



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

A beautiful family experience

A young Knight, a member of the Lieutenancy for Central Italy, introduced his father to the Order, leading to his later joining. In this two voice interview, the father and son share their experience



Carlo Maria Basile was born in Rome in 1989, he graduated in Law at the University of Pisa and currently lives and works in Viterbo. He joined the Order in December 2017. Benedetto Basile was born in Palermo in 1948, he graduated in Law in Palermo and currently lives in Rome. Retired Chief Magistrate he Joined the Order in February 2020.

Carlo Maria Basile, how did you get to know the Order of the Holy Sepulchre and what attracted you and prompted you to consider joining it?

I joined the Order in November 2017 and the choice was fully shared by both my father, a retired Chief Magistrate, and my mother, an official of the Lazio Region in fact, I have always been close to the ecclesiastical institutions, a contiguity that comes, I might say, from my family's DNA. Over a hundred years ago, my grandfather founded a 'Pia Unione' ('Pious Union') in Palermo, which carried out, and still does today, assistance in one of the poorest neighborhoods of the city. He is today commemorated by a memorial plaque in the ancient church of Sant'Isidoro Agricola, where an evocative procession, sponsored by the Diocese and the Municipality of Palermo, is still celebrated with votive icons donated by my family over more than a century.

I knew about the existence and aims of the Order from 'outside' but not its intense activity in the Holy Land. A colleague and friend, already invested as a Knight, gave me the opportunity to get to know the Order 'up close', so to speak, by participating, at the 'St. Matthew's' Delegation in Rome, in the interesting meetings held there with experts in the Holy Land, both lay people and clergy. What struck me most was the combination of tradition and the relevance of the Order's aims, which translate into incisive interventions, such as building schools, hospitals, supporting the poorest families, and thus into concrete help for these tormented peoples. All this prompted me to consider joining.

Can you share a significant experience you had after your Investiture as a Knight?

The most significant experience after my Investiture was undoubtedly the trip to the Holy Land, which made me understand the difficulties of everyday life in those places and at the same time the need to live in communion in a land sacred to all the religious communities there. I also understood the essence of that place, which cannot be fully understood just by reading or following the relevant reports in the various media. I went on this trip together with my parents and this meant that within my family we were able to discuss these issues, having more time there than in Rome. It was an experience that gave me a spiritually and humanly rewarding awareness.

Benedetto Basile, the call to be a Knight of the Order is also part of a dimension of communicating and sharing faith and the great gift of living first-hand the support of the Land of Jesus: what was it like in your family experience? Can you tell us how you approached this experience?

Born in Palermo, my profession, as a magistrate, meant that I had to travel frequently throughout the country, limiting the moments of sharing within family life. Having reached the age for retirement, it was possible for us to increase the 'sharing' of faith, as well as the 'communication' of the same, and it was precisely at that time that I came to know and began to attend the Order, thanks to my son Carlo who had recently joined it. The interest in this way of living the faith arose immediately, but it was the trip to the Holy Land, made together with my wife and my son who had already been invested Knight, with the reflections made there, that strengthened my resolve. It was my own son Carlo who 'introduced' me on the occasion of my request for admission to the Order. This seemed a very nice thing to both of us, considering that usually the opposite happens. My wife is not a member of the Order but she is very close to it, following with me the various meetings and testimonies promoted by it.

Do you think that within your family life, there is some level of sharing that has been added thanks to this common choice to join the Order?

Within our family dimension, the spirit that inspires the principles of the Order has always been there and comes to us, as I have already mentioned, from past generations, but being part of it has increased the level. This is an 'added value' of which we have taken note. We have found in the Order a motivation and a drive that has given a new impetus to our reflections on the faith, due above all to our now deeper knowledge of the Holy Land. This was also possible thanks to the numerous moments of participation in the meetings promoted by our Delegation. Nor should we underestimate the convivial moments, which also represent an opportunity for the brothers and sisters to meet, where in a more informal, and no less fruitful manner, they can exchange views. All this, which already has an intrinsic value in itself, becomes "special" when experienced as a family, increasing cohesion and human and spiritual sharing.

Interview by Elena Dini

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