



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

## **ORDER OF ST JOHN INVESTITURE**

**Speech by Mr Anthony Howard QC**

**Thursday 26 July, 2018**

**The Right Reverend the Honourable Dr Peter Hollingworth AC OBE**, Former Governor-General

**Professor Mark Compton AM**, Chancellor of the Order of St John

**Ms Virginia Bourke**, Chair, St John Council and **Board Members**

**Mr Gordon Botwright**, Chief Executive Officer, St John Ambulance Victoria

**The Very Reverend Dr Andreas Loewe**, Dean of Melbourne, St Paul's Cathedral

**Reverend Jim Pilmer**, PSM, State Chaplin to the Order of St John

**Distinguished guests, recipients, ladies and gentlemen**

First, in the spirit of reconciliation, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this evening.

Unfortunately, the Governor is unwell today and unable to be here. She very reluctantly accepted her doctor's advice and remains most disappointed about missing you all today, and especially missing out on personally investing the postulants.

However, I am pleased – on her behalf - to welcome you to Government House to celebrate this Investiture for Admission and Promotion of members of the Order of St John, and to convey to you the observations she intended to make this evening.

It is wonderful to see the names and achievements of the postulants today. Some of you have contributed to our community in special and caring ways with which we are immediately familiar, via your first-aid volunteering. Others have contributed in equally worthy, but less publicly visible ways.

What you all share in common is not only a commitment to others, but also a generosity of spirit and goodwill that adds immeasurably to the richness of life in our State.

Amongst the 12 of you, you have given a combined 163 years of service.

Some of you have joined as cadets, and across decades have risen through the ranks to leadership positions, helping to enlist, train, organise and inspire subsequent generations of volunteers.

Others have given freely of their professional skills in finance, law, risk management, insurance, strategy and governance that support the complex business of St John's range of services.

For her part, Canon Heather Patacca is being recognised for the warm relationship that she facilitates between the Order and the Church.

It is easy to see that St John is an organisation that has truly risen to meet the community's needs.

Last year alone, you interacted with nearly 300,000 Victorians across medical treatment, transportation and training.

And, recognising the challenges that many people face attending medical appointments, shopping or visiting loved ones, St John Ambulance Victoria has now launched the '*Community Transport*' program. It not only assists people with logistics, but it also helps to keep them connected to their community.

Importantly, no matter how innovative you are in your services and practices, everything you do is underpinned by the values that have been held dear in this Order for 900 years.

Preventing and relieving sickness and injury, and enhancing people's health and well-being, still lie at the heart of all that you do.

Your mottos: *'In the Service of Humanity'* and *'For the Faith'* are as relevant in guiding you now as they were when they were chosen around half a millennium ago.

And so, we welcome the opportunity today to express our deep appreciation on behalf of the Victorian community, for all of your contributions. For your hard work and dedication. Your skills. And your generous and caring spirits.

May I also acknowledge and thank the St John Board of Directors, led by your Chair, Virginia Bourke, whom I note is, herself being admitted today as an Officer of the Order.

That leaves me only to offer the warmest congratulations to all postulants on your achievements, and on the recognition that you have received today.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible while you are here this evening.