



FOR THE FAITH AND
IN THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY



St John

Eyes on the Future

THE ORDER OF ST JOHN

PRIORY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRIOR

Dear Confrères,

The majestic Washington National Cathedral was the venue for the 64th Annual Service of Investiture and Rededication for our U.S. Priory. This “house of prayer for all people” was where we gathered to invest new Members into our great Order, promote and honor those who have served *our Lords the sick and the poor* with particular compassion and commitment, and welcome our new class of Priory Esquires. Together we confirmed with respect to the Order’s Christian objectives, and as people of honor, our ongoing legacy to serve with dignity, respect and decency, in faith and in the service of humanity.

The service with its all its inspiring elements, including the sermon given by the Priory’s Sub Prelate Rt. Rev. Andy Doyle, was created with the central theme of service; the action we each commit to undertake as Confrères and that lies at the heart of our Order. I especially thank Paul Martin for his advice and patience in designing this important annual celebration of our community and to Matt Leddicotte and his team for ensuring that every detail was executed smoothly and with great respect and dignity.

I thank all from the Washington DC and Richmond Regions who came together as a team and worked so hard under the guidance of their four Regional Co-Chairs and with our headquarters team of Michele, Carey and Melissa (Conference Direct) to ensure that the entire weekend was one of inspiring camaraderie, celebration, and recognition of the important mission of our Order.

It was a great honour to have HRH The Duke of Gloucester with us. He

has led and served our Order with deep commitment for 50 Years. As always, he was eager to hear from as many Members as possible at every event. His Member Luncheon speech was inspiring, as he once again recognized that what we do as Confrères is not easy, but that we do it anyway because we have committed to serve where there is great need. He expressed his gratitude for all that the U.S. Priory does in ensuring not only the survival, but the ongoing growth, of the St. John Eye Hospital Group (SJEHG) facilities in the Holy Land and our St John Volunteer Corps (SJVC) service. Keen not to miss out on any part of our weekend, His Royal Highness even joined in our service project as we packed **FIFTEEN THOUSAND** meals for “Rise Against Hunger.”

I thank you all for being an important part of this special annual gathering and celebration of our Order and all that it stands for, whether you attended in person or virtually.

As we heard from the SJEHG Chairman Sir Andrew Cash, CEO Dr. Ahmad Ma’ali, and Order Hospitaller Dr. David Verity, our continued support of the mission of the U.S. Priory is vital to the very survival of the SJEHG. I spoke to Ahmad today from Jerusalem and he shares the latest news:

Following the ceasefire agreement signed in October 2025 between Israel and Hamas, levels of hostilities in Gaza have decreased. Our staff remain accommodated in a shelter located on a leased plot in the southern Gaza Strip. During the escalation at the beginning of September, the hospital’s building sustained additional collateral damage. A structural survey conducted by qualified engineers confirmed that the foundations remain sound, and the building is safe for use. One week after the ceasefire, renovations to the Hospital’s Outpatient Department were completed, allowing us to resume receiving patients. In addition, field clinics have been established in the south, and medical services continue at the Nuseirat refugee camp. Renovation of the operating theatre, at a cost of USD\$103,000, has begun and is expected to be completed by January 2026. We are collaborating with the World Health Organization (WHO) to secure a shipment of essential equipment and medical supplies critical for upcoming surgical operations.

In Jerusalem and the West Bank, there has been a slight improvement in the security situation and a modest easing of movement restrictions.

During the first ten months of 2025, the Group recorded a 24% increase in outpatient activity compared to the same

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INVESTITURE 2025

Confrères gathering for the 62nd Service of Investiture and Rededication in Los Angeles on October 6, 2023, awoke to the shocking news of the outbreak of the latest conflict in the Holy Land. As U.S. Prior Nigel Heath, KStJ, opened this year's ceremony, he recalled the prayers for peace two years ago and acknowledged the promise of the fragile ceasefire negotiated only a few days before this year's event in Washington, D.C. This hopeful circumstance and the setting of the Washington National Cathedral were fitting backdrops to welcome new Members and promote those who have served The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem with distinction.

