



GRAND MAGISTERIUM – VATICAN
EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

The Grand Master's Lenten message

"The great temptations of Jesus are still ours": let us allow ourselves to be guided by Him to Jerusalem this Lent.



At the beginning of this Lent, the Grand Master wishes to reach out all the members of the Order and he invites us to read the message of the Holy Father "'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem...'" (Mt 20:18). Lent: time to renew faith, hope and charity" (see below) which already centers our gaze on the journey of these forty days towards that city that the Knights and Dames of the Order have so much at heart.

We are preparing to enter the Lenten season. After a year in which we have personally experienced to a greater or lesser degree many challenges and experienced the desert to which Christ withdraws, we welcome the invitation of our Grand Master to use these six weeks offered by the Church to nourish ourselves with Word of God, to again recognize our rock in Him and only in Him, to look at the temptations that every human life faces and allow ourselves be guided in the answers to be given. As Knights and Dames we follow in the footsteps of Jesus in the desert and later on the path to Jerusalem, keeping our gaze fixed on what Cardinal Filoni reminds us to be "the point of reference for our Lenten journey": the empty Sepulchre.

We enter Lent by following Jesus, not simply listening to the sound of his voice, but to the Word, and allowing ourselves to be drawn by his example.

Christian life always proposes a journey to follow, one from which we cannot exempt ourselves; the meaning that we want to give to our life constitutes its direction, while by our actions we lay the path. Of course one can live without taking a direction, without bothering to seek a direction! However, one can also live by knowing one's direction and seeking it out, as so many men and women have done, constituting a turning point in their meaningless lives. It is not a question of a choice by imposition, but of adherence to the proposal that comes to us from faith directed towards Christ.

Over the next six weeks, the Church gifts us a Lenten journey, to coincide with the time of the liturgical year: a period that has Easter as its goal passing through the mystery of the passion and death of Jesus. Salvific for all.

Thus Lent appears to us as a Christological time; a time traced in the likeness of the forty days in which the Lord withdraws to a desert region, in the likeness of Moses and Elijah also hermits of the Eternal; Jesus, therefore, puts aside work as a daily worry, puts aside affections and relationships and feeds on the Word of God for forty days to allow himself to be tempted with the "security" that we instinctively seek in life, with the tenor of it (bread), with faith (God, where is He?), and with the suggestions of the insatiable cult of the self; in these temptations all the struggles of our existence are condensed: we are at the crossroads of it.

Forty days prepared Jesus for the mission that awaited him; this "spiritual retreat" was necessary to remove himself from a life that had hitherto been hidden, apparently banal or in any case not different from many others. Faced with the very strong tensions that torment the existence of every man and woman, Jesus prepares his response to bread, power and success.

It is no different for us. If we reflect, during this past year Covid has united us all in a rather Lenten lifestyle, which has upset our peaceful itinerary, kept under control on the reassuring tracks of technologies and our capabilities. We have been tempted on our certainties, on the removal of God, on our humiliated survival and freedom; in short: the great temptations of Jesus are still ours.

Lent therefore reminds us of this struggle of the Lord; a struggle that will never end and is present in every fold of our existence; a struggle that continues also in humanity in various forms, indeed it will always return dramatically as it was for Jesus, who was even tempted in the garden of olives and on the cross. From Golgotha, however, the new Temple, his glorious body, will be born, and that of Jesus will be its final answer: the empty Sepulchre. The empty Sepulchre is the reference point of our Lenten journey.

Lent invites us to conversion and to believe in the Gospel, according to the Lord's preaching: "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news" (Mk 1:15). Lent also exhorts us to exercise charity, according to the teaching of the Baptist: "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same" (Lk 3:11) and to prayer, which has as its foundation the presence of God, our life – even painful experiences – as its content, and our affective union with Christ as its configuration.

Fernando Cardinal Filoni

(February, 15, 2021)

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR LENT 2021