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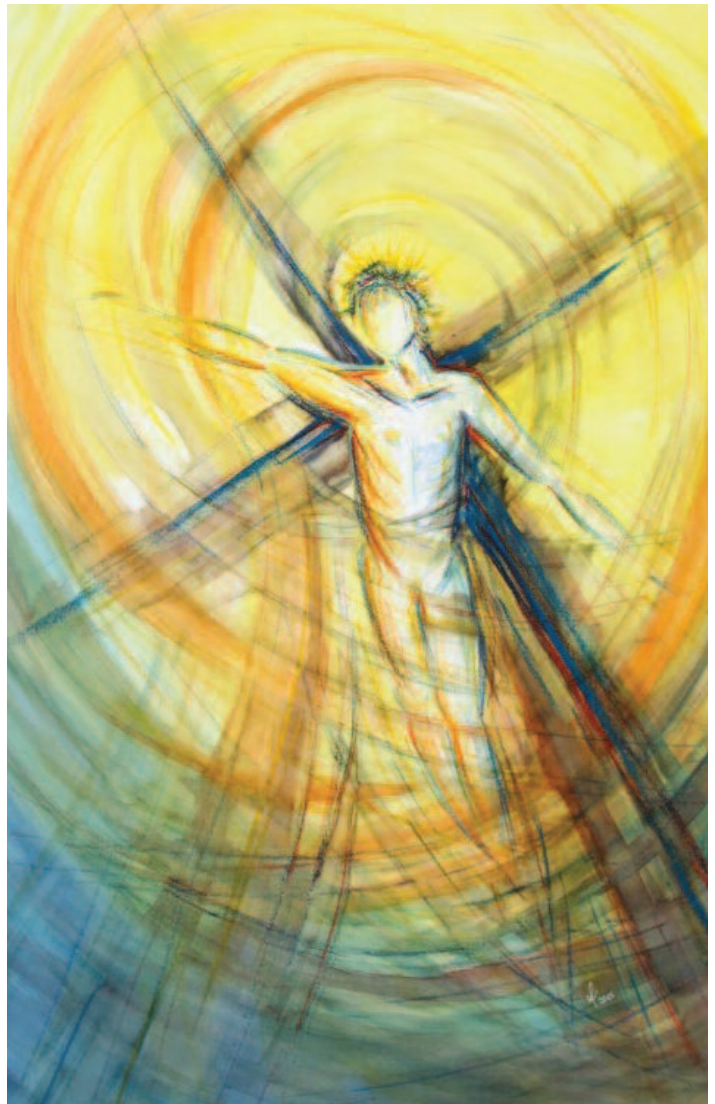
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A Message from the Grand Master

THE EASTER SEASON

Easter of the Resurrection: this is the recurring expression we read in the calendar on the Sunday on which the Church celebrates Jesus, the Risen One. It is an expression we also find in liturgies and theology; in short, it is the language of the Church. But what does 'Easter Sunday of the Resurrection' mean? Certainly many grasp its meaning perhaps through catechetical reminiscence, but it is also worth seeking its deeper meaning.

In the Catholic liturgy, the two terms – Easter and Resurrection – go hand in hand and refer to two extraordinary events that should be briefly recalled. First of all, Easter finds its origins in the Greek word for 'Passover', originally from the Aramaic *pashd'* (in Hebrew *pesach*), is used in the Bible (*Ex 12:48*) to recall the 'passing of God' and the 'exodus' of the Jews from Egypt; it is a feast of great importance, full of familial and sacred rites. Jesus and his natural family devoutly celebrated it every year as was and is traditional in observant Jewish families. The celebration became a memory, a story, a prayer of gratitude and praise to the Eternal for the intervention in favor of 'His' people. It is not an epic,



The Easter Season is a period in the liturgical calendar that runs from Easter Day to Pentecost Sunday, fifty days that are celebrated in joy and exultation.

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because Passover concretely touches the life of every good Jew, so much so that it binds him to God in an eternal Covenant, and vice versa; but also to the land he will bequeath to his children; Passover is a celebration around the Word of God; it is a perennial journey.

Jesus assumes, but then also transcends, the meaning of that Jewish solemnity; so much so that not only did he not want to ignore it despite being 'sought after' by the Sanhedrin, but, he "*earnestly desired*" (*Desiderio desideravi - Lk 22:15*) to celebrate it together with the Twelve, his new family, in deference to the style of the so-called *chaburot* (the gatherings for pilgrims who went to Jerusalem for the occasion); during that Last Supper, Jesus introduces something unexpected with respect to the practice: he gives thanks to the Eternal and offers his 'Body' and 'Blood' to the Twelve in the concrete matter of bread and wine, as a sign of the new Covenant.

Jesus' "Gesture" is an important novelty and will allow the Apostolic Community, not only to be formed around the Risen One and to be consecrated for the coming of the Holy

Spirit, but also to be constituted, as *Ekklesia*, that is, Community of the faithful, and to repeat it; that "Gesture" is also God's "Gift" for us and this in the friendship of Jesus Christ, of the One who forgives and allows humanity to accept it as an expression of God's own love and to return it to God; in short: love and sacrifice come together. Benedict XVI wrote that all the currents from the Old Covenant are also present in every celebration of the Eucharist, and in some way also the secret expectation of all religions (*Themes of Dogmatic Theology in Che cos'è il cristianesimo*).