In the presence of the Grand Prior, HRH The Duke of Gloucester, KG, GCVO, 45 new Confrères were invested and 38 were promoted, including five Knights and Dames, 24 were appointed Priory Esquires, and five Members also were awarded the Service Medal of the Order. Surrounding the investiture ceremony were uplifting hymns by the Cathedral's superbly talented choir, a reading from James calling us to be doers and not merely hearers of the Word, and a stirring homily by Sub-Prelate Rt. Rev'd Andrew Doyle, OStJ. Doyle referred to the formal ceremony as "not pageantry alone, but symbols of people set to work."

Doyle encouraged new Members to consider that the cross placed over their hearts be a reminder not of status, but of

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INVESTITURE PHOTO GALLERY

If you would like to order any photos from the Investiture weekend, please go [here](#) to view the gallery and make your purchase.



Photo credits: PCandace Dane, Candace Photo and Film

servanthood and the yoke gladly taken up. He ended with the charge that we “go from this place today with vow and virtue, with symbol and substance, with a heart, mind, and soul filled with the strength to be the very ambassadors of the Kingdom of God.” The challenge seemed all the more possible as the words were spoken amidst the majesty of Washington National Cathedral.

ESQUIRES

In addition to the new Members admitted to the Order during Investiture, 24 men and women were accepted as Priory Esquires. The opportunity to participate in the U.S. Priory as Esquires was initiated several years ago as a path to full membership for younger prospects. Since then, several Esquires have become Confrères and have taken on significant roles in the Order. This year, some nominees who were not invited to become Members were given the opportunity to join as Esquires and many accepted the invitation. They will be included in service opportunities and social events and, as Prior Nigel Heath, KStJ, explained, may use this experience as a period of discernment and to engage with the work and mission of the U.S. Priory.

The awe-inspiring church, officially known as the Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, was conceived as a sacred home for all Americans as early as the founding of the nation itself. It would take many more decades for the idea to take physical shape as both a house of worship and a monument showcasing the story of our nation through sculpture and stained glass. The massive church, the sixth-largest cathedral in the world, will be familiar to anyone who has watched television coverage of state funerals and inaugural prayer services. However, it is the small details that must be experienced in person that prove most inspiring.

Amongst the stunningly beautiful stained glass, mosaics, and sculptures depicting familiar scenes of Christianity are images of the Founding Fathers, explorers, and struggles for justice. As new Members of the Order of St John promised to devote themselves to the care of the sick and injured, the Cathedral served as a physical reminder that it is the “doers of the Word” who create a world where *the Lords, the sick and the poor* are cared for in institutions such as the St. John Eye Hospital Group and in our own communities across the country. ✱

INVESTITURE MEETING OF THE ST. JOHN OPHTHALMIC ASSOCIATION

In 2024, the Eye Group successfully treated over 175,000 patients and performed over 4,000 major surgeries.

On Friday afternoon of the Investiture and Rededication weekend in Washington, DC, the United States chapter of the St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group Ophthalmic Association (SOA – USA) convened its tenth meeting. Established in 2015, the SOA International comprises twelve chapters across five international hubs.

SOA – USA was established in 2018 and has since hosted an annual meeting at the American Academy of Ophthalmology annual meeting and a dedicated event during the US Priory's Investiture weekend. The

most recent Investiture at the Fairmont Hotel in Washington, DC, was the fifth such meeting and the third open to all confreres.

The event was presided over by US Priory Hospitaller, Dr. David Pyott. Following an introduction from Prior Nigel Heath, the program speakers included Chairman of the St John Eye Hospital Group, Sir Andrew Cash, CEO of the SJEHG, Dr. Ahmad Ma'ali, and Order Hospitaller, Dr. David Verity. Two captivating recorded video case presentations were presented by two of the Jerusalem Eye Hospital residents, Dr. Jomana Swiden and Dr. Mahmoud Qabaja, and moderated discussions ensued after each case by Dr. Suzanne Freitag and Dr. Bitu Esmali, academic advisors for the SOA-USA.

