

ORDRE DES CHEVALIERS BRETAINS
Bailliage Grande Bretagne

Message from the Grand Master
Gildas VIAUD
26th September 2026



Ladies of the Duchess Anne, Brother Knights, Bailiffs, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

First of all, my thoughts go out to all those who have recently left us, specifically, Michel Bassompierre, Bernard Le Pan, Vincent Barbier, and our late Grand Master Yves Cailler, who was taken from us far too soon. He left our Order bereft of its leader. At his own investiture, he had expressed the wish to present his successor - the 9th Grand Master-at the end of his term. Sadly, he never had the chance to do so. I dedicate this title to him.

Yet, I would never have become the 9th Grand Master without all of you: you who welcomed me and shared wonderful moments with me; you who introduced me to the Order and its workings, helped me rise through the ranks, and ultimately entrusted me with this weighty responsibility. Without you, I would be nothing.

My deepest thanks and respect go to everyone who has worked to make the OCB what it is today: an ambassador for our beloved Muscadet, as well as for the culture and gastronomy of our vineyards and the Nantes region-all in a spirit of mutual respect and conviviality.

There is still work to be done, but my predecessors have left behind a magnificent legacy and a path to follow. I intend to follow that path, building upon the foundation they established.

We possess a tremendous asset in La Fremoire and our closer ties with the wine federation. We must continue along this course, drawing ever closer to the world of viticulture and the winemakers themselves. Let them know they have our full support; we are well aware of the difficult times they have faced in recent years, but we also recognize that a brighter future lies ahead.

We are not here to take advantage of them, but to join them in promoting what unites us, a passion for this vineyard and for these exceptional Muscadet wines.

A case in point is the event organized for the reopening of Nantes Cathedral, where we made our own modest contribution to promoting Muscadet. I wouldn't call it a triumph, as that would be an exaggeration, but if we brought happiness to people, it was thanks to the high-quality wine we served and our genuine desire to promote them. We have nothing to gain personally; being *Bretvin* is about sharing.

Another matter close to my predecessors' hearts: we do have young people in our ranks - Knights or Dames of the Duchess Anne - but we must continue to bring more youth and more women into our Order. The future of our brotherhood and our image depends on it. We welcome young people, along with their fresh ideas and skills. Yes, it requires commitment; being a *Bretvin* is something one earns. But it is up to us to welcome them and ensure they stay.

This applies regardless of the age of our new recruits. I recently heard someone say, "*You know, you're actually really nice!*" Yes, our black robes hide big hearts, though we tend to be reserved about showing it. And yes, the goal is not to keep to ourselves, but to share and exchange ideas. That is the spirit that should drive every *Bretvin*.

We share a common passion and bring a wealth of experience, skills, and diverse international backgrounds. It is up to us to keep this vision alive. A fitting transition to my next point is the arrival of the *Bailliages*, who have honored us with their presence. I wish to thank them, personally, and on behalf of the Order, for participating. I will not name you all individually, but your journey here demonstrates your deep attachment to our region, and that commands our utmost respect.

In conclusion, and as time is short (the horn players are signaling that their reeds are drying out), the moment has come to thank everyone:

- Dear Seneschal Gerard Gouraud, for staging this ceremony;
- Our *Baillis*, for their presence and contributions;
- The horn players, for the entertainment;
- The *Echansons* (wine stewards), for their expertise;
- The municipality of Monnieres, for making the hall available;
- All our partners and friends;

and last, but certainly not least, all of you for your heartwarming presence, your support, and the message you send regarding your attachment to our brotherhood and the people who bring it to life.



To finish, I shall perform the first major duty of my office: I invite you all-Ladies of the Duchess Anne, Knights, and all those present to join in the ceremonial glass of Muscadet. But first, I ask you to stand and sing the *Bretvin* anthem.

Long live the Order of the Knights *Bretvins*, in keeping with our motto: "*drink the wine, be good like it.*"