

**Address by HRH The Duke of Castro on the occasion of the
conferring of the Grand Cross pro Merito Melitensi within the
Special Class of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta
Roma - 5 December 2012.**

Altezza Eminentissima, Eminenza Reverendissima, Membri del Sovrano Consiglio, Eccellenze, Cari Confratelli,

May I thank you, Your Highness, for your kind and most generous words and for receiving us today. I am delighted to be here and to receive from you this further high honour of the Grand Cross pro Merito Melitensi within the Special Class. I accept it with appreciation and conscious of the spirit in which Your Highness has approved it.

Our warm friendship, on a personal and institutional level, is one which I greatly value. The many centuries of cordial and brotherly relations between our two Orders are well known and appreciated.

In particular, the close ties of friendship and solidarity are clearly based on the common purposes of moral support and material assistance for people in need, in the belief of making ever more effective our efforts in support of our religious principles.

In this regard, I would like to express my great appreciation to you, the members of the Sovereign Council, the diplomatic missions and national associations in the world who perform these functions so significantly even at times of great difficulty.

The fact that our respective Orders share members of both sides is also indicative of our shared commitment to serving the Universal Catholic Church, both on the national and international level.

Your Highness :

I have been a member of the Order of Malta for thirty years and it is ten years since my appointment as a Bailiff Grand Cross. I would therefore like to use this occasion to commit myself, my Royal House and my dynastic orders to developing an ever deeper expression, of spiritual and charitable cooperation, between our respective, noble, and internationally recognized, institutions. Thank you.