

JERUSALEM CROSS

ORDO EQUESTRIS SANCTI SEPULCRI HIEROSOLYMITANI

[f @grandmagisterium.eohsj.eng](https://www.facebook.com/grandmagisterium.eohsj.eng)www.oessh.va[X @GM_oessh](https://twitter.com/GM_oessh)

The Grand Master's Message

EVIL AND DEATH WILL
NOT HAVE THE FINAL SAY

Dear Knights, Dames and Friends,
even in these times, our spirits are lifted towards the Holy City, towards those blessed Places where the mystery of salvation took flesh in human history. The Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary is linked to the memory of the Dormition of the Mother of God, which has been venerated since the earliest centuries by the Church of Jerusalem, and leads us into the very heart of the Paschal Mystery: from the Cenacle to Gethsemane, from the Cross to the glory of the Resurrection.

At the invitation of Father Nikodemus Schnabel, I travelled to the Holy Land on pilgrimage last year and on my arrival, I was so warmly welcomed by the Benedictine community of the Dormition. While there, I was able once again to contemplate how the theology of Jerusalem springs from a journey through the Holy Places. Nothing in the Christian faith is abstract. The Word became flesh, God dwelt within our history, and the Blessed Virgin Mary is the most radiant sign of this redemption of the whole human person, body and soul. Ancient tradition hands down to us the image of the Apostles gathered around Mary in prayer. From that place, Zion, her body is carried into the Kidron Valley, near Gethsemane, at the foot of the Mount of Olives. It is a journey that concerns



*"The Assumption is not merely a truth of faith, but a living hope that illuminates human history."
(Icon of the Dormition of the Mother of God. Mater Ecclesiae Benedictine Abbey. Isola di San Giulio, Novara).*

CONTENTS

The Order in union with the Universal Church

LEO XIV IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SAINT BARTOLO LONGO IV

CONSTRUCTING BABEL OR REBUILDING JERUSALEM V

THE ORDER ALONGSIDE THE POPE IN SPAIN VII

Proceedings of the Grand Magisterium

VOICES FROM THE CONTINENTS VIII



THE GRAND PRIOR OF THE ORDER HONORED BY THE FRENCH HEAD OF STATE X

FROM THE SHRINE OF PARAY-LE-MONIAL, THE LOVE OF JESUS REACHES THE HOLY LAND XI

A VICE GOVERNOR GENERAL ON THE ROAD TO SAINTHOOD XIII

THE MEETING OF NORTH AMERICAN LIEUTENANTS IN GREEN BAY XV

A NEW INITIATIVE IN ITALY TO SUPPORT THE HOLY LAND XVII

The Order and the Holy Land

EDUCATION IS REOPENING DOORS OF HOPE IN GAZA XVIII



GAZA PARISH RECEIVES RECOGNITION IN ROME XX

THE ONGOING COMMITMENT OF THE AID AGENCIES FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES XXI

The life of the Lieutenancies

RECENT INVESTITURES, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ORDER'S AUTHORITIES XXII



Culture and History

A BOOK THAT INSPIRES THE NEXT CHAPTER OF OUR LIVES XXVII



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

not only Mary, but the whole Church: Mary precedes the People of God in the destiny of death and resurrection.

The Assumption is not merely a truth of faith, but a living hope that illuminates human history. In a time marked by war, violence and division in the Land of the

Lord, the Assumed Virgin reminds us that evil and death will not have the final word. In a memorable homily for this solemnity, Pope Benedict XVI pointed to three profound dimensions of the Assumption.

First, that in God there is room for humanity: the Lord is neither distant nor



indifferent to the sufferings of mankind. Second, Mary, as the Holy Ark, brings God to the world and the world to God. Third, within the human person there is room for God: the human heart is called to become a dwelling place for His presence. Some of the great Fathers of the Church of Jerusalem, such as Saint John Damascene and Saint Modestus of Jerusalem, contemplated the Dormition as the moment when Mary entered fully into the heavenly Jerusalem in order to continue her mission as Mother and Advocate of Christianity. She does not abandon the pilgrim Church, but ceaselessly intercedes before the throne of her Son for all her children scattered throughout the world. How relevant this consolation is for us today! As we witness so many open wounds in the holy places of Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem and along the Sea of Tiberias, the Mother of the Lord continues to watch over the Christian people and all those who seek peace.

