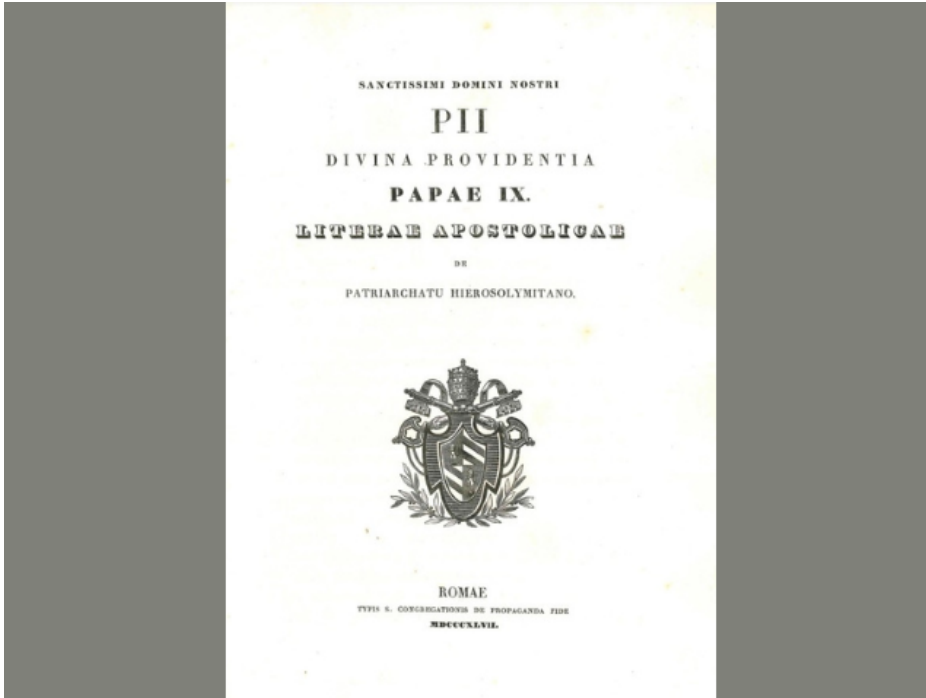




GRAND MAGISTERIUM – VATICAN  
EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF  
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM

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

## An anniversary to remember: Nulla celebrior



Thanks to the Apostolic Letter Nulla Celebrior, Pius IX restored the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Holy Land 175 years ago.

“For Christians there is no city more famous, no region better known than the City of Jerusalem and Palestine.” With these words Blessed Pope Pius IX began, “a perpetua memoria”, the Apostolic Letter Nulla Celebrior, with which on July 23, 1847, after mature and long consideration, he decided to restore (“restituimus”) the Patriarchate and the Latin Patriarch’s jurisdiction over Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

In the Letter the Pope recalls the sacredness of the places where the Lord lived and died and the veneration of Christians for them, and remarks on how already the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.), in canon 7, had established that everywhere the Bishop of Jerusalem and his Church should be held in high honour [Jerusalem, as Patriarchal See would later be erected at the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.)]. He adds, moreover, that after long and serious historical events, when the European Princes [11th century] liberated Jerusalem and established a Kingdom there, the Apostolic See began to appoint Latin Patriarchs [to distinguish them from the Greek Patriarchs because of the schism of 1054; until that date the Greek Patriarch had been in communion with Rome]. The institution of the Latin Patriarchate was later confirmed by the Fourth Lateran Council at the time of Innocent III (1215). Further historical events, writes the Pope, soon prevented the Latin Patriarchs from exercising their pastoral care in the Holy Land, which is why the Roman Pontiffs, without interrupting their appointment, exonerated them from residing there. Now, the Pontiff adds, considering the needs of Religion and pastoral necessities, and having had the desire, from the moment of his ascent to the Chair of Peter, to restore the ancient See of Jerusalem, comforted by the Cardinal Fathers and trusting in divine grace, in the second year of this pontificate, with the authority that is proper to him, he intended to reconstitute the Patriarchate of the Holy Land with the obligation of residence for the Patriarch himself, to whom he entrusted the pastoral care of the faithful and pilgrims, hitherto entrusted to the Franciscans, as well as whatever else would be decided by the Congregation de

Propaganda Fide [on whom it was territorially dependent at the time; shortly afterwards, in the same year, the Pope appointed Giuseppe Valerga as the new Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem].