Sir Andrew Cash and Dr. Ahmad Ma'ali engaged in a comprehensive discussion on the clinical activities of the



Dr Ma'ali Goes to Washington

SJEHG in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza. They also provided a financial overview, highlighting the sources of donations and gifts for the hospital, which is led by the US Priory. Both speakers elucidated the rationale behind adopting the new philosophy of delivering eye care directly to where patients reside, exemplified by the remarkable success of the Kufor Aqab Center and the Nablus Hospital.



David Pyott, CBE, CStJ, kicks off the 10th meeting of the SOA-USA

The primary factors driving the strategic shift in SJEHG eye care include limited access to eye care due to physical and geographical barriers, dire economic conditions that hinder patients from seeking treatment, low levels of health awareness within communities, a high prevalence of avoidable eye diseases such as cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, and refractive errors, and the urgent need to reduce preventable blindness and mitigate its social and economic consequences.

In 2024, the Eye Group successfully treated over 175,000 patients and performed over 4,000 major surgeries. Strategic projects planned for 2026 encompass general anesthetic services at the Hebron Hospital, the remodeling and renovation of the doctors' flats, the establishment of a modern commercial pharmacy in Jerusalem, and the installation of solar panels at the Eye Hospital to enhance renewable energy.

An update on the Gaza War and its impact on the Gaza Hospital was presented. The hospital sustained further collateral damage prior to the most recent cease-fire, and the hospital group is collaborating with partners to restore the premises and equip the hospital. Plans are underway to commence the renovation of the operating theaters, which may take approximately six to eight weeks to complete. It is

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RISE AGAINST HUNGER: 15,000 MEALS PACKED

"We are immensely grateful for the work of our Confrères, and especially for the great outpouring of help packing food on Saturday afternoon," said Father Salmon.

As part of the Investiture Weekend's commitment to service, more than 240 members and guests came together on Saturday afternoon to assemble more than 15,000 nutritious meals for Rise Against Hunger, a nonprofit dedicated to addressing global food insecurity.

The service project, organized by Bentley Andrews, OStJ, and The Very Rev'd Burl Salmon, OStJ, built on last year's successful partnership with Rise Against Hunger in New York, where volunteers packed an impressive 10,000 meals. This year's effort combined soy meal, rice, and vegetable mix essentials into shelf-stable packets for communities facing ongoing and widespread hunger.

"We are immensely grateful for the work of our Confrères, and especially for the great outpouring of help packing food on Saturday afternoon," said Father Salmon. "Many hands

made light work, and these efforts will directly provide sustenance amidst turmoil, if even for a day."

In 2024, Rise Against Hunger delivered 54.3 million meals, accounting for more than 2,100 metric tons of food produced or procured for the hungry and food insecure.

The spirited energy in the room reflected the Order of St John's mission to serve the sick and the poor, transforming an afternoon of teamwork into tangible hope for thousands of people in need.

Confrères who participated in the project are invited to record their service hours on the Priory website's member dashboard at [SJVC Volunteer Service Hours](#) (not Priory Service Hours) and selecting 'Rise Against Hunger - Washington DC' from the pulldown menu to complete the entry. ✨



The Very Rev'd Burl Salmon, OStJ, and Bentley Andrews, OStJ, chairs of the 2025 Investiture Service Project.

DEVELOPING LEADERS, DEEPENING SERVICE: GLOBAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM SEEKS PARTICIPANTS FOR 2026–2027 COHORT

Application deadline is November 26, 2025

The St John Global Leadership Development Program (GLDP) is a values-driven initiative designed to strengthen leadership capability across the worldwide St John family. Over the course of 18 months, participants engage in experiential learning, peer collaboration, and applied leadership practice, developing the skills, confidence, and networks to lead with integrity and impact.

