

SERVANT OF GOD
FRA' ANDREW BERTIE





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*A current and a future Grand Master: Fra' Andrew Bertie
with Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto*



INTRODUCTION

Fra' Andrew Bertie, 78th Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta, was a deeply respected and revered figure, by the 13,500 members of the Order worldwide, by the Church, and by all with whom he came into contact. His vocation, as a Professed Knight of the Order, was to care for the poor and the sick, and to demonstrate this inspiration through his deep Christian spirituality. He lived modestly, with humility and with intense faith.

One of those whom he greatly impressed for the way he lived his vocation was Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del TTempio di Sanguinetto (9 December 1944 – 29 April 2020), who became the 80th Grand Master.





ELECTION AS 78TH GRAND MASTER

On Friday 8 April 1988, in the council chamber of the Order's Magistral Villa on the Aventine, Fra' Andrew Bertie was elected 78th Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta by the Council Complete of State, the Order's electing body. Thus he became only the second Englishman to hold this office in the Order's history – a history which stretches back almost 1000 years.

The new Grand Master was invested at the swearing in four days later, during Mass celebrated by the Order's Prelate, Mons. Mario Brini in the Order's Church of Santa Maria in Aventino – famously designed by Piranesi, and his only architectural monument. The Grand Chancellor, Amb. Baron Catalano di Melilli read the *nihil obstat* from His Holiness Pope John Paul II, signed by Secretary of State Cardinal Agostino Casaroli on 9 April. Fra' Andrew addressed the congregation, emphasising the values of faith and community: that 'Our Order is a religious order and thus it is of primary importance to pray for new vocations' and that 'we are a family and a confraternity... the family has to remain united and willing to make personal sacrifices to help each other.

I do not doubt that I will have the cooperation of all the Order's members to ensure this.'

A Mass of thanksgiving was celebrated in Santa Maria in Aventino by Cardinal Sebastiano Baggio on 14 April, attended by the Sovereign Council and dignitaries and representatives of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Sovereign Order.

Fra' Andrew's mandate, which began that historic day, lasted until his death twenty years later on 7 February 2008. In those twenty years Grand Master Bertie effected wide ranging reforms in the Order, accentuating the importance of continuing the Order's tradition of caring for the poor and the sick, especially emphasising the development of humanitarian activities in many parts of the world:

- in the restructuring of its Constitution and Code to reflect modern times; and
- in the importance of the spiritual life of its members.

The influence of his great legacy continues today.





WORKS AS GRAND MASTER

As Grand Master, Fra' Andrew created an international voice for good. Over his long reign he travelled to many countries to see for himself the activities carried out by the Order's many national Associations, undertaking numerous visits every year to inspect the projects, talking with all concerned, always underlining the Christian inspiration which informed their works.

His encouragement, in his gratitude and praise for those involved, remained a strong incentive for all whom he met. He emphasised the need for international solidarity to fight poverty and social marginalisation and in so doing, to respect human rights. All this was informed by his own spirituality and his own carrying out in practice the ideals of the Order's twin charisms: *tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum*.

In his many years of attending the Order's international pilgrimage to Lourdes every May – from his time as a university student onwards – he was always actively involved in caring for the sick pilgrims. In Lourdes it was noted that in all those pilgrimages he carried out his duties 'with piety and fervour and his engagements meant a great deal to him.' He exemplified prayer in action.

From 1988 until his final months, as well as receiving many Heads of State at the Grand Magistracy, he made many State and Official Visits to countries in Africa, Europe and the Middle East, met many leaders and discussed with them how the Order could assist their countries, especially in the sphere of medico-social work. His immediate rapport was enhanced by his linguistic ability, and his deep interest in cultures and religions, as he was able to converse in many languages as well as English – in French, Italian, German, Russian, Spanish, and in Tibetan.

Fra'Andrew meets young pilgrims in Lourdes





*Fra' Andrew with Pope Benedict –
the annual traditional meeting*



SPIRITUALITY

Fra' Andrew's spirituality was remarked upon from the time he was a schoolboy. At Summerfields one of his friends was Lord Furness (Anthony – later Fra' Anthony), whom he later converted into the Faith.

Whilst teaching at Worth, he was a daily Communicant and started the practice of taking the students on annual pilgrimages to Lourdes. During those years, he was also a founding member of the British 'OMV' – the young Order of Malta Volunteers, for ages between 17 and 30, an organisation which remains effective, energetic and committed to the values of the Order to this day.

