



JERUSALEM CROSS

ORDINIS EQUESTRIIS SANCTI SEPULCHRI HIEROSOLYMITANI

[f @granmagistero.oessh](https://www.facebook.com/granmagistero.oessh)

www.oessh.va

[X @GM_oessh](https://www.instagram.com/GM_oessh)

Message from the Grand Master

“GOD WILLS IT”, BUT WHAT DOES HE WILL?

As laid down in our Constitution, our Order is preparing for an important international event that takes place once every four years: the Consulta, the General Assembly of Lieutenants in Rome held in the presence of the Presidency of the Grand Magisterium. This year I also wanted the Grand Priors to be invited. There will be about 150 participants, from all continents, and we will meet on the theme of the “formation” of the Knights and Dames. Pope Francis will receive us in audience and we will inform him of the results of our work, before publishing a final document that will be our ‘charter’ for the formation of members in the coming years.

With this meeting in mind, I’d like to say a few words regarding our motto, “God wills it”, which may seem to some to be very old-fashioned, even outdated. In reality, we need to give new meaning to this motto and answer the question: “What does God will? What does He want from us?”

Knights and Dames, we are the bearers of a spiritual heritage, that of the Resurrection, and we are called to bear witness to the fact that Christ is alive today in his Church. The Book of Revelation speaks of the “tabernacle of the living God among men”; we, in the Church, are part of this “tabernacle” at the heart of humanity, at the heart of the world.



This banner of the Magistral Delegation of the Czech Republic, blessed by Cardinal Filoni in Prague, evokes the words of the Grand Master: “Knights and Dames, we are bearers of a spiritual heritage, that of the Resurrection.”

CONTENTS

The Order in Union with the Universal Church

CARDINAL PIERBATTISTA PIZZABALLA
CONGRATULATED BY MEMBERS
OF THE ORDER **III**

Proceedings of the Grand Magisterium

ON OCTOBER 25, THE ORDER CELEBRATES
ITS PATRON SAINT **V**

PREPARING FOR THE CONSULTA 2023 **VII**

THE MEETING OF THE FRENCH-SPEAKING
LIEUTENANTS IN PARIS WITH THE
GOVERNOR GENERAL **IX**

MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF CENTRAL
AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES
IN PRAGUE **XI**

EXCEPTIONAL DISCOVERIES IN THE
GARDENS OF PALAZZO DELLA ROVERE **XIII**

The Order and the Holy Land

OPENING NEW PATHS FOR YOUNG
PEOPLE, WOMEN AND FAMILIES IN
THE HOLY LAND **XIV**

THE ORDER'S CLOSENESS AND SUPPORT
FOR BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY **XVI**

The Life of the Lieutenancies

INVESTITURE IN PRAGUE PRESIDED
OVER BY THE GRAND MASTER **XVIII**

CATHOLIC STUDENT TEACHERS FROM THE
UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW ON
PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND **XIX**



GRAND MAGISTERIUM OF THE EQUESTRIAN ORDER
OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM
00120 Vatican City
E-mail: comunicazione@oessh.va



Wherever he meets members of the Order - as in this case, celebrating Mass with them in the chapel of the Archdiocese of Prague - Cardinal Filoni invites them to be part of the "Tabernacle of the living God among men."

In this vision, let us find our true perspective as members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre!

But how can we show the presence of Christ today? First, by taking care of the "feet" of the Church, humbly serving her so that she can continue her mission, as Mary of Bethany did when she washed Jesus' feet. Secondly, by taking to heart the "Mother Church" in Jerusalem, for which Saint Paul already called the first Christians to show special concern, as well as the local Churches to which we belong.

Our nobility is not hereditary, dear brothers and sisters, it comes from the spiritual heritage of Jesus that we carry, his Resurrection, and from our concern for the "Mother Church", which is a universal demand of all the Churches, because we are in a way her grandchildren.

The Consulta will help us to deepen the meaning of this mission and to find better ways of helping new members to adhere to it with fervor, leading other men and women to follow us, out of attraction, out of love.

Fernando Cardinal Filoni
Grand Master



The Order in Union with the Universal Church

CARDINAL PIERBATTISTA PIZZABALLA CONGRATULATED BY MEMBERS OF THE ORDER

The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem was surrounded by Knights and Dames at the Consistory during which the Pope created him Cardinal

"**Y**ou, new Cardinals have come from different parts of the world, and the same Spirit that made the evangelization of your peoples fruitful now renews in you your vocation and mission in and for the Church," said Pope Francis, meditating on the story of Pentecost, the "baptism of the Church", during his homily at the recent Consistory celebration on September 30, during which he created the Patriarch of Jerusalem and Grand Prior of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, His Beatitude Pierbattista Pizzaballa, cardinal. "We are evangelizers to the extent we cherish

in our hearts the wonder and gratitude of having been evangelized, even of being evangelized, because this is really a gift always present, that must be continually renewed in our memories and in faith. Evangelizers who have been evangelized, not functionaries," added the Holy Father, then using an image to express what the College of Cardinals is called to resemble: "a symphony orchestra, representing the harmony and synodality of the Church." "Diversity is necessary; it is indispensable. However, each sound must contribute to the common design," he said, inviting us to have



A large delegation from the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, led by the Governor General, took part in the celebration during which the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem was created a cardinal, along with twenty other newly elected members of the College of Cardinals from various continents.