To her, dear friends, we entrust the intentions and prayers of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, commending to her care the Patriarch, the priests, religious men and women, and all the Christian communities of the Holy Land, who are called each day to

bear witness to the Gospel amid trial and hardship. The Assumption also proclaims the dignity of the human body, as for centuries, the liturgy of Jerusalem has sung of the holiness of redeemed matter. Mary assumed into heaven proclaims to us that all creation is called to its final transfiguration. As Saint Paul teaches: "For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death." And in the Gospel of the Visitation we hear the *Magnificat*, the song of the Virgin: "for he who is mighty has done great things for me." Mary recognises that all is grace, all is God's gift. A faith that does not love the Mother of the Lord remains incomplete, for Mary is the sure path that leads to Christ. Let us pray that through her intercession the world may receive the gift of reconciliation, that the Christians of the Holy Land may be granted the strength to persevere, and that each one of us may be given a heart capable of welcoming God.

Let us reaffirm our conviction that the Lord does not abandon his people, for the earthly Jerusalem, scarred by human tears, is called to become the heavenly Jerusalem, where God will be all in all.

Fernando Cardinal Filoni



Barbiconi
1825

**CAPES
MEDALS
ACCESSORIES**

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

f @barbiconi

The Order in union with the Universal Church

LEO XIV IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SAINT BARTOLO LONGO

It has been some time since the Pope's visit to Pompeii, but the memory and joy of May 8 remain vivid. His words, his gestures, indeed his entire way of "being for others," clearly revealed his identity as a father who goes out to meet his children, to listen to them and to strengthen them in their faith. During his meeting with the people served by the Shrine's charitable works, accompanied by the Archbishop-Prelate of Pompeii, Monsignor Tommaso Caputo, Assessor of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, the Pope highlighted the profound bond between faith and charity that lies at the heart of the Shrine. He also emphasized the importance of the Holy Rosary as the spiritual foundation and driving force of every work of charity, while encouraging educators and volunteers to deepen their prayer life so as to continue sustaining the work of the Founder, St. Bartolo Longo, whom he himself canonised on October 19, 2025.

In his homily, reflecting on the Gospel of the Annunciation, the Pope said that the angel's greeting to Mary is an invitation to joy for all

humanity. Despite the devastation wrought by sin, oppression and war, God responds by sending his merciful caress, which takes on a human face in Jesus, making Mary the Mother of Mercy. Following the Mass, at which a delegation of Knights and Dames of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem was present, led by the Lieutenant for Southern Tyrrhenian Italy, Knight Grand Cross Dr Ennio Zerrillo, the Holy Father presided over the solemn recitation of the Petition to Our Lady of Pompeii. The Pope's visit has left the people of Pompeii and the devotees of Our Lady of the Rosary with a renewed commitment to persevere in prayer and charity, following the example of the Founder, the first lay Saint of the Order.

Loreta Somma

*Director of the Communications
Office at the Shrine of Pompeii*



Pope Leo XIV prayed at the tomb of Saint Bartolo Longo, a model of Christian life for all Members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.



CONSTRUCTING BABEL OR REBUILDING JERUSALEM

"Let's not fear artificial intelligence, but constantly keep the question of the human in play"

On Whit Monday, the feast of Mary, Mother of the Church, in the Paul VI Hall, the Pope was personally present at the official presentation of an encyclical of his own authorship. This was the first time a Pontiff had personally attended such an event, and the gesture likely reflects Leo XIV's desire to lead by example, given that, in his own words, the task before us is "together to find the way for humanity, in this time of artificial intelligence."

