

Charter

The Priory of Lazarus



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I. Name:

A. The name of this Branch is, The Priory of Lazarus (may be referred to as “the Priory” later in this Charter).

II. Banner/Gonfalon/Device:

A. The Priory of Lazarus is argent (white) an eight pointed cross vert.(green).

III. Fief Mission Statement:

A. A member does not need to participate in Armored Combat, fencing, archery, etc... though it is encouraged. This allows people who are interested in other aspects of this time period in the medieval ages to play and pursue their medieval passions.

B. Book References: Leper Knights by David Marcombe, The Medieval Leper by Peter Richards, The Sword and the Green Cross by Max J. Ellul.

IV. Location:

A. Geographic Location of Branch for Historical Purposes:

- Jerusalem, Kingdom of Jerusalem circa 1119 A.D.

B. Geographical location in current day:

- West Mifflin, Pa. landmark: Kennywood Park

V. Membership

A. Anyone who is interested in joining the Priory of Lazarus must contact the Prior to join. Then a vote of approval of 90% of the members and the Prior must be obtained for membership.

B. Only paid Priory members may hold Priory positions, vote in any Priory elections, or be allowed to challenge the Lord/Lady for his/her seat.

VI. Events & Meetings

A. A meeting shall take place no less than once per year (online or in person).

B. The Priory of Lazarus shall host at least one event per year for the EMP, but more events shall be encouraged if possible.

VII. Fief Leadership:

A. Title

- A.1. The title for the senior most leadership position in the Priory of Lazarus is "Prior" or "Prioress".

B. Term of Office

- B.1. The position of Prior/ Prioress will have a term of 2 years.
B.2. If there is no citizen of the County that wishes to succeed the current

Prior/Prioress at the end of their term, the current Prior/Prioress may decide to continue in their position.

B.3. The Prior/Prioress can be removed from Office with a 90% vote from Paid Priory members.

C. Becoming Prior/Prioress

C.1. Prior to the end of the 2 year term, the current Lord/Lady will take a vote from the entire Priory and for the current Lord/Lady to be replaced by a successor there must be a 90% majority vote.

C.1.a) Method of finding a replacement Lord/Lady:

C.1.a.1. Armored Rattan, Fencing, and Archery tournaments are accepted to find a Lord or Lady.

C.1.a.2. If there is only one person who wishes to become Lord/Lady, the position may be granted to the requestor by the Lord/Lady at their discretion only.

C.1.b) It is the Lord/Lady's responsibility to advise the public of the need for a new Leader no later than 30 days prior to the end of their reign should they choose to step down for any reason.

C.1.b.1. The successor will have to have the following

C.1.b.1.a. Be a current paid member of the Priory.

C.1.b.1.b. Have been a member of the Priory for at least one year.

D. Duties & Responsibilities of The Prior/Prioress

D.1. The Lord/Lady shall serve as the Priory of Lazarus representative in the Kingdom's House of Lords.

D.2. If the Lord/Lady is unable to make the annual House of Lords meeting at one of the EMP sanctioned Wars, he/she will send (if possible) another member of the Fief that is able to attend and bear witness to the House of Lords.

D.3. Appoint additional Positions of Office such as, but not limited to: A sheriff, herald, etc. at their discretion, who may assist with the duties and responsibilities of the Fief.

D.4. The Lord/Lady shall be responsible for all finance associated with the Fief and the empire of medieval pursuits (EMP).

D.5. Responsible for all duties not assigned to other members of the leadership team, but may delegate those duties as necessary

D.6. Attends all Fief level meetings.

D.7. Maintains a public-facing web presence

VIII. Fief Structure

A. Households

A.1. A household can only be formed with a minimum of four active members of the Priory.

A.2. The household may have their own charter per approval of their

Lord/Lady.

