

The Order of the Knights of Malta

This is the first of the Christian Orders contained in the Chivalric system and relates the story of St. Paul's arrival on the island of Melita which we know today as Malta. In the next portion of the order the history of the Knights of St. John (Knights of Malta) is explained and the periods of the orders history is paralleled with the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

This degree is universally associated with the Masonic Knights Templar. In the jurisdiction of Oklahoma PHA, we use the "stand-alone tradition" meaning the order it is conferred subsequently to the Templar Degree. This is done after the candidates produces documented of an act of charity, unless the Commandery was granted dispensation.

This Order actually consists of two: The Order of St. Paul, or the Mediterranean Pass, which is a preparatory order, and the Order of Malta itself. The Order of Malta must be conferred in either full or short form. The full form is quite elaborate and beautiful but, alas, is not conferred by many Commanderies. The short form is but a summary of the lessons taught in the full form.

The Order of St. Paul is based on the story of Paul's shipwreck on the island of Melita (Malta). The candidate represents a knight about to depart for the Crusades in the Holy Land. He receives sustenance, both spiritual and physical, to prepare him for the ardors of his journey.

The Order of Malta is a suitable preparation for the Order of the Temple, in that it provides the candidate with additional New Testament instruction, particularly in the eight Beatitudes. The symbol of the order is the Maltese cross, symbolic of the Beatitudes and the eight languages, which once were spoken by its members. The candidate is created a Knight of Malta and invested with words and signs specific to the Order. The body is called a Priory.