



**CONSTITUTIONAL
CHARTER**

of the

**MILITARY AND HOSPITALLER ORDER
OF SAINT LAZARUS OF JERUSALEM**

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PREAMBLE

The existence of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem dates back to the 12th century community of European leper knights who accepted hospitality outside the walls of Jerusalem from an Armenian brotherhood of long standing, dedicated to Saint Lazarus. Down through the ages the distinctive Lazarite order has been substantiated by the bulls, indulgences and favourable regard of sovereign pontiffs. In recent times it has been further sustained by the esteem of prelates and hierarchs of other Churches and faith communities, and is now based once again in the Holy City of Jerusalem.

On his return from the Holy Land in 1149, King Louis VII brought back to France with him twelve knights of Saint Lazarus and in 1154 he ceded to the Order his royal castle at Boigny. One hundred years later Saint Louis (IX), when returning from the Holy Land, was accompanied by the Master General of Saint Lazarus. Thenceforth, Boigny remained the seat of the Order until its confiscation in 1792 by the Revolution. The patronage of the kings of France eventually expired with the death in 1883 of King Henry V (better known as the Comte de Chambord). The Head of the Royal House of France formally confirmed this tradition of 'temporal protection' by his ancestors on 8 December 2004.

From its origin, the aims of the Order have been chivalric: the defence of the Christian faith and the care of those suffering from leprosy. In welcoming leper knights from other orders into its ranks, it retained a fraternal, military dimension. The hospitaller vocation developed further over the centuries, facilitated by the admission of sisters, and today the Order cares for the underprivileged without regard to ethnic, religious or political boundaries.

Initially under the spiritual protection of the Latin Patriarchs of Jerusalem, the Order of Saint Lazarus was confirmed by a bull of Pope Alexander IV given in Naples on 22 March 1255. Having revived its oriental origins by forging links with the Melkite Greek Catholic Patriarchate in 1841, the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem re-established a direct link to the Catholic Church on 2 February 2005 through the appointment of a cardinal as Spiritual Protector.

Since the early 19th century, Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant Christians have been associated with the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem and nowadays they are welcomed into its ranks as full members. From this enriched heritage the definition of the Order's vocation has developed: caring for the most disadvantaged whilst working for the unity of Christians in a spirit of chivalry.

This spirit is inspired by an ecumenical reasoning that united action promotes full unity in faith. Collaboration of all the baptised reveals our common fraternity and is a demonstration of the new law of love. Thus, members of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem unite in bold projects which aim to change our world so that respect for the needs and rights of all, especially the poor, lowly and defenceless, may triumph.

Living out this common spirit of charity encourages a life of continual conversion. In the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem this is the fruit of prayer and of a rule of life which can be practised, under the emblem of the green cross, by members of all Christian communities.

Jerusalem 2015

SECTION I

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NATURE OF THE ORDER

Article 1 - Nature and Aims

1.1. The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is, from its foundation within the Catholic Church, religious. Nowadays, it comprises chaplains and lay members drawn from the major Christian Churches. The spiritual vocation of the Order is personal sanctification and the promotion of Christian unity.

1.2. The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is military in the context of its chivalric vocation. Thus the Order operates in a disciplined manner and may potentially be mobilized in the defence of Christianity.

1.3. The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is hospitaller in accordance with its spiritual and chivalric traditions, which require care for the poor and sick in body, mind or spirit, irrespective of ethnic, religious or political boundaries.

Article 2 - Patronage

2.1. The legitimacy of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem was guaranteed spiritually by the Latin Patriarchs of Jerusalem from its foundation until 1255, and then by successive Popes until the 19th century. From 1841-1930 and again from 1961-2005, spiritual patronage of the Order was given by the Greek-Melkite patriarchs of Antioch and all the East, of Alexandria and Jerusalem. To assure the spirit of ecumenism, since 2005 senior prelates and hierarchs representing the major Christian traditions have been appointed as Spiritual Patrons.

2.2. Temporal patronage to prevent the despoilment of the Order and provide assurance of its traditional legitimacy was assumed by the Heads of the Royal House of France from the time of King Louis VII until the death of King Henry V. In 2004, the historical continuity of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem protected by his ancestors was publicly declared by the Head of the Royal House of France.

Article 3 - Religion

3.1. The members of the Order belong to the major Christian Churches. They must live in conformity with the Church to which they belong.

