

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Read More About It:
Charities

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INTRODUCTION



Charities

As early as 1997 the GPUSA and OSMTH expressed concern over the plight of Christians around the world who had become victims of intolerance and even persecution. A plan was developed to support Christians at Risk, with aid going to Christian communities in Ethiopia, Iraq, Kosovo and Palestine. To bring about better understanding between Western Christianity and Russian Orthodoxy, the GPUSA supported the reconstruction of the Church of Christ in Moscow that had been destroyed under Stalin. This Russian opening led Bishop Tikhon of Archangel to request aid for his vast diocese. The result was the creation of a “Rolling Church,” a train that would provide both medical and spiritual aid. Such developments led to a declaration calling for cooperation and understanding between Jews, Christian and Moslems, The First Alexandria Declaration of the Religious Leaders of the Holy Land. This was made possible through a partnership between OSMTH and the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy, founded by a Templar Knight, Dr. Douglas M. Johnston, Jr.

This publication explores the various OSMTH and GPUSA charitable humanitarian projects.



International Projects

The charitable activities of OSMTH are primarily carried out by the Member Grand Priors (National Associations), and by their associated charitable foundations, in support of a wide range of international, national, and local, humanitarian aid programs and charitable causes. International humanitarian projects of the Order include the following.

Water Project

Water is essential for life itself. In religion and the great philosophies it is seen as a purifier and symbol of purity. On a daily basis it acts as a catalyst that impacts every aspect of people's lives.

However, one billion people still lack access to safe water and over 2.5 billion lack access to adequate sanitation. There is a clear correlation between access to safe water and economic development. It is estimated that by 2025 more than half of the world's population will be facing water-based vulnerability. The 2009 report *Charting Our Water Future* suggests that by 2030 water demand will exceed supply by 50% within many in developing regions of the world.



OSMTH is doing its part in three key ways

1. by providing water wells in India and Pakistan, where water access is an issue. The cost to bore one well €300, which will supply one village with safe drinking water, and lighten the burden of women and children whose task has been to carry water containers over kilometers several times per day.
2. Awareness raising - through such means as this website, workshops, and word-of-mouth;
3. Facilitation - through the deployment of Subject Matter Experts.



Human Trafficking

OSMTH (SMOTJ) is an affiliate NGO to the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT). UN.GIFT is a multi-stakeholder initiative providing global access to expertise, knowledge and innovative partnerships to combat human trafficking.

Human trafficking equates to the illegal trade in human beings for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation or forced labor: modern-day slavery. This affects men, women and the most innocent of all victims - children.

UN.GIFT works with all stakeholders - governments, business, academia, NGOs, civil society and the media - to support each other's work, create new partnerships and develop effective tools to fight human trafficking.

The initiative is based on a simple principle: human trafficking is a crime of such magnitude and atrocity that it cannot be dealt with successfully by government alone. This global problem requires an international, multi-stakeholder strategy that builds on national efforts throughout the world. To pave the way for this strategy, stakeholders and partners coordinate efforts already underway, increase knowledge and awareness, provide technical assistance; promote effective rights-based responses; build capacity of state and non-state stakeholders; foster partnerships for joint action; and above all, ensure that everybody takes responsibility for this fight.

Justice and Human Rights feature predominantly in the OSMTH Brussels Declaration, which serves as the Order's Mission. A number of OSMTH members are Law Enforcement, Justice and Rule of Law practitioners, some of whom are Subject Matters Experts in the field of Transnational Organized Crime and Trafficking issues.

The OSMTH-UN.GIFT affiliation is approached from two angles:

1. through OSMTH, as an I-NGO, supplying Subject Matters Experts as delegates, facilitators and advisors;
2. our greater membership - many of whom are also members of the Private and Business Sector.

Both communities have far-reaching networks.

For further information on how you can become involved contact: [Secretary General](#)

Jordan River Project

In 2010, His Highness, King Abdullah of Jordan created the Royal Baptism Site Commission to promote a Christian Ecumenical Environment among the major Christian denominations in the Jordanian part of the Holy Land. Our own Bishop Younan's ELCHL was given a plot of land at the site of where Jesus was baptized by John.