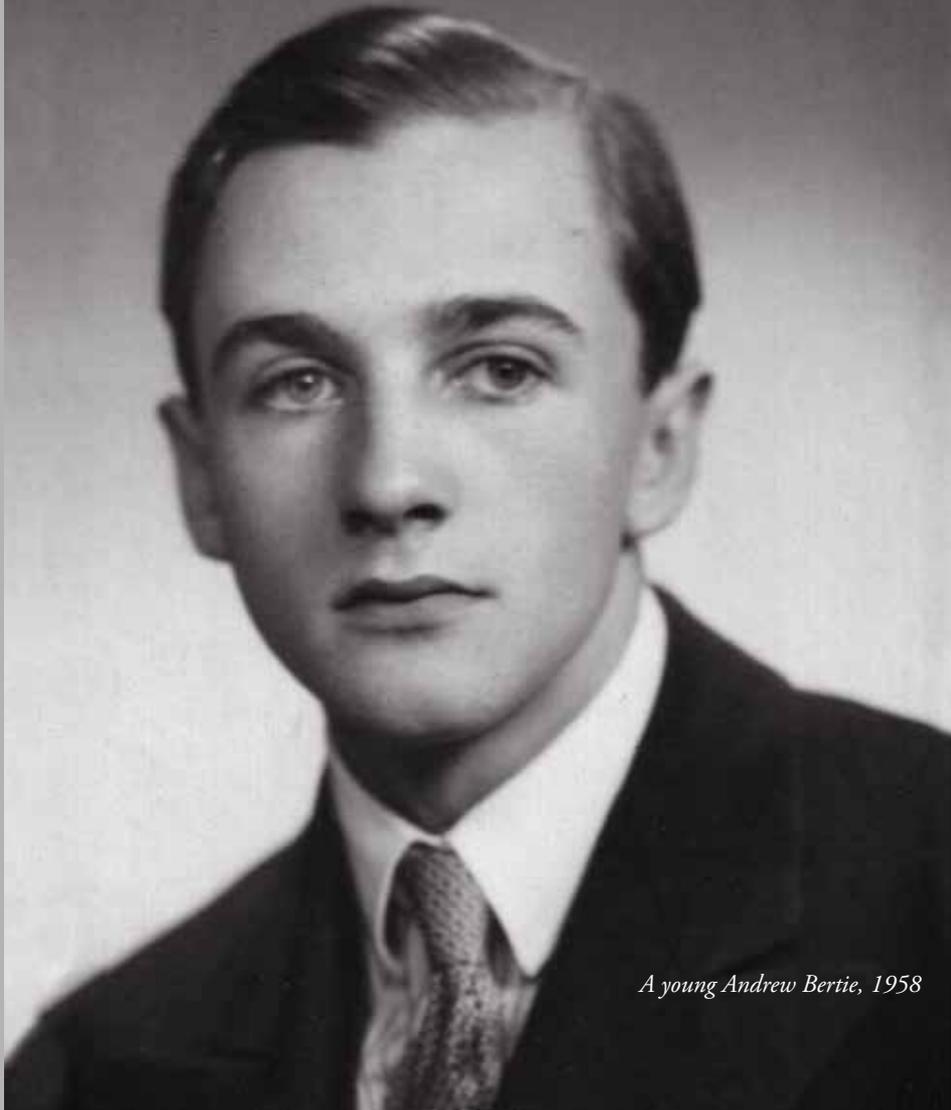
As Grand Master, he prayed the Rosary intensely every morning in the chapel in the Grand Magistry, before Lauds and daily Mass and then later at Vespers. At Lourdes he would kneel on the ground at the Grotto and every year bathed in the waters of the piscine. He emphasised that, outside official duties there, he wished to dedicate his free time to visiting the sick pilgrims. With all who worked with him he was always serene in his spirituality and in how he lived his life.

He viewed his promise of obedience as the expression of an intimate conviction, and poverty as a virtue. His own humility was underlined in his belief that a Professed Knight should do without unnecessary goods and use only practical items for efficient work.

At the Diocesan Inquiry for the Cause for Canonisation in 2015, Cardinal Agostino Vallini spoke of the affection and great respect the congregation, which filled the entire basilica, attested 'for an exceptional man of profound spirituality,' who had lived an intense spiritual life. He was 'an example of a Christian life lived in the name of the charity of Christ.'

