



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

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

Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa has been appointed Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem



Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Grand Master, and the authorities of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, as well as all the Knights and Dames in the world, have welcomed the appointment of Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa as the new Patriarch of Jerusalem and Grand Prior of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, a title attached to his new function. The news is a good surprise because of the bonds of trust developed between the Order and Msgr. Pizzaballa during his delicate mission as Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate accomplished with success since the summer of 2016.

Therefore, the Holy Father has decided to offer Msgr. Pizzaballa the very important role of Patriarch of the Mother Church which is located in Jerusalem, thereby establishing him as the pastor and leader of the latin Catholic community present in the vast territory including Jordan, Palestine, Israel and Cyprus.

Pope Francis had the opportunity to appreciate Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa's human and spiritual qualities as the Franciscan Custos of the Holy Land, especially during his Pontifical pilgrimage in May 2014, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the meeting between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras in Jerusalem, and then during the interreligious prayer for peace organized in the Vatican gardens in June of the same year (see our annual magazine of the time [here](#)). The esteem between the two men both marked by the spirituality of St Francis of Assisi was undoubtedly born during that unforgettable 'pilgrimage of prayer', six years ago. Father Pizzaballa had been Custos since 2004, but his service to the Custody, as a Franciscan friar, had already started in 1999.

His action as Custos of the holy places was rewarded in 2016, when the Greek Orthodox Patriarch awarded him the rank of Grand Commander in the Orthodox Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, in recognition of his efforts to bring the Christian confessions closer together, an ecumenical step forward which allowed the agreements to restructure the tomb of the Lord in the Church of the Resurrection.

Before being Custos, the new Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem had worked on the publication of the Roman Missal in Hebrew (in 1995), serving then as Vicar General to the Latin Patriarch for the pastoral care of Hebrew-speaking Catholics in Israel.

Present since 1990 in the Holy Land, Msgr. Pizzaballa, who is only 55-years old, has already spent more than half of his life in the Holy Land where he settled after his solemn profession in the Order of Friars Minor and ordination to the priesthood in Bologna from the hands of Cardinal Giacomo Biffi. Native of Cologno al Serio, in the Province of Bergamo, he is the eighth Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem of Italian origin, in the list of the ten prelates who have held this function since the restoration of the Patriarchate by Pope Pius IX in 1847. The Knights and Dames of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre entrust his ministry to their Patroness, Our Lady Queen of Palestine, whose liturgical Feast providentially coincides with his appointment as Patriarch.

**François Vayne**

*(October 24, 2020)*