The Order's authorities, as well as Knights and Dames, surrounded the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Grand Prior of the Order, with prayer and respectful affection. He was elevated to the dignity of cardinal by Pope Francis on September 30.



Liechtenstein, Donata Krethlow-Benziger, from England and Wales Michael Byrne, from Portugal, Bartolomeu da Costa Cabral, from Central Italy, Anna Maria Munzi Iacoboni, from Central Apennine Italy, Giuseppe Marrani, from Southern Tyrrhenian Italy, Giovanni Battista Rossi, from Sardinia, Marco Cantori, the Magistral Delegates from Latvia, Janis Smelters, and Norway, Hyan Nguyen.

They were able to personally congratulate the Patriarch of Jerusalem during the courtesy visits organized that same day, particularly greeting four other members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre among the new cardinals: Cardinal Stephen Brislin, Archbishop of Cape Town and Grand Prior for South Africa; Cardinal Luis José Rueda

Aparicio, Archbishop of Bogota and Grand Prior for Colombia; Cardinal Américo Manuel Alves Aguiar, Bishop of Setúbal; and Cardinal Agostino Marchetto, Apostolic Nuncio and Archbishop of Astigi.

The following day, Sunday October 1, in the Basilica of St. Mary Major, a Mass of thanksgiving brought together the authorities and faithful from the Holy Land around Cardinal Pizzaballa, in a warm and festive atmosphere. The Order of the Holy Sepulchre was represented by the Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, the Chancellor, Ambassador Alfredo Bastianelli, the Treasurer, Dr. Saverio Petrillo, as well as by members of the Grand Magisterium, Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates and numerous members of the Order. At the end of the celebration, the Governor General presented Cardinal Pizzaballa with a pectoral cross of the Order, on behalf of the 30,000 Knights and Dames from all over the world.

François Vayne

consoling confidence in the Holy Spirit: "He is the protagonist – as our master: the interior master of each one of us and the master of walking together. He creates variety and unity; He is harmony itself."

Setting off in procession from the Palazzo della Rovere, a large delegation from the Order – comprising around a hundred Knights and Dames – took part in the Consistory in St Peter's Square, surrounding the Patriarch of Jerusalem in prayer as he received the cardinal's red hat and ring from the hands of Peter's successor and was given St. Onuphrius on the Janiculum as his titular parish church. In addition to the Cardinal Grand Master and the Governor General, members of the Grand Magisterium and numerous Lieutenants were present on behalf of the Order: Vice-Governors General Jean-Pierre de Glutz and Enric Mas, members of the Grand Magisterium, Flavio Rondinini, Helene Lund and Vincenzo Buonomo, Lieutenants from Switzerland-



The Acts of the Grand Magisterium

ON OCTOBER 25, THE ORDER CELEBRATES ITS PATRON SAINT

The Grand Master on the meaning of the Knights' and Dames' devotion to the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Palestine

"Queen of Palestine" was the title bestowed on Mary for the first time by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Luigi Barlassina in 1920, later formally attributed to her by the Congregation for Liturgical Rites (now the Dicastery for Divine Worship and

the Discipline of the Sacraments) in 1933. The Patriarch had a sanctuary built in Deir Rafat, halfway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem for the devotion of the faithful of

the Holy Land. It was inaugurated in 1927 by Patriarch Barlassina himself and then entrusted first to the Sisters of Saint Dorothy and today to the monastic family of the nuns of Bethlehem. A place of pilgrimage, the liturgical anniversary is set in the calendar for October 25, and draws widespread

participation. The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem venerates the "Queen of Palestine" as its patroness.

The shrine of Deir Rafat houses the first image of Mary Queen of Palestine; in the lower part of the image one can recognize the outline of the Holy City and Jericho, two symbolic cities. Together with this historic image, the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre holds dear another highly expressive image of Mary, also called Queen of Palestine, in which Mary appears seated on a throne, cradling an outline of the City of Jerusalem in her lap, symbol of the Holy Land, but also symbol of the Church, the new Holy City of the



Patriarch Luigi Barlassina (pictured above right) had the shrine of Deir Rafat erected, where Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Grand Master, went on pilgrimage on May 11, 2022, to venerate the image of Our Lady of Palestine, Patroness of the Order.