Fr. Ronald Creighton-Jobe, Cong. Orat., recalled: Fra' Andrew's spirituality was grounded in an intense inner silence which expressed his conviction that every Christian has a call to genuine contemplation through the life of grace present, and through our incorporation into the life of the Holy Trinity. This simply requires time made for silent prayer and discipline, and renders our exterior works all the more fruitful. The dimension of the sacred was essential to his understanding of *tuitio fidei* and the Order's love and service of the poor and the sick.





A young Andrew Bertie, 1958





EARLY YEARS

- 1929** 15 May: Born in London, to the Hon. James Bertie and Lady Jean (nee Crichton Stuart).
23 May: Baptised, Westminster Cathedral
- 1938-39** Attends Summerfields preparatory school, Sussex
- 1941-42** Attends Craigflower preparatory school, Fife
- 1943-47** Ampleforth College, York. His headmaster: 'Bertie is a boy with an excellent moral character.'
- 1948-54** Military service as a lieutenant in the Scots Guards, and after finishing national service, in the Regular Army Reserve
- 1950-54** Christ Church, Oxford, B.A.
- 1951** Assistant master, St. Philip's School, London
- 1954-57** Financial journalist, City Press, London
- 1957** Christ Church, Oxford, M.A. Later studies: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, where he studies Tibetan language and culture

- 1958-59** Visits India and Sikkim
- 1960-80** Head, language department, Worth School, Sussex, where he is a daily Communicant. He teaches French, Spanish, Russian; he also teaches religious instruction, fencing and judo (as a black belt). With a Red Cross first aid diploma, he teaches schoolchildren elementary first aid. Organises annual pilgrimages to Lourdes for the students (and their parents) and arranges for the students to be stretcher-bearers in Lourdes.

WORKS FOR THE ORDER OF MALTA

- 1956** 14 November: Joins the British Association of the Order of Malta as Knight of Honour and Devotion, drawn to its twin charisms *tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum*.
- 1957** As a result of his work in support of the Hungarian patriots and refugees of the 1956 events, he is awarded the Pro Hungaria medal.





