

## Of Papal Bulls and Political Intrigue: the attempted abolition of an Order

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The aftershocks instigated by Pope Innocent VIII's Bull *Cum Solerti* in 1489 sounded the death knell of the Order of St Lazarus.<sup>1</sup> What arguably began as political accommodation between the Order of St John and the Roman Curia was not so palatable to the Order of St Lazarus, which in its aftermath was fighting for its very own existence. The French monarchy and the Lazarite Order in France made various objections to oppose the implementation of the Papal Bull<sup>2</sup> and the management of Boigny and its dependencies continued under Lazarite rule despite multiple hindrances from outside.<sup>3</sup>

Because of the perceived intransigence and reluctance of the Order of St Lazarus to kneel down, it will come as no surprise that there were various attempts by the Order of St John, mentored by the Roman Curia, to bring to fruition the intended outcome of Pope Innocent VIII's Bull and embrace the Lazarite assets. After 1489, there were several other Papal Bulls, most importantly the Pian ones, which continued to promulgate the eradication of the Lazarite Order.<sup>4</sup> Throughout this turmoil, the Order of St John continued to regard Boigny, the main asset

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<sup>1</sup> C. Savona-Ventura. The Papal Bull *Cum solerti meditatione pensamus* of 1489. *Journal of the Monastic Military Orders*, December 2009, 2:21-38.

<sup>2</sup> De Tillet. *Arrest de la Cour, par lequel une union faite par une Bulle du Pape de l'an 1489 est declarée abusive n'ayant été executée selon le Decret du Concile de Constance ny verifiée en la Cour 1547 – Extracts des Registre de Parlement*. In *Preuves des Libertez de l'Eglise Gallicane*, Sebastien Carmois, Paris, 1651, Vol 1, Chap. 31, pp.173-174.

<sup>3</sup> C. Savona Ventura. *Biographies: Ordo Sancti Lazari Hierusalem – Grand Maîtres, Protecteurs & Administres*. Lulu.com, 2016, p.12. There is a suggestion that the promulgation of the Bull *Cum solerti* in 1489, and the continued resistance to its implementation in France, strengthened the bonds between the French monarchy and Boigny.

<sup>4</sup> Mainly Pius IV and Pius V.

and the *de facto* motherhouse of the Lazarites, as its baillage and for fifty years sent its own brethren to administer it in the role of Grand Masters of the Lazarite Order, an occurrence that went against its very own statutes and ordinances. There was also a vaguely hatched plan to usurp the Lazarite Order from within to achieve the eventual amalgamation of the two Orders. Non-French Lazarite assets were indeed lost when they were merged with the Capuan Order, setting the scene for the eventual foundation of the Order of St Maurice and St Lazarus.

## Introduction

In a span of about a hundred years, from 1489 to at least 1599, the Roman Curia made several attempts to abolish the Order of St Lazarus. There was political intrigue from the outset. These attempts spanned the whole spectrum of political machinations, from outright dissolution to dispersal of the assets of the Order at a single stroke. When this failed to achieve the desired results, finer Machiavellian efforts were used, underhand methods that tried to reach the same outcome.

There was a singular event when four consecutive fully-professed members of the Hospitaller Order of St John were assigned the Grand Magistracy seat of the Order of St Lazarus, while remaining brethren of the Maltese Order. These events were related by the historian of the Order of St John, Giacomo Bosio, but the text on the reasons for these events is obscure.<sup>5</sup> Even Pierre Edme Gautier de Sibert, in his history of the Royal, Military and Hospitaller Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Lazarus of Jerusalem,<sup>6</sup> when writing about these events could not fully understand the plots and machinations of different Popes as they impinged on the Grand Magistracy of the Lazarite Order. However, despite these persistent onslaughts to break the backbone of the Lazarite Order,

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<sup>5</sup> G. Bosio. *Istoria della Sacra Religione et Illustrissima Militia di San Giovanni Gerosolimitano*. Facciotti, 1602.

<sup>6</sup> P.E.G. de Sibert, *Histoire des Ordres Royaux, Hospitaliers Militaires de Notre-Dame du Mont Carmel et de Saint- Lazare de Jerusalem*. Paris, 1772. English translation 1972.

the latter remained relevant and integral to a certain degree, aided mostly by its patron the French monarchy.

### **The desire to abolish the Lazarite Order**

The first attempt at eliminating the Lazarite Order was initiated by Pope Innocent VIII's Bull *Cum solerti medatiatione pensamus*.<sup>7</sup> The reasons for its issuance in 1489 were unclear. Popular ideas included ones of connivance and underhand deals with the Order of St John.<sup>8</sup> Sibert asserts a quasi-business transaction between the Pope and the Hospitaller Order, hidden behind a *quid pro quo*.<sup>9</sup> From the Papal side, there was the offer of a cardinal's hat to the incumbent Grand Master of the Order in Rhodes, Pierre d'Aubusson, together with all the assets of the Order of St Lazarus, once this was to be extinguished. This would have reduced Boigny, the main seat of the Lazarite Order, to a mere Commandery dependent on one of the French Priories of the Order of St John. In return, the Order of St John was to deliver the Muslim Prince Jem, who was in the custody of the Hospitallers, to the Roman Curia. In order to downplay the importance of the *Cum solerti*, Sibert retaliated that the Papal Bull of 1489 camouflaged high level political shenanigans that were issued without the Pope having a full knowledge of the facts, without any consultations with the King of France, nominally the Protector of the Lazarite order, and without consulting the parties involved with the issuance of commissions, as was then the norm.<sup>10</sup> The *Cum solerti* was the first of many memoranda by various Popes that attempted to dismember and annihilate the Order of St Lazarus. Although later Popes issued other Bulls which, at face value, tried to

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<sup>7</sup> Bulla Papae Innocentius VIII. *Cum solerti meditatione pensamus* dated 5 April 1489. Arch. Nat., L326, doc.VII. Transcribed in R. Hyacinthe. *L'Ordre de Saint-Lazare de Jérusalem au Moyen Age*. Études & Communication Édition, Bez-et-Esparon, 2003. Downloaded on the 19 August 2017 from [https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/handle/123456789/2164/OSL\\_105.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/handle/123456789/2164/OSL_105.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

<sup>8</sup> H.J.A. Sire. *The Knights of Malta*. Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1996, p.54.