A painting of the Virgin Mary holding the Son of God adorns the throne room of Palazzo della Rovere, the Order's headquarters in Rome.

Apocalypse (Rev 21:2) which, as a caring Mother, she protects and guards. An ancient image of Mary with the Child on her knees is also kept at the Order's headquarters. An analogy immediately comes to mind: one could almost say that the Church, which recognizes Mary

as Mother of the incarnate Son of God, is today guarded by her and has taken the place of the child Jesus.

According to the Gospel, in his last will, Jesus on the Cross entrusts Mary to the disciple John, her new son; the latter, accepting her as an immeasurable gift, takes her to the other disciples, where we find them in the Upper Room, with Mary, praying as the Holy Spirit descends. No one cares more than Mary for the Church, of which she is the most eminent member and Mother, even more so today, in a paganizing world that forgets or excludes God, and undermines the Church itself through indifference, the sins of her children and the hatred of those who would destroy her. Mary, Queen of Palestine, is an invitation to peace, to reconciliation, to mutual understanding without overpowering or proselytizing, and to make this Holy Land a home for all those who believe in the one God, that is, a place of witness to divine Revelation; and for Christians, the land where Jesus lived and created his new family open to all men and women of all times and proclaimed the Kingdom of God and his salvation.

The image of Mary holding the Holy City

in her arms is not an exclusionary image, knowing full well how much the Islamic world venerates Mary and the Jewish world sings Jerusalem-Sion through Psalm 87: Jerusalem the mother to whom the nations go in peace, "*Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God! Then those who sing as well as those who play the flutes shall say, 'All my springs of joy are in you'*". Who knows how many times Mary will have sung this joyful psalm on her pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as was the custom for pilgrims ascending to the Holy City! For the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, Mary belongs to the Order for various reasons. I would like to mention just two, spiritually profound ones: the first is that Mary does not appear much in Jesus' public life; on the contrary, it seems almost as if - both at Cana of Galilee and under the cross - she is distanced from her Son who no longer calls her 'mother', but 'woman', apparently wishing to conclude his temporal

relationship in order to pass it on, through John ("*Behold your mother*"), to the new family that he was establishing in his death and resurrection; since then Mary belonged to the Church for which her Son had given his life as a ransom. This thought belongs to the deepest spirituality of the Order, which cherishes the same places that belonged not only to the life of Jesus, but



An icon of Our Lady of Palestine, painted by the Sisters of Bethlehem, depicts the Mother of God carrying in her heart the city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants of all confessions, a symbol of the new humanity.



also to the life of Mary.

The second reason for the close bond between the Dames and Knights of the Holy Sepulchre and Our Lady is that Mary's faith did not wane, did not die out, neither under the cross as she took her Son's last breath, nor in front of the tomb, when a large stone would finally close Jesus' life, which had begun in her own womb and ended in the earth. Mary's faith remained leavening at all times. Yes! Like a leaven in the dough, fermenting it, to reappear in the context of the apostolic community in prayer, awaiting

the promised Holy Spirit. The Order, therefore, for profound reasons, has love for Mary Queen of Palestine at heart, to whom it turns as a beacon of peaceful coexistence between Christians and the peoples inhabiting the Holy Land, a land blessed precisely by the historical presence of the Son of God and where Mary has not yet exhausted the special mission entrusted to her by Providence.

Fernando Cardinal Filoni
Grand Master

PREPARING FOR THE CONSULTA 2023

Under the chairmanship of the Cardinal Grand Master, all the highest offices of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre (the Grand Magisterium with the Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates) together with a representative of the Secretariat of State and one from the Dicastery for Eastern Churches meet every four years to discuss and reflect on common themes concerning the life of the Order in all its peripheral structures. The 2023 Consulta will take place in Rome from November 6 to 10, 2023.

Due to COVID, five years have passed since the previous Consulta 2018, which

focused on "*The role of the Lieutenant in the mission of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem*". This year - which will exceptionally include the participation of the Grand Priors of the Order at the direct invitation of Grand Master Cardinal Fernando Filoni, - the theme will focus on formation.

An *Instrumentum Laboris* has been forwarded to the participants to allow them to enter into the theme, also involving Knights and Dames in a broader context to foster their contribution to the reflection.

The Consulta is the Grand Master's main consultative body in a synodal spirit and, as

Participants of the Order's Consulta in 2018, during a working session.



we read in the Constitution, "is not a deliberative body but its proposals form a part of the decision-making process relating to the most important issues concerning the Order" (art. 17.1). Following this meeting and exchange, the Grand Master will draft a final document that will define the guidelines for the coming years.

