

**INAUGURAL ADDRESS
AS THE 28TH SUPREME KNIGHT
OF THE NOBLE ORDER OF THE KNIGHTS OF MARSHALL**



Sir Kt. Anthony Kemavor
Supreme Knight (2009 – 2011)

- Supreme Director, Sir Knt. Vet. Bro. Dr. Edmund S.K. Kwaw, Kt. Cdr of St. Gregory the Great, President, Unum Omnes, PP, IACK,
- My Lord Bishop & Supreme Spiritual Director of the Knights and Ladies of Marshall, Most Rev. Joseph Osei Bonsu,
- Sir Knt. Cdr Bro., Owusu Akyaw Prempeh, P.P., IACK,
- Sir Knt Bro Samuel Kweku Barnes, Immediate P.P. IACK
- Sir Knt Fosuaba Banahene KSG
- Sir Knt Bro. Edward Aloysius Prah, Immediate Past Supreme Knight,
- Members of my Installation team.
- Supreme Chaplains,
- Sir Knights & Worthy Brothers.

The LORD said to me:*You are my servant, I chose you.....Do not be afraid, I am with you. I am your God- let **nothing** terrify you!. I will make you strong and help you; I will protect you and save you. Isaiah 41: 9-10*

I responded and said: **Here I am LORD, I place my trust in you.**

With the confidence that he who has called me to this office has imbued in me, I am pleased to address you today as the 28th Supreme Knight of the Noble Order of the Knights of Marshall.

I wish to thank the Installation team led by our Supreme Director Sir Knt. Vet Bro. Kwaw for the honour done me this evening with this solemn ceremony. I am most grateful.

I also pay tribute to the founding fathers of our Noble Order for their vision in pioneering a truly men's society which has stood the test of time.

Over the years, 27 Supreme Knights have come before me in the service of this Noble Order. All my predecessors have faced a myriad of challenges with varied intensities during their tenure of offices. Their resilience and total submission to the guidance of the

Holy Spirit had seen them through leaving the Noble Order stronger than they came to meet it.

Through the intervention of the same hand of God, I pledge to work closely and collaboratively with all of you Noble men of the Supreme Council and outside it as your Supreme Knight to truly make the Noble Order the *Salt of the earth* and the *light of the world*.

My Lord Bishop and Supreme Spiritual Director; our illustrious and indefatigable Supreme Director, Past Supreme Knights, High officers of this Noble Order, I would like us all to briefly reflect on the dream of the Noble Order. What is it that we set our eyes on as Marshallans.

To refresh our minds, our mission enjoins us : *To prepare Catholic men as Knights who will actively work in co-operation with the hierarchy to enhance the propagation of the Gospel and to Honour, Promote Defend and Live the Catholic Faith at all times as well as foster amongst its members and those of all Kindred Orders, a strong fraternal spirit and relationship.*

Arising from this Mission statement, we have a collective vision to be “ *a committed and knowledgeable body of Catholic men imbued with unalloyed Catholic faith and ever determined to play their individual and group roles in the highest level towards the realization of the Universal Sacrament of Salvation Universallis Sacramentum”.*

The objects as captured in these two statements can be summarized in three broad categories. These are:-

- I. Moral, religious and spiritual formation leading to the empowerment of the individual.
- II. Group activation as a body of Knights or in a wider context, a conglomerate of kindred orders in the International Alliance of Catholic Knights as well as the Unum Omnes
- III. Total and unrestrained support for the Catholic Church.

I. Moral, religious and spiritual formation and empowerment of the individual.

I would like here to pose a few questions: What structures has the Noble Order institutionalized in facilitating our quest for a closer relationship and more importantly, an encounter with God. Can these structures be further developed? As individuals, how intimately have we taken the doctrinal wealth of the Church?

How conversant are we with the Catechism of the Catholic Church? How well informed are our instructors, our Readers and lecturers. What material do they use in their teachings? Are these all standardized and approved literature?

