

The Masonic & Military Order of the Red Cross of Constantine

Division of West Lancashire

www.westlancsrcc.org.uk



Friendship Meeting

INFORMATION PACK

Brethren,

This Friendship Meeting Pack has been designed to help you together with other measures now in place, forming part of a co-ordinated strategy throughout the Craft Province of West Lancashire to promote the order to Royal Arch Masons. Don't forget to make Craft Masons aware of the Red Cross, and keep an eye out for them joining the Chapter.

We welcome interest from Masons throughout Lancashire and especially those who have already become Royal Arch Companions.

The new 'Cluster Groups' are proving to be a success. More and more Red Cross Knights are visiting Conclaves. There has been a noticeable rise in the number of joining members.

The success of any venture is only a reflection of the commitment and enthusiasm of all the Brethren involved. Once you have made a decision to hold a Friendship Meeting in your area, Red Cross members will give their support by inviting Companions from their Chapters and friends from their Craft Lodges.

If a decision to hold a meeting is made and sufficient notice given, then you can expect strong support from the Intendant-General and other Senior Officers.

We will be happy to support your endeavours.

Planning:

If there is more than one Red Cross Conclave meeting in your Masonic Hall, ask them to join you in the presentation.

Alternatively, you may consider it would be better to promote an evening involving your 'Cluster' Group. You can record the details of Brethren who attend and show interest, and they can choose a Conclave which is most suitable to them, probably by location.

Write to Chapter Scribe E's with your intention of holding a Friendship Meeting and include details. (See sample flyer in this pack) Use the Flyer as a poster for the Masonic Hall notice board.

There is no substitute to personal invitations from Red Cross members to their friends in the Royal Arch.

Distribute information well in advance of chosen dates.

Ask interested Companions to confirm their intention to attend, this will assist in the layout of the Conclave and enable accurate catering arrangements.

Ensure that a steward is appointed to look after all guests and visitors prior to attendance in the Conclave.

Present one of the new PR leaflets to all visitors.

Format:

- Open your Conclave
- Transact your normal business (*use an evening where there is no ceremony planned*)
- Close the Conclave
- Officers remain in post wearing full regalia
- Admit visitors in Royal Arch Regalia
- Sit guests on the south side between the Orator and Junior General, if necessary in two rows and ask some W. Knights to sit with the visitors

The M.P.S. will welcome the visitors and proceed with the suggested format.

Try to arrange for members of the Sepulchre Guard to attend (See Neil Cooper), and sit them in the South between the Prefect in the southwest corner and the Junior General in the south facing the Senior General and Recorder's Desk. It would be special to form the Guard at the Conclave entrance and ask the Captain of the Guard and the Conclave Marshal to invite the visitors to process into the Conclave and to be shown their seats in the southeast corner as described previously.

Make sure that as many members as possible wear their swords.

Ensure that movements around the conclave are 'smart' and 'precise'.

Plan properly; make sure everyone knows what they are doing beforehand. Whilst your Conclave is open allow time for the M.P.S. and Marshal to inform members of the format and what is expected of them.

Make sure your members give the event their full support even if it means contacting them beforehand as well as sending a summons.

At the social board ---- TOASTS ---- NO SALUTES

- To the memory of our Illustrious Founder Constantine
- The Queen
- The Grand Sovereign
- The Intendant-General (Name him)
- The Deputy Intendant-General (Name him)
- The Divisional Eusebius
- The M.P.S.
- The visiting Knights, Companions and Brethren
- The Sentinel's Toast

Introduction and welcome:

1. The purpose tonight is to inform, in order that you should understand where the Red Cross fits into the panoply of Masonic Orders. The hope is that at the end of the meeting, you will be stimulated to give membership of the Order your serious consideration.
2. The Order of the Red Cross of Constantine belongs to the 'East and West' class of initiatory Rites. A new member is Installed as a Knight of the Red Cross, a ceremony based on the Conversion of our founder, the Great Roman Emperor Constantine, to the Christian Faith. The second and third degrees, Knight of the Holy Sepulchre and Knight of St. John the Evangelist constitute the Appendant Orders. It is compulsory that members receive these superbly moving ceremonies, in order to advance within the Conclave. A member progresses through the high office of Viceroy within a Conclave before becoming Most Puissant Sovereign, M.P.S. These offices are the culmination of this outstanding Masonic Rite. Two certificates are issued to members, one for the Red Cross and the second for the Appendant Orders.
3. To become a member, you have to first be a Royal Arch Companion, a good reason for Craft Masons to join the 'Chapter' as soon as possible. A candidate enters as a Royal Arch Mason on a mystical journey on a quest for further knowledge and he undertakes to follow in the footsteps of the Great Emperor Constantine.
4. The Red Cross has a chequered history, but can be traced back to at least 1770 and was formally organised in 1865. The order is administered by the Grand Imperial Conclave and like many similar orders operates from Mark Masons' Hall in London. The Order today spreads throughout the English speaking world. Constantine (circa A.D. 270-337), succeeded his father as Governor of Spain, Gaul and Britain and was proclaimed Emperor of the West by Roman Legions in York in 306. Later he defeated Maxentius at the Battle at Milvian Bridge near Rome in 312 and was accepted by the Senate and acknowledged 'Senior Augustus'. He was successful in battle near Byzantium in 323, which brought the Empire of the East under his control,

thus becoming Emperor of East and West. You will appreciate the Military flavour of the Order by the regalia and several other items of Conclave furniture. The standards, of Constantine and the Labarum Standard play a key part in our history and more can be explained in the ceremonies.

5. Some years ago, the old North Western Division was divided to form the Division of Lancashire and the Division of Cheshire and North Wales. In 1976, the Division of Lancashire was re-designated West Lancashire, and The Division of North & East Lancashire was constituted.

6. The Division of West Lancashire is probably the largest Division in the U.K. and has 17 Conclaves with an average membership of around 24 knights.

7. There are many Chapters in the Province of West Lancashire where no Companions belong to any further orders. Brethren, they are missing so much! The wealth of Masonic knowledge and history, the friendship which permeates these other orders is lost to them. Remember, most of the senior members of the Craft and Royal Arch have ventured further and have found so much fulfilment out there. They have shown that extra commitment and spirit of adventure. These and several other qualities have no doubt been recognised and that is one of several reasons why they have found so much enjoyment and have progressed and have widened their horizons. **You too can do the same.**

8. So from a fairly brief background to the Order, now to some presentations which you hopefully will find very interesting, stimulating and informative. We have provided further presentations for you:

Introduce

Introduce

Questions

Summary:

The presentations will probably be given by the M.P.S. and/or the Conclave Marshal about the Conclave layout, Offices and Regalia, and the other by the Treasurer or other Senior Officers about the charity work carried out in the Division, U.K and further afield, and the costs of membership in terms of time and expense, both relatively minor!

Refer to enjoyment, the inter-visiting between conclaves, the 'Cluster Groups' giving mutual support and enjoyment and opportunities to meet new friends, the Church Service and Social Event at Croston following the Service in June, the Ladies' Festival at Bryn in November, the Divisional Meeting at Leyland, any other socials /charity events planned by your Conclaves or the 'Cluster Group, the meeting of Grand Imperial Conclave in July at Birmingham, The Grand Sovereign's Fund, the Tsunami Relief given directly to the Children who needed it, and our support of Derian House and the Rainbow Trust and several other deserving causes around Lancashire.

Experience has shown that the most effective addresses are quite short and to the point. Use bullet points to ensure certain items are remembered.

Conclave Furniture and Regalia:

Explain the differences; purple sash and jewel of a Knight of the Red Cross, followed by a white sash and jewel of a Knight Companion of the Order, the Divisional Sash and later the sash and jewel of a Grand Officer. Explain the offices within the Conclave, especially the Prelate, Viceroy, Senior & Junior Generals and the various titles of offices with a military connotation, i.e. Marshal, the Standard Bearers C and L, the Prefect, the Aide-de-Camp, Sentinel etc.

Make mention of the Divisional structure of ranks, again very military in appearance hence the links to Roman Legions etc. and of course the Grand Ranks too.

Explain that the Bible is always situated in the centre on the altar, opened for a meeting, with the Roman Swords placed either side, when closed. Point out the four equilateral-triangular pillars in the North,(1) East(H) South,(S) and West,(V) with the appropriate letters as seen elsewhere, on the jewel which is shown in the PR leaflet, on members jewels etc. If you become a member this will become more familiar to you.