When we say '**Resurrection**', the reference is to the body of Christ in which human life was no longer there. Jesus is laid in a tomb. It was approaching the beginning of *Shabbat*, the Saturday on which no actions involving work could be performed, corresponding to that seventh day on which, after creation, God 'rested'. Jesus observes it in the silence of death; it is the day of Sabbath rest, apparently an "idle" time.

For the Catholic liturgy, 'Holy Saturday' has become the day of meditation, of intimate sorrow, the day when we recall all



of the memories, the words, the many whys that accompany extreme moments, such as death. This until the first day of the week after the Sabbath, which for Christians is Sunday and for Holy Scripture corresponds to the day of the creation of light (cf. *Gen* 1:5). An analogy that is not accidental!

On that day, the first of the week, the unexpected, the unprecedented, the most shocking event took place: The Resurrection of Christ.

"Whom do you seek?" This was the question put to those, women and men, who had gone to visit a deceased person. The only ones present at the moment of the Resurrection had been the soldiers, but then they had fled in shock, to report back to those who had ordered them to custody the tomb.

Now the Risen Christ becomes the space for the adoration of God, comments Benedict XVI; Christian faith is born and our inclusion in the new 'Body' is realized, which definitively unites every baptized person to the Risen One. This is **the Easter Sunday of the Resurrection**. In the Christian faith, Jesus' death is the most radical act of love in which the reconciliation between God and a world marked by sin is truly accomplished, and the Resurrection is the most sublime event

**“ The Resurrection is
the most sublime event of
God's work ”**

of God's work.

Every Knight and Dame must embrace within themselves this mystery that qualifies them in a special way for a very high spiritual mission. The event of the Resurrection reminds us that Christ transcends in Himself human nature and history, and in the newness of His being the Living One, our conversion to the Lord holds incomparable glory (cf. *Heb* 3:10,16).

It is in the Easter Resurrection that the Risen One offers us, the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, who have visited him on our pilgrimages like the pious women and disciples, an "inheritance" with the "Title" of the place of his deposition,

and to enter into his friendship and be destined for a mission of faith and high charity. That Sepulchre in which the Son of God had laid the burden of our sinful and sorrowful humanity, becomes the place of the beginning of new life in Him, of hope for all the multitudes.

As the Son of God, says the Letter to the Hebrews, *"Christ (...) as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end"* (*Heb* 3:6).

Happy Easter of the Resurrection! A season of grace!

The Pope's prayer on the feast of Easter

"We believe in You, Lord Jesus, we believe that with You hope is reborn"

In his Urbi et Orbi Easter Message to Rome, the Holy Father spoke with sorrow of the situation in the Holy Land: "On this day, Lord, we entrust to you the city of Jerusalem, the first witness of your resurrection. I express deep concern for the attacks in recent days that threaten the desired climate of trust and reciprocal respect necessary for the resumption of dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, so that peace may reign in the Holy City and in the entire region." Pope Francis concluded with a prayer addressed to the Risen Christ: "We believe in you, Lord Jesus. We believe that, with you, hope is reborn and the journey continues. May you, the Lord of life, encourage us on our journey and repeat to us, as you did to the disciples on the evening of Easter: "Peace be with you!"



The Order in Union with the Universal Church

IN MEMORY OF POPE BENEDICT XVI

The testimony of Vice Governor General of Honour Adolfo Rinaldi

As I attended the funeral of Pope Benedict XVI on the parvis of St. Peter's Basilica, my thoughts movingly returned to the meetings I had with him in 2008 in my capacity as Vice Governor General of the Order.

On the occasion of the 2008 Consulta, the Pope received the Grand Magisterium and the Lieutenants, led by Grand Master Cardinal Foley and Governor Parola. His kind and affectionate words opened our hearts to understand the value and grace of our mission for our brothers and sisters of the Holy Land.

"Dear brothers and sisters, an ancient and glorious bond links your knightly Order to the Holy Sepulchre of Christ, where in a completely singular way the glory of his death and Resurrection is celebrated. Precisely this constitutes the pivotal centre of your spirituality. Jesus Christ crucified and Risen is therefore the centre of your existence and of your every project and programme, personal or collective...."

What need the Land of Jesus has for justice and peace! Continue to work for this and do not tire in asking, with the Prayer of the Knights and the Dames of the Holy Sepulchre ... Ask the Lord to make you "convinced and sincere ambassadors of peace and love among your brethren"

At that moment I really felt that the Lord Jesus was saying to us: 'It is not you who have chosen me but I have chosen you that you may go and bear fruit and that your fruit may remain.'

And then at the end the Pope met us one by one. He held each of our hands in a

gentle but firm gesture to thank us and exhort us to continue. I felt myself truly embraced by his affection and, through him, by the Lord. At that moment, all memory of the fatigue and difficulty of my task disappeared to make way for a profound feeling of enthusiasm and charity towards all the brothers and sisters of the Order and in the Holy Land.

I remember saying to him, 'Your Holiness, my wife and I are praying during Advent for your next journey to the Holy Land'. He thanked me and smiled. Then he met my wife among the Dames, asked her to pray for him and gave her the Rosary.