Of all the sites, the Lutheran site is the only ecumenical development that welcomes all people to come and worship, meet and learn together. The site has a simple church in the style of early Christendom, and conference center for inter and intra faith gatherings, along with a small office and apartment for the site staff. The site is within a short walk to the Jordan river where Christ was baptized. The Jordanian Commission site is devoid of commercialism.

The emphasis of the ELCHL is three fold: spiritual growth in a most holy setting, historical and archeological preservation, and a true environmental preservation, all wrapped around the concepts of inclusion and ecumenical development. This is a site that modern day Templars can support in efforts to keep the roads open to the Holy Land, and continue to support its Arab Christian brothers and sisters efforts to remain in the Holy Land.



Oikocredit

Oikocredit (in full Oikocredit, Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society U.A.) is a cooperative society that offers loans or investment capital for microfinance institutions, cooperatives and small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries. It is one of the world's largest private financiers of the microfinance sector. The idea of Oikocredit came from a 1968 meeting of the World Council of Churches. Oikocredit was established in 1975.

OSMTH Grand Priorities through OSMTH donate annually to Oikocredit. To read more about this worthy organization, visit their [website](#).



Lutheran Baptismal Site

OSMTH is very familiar with the work and witness of the Lutheran Church Baptismal Site at Bethany Beyond Jordan and considers it a great honor that OSMTH holds seats on the International Advisory Board for this significant religious institution. OSMTH has also taken note of the mission statement of the Lutheran Church Baptismal Site at Bethany Beyond Jordan, which states that:

“Bethany Beyond Jordan is a place of worship and meditation, of listening and learning. The focus is on the spiritual and historical, political, and environmental aspects of the place. Worship is central; pilgrims and visitors are encouraged to renew their baptismal vows. Thematic pilgrim walks and retreats, baptisms and conferences are organized at the Centre. The Pilgrim Centre is open to all churches, believers, and visitors. It is a place of fellowship and dialogue with all people of good will.”

Donations from OSMTH support the day-to-day operational costs of the Lutheran Church Baptismal Site, which is in the care of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

Further information on the work and witness of the Lutheran Church Baptismal Site in Jordan can be found via [this link](#).

Generations for Peace

OSMTH considers it a great privilege to have a Memorandum of Understanding with this award-winning international and youth-oriented non-governmental organization which focuses on peacebuilding.

OSMTH has also taken note of the GFP Vision Statement, which is:

- “Sustainable peace in actively tolerant communities through responsible citizenship”;
and the GFP Mission Statement, which is:
- “To empower youth to lead and cascade sustainable change in communities experiencing conflict, through world-class free education in conflict transformation and the use of sport, art, advocacy, dialogue, and empowerment for peacebuilding.”



SMOTJ donations are being used to support the Amman Peace Talks, which is an initiative, recently developed in Jordan by Generations for Peace, to provide a speaking platform for a diverse range of youth leaders to share their experiences and to:

- demonstrate that peaceful solutions to conflict exist;
- showcase inspiring stories and what is working;
- raise awareness that everyone has a role in building peace; and
- inspire action in everyday life and on a global scale.

Friends of the Holy Land

Friends of the Holy Land is a non-political charity which focuses on encouraging Christians to remain in the land of their birth by supporting them to build resilient and self-sufficient communities, in what can often be a challenging environment. FHL concentrates on a mixture of small immediate relief, and longer term sustainable, projects through a team of locally based lay and clerical professionals who identify and verify those in need.

OSMTH has chosen to support the FHL Pentecost Challenge Appeal, launched by the Friends of the Holy Land. OSMTH has also noted the messages of support for the Appeal from the Most Reverend Suhail Dawani, Anglican/Episcopal Archbishop in Jerusalem, and from Mr Sami El-Yousef, Chief Executive Officer of the Latin Patriarchate of the Roman Catholic Church, which indicate the interdenominational nature of this Appeal.



As a result of the generosity of three long-standing individual supporters of the Friends of the Holy Land, OSMTH's donation is being “match-funded” and thus effectively doubled in value.