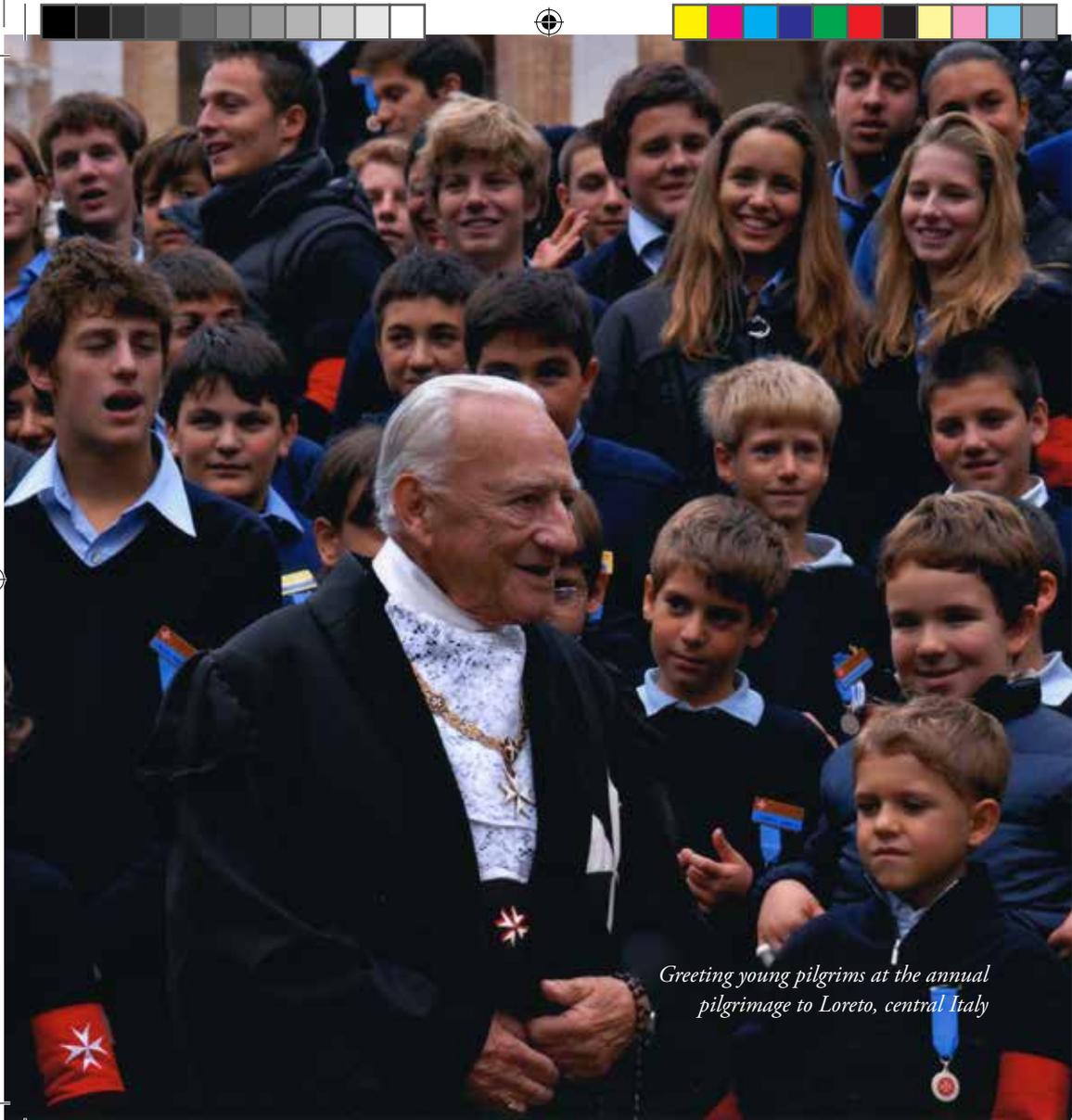


- 1958** In recognition of his assistance for the visit to London of the Lieutenant of the Grand Master, he is conferred the Cross of Merit, Second Class.
- 1966** Accepted as a novice for the Promise of Obedience (approved by the Holy See, Congregation for Religious, prot.n.8573/66, 29 August 1966).
- 1968** 31 March: Makes his solemn Promise of Obedience.
- 1974** Having taken young students and their parents to Lourdes over a number of years, the event is now officially recognised by the British Association, and named the Youth Pilgrimage of the British Association. He applies to be considered for Knight of Justice. Many testimonials speak of his profound spirituality, including from the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, the Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, the Abbot of Worth and the President of the British Association of the Order.

*With King Juan Carlos of Spain,
Aventine, Rome, 1999*

- 1975** The Sovereign Council accepts his admission to the two-year novitiate for Knight of Justice.
- 1977** 28 March. Takes his simple vows (renewed 10 March 1978 and 21 February 1979).
- 1979** Is appointed Regent of the British Sub-Priory of Bl. Adrian Fortescue.
- 1980** Completes his simple vows novitiate (as does Anthony Furness, at the same time).
- 1981** 20 May: Fra' Andrew Bertie makes his solemn vows in the Order's Chapel, St. John's Wood, London and is received by Fra' Cyrille Toumanoff, Commander of Justice, acting for the Grand Master. 28 November: Is elected member of the Sovereign Council, on which he serves until his election as Grand Master.
- 1988** 8 April: Following the death of the 77th Grand Master, Fra' Angelo de Mojana di Cologna in January, he is elected Grand Master of the Sovereign Order. 12 April: Fra' Andrew Bertie is sworn in as the 78th Grand Master. 7 February. Dies in Rome.
- 2008**





Greeting young pilgrims at the annual pilgrimage to Loreto, central Italy



Andrew Bertie was a talented linguist and an erudite scholar and teacher. He was noted for his deep spirituality throughout his life. In his twenty years as Grand Master, he reformed what he had found, so to bring the Order of Malta into modern times, able to cope with modern challenges.

He emphasised the importance of the spiritual life of the Order's members. He recognised and promoted the importance of extending the Order's diplomatic network, which provided a wide range of assistance in the developing world very effectively, from a neutral and impartial position.

He increased the number of bilateral diplomatic representations from 49 to 100. He oversaw the reform of the Order's Constitutional Charter, which brought its laws and provisions into the twentieth century and created a more effective and coherent organisation.

He stressed internationalism in humanitarian assistance, calling for the need for countries to work together to combat poverty and disease. He encouraged the establishment of more national Associations so that the Order

could carry its work far and wide. At the time of his death, the Order had grown to have a presence in 120 countries.

His conviction of the importance of this Christian dedication and care for society's marginalised was carried out in his own life and service to those in need, caring for the sick in Lourdes with total humility, which he did every year of his adult life, or serving in the soup kitchens of Rome and other cities he visited as Grand Master. It was observed that he gave charity in the spirit of the gospel and had on occasion been seen discreetly giving alms to the poor in the street.