At the end of the meeting, as the Pope was leaving the Clementine Hall, I ran after Mons. Gänswein and asked him for the written text of the speech Benedict XVI had given in his hands. That text bore a small handwritten correction by the Pope and has since hung in a small picture in the Cardinal Fürstenberg hall of the Grand Magisterium.

Then in May 2009, as part of a delegation with Cardinal Foley and Governor Borromeo, we accompanied the Pope on his



The Vice Governor of Honour, Adolfo Rinaldi, greets Pope Benedict during the Order's Consulta in 2008.



pilgrimage to Jordan, Palestine, Israel and Cyprus with great enthusiasm. There is only one photo of some of us left, but in my heart there is the memory of a whirlwind of movement to be as close as possible to the Holy Father, who brought the memory and the word of Christ to the places where He lived, died and rose again.

I remember three moments in particular.

The first was at the stadium in Amman when, due to a mistake in the entrances, we had to cross the pitch in our ceremonial dress and those present recognised us and applauded us. The applause was not for us, but for the Order.

The second when, upon entering the Holy Sepulchre, Benedict XVI publicly greeted and thanked us: *"I gratefully acknowledge the presence of representatives of the other Christian communities in the Holy Land. I greet Cardinal John Foley, Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre and also the Knights and Dames of the Order here present, with gratitude for their unfailing commitment to the support of the Church's*

mission in these lands made holy by the Lord's earthly presence."

The third was in Bethlehem, when in the meeting with the Authorities, right under the separation barrier and a raised outpost (appropriately empty) of Israeli soldiers, the Pope with a slightly astonished expression noticed our presence in the second row. Later, after returning to Rome, he told Governor Borromeo that he had seen us everywhere.

I am not going to mention the many homilies and speeches Benedict XVI delivered during the trip or the enthusiasm of the crowds. I remember his humble and respectful tone towards others but in perfect accordance with doctrinal and political truth. Just like in his encyclical 'Caritas in Veritate'.

Now Pope Benedict XVI is in the house of the Father and from there he continues to protect our Order. It was a privilege for me to meet him and to contribute a little to his work. I hope to see him again.

Adolfo Rinaldi

150 YEARS AGO, THE ARRIVAL OF BARTOLO LONGO IN POMPEI

The Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of the Holy Rosary in Pompeii is currently hosting the "Longhiano Jubilee Year", a special Holy Year to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Bartolo Longo and his calling, in October 1872. Inaugurated on 1 October 2022, the Jubilee Year, during which it will also be possible, under the usual conditions, to gain a plenary indulgence, will end on 31 October 2023.

To mark the occasion, the Archbishop of Pompeii, Monsignor Tommaso Caputo, addressed a letter to the city and the faithful entitled 'From the inner illumination of Bartolo Longo a new impetus for Pompeii and a model for the world'.

In his volume "History of the Shrine from its origins to 1879," Longo himself recounts his first arrival in the "disconsolate valley" he described as "lonely, wretched, feared, abandoned by civilised people." In October 1872 the young lawyer found himself in the locality of Arpaia, on the dangerous roads of this land, when he sensed an inner inspiration: "If you seek salvation, spread the Rosary." That day, radically changed his life and, over the years, Bartolo Longo became "A man of Our Lady", as St. John Paul II stated in his homily at the Beatification; he founded the Shrine, visited every year by around two million pilgrims; the Works of Charity, dedicated to orphans



and the children of prisoners; and the New City of Pompeii itself.

A historical fact, set in time and space, but which continues to speak to contemporary man, to the citizens of Pompeii and to devotees all over the world, in this complex present. And it also speaks, in a very special way, to the great family of the Knights and Dames of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, to which Bartolo Longo also belonged, the only lay Blessed of the Order, counted among its members in 1925, by the then Grand Master, Pope Pius XI, with a *Motu Proprio*, as a sign of appreciation towards an extraordinary person.

Monsignor Caputo writes in his Letter for the 150th anniversary, *"what we feel we must do today, out of love for our community, for the Church of Pompeii and for all devotees of Our Lady of the Rosary, is not simply to leaf through the album from that inner illumination onwards. But to see how it can continue, today, in this first dramatic glimpse of the third millennium, to mark our path and, what is most important, become a paradigm of a "new beginning" not only for the city of Mary, but for the entire world"*. Bartolo Longo's mystical experience marks, as the Archbishop explains, "a turning point". That initial spark becomes, quoting the Book of Exodus, a "burning bush", a fire that generates a new beginning, of which there is, even today and everywhere, an absolute and urgent need. *"Today's crises are called, more often than not, emergencies;"* observes the Prelate, *"we have learnt of many of them and we are still in the midst of a health, social and economic emergency, the result of Covid which has yet to be fully superseded, and because of a senseless conflict in the heart of our continent."*

The example of the Blessed and of those who, with him, did

not give in to difficulties, traces a way forward. The letter continues; *"One's thoughts return to Pompeii Valley. To that spark that became fire. Bartolo Longo and the Pompeians of the time were not 'frightened by the crisis', remembering that, as Pope Francis says, the 'Gospel itself is the first to put us in crisis'. The Pope's words on a moment of crisis seen as a test that passes and in the face of which our experience of darkness, weakness, fragility, contradictions and bewilderment must not leave us feeling crushed, seem written for the condition of the Pompeii Valley."* Despair cannot dwell in believers, even in the face of the gravest of crises. And this is why the Archbishop's Letter becomes an invitation to hope, to look to the future with confidence.