The collaboration between the lay and ecclesiastical components of our Pontifical Institution can be clearly felt in the organisation and management of working sessions where both lay (Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates) and ecclesiastic (Grand Priors) leaders of the Order's more than 60 peripheral structures will be present for the first time. Furthermore, as the Constitution details, we recall that while it is the Cardinal Grand Master who convenes the Consulta, approves the agenda proposed by the Presidency of the Grand Magisterium and presides over its plenary meetings, it is the



Governor General who moderates its meetings (art. 17.4) in a spirit of communion. Personal meetings of the Grand Master, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, and the Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, with the various Lieutenants, and linguistic working groups are planned to enable the Order's local leaders from geographically and

linguistically similar areas to meet and work on the proposed theme.

Clearly the Consulta is lived in deep union of prayer with the Mother Church of the Holy Land, which is the focus of our commitment and attention as Knights and Dames of the Holy Sepulchre. And it will be a joy to have with us His Beatitude Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Patriarch of Jerusalem and our Grand Prior, just a few weeks after receiving the cardinal's biretta on September 30 from the hands of Pope Francis.

An audio-book in English on the spirituality of the Order

The Order's Vice-Governor for North America, Thomas Pogge, brings us this good news: "We are delighted to announce that His Eminence Cardinal Fernando Filoni's book, *The House Was Filled with the Fragrance of Perfume. A Spirituality of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre*, has been made into an English-language audiobook and is now available." "The audiobook can be accessed via the Order's website in North America at www.eohsjnorthamerica.org," Tom Pogge enthusiastically explains. "The creation of this audiobook was made possible by a generous grant from one of our members and the diligent efforts of many others. A professional narrator was employed. His Eminence's book is profound. Several priests and Lieutenancies have used it for homilies and reflections. I would like to add that the reader incorporated the footnotes into the reading and, in doing so, really energized the text. The audiobook will allow each member to deepen their spirituality and reaffirm the reasons why we are members of this wonderful Order," concludes the Vice-Governor for North America.



THE MEETING OF THE FRENCH-SPEAKING LIEUTENANTS IN PARIS WITH THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

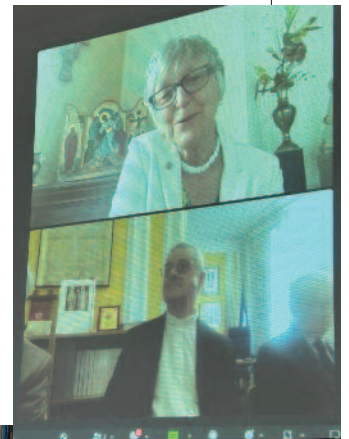
"The cross is the true symbol of the Order"

Rue de Suffren is home to the headquarters of the Lieutenancy for France and it was here that the Governor General, Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, was received by the French-speaking Lieutenants, who met exceptionally on June 28 in Paris at his request. Some Lieutenants - those of Canada-Montréal, Monaco and Switzerland-Liechtenstein - were represented, while the Lieutenant of Canada-Québec took part in the meeting by videoconference. The Governor General explained from the outset that the purpose of these meetings based on linguistic or regional affinities is simply to promote an exchange of information and free discussion, in order to improve cooperation between the Lieutenancies and the Grand Magisterium.

In chairing the meeting, the Governor General was assisted by the Vice-Governor for Europe, Jean-Pierre de Glutz, in the presence of Dominique Neckebroek, member of the Grand Magisterium. The discussions proceeded according to the planned agenda. The situation of the Grand Magisterium was presented in detail, in particular with regard to the work at Palazzo della Rovere, part of which has been rented to an international hotel company to cover the running costs, so that all the money donated by members of the Order could be directly allocated to the Holy Land. The Governor

General also reported on relations with the Latin Patriarchate, particularly on the growing demand for humanitarian aid due to the very difficult situation of Christian families in Jerusalem.

The Lieutenant for France, General Faugère, was keen to point out to his guests that his country's historical commitment to the Holy Land means that many private donations are destined for institutions other than the Patriarchate, such as the *Oeuvre d'Orient*, thus reducing the sums that the French Lieutenancy can collect. Despite the pressure of requests (one million euros more this year for the Patriarchate from the Grand Magisterium), an exceptional effort will be made, at the request of the Grand Master, to contribute to the restoration of the Holy



Governor General Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, surrounded by the Vice-Governor for Europe, Jean-Pierre de Glutz, and French-speaking Lieutenants, during a coordination meeting in Paris.



Sepulchre in collaboration with the Custody of the Holy Land. The participants of the meeting then discussed the Consulta, planned for next November, which will bring together Lieutenants and Grand Priors from all over the world.

