



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

Africa and the Order of the Holy Sepulchre: a small presence that is growing



On September 14, 2024, and coinciding with its 14th anniversary, the Lieutenancy for Southern Africa welcomed 16 new Members. Magistral Delegate Juan Luis Cabral joyfully shared this event, and took the opportunity to reflect on the history of this Magistral Delegation, which remains the only one on the African continent to date. Although physically distant from the other Lieutenancies, Southern Africa is clearly close in spirit and mission to the Lieutenancies of other continents. In addition, it joins the European English-speaking group for meetings of dialogue and exchange between like-minded Lieutenancies, which is strongly encouraged by the Governor General.

“The Order in South Africa was established in 2010 with a few members, and a larger group joined in 2015,” began the Magistral Delegate. The Covid era had a negative impact on the strengthening of this young local reality of the Order, as was the case in many other regions, with the added difficulty of the worsening health conditions of the Ecclesiastical Master of Ceremonies of the Magistral Delegation. “We realized that it was necessary to find a new Master of Ceremonies. On July 28, 2023, Father Robert Bissell was Invested and became our new Master of Ceremonies.” Thanks to this renewed presence, the Magistral Delegation was able to organize the induction of new candidates into the Order and prepare the training course that led to the Investiture of the 16 members who were welcomed on September 14.



When he spoke about the importance of formation, Cabral explained, “Regarding formation, we initially developed our own document. Then, when we received the much-anticipated Formation Document from the Grand Magisterium, we were pleased to notice that we had followed the same line. In our formation efforts, we had incorporated content from His Eminence’s book *The House Was Filled with the Fragrance of the Perfume*. As we look ahead, the Magistral Delegate adds, “We have taken seriously the exhortation of the Holy Father and of our Cardinal Grand Master regarding the initial and ongoing formation of members. We are already training some new candidates who could be invested in May 2025, while we are continuing to develop the formation for those who are already members.”

The Investiture is a decisive moment, a moment of public choice and personal commitment before God and the community. “One of the most touching moments for me was during the Vigil when the Dames raised the jar of oils. This evokes the image of Mary of Bethany with her devotion and service, which resonates with the teachings of the Cardinal Grand Master and embodies the commitment of our Order in the Holy Land. Witnessing the Investiture of 16 new Knights and Dames of such high caliber was another deeply moving moment, signaling a promising future for our Order in Southern Africa.”

In addition, the future brings possibilities for expanding the presence of the Order in the region, concludes the Magistral Delegate, “We also hope to expand beyond Cape Town, initially to nearby cities, and as soon as possible, to begin moving toward Johannesburg and Durban. We are also discussing presences in Port Elizabeth and even in Gaborone.”

(September 2024)