



Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

NEWS LETTER

No. 16

Christmas 1998

Dear members and friends of our
brotherhood,

What we really celebrate on Christmas is, that God abundant in graces humbled himself and became a poor man. -Yes, the great God became poor, needy, little and humble, a baby of poor parents, who could not even get accommodation for their new-born and had to place him in a manger. The Three Kings - thank God - did not find him in the palace of the rulers, but they found him in a place where Christ is drawn to. He was found with those, who have not forgotten to beg and to open their hands, eyes and ears and to really expect all from God. I think we battle to truly understand Christmas in our days, because we have forgotten, through our talkativeness, to open our mouths in admiring respect, because we have forgotten, through our business, to open our hands in begging readiness, because we have forgotten, through our hurry, to put our eyes on the greatness of the humble God, because we have forgotten, through our cleverness, to meditate the word made flesh in our hearts, because we have forgotten, through our pride, to entrust ourselves simply to God. We have to become simple again like the shepherds, open, aware of our need to understand Christmas and to rediscover it and to experience it as an event of very personal salvation.

This is exactly what I wish you for Christmas: That you may meet the Lord personally, who knows all your need and trouble, sickness and sadness, fear and desperation, pain and grief, loneliness and bitterness, despondency and doubt, from his own experience and who carries it all with you as a good shepherd, loving and caring father, as suffering servant of God on the way of the cross and on Calvary, who leads you and all to the big Easter victory over death and devil, to life in fullness, peace and joy and not just in eternity, but already here and today in this our world.

I wish all of you from the centre of my heart, the peace and joy of the incarnated Son of God, for this Christmas season and for every day of the New Year 1999!

Yours Sincerely

Father Gérard

Changes to the Constitution of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

The following amendments to the statutes of our constitution were proposed and agreed to by the Council of Dedicated members of our organisation, at a meeting on 10th November 1998. These changes were submitted to the competent entity of the Order for the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard, the Grand Hospitaller of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, in Rome, Albrecht Frhr. von Boeselager, for approval, which we have received on 1.12.1998. These changes take immediate effect. We print only those parts of the statutes, where changes have been made. Passages, which have been deleted, are printed in ~~strike through~~ and passages added are underlined:

Part II

STATUTES

of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

1. Definition

The Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard (hereinafter shortly referred to as Brotherhood) is a Private Association of Christ's faithful according to the provisions of the Code of Canon Law (CIC 1983, can. 298-311 and 321-326).

As such it identifies itself as an association of Catholics and other people of good will, dedicated to the service of God in the Roman Catholic Church, subject to the supervision and governance of the ecclesiastical authority.

The Brotherhood is affiliated as an autonomous body to the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta (called the Order of ~~the Knights of~~ Malta, hereinafter abbreviated as SMOM). As such the use of the coat of arms of the SMOM is subject to the permission of the SMOM, which can be revoked by them, if the Brotherhood should contravene the ideals and principles of the SMOM. The Brotherhood is accountable to its competent entity, the Grand Hospitaller of the SMOM for all its activities.

According to civil law the Brotherhood is a welfare society directed to the common good of all people.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Brotherhood is to further the glory of God and strive with a common effort to foster a more perfect life of its members by devoting themselves to the apostolate of the Catholic Church in works of charity to serve "the poor of our Lord Jesus Christ" extending God's loving care to them under the motto "tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum" (Protection of faith and ~~obsequiousness~~ service to the poor).

The Brotherhood and its members are resolved to take on charitable tasks according to the needs of the people ~~in its~~ catchment area and in keeping with its own capability.

This includes the training of its members and other interested people to exercise such tasks and the raising of funds to fulfil those tasks. All acquired funds are exclusively to be used for the above mentioned purposes.

The Brotherhood wants to serve needy people irrespective of their creed, colour of skin or political affiliation.

3. Centre

The centre of the Brotherhood is ~~St. Anthony's~~ Blessed Gérard's Catholic Church in Mandeni, Republic of South Africa.

4.6. The Management Committee

The Executive Council may nominate suitable members of the Brotherhood to form the Management Committee. The Management Committee acts on behalf of the Executive Council and is responsible for the daily administration and activities of the Brotherhood. All project-co-ordinators, group leaders and employees of the Brotherhood are directly answerable to the Management Committee.

5.2.2. Supporting Associate Members

Associate members who are not actively involved in the Brotherhood's works, but assist the Brotherhood financially or spiritually are called "Supporting Associate Members". As such those who support the Brotherhood spiritually are called "Spiritual Supporters" and those who support the Brotherhood financially are called ~~"Donors of material goods"~~ "Financial supporters".