Some of these questions prod me into a deeper search of where we stand as individual Catholic Knights. As the Church militant, what is our prayer life like? Can we honestly say we are committed to a dedicated and regimental prayer life? Is it true that we have issues of discipline within the Order? If this is true could it be a manifestation of a not too dedicated prayer life? Are we presenting ourselves to others as a Social club within the Church?

Remember we can only give from what we have. We can only bear “Witness to Christ” if we adequately empower ourselves with the word of God.

II Group activation as a body of Marshallans in relation to kindred bodies.

Our motto, Unity, Charity and Fraternity is indeed a noble charge to us which should remind us *How wonderful it is, How pleasant for Gods people to live in harmony. Psalm 133: 1.*

My understanding of this charge is that as brothers, and in spite of our human imperfections, we should remain united. Together with our kindred orders, we are enjoined to play a complementary role for the ultimate good of the Catholic Church, and humanity.

III Support for the Catholic Church.

As Marshallans with a wealth of God-given talents and intellectual resources, it is mandatory for us to enhance God’s work with what he has generously bestowed upon us.

No doubt, Marshallans constitute a very strong arm of the Church. In Togo, Benin, Liberia, London and Ghana, the role of Marshallans in the apostolate cannot be overemphasized. The exemplary role of Marshallans in the leadership of the Church, whether administrative or liturgical is there for all to see.

As a body of Marshallans, we should be doing more than the Christus Regnet donation to the Seminaries. We should together explore other areas where we can assist the Church.

VISION 2010

During my term of office, I suggest we should together take another look at the **Vision 2010** document for the Noble Order with the view of implementing some of its recommendations.

The Standing Committee of the Supreme Council in 1999 under the leadership of the late Supreme Knight, Worthy Bro. Mathew K. Nti constituted a 16-member committee chaired by W/ Bro. K. Ofori Kuragu, (DSK).

The report from the Vision 2010 Committee may be summarized as below:-

- Not much has been done to provide spiritual development by seriously studying the Catholic Catechism and also attempting to be conversant with the church's teachings including the Encyclicals.
- In order to gear up as a society of the millennium, it is necessary to refocus on the membership, spiritual, physical and economic development, in clear terms, and review progress from time to time.
- It was found simply inadequate to write-off distressed Councils without exploring ways to assist them.
- The individual brother who finds himself bogged down to the lengthy business of a Council day gains little every month.
- Frustrations at meetings are aggravated when there is no effort to initiate and promote spiritual lectures and discussions.
- Currently, Chaplains are under-utilized and are in attendance only to open and close Council meetings. This is not good enough.
- Works of Charity do not appear to be coordinated as each Council is requested to advise on what it has been able to do only. Besides the annual reporting system is not deep enough to make provision for each Council to do self evaluation from year to year.
- A clear youth policy for the Order does not seem to be in place.
- Although a lot of effort is made by brothers to appear neat at public outings, a lot more has to be done to merit the status of the best Knightly Order.

In my view, the challenges facing the Noble Order a decade ago when the Vision 2010 committee was set up largely remains unresolved to this day.

MY VISION FOR THE NOBLE ORDER

My Lord Bishop, Supreme Director High Officers, permit me now to share with you my vision for the Noble Order.

Empowerment of the individual Marshallan.

“Knowledge is Power” How very true. “*My people are perishing for the lack of knowledge*” said the prophet Hosea (chapter 4:6).

Improved Reading Habits

The habit of reading is fast eluding many. The wealth of Catholic reading material as well as recommended literature by the Noble Order has largely been left to gather dust.

With the assistance of our Supreme Spiritual Director, Bible reading and discussion sessions will be introduced into our regular meeting sessions.

Our Catholic Catechism, basic to every Catholic let alone Marshallan will become an important material in the Scriptural component of our business in Council chamber.

To demonstrate my sincerity and to underline the premium I attach to this book, it is my pleasure to share with you a copy each of the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Kindly accept it as a gesture to engender an enhanced reading culture. Other Books such as the teaching of Christ and the Imitation of Christ should be a companion to every Marshallan Knight.

Prescribed Courses of the Noble Order.