In 2013, reflecting on his memories of Fra' Andrew Bertie, the Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Rome, the Most Rev. Matteo Zuppi (subsequently Archbishop of Bologna, since October 2019, Cardinal Zuppi) wrote of the 78th Grand Master '...he is an example of sanctity that encourages and validates us all.' (20 July 2013)

Fra' Andrew Bertie lived his life close to the Benedictine rule, for which humility is the foundation of spiritual life.





DEATH OF FRA' ANDREW BERTIE, 78TH GRAND MASTER

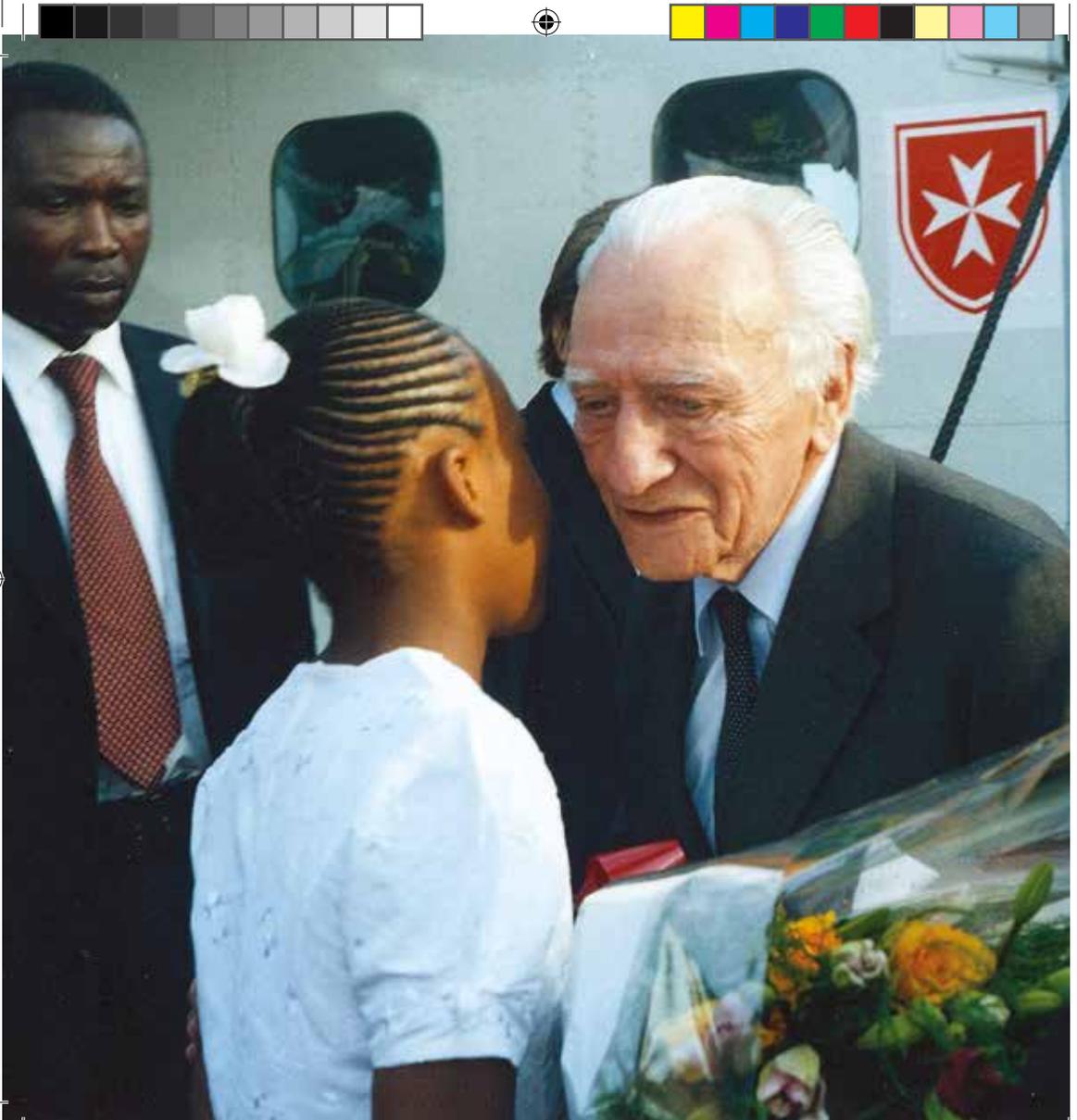
Fra' Andrew lived a life of prayer and humility and bore his final illness with courage, dignity and resignation to the will of the Lord. Those who visited him in his last days attest to his exemplary strength of character and his serenity, and that he found great comfort in receiving the Last Sacraments. He died piously and peacefully as his devoted followers prayed around his bedside. His funeral took place in the Basilica of Santa Sabina, celebrated by Cardinal Pio Laghi and concelebrated by Cardinals Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, Foley, Martino, Poupard, Rode' and Tauran, and by the Order's Prelate Mons. Angelo Acerbi, together with many Order chaplains.