The *Instrumentum Laboris* drafted by the Grand Master on the subject of membership formation is currently being read by the Lieutenants, who will come to Rome with their proposals for changes to draft the final document. Thought was also given to the future Regulations, currently being drafted by a Commission, whose translation will have to be very precise to ensure that the nuances of the text of each article are clearly understood. With regard to the new Ritual of Investiture, it was noted that only Germany is still resisting it, while all the other Lieutenancies have accepted and put into practice the change regarding the sword, a historical symbol that takes its rightful place during the Vigil.

"The cross is the true symbol of the Order," insisted the Governor General, firmly echoing the words of the Grand Master, eager to help the Knights and Dames become aware of their vocation as "missionary disciples."

The meeting continued with a discussion

on some administrative problems with the European Commission, which wants to verify that the money sent to the Holy Land is not used indirectly to finance terrorism.

In conclusion, the French-speaking Lieutenants intervened on communications, deciding - thanks to Jacques Klein, Lieutenant for Luxembourg - to have the Order's international magazine, published in their language by the Grand Magisterium, printed together (following the example of the United States and Italy).

The Governor General concluded by showing how the Order is developing in South and Central America, with the forthcoming creation of a Magistral Delegation in the Dominican Republic, and by pointing out that the contacts initiated in African countries (Burkina Faso, Republic of Congo) are very promising. At the end of the day, a convivial dinner helped to strengthen the fraternal ties between all the participants.

Before leaving for Rome the following day, the Governor General, accompanied by the Lieutenant for France, gave a long interview on the Order's mission to KTO television, available on the YouTube channel of this French-language Catholic broadcaster.

François Vayne



Barbiconi
1825

**CAPES
MEDALS
ACCESSORIES**

Via Santa Caterina da Siena 58/60 00186 Roma
www.barbiconi.it info@barbiconi.it

 @barbiconi

MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN PRAGUE

A series of sectorial meetings between the Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, and European Lieutenancies and Magistral Delegations began with the Iberian group in Madrid, and continued with the Nordic countries in Stockholm, the Italophones in Assisi, the German-speakers in Vienna, and the French-speakers in Paris. In order to close the circle, a meeting with representatives of the Lieutenancies and Magistral Delegations of Central and Eastern European countries was missing.

Thus an Investiture in the splendid Prague Cathedral, celebrated by the Cardinal Grand Master on Sunday, September 10, was the perfect occasion to convene representatives from that

geographical area in the former capital of the Habsburg Empire.

The meeting was held in the usual cordial and informal atmosphere in the setting of the ancient Strahov Monastery. Alongside the Governor General and Vice-Governor, Jean-Pierre de Glutz, was the host Magistral Delegate, Professor Tomáš Parma. Also present were: Bela Jungbert for Hungary, Claude Grbeša for Croatia, Andrei Sznaider for Poland, accompanied by Chancellor Pavel Szopa, Nicholas Ehrer for Switzerland-Liechtenstein, and Stefan Ahrenstedt for Sweden-Denmark.

The Governor General began by recalling the reason why he considered promoting the formula of sectorial meetings in Europe, after noting that the formal general meeting

*Meeting of the
Central and
Eastern European
Lieutenants in
Prague with the
Governor General
and the Vice-
Governor for
Europe.*



among all the European participants was too "crowded" to allow a useful debate and a fruitful exchange of evaluations.

The meeting in Prague allowed the Governor General to present the latest developments in the activities of the Grand Magisterium, and relations with the Holy Land and the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, an update on events related to the Palazzo della Rovere, and a presentation of future appointments such as the Consulta and the Holy Year 2025.

As repeatedly noted, the biggest problem in the Central and Eastern European geographical area concerns communication, mainly because of the plurality of languages. The Governor General recalled the intense information activity carried out by the Communications Office headed by François Wayne, but also the need for such information to be translated and disseminated within each area concerned, for the benefit of members who do not know the principal languages for communication. This can also facilitate the recovery of fellow Knights and Dames who have drifted away and no longer follow the Order's activities. The ensuing discussion

was lively and everyone spoke. All present expressed interest in repeating the experience on an annual basis, and the Magistral Delegate for Croatia, Claude Grbeša, offered to host the next meeting in Pula at an Investiture of his Magistral Delegation.

A particularly topical issue that was addressed was that of the observance of the new Ritual, which by now – after some initial hesitation – is being applied by all the Lieutenancies; where this has not been the case, it seems to be due to inadequate familiarity with it and its rationale, despite the five languages – including German – in which it has been circulated. It was therefore hoped that members of the Order would visit the Grand Magisterium website directly and that the spirit of communion in the Order would be strengthened.

The outcomes of the meeting were reported the very next day to the Cardinal Grand Master, who was in turn able to meet with the members from Central and Eastern Europe, who were also joined by some aspiring candidates from Slovakia, a country where work on the creation of a new Magistral Delegation has begun.