Explain the Altar in the East with the Red Cross of the Order on it. Explain the Standard on the North side of the altar, the Constantine Standard behind the throne of the M.P.S. Explain the Standard Labarum behind the throne of the Eminent Viceroy, and the Monogram of the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ, (No more). Point out his Crozier, a pastoral staff. The robe is a white one, symbolical of innocence. Gavels should be used by the Sovereign and the Viceroy. The M.P.S. carries a baton, like a Roman Emperor, a symbol of his power, and wears a scarlet robe, a symbol of imperial dignity. The Viceroy and M.P.S. wear a collarette and jewel, pointing out their important positions within the Conclave.

The Red Cross Order and Charities:

Significant amounts have been raised over many years in support of charities in the Division of West Lancashire, to support the Grand Sovereign's Millennium Fund, set up as a consequence of his desire to assist Children's Hospices throughout the U.K. and to help people worldwide. Following the Tsunami Disaster, the Order donated directly to Sri Lanka and our contacts there through Freemasonry were able to oversee the building of a new school/home etc. for underprivileged children and children in need due to those dreadful events suffered by them following the Tsunami natural disaster.

Donations to charities in West Lancashire, including: Derian House, Rainbow House, Southport Blind Aid Society £2,800.00

Donations to the Millennium Appeal, including Tsunami: £800.00

Further donations of several hundred pounds have been made to local charities directly by various Conclaves, operating in their own communities.



Division of West Lancashire

The Red Cross of Constantine

Friendship Meeting

Your introduction to the Red Cross

Dear Sir and Brother,

The Division of West Lancashire, Red Cross of Constantine, is to hold an Introduction to the Order of the Red Cross Meeting for all Brethren interested in finding out more about this fascinating Degree. You are welcome to join us at this meeting, which will be hosted by

Conclave No.

at

Masonic Hall

on the

of

at

p.m.

The Intendant-General, R. Ill. Kt. Peter Lockett will be in attendance, accompanied by other Senior Officers.

The Conclave will open their meeting at p.m., to conduct Conclave business. You are invited to attend the meeting at p.m.

You will find out a great deal of information about the Order, its history, dating back to Roman times, military links and the world-wide charity projects in which it is involved. You will see a Conclave in action, and be able to ask questions before joining the knights for their Social Board.

PLEASE NOTE: On this occasion visitors will wear Royal Arch Regalia.

Come and see what a friendly Order we are

Yours faithfully and fraternally,



I would like to attend the Introductory Meeting to the Red Cross Order on
_____ at _____ .

Please reserve a place at the social Board in the name of:

Bro/Comp. _____ Phone: _____

Enclosed is a cheque for £ _____ to cover the meal cost.



Division of West Lancashire

The Red Cross of Constantine

EVER THOUGHT OF JOINING ANOTHER WONDERFUL ORDER IN FREEMASONRY?

THE MASONIC AND MILITARY ORDER OF THE RED CROSS
COULD BE FOR YOU!!

FIVE GOOD REASONS FOR JOINING THE RED CROSS

1. Enjoy arguably the most substantial & beautiful ceremonies in Freemasonry
2. An advancement of your historical & Masonic knowledge
3. Experience the genuine friendliness that extends throughout the Division in the West Lancs. Province
4. A chance to make a difference to children's charities locally, nationally & internationally
5. An Order administered from Mark Masons' Hall continuing to grow, and attracting younger members

The West Lancashire Division of the Red Cross of Constantine with the kind invitation of _____ Conclave No. _____ is to hold a Friendship Meeting and introduction to the Red Cross Order at _____ Masonic Hall, on _____ the _____ of _____ at _____ p.m.

If you are a Royal Arch Mason and interested to find out more, and are looking for new and interesting steps to take, then come along on the date shown and you are assured of a warm welcome and will learn much more about this important degree in Freemasonry locally.

If you would like to join us at this special event, please see your Scribe E for further information. You can also contact the Divisional Recorder, Fred Hargreaves on: 01695 722077 or via email through the Red Cross website:

www.westlancsrcc.org.uk