OSMTH donations are being used to relieve the hardships caused by:

- health issues,
- financial distress, and
- lack of work for the Christian communities at risk in Israel and the Palestinian Territories

Further information on the work of the Friends of the Holy Land can be found via [this link](#).



Gen. Davis, recipient of the SMOTJ Order of Merit Grand Cordon.

Raymond G. Davis

was a Marine who rose through the ranks and retired as a Full General (4 stars). He fought in WW-II, Korea and Viet Nam and was awarded the Medal of Honor, for his bravery in Korea. He was also a deeply spiritual man who became a brother Templar. He was first brought into the Order of Merit as a companion (non-member), and is one of only four individuals who was ever awarded the Order of Merit Grand Cordon. However, once he became involved with the Order he asked to become a regular member and both he and his wife Knox were invested as a Knight and Dame in the Priory of Holy Rood. Shortly before his death, he was promoted to Grand Croix. The Raymond Davis Society was created by the Foundation Board to honor those individual members who name the Foundation as part of their will/estate plan, regardless of the amount, or make a significant contribution to the RDF Legacy/Endowment Fund. Members can be identified by the distinctive lapel pin.

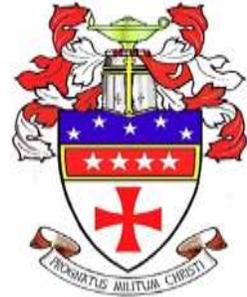


GPUSA Charities

The Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem, Inc. (SMOTJ) is an autonomous and independent organization, incorporated in the United States, which seeks to emulate the chivalric and charity traditions of the original Templars.

General Raymond G. Davis Templar Foundation

The General Raymond G. Davis Templar Foundation is a public charity whose purpose is to operate exclusively for the charitable purposes of the SMOTJ-GPUSA, including but not limited to, assisting Christians and others of faith in the Holy Lands and elsewhere who are at risk for the following purposes:



- to defend in an ecumenical spirit the common faith of all and to affect a union of Christianity, and to fight intolerance and to help in the recovery of the spirit of chivalry,
- to perpetuate the history and collect historical material on the European branches of this Order,
- to protect and teach the Christian religion, and
- to aid the needy, lame, blind, and afflicted.

The Foundation is controlled by the SMOTJ-GPUSA. It has a separate but overlapping Board of Directors, none of whom receives any compensation. The SMOTJ -GPUSA pays for the administrative costs of the Foundation.

The tax-exempt status of The General Raymond G. Davis Templar Foundation, Inc. was granted by the IRS on June 13, 2008 under section 501 (c) (3) of the IRS Code.

With this 501 (c) (3) status, the SMOTJ has additional capacity to receive charitable contributions. Donations made to the SMOTJ that are designated and used for the SMOTJ's charitable purposes are fully tax deductible even though it is a (c) (10) organization. However, some private foundations can only make contributions and grants to 501(c) (3) organizations and thus are unable to contribute to the SMOTJ. The existence of the General Raymond G. Davis Templar Foundation and its use as the charitable entity of SMOTJ-GPUSA solves this problem. Furthermore, a separate 501(c) (3) organization can in some cases facilitate donations to the charitable purposes of a 501(c) (10) such as the SMOTJ-GPUSA.

The humanitarian objectives of the Raymond Davis Foundation are supported by gifts, bequests and donations of members of SMOTJ but can also be supported by the generosity of individuals, corporations and endowments of people of goodwill who share a common goal of facilitating peaceful relations between the major faiths.

Scholarship Program

SMOTJ-GPUSA supports all major Christian denominations that have a presence in the Holy Land. As part of this support, the Order provides scholarships to deserving high school and college students residing in the greater Holy Land so that they may receive high quality education at Christian institutions while remaining in their homes. In keeping with the Order's ecumenical tradition, scholarships are provided at various church supported high schools and universities rather than just a single school. Priors, Commanderies, and individuals may elect to sponsor a student either by name or anonymously. Scholarships are usually multi-year so that the educational endeavors of the student can be maintained rather than having to deal with the uncertainty of year-to-year funding. While the sponsor is required to pay one year's tuition at a time, the sponsoring organization or individual must agree at the onset to sponsor the student throughout the entire scholarship/educational period.