The message of this encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas* (meaning *Magnificent Humanity*), is first and foremost that "artificial intelligence now needs to be 'disarmed'." "The word is strong, I know, but deliberately chosen because this moment needs words capable of attracting attention, awakening consciences," emphasized the Holy Father. "Artificial intelligence now demands to be 'disarmed', freed from logics that turn it into an instrument of domination, exclusion and death," he clarified, before adding that disarming, however, is not enough because "we must build."

In highlighting the heart of his message, the Holy Father points to the example of the biblical prophet Nehemiah who, faced with the ruined walls of Jerusalem, rallied a discouraged people to bring about a revival. "Nehemiah's effort speaks to our time. Artificial intelligence can be a construction site of history from within a horizon of communion, in which technical progress learns to serve human life," the Pope observes. Summing up his message, he adds: "Let's not fear artificial intelligence, but constantly keep the question of the human in play."

In the introduction to the encyclical, Leo XIV draws upon two biblical images: the building of the Tower of Babel (*Gen 11:1-9*)

and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (*Neh 2-6*). Referring to Babel, he observes that "when a city is built on pride and the claim to self-sufficiency, communication breaks down, languages are confused and people no longer understand each other." In contrast to this fragmentation, the Pope emphasizes the pursuit of unity, recalling how, after the Babylonian exile, the prophet Nehemiah worked to rebuild Jerusalem,

The biblical prophet Nehemiah promoted the rebuilding of Jerusalem by encouraging the inhabitants to share responsibility: a task that involves rebuilding bonds even before the stones are laid. Following his example, Catholics are called by the Pope to be builders of communion.



which laid in ruins: "He did not impose solutions from above. He convened the families, assigned each of them a section of the wall to rebuild, listened to their concerns, coordinated their efforts and addressed any opposition. The narrative shows how the city is reborn, not through the initiative of one man, but through the shared responsibility of all: men, women, priests, artisans, heads of households and young people all play a part. It is an undertaking with God at the center, which rebuilds relationships before rebuilding with stones. Thus, ancient Jerusalem rediscovers a common language — not one of uniformity, but one of communion, namely the harmony that arises when all persons assume their own role and recognize that their strength comes from the Lord." According to the Pope, with reference to technology and the ongoing digital revolution, the choice therefore lies "between constructing Babel or rebuilding Jerusalem; between a power that claims to dominate the heavens and a people who work together in the presence of God to rebuild the walls of fraternal coexistence."

In this spirit, Leo XIV issues a heartfelt appeal to all the Catholic faithful, to all Christians, and to all men and women of good will: "Like Nehemiah, let us pray, plan wisely and work perseveringly, placing God at the forefront of our actions and the human person at the center of our choices. Thus, the "rejected stones" – the poor, the sick, the migrants and the lowly among us – will become the cornerstone, and a solid, welcoming common home will emerge on the earth, where love and faithfulness will finally meet, and righteousness and peace will embrace (cf. *Ps* 85:10). This is the blessing we implore from God; and the task that stands before us is that of being builders of communion, rather than architects of Babel. We are to be servants of the coming Kingdom, instead of lords of towers destined for ruin. With the heart of a shepherd and a father, I ask everyone to abandon the construction of yet another Tower of Babel

and to join forces in building up the common good, so that humanity will never lose its beauty, and the world once again will come to recognize the human heart as the place where God desires to dwell."

Magnifica Humanitas sets out in detail the history of the Church's social teaching, together with its foundations and guiding principles. The encyclical also explores the potential of artificial intelligence, subordinating it to a Christian humanist vision, placing particular emphasis on the need to safeguard the dignity of work throughout the digital transition. Furthermore, this seminal text outlines a horizon of commitment for all, that "civilization of love" which corresponds to the vision of Saint Paul VI, that is, a veritable "construction site of hope." "The civilization of love is no naïve utopia, but a demanding project, which consists in translating charity into structures of justice, giving institutional form to fraternity and regarding others – whether individuals or peoples – as allies necessary for building the common good."