3.2. People who do not belong to one of the major Christian Churches or who do not live in conformity with their Church may be associated with the Order as members of merit or companions.

Article 4 - Invocation

4. Official acts and documents of the Order are traditionally preceded by the invocation 'In the name of God, the Virgin Mary and Saint Lazarus.'

Article 5 - Cross

5.1. From the origins until the 16th century, the cross of the Order was a plain green cross. This continues today, displayed on a white field, as the banner of the Order.

5.2. Since the 16th century, the cross of the Order has been a green eight-pointed cross.

Article 6 - Arms and Seal

6.1. The arms of the Order are blazoned as follows. Argent a cross vert; the shield superimposing a cross of eight points vert, fimbriated argent, encircled by the grand collar of the Order; the whole on a manteau sable, lined ermine, fringed, corded and tasselled or, on the sinister side the eight-pointed cross of the Order; surmounted by the antique crown of the Order, with nine visible points; at the foot of the manteau the motto of the Order: ATAVIS ET ARMIS.

6.2. The seal of the Order comprises the arms of the Order circumscribed with these words:

‘S. Ordinis Militaris et Hospitalaris Sancti Lazari Hierosolymitani’.

Article 7 - Habit

7.1. The habit, the symbol of the fraternity of the Order, is a black mantle embroidered with a green eight-pointed cross on the left side over the heart. Chaplains may substitute for the mantle a vestment, adorned with the green eight-pointed cross, that accords with their liturgical tradition.

7.2. The uniform, insignia and attire to be worn by the members of the Order are described in the International Regulations.

Article 8 - Seat

8.1. The seat of the Order has been successively Jerusalem, Saint-Jean d’Acre and the Château Royal de Boigny – the historic seat of the Order in exile – before being restored in 2012 to Jerusalem.

8.2. The magistral seat of the Order is wheresoever the Grand Master designates.

8.3. The Grand Master may propose the separation of the administrative and magistral seats of the Order.

Article 9 - Languages

9.1. The official language of the Order is French.

9.2. The principal administrative language of the Order is English.

9.3. Should a dispute arise regarding the interpretation of a text, the French version shall prevail.

SECTION II

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ORGANIZATION OF THE ORDER

Article 10 - The Order

10.1. All the structures of the Order exist to further the three vocations and ends of the Order: spirituality, charity and tradition.

10.2. The basic structure is the commandery. Directed by a Commander, it implements the three vocations and ends of the Order: spirituality with a Chaplain, charity with a Hospitaller and tradition with a Capitular. The Commanders of a priory or grand priory are nominated by the Prior or Grand Prior.

10.3. At the national level, multiple commanderies may be grouped into a priory or grand priory. Their means of operation are defined in the International Regulations.

10.4. The national commandery, priory or grand priory is governed by a Commander, Prior or Grand Prior appointed by the Grand Master with the agreement of the Grand Magistracy. He is called the Head of Jurisdiction. A Grand Magistral Delegate may be appointed to be responsible for the Order in particular places.

Each Head of Jurisdiction is assisted by a minimum of (in alphabetical order):

- a Capitular
- a Chancellor
- a Chaplain General
- a Hospitaller
- a Marshal
- a Treasurer

Together they constitute the Council of the national commandery, priory or grand priory, whose function is defined by the International Regulations.

10.5. All the members of a national commandery, priory or grand priory meet in chapter at least once a year to be informed of the activities of their jurisdiction with respect to the three vocations and ends of the Order and to approve the financial affairs of their jurisdiction.

10.6. Each national commandery, priory or grand priory is to establish a legally constituted association according to the laws of the country. Its name is to be a translation into the national language of 'Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem.' The president of the national association is the Head of Jurisdiction appointed by the Grand Master. The members of the jurisdiction are automatically members of the association. The statutes of the association are to include the stipulation in the articles concerning the appointment of the president that he must be in good standing with the Grand Magistracy of the Order for the duration of his term of office. The statutes of the association must be concordant with this Constitutional Charter.

Article 11 - Hospitaller Activity

11.1. The hospitaller organizations of the Order share a common name of 'Saint Lazare' followed by the name of the national commandery, priory or grand priory.

11.2. Each national commandery, priory or grand priory is to establish a legally constituted association according to the laws of the country, with the name 'Saint Lazare' followed by the name of the national commandery, priory or grand priory. The statutes of this association must be concordant with this Constitutional Charter.