In furtherance of my objective to strengthen the knowledge base of brothers, I cannot but commend my immediate predecessor Sir Knight Bro. Edie Prah for the initiative he took in setting up a committee to review prescribed courses by the Noble Order.

Supreme Director, My Lord Bishop, High officers of the Noble Order, my commitment to ensuring the implementation of the approved Policy on Revised Courses of the Noble Order will not waver. In Order to ensure uniformity in approach, I will be starting with a Seminar for Readers and Lecturers of adult councils as well as Regional Councils before the end of this year. Similar seminars will be organized on territorial basis ie. Liberia, Togo/Benin, and UK (London).

Charity

Understandably, when we talk of Charity, we tend to look outside the Noble Order. This demonstrates the true selflessness of the Marshallan. Charity works to Church institutions as well as the needy and distressed institutions will constitute an important aspect of my administration.

May I also take this opportunity to commend the many Councils who have consistently supported and made donations to the under privileged in their communities.

Within our membership, many brothers are either unemployed or are on pension. This situation places some challenges to their capacity to meet some financial obligations of the Noble Order.

As a first step in addressing this challenge, I request that ALL councils identify such brothers in their midst. All financial obligations of such brothers categorized as “distressed” are to be borne by the more resilient brothers of the council.

The Physical Growth of the Order

Quite apart from the spiritual growth of Knights of the Noble Order, it is equally important that we grow in membership. To meet this important requirement, I will be making a recommendation to the Standing Committee for Councils to be Parish-based.

It is my hope that many new Councils will emerge. As existing Councils are pruned they will be induced to intensify membership drive by looking more intently at eligible material in their parishes.

Needless to say, Parish-based Councils will be better focused to contribute more effectively to the holistic wellbeing of the Parish and by extension, the Church.

Our Council Meetings

As aptly captured by the Vision 2010 Committee and later confirmed at the first Chaplains forum, there is the need to improve upon the format for our Council meeting. As earlier identified, many brothers are increasingly staying away from meetings largely because meetings are often prolonged unduly by Grand Knights.

To assist Grand Knights in the administration of their Councils, I will institute steps to come up with a Grand Knights Handbook.

I plan to continue with the monthly reflections of the Supreme Knight as it relates to our individual and group formation as Catholics with a mission.

Regional Councils

For the few active Regional Grand Knights, I congratulate you and encourage you to continue to aptly represent the Supreme Council in your Regions. Unfortunately however, many Regional Grand Knights exist only by name. Supervision of constituent Adult Councils is often non-existent. The situation is even more staggering in the case of Regional Council office holders.

My Lord Bishop, Supreme Director, High Officers; Regional Grand Knights and their team of office holders will be made to work. The Supreme Knight will be meeting with Regional Grand Knights from time to time to assess their performances. A reporting Template will be designed to assist in their supervisory duties.

Finance

One of the most sensitive issues of any society is finance.

Here, I wish to commend my predecessors, particularly in recent years, for their tireless efforts at developing a reliable and sustainable financial system of capital generation for the Noble Order. For now, I wish to stop at the **Marshallan Investment Fund** as well as the **Marshallan Endowment Fund**.

The second term of the Board of Trustees of the Marshallan Investment Fund (MIF) will end in the course of the year 2010. Until then, I am expanding their terms of reference. The Board of Trustees of the MIF will be reconstituted into a “Board of Finance” of the Supreme Council. The Board of Finance will be responsible for the coordination of all financial products of the Supreme Council. They will manage and report on all investments of the Noble Order.

I do not intend to introduce any new financial product. The existing schemes will be made to work to the full objectives for which they were established.

I however encourage individual adult councils to seriously consider engaging in one commercial activity or other. This idea was mooted at the G.K.’s forum in 2005 by Sir. Knt. Donkor Fordwour. Many Grand Knights opted for a range of agro-commercial economic endeavours. Teak tree cultivation came predominant in the array of project alternatives. My information is that the good intentions ended in the room. Perhaps we may want to revisit this idea.

Consensus building with our Lady Counterparts.

