



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

The Spring Meeting of the Grand Magisterium



The Spring Meeting of the Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre was held on 12th April 2022, at the Palazzo della Rovere. Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Grand Master, who chaired the meeting remotely, insisted on the importance of continuing to support the Mother Church in Jerusalem, even if news of the war in Europe tends to distract our focus away from the Holy Land. The Grand Master also underlined the urgency of preparing for the future through facilitating the integration of younger people into the Order.

The meeting was moderated, as usual, by the Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, in the presence of the Lieutenant General, Professor Agostino Borromeo, the Vice-Governor Generals Jean-Pierre de Glutz and Enric Mas, the Chancellor, Ambassador Alfredo Bastianelli, Treasurer, Dr. Saverio Petrillo, Master of Ceremonies, Mgr. Fortunato Frezza, President of the Legal Commission, lawyer Flavio Rondinini, Duke Leopoldo Torlonia, Knight Grand Cross Michael Scott Feeley, H.S.H. Prince Hugo Windisch Graetz, Professor Helene Lund, Professor Bartholomew McGettrick, President of the Commission for the Holy Land, and the CEO of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Sami el-Yousef.

In addition to the Grand Master, also present virtually either live or by video, were Assessor Mgr. Tommaso Caputo, Vice-Governor Tom Pogge, Knight Grand Cross Nicholas McKenna, Colonel Dominique Neckerbroeck, Professor Vincenzo Buonomo and Lady Grand Cross Mary O'Brien.

In his main address, the Governor General insisted on openness to dialogue with the Lieutenancies, to support them in their work especially in the different language groups, announcing the meeting of the Lieutenancies of North America next June in Los Angeles and that of the Latin American Lieutenancies in San Paulo, Brazil, the following November. He was delighted with the positive financial results from the Grand Magisterium. The Governor General also informed the Grand

Magisterium about the work to draft the new internal Regulations of the Order, as well as the progress of the renovation works at the Palazzo della Rovere.

The members then listened to a recorded video message from the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Archbishop. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, warmly thanking the Order for its continued support and looking to the future with hope. For his part, the Lieutenant General announced the conclusion of the vital work of the Saint-Jean-Baptist Foundation, whose mission was to save the University of Madaba, in Jordan, from running a deficit. The final balance sheet for 2021 was then presented by Dr. Petrillo and approved, closing with a surplus of 1,236,524.47 Euros, almost entirely offsetting the deficit of 1,397,729 Euros from the previous year caused by expenses relating to the solidarity made necessary by the Covid 19 crisis.

In his very comprehensive report, the administrative director of the Latin Patriarchate showed how the Order's donations made it possible to help more than 20,000 people in difficulty during the pandemic, to pay some 2,000 employees of the diocese of the Holy Land, thus supporting many families, and creating jobs for young people, especially in Palestine and Gaza. He welcomed the enthusiasm shown by the Lieutenancies for small projects with a social and educational dimension.

The President of the Commission for the Holy Land, Bart Mc Gettrick, back from Jerusalem, wanted to testify to the high socio-political tension and despair that the local population would experience if the Order were not there to keep the torch of hope alight.

Chancellor Bastianelli, for his part, reiterated the Grand Master's words concerning the young people of the Order, proposing the constitution of an international network of young members, which could be led from Rome, to encourage local initiatives that would help rejuvenate the institution.

Vice-Governors De Glutz, Pogge and Mas opened a debate with their speeches on the various questions raised during the talks, including that of the training of future members. On the same theme, the Grand Master, in his conclusions, emphasised the role that Priors and Grand Priors in the Lieutenancies play in the initial and the ongoing formation of Knights and Dames, a need to which he has been firmly committed in recent months through his spiritual teachings disseminated by the Order's various communication channels. He welcomed the resumption of pilgrimages to the Holy Land, first and foremost the one he will make from 9th to 14th May and which will be marked by his solemn entry into the Holy Sepulchre.

(April 2022)

Sami El-Yousef updates members of the Grand Magisterium on current events from the Holy Land



During the Grand Magisterium meeting on April 12, 2022, Sami El-Yousef, Administrative Director of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, provided the members with a detailed report regarding the situation in the Holy Land and the status of the many important charitable projects and initiatives carried out thanks to the contributions of the Knights and Dames of the Order.

Clearly the economic and social challenge continues to be exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic, primarily unemployment which is slow to decline in Palestine, Gaza and Jordan. 2021's increase in funding for humanitarian (from \$650,000 to \$1 million) and pastoral (from \$340,000 to \$500,000) sponsored by the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, along with the generous fund created after the Grand Master's appeal for needs due to the pandemic (over \$3 million) were two of the initiatives put in place to try to offer more support to the population.

Sami El-Yousef also shared an update on various small projects that have been taken on by the Order's Lieutenancies from 2019 onwards. Allowing Lieutenancies to support a specific reality has consolidated relations with those local communities that receive their aid. All of this, however, should not detract from the important and necessary monthly support for institutional expenses, schools and the seminary that continue to operate thanks to these contributions.

The administrative director of the Patriarchate drew attention to two issues that should not be underestimated: the decline in the number of students in the Patriarchate's schools in the second year of the pandemic (and a good number of them are Christians); and the increase in the price of some supplies following the outbreak of war in Ukraine, as well as the strengthening of the shekel against the dollar, which implies greater economic disbursements compared to the budgeted budgets.

Nonetheless, the Holy Land is looking to the future with confidence at this time when pilgrimages are also slowly recovering and the Patriarchate's financial position is enjoying greater stability.