11.3. Through membership of the national juridical structure of a national commandery, priory or grand priory, members of the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem are automatically members of the national juridical hospitaller structure called 'Saint Lazare'.

11.4. Members of the Order must hold the majority of seats and the presidency of each hospitaller organization. This stipulation must be explicitly stated in the statutes of each hospitaller organization.

Article 12 - The Regular Fraternity

12.1. The Regular Fraternity comprises a group of professed knights and dames from the major Christian Churches under the direction of an elected Prior, confirmed by the Grand Master with the agreement of the Grand Prior Spiritual.

12.2. The Regular Fraternity may be organized into national fraternities depending on the number of professed knights and dames.

12.3. The members of the Regular Fraternity follow the hierarchical rules applicable to all members. They fulfil their spiritual vocation within the commandery in liaison with their chaplain. It is incumbent on the Prior of the Regular Fraternity to inform the Chaplain General in each jurisdiction of the spiritual activities of the professed knights and dames in their jurisdiction.

Article 13 - Means

To realise its objectives, the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem has at its disposal various means:

13.1. The whole international organization depends on the bodies that represent the government of the Order and that reflect the expression of each of its members.

13.2. The chaplains are responsible for fostering the spiritual enrichment of members and their mutual relationships, taking into account the personal vocation of each individual.

13.3. Each member of the Order exercises his hospitaller role through a national hospitaller structure, which is, itself, federated to an international structure called 'Saint Lazare International.'

13.4. The financial means required to realise the objectives of the Order are provided through passage fees, free contributions, grants, legacies and any other private or public means agreed by the Grand Magistracy. In addition, each member must pay their annual oblation.

13.5. The Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is entitled to acquire, administer and dispose of temporal goods for its own ends.

SECTION III

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MEMBERS OF THE ORDER

Article 14 - States of Membership

14.1. In accordance with its nature and objectives, the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem may admit those who freely apply, be they lay men or women, single or married, priests or pastors, or male or female religious of the major Christian Churches. New members are received into the Order in states that accord with their personal situation and may choose the nature of their commitment, either member or professed member.

14.2. All members profess the Christian faith, conform to the teachings of their Church and participate in the spiritual life of their jurisdiction in support of Christian unity. Male members may be invested as knights while female members may be invested as dames.

14.3. The professed members are those knights and dames who freely choose to perfect their chivalric status through the practice of a rule of life adapted for laypersons.

14.4. Members must be at least 21 years of age. However, the Order may admit persons over the age of 16, under the same criteria, as esquires or demoiselles.

14.5. Chaplains must have been ordained in a major Christian Church with which they remain in good standing. Seminarians and students preparing for ordination may be received as novices.

Article 15 - Ranks and Categories

15.1. According to the nature of their commitment and their progress, members of the Order may attain the following ranks:

Male Designation	International Abbreviation	Female Designation	International Abbreviation
Serving Brother	SBLJ	Serving Sister	SSLJ
Officer	OLJ	Officer	OLJ
Knight	KLJ	Dame	DLJ
Knight Commander	KCLJ	Dame Commander	DCLJ
Knight Grand Cross	GCLJ	Dame Grand Cross	GCLJ

Chaplains:

Designation	International Abbreviation
Chaplain	ChLJ
Senior Chaplain	SChLJ
Ecclesiastical Commander	ECLJ
Prelate Grand Cross	GCLJ

15.2. Knights and dames of the Order are invested as such in one of the following categories:

15.2.1. The category of justice when their family is noble according to the criteria of their national tradition as confirmed by the Grand Magistracy;

15.2.2. The category of grace if, being unable to prove noble family origins, their personal situation exhibits a particular aptitude to serve the three vocations and ends of the Order. In this case the member is received by virtue of a dispensation of the Grand Master called magistral grace.

Article 16 - Commitment of Members

16.1. The members of the Order pledge to live exemplary lives in accordance with the duties and principles of the Church to which they belong.

16.2. At their investiture, each candidate makes the following promise: 'I do solemnly promise before Almighty God to serve loyally and faithfully the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, to respect and observe its Constitutional Charter, regulations, ordinances and customs, and to obey its hierarchy, for the greater glory of God and the service of the Order.'

16.3. Investiture as a knight, dame or senior chaplain entails a permanent commitment. In testimony of this, the member concerned signs at the altar a copy of their solemn promise, which is retained in the archives.

