

The Archbishop's Guard of St. Sebastian



Information for Prospective Members

The Archbishop's Guard is an Order of Chivalry within the Spanish Orthodox Church and Ecumenical Apostolic Chaplains Service. The Spiritual Grandmaster is the Metropolitan Archbishop, who is also the Prelate of the Sacred Magistry of the Archdiocese of Religious Military Orders of Chivalry. Within the Guard there is, for administrative purposes, an International Council. There is, as well, a Devotional Circle of Fellowship: a network with the aim of linking members so as to strengthen their personal religious life and ministry through prayer, reflection, and discussion.

The Circle may "touch ground" — and touch lives — at the local parish level, or through individual members separated by great distances but united in service: charitable works, visitation with the sick and infirm, prayer groups, and the defense of the Church against the declining moral and ethical standards in society. The faith, strength, and courage of Saint Sebastian form a yardstick for personal measure; the Body of Christ is the rallying point for collective action.

The Application Process First, we would like to know something of your background: your age, your education and skills, where you live, your marital status, and your religious life. If you are an ordained member of the clergy, a member of a religious order, or a missionary, we will require details of your ministry and current standing.

Initially, you may send your background information by e-mail. Please also send, as attachments, a recent photograph of yourself, and scanned images of important documents such as your baptismal certificate and transcripts of any academic qualifications that you hold. Later, in your formal application, we would like you to send legally certified copies of those documents.

Vows After receiving tentative approval, you must be willing to sign the vows that we require. You will find them at the end of this document. Please read the vows very

carefully, and feel free to ask questions, because you must bear in mind that by entering the Archbishop's Guard you will be joining a religious order, not a club.

Formal Application Your formal letter of application must be sent by mail, along with the completed forms with your vows and personal information (see below), plus the certified copies of certificates, transcripts, and other documents that we might also ask you to send.

Acceptance If your application for membership is accepted, you will be admitted as a Companion and remain at that level for a period of three to six months. You may choose to remain a Companion indefinitely. By taking further vows, however, you may proceed to the rank of Knight or Dame and participate in the Devotional Circle of Fellowship. You will also be eligible for service on the International Council.

Promotion To seek promotion above the rank of Knight or Dame is not obligatory, but if you do, promotion through the three principal officer ranks would normally be by demonstrating a deepening or continued involvement in outreach or ministry. The simplest way of doing that would be through a description, with photos, newsletters, newspaper cuttings and so on. It is also possible to submit an essay of a reflective or theological nature, but you would need to discuss that with us, prior to starting on it.

Fees To become a Companion, the fee is \$70 (US), which is non-refundable and must be paid by check or credit card when you send your formal application. A husband and wife couple may join at the same time for a combined fee of \$110.

You will receive a formal Letter of Admission, under the seal of the Metropolitan Archbishop, confirming your membership, a set of devotional prayers, a brief history of the lines of Apostolic succession in the Spanish Orthodox Church, and an outline of how to proceed to a higher rank within the Archbishop's Guard. If you have children aged 12 to 17, they will be entitled, with your consent, to participate in the Cadet Corps.

The fee for moving from Companionship to Knighthood is \$50 (US), which is non-refundable and must be paid when your application is approved. You will receive a Certificate of Knighthood, a letter of confirmation, and a further set of devotional material and information.

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NOTE: The following two pages are required when you submit your formal application. Please print copies of them — back-to-back on one sheet is OK.

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The Archbishop's Guard of St. Sebastian

Preliminary Vows

**These are required for admission to
Companion Membership of the Archbishop's Guard**

The preliminary vows must be signed in the presence of a witness.

I hereby vow to uphold and promote the morality common to the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, in the name of Jesus Christ. I also vow to be faithful and obedient to the Archbishop's Guard of Saint Sebastian through its Spiritual Grandmaster and Officers.

I understand that admission as a Companion member is neither an ordination to the clergy nor a license to preach, and that I am not entitled to act as a spokesperson for, or representative of, the Archbishop's Guard or the SOC-EACS..

I also understand that if I apply for release from my vows, I must, at the same time, return the Letter of Admission that is issued upon acceptance into the Archbishop's Guard, and thereafter must not claim to be a member.

Signed by the applicant (in the presence of the witness):

Your signature

Please print your name here: _____
Please use block letters

Witness (signed): _____ Date: _____

Please print your name here: _____
Please use block letters

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