In conclusion, the encyclical presents the Virgin of the *Magnificat* as a model, for the "hope, which sustains our actions in the world is prayer." "Before Elizabeth who announces to her that she has become the mother of the Lord, Mary bursts into a hymn of praise and joy. Her soul magnifies the Lord, and her spirit rejoices in God her Savior, for he chose a young, poor and humble girl for his plan of salvation. Mary suddenly sees all of history through the lens of this revelation" writes Leo XIV, affirming from an eschatological perspective that "God takes the part of the lowly. His plan is one that is often hidden beneath the opaque context of human events that see 'the proud, the mighty and the rich' triumph. Yet his secret strength is destined in the end to be revealed." In the age of artificial intelligence, the Pope urges all human beings to become "weavers of hope", with the same faith as Mary.

François Vayne



THE ORDER ALONGSIDE THE POPE IN SPAIN

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem played an active part in Leo XIV's historic visit to Spain. The Lieutenancies for Western Spain and Eastern Spain were both represented.

The highlight of the Holy Father's visit to Madrid was the celebration of Mass in Cibeles Square, followed, on Sunday 7 June, by the Eucharistic procession for Corpus Christi, in which numerous Knights and Dames of the Order took part. During the procession, the Lieutenant for Western Spain, Daniel Berzosa y López, wearing the Order's cape, marched



In both Madrid and Barcelona, the Members of the Order rallied to take part in Leo XIV's historic apostolic visit to Spain.

behind the Blessed Sacrament.

In Barcelona, a number of Members of the Order also served during the Pontifical Mass celebrated at the Sagrada Familia. Among them were the Lieutenant for Eastern Spain, Alberto Estrada-Rius, and the Vice Governor General, Enric Mas.

Proceedings of the Grand Magisterium

VOICES FROM THE CONTINENTS

Summary of the Addresses Delivered by the Four Vice Governors General at the Meeting of the Grand Magisterium held in Rome on April 21, 2026

The Spring Meeting of the Grand Magisterium was held on April 21, 2026, under the chairmanship of the Grand Master, Cardinal Fernando Filoni. The meeting was moderated by Governor General Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, in the presence of the Assessor of the Order, Monsignor Tommaso Caputo, Archbishop-Prelate of Pompeii. During the meeting, each of the four Vice Governors addressed the assembly and highlighted the efforts undertaken on every continent to expand the presence of the Order.

Vice Governor Thomas Pogge presented an overview of the Order in North America in 2025. Total membership stood at 14,240 – representing a slight decrease of 1% compared to the previous year – comprising 42% Knights, 42% Dames and 16% Ecclesiastics. Contributions amounted to \$10.9 million, unchanged from 2024, excluding funds raised through the additional Campaign led by the North American Lieutenancies. Responding to the appeal of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, to “build a future of hope and peace,” the North American Capital Campaign *Ensuring the Future* had been launched in previous years to support the schools of the Latin Patriarchate. To date, \$8 million of the funds raised have been allocated to the renovation and modernization of 44 schools, while a further \$4 million have been used to support teachers’ salaries, thereby helping to create employment opportunities for Palestinian Christians. Initiatives undertaken by the

Friends of the Order have also attracted new supporters from among non-members. Finally, the need was highlighted to develop employment opportunities in the Holy Land that are not dependent on religious tourism, by strengthening vocational training programs and fostering entrepreneurial initiatives in collaboration with Bethlehem University.

Vice Governor Jean-Pierre Marie de Glutz-Ruchti noted that, within the European context of the Order, support for projects proposed by the Patriarchate is generally provided after institutional expenses have been met. Among the recent developments are the separation of the Lieutenancies of Denmark and Sweden and the establishment of a Magistral Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Particular emphasis was placed on the dissemination of the Grand Magisterium's documents – namely the *Constitution, General Regulations, Ritual, Spirituality, Document on Formation, Compendium for Ecclesiastics and the Document constituting the Area of the Friends of the Order* – which are translated to ensure their accessibility to all Members. In May, an Investiture took place in Poland that included three Bishops, among whom the one who has responsibility over Miechów, an important pilgrimage centre where consideration is being given to appointing Honorary Canons and Canonesses of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. Finally, a significant number of European Lieutenants will participate in the forthcoming meeting in Pompeii, looking forward to gathering in





The Order's presence is woven into the history of the Church throughout the world, as illustrated by this stained-glass window in the church of Notre-Dame des Victoires au Sablon, in Brussels, Belgium, which is the birthplace of Godfrey of Bouillon, defender of the Holy Sepulchre.

the place where Saint Bartolo Longo lived and worked, and where the autumn meeting of the Grand Magisterium will also be held.

