



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

“You might be a modern saint!” Reflection of the Grand Master



In his recent Apostolic Exhortation, *Gaudete et Exultate* on our call to holiness in today’s world, Pope Francis declares at the outset: “Jesus wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland and mediocre spiritual existence.”

Modern saints need not to be formally canonized, nor do they live in “swooning and mystic rapture.” You might know, or even be a modern saint! Not perfect, but trying to be, drawing closer to Christ and imitating him in small gestures and selfless service to others. Saints live in trustful joy whatever the circumstances. They recognize the face of Christ in their beatitudinal awareness and response to the poor, the weak and those suffering persecution for His sake.

Saints will necessarily suffer in a spiritual combat, but they can always be assured of the strength gained in personal prayer and frequent sacramental life, especially the Eucharist and Penance.

In a challenging statement, Pope Francis summarizes the identity of a saint: “A mission planned by the Father to reflect and embody, at a specific moment in history, a certain aspect of the Gospel.” The mission of everyone of us is defined in family, occupation, social contacts and personal status such as health, economic status, etc.

In our case, the mission of a knight or dame of the Order is additionally defined by a solemn commitment to Christ and His Church in the Holy Land. In this regard, note that Pope Francis insists: “Growth in holiness is a journey in community, side by side with others.” Accordingly, we can conclude that our Order “...is called to create a God-enlightened space in which to experience the hidden presence of the Risen Lord.”

Does our special devotion to the Empty Tomb enable us to experience “the hidden presence of the Risen Lord”? What effect has a Pilgrimage there had in experiencing his hidden presence – in the

Mass and Holy Eucharist, perhaps? What can each of us contribute to make our Lieutenancy “a God-enlightened space to experience the Risen Lord’s hidden presence”?

I conclude with the final prayer of the Pope’s document: “Let us ask the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us a fervent longing to be saints for God’s greater glory, and let us encourage one another in this effort. In this way, we will share a happiness that the world will not be able to take from us.” Amen!

Edwin Cardinal O’Brien

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