A CAPSULE HISTORY OF THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

Our official name is Ordo Supremus Militaris Templi Hierosolymitani – Latin for Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem, and often shortened to the initials OSMTH or SMOTJ. SMOTJ is a chivalric Order with both royal and religious patrons. It is the largest Knights Templar order in the world. The autonomous Grand Priory of the United States (GPUSA) was formed and today guides the Order in this country.

In 2002, SMOTJ gained formal recognition by the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with special consultative status. Our organization is active locally, nationally and internationally providing millions of dollars and thousands of hours of assistance to people of all faiths and cultures. Today’s members of the SMOTJ practice the finest traditions of the Order and preserve its rich heritage.

The Knights Templar of Crusader times was well known for courage, loyalty, steadfastness and benevolence. The modern Order reveres these strengths and places a strong emphasis on Christian spirituality and service to our faith and fellow man.

MOTTO OF THE MODERN ORDER

Non nobis, Domine, non nobis
sed nomini tuo da gloriam

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name, give glory.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MODERN ORDER

To seek God in our daily lives and to promote love and respect in our community;
Helping to maintain a Christian presence in the Holy Land and assisting those organizations which are protecting and preserving these Holy places;
To increase understanding between religions and to help pilgrims visit Holy places;
To support the poor, sick and unjustly accused and to stand against oppression and to protect freedom of speech;
To encourage the noble ideas of chivalry;
To maintain the monuments, archives and history of the Knights Templar.

HOW WE SEEK TO ACCOMPLISH THESE GOALS

By being invested as a Knight or Dame in the service of Jesus Christ through this Order and participating in the celebration of our solemn and beautiful convents, retreats and investitures;
By witnessing our faith in the ecumenicity of our Order’s religious services and in our own church;
By donating our time, labor and money to assist those individuals of all faiths who are in need;
By carefully considering our words, deeds and practices;
By association with like-minded individuals in the practice of chivalrous behavior and noble ideas;
By journeying to the holy places and bearing witness to their significance.

WHO CAN JOIN?

Membership is open to all Christian men and women who are 21 years of age or older and who embrace chivalric values and noble ideas. Members of other faiths may be admitted through the honorary arm of the organization known as the Order of Merit.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Donations support the maintenance of Holy Land sites, hospitals and schools: The Franciscans in the Holy Land; the Augusta Victory Hospital, operated by the Lutheran Diocese of Jerusalem; The Anglican Diocese for the support of St. George Cathedral and School in Jerusalem; The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate; The Armenian Patriarchate to maintain many of the Old Quarter sites; and The International Orthodox Christian Charities.

HOW TO BECOME AN OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED KNIGHT OR DAME

First you become a ‘Postulant’ or Candidate who is one who is seeking admission into the Knights Templar Order;
We’ll introduce you to your mentor, an honored Knight or Dame, who will assist you as you merely ‘look around’ to see if you like our mission;
We will try to give you enough information to judge for yourself whether this is the way or life you wish to lead;
You will be completely free to decide for yourself. Think it over carefully;
There is no obligation of any kind. We would urge you to go beyond the appeal of the title of a recognized Knight or Dame;
You don’t choose to become a Knight or Dame - it chooses you.
THE PRIORY OF THE LIGHT

The Priory of The Light was formed in 2002 as a Commandery under the aegis of The Priory of Our Saviour in San Gabriel, California. It was elevated to a full Priory in 2005. Membership is mostly from Arizona but also includes members from Nevada, California, Minnesota, Alabama, New Mexico, and as far away as Scotland. Several members are active duty military and have served in Iraq, Afghanistan and other foreign countries.

Besides supporting the Christian presence in the Holy Land, local charities that have been supported are: Packages From Home, the Catholic Charities MANA House, and the United Methodist Outreach Ministries. Individual members also participate in the Silent Knight Program.

MEETINGS, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

SMOTJ holds an annual National Grand Convent which takes place at various locations throughout the United States. The Priory of The Light holds a Convent and Investiture once a year during which new members are knighted. The investiture is followed by a gala reception and banquet. Most activities are held in the Phoenix area. The Priory of The Light schedules a general membership meeting once a quarter. When appropriate, special meetings may be called. This may be for fundraising for a charity that has been chosen for support or any situation that requires the membership to gather. The goal of the Priory of The Light is to have at least two social gatherings or holiday meetings per year. Other activities include hands-on charity work, benefits and other events such as the Memorial Day Services at the National Cemetery in Phoenix.

As a membership-driven organization, the activity calendar will be determined at an annual business meeting.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN JOINING?

A petitioner must prepare two application forms which detail personal background. This must be signed by two members of the Priory; An education program must be completed; If accepted by the Priory, the applicant is inducted into the Order at the next Investiture; All members are expected to participate in at least two activities per year and take an active part in the Priory. Promotions result from effort; A one-time Investiture fee of $500 is paid. This fee pays for the mantle of the Order, insignia, diploma, and Grand Priory passage fees; Annual oblations (dues) are approximately $200 ($175 for the Priory and $75 for the National organization); Attendance at an annual black or white tie event costs approximately $100 per person.

WHAT SMOTJ IS NOT

It is not an organization of social status or prestige, but one of values. The Order is not part of the Freemasons, nor is it affiliated with any other fraternal organization. The Order does not engage in politics. The Order does not allow members to act contrary to their obligations to their country. The Order does not restrict membership to any single Christian church. The order is not a 'secret society.' It has no secrets and no rituals other than the order of investiture, which is always open to the public.

For Additional Information on The Priory of The Light, contact -- www.smotj.org www.smotj.org/priories/thelight

The person who gave you this brochure Observe an Investiture of our Priory

The Sovereign Military Order of The Temple of Jerusalem

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