<sup>9</sup> P.E.G. de Sibert, *op. cit.*, p.242.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p.242.

revoke the major damage that *Cum solerti* had perpetrated to the Lazarites, either piecemeal or in its entirety, a slight undercurrent of uncertainty is always felt as to whether the Roman Curia was in reality supporting the Order of St Lazarus at all.

One possible reason for the promulgation of this Bull included the creation of funds for the Hospitaller Order of St John. A few years had passed since the unsuccessful first siege of Rhodes in 1480, which the Hospitaller Order had withstood. The Roman Curia knew, however, that the Ottoman desired hegemony over Europe. Despite this defeat, the *Sublime Porte* had started in earnest to prepare its war machine for another even greater onslaught, which would prove to be triumphant in extirpating the Hospitaller Order of St John from the Rhodian island in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Church, and indeed the Kingdoms of Christendom, needed to bolster this eastern bulwark, reinforcing its defence against the assault that would eventually come. Funds were urgently needed to continue to help the Hospitaller war effort.<sup>11</sup>

Sibert's main argument against the *Cum solerti* that the Pope could not issue a Bull of annihilation against a French Order without any consultation with the French monarch is based on a modicum of fact.<sup>12</sup> There were two stakeholders involved in the conferment of the Grand magistracy of the Lazarite Orders in France. The Roman Curia could not unilaterally appoint members to lead the Lazarite Order without the acquiescence of the King of France. This had been set out clearly in a Roman Concordat with France which was finalized in 1516.<sup>13</sup> Prior to

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<sup>11</sup> With the attempted annihilation of the Lazarite Order and the transfer of their assets to the Order of St John, the Papal Bull *Cum solerti* also set out plans for the union of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre with the Hospitallers.

<sup>12</sup> P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, p.242.

<sup>13</sup> This Concordat (Concordat of Bologna 1516) expressly superseded the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges (1438), which had proved ineffective in guaranteeing the privileges of the Church in France, where bishoprics and abbacies had been fought over, even in front of the *Parlement* of Paris. The Court of Rome was trying to have it abolished, until the two sides met in a meeting in Bologna. This was initiated between Pope Leo X and King Francis I, and finalised by Chancellor Duprat for the King and two

this, the Gallican Church was involved, as Sibert describes, ‘in scandalous scenes that were displayed before Christendom with major quarrels between the monarchy and the priesthood on the selection of persons to fill the great benefices of France’.<sup>14</sup> The Concordat, which was put together by Pope Leo X and King Francis I, meant to resolve these issues. The agreement included provisions that Pope and King jointly would hold the exclusive right to make appointments for the Bishoprics and Abbeys of France, the King by selecting the candidate and the Pope by issuing the Bulls of provision to those candidates proposed by the King. The agreement confirmed the Papal veto of any leader the King of France chose who might be deemed truly unqualified.

### **Papal politics after the *Cum solerti*.**

Seven years after the promulgation of the *Cum Solerti*, in 1496, Pope Alexander VI issued another Bull that partially reversed a particular objective of the 1489 memorandum, namely the taking over by the Pope himself of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, becoming its *de facto* Head and Sovereign Grand Master. Sibert maintained that the partial reversal of the effects of the Papal Bull *Cum solerti*, just seven years after its promulgation served to testify to the flawed objectives and intent of the Bull, but the Borgia Pope did not reverse the other main objective of the *Cum solerti*: the annexation of the Lazarite Order. In fact, the next incumbent of the Roman Curia, Julius II, in 1505, re-confirmed the act of union of the Order of St Lazarus with the Order of St John.

This Papal onslaught saw the closure of Lazarite Commanderies in most of Europe. However, the Bulls of Innocent VIII and Julius II did not substantially affect the rights of the Lazarite Order and its Grand Master in France. In the French Commanderies and in the Mother House of Boigny, business continued to be carried out as usual.

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cardinals for the Pope. The Concordat confirmed the Apostolic Camera’s right to collect *annates*, the first year’s revenue from each benefice, a right that when abused led to shuffling of prelates among dioceses. Accessed 19 August 2017 from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concordat\\_of\\_Bologna](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concordat_of_Bologna).

<sup>14</sup> P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, p.261.

Leo X (1513 – 1521) issued two other Bulls that influenced to some extent the Order of St Lazarus, both within and outside French territory. After some political leanings from Charles V, a Bull in 1517 re-established the Hospital of St Lazarus in Capua in Southern Italy and amalgamated other Lazarite properties with it as dependencies, including Saint John of Palermo and St Agatha of Messina.<sup>15</sup> However, it is interesting to note that *ab initio* these Lazarite Brothers considered themselves exempt from the main branch of the Order.<sup>16</sup> Another Bull in 1519 gave recognition to the resignation of Agnan of Mareul as Grand Master of the Order of St Lazarus, and waiving the age restriction for his nephew, acknowledged Claude of Mareul, then not yet 16 years old, as Grand Master of the Lazarite Order and Commander of Boigny,<sup>17</sup> then considered as the principal house and seat of the Militia of St Lazarus. This means that there were two concurrent branches of the Order of St Lazarus created by Pope Leo X by 1519 – one in France; the second in Southern Italy and Sicily.

### **The Hospitaller Grand Masters of the Lazarite Order**

The codes of conduct and statutes of the Hospitaller Order of St John gave very strict guidelines and instructions to its members on all aspects of their lives in the Order, from the moment of their profession to their demise. The statutes even set the strict criteria as to the qualities which any aspiring postulant would need to possess before being admitted to its noble and refined ranks; there were exhaustive and long Proofs of Nobility that the prospective member had to go

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<sup>15</sup> L. Cherubini and A.M. Cherubino. *Magnum Bullarium Romanum, a Pio Quarto usque ad Innocentium IX*. P. Borde, L. Arnaud & C.I. Rigaud, Lyon, 1673, vol.2, pp.136-150, Section 33.