Vice Governor Enric Mas reported that in **Latin America** the recent renewal of leadership positions has marked a decisive step towards a more stable and effective structure, giving fresh momentum to the life of the Order. The situation in Venezuela has long been complex however, the new Archbishop of Caracas's acceptance of the office of Grand Prior now makes it possible to restore full local activity. Investitures are also resuming, with a significant number of candidates preparing to enter the Order. At the same time, several countries are showing encouraging signs of growth. Argentina has resumed its activity with vigor; in Colombia a Grand Prior Coadjutor is being appointed; while in Ecuador work continues with a view to the Order's future presence there. New possibilities are also emerging: the establishment of a Magistral Delegation in Honduras is under consideration; in Chile

there is growing openness thanks to the agreement of the Bishops' Conference; and in Brazil work is underway on the creation of a new Lieutenancy for the Central and Southern regions of the country. To crown these developments, it is hoped that a meeting of the Latin American Lieutenants can be held in Quito at the end of the year, coinciding with local Investitures, with the aim of consolidating the ongoing process of renewal throughout the region.

Vice Governor John R. Secker reported that across **Asia, Australia and the Pacific**, significant challenges arise from vast geographical distances and linguistic diversity. For this reason, increasing emphasis has been placed on the use of digital tools for formation and for strengthening connections among

local communities, together with the reinforcement of local Sections and Delegations in order to ensure a more extensive presence throughout the region. The Magistral Delegation of Guam is preparing to celebrate its first Investiture in many years. Among the initiatives currently underway are contacts with the Archdioceses of Bangalore and Hyderabad aimed at establishing two new Magistral Delegations. Roberto Buontempo, Lieutenant of Malta, has been entrusted by the Grand Master, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, with overseeing this process. Consideration is also being given to postponing until 2028 the regular gathering of the Australian Lieutenancies, planned in Sydney, so that it may coincide with the International Eucharistic Congress and a possible papal visit to Australia. The entire region is thus preparing for an event that could further strengthen the cohesion and visibility of the Order.

Livia Passalacqua



THE GRAND PRIOR OF THE ORDER HONORED BY THE FRENCH HEAD OF STATE

The Grand Prior of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, visited France at the invitation of the Œuvre d'Orient and the Shrine of Paray-le-Monial. During his visit, he issued a strong appeal for peace and dialogue in the Holy Land, describing the period since October 7, 2023 as "the most difficult moment in the region's recent history." On June 9, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pizzaballa, received the insignia of the Legion of Honour from the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, during a ceremony held at the Élysée Palace. The honour recognized his commitment to serving the peoples of the Holy Land, as well as his constant efforts to promote interreligious dialogue, justice and peace in a region marked by persistent tensions. The French Head of State paid tribute to Cardinal Pizzaballa, describing him as "a courageous voice for dialogue in time of war," stressing that the Christian presence in the Holy Land is facing unprecedented challenges and requires the continued support of the international community. President Macron also reaffirmed France's commitment to preserving the *status quo* of the Holy Places of Jerusalem, presenting it as an essential element of the religious and political balance of the Holy City and a fundamental component of France's historic engagement in the Middle East. Receiving the Legion of Honour, Cardinal Pizzaballa expressed his



Cardinal Pizzaballa, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Monsignor Shomali, Patriarchal Vicar for Jerusalem and Palestine, alongside the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, June 9 in Paris.

gratitude, stating that the award is an honour not only for him personally but for all the peoples of the Holy Land. "This distinction belongs first and foremost to the inhabitants of this land," he declared, reaffirming the determination of the Church of Jerusalem to continue her mission alongside communities enduring great hardship, defending human dignity and promoting a culture of encounter among peoples. The event also highlighted the Christian presence in the Middle East as a living mission of dialogue, reconciliation and bridge-building between communities. This mission is enthusiastically and generously supported by the 30,000 Members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, who are present on every continent.