The Papal Letter was followed by the Instruction (December 10, 1847) of the same Congregation, which, in Article 8, dealt with “the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre” and established that they fell under the authority of the Latin Patriarch, both for the granting of honours and for the collection of financial subsidies, to be paid into the Alms Fund for the support of the Holy Land.

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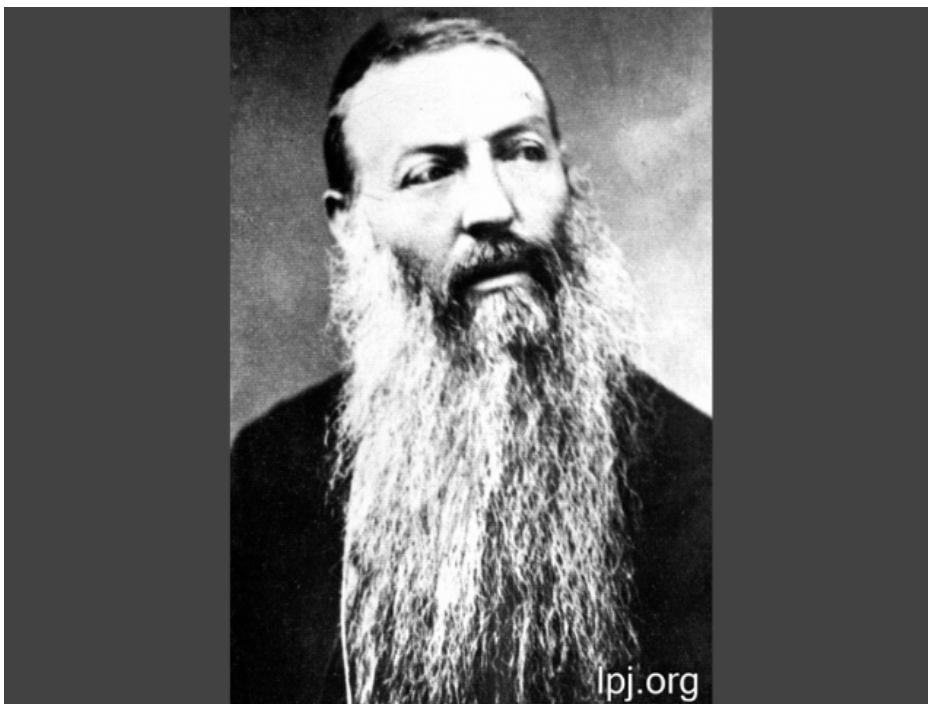
It is a pleasure to recall this historical chapter based on these two documents on the occasion of the 175th anniversary of their publication; they remind us of a very significant moment in the life of our Order. Motivation and historical memory allow us not only to reflect on the past, but also to revive the love nourished by the Order of the Holy Sepulchre for the Mother Church of Jerusalem, as well as its solicitude and moral bond that stretches back to apostolic times, when the Apostle Paul, in times of particular calamity, persecution and famine, asked the communities of Antioch, Greece, Galatia and Macedonia to remember the “saints” (i.e. Christians) in Jerusalem and to hold collections, which the Apostle himself later described as extremely generous. The Order still intends to respond to this commitment today by appealing to the munificence of Knights and Dames from all over the world, who, during their pilgrimage to the Holy Land, can visit some of the charitable works they support.

Charity cannot be extinguished; it is an eternal fire that has its source in the heart of the risen Christ.

**Fernando Cardinal Filoni**

*(July 2022)*

**Monsignor Valerga, the Reconstituting Patriarch**



Giuseppe Valerga, born in Liguria on April 9, 1813, was the first Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem after the reconstitution of the Patriarchate by Pius IX in 1847. A doctor of theology and professor at the College of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (now the Dicastery for the Evangelisation of Peoples), he became secretary to the Apostolic Delegate for Syria, Aleppo and Mesopotamia. After becoming Vicar General for Mesopotamia, he was consecrated Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem on October 10, 1847 by Pius IX himself. From the moment of his consecration until his death, he was also Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. He initiated the project to build the Latin co-cathedral, seat of the Latin Patriarchate, and the Beit Jala seminary, for the formation of future priests from the Holy Land. He actively participated in the First Vatican Council with a missionary spirit. He died of typhus in 1872 and is buried under the altar of St Joseph in the co-cathedral, where pilgrims still today flock to pray for this renowned and holy figure.