The re-establishment of the Capuan branch of the Lazarite Order was reported in Pius IV's *Inter assidua dominici* Bull. Jacobus Antonius de Accia was made *Capitanus Generalis Magister Hospitalis Sancti Lazari in Regno Siciliae* until his death in 1522.

The post of Grand Master was subsequently filled by two family relations until 1564.

<sup>16</sup> P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, p.256.

<sup>17</sup> Archivo Segreto Vaticano, *Registro Vaticano 1192*, fol. 196v - 198. Transcribed in R. Hyacinthe, *op. cit.*, Doc. xvi, pp.219-220.

The re-establishment of the French branch of the Lazarite Order was given by Pope Leo X in the Bull *Religionis zelus*, dated June 1519.

through before he was considered eligible for membership. It even set out in detail everything from the type of dress that the brethren should wear, to the manner of how the *dispropiamiento*<sup>18</sup> was to be carried out.

The code contained thirteen long chapters,<sup>19</sup> the second chapter of which dealt with the reception of the Brothers in the Order. Of particular interest here is section 7, which deals with the specific exclusion of those Brothers who had already been affiliated to other Orders, be they secular or religious. This section stated that if the Brother had professed previously in any other religious, secular or royal Orders, he would not be accepted in the Hospitaller Order of St John; and if, by a quirk of fate, he was accepted and later on found out, he would be deprived of his habit.<sup>20</sup> This ensured total and irrevocable loyalty of the members, to their Order and its Grand Master.

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<sup>18</sup> These were the effects that the member of the Order left behind after death.

<sup>19</sup> *Volume che contiene gli statuti della Sacra Religione Gerosolimitana* (Ordre de Malta, per Antonio Scionico, 1719 - 666 pages). Retrieved on 8 December 2014 from [http://books.google.com.mt/books/ucm?id=IFR2ds4sbX8C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com.mt/books/ucm?id=IFR2ds4sbX8C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).

*Volume che contiene gli Statuti della Sacra Religione Gerosolimitana* (Paul Raphaël Spinola, Bartol. Cotta, 1676). Retrieved on 8 December 2014 from [http://books.google.com.mt/books/ucm?id=AfHUIXDrUEMC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com.mt/books/ucm?id=AfHUIXDrUEMC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).

*Statuti della Sacra Religione di S. Gio. Gerosolimitano, con le ordinationi dell'ultimo capitolo generale celebrato nell'anno 1631* (Ordre Souverain Militaire et Hospitalier de Saint-Jean-de-Jérusalem, de Rhodes et de Malte app[ress]o il stampatore Camerale, 1674 - 544 pages). Retrieved on 8 December 2014 from [http://books.google.com.mt/books/ucm?id=LUIM8JWhWzwc&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com.mt/books/ucm?id=LUIM8JWhWzwc&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).

*Privilegi della Sacra Religione di San Giovanni Gerosolimitano: con un indice volgare* (Scionico, 1718). Retrieved on 8 December 2014 from [http://books.google.com.mt/books/ucm?id=7epDAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com.mt/books/ucm?id=7epDAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).

<sup>20</sup> *chiunque haverá fatta professione in altro Ordine á modo alcuno non sia mai accettato nel nostro, e sé fará ricevuto, havuto notitia della prima professione, sia privato dell' habitó.* See *Statuti della Sacra Religione di San Giovanni Gerosolimitano*, 1674, p 21.

Members of the Hospitaller Order, therefore, could not and were not allowed to don two habits. The Hospitaller Order was indeed jealous of having its brethren being shared with other Orders, and strictly precluded this for its members. So, it was surprising that in the latter half of the sixteenth century, contrary to this regulation, some members of the Hospitaller Order were elected members of the Order of St Lazarus. Even more, some went on to become Grand Masters of the Lazarite Order. These Knights were specifically selected for this role whilst remaining full members of the Order of St John. This flew in the face of the statutes of the latter Order.

<b>Boigny Branch</b>	<b>Capua Branch</b>
<i>Claude de Mareuil [1519-†1554]</i>	<i>Alfonso de Accia [1522-†1548]</i>
<i>Jean de Conti [1554-†1557]</i>	<i>Muzzio d'Accia [1548-†1564]</i>
✱ <i>Jean de Levis [1557-†1564]</i>	
✱ <i>Michel de Seure [1564-1571]†1595</i>	<i>Giannotto Castiglione [1565-†1571]</i>
✱ <i>Françoise de Salviati [1571-†1586]</i>	<i>1566: Failed attempt to "sell" the holdings to the Order of St John</i>
✱ <i>Michel de Seure [1586-1593] †1595</i>	<i>1572: Amalgamated in the Order of SS. Maurice &amp; Lazarus under the Dukes of Savoy as hereditary Grand Masters</i>
✱ <i>Aymar de Clermont-Chattes [1593-1599] †1603</i>	
<i>Jean-Charles de Gayand [1599-1604 resigned] †1640</i>	
<i>Philibert de Nérestang [1604-1613] †1620</i>	
<i>1608: United administratively with the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel under the protection of the Kings of France</i>	

### **Masters of the two branches of the Order of St Lazarus – 16<sup>th</sup> century**

✱ : *Members of Order of St John.*



From 1557 to at least the end of that century, there was an uninterrupted series of Officer-members of the Order of St John who were designated as Grand Masters of the Order of St Lazarus. In 1557, Jean de Lévis, a Knight of St John was confirmed as Grand Master of the Order of St Lazarus in the Priory of Boigny. This had Papal blessing with the Bull *Nos Igitur* of Pope Paul IV. He was followed by Michel de Seure de Lumigny in 1564, another Knight of St John. In 1571, de Seure resigned from this post though he retained magisterial privileges. In his stead François de Salviati was elected Vicar General of the Order of St Lazarus. De Salviati was also a Knight of St John as well as an ambassador of the Order. On the death of François de Salviati in 1586, Michel de Seure resumed the role of Grand Master which role he filled until 1593. He was followed by Aymard de Clermont de Chastes, a Knight of the Order of St John who was made Grand Master of the Order of St Lazarus. De Chastes had previously been Marshal of the Order of the Hospitallers in Boigny and Vice-Admiral of France. He fulfilled the magisterial post of the Lazarite Order until 1599 when he was replaced by his nephew Jean-Charles de Gayand de Monterolles.