GUCCIONE
SINCE 1975

DECORATIONS OF KNIGHTLY ORDERS



Order of the Holy Sepulchre
Papal Equestrian Orders
Order of Malta
Italian Dynastic Orders and Orders of the Italian Republic

Via dell'Orso, 17 - 00186 Roma - Italia
Tel/Fax: (+39) 06 68307839 gianluca.guccione@gmail.com

EXCEPTIONAL DISCOVERIES IN THE GARDENS OF PALAZZO DELLA ROVERE

On July 26 a press conference was held at the Grand Magisterium's headquarters of the Order to present the results of the three-year archaeological excavation conducted in the gardens of Palazzo della Rovere. The Special Superintendent for Rome, Daniela Porro, emphasized the exceptional importance of the finds from the Julio-Claudian and late medieval periods. The press conference was followed by a tour of the excavations and a presentation of the main archaeological finds. In his speech, the Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, stressed that the Palazzo della Rovere is an essential resource for the Order, which facilitated this excavation work, the costs of which were covered by the hotel company, which rented part of the historic building. Numerous articles in the international press,

available online, reported on these discoveries, also taking the opportunity to present the Order of the Holy Sepulchre's mission to serve the culture of encounter in the Holy Land.



Press conference at Palazzo della Rovere, July 26, 2023, to present recent archaeological discoveries.



The Order and the Holy Land

OPENING NEW PATHS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, WOMEN AND FAMILIES IN THE HOLY LAND

Sustaining hope in the Holy Land for Palestinian Christians faced with the difficulties of daily life is a challenge that the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Bethlehem University have decided to tackle together, with a particular focus on young people and women who find it most difficult to enter the labor market. The AFAQ project, a word that opens up the future in its Arabic meaning of "Horizons", ended in August 2023 after two years during which many objectives were achieved and, above all, many people were supported and accompanied in order to be more independent in their search for work and to set up or improve their own employment and business activities. The Order of the Holy Sepulchre is pleased to have been the promoter of this initiative, covering about 50% of the expenses, thanks to the support sent by the Grand Magisterium through the Covid-19 fund to which all the Lieutenancies contributed and which had been created by the Cardinal Grand Master to meet the greatest needs in the Covid and post-Covid period, and some special donations from Lieutenancies such as Germany and Austria.

The results of the project, which started in September 2021, touch on various categories and this allows us to perceive the broad impact of this initiative on the small Palestinian Christian community. Among the results achieved: 110 young graduates completed an interactive and dynamic training program focused on the skills needed to enter the job market; social workers from 17 schools were trained in

career guidance to better serve their students and help them learn about their aptitudes and possible career and academic paths; 19 start-ups were supported through a grant of \$3,000 each; 29 existing small businesses received a \$2,000 grant to improve their operations and increase income; 47 unemployed graduates were given the opportunity to carry out an internship for a period of 3 to 6 months to support them in their entry into the labor market (at the end of the project, more than 40% secured permanent employment contracts, thus emerging from unemployment); 63 young people and women received a vocational scholarship to gain practical experience in a specific



Thanks to the AFAQ project, a family in the Holy Land was helped to improve their small baking business right in their own home.



vocational pathway, thus boosting their chances of employment as well as their knowledge of the labor market.

Beyond the numbers, however, there are people and grateful faces for the opportunity they were given. The Safar family from Bethlehem produces typical sweets at home and has worked to make their business more professional. "Even though the funding is small," they say, "it has allowed our family to initiate a radical change. My husband Nizar, who worked as a driver, left his old job, sold his car and we both devoted our resources to transforming this project into a small family business."

Victor and Fadi Abu Leil (respectively 28 and 30 years old) are two young men from the Jenin parish. They opened a food truck, *Location Sandwich*, in a caravan where they prepare sandwiches and sell drinks. "Here in the north," they say, "there are very few job opportunities, so we decided to open our own small business, but to do so we need an economic investment." Expressing their thanks for the support received through AFAQ, Victor and Fadi explain: "The support is not only financial but also moral. It is good to see that you continue to follow our projects. Come and visit us and see how



A family-run detergent business received a grant as part of an employment support project funded by the Order.

much we are putting in to this!"

Nelly Nemeh is from Bethlehem Parish and is 52 years old. She runs a small family-run detergent production business and explains how "because of Covid, our company suffered a serious crisis." The AFAQ project offered her an opportunity: "When my project was approved, AFAQ helped me to buy the material for small packages and redesign our labels."

The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, spoke passionately about this initiative in a short video: "We must create job opportunities, training, professional growth and other possibilities for our people. In this very complicated context, people do not see prospects for their future and we must help our people, families, and give prospects, future, possibilities to improve their lives."

