



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

The life of the Order during the global health crisis



The newspaper New Orleans Times-Picayune mentioned the initiative of Msgr. Gregory Aymond, Archbishop of New Orleans and Grand Prior of the Lieutenancy for USA Southeastern who, on Good Friday, flew over his diocese, blessing it with the water of the Jordan River.

This Spring, which has proven to be a time of great crisis provoked by the coronavirus, the Grand Magisterium has continued to pay the expected contributions to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, trying to respond to emergencies.

The Governor General Leonardo Visconti di Modrone guided the Lieutenants who wanted to intervene on a humanitarian level, insisting on the priorities established by the Latin Patriarchate which knows the local needs best.

In particular, the Patriarchate requires assistance with the school accounts as many families no longer have the means to contribute economically to their children's studies. The pandemic is spreading hand in hand with a serious economic crisis.

Within the Lieutenancies, members have mobilized themselves in solidarity initiatives, as underlined by the Vice Governor for Europe, Jean-Pierre de Glutz. "The attitude of the young people has been remarkable. They help people over 65, offering to do their shopping" he noted. Even in the Asian and Pacific region, Vice Governor Paul Bartley tells of the closeness via an email or phone call to older members or those with health problems.

On a spiritual level, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Grand Master, supported the members with his meditations and reflections published on the Order's international website and widely reported in the press. The Assessor of the Order, Msgr. Tommaso Caputo, animated the recitation of the Rosary live on Italian Catholic television during the Easter Octave.

Various moments of prayer were organized among the members, in particular through platforms that allow group meetings. The staff of the Grand Magisterium, for example, gathered for several weeks every day to recite the Angelus and then, after Easter, the Regina Caeli, led by Msgr. Fortunato Frezza, Master of Ceremonies of the Order. Some Lieutenancies have organized moments of prayer on their Facebook page, such as Central Apennine Italy and others. The Facebook page of the Lieutenancy for Brazil - Rio de Janeiro indicates that more than 6000 people have been reached by the virtual Way of the Cross initiative, organized via social media on Good Friday with the texts proposed by the Grand Magisterium and the addition of a fifteenth station for the Resurrection.

The members of the Lieutenancy for Luxembourg met to pray together every day at 3 pm, the hour of Christ's death on the cross. In France, a daily mass was celebrated by the Lieutenancy according to the intention for our brothers and sisters of the Holy Land and the members participated intensely on Good Friday in the special display of the Holy Crown broadcast by the Notre-Dame de Paris cathedral by the secular BFM TV channel.

An original initiative that we learned about was that of Msgr. Gregory Aymond, Archbishop of New Orleans and Grand Prior of the Lieutenancy for USA Southeastern: driving a small plane dating back to the Second World War, on Good Friday he flew over his diocese, blessing it with the water of the Jordan River and thus making a gesture of hope for people confined to their homes because of another "war", the one against coronavirus.

What emerges from the words of all those with whom we have spoken, is that this time of confinement is strengthening the bonds of communion within the Order and with the Latin Patriarchate in a historic momentum of fraternity and solidarity.

F.V.

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