5.3. Neutrality

~~In their capacity as members of the Brotherhood members must not issue any political statements or involve themselves in party politics.~~ Members of the Brotherhood, in their capacity as such, must not issue any political statements or involve themselves in party politics. They may do so in their private capacity, but must not use their membership in the Brotherhood as a vehicle to propagate their political views.

5.4. Suspension of Membership

Members who do not fulfil their obligations as members, may be suspended from their membership of the Brotherhood.

Active members, who have not participated in any activities of the Brotherhood or Financial supporters, who have not honoured their membership fee pledges for more than two years are suspended from their membership in the Brotherhood automatically. Membership can also be suspended if propriety and / or conduct of the member deteriorate or facts become known which would have prevented acceptance of membership in the first instance and as such would hinder and / or impair the functioning of the Brotherhood.

Suspension of membership debars the member from all rights and privileges of membership until it is officially revoked.

5.5. Disciplinary measures against office bearers, project co-ordinators or group leaders

If an office bearer, project co-ordinator or group leader would not fulfil the duties proper to his / her assignment, he / she may be removed from his / her position.

5.6. Authority to suspend membership or to impose disciplinary measures.

Any suspension of membership or disciplinary measure is to be decided upon through a majority vote of the Executive Council. In cases of urgency suspension of membership or disciplinary measures may be imposed immediately by the President, who has to inform the Executive Council about the circumstances. Members, who have been suspended or disciplined may appeal against the measures taken, to the Council of the Dedicated Members, who, after due consideration, may modify or revoke such measures.

5.4 5.7. Cessation of membership

The membership in the Brotherhood ends through

~~5.4.1~~ **5.7.1.** the death of the member;

~~5.4.2~~ **5.7.2.** the issue of a written notice of resignation to the ~~Executive Council~~ **Brotherhood** by the respective member; a Dedicated Member doing so must ask his or her confessor for dispensation from the promise made.

~~5.4.3~~ **5.7.3.** expulsion, which can only be decided upon by the Executive Council, if the conduct of a member considerably harms the reputation of the Brotherhood or ~~hinders~~ **impairs** its activities.

8. Insignia and vestments.

All members wear the Brotherhood medal on a red braid on festive occasions.

~~At special functions~~ The Dedicated Members of the Brotherhood wear a black cape, with the badge ~~in front of the left shoulder~~ on the left side of the chest, at special functions.

Members of the Executive Council wear a black blazer with gold Maltese Cross buttons and the badge on the left breast pocket.

Dedicated Members wear a black blazer with silver coloured Maltese Cross buttons and the badge on the left breast pocket.

Active members may wear a black blazer with bronze coloured Maltese Cross buttons and the badge on the left breast pocket.

~~The~~ Active members wear a short sleeved white pilot style shirt with the badge on the left breast pocket.

Further regulations regarding the dress code are part of the Particular Norms of the Brotherhood.

Insignia and Decorations, as far as they are approved by the SMOM, are worn on top of the left breast pocket of the blazer, above the badge.

11. Amendment of the statutes

The statutes can only be amended by the Council of the Dedicated Members, provided that all the founder members present of the Executive Council unanimously agree to such amendment. ~~and~~ Amendments of the statutes must be approved by the competent entity of the SMOM to come into force.

It is strongly recommended that you take note of these changes and keep this copy with your original constitution, which was posted to you when you joined the organisation.

If you want a new copy of the entire constitution, please call at the office.

Letters to the
Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard
Extract of a letter received from Marie-Sophie Freiin von Venningen (An active member who volunteered in our Care Centre & Hospice for two months)

"...a very successful undertaking. The same as my excursion to South Africa and this is actually to thank you for it. I had a very nice time rich in experiences, exciting, even when it was not always easy. I want to thank everybody very much from my heart, who made this possible for me and who received me so warmly ... Please give my regards to all! ... Sophie"

May we introduce to you
our new Volunteers from
"Overseas"?



Mr. Niklas Rohlf from Munich, Germany is a student of Coburg Fachhochschule (University) and has joined us in Mandeni to complete part of his practical training as a social worker.

For the month of October Sr. Ellen Evanow from California and Sr. Yvonne Miller from Milwaukee, came as volunteers from USA. Once again the Federal Association of the Order of Malta sponsored their trip. We thank both of the ladies who sacrificed one month of their time to come and work for the good of humanity. They left their families and friends for which we are very grateful and we extend our thanks to the families as well.

