

About Us

THE KNIGHTS OF MARSHALL

The Noble Order of the **Knights of Marshall** is a historical society founded along the lines of the Order of the Knights of Columbus of the United States of America. It is a Catholic Fraternal Organization in West Africa and London with its Supreme Headquarters in Sekondi, Ghana, and aims at bringing Catholic men (and women) together in the practice of Unity, Charity and Service.

In the year 1925, some enthusiastic young men of St Paul's Catholic Church, Sekondi, rallied themselves together to plan the formation of a purely Catholic Friendly Society in West Africa for the purpose of bringing together Catholic men for effective lay apostolate and Catholic Action and provide that friendly social forum for Catholic men, who might otherwise be attracted into other non-Catholic secret societies.

These ardent young men made enquiries as regards the history of the **Knights of Columbus**. They found that whilst the **Knights of Columbus** exists as a fraternal organization, it also immortalizes the name of a layman, Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America. Inspired by a similar spirit, this band of Catholic young men, with their zealous leaders: Brothers J Brookman-Ammisah and JA Kwesi-Aaba decided to institute a fraternal society that would immortalize the memory of Sir James Marshall, who acting on the West African scene, championed and espoused the re-establishment of the Catholic Church in the Gold Coast (Ghana), West Africa in the year 1880, after nearly 250 years of the breakdown (1637) of the first Catholic Church established by the Portuguese in 1482.

Their researches into the history of the Catholic Church in West Africa revealed that Sir James Marshall, MA, BL, CMG, KCSG, a Scotsman and a Catholic layman, working in the British Colonial Service in Lagos, Nigeria and accredited to the Gold Coast, Ghana, most persistently added his voice and the weight of his endeavour to the appeals and pressures that made Propaganda Fide assign the Gold Coast to the Society of African Missions (SMA). Following the assignment, the SMA transferred the pioneer Priests Rev Fathers Auguste Moreau and Eugene Murat, both French nationals, from their Island of St Helena Station (South Africa Mission), to establish the Catholic Mission in the Gold Coast (Ghana). The pioneer Priests arrived at Elmina, Gold Coast (Ghana) on 18th May 1880 soon after Sir James Marshall had been transferred from Lagos to Accra as Chief Justice. He gave the Priests every encouragement and assistance in establishing themselves and the faith in Elmina.

Sir James Marshall was, for some time, a Chief Magistrate and Judicial Assessor at Cape Coast, Gold Coast (Ghana), Puisne Judge in Lagos (Nigeria) and finally, Chief Justice of the Gold Coast and Nigeria, and resident in Accra, Gold Coast.

Sir James Marshall was also known to have played a significant role in enhancing the growth of the Catholic Church in Lagos, and was involved in the preparatory work that led to the establishment of the Catholic Church at Asaba, Southern Nigeria which actually occurred in 1888, long after he had retired from the Colonial service. It was to immortalize the name of such a great soul that the Founders named the Society after Sir James Marshall, hence the name **Knights of Marshall**.

The First **Council** of the **Knights of Marshall** was inaugurated and consecrated in Sekondi on 18th November, 1926. There are presently 91 Councils spread throughout Ghana, Togo, Benin, Liberia and the United Kingdom.

THE LADIES OF MARSHALL

The **Ladies of Marshall**, the women's wing of the Noble Order was formed from three separate Catholic Associations based in Ghana and Togo. They were (i) The Thais Lodge of Ghana (ii) Catholic Daughters of Ghana and (iii) The Noble Ladies of St Anthony of Togo. Thais lodge derived its name from Rev Mother Thais, one of the early nuns who was known to have done excellent religious, social and educational work for girls in Elmina, Cape Coast and Kumasi. Its headquarters was in Kumasi. Catholic Daughters of Ghana derived its name and organizational scheme from the Catholic Daughter of America, and American Catholic Ladies Association formed by the Knights of Columbus of the United States of America in 1903. Daughters of Ghana had their headquarters in Cape Coast. The Noble Ladies of St Anthony was a Catholic Ladies Association in Togo with its headquarters in Lome.

On 1st June, 1969, the Supreme Council Standing Committee of the Knights of Marshall accepted the final recommendations of the Working Committee to merge the three Catholic Associations into one single association to be known as **Ladies of Marshall**.

The Ladies of Marshall was duly and legally established on 20th December, 1969 with the Motto: **Unity, Charity and Service**, sharing in all the principles and tenets of the Noble Order of the Knights of Marshall in love of neighbour and service to the Catholic Church.

Currently, there are 87 Courts operating in Ghana, Togo, Benin, Liberia and the United Kingdom. The Headquarters of the Ladies of Marshall is located in Kumasi.

THE JUNIOR ORDER

The first Junior Order was established at Cape Coast on 25th August, 1978. It aims at grooming the youth in sound Christian principles and to prepare them to join the Senior Order. There are presently 59 Junior Councils/Courts.

THE MOTTO, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE NOBLE ORDER OF KNIGHTS AND LADIES OF MARSHALL

The fundamental principles of the Noble Order are **Unity, Charity, Fraternity and Service**. Furthermore, the Society pledges unqualified loyalty to the Holy Mother the Catholic Church to support and defend the church under all circumstances.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- a) To inculcate into the members loyalty and fidelity to the state in which the Noble Order operates.
- b) To promote and enhance fraternal Catholic spirit both by personal and group action in all phases of life.
- c) To promote Catholic Education and Charity.
- d) To maintain Fraternal Order of Catholic Leadership.
- e) To honour and defend the Catholic Faith.
- f) To prepare members of the Order for Lay Apostolate.
- g) To render assistance to its members and their families in periods of emergency and need
- h) To foster, facilitate, maintain and establish relations with national and international Catholic organizations with similar aims and objectives.
- i) To collaborate with members of the Knights of St John International in the countries where the Noble Order operates for the common objective of helping the Catholic Church to flourish.
- j) To undertake any financial and economic ventures that will facilitate the goals outlined by the objectives.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF CATHOLIC KNIGHTS
(IACK)

The International Alliance of Catholic Knights was formed by six Orders from all over the world on October 1, 1979, namely:

Knights of Columbus	USA
Knights of Columba	UK
Knights of Columbanus	Ireland
Knights of the Southern Cross	Australia
Knights of the Southern Cross	New Zealand
Knights of Da Gama	South Africa

The registered office of the Alliance is 780 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, Australia.

Since its foundation, nine other Orders of Catholic Knights have been admitted to the Alliance as follows:

1983	June 12	Knights of Marshall, Ghana
1984	October 30	Knights of St Mulumba, Nigeria
1987		Knights of St Peter Claver, USA
1992		Knights of St Virgil, Salburg, Australia
1992		Fraternal Order of Sts Peter and Paul, Banjul –
Gambia		

1997 Service	Knights of St Gabriel, International Diplomatic
1998	Knights of St Thomas the Apostle, Pakistan
2000 Mauritius	Ordre des Chevaliers de Marie Reine de la-Paix
2001	Knights of St Thomas More, Belgium

The Vatican by a decree dated April 14, 1992 accorded official recognition to the International Alliance of Catholic Knights as an International Catholic Association.