“Participating in the program gave me the opportunity to develop skills that help the Order of St John serve people in our communities and around the world,” said Dave Boven, CSTJ, a program graduate. “Just as importantly, it was a chance to build connections with committed members of the St John community from around the world. Those relationships have already grown into partnerships between establishments and international programs. Being in London, at the historic heart of our Order, gave us a deeper appreciation for the broader story of our global organization.”

This year, to further enrich the experience, the program partners with external trainers and facilitators from Hult Ashridge Business School, ensuring that its leadership practices are world-class and forward-looking. More than a management course, the St John GLDP is a transformative journey in leadership—combining residential learning, external challenge, and applied projects that stretch, inspire, and support participants to grow as leaders who will help shape a vibrant, forward-thinking St John, ready to serve

communities with compassion and skill for generations to come.

Designed for mid-career professionals, successful applicants will have at least five years of professional experience and two years’ active St John volunteer service. Participants commit to approximately 5 to 8 hours per month plus project work, including residential components held in the UK. The fully-funded program covers travel, meals, and accommodation, with participants responsible for personal incidentals and any weekend excursions during free time.

Application Process

Qualified emerging and established leaders in the U.S. Priority who wish to be considered should follow these steps:

- Submit an online application, including the required form, supporting statement, CV, and video
- Secure endorsements from both your employer and Regional Chair. Once these are in place, contact the Prior at prior@saintjohn.org
- If shortlisted, advance in the selection process conducted by the St John GLDP Steering Committee
- Upon selection, accept the invitation and complete the onboarding process

Visit the St John GLDP page [here](#) for complete program details and to submit an application by the November 26 deadline. ❄️



The inaugural class of the St John Global Leadership Development Program

INVESTITURE GALA



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PRO FIDE

My dear Confrère,

We had a lovely time in Washington, D.C. I came away from our investiture with great hope for our ministry to the St. John's Eye Hospital and supporting ministries as well with the amazing amount of service hours put in by you and me and many others to support the Lord's poor and those in need. I am grateful for all of the Confreres who had a hand in the preparations and carrying the day, most especially for our siblings in Washington! Moreover, how could we not be grateful for the team at our Cathedral of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, often called the Washington National Cathedral? It is always a gift to be hosted and to worship in such a place as that—it was a stunning day. The whole weekend of service and celebration truly reminded me of the real work we do as an order—what our highest virtues are and what we value the most. I add only that that truly the best part was the meeting of friends over a meal and around the hotel. Goodness, we are so fortunate to share a goodly fellowship.

The whole weekend of service and celebration truly reminded me of the real work we do as an order—what our highest virtues are and what we value the most.

As last year, I include my homily for the investiture as an offering to you to meditate upon as an Order seeking to share what we have and do good works, while giving thanks to God (Hebrews 13:15).

Sermon from the Investiture

Your Royal Highness, Prior, honored guests, and Friends of the Order and my beloved Confrères. We gather amid banners and cross, sword and mantle, signs of the Orders, sworn oaths for peace and for service. Names are soon to be called, and vows will be spoken and medals readied. Signs, each one that point beyond themselves to our service in faith and for humanity.

Perhaps for some looking on, these are outdated signs of an old world, but they are not vestures of a bygone era. They do not exist as pageantry alone. Rather, they are emblems of a people set to work. From Blessed Gerard's hospice in Jerusalem, to the clinics and wards of cities through time, of ambulance corps sent to war and carrying the sick and need for help, at this very hour around the world, people being cared for through the Order of St John, that same mercy of God has repeatedly, repeatedly taken form through this

organization. We did not invent this historic river of service in this generation, but you and I together have stepped into it.