Improved coordination of programs with our Ladies will leave our twin societies even stronger. Needless to say, a synchronized growth strategy will inure to the benefit of the Noble Order at large.

I will encourage regular meetings between the leadership of the Knights and our Lady counterparts. Such meetings will precede our Standing Committee Meetings.

The Junior Order

I believe we all understand that to a large extent, the future of our Order is tied to the sustainability of the Junior Order. Consequently, it is a must that we do all we can to make the Junior Order achieve their objectives to the fullest.

In my first year of office I will ensure we hold the first forum for Regional Youth coordinators.

Pilgrimage

May I commend Sir Knt Bro. Prof Dr. Dr. Sir, George Brobby for the insight in instituting the concept of pilgrimages to Holy Lands of the Church. This was during his tenure as Supreme Knight in 2006. To date, two such pilgrimages have been successfully undertaken.

From the lessons learnt in the organization of previous visits, I am happy to retain the Pilgrimage Committee in its full membership. I challenge them to put together an even more exciting pilgrimage program for 2010. I would expect that the committee starts

work immediately and submit proposals for the 2010 Pilgrimage to the Standing Committee meeting at our next Standing Committee meeting.

Information Technology Management.

Without doubt, we are in an age of Information technology. We risk exposure to high operational and administrative costs if we do not adjust to the opportunities available through Information Technology. Again, I cannot but commend my immediate predecessor, Sir Knight Bro. Eddie Prah for working to place the Noble Order on the global worldwide web. Many thanks go to W/Bro Arthur Collins whose singular intellectual investment in setting up a website for the Order has saved the Noble Order a whooping US\$ 25,000.0

Regrettably, this opportunity remains untapped. Bulletins and events on our sites are stale. Our electronic mailing system is underutilized, and personal records remain limited to under 900 registered members out of total Marshallan population of about 6,000.

I am informed there is a Committee to monitor material placed on the Marshallan website. The committee I am informed is the “**Information Management Committee**”. I will review the membership and terms of reference of this committee to place Infotech high on our agenda for communication.

The Contribution of Marshallans to the growth of the Church.

Councils and its members when indexed to Parishes will be required to consider themselves the livewire of their parishes.

Suggested programs I will expect Councils to undertake in their parishes are:-

- Initiating an Educational trust fund at parish level.
- Provide direct support to the needy in the parish and beyond.
- Provide direct aid to the elderly.
- Identify support areas for the mentally handicapped.
- Volunteer man hours in community service.
- Lead in talks, lectures and retreats.
- Provide career counseling programs for the youth.
- Provide free professional advice such as business, medical and legal advisory services just to mention a few.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

My Lord Bishop, Supreme Director, High Officers; for all that I have shared with you this evening, it is apparent that it will require a shared responsibility if we are to succeed. For the purpose of implementation therefore, I intend to adopt two strategies.

Firstly, I will be calling on many of you to perform various roles consistent with my vision from time to time. Here I will rely greatly on the huge wealth of knowledge of our many Past Supreme Knights.

Secondly, I will expect all Grand Knights to be installed in December/January as well as Regional Grand Knights to derive programs for their Councils from the global vision of the Supreme Knight as contained in the document.

CONCLUSION

Sometime in 1982, I was in discussions with my father (now deceased) also a brother on some aspects of the Noble Order. At the time, I was a vibrant 9th Degree Knight and he was a PGA. I remember we were discussing the topic "The Power of the mind". It however turned out to be more of a lecture from me for I had just read on the topic in a book written by Roy Eugene Davis. I was eager to impress the old man.

After a long pause he said to me Tony, if you continue this way you will become Supreme Knight some day. His prophesy has come true. He must be turning in his grave all evening.

May his soul Rest in the peace of the Lord.

Over the period of my preparation towards assuming office as Supreme Knight, I have benefited immensely from the advice, counseling and encouragement from many of you gathered here. Somehow, you all choose to go without mention. Your wishes have been granted.

My Lord Bishop, Supreme Director, High Officers of the Noble Order of the Knights of Marshall,, I thank you for the great honour done me .

God Bless you and the Noble Order.