The Patriarch concluded his remarks by thanking the entities that supported the initiative, including the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, adding "sometimes people need little to improve their activities, their training, to take a step forward. And this is part of the project: not just giving money to create new opportunities but helping those who are already working to improve themselves."

Elena Dini



Among the businesses that have been sustained as a result of the AFAQ project is the food truck opened by two young people in Jenin, enabling them to earn a decent living from their work.



THE ORDER'S CLOSENESS AND SUPPORT FOR BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY

As Bethlehem University celebrates its Jubilee by commemorating 50 years since its foundation, Vice Chancellor Peter Bray takes the opportunity to look back on the longstanding support and friendship with the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, which began at least 30 years ago

"It seems from the records we have here at Bethlehem University, that the first connection with the Equestrian Order was in July 1993 through Mr. Robert Benson, the Lieutenant for England and Wales. I suspect there may even be earlier connections, but there are no records of these in the archives at Bethlehem University," shares Brother Peter Bray, Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University.

Of the 50 years of Bethlehem University's existence, surely at least 30 have been accompanied by the closeness, interest and support of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, which has from very early on recognized the value of this institution and the importance of its mission for the benefit of the young Palestinians of the Holy Land who are trained and prepared here professionally and humanely to be a positive presence in this land that often and willingly subjects them to so many challenges.

But what is Bethlehem University? Brother Bray describes it for us: "Bethlehem University is a Catholic University in the Lasallian tradition. As such it seeks to provide an environment where students can acquire the knowledge, gain the skills and develop the values, virtues, and attitudes, that are going to enable them to live life as fully

as they can, as Jesus wanted people to do, in spite of the occupation and the restrictions."

Taking stock of the fifteen years in which he has served at Bethlehem University, there have been many developments (for the better or even, unfortunately, for the worse) that Brother Peter Bray has noticed and shares with us: the more tense atmosphere in Palestine with regards to the Israelis living in settlements and a growing fear on the part of students to cross some areas of tension to the point of giving up going to classes at the university; the growing anti-Christian sentiment in Jerusalem; the steady lowering of contributions paid by the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Higher Education to Bethlehem University until reaching zero



Bethlehem University, which helps young Palestinians stay in their own country, has received support from the Order for many years.



(which has made it difficult for the University to be financially sustainable, especially in times of COVID); but also greater freedom in the interaction between male and female students on campus, a wider spread of the Internet that has allowed greater awareness and openness to the outside world, and a rethinking of undergraduate and graduate courses to better meet the educational needs of young people.

Thinking about the Palestinian society, the Vice Chancellor comments: "In Palestine less than 1% of the population is Christian. At Bethlehem University there are some 20% of the student population who are Christian, so in a significant way Bethlehem University is reaching out to support the Christians here in Palestine.

However, with this portion of Christian student population, it means that it is impossible for a Muslim student to avoid engaging with Christians. Many of our Muslim students, particularly from Hebron and neighboring villages, have never met a Christian until they come to Bethlehem University. So, it is an opportunity over the course of four years for both groups to engage with one another. [...] I think providing such opportunities for Christians and Muslims to be together, study together, play and pray together, among other things, and so come to appreciate each other, is a very significant contribution Bethlehem University is making to the Palestinian society."

Certainly another important aspect in this timeframe has been the expansion of the University's facilities to which the Order has contributed significantly over the years: The Millennium Hall, built - as the name suggests - at the beginning of the new millennium, houses a theater named after Cardinal Furno, at the time Grand Master of the

Order. Various other buildings have been renovated thanks in part to funds sent by the Order: The De La Salle Hall, Bethlehem Hall which became the space that initially housed the Nursing faculty, and the library.

In addition to the renovations, Brother Peter Bray mentions the latest two structures built with the Order's help. "In 2021 the new facilities for the Nursing and Health Sciences were opened. The Order contributed significantly to that through a bequest from Dame Rose Bente Lee, that was left to the Middle Atlantic Lieutenancy in the USA and was then designated for the facility for the Nursing and Health Sciences. The building was named the John Patrick Cardinal Foley

Hall after the Grand Master who held that position from 2007 until 2011." And finally, a fitness center with a space to welcome visitors who often come to Bethlehem University, the Georgette Salameh Center, is being inaugurated these very days during the University's planned 50th Jubilee celebrations, and some

of the funding has also come from the Order.

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre is proud to have been able over the decades to support this center of excellence in higher education in Palestine. During the past 10 years this happened with more than 4 million euros in direct support of the students, through scholarships and various initiatives, and of the facility to enable training and activities to be carried out safely and in an environment conducive to learning. In this jubilee of Bethlehem University's 50th anniversary, we joyfully join the staff and students celebrating the occasion.