Today, the Blessed's experience is a programme for the Church and the civil community of Pompeii. *"Arpaia Way [via-way or street in Italian – ed],"* explains Monsignor Caputo, *"could be called the Way of the Pompeii Rosary or Street of the Foundation of the City of Mary. That moment became history. That moment grew, gradually accompanying the steps of a new community that became aware of the ineffable resource entrusted in its hands and treasured it. It was the Rosary that bound Bartolo*

Longo to the land that stretched out before him from Località Arpaia. It was prayer to the measure of Pompeii, the city of Mary stretched out towards the celestial Kingdom".

The Archbishop writes that we must, *"rediscover the spirit of that time, reawaken dormant enthusiasm, rediscover the taste for investing in hope"*. And this concerns not only Pompeii, in a new millennium that could not have begun worse: *"After the year of extraordinary quiet, almost an act of homage to the Great Jubilee in the sign of peace and reconciliation, here comes the ferocious attack on the Twin Towers and, in the wake of other bloody*



Blessed Bartolo Longo, apostle of the Rosary, is the only lay member of the Order to have been beatified to date. His spiritual journey is an example for all Knights.





During his recent pilgrimage to Pompeii, on 12 April, Easter Wednesday, after participating in the performance of the Oratorio Exsultate, Cardinal Filoni, Grand Master of the Order, personally offered a candle which he lit at the urn of the Blessed Knight Bartolo Longo, during a moment of prayer attended by the Order's Assesor and Archbishop of Pompei, Monsignor Caputo, the Governor General, Ambassador Visconti di Modrone, Lieutenant Rossi and members of the Order present. The Grand Master - on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Bartolo Longo's arrival in Pompeii - entrusted the Knights and Dames and their families to the intercession of the Blessed, father of orphans, apostle of the Rosary and founder of the Marian Shrine in the famous Vesuvian city. The flame lit by the Grand Master will be constantly nourished by the prayers of the Order's members living in Pompeii, for the intentions of the Knights and Dames all over the world. Everyone can participate spiritually in this initiative during the Longhiano Year, which will be celebrated in the Prelature of Pompeii until October 31.



attacks, the vast geography of forgotten wars, up to the conflict unleashed by Russia against Ukraine. The war in the heart of Europe and, before that, for almost three years, the torment of a pandemic that sowed mourning and shocked an increasingly lost and disoriented world".

In this sense, what happened in Località Arpaia "can be a model for a reciprocal regeneration: cultural and social, yes, but first and foremost spiritual" in a world that seems

to have set aside the Gospel, in a Europe that is witnessing the decline of "christianitas", "the soul of a continent for which the call to Christian roots extended to the two great lungs of the East and the West and, in a geographical sense, from the Atlantic to the Urals." To look at all this is to take note of the situation, but never a reason to "back down or let oneself be taken by discouragement" because "Bartolo Longo's Arpaia Way and the paths of salvation scattered around the world, come together again in the light of the Gospel, "a lamp to the feet" for all humanity".

There is a need for people who bring the Word of God to the world, and this also has an obvious return on society itself. The style of believers must be that of Jesus, made, as Pope Francis exhorts, of tenderness, encounter and closeness. And Monsignor Caputo also recalls the specificity proper to Pompeii, which arose as the 'City of

Charity, of welcoming abandoned children'. "Today more than ever we have the duty to look further and further afield to put into practice in the concrete and full life of every day, alongside our brothers and sisters and first of all those who suffer, the richness of an inheritance that cannot pass through our hands without "anointing" them with the good oil of sharing."

An appeal to peace, faith and charity from Pompeii reaching out to the whole world, following a trail of light that is still alive, given 150 years ago by the Holy Spirit to a layman, an illustrious member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem!

Loreta Somma



Proceedings of the Grand Magisterium

APPOINTMENT OF VICE GOVERNOR FOR ASIA, AUSTRALIA, AND THE PACIFIC

In January 2023, the Grand Master appointed the current Lieutenant of Honor of Australia-New South Wales, John Secker, as the new Vice Governor for Asia, Australia, and the Pacific. Secker was admitted to the Order in 1995, when the Lieutenancy for Australia-New South Wales was established. He became Secretary of the

Lieutenancy in 2004 and then served as Lieutenant from 2008 to 2016. Born in

England and educated in London, John Secker began his banking career in Britain in 1964 and moved to Australia in 1982. Married to Philippa Kenny in 1970, widowed in 2005 and remarried to Jai Milward in 2010, he has two daughters from his first marriage, an adopted son from his second, and has four grandchildren.

The Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, had a lengthy conversation by videoconference with the new Vice Governor and expressed his warmest congratulations on behalf of himself and all members of the Order.



John Secker on his willing service to the Order

“In recent years, I have gradually curtailed on my commitments with the various charitable organizations and church bodies I had been supporting since I retired from banking. Taking on new and important responsibilities was not at all part of my future plans, rather I expected to regain a semblance of normalcy post-Covid: holidays in Australia and abroad, spending more time with my grandchildren, with friends and on the golf course. This is why, when I received an email in early March from our Governor General asking if I would be willing to

become the next Lieutenant Governor General for Asia, Australia and the Pacific, to succeed my dear friend, the late Paul Bartley, I was both surprised and in need of time for serious consideration.