Willingly, knowingly putting our lives in service to God and for others, laying down the sword to take up peace and bread and care. An ancient yet current found as it continues to move through our very words *Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate Hominum*, for faith and for the sake of humanity.

Here, this is a wider truth too, though, not simply possessed by Christians alone, but our Jewish and Muslim neighbors, our brothers and sisters and siblings and other traditions stand with us in an ancient obligation to the poor and to the sick, says God that leaves food for another's hunger, alms giving that turns wealth into love of neighbor, and Zakat that purifies the heart so that the hand might be loosened. All of these traditions confess that what we hold is gift. And what we give is faithfulness for the sake of God and for neighbors we have not chosen that experience hardship.

Our scripture from James reminds us that the life well-lived in the manner of faith is one that is done in service to others, recognizing that what we do is always becoming in our midst a conduit for the Most High God to intervene in the powers and darkness and sin of this world. "Every generous act," he wrote, "is an act of giving from above. For the one who hears and does not do is like a person who forgets who created them, who has given them life, and who sustains them." In other words, the person who hears and does not act is a human being who has forgotten that they are a beggar like everybody else.

We are each invited to serve. So it is that today we stand and answer this invitation that becomes for us vocation. Beginning with vows, then living by virtuous rule. We promise to pay due obedience, to contribute to the dignity and prosperity and utility of the order, especially, and especially, especially the care for the sick and for the injured and for the poor, and to conduct ourselves as true women and men of honour. *Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est*. We see where charity and love are. There you will find God. Not because our doing summons to God from absence, but rather because love in the world is created when we become instruments of gods.

We thus step aside. When we make our vow and vocation, we step aside from hatred. We step aside from injuring others. We step aside from doubt. We step aside from despair and darkness and sadness. And we grasp hold of these virtues that we speak out loud so as to move them into our heart so that our feet and hands may move with certainty and clarity in God's ways to serve as God's instruments. Now, we will fail, that's for sure. We all do, even me, on a pretty regular basis.

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But I come back to those words from St. Paul that when we speak in tongues of men and of angels, but if we do not have these virtues, this love at our very core, we are not a clarion call to a world that is different, but we become a ringing gong and a clanging symbol. So on this day, let these vows, these renewing of our vows be not mere words, but let them be seeds of instrumentality in our hearts, visible signs spoken about invisible grace.

For in this, you become what Christ already calls you. Here you will know you are a friend of God and a vessel of mercy and a bearer of light to a world that desperately is looking for icons,

that we are not alone in this. This is your service. This is your song, and it echoes our ancient tradition in this order.

So may you go from this place today with vow and virtue, with symbol and substance, with a heart, mind, and soul filled with strength to serve not only the members of this order, but to be the very ambassadors of the kingdom of God, for faith, for the sake of humanity, and above all, for the glory of God.

The Rt. Rev. C Andrew Doyle, D.D., OStJ
Sub Prelate

INVESTITURE MEETING OF THE ST. JOHN OPHTHALMIC ASSOCIATION *continued from page 5*

evident that the Gaza Hospital restoration will be a substantial undertaking.

The meeting subsequently transitioned into the clinical and academic segment, presided over by Dr. David Verity, Director of Ophthalmic Plastic Surgery at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London. Dr. Verity provided an in-depth analysis of the 10-year history of the SOA and its visionary outlook for the forthcoming decade.

The meeting concluded with two case presentations presented by two resident eye doctors from the Jerusalem Eye Hospital. The first case was a pediatric retinal case seen at the Nablus Hospital and moderated by Dr. Suzanne Freitag, Director of Ophthalmic Plastic Surgery at Massachusetts Eye and Ear at Harvard University. The second case was a lacrimal

gland tumor, moderated by Dr. Bitá Esmaeli, former Director of Ocular Oncology at MD Anderson in Houston.