Elena Dini

“ In 2021 the new facilities for the Nursing and Health Sciences were opened. The Order contributed significantly to that through a bequest [...]. The building was named the John Patrick Cardinal Foley Hall after the Grand Master who held that position from 2007 until 2011 ”



The Life of the Lieutenancies

INVESTITURE IN PRAGUE PRESIDED OVER BY THE GRAND MASTER

At the beginning of September, the Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre presided over the solemn Investiture in Prague of the new members of the Magistral Delegation for the Czech Republic. Cardinal Fernando Filoni began his visit on Saturday September 9, celebrating Mass in the chapel of the Archbishop's Palace and blessing the Magistral Delegation's new banner. The Cardinal then met the members and participated in a prayer vigil in the Chapel of St. Wenceslas of Prague Cathedral, presided over by Archbishop Jan Graubner, Grand Prior. In the evening, the Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, and the Vice-Governor General for Europe, Jean-Pierre de Glutz, met with the Lieutenants and Delegates from neighboring countries



for a regional coordination meeting. The solemn Investiture Mass of the five new Czech Knights took place on Sunday 10, in the majestic Prague Cathedral, in the presence of the Archbishop, the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo, and the Archbishop Emeritus of Prague, Cardinal Dominik Duka. The celebration was followed by a gala lunch in the garden of the Archbishopric, attended by numerous Dames and Knights from all over Europe.



Celebrations in the majestic Prague Cathedral for the Investiture of new members of the Czech Magistral Delegation.



CATHOLIC STUDENT TEACHERS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW ON PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND

"My time visiting the Holy Land was an eye-opening, emotional and transformational experience..." (Morgan)

The summer often offers the chance of engaging with places, people, situations different than usual, and sometimes out of our comfort zone. Going on pilgrimage is one of those experiences that opens new perspectives and introduces us in a totally new context. This is what some young people decide to experience every summer.

Prof. Bartholomew McGettrick, President of the Holy Land Commission tells us about the two-week pilgrimage to the Holy Land of 25 students of Education from Glasgow University (Scotland) which took place in June 2023. Some of the pilgrims were completing their studies and some are undergraduates; some of them are going to teach in primary (elementary) schools, and others in secondary (high) schools and all are very committed to Catholic education. The Scottish Lieutenancy, although not being the sponsor of this pilgrimage, was close to the organization first of all thanks to Prof. McGettrick and is planning a follow-up with a meeting between the students and some Knights and Dames to discuss how such an event can raise awareness of the Order, and in time lead to admission of young members of the Order.

"A feature of this pilgrimage - Prof. McGettrick shares - was the planned and intense interaction with students of Bethlehem University for the first week. The students from Bethlehem University and Glasgow University worked in dialogue, and the learning arose from those conversations. This planned interaction



Prof. Bart McGettrick, an eminent member of the Order, with young students from Glasgow in the Holy Land.

allowed a depth and quality of formation that would be difficult to achieve in any other way." Being able to spend time working together and learning from each other afforded the Scottish students a deeper understanding of what it is to be a Christian in the Holy Land in these challenging times.

"The second week was based in Tiberias allowing a range of visits and experiences - including *Highland Dancing* on the Sea of Galilee!" continues the President of the Holy Land Commission. "The visits to the Holy Sites were central to the pilgrimage as were the opportunities to engage with significant





Students from Glasgow and Bethlehem Universities forged friendships that give hope for future collaboration.

people whose generous contributions made lasting impressions. A good deal of time was spent at the Latin Patriarchate hearing about and discussing the role of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land - especially in relation to humanitarian aid."

The effects of all of this on the students but also on the faculty accompanying the group from Glasgow was visible for all to see, comments Prof. McGettrick, sharing some of the experiences the group had such as the renewing of baptismal vows in the River Jordan, and the prayer at the Separation Wall in Bethlehem. "Each day - he adds - there was Mass celebrated with a local priest, and that was interesting to have the cultural experiences of daily Mass with a local flavor."

Mary, a lecturer at the University of Glasgow, was there with the group and she says: "As a lecturer at the University it was an honor to accompany our students and I am deeply appreciative of the various individuals and groups we met and/or

supported financially or in prayer for our pilgrimage. The Holy Land brought the Gospels to life. It was very moving to walk the shores that Jesus walked."

"The Holy Land pilgrimage opened my eyes to a new perspective on my faith journey. It showed how important it is to have a Christian voice in the Holy Land. As a student Catholic teacher it has changed the way I view my own faith and in turn will change the way I will teach to help future generations to explore their faith..." shares Katie, one of the pilgrims.

The roads that Jesus walked, the places where he lived, and the presence of the local Christian communities, the living stones, are a key part of the experience but there is also more, as Lily mentions: "the Holy Land pilgrimage was not just an exploration of the sacred landmarks and ancient sites but also an exploration into the spirit and hearts of other pilgrims. The love that was shared and shown within the group was the strongest divine presence ..."