After prayerful reflection, talking with the Governor General, and discussing the matter with my wife, I decided to accept this call and again assume a leadership role within the Order and, more specifically, in the Asia-Pacific region (having previously had similar responsibilities in my working life).

Since my appointment, I have spent time (largely by videoconference) in discussions with the region's Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates, and I am excited about the Order's prospects for development in this large part of the world, which has a theoretical Catholic population of about 150 million people, but only about a thousand Knights, Dames and clergy. The sheer size of the region itself poses challenges: from my home in Sydney, in the eastern part of the region, it takes about a day's travel (with stopovers) to reach the westernmost area, which has a strong Catholic presence, while the northernmost area is only a few hours' flight away! I am happy to have been able to discuss all that during my first Grand Magisterium meeting in Rome, as well as with those in charge and members of our Order in Asia, Australia and the Pacific.”



SPRING MEETING OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM

On 19 April 2023, following the Mass celebrated in honour of Our Lady of Palestine, Patroness of the Order, presided over by the Grand Master in the church of Santo Spirito in Sassia, the members of the Grand Magisterium met in Palazzo della Rovere. "It gives me great pleasure to meet with you in person for the first time after the years of the pandemic," said Cardinal Fernando Filoni, opening the proceedings and recalling the purpose of this meeting: to share with confidence and encourage each other for an ever more generous service of the Mother Church in the Holy Land, in Palestine, Jordan, Israel and Cyprus.

The Governor General, Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, welcomed the new members, John Secker, Vice Governor for Asia-Pacific, and Tom Standish, who was Lieutenant Governor for the United States, and thanked Mary O'Brien, also from the United States, who had reached the end of her term. The Governor emphasised the Order's expansion efforts, particularly in Latin America and Africa, and then spoke of the importance of the Consulta scheduled for next November, announcing the publication of the Order's new Regulations at this important event. The Governor General also informed the members of the Grand Magisterium about the details of the contract for the lease of part of the Palazzo della Rovere to a hotel company, which will fully cover the Grand Magisterium's operating expenses.

Patriarch Pierbattista Pizzaballa, busy in Cyprus, participated in the meeting with a letter in which he thanked the Order, not only for the support it has provided through



Mass celebrated in honour of Our Lady of Palestine, Patroness of the Order, presided over by the Grand Master in the church of Santo Spirito in Sassia.

the financing of numerous projects, but also for the links woven with the Catholics of the Holy Land during the pilgrimages that have resumed following the pandemic. The meeting continued with the approval of the budget and the report of the Treasurer, Saverio Petrillo, who highlighted the generosity of the Lieutenancies, which has enabled over 14 million euros to be sent to the Patriarchate in 2022.

In his presentation, Sami El-Youssef, CEO of the Latin Patriarchate, welcomed the resumption of pilgrimages (over two million visitors in April), despite the serious political crisis in Israel, where the government is strongly contested for its supremacist tendencies. The CEO extensively described the projects supported by the Order in the various countries that make up the Holy Land, especially those in favour of education and youth employment in the most disadvantaged areas, such as Gaza, indicating the Patriarch's desire to develop pastoral and humanitarian activities in Cyprus, where the reception of migrants is mobilising the Church.

With respect to this issue, the President of





On 19 April 2023, the members of the Grand Magisterium met in Palazzo della Rovere.

the Holy Land Commission, Bartholomew McGettrick, spoke of an "underground Church" with regards migrants, vulnerable and deprived of the most basic rights, victims of a form of modern slavery, not only in Israel but throughout the Middle East. The Grand Master, who personally discussed the Order's mission with the Holy Father on 28 January 2023, spoke of this service to migrants as a priority.

The Vice Governors then took turns to speak. Tom Pogge, for North America, emphasised the spiritual formation of members through the Grand Master's book on the spirituality of the Order, now available in audio-book format, for the moment in English. Jean-Pierre de Glutz, for Europe, testified his commitment to making all the important documents of the Order available in different languages, so that the Knights and Dames can have the necessary tools for their formation. Enric Mas, for Latin America, described the Order's expansion initiatives in new countries such as the Dominican Republic, where a Magisterial Delegation will be created, Uruguay and

Paraguay, and expressed his wish that the Bishops receive the Newsletter published by the Grand Magisterium to be better informed on the Order's mission and work. John Secker, for Asia Pacific, presented his programme for the further development of the Order, for example in Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Indonesia.

Chancellor Bastianelli, for his part, appealed for a broader recruitment for the Order, noting that the statistics are declining after the pandemic. He then reported on the technical preparations for the Consulta. With regard to this event, scheduled for next November, the Grand Master is working on the drafting of an *instrumentum laboris* based on the reports received from the Lieutenancies, which will enable the Lieutenants to jointly discuss the issue of members' formation.

The Governor General, concluding the exchanges and highlighting the Order's communication activities and external relations, indicated the date of the next Grand Magisterium meeting, set for 9 November 2023. The meeting concluded with a moment of prayer led by Msgr. Tommaso Caputo, Assessor, who invited the members of the Grand Magisterium to be "Dames and Knights of the Resurrection," following the example of Blessed Bartolo Longo, apostle of the Rosary and founder of the Marian Shrine of Pompeii.

