



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

"Peace is not possible, without the Risen Christ."

Mass in honor of Our Lady of Palestine and prayer for peace



Never before has the feast of Our Lady of Palestine, which is celebrated on Oct. 25, fallen at a time when her intercession is most needed. Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, of which Our Lady of Palestine is patroness, was accompanied by the Governor General, members of the Grand Magisterium and Knights and Dames, in the celebration of Mass of this feast in the Church of Santo Spirito in Sassia with a special intention for peace in the Holy Land.

At the beginning of his homily, Cardinal Filoni quoted a passage from the letter to the entire diocese circulated, by His Beatitude Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem on October 24. Cardinal Pizzaballa writes, "We are approaching the solemnity of the Queen of Palestine, the patroness of our diocese. The shrine was erected during another time of war, and was chosen as a special place to pray for peace. In these days we will once again reconsecrate our Church and our land to the Queen of Palestine! I ask all churches around the world to join the Holy Father and to join us in prayer, and in the search for justice and peace. We will not be able to gather all together this year, because the situation does not allow it. But I am sure that the whole diocese will be united on that day in prayer and in solidarity for peace, not worldly peace, but the peace which Christ gives us."

"With this our celebration today," the Grand Master began, "we join this intention and pray for the Church in the Holy Land. Pointing to the first reading from the Book of Revelation of St. John (Rev. 21:1-5), Cardinal Filoni commented, "In Revelation, a new heaven and a new earth are glimpsed because those of before disappear. The new Jerusalem descends from heaven as an adorned bride for the Risen Christ; the new Jerusalem is not built by men... "

"We Knights and Dames," he continued, "are called to contribute to the building of this Holy City. It is a prospect, something in the making where the times and ways belong to God. Where the Bridegroom

who is waiting is there; where the Bride is not yet ready; where the dwelling is there but not completed. Where still the tears continue to flow, where death is not eliminated."

"Yet," the Grand Master continued, referring to the Gospel of the Resurrection proclaimed in the Mass (Mt 28:1-10), "even today's difficult and complex historical reality fails to extinguish Jesus' greeting to the women who went with sadness to the tomb and instead encountered the Risen Christ. His words "Hail to you" give comfort and rebuild inner peace. From sadness that they were going to the Tomb, they return with joy to make the announcement to the disciples, "The Lord is risen!"

The biblical reality we hear in the liturgy of the word, the story of salvation, speaks to our historical reality today. Concluding his homily Cardinal Filoni stated, strongly emphasizing these words, "Peace is difficult to 'enjoy,' it is much more important to rebuild it. Peace, respect and rights are to be rebuilt. And the feelings we have today are not of adherence to one side or the other but of union in human solidarity, a solidarity that, however, goes beyond human reality." He ends, "Without the Risen Christ, peace is not possible. May Mary, Queen of Palestine, take onto her lap the care of this humanity of ours that needs her maternal attention."

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