



THE MILITARY AND HOSPITALER ORDER OF SAINT LAZARUS OF JERUSALEM

H. E. Don Carlos Gereda de Bourbon, Marquis of Almazan, 49th Grand Master

**H.E. Chevalier Drs Ronald Hendriks, GCLJ-J
Grand Commander of the Order**

New Year's message from the Grand Commander

To the Heads of Jurisdictions and GMC Members

Vaassen, January 1st 2016

Dear confrères and consoeurs,

We are standing on the threshold of a new year.
As always it is time to think about our intentions for the coming year.
However I must admit, thinking is not the same as practicing.
Looking back, the question is always: "What could I have done".

2015 was an important year for our Order. The first steps were made to give our Order the necessary legal entity. Some people were afraid that because of this, the autonomy of the jurisdictions would be smaller. This however is not the case. It stays as it is. The purpose is to have an Order which can cooperate with other organizations, can have its own bank account, etc.

I was pleased by the positive reaction of the Chapter General in New Orleans in September last year.

There is still a long way to go but this essential work can be finished in 2016.

Also very important is the communication within our Order. There is some room for improvement.

We thank Chevalier Lars Sahlin for accepting the job as Chairman of the PRC Committee. Communication, however, involves two-way traffic. Lars cannot do it alone. He needs your help.

There is a sender and a receiver. Besides this they have to understand each other.

There are two golden rules:

1. If you don't know something you want to know, don't guess or speculate but ask.
2. Do not talk about people but with people.

It is amazing to see that a lot of people still don't understand these 2 rules.

Looking at the hospitaller report 2014 you can be proud to be a member of this Order. A lot of work has been done.

Was it enough? It never will be enough. For example approximately 3 million children under the age of 5 are dying every year.

Pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria together are the cause of 3 out of every 10 children's deaths before the age of 5.

Of course I know that the battle against leprosy is very important for our Order. And yes, we need to put efforts in this. But let us not forget all the other needs of our World today.

Let us think about the people in Syria and other countries which don't have the possibilities we have.

Spirituality is another issue to pay attention to this year.

We are looking after the composition of the Spiritual Advisory Council and believe they can make a new start this year.

As you maybe know the next pilgrimage will be to MonReale during Pentecost in 2017.

I like to wish you and your family a very good and healthy 2016.

Ronald Hendriks

Drs. Ron Hendriks, GCLJ-J
Grand Commander

