



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LINEAGE OF THE ORDER

Roots of the Order

- The Order's roots are in the Oriental Orthodox branches of Christianity.
- These are what are called the autocephalous churches in the lands East of Palestine: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Armenia, Arabia, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Tibet, Nepal, and China.
- Christianity existed and flourished in these lands for over a millennia after the advent of Christianity, and many of them they still exist today. In other places Oriental Orthodoxy has died out.
- These early churches and branches of Christianity spoke the original language of Jesus and transmitted his wisdom teachings to the East. Often very different from Occidental Christianity, they expressed the wisdom that Jesus lived through his work and witness before it became quagmired in the rules and dogmas of the Western churches—the Latin Catholic of Europe and Greek Orthodox of the Byzantine Empire.
- After the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE), these Oriental branches self-separated from western Orthodoxy and remained isolated from the West and were largely forgotten by their western brothers and sisters. They, however, continued to flourish and expand in their own native lands.

Oriental Christianity Under Islam

- Around the 7th Century, Islam became the predominant faith in the Middle East, and yet these churches continued to exist as separate faith communities.
- In other lands they flourished alongside Buddhism and Hinduism as equal faith traditions.
- Sometimes this co-existence was not easy, yet mutual respect between the faith traditions was the norm and these disparate communities generally lived in harmony and peace.
- Greater disruption between the faiths, however, came as a result of the Crusaders who invaded these homelands, and then later again as colonialism from the West spread across Asia and the Middle East. Each of these movements introduced greater stress and tension to their normal relationships.
- As a result of the Inquisition, the same disruption swamped the flourishing culture of the three Abrahamic faiths living together in relative peace in southern Spain.

Oriental Christian Migrations

- As disorder grew during the 19th and 20th centuries, many Christian people from the Middle East sought refuge in the West, bringing their faith with them.
- Some of these communities settled in North and South America where they built churches and continued their faith traditions. Many welcomed western Christians into their congregations.
- In this way some clergy and bishops, not of Middle Eastern or Indian descent were ordained into these communities and took leadership.
- One lineage of Oriental Orthodoxy in particular, from Eastern Iraq and Iran (Syrian and Assyrian Churches), moved from South America to North American and the West Coast of the USA where new congregations were established.
- The lineage of the Oriental Orthodox Order in the West came from bishops from these branches and congregations understood by them to be an authentic transmission from Apostolic times.

The Origins of the OOOW

- An early bishop of this lineage was the Rev. Dr. James Hall (who had received ordination from earlier bishops now residing in the West), and then later the Rev. Drs. Marshal Voris and Shirley Good received the same transmission. Later Marshal and Shirley were also made Knights in the tradition of the Russian Orthodox Templars.
- These lineages were passed on to Ron and Karen Poidevin and Lynn Bauman who were ordained priests by the hands of the Rev. Drs. Marshal Voris and Shirley Good and with the permission of the Rev. Dr. James Hall. The tradition of the Knights Templars (also called Hospitalers), was also transmitted to them at a later liturgy.
- The Rev. Dr. Voris and his wife Dr. Shirley Good had been knighted earlier for accomplishments in their field. Dr. Voris and Dr. Good were appointed Prior and Prioress of Delos Priory of The Sovereign Order of the Orthodox Knights Hospitaller of Saint John of Jerusalem. They also founded Hallow Place, Inc., the parent organization of Delos Mind~Body Institute and The International Institute of Integrative Medicine.
- An early convocation of Bishops Marshal Voris and Shirley Good with priests Ron, Karen and Lynn was convened in 2002 in Corpus Christi, Texas where Marshal expressed his desire to restructure the Oriental Orthodox lineage to include a monastic tradition alongside its ecclesial structures.
- The Rev. Doctor Marshal Voris died suddenly in 2003 of a heart attack and the nascent Texas community of Oriental Christians gathered immediately to reflect on its future without Marshall. The decision was made to seek additional permission from the Rev. Dr. James Hall (with Shirley Good concurring) to continue the lineage from the Oriental Orthodox tradition as a newly formed and constituted monastic Order in the West rather than as a church or ecclesiastical body as it had originally come from the Middle East.
- That permission was granted and the existing leadership were made Abbots of the newly formed monastic Oriental Orthodox Order in the West. The writing of our founding documents based on earlier discussions with the Rev. Drs. Marshal Voris and Shirley Good was clarified and ratified, and the work of the Order began to spread in a new way.
- The form of the lineage changed, but the transmission of the ancient Oriental Orthodox lineage did not and has been passed now to many monks of the Oriental Orthodox Order in the West. Each has

received the same ***Barakah*** (blessing) passed through the centuries from its ancient origins in Palestine understood from the earliest times to have come from the hands of Yeshua and his Apostles.

- In the years since, the work of the Order has grown rapidly and new monks have been steadily added to the Order as well as a number of priests. New Abbots have also been ordained, among them the Rev. Dr. Blake Burleson and the Rev. Ann Johnson, to help meet the needs of its work and its expanding membership with its many friends.

—*L. Bauman, 2019*