Against all the usual norms, this consecutive cohort of Knights, professed members of the Order of St John, permeated into the Lazarite Order and indeed filled positions in the higher echelons, essentially belonging to both Orders concurrently. This whole series spanned a period of about fifty years, one Hospitaller being elected after the other. The reason for this singular event is not clear. It would be unlikely to suppose that the council of St John had become lax in allowing their brethren to don other uniforms. Could this have been part of some obscure plan hatched by the Order of St John and the Papal Curia to infiltrate seamlessly the Lazarite Order?

A possible reason is given by Charles Savona Ventura in his *Biographies: Ordo Sancti Lazari Hierusalem*, who states that: 'The appointment of members of the Order of St John to the Commandery of Boigny may have been a tactful conciliatory measure by the French royalty towards that Order and the Pontiff. It is interesting to note that

approval for the change in the magisterial leadership of the Commandery of Boigny was sought from the Order of St John since the two persons involved (that is, de Seure and Salviati) were members of that Order'.<sup>21</sup>

Appointing a member of the Order of St John to the top rung of the Order of St Lazarus could be construed as an ingratiating act by the French Royalty towards the Papal Curia, as indeed Savona-Ventura is suggesting. On the other hand, knowing the effects wrought on the Lazarite Order by the *Cum solerti* and subsequent Papal Bulls and the dogged perseverance by the Order of St John to usurp what was felt to be theirs points towards other possible reasons behind the odd fact of this dual allegiance, as this went against everything that was in the statutes of the Order of St John. If such was indeed the case, there must have been very compelling reasons for the Grand Master and Council to permit this major lapse in the regulated life of this Order.

There is another possible explanation: the French segment of the Order of St Lazarus was at the time being considered by the Order of St John essentially and *de facto* part of the Hospitaller Order of Malta, as bailiwick or a member of a French grand priory, (possibly the Priory of Aquitaine).<sup>22</sup> What the Order of St John did not get outright in France following the Papal Bull *Cum solerti*, it was trying to achieve by stealth and backroom machinations. It was thoroughly understandable for the Order of St John to think of annexing the Lazarite Order seamlessly with its own Order, and this it did by appointing its own brethren in the management of the Boigny Priory. No special Papal dispensation was given to bypass the Order of St John statutes, because there was no need for one.

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<sup>21</sup> C. Savona Ventura, *op. cit.*

<sup>22</sup> L. Cherubini and A.M. Cherubino, 1673, *op. cit.*, vol.2, pp. 9-19. Pope Pius IV in the Bull *Circumspecta Romani pontificis* dated 1 July 1560, confirmed the 1489 Bull of Pope Innocent VIII, but emphasized that the properties of Saint Lazarus were to be administratively linked with the Priory of Aquitaine of the Order of St John.

## The political life of Fra Michel de Seure de Lumigny

One of the Knights who had dual allegiances with both Hospitaller and Military Orders was Fra Michel de Seure. Born of noble parentage in the town of Lumigny, he professed in the French Langue of the Order of St John in 1539. He quickly climbed the hierarchical rungs of the Order so that at a rather young age he was elected Prior of Champagne. By this time he was already master of several galleys, both of the Order of St John under the Prior of Capua Strozzi, as well as the sovereign navy of the King of France.<sup>23</sup> He was given the title of Bailiff of Boigny in 1564,<sup>24</sup> and was also made a Grand Cross of the Hospitaller Order.<sup>25</sup> It seemed that the ambitious de Seure kept his feet firmly planted in both Orders. Giacomo Bosio, the historian of the Hospitaller Order, records that de Seure while appointed Bailiff of Boigny was also elected Prior of Champagne in the Order of St John.<sup>26</sup>

Apart from riding on the crest of popularity, de Seure had acquired enormous patronage from the French sovereigns.<sup>27</sup> He succeeded Abbot Noailles as the French ambassador to England, a difficult but very important post in the very early years of the reign of Elizabeth I.<sup>28</sup> Michael de Seure was also appointed by the French King to mediate

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<sup>23</sup> G. Bosio, 1602, *op. cit.*, Terza parte Indice. '*fra Michele de Seure, che poi fu Priore di Chiampagne, guidò alcune galere regie nel Mar Oceano, sotto il generalato del Priore di Capua Strozzi*'.

<sup>24</sup> P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, pp.285-286.

<sup>25</sup> A.O.M. 92, f. 41-42. '*Exemplar epistulae, Gallice conscriptae, per M. Magistrum ad Galliae Regem missae, circa concessionem M. Crucis Domino De Seure, equiti*'.

<sup>26</sup> A.O.M. 91, f. 164v. This confirms that the Commandery of Boigny was granted to De Suere with the express wishes of the King and Queen of France. '*Intuitu Gallorum Regis et Reginae, Commenda de Bony (sic) Ordinis et Militiae S. Lazari Hierosolymitani concessa est fr. Michaeli de Seure atque illi data et acultas deferendi M. Crucem*'.

<sup>27</sup> Appendix III: The Subsequent career of Michel de Seure. *Camden Fifth Series*, 2014, 45, pp.179-188.