Livia Passalacqua



FROM THE SHRINE OF PARAY-LE-MONIAL, THE LOVE OF JESUS REACHES THE HOLY LAND

During his visit to France and his meetings with the Bishops' Conference, Patriarch Pierbattista Pizzaballa was also received by the President of the Senate, Gérard Larcher, together with the Senate's working group on Eastern Christians, and by the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs. He also visited the Chapel of the Eastern Christians at Notre-Dame de Paris and shared moments of prayer, including with Members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

His visit to the Shrine of Paray-le-Monial brought him back to the roots of his devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which, the Cardinal recalled, had



The Lieutenant for France, Christian Piotre, and the Director of the Œuvre d'Orient, Monsignor Hugues de Woillemont, gave a joint presentation in Paray-le-Monial to discuss with the pilgrims present the issue of aid to the Holy Land, on the occasion of the Feast of the Sacred Heart presided over by the Patriarch of Jerusalem.



shaped his faith from childhood within his family. "Being able to visit the place from which devotion to the love of Jesus first spread throughout the world is something I personally feel I need," he said. In the context of the Holy Land, marked by war, division and hatred, he stressed "the symbolic significance of coming



to the place from which the spirituality of Christ's love spread throughout the world," adding that this is a message he wishes to bring back to the Church of Jerusalem. Cardinal Pizzaballa described a situation characterised by widespread violence, mistrust and deep social wounds.

In Gaza, where the Catholic Church maintains a stable presence through the Holy Family Parish, many schools have been destroyed. Only one Catholic school continues to operate partially, serving around 600 pupils. The Cardinal also highlighted the difficulties facing the West Bank, criticising the expansion of settlements, attacks by settlers and the climate of fear affecting both Israelis and Palestinians. "Both peoples are living through a profound trauma," he observed, noting that the war in Gaza has "reactivated among Palestinians the memory of the Nakba of 1948." He also expressed concern over attacks on the Christian village of Taybeh, which he described as a symbol of the Christian presence in the West Bank.

Despite this dramatic situation, the Patriarch pointed to several signs of hope in the vitality of civil society, peace

movements, interreligious dialogue groups and the educational role of Christian schools, which are open to all regardless of religious affiliation: "I recently took part, in April, in initiatives organised by Israeli peace organizations in Tel Aviv. Thousands of young people participated. There are also interreligious groups and private meetings between religious leaders. The Church is very active in the field of education, and schools remain the area in which we can still exercise significant influence."

Finally, referring to the possible pilgrimage of Pope Leo XIV to the Holy Land in 2033, Cardinal Pizzaballa stressed that it would be an event involving the whole of Christianity: "We must bear in mind that this would not simply be a Catholic event, but a Christian event concerning all the Churches. We have the Holy Places, the sites of Christ's Baptism and Transfiguration, and naturally the sites of His death and Resurrection. We must therefore reflect on how to organise all this in the most appropriate way possible, involving all the Churches as fully as we can."

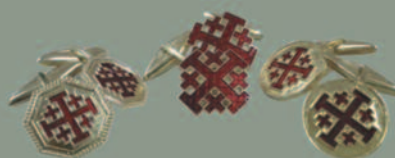
Livia Passalacqua



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

A VICE GOVERNOR GENERAL ON THE ROAD TO SAINTHOOD

James Joseph Norris, Layman and Servant of Universal Charity

James Joseph Norris (1907–1976), an American layman, served as Vice Governor General of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. On December 8, 1962, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Pope John XXIII approved the Order's new Constitution through the Apostolic Letter *Religiosissimo a monumento victoriae*. Drafted by Cardinal Eugène Tisserant, the Grand Master at the time, the text consisted of 36 articles and introduced numerous innovations, including the Order's international character and the establishment of the Grand Magisterium. On December 16, 1969, Norris was invested as a Knight Commander; on November 10, 1972, he was promoted to Knight Commander with Star; and on October 20, 1976, he received the rank of Knight Grand Cross, an honour bestowed upon only a very small number of lay people in recognition of exceptional service to the Church and the Holy Land. On April 29, his son Stephen and granddaughter Amanda Norris paid a visit to the Grand Master, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, accompanied by Dr Alessandra Scotto, the postulator supporting the opening of the diocesan inquiry into the Cause of beatification of this exemplary Member of the Order.

