

A Great Honor Bestowed Upon WWME Couple

By Bob & Joy Hernandez and Msgr. Chuck Kosanke

Knight and Lady of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem

Dearest Companions on the Journey,

We know you will rejoice with us at this honor bestowed on Rene & JoAnn Lusser, our WWME Legal Advisors. Rene & JoAnn have served our beloved movement faithfully in a variety of leadership roles and we are delighted that their readiness to serve the needs of our Church is being acknowledged.

Please join us in congratulating Rene & JoAnn at lusser@charter.net.



Rene & JoAnn Lusser

With much love,
Bob & Joy & Msgr. Chuck

Our dearest Loving Sacraments;

We thank you for your interest and loving affirmation when we shared with all of you at our Presenting Team meeting last evening, our news that we will be participating in an investiture ceremony the Weekend of Sept 22-25 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, as we receive the honor of "Knight and Lady of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem". JoAnn had told me that if we cannot feel free to share this news with you, who we consider close 'family' then who can we share it with?

Some of your questions as to the history and purpose of this Papal Order generated my going home and re-reading the literature that was sent to us when we were advised of our acceptance, and therefore thought we could share that with you. As we read about the qualifications or criteria we recognize each of you as meeting them also - I guess we've just been 'at it' a little bit longer.

We've been advised that this honor is bestowed on "practicing Catholics of unblemished moral reputation and distinguished Catholics of demonstrated fidelity and generous readiness to serve the needs of our Church" and "is the highest papal Award which can be conferred on clergy as well as laity who are nominated and approved for nomination by their Bishop. It is given as a recognition of outstanding service to the Church, the community and one's fellow man, and entails a personal, solemn commitment to an active apostolate, namely, the fostering and support of a viable, vigorous Christian Presence in the Holy Land."

It was at the time of the first crusade that the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre was founded for the safeguarding of the tomb of Christ, and for providing assistance to pilgrims. Godfrey of Bouillon, the leader of the first crusade, is credited with establishing the first guard of honor, a religious order of Knighthood at the Shrine of the Holy Sepulchre. It is still an authentic Order of Knighthood, the oldest in continuous existence. The Patriarch of Jerusalem has the privilege of personally appointing the Knights and Ladies of the Order, and his appointments are then formally approved by the Cardinal Grand Master in Rome (at times this position has been held by the Pope himself), and then approved by the Papal Secretary of State, before they are offered.

The Grand Prior of this Lieutenancy is St. Louis Archbishop Raymond Burke, and he will confer this rank on us and others in a solemn religious ceremony on the afternoon of September 24th. The Order contributes to the building and support of Catholic Schools, hospitals, orphanages, and Churches in the Holy land, as well as promoting peace, justice and hope in the Spirit of God.

The insignia worn today by the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre is the Red Cross of the Five Wounds of Christ. It is sometimes referred to as the Jerusalem Cross. Members today are encouraged to wear this cross as a testimony of their submission to Christ.

As with the original Knights, the vigil on Saturday evening prepares for investiture and is spent in prayer and reflection - a liturgical waiting for an act of the Spirit of God. The true knights made vows and committed themselves to a medieval code of ethics, which included vigilant prayers, devotion to God, and a life of service to others. Devotion to Mary is also encouraged by daily recitation of the Memorare.

Our attire for investiture - for JoAnn, black dress with long sleeves, black Mantilla, and her black cape. For me, tuxedo, white cape, and black beret bearing the crest of Godfrey, the Jerusalem Cross.

And this is the part we like, from the Booklet of explanation, based on our years and history with Worldwide Marriage Encounter:

"From the Round Table to the Plains of LaMancha, the 'Knight in Shining Armor' has been an inspiration in every age. The true Knight will always strive to reach the unreachable stars. The Order's motto is "Deus lo Vult" ="God wills it", summoning its Knights and Ladies to serve as much today as it did over nine centuries ago".

We see in each of your Sacraments, journeying with us on your own "QUEST' for change in the world and renewal of our Church", your own demonstrated fidelity to the Church, and a generous readiness to serve the needs of our Church.

We will humbly in our hearts accept this accolade in each of your names, and in honor of all of our mutual commitment to our beloved Ministry of Worldwide Marriage Encounter.

Thanks for your continued love and inspiration -- We Love You!!!

Rene & JoAnn