The annual cost of one year's schooling varies by denomination and by the specific location of the school. The standard high school scholarship cost has been established at \$1400/student/year. Tuition at some schools is more than that while at other educational institutions, it is less. Scholarships may be either full (tuition amount: \$1400) or half (tuition amount: \$700). Payment for full or half scholarships is usually made by check in the month of July before the school year begins. The donor can elect to make monthly, quarterly or annual payments using a credit card or a bank draft, however, all processing fees must be absorbed by the donor rather than the foundation.

The Order also supports two-year specialty High School scholarships at the Episcopal Vocational Technical Training Center (EVTTC). EVTTC provides students with their final two years of high school while concurrently providing them training for either the hospitality industry (Hotel School) or the Information Technology Field (IT School). Tuition for these two curriculums is \$2100/year and \$2300/year respectively. Payment for full or half scholarships is normally made by check in the month of July. The donor can elect to make monthly, quarterly or annual payments using a credit card or a bank draft, however, all processing fees must be absorbed by the donor rather than the foundation. The credit card year normally runs July through June.

Donations for amounts less than a full or half scholarship are certainly needed and 100% of such funds are applied to scholarships. However, such funds cannot be identified to a named student.

With the exception of credit card costs, the Grand Priory absorbs all administrative costs for the scholarship program, so all funds donated for the scholarship program are used for actual scholarships. At some of the less expensive schools, part of each scholarship donation are used to cover tuition at some of the more expensive schools, but all funds donated for the scholarship program are used for scholarships.

High School Scholarships

These scholarships are normally for students who will be completing 8th grade and beginning their 9th grade the following fall. The scholarship period will then cover the next four years. Some schools such as the Anglican Technical and Vocational School (Hotel School) in Ramallah are only for two years, and those students do not begin their program until they complete 10th grade. The headmasters, administrators or church officials may from time to time nominate additional students for scholarship for shorter periods if an acute financial need develops. These are handled by the scholarship committee as funds become available.

SMOTJ-GPUSA is presently sponsoring students who attend the following schools in the Holy Land:



Anglican:

- [Evangelical Technical and Vocational Training Center in Ramallah](#) (two-year programs).

Armenian:

- [Sts. Tarkanzhats of Jerusalem.](#)



Coptic:

- St. Dimiana's Coptic College (high school) of Jerusalem.

Lutheran:

- [The Evangelical Lutheran School of Hope in Ramallah.](#)
- [The Evangelical Lutheran School in Beit Sahour.](#)

Roman Catholic:

- College des Frères of Bethlehem (De La Salle Brothers).
- College des Frères of Jerusalem (De La Salle Brothers).
- The Terra Sancta School in Ramleh (Franciscan).



Russian Orthodox:

- [The Orthodox School for Girls in Bethany.](#)

College/University Scholarships

Initially, university level scholarships were only for those students interested in pursuing a college degree in nursing that concurrently provided certification as a Registered Nurse (RN). While this remains the primary focus of the program, it has been expanded to other university level fields to include those outside of health care, on a case by case basis. Regardless of major or degree, the recipient is required to execute the Memorandum of Understanding that stipulates agreement to remain in the Holy Land following graduation having pursued a profession that provides aid and comfort to the indigenous Christian population.

The annual cost of one year's schooling at one of the universities where SMOTJ has scholarship students is currently \$4000 per year for a full scholarship and \$2000 per year for a half scholarship. However, the universities may change this amount they

charge at which time the Order will have to adjust scholarship costs for the donors. Payment for full or half scholarships are normally made by check in the month of July. The donor can choose instead to make monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, or annual payments using a credit card or a bank draft, however, all processing fees must be absorbed by the donor, rather than the foundation. The credit card year normally runs July through June.

Scholarship donations for lesser amounts are certainly needed and 100% of donated funds are applied to scholarships. However, funds for less than the half scholarship amount cannot be directed to a named student.

