

ORDER OF THE CROWN OF THORNS

From the GRAND MASTER to the ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS AND DIGNITARIES
of the Antioch Succession, through the late Grand Master
Mar Timotheus I
Who have received Knighthood in our beloved Order.

Most Reverend and Right Reverend Chevaliers:

It has come to my knowledge just recently that certain Roman Authorities are claiming that one of the conditions attached to our former Grand Master's "submission" to Rome was that he would NOT appoint any Successor to the Office of Grand Master, but would allow the Order to lapse. It is further claimed that he signed a Document to this effect on his death-bed!!! These "rumours" amongst those in high places, not ecclesiastical, finally came to my notice through a friendly and noble channel.

They are nothing but "rumours", and there is no known way by which their truth or falsehood can be discovered. But insidious rumours, be they true or false, can often do much harm if persisted in long enough. More than eight years have passed since Mar Timotheus' death, and while I have been in contact most of the time with Chevaliers who are even members of the Pope's Cabinet, none of them have ever mentioned such rumours, neither have Roman Ecclesiastics who belong to the Order also. But the Order has been making progress, and has obtained many high adhesions, which might well be the reason for starting such rumours now.

Efforts are being made to obtain the present Patriarch's definite approval and acknowledgment of the Order, as founded by his Predecessor about 1880, but he is evidently very bitter towards the former Grand Master -even to the point of claiming that the Consecration of Mar Timotheus was null and void, and all those of his Succession not truly Bishops and Priests- so that progress there is very uncertain.

After careful consideration and thought it seemed best to write to all of you, asking that by signing and returning the enclosed Declaration it may be possible to make it clear to any enquirer or critic that YOU, some of the most interested of all in the situation, do thus make it known that you refuse to acknowledge some pretended authority on the part of Rome over an Order of Orthodox origin, and that if the present Patriarch persists in his unfavourable attitude towards you, your Sacred Orders, and this Chivalric Order, you no less refuse to accept the theory that the former Patriarch did not know what he was doing when he issued a Bull for the Consecration of Mar Timotheus I, and that the latter's Consecrators were equally delinquent in duty. Further that by this Act of signing you do declare that the Order to which you have been admitted does actually exist now, and has existed without a break since reestablished by the former Patriarch, and that it is your will and determination to recognise and authorise, so far as lies in your power, the continuance of this Order under the Successor legally appointed by Mar Timotheus I while he was still loyal to Orthodoxy, and under those who may legally succeed me.


This Declaration on your parts may never prove necessary for actual use, but if need should arise it will serve to protect our Order, and to ensure its general acceptance amongst all who are actuated by right principles & motives.

Please attach the number of Adherents & Communicants under your charge, so that no misrepresentation may unintentionally be made in the form as completed, and to which the signatures of all who cooperate will be appended. The final form will be the same as the individual forms now enclosed.

Trusting that we may be favoured promptly with this desired cooperation, and that God will richly bless all your efforts in His Service.

Cordially yours,


Prince-Grand Master


Please address to Monseigneur Edmond, Box 154, Atascadero, Calif., U.S.A.