



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

*At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land*

## The online meeting of the European and Latin American Lieutenants 2022



The Lieutenants of Europe and Latin America met by video conference under the chairmanship of the Cardinal Grand Master on 22 and 23 November respectively. The discussion, coordinated by the Governor General, focused on topical issues concerning the life of the Order, provided an update on the realities sustained in the Holy Land through a report by the Administrative Director of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Sami El-Yousef, and a report by the President of the Grand Magisterium Commission for the Holy Land, Prof. Bartholomew McGettrick, and allowed the Lieutenants to update the Grand Magisterium on local activities and raise issues for common reflection.

In the meeting with the European Lieutenants, several issues had emerged from the reports received prior to the meeting, and the Governor General addressed issues of interest one by one, including the preparation of the next Consulta.

For the first time, this will see the participation of Grand Priors alongside the 65 Lieutenants from around the world, the resumption of pilgrimages, the application of the new rituals, the boost given to spirituality, the search for new resources, humanitarian and pastoral projects and activities, initiatives in favour of young people, disciplinary aspects, the Holy Year of 2025 and the role of the clergy and religious in spiritual formation and assistance.

Some of these themes were also clearly addressed the following day in the meeting with the Latin American Lieutenants, with special attention given to the Order's expansion project in this "great Christian continent", as described by the Governor General and where there is a high "potential that the continent can express".

In Europe, the Grand Prior of the new Magisterial Delegation for Slovakia joined the meeting, while in Latin America, Deputy Governor Enric Mas announced the objective of being able to see the creation of Magisterial Delegations in Ecuador, Panama and the Dominican Republic by 2023, based on

the contacts established in recent months. Conversations with other countries in the region are in progress (Peru, Paraguay, other states in Brazil).

In his speech, Cardinal Filoni recalled his pilgrimage to Jerusalem last May and the meetings he had in the Holy Land. The Governor General, in turn, illustrated the administrative aspects of guiding the Grand Magisterium through a delicate economic phase. The European Lieutenants then spoke through the words of their language group leaders, thus giving voice to the various realities within the continent, while, given the smaller number on the following day, each Latin American Lieutenant briefly presented the activities of his own Lieutenancy.

Reflecting on the mission and identity of the Knights and Dames, the Governor General recalled how "our Order must look more to the future than to the past. Our noble traditions must be a stimulus to accentuate the charitable aspect of our work. Tradition is not the equivalent of immobilism: on the contrary, tradition is the search through our roots for new ideas and proposals to better face the challenges of the present and the future".

At both meetings, great satisfaction was shown by the participants for the Grand Master's text on the ecclesiological significance of support for the Holy Land, which was widely circulated in the Lieutenancies, dioceses and episcopal conferences. In this document, Cardinal Filoni stated that "contributing to the sustenance of the Holy Places and the communities living there is a true ecclesial responsibility". The Pontiffs themselves entrusted this mission to the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, which carries it out on behalf of the entire Church. This aspect is fundamental and remembering it allows us to lay fruitful foundations for the relationship with the local churches and dioceses to which they belong and to foster a greater understanding of the mission of the Knights and Dames.

In his concluding words, Grand Master Cardinal Filoni, emphasised - among other aspects - the importance of the role of the Lieutenants, recalling that they are "fathers and formators within the Lieutenancies", called upon to exercise patience and show closeness to all members of the Order, even in problematic situations.

The hope expressed by all was that the next regional meetings could take place in presence, both in Europe and Latin America. As was mentioned during one of the interventions of the Lieutenants, in fact, in person meetings allow a greater opportunity to strengthen the bonds of friendship, fostering collaboration and closeness and the family spirit of the Order.

**Elena Dini**

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