A good response to our
advertisements

Introducing our new
Housekeeper Miss Anastasia Geswindt
Assistant Housekeeper Miss Hlengiwe Mabasa
Crèche & Pre-primary School Teacher/Day Mother, Miss Patricia Zantombi Zikhali.

Blessed Gérard's Crèche & Pre- primary School

It is with great pleasure that we welcome Miss Zikhali who will begin work at our Crèche in the new school year, January 1999. In the meantime she is gaining experience by assisting at the Mandeni Pre-primary School. The principal, very kindly agreed to allow Miss Zikhali to work with them until the end of this school year at no cost.

We are very grateful to Mrs. Zimmerman and her staff for the guidance and advice that she is giving to our new teacher.

Miss Zikhali was born and has grown up in the area of Mhlubulweni and therefore knows the local people. She is an active and reliable member of St. Patrick's Church, which is part of the parish of Mangete. The new school term will begin on 19th January 1999.

The teacher will be available at the Crèche from Wednesday, 6th January 1999. Please register your children as early as possible.

A new Project Co-ordinator

It has been decided to appoint a new Project Co-ordinator for **Blessed Gérard's Crèche & Pre-primary School**, in the person of Fr. Siphso Gamede, who is also the Parish Priest of Mangete. Fr. Gamede joined the Brotherhood as an active member in September 1998 and has kindly agreed to take this position over.

Yes, it is true

- that Blessed Gérard's Care Centre and Hospice is on call 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.
- that we provide rehabilitation for people recuperating from illnesses.
- that we provide day care for sick people of any age.
- that we render home care for ill people in their homes.
- that we are a hospice.

- that we rely on donations of the patient and /or family or any other generous soul.

Notice to All Members

Please let us know,
if any of your circumstances change
i.e. residential address and postal address;
telephone number and fax number;
e-mail address;
or if you would like to change your membership status
or your pledge.



MEMBERS' NEWS



May God bless you on your Benediction as Abbess
The Heart of Mary Convent in Sostrup/Denmark



Mother abbess Theresa and the sisters of Heart of Mary's Abbey in Sostrup

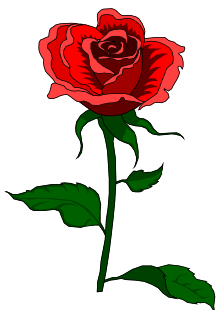
- all the sisters are members of our brotherhood as spiritual supporters! -
was raised to the status of an abbess and our member, Sr. M. Theresa
Brenninkmeijer O. Cist. received the benediction as first abbess of the
abbey on 3rd October 1998 through the abbot general of the Cistercian

Order, his Excellency Maurus Esteva in a solemn Holy Mass celebrated by his excellency, the bishop of Copenhagen, Czeslaw Kozon.

We are glad and proud and pray:

May Almighty God bless and sustain you. May he give you the gifts of his Spirit and set you on fire with love for God and for the service of the church. May he guide you in the way of grace and peace in the footsteps of the Lord and make your heart day by day more similar to the heart of Mary which was full of love for Christ. May he lead Heart of Mary's Abbey from strength to strength and help you on your way to perfection!

We wish a blessed and very happy birthday to:



Hwst. Herrn Prälat Anton Maier on his 87th
Frau Anna Stegerer and Frau Franziska Gisela Binzer
on their 75th

Mrs Amy Dunn, Mr Charles Joseph Dunn and Frau
Marga Spagl on their 70th

Fräulein Marianne Dittrich and Herrn Leo Kneip on
their 65th

Mrs Eslina Ndokweni, Mrs Phyllis Rosemary
Cunningham and Mr Christoffel Hermanus Tait on
their 60th

Mr Tamsanqa Johannes Hlongwa, Signora Gallo Norma,
Herrn Werner Neckermann, Rev Sr Irene Zitha O.S.B., Mr David Holliday
on their 50th

Mrs Mercia Susan Dyer, Mrs Lindeni Ignatia Dlamini, Frau Brigitte Hess
and Mrs Francisca Mdletshe on their 40th

Miss Thulile Cynthia Nzuzza, Mr. Lucas Bhekuyise Mgenge, Mrs Roàlien
Ann Ogle, Mrs Patricia Prieto and Mr Verster Brent on their 30th

Miss Shannon Seba and Mr Bongani Patrick Nkosi on their 21st



Congratulations to

Mr. Johannes Lagleder on his promotion to Oberstudienrat.