François Vayne

A NEW MEMBER OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM'S COMMISSION FOR THE HOLY LAND

His Eminence the Cardinal Grand Master has appointed Tim Milner as a member of the Holy Land Commission for the next three years. Prof. Bartolomew McGettrick was reappointed as President of the Commission and Dr. Detlef Brümmer as a member. The Commission visited the Holy Land from March 6-11 and reported on the progress of the projects during the Grand Magisterium meeting on April 19.



CONTRACT SIGNED FOR THE LEASE OF PART OF PALAZZO DELLA ROVERE

On March 10, 2023, the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem signed agreements with a Fort Partners Group Benefit Company to lease part of the Palazzo della Rovere, located at 33 Via della Conciliazione in Rome, for use as a hotel under the management of the Four Seasons Group.

In 2020, at the expiry of the contract with the previous tenant, the Order launched a public competition for expressions of interest from Italian or international business operators to be entrusted with the renovation and management of the hotel.

An international commission selected by the Order reviewed the offers received, under a procedure of strict transparency, and adjudicated the offer submitted by the Fort Partners group as being the most advantageous for the Order.

Since this was an act of extraordinary administration, the Order then requested and obtained from the competent



Authorities of the Holy See, prior authorization *ad validitatem* to begin negotiations with the aforementioned group.

The negotiations that followed led to an agreement under which the chosen company will bear the entire cost of the renovation of the Palace, allowing the Order to donate the entirety of the voluntary contributions received from its members to the Holy Land.

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The Order and the Holy Land

SAINT CHARLES DE FOUCAULD AND THE HOLY LAND

*Interview with Patriarchal Vicar for Israel,
 based in Nazareth, Msgr. Rafic Nahra*

Msg. Rafic Nahra, you are Patriarchal Vicar for Israel in Nazareth. How did your local Church experience the canonization of Charles de Foucauld and what are you doing to preserve his spirit, to live his message which so strongly linked to the city of the Holy Family?

The canonization of Charles de Foucauld was an important moment for Nazareth. Some participated in the canonization ceremony in Rome, but activities also took place here.

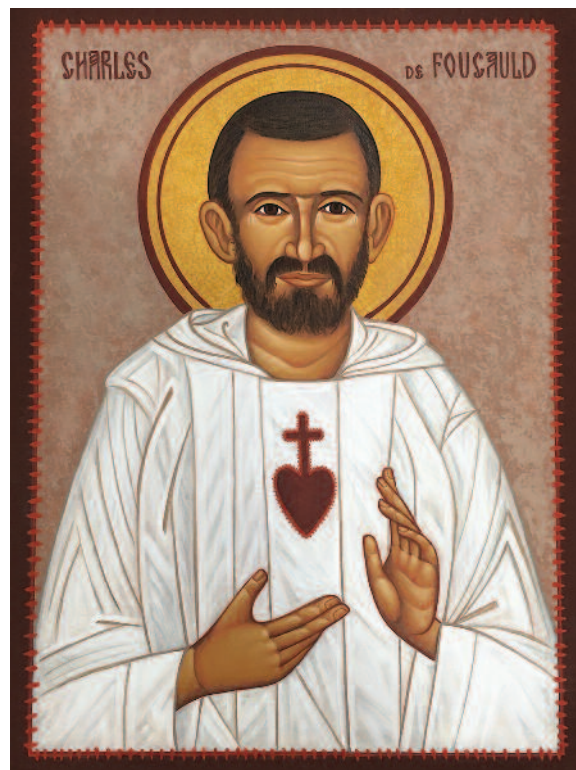
Before the canonization, an evening of prayer for vocations was organized at the Holy Family Center for disabled children, run by the religious of the Opera Don Guanella, located at the former Poor Clare convent where Charles de Foucauld had lived between 1897 and 1900.

It was an opportunity to hear several testimonies from religious men and women, including that of Fr. John Mark, Little Brother of Jesus Caritas, who spoke to us about the spirituality of the future saint and

how it is lived out in their communities. Similarly, after the canonization, a great celebration of thanksgiving took place in the Basilica of Nazareth, presided over by Patriarch Pierbattista Pizzaballa, during which, in his homily, the Patriarch emphasized some aspects of the Saint's spirituality, so intimately linked to the spirituality of Nazareth.

Allow me to share some significant excerpts: "Already in these first stages of his conversion, we find the characteristics of his entire life: the new love for Jesus definitively reversed his orientation in life and led him to seek hiding, to be poor and close to the poor, to a positive and constructive relationship with Islam. His love for Christ was enough for him.... The

"spirituality of Nazareth," harking back to the time when Jesus went into hiding, is none other than this: to descend into the simple life of the poor, to become poor with them, to hide among them. This is the mystery of the Incarnation, after all!....



Another of Charles de Foucauld's characteristic is that of "seeking," of always being on the alert. The beloved is never known once and for all.... The other peculiarity of the saint is related to the previous one: the "relationship." To love Christ means to love man.

These two aspects cannot be separated; they are two sides of the same coin. We look for the face of Christ in the encounter with man.... He felt himself to be a brother to all, anticipating what today is a central theme in the life of the Church... What does the witness of this Saint leave to our Church in the Holy Land? What does he remind our Church in the Holy Land of? First, he reminds us not to operate in the life of the Church in search of a result. He invites us to free ourselves from the search for achievement at all costs, for success in our actions. He reminds us that to be Church it is not necessary to build great works. The life of the Church is life-giving when it is born from the encounter and love of Christ."