<sup>28</sup> France had refused to recognize her as Queen of England, because it upheld the claims of the daughter-in-law, Mary Stuart, the wife of the Dauphin and Queen of Scotland, for the throne. This fact, in conjunction with the ascendancy of the Protestant religion in England, required a great amount of skill and diplomatic negotiation by the incumbent ambassador.

certain aspects of the Câteau-Cambrésis Treaty with the Corsicans in an attempt to keep them within the French fold. This patronage served him in good stead. When the post of Treasurer of the Order of St John became vacant, the French king and the Queen Mother wasted no time in making it crystal clear to the Grand Master who their desired candidate for the post should be. And they pushed de Seure to the post regardless of the Order's statutes and despite the eligibility of other more deserving brethren of the Order.<sup>29</sup>

The award of the title 'Bailiff of Boigny' in the Hospitaller Order, versus that of Grand Master is of crucial importance indicating that the Papal Curia was extremely careful to avoid giving the perception that it was giving approval to the French Order of St Lazarus by rubber stamping their Grand Master. Bosio was meticulous in stating that de Seure was invested as *Bailiff* of the French headquarters of the Lazarites, not as a Grand Master.<sup>30</sup> However, Sibert maintains that de Seure was elected Grand Master of the Lazarite Order. Sibert brings out five main points to underpin his argument that the institution of de Seure as Grand Master had Papal approval. However, these are not borne out by the available facts.<sup>31</sup>

The first point states unequivocally that Pius IV did not heed the Deed of Amalgamation in the *Cum solerti*, as this was never implemented, essentially implying that Pius IV ignored the Deed of Union. This was certainly not implied in the Pian Bull. The second point stated that de Seure was invested by Pius IV at the request of Charles IX,

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<sup>29</sup> G. Bosio, 1602, *op. cit.*, Terza Parte, p.482. '*...de Seure, loro cortigiano, che non isdiagnar le Maestá loro, fu giudicato bene prima di far altro; di dar commoditá a tempo alla Lingua di Francia, di mandare il Comm. Fra Iacomo de Viepont a supplicarle, che non volessero pregiudicar in ciò a molti Cavalieri honorati, piú antiani e benemeriti nella Religione di esso Seure*'.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, p.710. '*Essendosi dato al detto Seure, uno Gran Croce ad honore solamente, con titolo di baglio di Bogni: dignitá chi era stata della Religione di San Lazaro. Avenga che l'ambitione del Seure, non per questo si quietesse sin tanto, che n'estorse finalmente il Priorato di Champagnia*'.

<sup>31</sup> P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, pp.290-291.

but the Pope invested (Sibert's words) '*..Michael de Seure with the Priory and Preceptory of Boigny, and all the ecclesiastical benefices attached thereto, on the basis of the regular profession made by Michel de Seure*' (presumably in the Hospitaller Order of St John). The Bull did not specifically mention the assigned status given to de Seure, and it is certainly not implicit in the wording that de Seure was invested as Grand Master of the Lazarite Order. However, this meaning could have been extrapolated from the fact that de Seure had been invested with the Priory of Boigny, the main motherhouse of the Order, and hence the residence of the head of the Order, the Grand Master.<sup>32</sup> Sibert's argument that Pius IV's Bull in 1564 confirmed the French King's appointment of de Seure (as Grand Master) to the Commandery of Boigny (and as a Bailiff from the Pope's viewpoint) is not tenable.

The third point makes out the fact that the Commandery of Boigny was given to de Seure '*tale quale, whether it be, now or previously, principal seat of the Chivalry of Saint Lazarus, on both sides of the sea, as had been claimed*'. This sentence could have been construed to mean that the Pope was not taking the fact of the magistracy of de Seure on his own back and authenticating it, but what he claimed to be common knowledge; another minor criticism that the Pope was not directly acknowledging de Seure as the Master of the Lazarite Order.

The fourth point makes the argument that de Seure was given authority to give out grants according to the seniority of the knights; *ergo* the offices of Grand Master. The last point made by Sibert was that no future Papal Bulls would depart from the aforementioned statutes and regulations of the Order of St Lazarus unless they were given out in whole and that new bulls '*should be communicated to the above-mentioned Brothers and Superiors in three separate Papal briefs, and approved by those Brothers and Superiors*'. However, by Sibert's own admission of facts, there is nowhere in the Papal Bull that stipulates unequivocally that de Seure was invested as a Grand Master by Papal approval.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, p.290.

## Giovanni Castiglione

There was a certain amount of inadequately hidden reluctance by the Roman Curia to acknowledge overtly the magistracy of the French Lazarite Order.<sup>34</sup> This was especially regarding the Grand Mastership of de Seure. Confirmation of this came very soon afterwards. The mood of the Bull *Inter assiduas dominici* of Pius IV in 1565 came as a surprise to Sibert: '*nothing could seem more inconsonant than what then happened to the Order of St Lazarus*'.<sup>35</sup> With hindsight, *Inter Assiduas* was really carrying on the same thoughts, messages and instructions as the 1564 Bull investing de Seure. Section 37 of *Inter assiduas* conferred the dignity of Grand Master of the Order of St Lazarus to another man, Giovanni Castiglione. In truth, Giovanni Castiglione was made Grand Master of the Capuan branch of the Order of St Lazarus.<sup>36</sup> The irate Sibert wrote that '*a new Bull of Pius IV conferred the same dignity upon Giovanni Castiglione*';<sup>37</sup> but as we have seen from the above, nowhere in

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<sup>33</sup> P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, pp.290-292.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, pp.296-297. Sibert had admitted the single-mindedness antipathy of the Roman Curia towards Lazarite hegemony. He states: 'it must nonetheless be acknowledged that the Popes had never recognised in a positive fashion that the Concordat had given the King of France the right to appoint candidates to the Grand Magistracy of the Order of St Lazarus on both sides of the sea; that most of the Bulls said to include Papal recognition of this right cannot be found in the datary; and that Pius IV's Bull in favour of Micheal de Seure contains a certain ambiguity and indecisiveness which indicate that this Pope intended to confer the provisions for the Commandery of Boigny, rather than those for the Grand Magistracy of the Order. In any case, whether Pius IV and his successors acted in contravention of the French Sovereigns' rights and overstepped the limits of their power is an irrelevant issue, given the current condition of the Order'.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, pp.295-296.