Welcome Home to

Mr. Stephan Killian, a volunteer from Germany had been with us earlier this year and came back. He will be with us in the Care Centre until March 1999



Sincere condolences to

Our member Mr Otto Hoff and his wife Elisabeth and all her family on the passing of her father, Mr. Alfred Oppold on 22.11.98



Best wishes to the following members who have not been well

Mr. Trevor Thompson from Stanger

Mr. Wilfred Moss from Mangete

Herrn Hans Lagleder from Germany

Bro. Raymond Berchtenbreiter from Mariannahill

Thank you to

The Federal Association of the Order of Malta in USA for sponsoring the flights of the two registered nurses, Sr. Yvonne Miller and Sr. Ellen Evanow who volunteered in our Care Centre for one month.

WELCOME to all our new members:

Frau Elisabeth Feierfeil, Mrs Dolly Chetty, Mrs Sandy Mariamah Govindasamy, Mr Paul Harding Conn, Jr. Miss Prena Kadirveloo, Sr Llaurin C C Bishop, Mr Brian Phillips, Dr Peter Martinez, Frl Theresa Birner, Miss Charlene Clark, Miss Lindiwe Agrineth Zondi, Miss Daphney Ntombizodwa

Shangase, Herrn Björn Peters, Frl. Martina Fuchsl, Frl. Karolin Löffelmann, Mr David Gutierrez, Miss Hlengiwe Mabasa, Mrs Siphwe Patricia Ngema, Mrs Beverly Dunn, Mrs Deidre Gregory, Herrn Niklas Rohlf, Mrs Francisca Mdletshe, Mrs Simangele Audrey Mhlongo, Miss Leanne Amos, Miss Ntombizethu E Radebe, Herrn Gunnar Schröter, Rev. Fr Albert Herold O.S.B., Rev. Fr Siphon Titus Gamede, Mrs Ellen Evanow, Mrs Yvonne M Miller, Dr Michel Veuthey, Miss Princess Sindy Ndlovu, Miss Tholakele Ernestinah Mpanza, Miss Winnie Ntombikhona Mthembu, Miss Phindile Patricia Mthembu, Miss Simangele Gladness Maphanga, Miss Nomlindelo Yvonne Maphanga, Miss Ntombikayise Goodness Maphanga, Miss Charity Ncane Mthembu, Miss Patricia Zantombi Zikhali, Mrs Bharathwathie (Shanti) Mahadena, Frau Marianne Herner, Herrn Heinrich Weihs, Mrs Theresa Zandile Hlabisa, Mrs Nkosingiphile Princess Mthembu, Mrs Zodwa Cecelia Mthembu, Mrs Nonhlanhla Mamizia Ndlovu, Mrs Happiness Lindokuhle Mkhwanazi, Mrs Nokuthula Monica Msane, Mrs Nqabile Elcah Ncube, Mr Marthinus Nel, Mrs Nozipho Mathonsi.

Membership statistics on 22.12.98	Active Members	Donors	Spiritual Supporters	Total
South Africa	208	83	20	311
Tanzania	0	0	1	1
Austria	0	1	4	5
Belgium	0	0	1	1
Germany	18	156	70	244
Denmark	0	1	16	17
Finland	0	0	1	1
Great Britain	8	1	1	10
Italy	2	18	1	21
Ireland	2	6	1	9
Hungary	0	0	1	1
Malta	0	0	1	1
Switzerland	1	0	0	1
USA	9	20	13	42
Canada	0	2	1	3
El Salvador	0	0	2	2
Chile	0	0	1	1
UAE	0	1	0	1
Japan	0	0	1	1
Australia	0	2	2	4
Total	248	291	138	677

NB: Active members outside South Africa are members, who have been working in South Africa as volunteers. These members keep their active status. Many of them continue to support us actively, e.g. through fundraising and canvassing for membership.

Making your donation

It might help our **South African members** to know that you may pay your membership fees directly into our banking account. The most convenient solution for both sides would be if you organised a stop order on your account. Our banking details are as follows:

Name of Account:	Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard
Type of account:	Current Account
Bank:	First National Bank
Account number:	529 4004 0349
Branch:	Mandini
Branch code:	22-04-29-43

Please ensure that you put your personal details on the deposit or send the information directly to us, so that we can debit your membership fee account correctly.

The “Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard Newsletter” is the official mouthpiece of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard and is edited by the Management Committee of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

<u>Our address is:</u>	61 Anderson Road
	P O Box 440
	Mandeni
	4490 Republic of South Africa
Phone	032-4562743 (national) +27-32-4562743 (international)
Fax	032-4567962 (national) +27-32-4567962 (international)
E-mail	bbg@iafrica.com
URL	http://servus.smom-za.org