



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

A Knight of the Grand Cross of our times, now a Saint!



The elevation to the altars of Blessed Bartolo Longo is going to take place on October 19, 2025 in St. Peter's Square. Leo XIV will preside over the solemn celebration in which other Blesseds are proclaimed Saints by the Pontiff. The meaning of a canonisation is in the fact that the Church is called to holiness through her children and they, having the Mystery of Jesus at the centre of their lives, with his passion, death and resurrection, shape their own existence and become a source of inspiration for many other men and women.

Bartolo Longo reached holiness after a long period of spiritual waywardness; then came his return to God by walking the path of charity, love for Mary, and the prayer of the Rosary, in which he involved friends and acquaintances. Like John beneath the Cross, Bartolo Longo gave Mary a “home”, in his Shrine of Pompei (Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary), which he founded in a desolate, poor, and ill-reputed land.

Day after day, this was the path he followed until, even after certain misunderstandings and unjust slander, he became a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. This honour concluded his life, and when that came to pass, he was buried wearing the knightly habit. Bartolo Longo was not a knight by dynastic inheritance nor by acquisition of title; he became one because he kept the indelible memory of the Redemption. Although we are caught up in overly human and superficial considerations in our daily lives, every Knight and Dame of the Holy Sepulchre should never forget that too.

In 1925, on the 50th anniversary of the arrival in Pompei of the image of Our Lady of the Rosary, Pius XI, the then Grand Master of the Order, decided to confer to Bartolo Longo the honor of Knight of the Grand Cross, which was presented to him on May 30 by Cardinal Augusto Silj. Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Gasparri, in handing over the insignia and the Brief to Cardinal Silj, stated: “I am certain that this high distinction, which recognizes the great merits acquired by this outstanding man,

will also serve to encourage him to continue with the tireless and youthful vigor that distinguishes him in his religious and humanitarian apostolate”.

During the solemn ceremony, in thanking Cardinal Silj, Bartolo Longo declared that he was poor: his only personal possessions were the knightly insignia he had received from the benevolence of the Pontiff, which he bequeathed to the orphans, who were the sons and daughters of prisoners (cf. Dicasterium De Causis Sanctorum – Pompeiana – Canonizationis Beati Bartolomeai Longo – Viri Laici – Positio Super Canonizatione, Romae 2024, pp. 787-788).

Today, we Knights and Dames cannot but fail to rejoice. Many of you are participating in the celebration in St Peter's Square and we all rejoice in the grace granted us of having a lay confrere recognized as a Saint.

May his intercession accompany us each day, inspire our steps, and sow seeds of reconciliation and charity in this dramatic moment for the Holy Land, which Bartolo Longo, as a devout Christian and Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, deeply loved.

Fernando Cardinal Filoni

Grand Master

(October 2025)