<sup>36</sup> Pius IV *Inter assiduas dominici* 1565. Section 33 '*...Hospitalia S. Io. Leprosorum Panormitan. & S. Agathæ Messanem. Ordinis S. Augustini, olim Hospitali S. Lazari tanquam membra capiti subiecta, Religioni, & Hospitali Capuano S. Lazari præfati ... & ferma perpetuo restituerat dictumque Hospitale Capuanum, adversus suppressiones, & extinctiones per Innocentium VIII...*'.

<sup>37</sup> G. Bosio, 1602, *op. cit.*, p.809. '*haveva Papal Pio Quinto, fin dal mese di Maggio dell'anno 1565, ad istanza di Gianotto Castiglione, suo parente, da lui poco dinanzi creato (just now shortly created) Gran Maestro di San Lazaro innovato e di nuovo conceduti i privilegi a quell'Ordine Militare per ristaurario, anzi per ergesio di nuovo,*

the previous Pian Bull does it state that Michael de Seure was the *de facto* Grand Master of the Lazarite Order.<sup>38</sup>

There were various reasons why Pope Pius IV appointed Giovanni Castiglione as the Grand Master of the Lazarite Order rather than the previously mentioned Michael de Seure, as preferred by the French monarchy. These included a desire to satisfy the ambitions of his extended family; Sibert maintained that Castiglione was the nephew of Pope Pius IV.<sup>39</sup> Pius IV must have also known from his Papal spies in the Turkish Porte, as well as from his protégés in the Hospitaller Order, that a massive invasion by the Turks, starting from Malta and climbing northwards towards the Vatican State was imminent. Castiglione's plans whereby he had promised the Pope the building of a great fortress on the island of Pruzza, across from the Ecclesiastical states and the Kingdom of Naples, were therefore most propitious. The Bull was also a tepid attempt to facilitate Spain's ascendancy over France, and the set-up of Castiglione as Grand Master of the Order of St Lazarus acted directly against the French establishment and the King's wishes.

It seemed that the Bull *Inter assiduas* promoting Castiglione as Grand Master continued to confound the aspirations of the three major stake holders: the French King, the previous Popes and the Order of St John. It went straight in the face of the aforementioned Concordat with the French monarchy that gave the latter the authority to nominate and assign names to the Grand Magistracy of the Order of St Lazarus. Secondly, it went against the desires and wishes of Pius IV's predecessors, namely Pope Innocent VIII and Pope Julius II who had

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*poich'egli era gia estinto. Et erano i privilegi sudetti, tanto amplij che se ben'erano con dichiarazione di non pregiudicar all'altre Militiae'.*

<sup>38</sup> At this point in time, Giovanni Castiglione was Grand Master of the Capuan (Italian) Order of St Lazarus; whereas Michel de Seure was Bailiff of Boigny (Mother House of the French Order of St Lazarus) as seen from the viewpoint of the Roman Curia and the Order of St John, and Grand Master of the Order of St Lazarus, from the perspective of the French King.

<sup>39</sup> L. Cherubini and A.M. Cherubino. *Magnum Bullarium Romanum, a Pio Quarto usque ad Innocentium IX.* P. Borde, L. Arnaud & C.I. Rigaud, Lyon, 1673, vol 2, pp.136-150.

promoted the extinction of the Lazarite Order - *Inter assiduas* had just promoted Castiglione as Grand Master to the supposedly defunct Order.<sup>40</sup> Thirdly, it also violated the aspirations of the Order of St John, which had maintained, since 1489 that all the Lazarite possessions belonged to them, with the bequests promulgated by the Papal Bull *Cum solerti*.

With hindsight, the plans of Pope Pius IV were even more devious than those of previous Popes. The goal of the annihilation of the Lazarite Order had, however, never really changed from the plans set out by Pope Innocent VIII,. Gianotto Castiglione tried to start negotiations with the Order of St John whereby he proposed that if he was given the Grand Magistracy of their Order, having already occupied the same post in the Order of St Lazarus (albeit the Capuan Branch) he proposed to unite the two Orders. He would also be instrumental in having achieved what the *Cum solerti* had failed to do seventy-five years before. Unwittingly, Castiglione was playing right into the hands of the Order of St John; this was exactly what the Hospitaller Order had wanted since the promulgation of the *Cum solerti*, and which it had never achieved. This plan had reached the higher echelons of the Council of the Order of St John,<sup>41</sup> but the latter were wary of the amalgamation plans, as these had failed on previous occasions.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Section 33 of *Inter assiduas dominici*: and he (Pope Leo X) replaced and renewed the aforementioned Capuan Hospital against the suppressions and extinctions performed through Innocent VIII, also our predecessor. (English translation by Dr. SL Jones – commissioned by Chev. Prof. M. Ross).

<sup>41</sup> G. Bosio, 1602, *op. cit.*, p 809. '*perilché fu volentieri dell' Ambasciator Cambiano dato orecchio alla pratica, mossa del medesimo Gran Maestro di San Lazaro Giannotto Castiglione d'unir di nuovo quell'Ordine Militare con questo di San Giovanni Gerosolomitano. Per il qual effetto, havendo il Gran Maestro sudetto, piú volte scoperto quel suo desiderio al Cardinale San Clemente all'hora protettore di quest'Ordine, al Prior di Capua Fra Pietro di Monte, al Commendator Cambiano Ambasciatore, e al Signor Giannotto Bosio, mio zio*'. Fra Giuseppe Cambiano was commander of Fossano, Castrovillari, Honrrain, and Medin. He was ambassador of the Order of St John to the Vatican. This plan was sent to Fra Anton Francesco with a *memoriale* sent also to the incumbent Grand Master. The *memoriale* was read by the Grand Master and Council and a reply sent to Cirni in Rome.

<sup>42</sup> P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, p.301.