To be nominated for a university scholarship, a potential scholarship student must have scored a satisfactory grade on the Tawjehi Entrance exam and been accepted by a fully accredited university in the greater Holy Land region. The applicant must agree in advance to complete the GPUSA's University Scholarship Contract (Form A or Form B) which requires the candidate to agree to:

1. Register for sufficient courses each semester to remain a full-time student throughout the year in order to complete their degree/certification in the required time.
2. Have his or her official grades forwarded by the college/university to the Grand Aumonier of SMOTJ (GrandAumonier@smotj.org) upon the completion of each semester.
3. Seek employment in the region upon graduation in a field that primarily provides service to the indigenous Christian Palestinian People.
4. Remain in the Holy Land to work at least one year for every year of scholarship received.



Bethlehem University

SMOTJ-GPUSA is presently sponsoring students who attend the following universities in the Holy Land:

- [Bethlehem University in Bethlehem](#)
- [The Arab American University in Jenin](#)



Arab American University

An individual's commitment to sponsor a high school or university student is a significant undertaking for which the Order has chosen to recognize through the awarding of a scholarship medal. There are two medals involved: one medal for a member who is sponsoring a high school student and a slightly different one for a member who is sponsoring a university student. While this is an SMOTJ award program, the medals are provided to SMOTJ by the Raymond Davis Templar Foundation at no cost to the Order or to the member through the generosity of a silent knight.



Jerusalem Mite

The Jerusalem Mite is the primary charitable outreach of the Order. The primary purpose of the Jerusalem Mite is to protect Christians at risk and to keep the road to Jerusalem open to all peoples of all faiths. In this charity GPUSA continues the mission of the original Templars whose mission was to provide security for the Pilgrims as they journeyed from the coast to Jerusalem.

Solicitation for the Jerusalem Mite usually occurs in October each year. The Grand Priory provides all administrative services and support for this endeavor so 100% of monies collected are donated to worthy causes, primarily in the Holy Land. All donations to the Jerusalem Mite are tax deductible and receipts will be provided to donors as required by IRS Publication 1771, Charitable Contributions – Substantiation and Disclosure.

a **MITE** was the smallest and least valuable coin in circulation in Judea, worth about six minutes of an average daily wage.

The Jerusalem Mite, with money raised from American Knights, Dames and friends, directs funds to a dozen known, trusted, church-related charitable organizations, based primarily in the Holy

Land. These organizations provide essential programs for healthcare, housing, academic education, and vocational training, and are making a difference for Christian families.



Silent Knight

Most members feel that it is inherently part of their knightly responsibilities to become active in some ongoing philanthropic endeavor. The "Silent Knight" Program is a perfect example of the type of individual philanthropic initiatives promoted by the Order. The International Silent Knight Charity Program was founded by a member of the American Order, Craig L. Carlson and his wife, to promote the making of anonymous charitable and humanitarian contributions.

All Silent Knights are Templar Knights and Dames who voluntarily participate in random acts of kindness. Silent Knights are:

- Templar men and women from all races, religions, cultures and ethnic backgrounds who share a respect for all inhabitants of this planet;
- Templars who wish to serve others; and
- Templars who have the personal courage to act upon that heartfelt desire.

Operation Knight Flight

Operation Knight Flight (OKF) is facilitating the Order's primary goal of assisting Christians in the Holy Land. The Denton [Amendment] Program enables registered (501)(c)3 charities to use US military aircraft to transport relief aid to those in need throughout the world; this aid is transported "space available" and free of charge.

OKF enables GPUSA membership to serve as advocates in connecting and guiding local charitable organizations to strategic airlift components administered by the Department of Defense (DoD), Department of State (DoS), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) through the Denton [Amendment] Program office in Charleston, SC.



The Denton Program provides transportation for approved humanitarian assistance commodities destined for approved countries. Approved countries include those that are supported by DoD transportation services, and where civil systems, local infrastructure and the supply chain will support the immediate onward distribution of the commodities. Generally, the program is not designed or intended for the transport of private sector commodity donations to disaster areas -- where civil systems, local infrastructure or logistics resources may be compromised due to a natural or civil disaster. In such cases, USAID, DOS and DOD will review the circumstances in the destination country, and the application, to determine whether or not a commodity donation should be transported by the Denton Program to the area of the disaster.



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