



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

Hundreds of Knights and Dames follow in the footsteps of Blessed Bartolo Longo



At the decision of Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, there was a jubilee pilgrimage during the month of the Rosary, Saturday 15 October 2016, of Knights and Dames from all over Italy to the Marian shrine in Pompeii, on the occasion of the Year of Mercy, which comes to a close on 20 November.

“We were more than 800 pilgrims, 550 of which were Knights and Dames from all over Italy and also from Switzerland”, said the Lieutenant for Italy South Tyrrhenian, Knight Grand Cross **Giovanni Napolitano**, who, incidentally, was strongly congratulated by the **Grand Master** for the perfect organisation of this event, which has gone down in history.

During a morning conference on the Pompeiian charism, which used **Bartolo Longo's testimony of a Christian life**, the participants of the pilgrimage discovered all the works of charity which were built from nothing, on just ‘a penny a month’, also realising an understanding of the truth of the message of God's love, through the mediation of Our Lady, given to the only lay member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre beatified to this day.

Model of Christian life, of humility and selflessness for all Knights and Dames, they had the chance to personally invoke him, notably through the prayer for his canonisation (see next page).

Following that, leaving on procession through the streets of the Marian city, the pilgrims of the Order passed through the Holy Door of the shrine, before attending midmorning Mass. The reliquary containing the body of Blessed Bartolo Longo had, exceptionally, been placed close to the altar

underneath the famous image of the Blessed Virgin of Pompeii. Welcoming the congregation at the beginning of the Eucharistic celebration **Msgr. Tommaso Caputo**, the archbishop prelate and pontifical delegate for Pompeii – himself a member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre – strongly highlighted that, “through the intercession of the Blessed, the Knights and Dames today entrust their fervent desire to live a Christian life of Charity, and to increase the works of moral and material support helping those Christians of the Holy Land and the Middle East.” In his homily **Msgr. Antonio Franco**, Assessor of the Order, encouraged the Knights and Dames to experience deeply the grace of forgiveness in these final days of the Jubilee of Mercy.

After sharing a joyful meal as a family – raising even then the idea of a future international pilgrimage of the Order to Pompeii, perhaps after the canonisation of Bartolo Longo – the pilgrims came back to the shrine at the beginning of the afternoon for a time of Eucharistic Adoration and the Holy Rosary, honouring also their patron saint just a few days from the feast of **Our Lady of Palestine**, liturgically celebrated on 25 October.

(October 20, 2016)