Thirty days after the death of the 78th Grand Master, as is the custom, a State Mass was celebrated. Held in the Basilica of Saints Bonifacio and Alessio, Cardinal Angelo Sodano officiated, with the President of the Republic, Giorgio Napolitano and many dignitaries in attendance.

In his homily, Cardinal Sodano said: 'He devoted himself totally to his mission, giving the example of a humble and generous service in the footsteps of so many giants of charity in our Order's long history.'

The 78th Grand Master was buried in the Order's church, Santa Maria in Aventino.

*The lying in state, Santa Maria in Aventino,
February 2008*





THE PATH TO SAINTHOOD

Canonisation, in its most exact historical sense, refers to a papal declaration that the Catholic faithful may venerate a particular deceased member of the Church.

Step one: The process to make someone a saint starts from at least five years after their death.

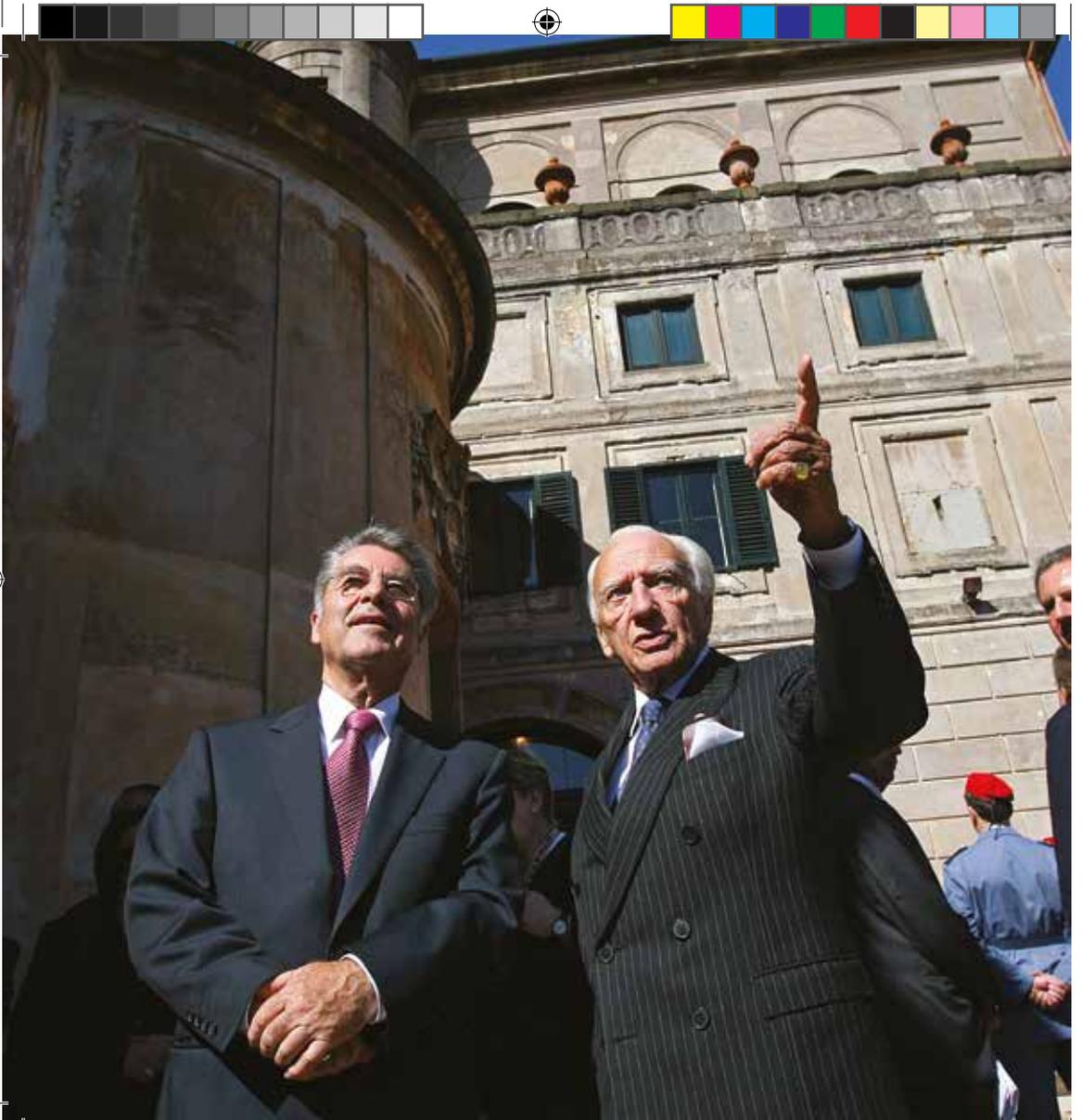
Step two: The candidate is named a ‘Servant of God’. The bishop of the place where the candidate died or is buried gives permission to open an investigation into the virtues of the individual, in response to a petition of members of the faithful, either actually or pro forma. The investigation usually starts no sooner than five years after the death of the person being investigated.