16.4. All members are required to participate effectively in the three vocations and ends of the Order: spirituality aimed towards Christian unity, charitable activity and the maintenance of the traditions of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem.

16.5. A member who has discerned that they cannot persevere with their commitment or wishes to resign should write to their superior in the Order to seek a dispensation from the obligations of their solemn promise.

Article 17 - Progress in the Order

17.1. Promotion within the Order is based upon merit, ability and vocation.

17.2. Postulants are received into the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem as a serving brother or serving sister for a probationary period of at least one year. Ecclesiastics are received in the rank of chaplain.

17.3. On completion of the probationary period, the serving brother or serving sister is received as an officer to serve the Order within the scope of its three vocations and ends.

17.4. An officer who has proven their ability to serve the Order over at least two years may be invested as a knight or dame, which marks the fullness of membership and a solemn and permanent commitment within the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem. The corresponding rank for a chaplain is senior chaplain.

17.5. Members who have made their definitive commitment to the Order and acquired sufficient spiritual maturity may, with the agreement of their chaplain and the Prior of the Regular Fraternity, take the promise to follow the rule of life. They are designated as professed knights or dames.

17.6. A knight or dame who accepts jurisdictional responsibilities may be appointed knight commander or dame commander. The corresponding rank for a chaplain is ecclesiastical commander.

17.7. A knight or dame who assumes a role of national or international leadership may be appointed knight grand cross or dame grand cross. The corresponding rank for a chaplain is prelate grand cross. These members are called Grand Officers.

17.8. Precedence is designated by office held and then by rank, according to the International Regulations. Seniority in the Order is determined by date of admission, as recorded in the central Register of Members.

Article 18 - Exclusion of Members

18.1. The Grand Master may, on the advice of the Grand Magistry, exclude a member whose attitude conflicts with his undertaking or is detrimental to the aims of the Order or brings it into disrepute. Such exclusion will only be effected after the member concerned has been heard by their superior in the Order.

18.2. An appeal for clemency may be submitted to the Constitutional Council within sixty days of the date of notification. The Constitutional Council has sixty days to reach a decision. This decision is final and irrevocable.

18.3. Pending a definitive decision from the Constitutional Council, the member concerned is suspended and does not take part in any activity of the Order.

18.4. In the case of an exclusion or resignation, nobody is permitted to request reimbursement or compensation for services rendered to the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem or for oblations made to support the Order.

SECTION IV

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GOVERNMENT OF THE ORDER

Article 19 - Structure of Government

19. The government of the Order is constituted as follows:

- The Grand Master is the supreme head of the Order.
- The Grand Magistracy assists him.
- The Constitutional Council interprets the Constitutional Charter, regulations and ordinances of the Order. It arbitrates in disputes between the organs of government, the jurisdictions and the members.
- The Grand Magistral Council provides the representation of the national jurisdictions.
- The Chapter General permits the expression of the voting members.

Article 20 - The Grand Master

20.1. The Grand Master is the supreme head of the Order. He is elected by an absolute majority of the voters present or represented at a Chapter General. After two ballots without result, the vote is between the two candidates with the most votes or between the two of longest membership if there are more than two. If support for the candidates remains equal after the third ballot, the one of longest membership is deemed to be elected.

20.2. The Grand Master must be a member of the Order, in good standing with his Church, and must be a member of a royal or major noble family.

20.3. The Grand Master is to offer his resignation on his 75th birthday to the Grand Magistracy, which decides whether it is expedient for him to continue in office. After retirement, he is titled Grand Master Emeritus.

20.4. In the case of the death or incapacity of the Grand Master, the Grand Capitular, mandated by the Grand Magistracy and having consulted the Spiritual Patrons of the Order, convokes an extraordinary Chapter General for a new election.

20.5. In the case of the death or incapacity and pending the election of a new Grand Master, his functions are exercised *ad interim* by a member of the Grand Magistracy elected by a two-thirds majority of the Grand Magistracy. He assumes the title of Administrator General.

20.6. The Grand Master is the legal representative of the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem.

20.7. The Grand Master maintains the three vocations and ends of the Order: spirituality, charity and tradition. He works for the development and prosperity of the Order, assisted in this by the members of the Grand Magistracy.

20.8. In the case of a grave dispute between the Grand Master and the Grand Magistracy, the President of the Constitutional Council solicits the views of the Spiritual Patrons of the Order.