B. Member Structure

- B.1. All members of the Priory, excluding the Lord, shall be equals in rank. Priory members may choose to take on a Position of Office within the Group; however this does not warrant any type of rank over anyone else, it warrants extra responsibility.
- B.2. There will be a position of 'sergeant' to the champion living in the Priory of Lazarus who wins the annual tournament of arms that may be held should the Fief have enough rattan fighters (Minimum of 4) that wish to compete.

C. Additional Positions of Office

- C.1. The Lord/Lady may create such rules and offices as are necessary for the function of the Priory. The Lord/Lady shall have executive and judicial authority in regards to the Priory activities within the limits of the bylaws and charter, is responsible for maintaining group status within the EMP, and for ensuring that required events and scheduled activities occur as required by EMP Group Guidelines.
- C.2. All minor offices within the Priory are voluntary. And approved by the Lord/Lady

IX. Lazarus History:

The Order of St. Lazarus evolved from a leper hospital that had existed in Jerusalem prior to the First Crusade. After the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem was established, it became part of the Hospitaller network of hospitals, but by 1142 the Order of St. Lazarus broke away, and by 1147 it was known as the Leper Brothers of Jerusalem.

About this time the Order also started to expand, eventually having houses in Tiberias, Ascalon, Acre, Caesarea, Beirut, and possibly other cities as well. Furthermore, it began to have military brethren, whose role was primarily the defense of the leper hospitals. These military men were most likely former Templars and Hospitallers who had contracted leprosy because we know that both the Templar and Hospitaller Rules required members with leprosy to join the Order of St. Lazarus.

Possibly some knights and sergeants joined St. Lazarus without being lepers, however, because there are recorded incidents of the Order of St. Lazarus taking part in military operations – possibly at the Battle of Hattin; certainly at the Battle of Gaza in 1244, at Ramla in 1253, and during the defense of Acre in 1291.

After the fall of Acre, the Order of St. Lazarus moved its headquarters to Cyprus, abandoned all military activities, and thereafter concentrated on its mission of providing comfort and care for the victims of leprosy until the mid-14th century.

The most famous of the lepers in the [Holy Land](#) was [Baldwin IV](#).

Baldwin IV of Jerusalem (ruled 1174-1185) contracted leprosy as a child. However, since he was the only heir to the [Kingdom of Jerusalem](#), the physicians remained inconclusive about his condition to prevent him from being forced into the Order of Saint Lazarus.

Baldwin IV, known as the “Leper King”, defeated the forces of [Saladin](#) in the [Battle of Montgisard](#) in 1177. You may remember Baldwin IV from the Hollywood blockbuster, [The Kingdom of Heaven](#).

Although they were centred on their charism of caring for those afflicted with leprosy, the knights of the Order of Saint Lazarus notably **fought in the Battle of La Forbie in 1244 and in the Defense of Acre in 1291.**

The Order in England...

It is uncertain at what date the Order of Saint Lazarus was first established in England. Certainly the Order would have been known to crusading knights and it is likely that the first brethren of Saint Lazarus were brought to this country by returning crusaders. Modern French authorities claim 1135 as the year in which Baron Roger de Mowbray presented the knights with land, and a mill, at Burton, near Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire. It was in the fertile countryside of this county that they built their great hospital (hospice), which became the chief house of the Order in England and from which, in succeeding years, numerous other hospitals and commanderies were erected throughout the country. The foundation at Burton, since called Burton Lazars, was administered by a Master and eight knights and was placed under the protection of the Blessed Virgin and of Saint Lazarus.

Two charters were granted, in the Order’s favor, by King Henry II in 1155 and 1159 respectively, with a further charter granted in 1176. This charter was confirmed by King Richard I (Coeur de Lion) at Westminster in 1189. On the 5th January 1195 Richard granted the Order a new charter in which it is declared:

‘We have recognized that the Holy House and Hospital of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is splendid and praiseworthy in the works of mercy, whereof we have sure faith and witness by the experience of our own eyes’.

This was testimony indeed from England’s most illustrious crusader!