



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

A hand that reaches out

The self-awareness of the Order



A decisive element in human evolution is the hand. Many actions are possible thanks to it, for example, we can write, play, caress, firmly grasp objects, build, and create. Each finger of the hand has its fundamental function, and together the fingers cooperate in an integrated manner, as St Paul reminds us in a broader sense in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).

Under the guidance of the Grand Master, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, during these years at the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, we have worked to ensure that our Pontifical Institution could increasingly become aware of its own aims. To assist this, we have been articulating them through a series of documents and initiatives that help us deepen our identity and constitute important elements in the life of the Order, much like the *five fingers* of the hand.

In 2020, the Holy Father approved the new **Constitution**. The Cardinal Grand Master then worked during the COVID lockdown on a **book about spirituality** (*The House Was Filled with the Fragrance of the Perfume: A Spirituality of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre*). This text provided the Knights and Dames – along with the wider public and other institutions – with an important tool to reflect on the life project, values, and choices that characterize the path of the Order.

The next finger was the in-depth analysis and guidelines concerning the **Ritual for celebrations**, which offer the possibility, through the symbols that compose them, to delve deeply into the mission that defines us.

Subsequently, the 2023 Consulta focused on **formation**, and the Cardinal Grand Master worked on a final draft that incorporated the insights and experiences of the Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates on this topic, which was distributed during the summer. The last finger of our hand is the **General Regulations**, which is in the final stage of revision and will be made available soon.

Some might see all this as innovation or perhaps a change. In reality, the tools offered to us are a way to activate the participation in today's world of an Order with a long history.

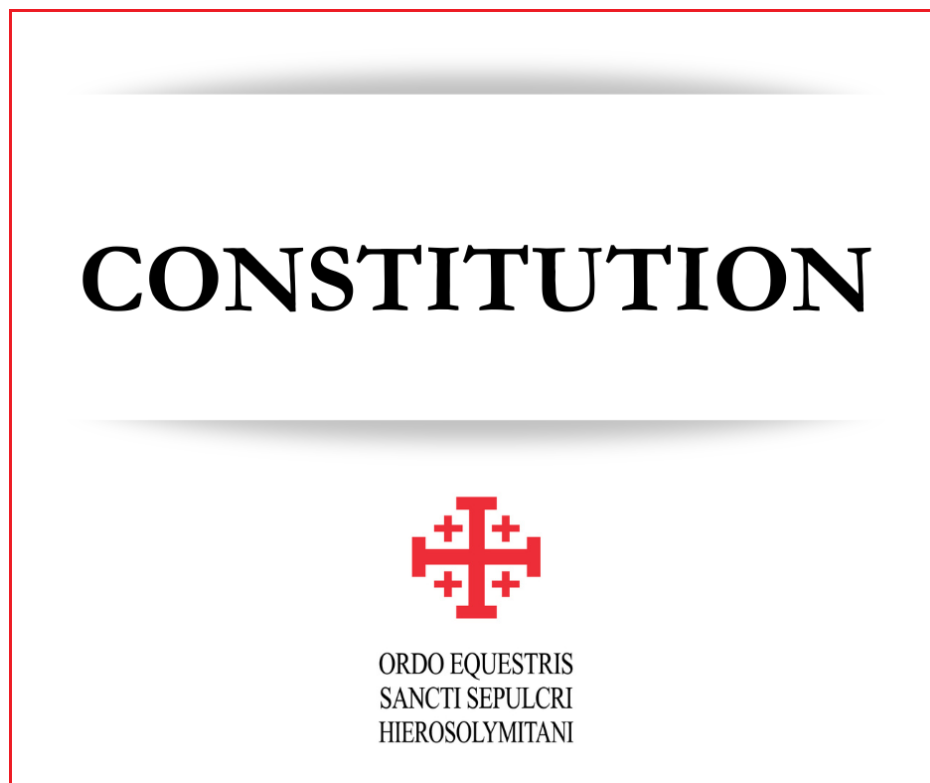
There is a very significant biblical image. Jesus speaks of the mustard seed, which when sown on the ground is the smallest of all seeds; but once sown, it grows and becomes larger than all the plants in the garden and puts out such large branches that the birds of the sky can make nests in its branches (cf. Mark 4:31-32).

That small mustard seed contains the entire genetic makeup of the tree. When watered, cared for, given time to grow, from that small seed, the great tree we know develops. In short, everything is already contained in the seed, all the characteristics are present in embryo, and are simply expressed in the concrete form that the Order takes today.

I appreciate the Cardinal Grand Master's support in the development of a clearer image of the five fingers of the Order's hand. In doing so, it allows us to act more consciously, and secure in our identity as Members, we reach out towards our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land to be close, and support them in prayer and charity.

Leonardo Visconti di Modrone

Governor General



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FORMATION DOCUMENT



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GENERAL REGULATIONS



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