For you personally, and of course as a pastor, what does Charles de Foucauld represent? Do you think his spirituality can contribute to the ongoing reform of the Church, as it did with St. Francis in his time?

Personally, Charles de Foucauld has always been particularly dear to me. I love his character as a "universal brother," as a humble servant, who never tried to stand out, on the contrary. He wanted to live hidden both in Nazareth and, later, in the Hoggar. Such a free, humble, and loving life, without seeking immediate results, seems so authentic and evangelical to me. Nothing but loving God and others faithfully, every day, in every detail. This is what Jesus did for 30 years of his life, and it is a very significant message for our modern world, which is

completely focused on immediate efficiency, knowing that it is a danger for the Church itself to be pulled in that direction.

Charles was also the man of the "peripheries," just as Pope Francis invites us to be, dedicating the last years of his life to befriending and serving his Tuareg Muslim brothers in Algeria. The spirituality of Charles de Foucauld can undoubtedly contribute to the reform of the Church today, as St. Francis did in his day, a reform in the spirit that Pope Francis invites us to live.

Charles de Foucauld was an apostle of interreligious dialogue. What is the status of this dialogue in your Diocese, with Muslims and with Jews?
Nazareth is a totally Arab city where

Christians and Muslims coexist. Old families in Nazareth testify to the traditional good relations between these two communities, although there have been more troubled

“ He invites us to free ourselves from the search for achievement at all costs, for success in our actions ”

times, especially when a project was proposed from outside Nazareth to build a large mosque at the foot of the Basilica of Nazareth just before 2000. Fortunately, this project was halted in 2005. Some consequences of this still linger in Nazareth, but we continue to maintain good relations with several local Muslim families, which I hope to develop and extend to a wider circle of families in the years to come. We also have relationships with some Jewish institutions and organizations in the Galilee that are open to dialogue. These relationships need to be further developed. Interreligious relations in Galilee are mainly developed in a three-way relationship, that is, through meetings or activities in which Jews, Muslims and Christians participate, to witness the possibility of living together in peace and friendship.

Interview by François Vayne



THE HOLY LAND COMMISSION RETURNS TO THE FIELD

After the years of restrictions due to Covid, the Commission for the Holy Land - chaired by Prof. Bartholomew McGettrick and composed of Detlef Brümmer from the German Lieutenancy and new member Tim Milner, Knight of the US Northern Lieutenancy - travelled to the Holy Land from March 6 to 11 for its first in-person visit in three years to Israel and Palestine. As usual, the Commission had the opportunity to meet with the heads of the different services of the Patriarchate, clearly starting with Patriarch Pierbattista Pizzaballa, and to verify the status of various realities and projects supported by the Order.

During the meeting on 19 April, President McGettrick shared the highlights of the visit with the members of the Grand Magisterium. First of all, he wished to reassure them that the funds that are sent by the Order to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem are used for their intended purposes and thus enable the Diocese of Jerusalem to carry out its mission for the benefit of the local population.

"The three main areas of commitment," he recalled, "are education, pastoral care and humanitarian aid. "During the week spent in the Holy Land we discussed the balance between these three areas with our interlocutors," shared McGettrick, emphasising in particular how humanitarian aid at this time needs to be particularly supported in order to continue to ensure that the neediest families can live in dignity.

The Commission President shared that "among the various visits, we were greeted by some families in the Old City of



Jerusalem and I was struck by the poverty that does not allow them to afford adequate nourishment. I asked one family when was the last time they had eaten meat and was told Christmas [and that was in March]". "It is thanks to the support we offer that these families can survive and it is important that you know that," he concluded emotionally as he addressed the members of the Grand Magisterium.

After recounting the plight of migrants and asylum seekers in particular followed by the Vicariate dedicated to them (see general report of the meeting), McGettrick spoke of the need to support the general upkeep of the Latin Patriarchate's schools so that they can be appropriate environments for learning, and praised the direction taken by some projects, such as AFAQ - a collaboration between the Latin Patriarchate and Bethlehem University, with a contribution of more than €250,000 from the Order (more information in the podcasts on our website), which allow them to "move away from a culture of dependency towards a culture of initiative and emancipation" through the development of small business ventures.