Step three: Proof of a life of ‘heroic virtue’. The Servant of God is demonstrated to have exercised to a heroic degree the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity and the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude.

A greeting on one of many official missions

From this time the Servant of God is entitled to be referred to as ‘Venerable’ (Latin: Venerabilis). A Venerable does not yet have a feast day, and permission to erect churches in his honor has not been granted at this stage; the Church does not yet issue a statement on his probable or certain presence in Heaven, but prayer cards and other materials may be printed to encourage the faithful to pray for a miracle wrought by his intercession as a sign of God’s will that the person be canonised.

Step four: Verified miracles. At least one verified miracle obtained through invocation after beatification must occur before the cause for canonisation may be introduced. For a non-martyr, to be denominated a ‘confessor’ because he has borne witness to the Faith by how he lived, proof is required of a miracle through the intercession of the Venerable; that is, that God has granted a sign that the person is enjoying the Beatific Vision by performing a miracle for which the Venerable interceded. These miracles are almost always miraculous cures of infirmity, because they are the easiest to judge given the Church’s requirements for miracles.





When the applicable conditions have been met, beatification is permitted. The Venerable is then bestowed the title of ‘Blessed’ (Latin: *Beatus* or *Beata*). A feast day will be designated, but its observance is usually only permitted for the Blessed’s home diocese, to specific locations associated with them.

Step five: Canonisation. To be canonised as a saint, usually at least two miracles must have been performed through the intercession of the Blessed after his death, but for ‘beati’ confessors, only one miracle is required. Canonisation is a statement of the Church that the person enjoys the Beatific Vision of Heaven. The title of ‘Saint’ (Latin: *Sanctus* or *Sancta*) is then proper.

With President Heinz Fischer of Austria, Villa Malta, Aventine, 2006

On 2 July 2012, Cardinal Agostino Vallini, Vicar General of Rome, approved the appointment of Prof. Vittorio Capuzza as Postulator of the Cause for Canonisation of Fra’ Andrew Bertie, the first time in the Order’s long history that a Grand Master is proposed for canonisation. The written petition went forward in 2013.

Opening Session of the Diocesan Inquiry on the Cause for the Beatification and Canonisation of the Servant of God, Fra’ Andrew Bertie

On 20 February 2015, in the Basilica of S. Giovanni in Laterano in Rome, in the presence of the 79th Grand Master, of the Sovereign Council, of Fra’ Andrew’s own family and a large congregation of members of the Order and many friends, in accordance with Canon Law and the attainment of the required proofs, during the celebration officiated by Mons. Angelo Acerbi, Prelate of the Order, Fra’ Andrew Bertie was deemed to be a Servant of God.







PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Most Holy Trinity, we, your humble children,
thank You for having given us your servant
Fra' Andrew Bertie, and for having made him,
In the fulfillment of his lofty charge
and in his personal consecration to You
an example of radiant faith
shown by his love for the Holy Eucharist
the intensity of his prayer,
his fidelity to the Divine Office,
his most edifying spirit of recollection,
and his assistance to the poor and suffering
according to the ancient charism of the Order
of Malta.

Tuitio fidei – obsequium pauperum.

