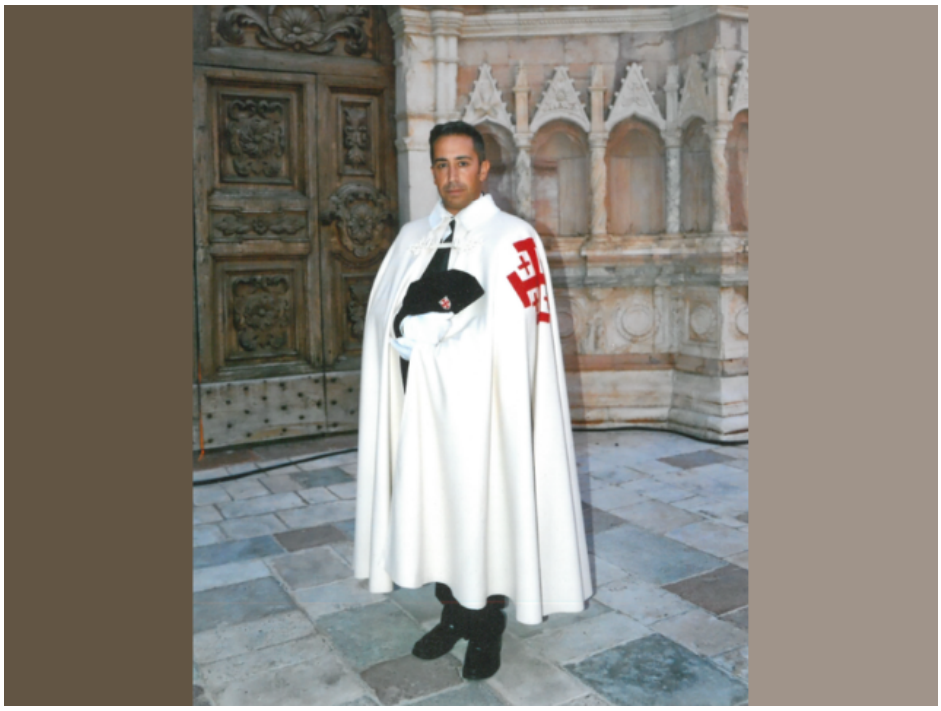
The Cloak of the Order: Beyond a simple Appearance



Apassage from Sacred Scripture states, “If I can just touch his cloak, I will be healed” (Matthew 9:20-22); another passage reads, “They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing” (Psalm 22:19).

These are powerful expressions. The first represents a profound act of faith: a woman who trusts the Lord so much that merely touching his cloak would heal her. The second expression, however, is driven by human greed. Despite being aware of the “greatness” of the Lord, people cast lots for his cloak. Therefore, membership in our beloved Order should prompt reflection on these two human sentiments. The first sentiment represents complete reliance on the Lord, which makes us instruments for the good of the Holy Land and its people. These same people, who trust in our “wearing the cloak,” hope to find relief from God through us, much like the woman in Matthew’s Gospel.

Unfortunately, at times, membership in the Order becomes a mere source of pride due to human frailty and the desire to excel in society – despite the teachings of Jesus – similar to the soldiers who cast lots for his garments beneath the cross.

For me, membership in the Order is a mission primarily focused on supporting the Holy Land and defending the Faith and the Catholic Church through deeds and example. Simultaneously, I am acutely aware that this membership should help all of us, both Dames and Knights, to strive for the holiness to which God summons us. How can we experience this path? By living out our charism every day and by not assuming that merely donning a cloak during official ceremonies will lead us to our goal.

On April 30, it was an honor for me to organize the presentation of the latest book by the Grand Master, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, titled Episcopal Conferences: A Modern Institution of Ecclesial

Communion. The event took place at the Fides et Ratio Institute of Religious Sciences in L'Aquila, where I have served as Secretary for nearly twenty years. Membership in the Order extends beyond official ceremonies, for it should permeate our daily lives, including the workplace and family sphere, which allows us to bear witness to our faith with those we encounter.

I firmly believe that the Order is a life experience. Recently, I conveyed my best wishes to a dear friend who received the Investiture last December in Rome with the following words, "Let yourself be imbued with the Order; you will discover its deeper meaning and overcome the natural human temptation of mere externals associated with the cloak and the rosette."

Giancarlo Della Pelle

Knight of the Delegation of L'Aquila (Italy)

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