Culture and History

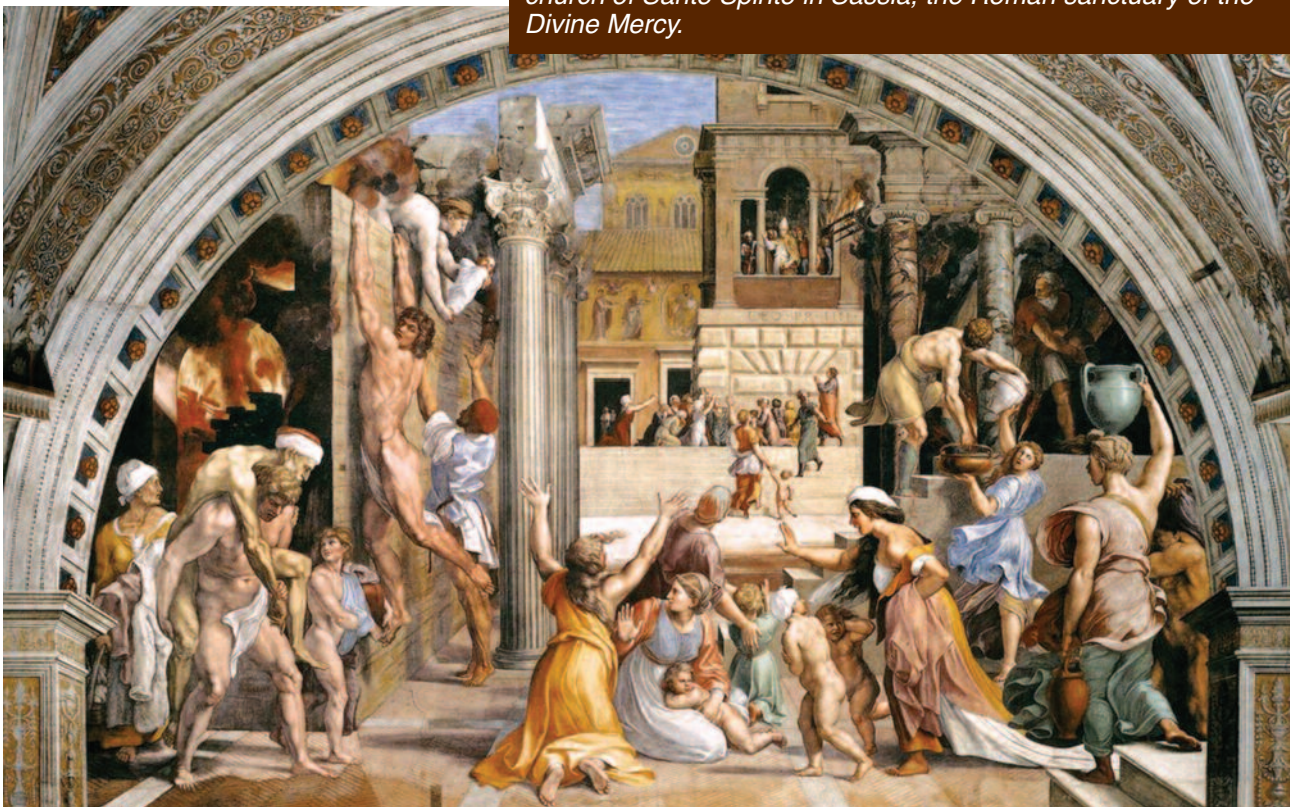
A WINDOW ON THE BORGO AND ONGOING WORK

In 847 the Borgo district, where the Palazzo della Rovere currently stands, was devastated by a terrible fire. The story goes, however, that Pope Leo IV, looking out of a window, imparted a solemn blessing that miraculously extinguished all the flames, saving lives and monuments in the immediate vicinity of the ancient basilica of St. Peter's.

Raphael took his cue from the episode for the fresco of one of the in the Vatican Stanze that he decorated with his collaborators between 1508 and 1524, populating it with mythical figures painted in a manner that



A fresco by Raphaël (reproduced below) dated 1514 and exhibited in the Vatican Museum, recalls the miraculous blessing of Pope Leo IV, as a result of which the fire in the Borgo ceased in the 9th century. The window that inspired Raphaël in his time can still be seen (photo above) next to the church of Santo Spirito in Sassia, the Roman sanctuary of the Divine Mercy.



resonates with Michelangelo's influence and, the fresco in the Vatican Stanze juxtaposing the fire of Borgo with that of Troy, as described by Virgil in the Aeneid.

By placing the blessing Pope, static and hieratic, above scenes of the populace's despair, Raphael wanted to exalt the Pope's peacemaking role amid the flaring of hotbeds of war in Europe; by evoking the Aeneid he could at the same time celebrate the glory of Rome.

The figure of the Pontiff looking out a window, almost aware of his infallible mission, stands in the center of burning buildings, while in the foreground Aeneas advances, dragging his aged father Anchises on his shoulders and holding his young son Ascanius by the hand.

The window from which the Pope looks out is of Bramante's structure and to his left a piece of the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Saxia can be glimpsed. Thus, the window is not that of the loggia of the Vatican Basilica, as one might imagine, but that of the Palazzo del Commendatore, just behind the Palazzo della Rovere.

I like to think that just as Pope Leo IV blessing the Borgo miraculously

extinguished the fire and saved the neighborhood, so the Pontiff's beneficent influence continues to spill over to the palace across the street, built centuries later by Cardinal Domenico della Rovere, where excavation and restoration work has begun under the watchful eye of the Superintendency, unearthing wonderful medieval artifacts that testify to the passage of droves of pilgrims there where the Borgo was in flames in 847.

And indeed, the ongoing work was outlined to Pope Francis during the audience the Pontiff granted to the Cardinal Grand Master on January 28, 2023. The cost will be entirely borne by the tenant of a portion of the palace with whom a lease was concluded on March 10: the "Palazzo della Rovere Society Benefit s.r.l." established by the real estate company Fort Partners of Miami, Florida, allowing the Order to send to the Holy Land the full amount of the donations it receives from the Lieutenancies scattered around the world.

Leonardo Visconti di Modrone

*Governor General
of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre*



GUCCIONE
SINCE 1975
DECORATIONS OF KNIGHTLY ORDERS

Order of the Holy Sepulchre
Papal Equestrian Orders
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