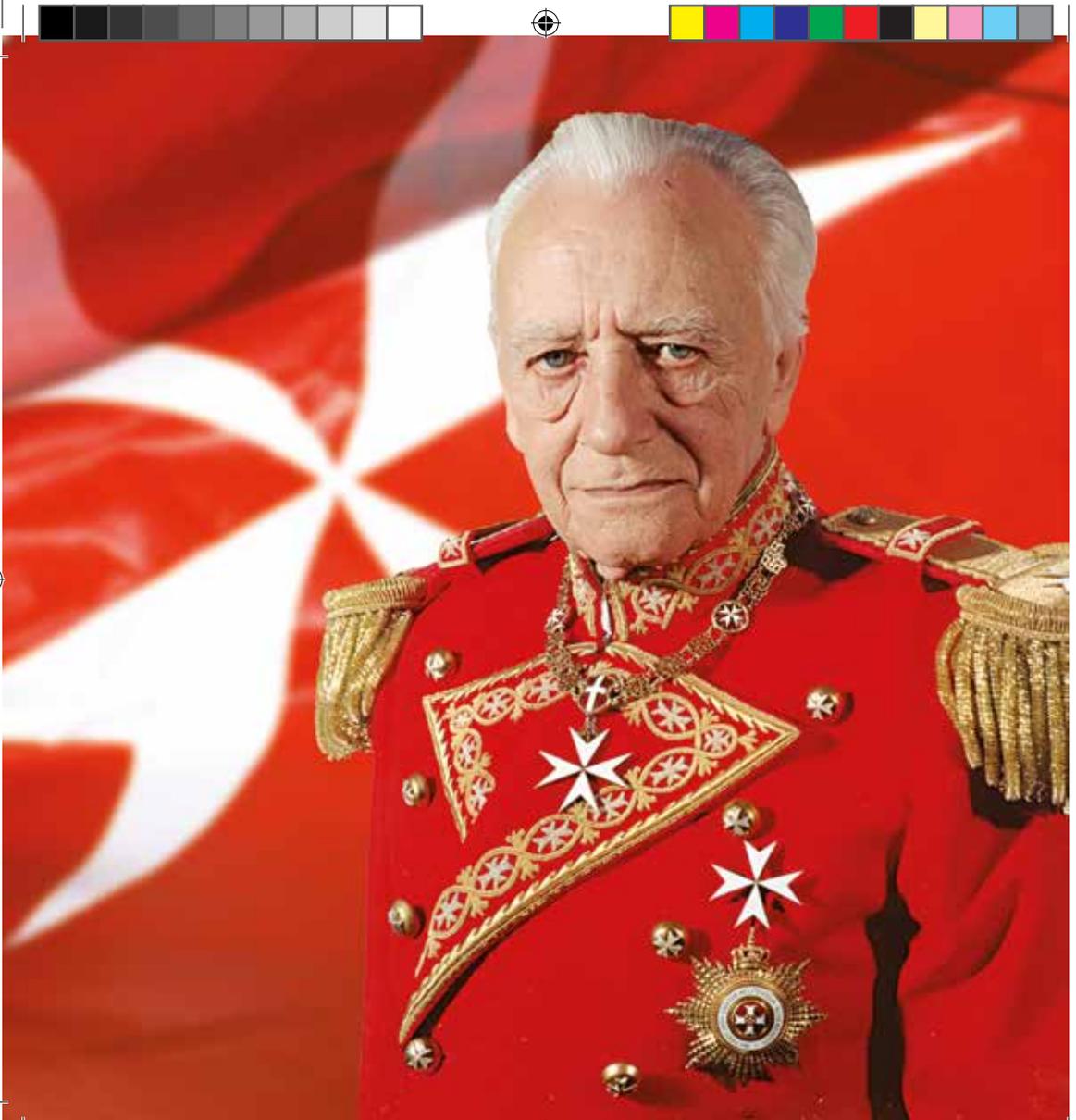
Glory be to the Father...

Lord, Your servant Fra' Andrew Bertie, showed
us, by his fidelity to Your example and teaching
the path of holiness as the true measure of
the Christian life, through the mediation of
the Blessed Virgin venerated under the title
of Queen of Mount Philermos, whom he so
deeply loved and confidently invoked, grant,
we pray, that he may be exalted also on earth
for Your greater glory, and that we may obtain
by his intercession the grace we so ardently
implore.

Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.

Fra'Andrew had a great rapport with the young





Fra' Andrew Bertie





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