The strategy promoted by Castiglione was crystal clear. He was to be elected Grand Master of the Order of St Lazarus. From there he would be in the best position possible to militate for the magistracy of the Order of St John. As Grand Master of both Orders and with the patronage of his uncle, Pope Pius IV, amalgamation of the two Orders would not have been difficult. This was something that had eluded successive Popes.

For Castiglione, Grand Master of the Capuan side of the Order of St Lazarus, militating to unite his Order to that of St John came at a price. For his efforts, Castiglione proposed that he was to receive an annual pension of 6000 *scudi* for as long as he lived; this was over and above the *responsiones* that were his due from his Commanderies. He was to retain the title of Grand Master of St Lazarus during his life and at Council and during processional meetings he was to precede every Grand Cross, as if he were the lieutenant of the Grand Master of the Order of St John. The Order of St John also had to pay all the debts and arrears of the Order of St Lazarus while accommodating Giulio Orsini as Constable of the Order of St Lazarus. Orsini was to be paid 1200 *scudi* annually and efforts were to be made for him to enter the service of King Philip II. There was also to be recompense to his son. Within five years, the Grand Master of the Order of St John was also to give a Commandery of Grace to the Grand Master of the Order of St Lazarus, who was then able to donate this to whomsoever he wished. Two pages were also to be given to the Grand Master of the Order of St Lazarus.<sup>43</sup>

However, one year later Castiglione realized that all his best laid plans were to be thwarted.<sup>44</sup> The Grand Master of the Order of St John did not grant any of the above as the Council of the Order thought the demands were excessive. As the Capuan Order of St Lazarus was mired in debts, Castiglione<sup>45</sup> thought it opportune to relinquish the Lazarite

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<sup>43</sup> G. Bosio, 1602, *op. cit.*, p.811.

<sup>44</sup> P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, p.300.

<sup>45</sup> Giovanni Castiglione died on the 5 August 1571 in Giaveno (Turin), where he was a guest of the Cardinal Ferrero.

Order to an Italian Prince.<sup>46</sup> The Duke of Urbino was approached by Castiglione with little results. Eventually the merger with the Savoyan Order of St Maurice occurred in 1572,<sup>47</sup> to become the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus, linked in perpetuity to the House of Savoy.<sup>48</sup>

### **Fra Franciscus De Salviati**

Fra Franciscus Salviati was elected Lieutenant of the Order of St John in the French Kingdom in 1571. At the time when Fra Salviati was interim Vicar General of the Lazarite Order, in the interregnum of De Seure, Boigny was demoted from Bailiwick to a Commandery. This was stated in a Papal Bull awarding the benefice of Boigny to Salviati. It was also stressed that De Salviati was held responsible for seeing that within two years the Commandery would be incorporated and united with the Priory of France as yet another Commandery of the Religion.<sup>49</sup> This was probably the last effort to bring the objectives of the *Cum solerti* to fruition.

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<sup>46</sup> *Dizionario Biografico degli italiani* – volume 22. Downloaded on the 14 August 2017 from [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giannotto-castiglioni\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giannotto-castiglioni_(Dizionario-Biografico)/).

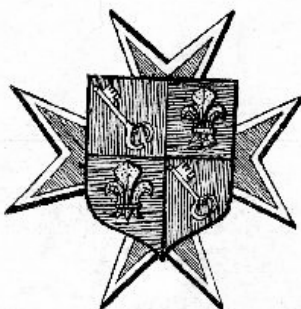
<sup>47</sup> L. Cherubini and A.M. Cherubino, *Magnum Bullarium Romanum, a Pio Quarto usque ad Innocentium IX*. P. Borde, L. Arnaud & C.I. Rigaud, Lyon, 1673, vol.2, pp.366-368. The amalgamation was endorsed by Pope Gregory XIII in the *Pro commissa nobis* dated 13 November 1572.

<sup>48</sup> L. Cherubini and A.M. Cherubino. *Magnum bullarium romanum, a Clemente VII usque ad Gregorium XV*. P. Borde, L. Arnaud & C.I. Rigaud, Lyon, 1655, vol.3, pp.144-147. In 1603, Pope Clement VIII confirmed the amalgamation of the Order of St Lazarus to the Order of St Maurice of Savoy in the Bull *Decretum Romanum Pontificem* dated 9 September 1603.

<sup>49</sup> *A.O.M.* 93, f.33v. Bulls giving the Commandery of Boigny to Fra Francesco Salviati, however, that within two years Fra Salviati was bound to present it to the highest group of Parisian lawmakers so that the Commandery be incorporated into the Priory of France. See appendix.



**Coat-of-arms of Fra Franciscus De Salviati as described from Boigny reflecting Grand Mastership of Order of St Lazarus and membership of the Order of St John<sup>50</sup>**  
*1<sup>er</sup> & 4<sup>e</sup> d'argent à la croix de sinople, qui sont celles de l'Ordre [of St Lazarus] le marque de la Grande-Maîtrise, au 2<sup>e</sup> & 3<sup>e</sup> de guetles aux trois rateaux d'argent, qui sont de Salviati, & sur le tout, un chef de l'Ordre de Malte, dont le Grande-Maître, etoit Chevalier.*



**Coat-of-arms of Fra Aymar de Clermont-Chatte**  
**Commandeur de Saint-Jean-de-Jérusalem et Grand Maître de l'Ordre de Saint-Lazare<sup>51</sup>**  
*Au premier et au 4<sup>e</sup> de queuies à une clef d'argent posée un bande; au 2<sup>e</sup> & 3<sup>e</sup> d'azur à la fleue de lys d'or [tout sur la croix de sinople vert avec bordure argent de l'Ordre de Saint-Lazare]*

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<sup>50</sup> Described by P.E.G. Sibert, *op. cit.*, p.327.

<sup>51</sup> *Bibl. Mat. Mss., Donds franc.*, vol.31795, p.F.&II. Available In *Archives Monréale: Fonds A.-Léo Leymarie*. - [15-]-1981 <https://archivesdemontreal.ica-atom.org/armes-daymar-de-clermont-chatte-18>.