20.9. During his ceremony of inauguration, the Grand Master makes the following promise: 'I do solemnly promise before Almighty God, to honour, respect and observe at all times his holy commandments and to ensure, as far as lies within my power, that they are maintained, venerated and observed; to administer and govern the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem loyally and faithfully, as becomes the duty and dignity of the Grand Master; to respect the Constitutional Charter, regulations, ordinances and customs of the Order and to ensure they are respected by all the members; so help me God.'

20.10. In order to realise the three vocations and ends of the Order, spirituality, charity and tradition, the Grand Master uses the power conferred on him by the Chapter General. He may delegate this power by naming Grand Officers, members of the Grand Magistracy and Heads of Jurisdiction in the various countries where the Order is established. This delegation is valid as long as the Grand Master considers the Grand Officer appointed to be loyally exercising this delegated power.

20.11. The Grand Master is the sole authority for the admission or promotion of any member in the Order. The same applies to members of merit and companions.

20.12. The Grand Master, advised by the Grand Magistracy, signs the ordinances.

Article 21 - The Grand Magistracy

21.1. The purpose of the Grand Magistracy is to permit the Grand Master to govern the Order in accordance with the three vocations and ends of the Order: spirituality, charity and tradition. It works for the development and prosperity of the Order.

21.2. The Grand Master appoints at his pleasure and presides over the Grand Magistracy, which is composed of the following Grand Officers (in alphabetical order):

- The Grand Capitular
- The Grand Chancellor
- The Grand Hospitaller
- The Grand Marshal
- The Grand Prior Spiritual
- The Grand Secretary
- The Grand Treasurer
- The Grand Visitor
- The President of the Constitutional Council
- The President of the Grand Magistral Council

21.3. The Grand Capitular: he is the guardian of the traditions of the Order and keeper of the historical archives. To that end, he maintains links with the Capitular of each jurisdiction. He convokes the Chapter General at the request of the Grand Master.

21.4. The Grand Marshal: respecting the history of the Order, the Grand Marshal implements a consistent ceremonial and protocol for the whole Order. In the same spirit, he is responsible for the dress code and insignia regulations for the various meetings of the Order.

21.5. The Grand Chancellor: to assist the Grand Master, the Grand Chancellor coordinates all the activities of the Grand Officers of the Grand Magistracy and Heads of Jurisdiction in support of the three vocations and ends of the Order. He is also responsible for the external relations of the Order.

21.6. The Grand Hospitaller: he implements the charitable end of the Order within the scope of the hospitaller policy determined by the Grand Magistracy. To this end, he liaises with the Hospitaller of each jurisdiction.

21.7. The Grand Prior Spiritual: within the context of the first end of the Order, the spiritual vocation of personal sanctification and the promotion of Christian unity, the Grand Master, in consultation with the Spiritual Patrons, appoints a prelate or hierarch who is already a member of the Order. The prelate or hierarch oversees the spiritual development of the members of each jurisdiction through their Chaplains General. The professed knights and dames of the Regular Fraternity also fall within his domain.

21.8. The Grand Secretary: he puts in place and monitors the administrative systems of the Order and oversees the publication of all important documentation.

21.9. The Grand Treasurer: he effects the financial management necessary for the smooth running of the Order. He is also responsible for the financial resources of the Order, the management of its movable assets and real estate and the protection of its intellectual rights.

21.10. The Grand Visitor: within the context of the Grand Magistracy, the role of the Grand Visitor is to visit and establish contacts with countries in which the Order is not yet established or where it is not currently recruiting. He may also be entrusted with specific missions relating to the development of the Order.

21.11. The President of the Constitutional Council: he is elected by the Members of the Constitutional Council and confirmed by the Grand Master. He presents to the Grand Master the recommendations of the Council concerning the interpretation of the Constitutional Charter, regulations and ordinances, and disputes involving the Grand Magistral Council or the Grand Magistracy. He also gives opinions on individual appeals.

21.12. The President of the Grand Magistral Council: he is elected by the Heads of Jurisdiction and confirmed by the Grand Master. He represents the Heads of Jurisdiction in the Grand Magistracy and thus ensures the essential flow of communication from the Grand Magistracy to the jurisdictions and from the jurisdictions to the Grand Magistracy.

21.13. The means of operation of the Grand Magistracy are defined in the International Regulations.

Article 22 - The Constitutional Council

22.1. The Constitutional Council is responsible for the interpretation of the Constitutional Charter, the regulations and the ordinances of the Order. It is the guarantor of the electoral process. Its conclusions are expressed in the form of recommendations, which become binding once validated by the Grand Master.