Dedicated to advancing research, teaching, and training at the St. John Eye Hospital Group, the SOA has now conducted over 35 meetings worldwide. The meeting in Washington DC once again successfully brought experts from diverse medical and non-medical specialties together to discuss the service work of the hospital group, our clinical and research projects, and case reports from the Eye Hospital. The SOA – USA and the US Priory express gratitude to the extraordinary international leaders of the SJEHG and devoted doctors in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza for enabling us to host such a high-quality meeting to further advance our mission to serve our Lords the sick and the poor by “saving sight and changing lives” in the Holy Land. ✨



INVESTITURE 2026

The San Francisco Region looks forward to welcoming everyone to the 2026 Service of Investiture and Rededication Weekend October 2-4 in San Francisco. Watch for more details early next year.

period in 2024. A total of 183,373 outpatient visits were conducted, on target to achieve the year-end of 210,000 outpatient visits. Children accounted for almost 46% of all patients seen in the outpatient departments across the network. Similarly, major surgical activity rose by nearly 12.5% during the same period, reflecting the continued growth in clinical demand and service delivery across the Group.

Clinical activities at the Jerusalem hospital demonstrated a positive upward trend compared to the same period last year:

- Outpatient numbers increased by approximately 7%.
- Major surgeries rose by 5%.
- Cataract surgeries increased by 3%.

These results reflect steady growth in patient volumes and a sustained demand for high-quality ophthalmic care in Jerusalem.

In Gaza, a total of 31,966 patients have received eye care at the various service stations, including St. John Gaza Hospital, year-to-date. Since the launch of the emergency medical intervention, more than 70,000 patients have been treated by our teams in Gaza—demonstrating the Group's ongoing commitment to providing essential medical care in times of crisis.

Operations at Hebron Hospital continue to progress positively. Outpatient visits have increased by nearly 11% compared to 2024.

- Cataract surgeries rose by 22%, indicating strong demand for this service.
- Other surgical procedures declined by 12%, reflecting some seasonal and operational variations.

Architectural plans for the remodeling of the operating theatres have been formally approved by the Palestinian Ministry of Health. The total estimated cost for the remodeling and the replacement of the central air conditioning system is \$200,000, which will be largely covered by donations. Once approved by the SJEHG Board, work is anticipated to commence in March 2026 (during the Holy Month of Ramadan) and is expected to last 4–6 weeks.

A third outreach service has been established to provide eye care and screening for residents of the Hebron District. The service commenced on 3 November 2025, made possible through a multi-year grant secured by the fundraising team.

The Kufor Aqab Centre continues to deliver essential eye care services to patients unable to access the Jerusalem facilities. With the recent expansion of the facilities, the Centre has treated more than 10,000 patients, representing a 14% increase in clinical activities compared to the previous year.

Since its opening in March 2025, Nablus Hospital has performed exceptionally well. Over 12,800 outpatient visits were conducted in the first seven months of operation—representing an approximate 300% increase in activity compared to the same period last year in Anabta.

In addition, more than 205 cataract surgeries have been performed at the Nablus Hospital. However, the waiting time for surgery is currently around six months due to the high demand. Recruitment is in its final stages for a phaco surgeon, whose addition will enhance surgical capacity and reduce waiting times.

The U.S. Priory-sponsored Child Vision Screening Project has made significant progress in 2025, with the initiative aim to screen 50,000 children over the course of the year. As of the end of October, 41,000 children have already been screened—representing over 80% of the annual target. Of those screened, 2,345 children were referred to the Hospital Group for further evaluation and treatment, including advanced assessments and surgical interventions where necessary.

This impactful program continues to play a vital role in identifying and addressing critical vision issues among children, improving long-term eye health and quality of life across Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Thank you for your continuing commitment and service to the desperate needs of *our Lords the sick and the poor*. As Members of the Order of St John, our response to the struggles of our most vulnerable sisters and brothers is always first and foremost our unending commitment to humble service. I look forward to our ongoing dedication of time, talent, and treasure together

Pro Fide,

Nigel G. Heath, KStJ
Prior