## Conclusion

After the promulgation of *Cum solerti* in 1489, there were several concerted attempts to splinter the Order of St Lazarus. This disintegration did happen to a certain extent and, at a point in time, in the mid-sixteenth century the Lazarite Order in France was being managed by members of the Order of St John under the tutelage of the French monarchy, whereas that in southern Italy was being run by Giovanni Castiglione under the direct protection of the Roman Curia. Needless to state, these incursions to break up the Order of St Lazarus proved unsuccessful. The Lazarite Order did remain viable and relevant although in reality piecemeal. It is a surprising fact that when, in 1775, yet another Papal Bull eradicated the Religious Order of St Anthony of Vienne, the Roman Curia decreed that the spoils were to be divided equally between the Orders of St John and that of St Lazarus, a very different situation from that of 1489, with the two Orders, now on the same side of the negotiating table.<sup>52</sup>

## APPENDIX – A.O.M. 93, fol 33v.

*Bullae Commendae de Boigny expedia[n]tur in favorem fr. Francisci Salviati, eo tamen pacto ut intra biennium fr. Salviati curet ut a publico supremo coetu legumlatorum Pariensi dicta commenda incorporetur Prioratui Francia. Die IX mensis octobris MDLXXI. Audita requisitione in pleno concilio proposita per D. fra Joan'em de Subiran dit arifat procur[ator]em D. F. Francisci Salviatis et eo noi'e petente sine tn preuiditio suoru' anciano bullas et provisiones bauilivatus de boigni cum decoratione et insigniis magna crucis dari ac expediri ab renunciatione de eo facta ex parte venerandi bauilivi D. F. Michaelis le Seure eiusdem Bauilivatus ultimi et legitimi possessionis et bauilivi. Nec non audita contradictio domini fra Gasparis de partenay dit Foucaucourt procuris' domini f. Joannis de Cuuiller dit cussi anciani euisdem de salviatis pretendenti et contententi hmoi' bullas minime nisi in titulo comendae et non Bauilivatus absq maioris crucis concessione dari ne ipsi domino de Cussi praeiudiculo aliq. inferatur. Intellecta preterea D. F. Claudii Jobelin procuratoris ut dixit Prioratus Campania allegatione et praetensione ... bauilivatus predictus sit, intelligatur et*

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<sup>52</sup> R. Gatt. The Suppression of the Order of St Anthony of Vienne in 1775: the consequent interactions between the Order of the Hospital and the Order of St Lazarus. In C. Savona-Ventura and M. Ross (eds.), *Acta Historiae Sancti Lazari Ordinis*, Lulu.com, Malta 2016, pp.57-86.

*censeatur comunis fratribus trium prioratum Franciae ut in ea lingua requisivit. Postremis audito et Domino f. Jacobo le iay, procuratore ... domini le seure qui in ipsa lingua in favore praenominati de salviatis dictum bauilivatam denunciavit sub conditione latius ex actis ipsius linguae contentis et exhibitis ideo bullas expediri modo premissis et non atr. requerentis. Reverendissimus D. M. Magistri et ven. con cum scrutinio ballotarum decreverut ut bullae atq. provisiones expediantur praedicto dom f. Francisco Salviatis sub titulo simplicis commendae de Boigny et non bauilivatus cintemplatione et intuitu christianissimi francorum regis, ita ...isse de salviatis teneatur vitra biennui curare cum effectu et essicere ut a suprema curia parlamet parisien emologetur, approbetur et confirmetur incorporatio et unio dictae commendae de Boigny ad prioratum franciae ad instar .. commendae religionis.*

### **Translation [Prof. HCR Vella]**

*The Bulls of the Commenda de Boigny should be dispatched in favour of Bro. Francis Salviatis, with that proviso, however, that Bro. Salviatis should, within two years, see that the mentioned Commenda be incorporated within the Priory of France by the Paris Public Meeting of Legislators. The 9th day of the month of October, 1571. When the request made by the Lord Bro. John de Subiran called "Arifat", procurator of the Lord Bro. Francis Salviatis, and requesting in his name, was heard in full Council but without prejudice of his (predecessors), (it was decided) that the Bulls and provisions of the Bailiwick de Boigny be given and dispatched with decoration and ensigns of the Great Cross following the renouncement made as regards it on the part of the Venerable Bailiff Lord Bro. Michael le Seure of the last and legitimate possession of the same Bailiwick. Also, when the opposition of the Lord Bro. Gaspar de Partenay called "Fouraucourt", procurator of the Lord Bro. John de Cuviller called "Cussi", pretender and contender of the same Elder de Salviatis, was heard, (it was agreed) that the Bulls be least given except in the title of the Commenda, and not of the Bailiwick without the concession of the Greater Cross lest it proceed to the Lord de Cussi himself with some other prejudice. Furthermore, when the allegation and pretension of the Lord Bro. Claude Jobelin, procurator, as he said, of the Priory of Campania, came to be known, the already mentioned Bailiwick should be, should be understood and should be considered as common to the Brothers of the three Priors of France, as he requested in that language. Finally, when even the Lord Bro. Jacob le Lay, procurator of the Lord le Seure, was heard, who denounced the mentioned Bailiwick in the same language in favour of the already mentioned de Salviatis with the condition more broadly*

*according to the Acts of the same language contained and shown therein, (it was decided) that the Bulls of the person making the request be sent in the manner already set and in no other way. The Most Rev. Lord Grand Master and the Venerable Council decreed by means of ballot that the Bulls and provisions be sent to the already mentioned Lord Bro. Francis Salviatis with the title of the simple Commenda de Boigny and not with the understanding and sense of the Bailiwick of the Most Christian King of the Franks, in such a way that de Salviatis be held responsible for seeing with effect and thoroughness that within two years the incorporation and union of the mentioned Commenda de Boigny be approved and confirmed to the Priory of France after the fashion of the Commandery of the Religion by the Paris Supreme Court.*