



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

PREPARING FOR THE PILGRIMAGE TO POMPEII - 3

Works of charity: Putting faith into practice in the footsteps of Bartolo Longo



The example of a lay man, a Knight of the Order, who has consecrated his life to God's work, is a great lesson for all members of the Order. What do his story, his works and his faith say to us today?

During his pastoral visit of October 19, 2008, Benedict XVI paused to reflect not only on the Shrine of Pompeii but on the whole city because one cannot be disconnected from the other. **The action of God by those who choose to place him at the center of their lives is not locked up in churches but it is the seed of rebirth within societies.** The Holy Father said: "This city, which Longo refounded, is thus a historical demonstration of how God transforms the world: filling the human heart with love and making it a "vehicle" of religious and social renewal. Pompeii is an example of how faith can work in the human city, inspiring apostles of charity who place themselves at the service of the lowly and the poor and act to ensure that the dignity of the least is respected and that they find acceptance and advancement. **Here in Pompeii one realizes that love for God and love for neighbor are inseparable.** Here the genuine Christian people, the people who face life with sacrifices, find the strength to persevere in good without stooping to compromises. "

Blessed Bartolo Longo committed himself to realizing a number of public services in Pompeii (oratories, schools but also a water system) and charitable works with special attention for orphaned girls and children of prisoners .

A year before his death, he wrote: "**A Triumph of Faith and Charity: this is what the Valley of Pompeii is.** It is the light that bursts forth from the Heart of God, it is the hot love that inflames the heart of man. Charity without faith would be the supreme lie. Faith without charity would be the

supreme inconsistency; the Valley of Pompeii has combined them in a magnificent balance; two wings in flight".

What better place, in the Jubilee of Mercy to reflect on the works of mercy that we are called to do, and our action, as members of the Order in the Holy Land at the service of those who are in need...

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