22.2. The Constitutional Council is composed of five members appointed by the Grand Master for a renewable five-year term. They likewise elect their President for a renewable five-year term.

22.3. Should a member of the Order wish to raise a matter of dispute concerning a notification he has received, he may appeal to the Constitutional Council through the hierarchy within sixty days of the disputed notification. The Constitutional Council then has sixty days to announce a decision. This decision is final and irrevocable.

22.4. The means of operation of the Constitutional Council are defined in the International Regulations.

Article 23 - The Grand Magistral Council

23.1. The Grand Magistral Council is composed of the Heads of Jurisdiction.

23.2. The members of the Grand Magistral Council elect from among their number a President and a Vice-President for a renewable six-year term.

23.3. The Grand Magistral Council formally meets at least once a year at the convocation of its President.

23.4. The Grand Magistral Council's function is to transmit to the Grand Magistry, via its President, propositions of the national jurisdictions and reports of difficulties they encounter. Conversely, it is the duty of the President of the Grand Magistral Council to transmit back to the Heads of Jurisdiction all information from the Grand Magistry that is necessary for the good functioning of each national structure. In this spirit, the Grand Magistral Council is consulted by the Grand Magistry on any matters which concern a substantial change to the Order or which engage its responsibility, in particular proposals to amend the Constitutional Charter and the annual budget.

23.5. The accounts and reports of activities approved by the Grand Magistry are presented to the Grand Magistral Council for information.

23.6. The means of operation of the Grand Magistral Council are defined in the International Regulations.

Article 24 - The Chapter General

24.1. The Chapter General is the supreme governing body of the Order when it meets under the invocation of the Holy Spirit following a lawful convocation. Its power is delegated to the Grand Master from his election until the termination of his mandate.

24.2. The Chapter General comprises all the members who have been invested as knights, dames or senior chaplains. The members concerned are entitled to vote once their jurisdiction has confirmed their good standing. Their jurisdiction must itself be in good standing and confirmed as such by the Grand Magistry.

24.3. The Chapter General is convoked by the Grand Capitular at least once every three years and preferably at Pentecost, in accordance with the traditions of the Order, to be informed about the activities of the Order: spiritual initiatives, assessment of the humanitarian and charitable activities, presentation of the accounts of the international administration and the main lines of development in the years ahead.

24.4. The Chapter General is convoked by the Grand Capitular on the order of the Grand Master for any change to the Constitutional Charter.

24.5. Given the dispersion of the members of the Order throughout the world, proxy voting is permissible. The details and conditions for proxy voting are set out in the International Regulations. Proxies are received by the Grand Chancery and validated by the Constitutional Council.

24.6. The Grand Capitular convokes all the members by notifying their Heads of Jurisdiction 180 days before the date on which the Chapter General is intended to be held.

Article 25 - Financial Administration

25.1. Routine financial administration is carried out by the Grand Treasurer in conformity with the functions assigned to him by the Constitutional Charter and always guided by the prudence of sound economic management.

25.2. Extraordinary financial decisions (real estate, investments, legacies, etc.) require the Grand Treasurer to obtain the prior authorisation of the Grand Master and Grand Magistracy.

Article 26 - Changes to the Constitutional Charter

26. Any change to this Constitutional Charter must be:

- proposed and submitted for the Constitutional Council to study
- approved by the Grand Magistracy and the Chapter General, each with a two-thirds majority
- promulgated after consultation with the Spiritual Patrons

Article 27 - Dissolution

27.1. The dissolution of the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is a decision that falls to the Chapter General, requiring a qualified majority of two-thirds of the members entitled to vote.

27.2. This decision is required to be validated unanimously both by the Grand Magistracy and by the Spiritual Patrons.

27.3. In this event, the assets of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem shall be donated to any other organization with the same objectives in accordance with the wishes of the donors. This organization shall have been approved by the Grand Magistracy of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, who shall inform the Spiritual Patrons accordingly.

Article 28 - International Regulations

28.1. International Regulations explain and interpret the contents of this Constitutional Charter.

28.2. The International Regulations are drafted and modified by the Grand Magistracy and validated by the Grand Master.

28.3. Jurisdictions may adopt their own national regulations. They must be concordant and juridically compatible with this Constitutional Charter and with the International Regulations and must be approved by the Grand Magistracy.