Born in 1907 into a deeply rooted Catholic family, James J. Norris grew up with a vision of life centered on concrete service to others. He received an excellent academic education, enriched by

his experience with the Servants of the Most Holy Trinity, a movement dedicated to promoting the apostolate of the laity. A husband and father of four children, Norris served as a naval officer during the Second World War, where he witnessed the spiritual ruin into which humanity had fallen.

Convinced that the Church is the cradle of one universal family, he broadened his sense of fatherhood to embrace war orphans and those in need throughout the world.

Beginning in 1951, he worked closely with Msgr Giovanni Battista Montini, who later became Pope Paul VI, and with Pope Pius XII in establishing the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), an organization created to coordinate the Church's response to the migration and humanitarian emergencies of the post-war period.

As European director of Catholic Relief Services, he witnessed first-hand the dire plight of millions of displaced persons and refugees in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Personally chosen by Pope Paul VI because of his extensive humanitarian experience,

Norris became the first layperson to address the Second Vatican Council. His intervention, *De Paupertate Mundiali in schemate de Ecclesia in Mundo Huius Temporis*, cap. IV, par. 24, urged the Church to translate her social teaching into concrete action against global inequality and extreme poverty. Addressing the Council

The Vice Governor General of the Order, James Joseph Norris, received in Rome by Saint Paul VI.



Fathers, Norris called for "a strong appeal to action" that would lead to the creation of institutions and structures through which the Church could ensure "full Catholic participation in the worldwide struggle against poverty." His intervention had a significant impact on the Council's deliberations and contributed in particular to the formulation of paragraph 90 of the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, the landmark document that defined the Church's role in the contemporary world and her commitment to the promotion of social justice. Norris outlined a model of cooperation that would help shape policies, initiatives and institutional partnerships aimed at supporting the world's most vulnerable populations.

The day after his intervention, Norris received a letter addressed to "our beloved son James Norris," in which Pope Paul VI expressed his appreciation for having drawn the Church's attention to the plight of the poor throughout the world and for encouraging Catholics to commit themselves concretely to the service of those most in need, following the example of Jesus Christ. A few days later, in what was widely interpreted as a highly symbolic gesture, one that echoed Norris's appeal, the Pope renounced the papal tiara. The act was unprecedented and was understood as a sign of the Church's solidarity with the poor and the marginalized, because of his intention of selling it and donating the profits to assist the poor.

As President of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) from 1951 to 1974, Norris strengthened the organization's role as a major international voice in the field of migration, promoting the protection of the rights and dignity of migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons. Under his leadership, the ICMC steadily expanded its

collaboration with national bishops' conferences and deepened its cooperation with international institutions.

Norris served during the tenure of Cardinal Eugène Tisserant as Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem (19 August 1960–21 February 1972). Before assuming that office, Cardinal Tisserant had served as Secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches until 1959. During these years, Norris worked closely with Vatican Dicasteries to address the massive flow of refugees and displaced persons from Eastern Europe. During the Second Vatican Council, Cardinal Tisserant also served as President of the Council's Presidium.

During the final years of his life, Norris served within the Order of the Holy Sepulchre under the leadership of the

subsequent Grand Master, Cardinal Maximilien de Fürstenberg (1967–1973). Before assuming the leadership of the Order, Cardinal de Fürstenberg was Prefect of the

**Grant that I may always
listen to Your voice, watch
for Your light and follow
Your noble inspirations...**

*(Excerpt from a prayer to the Holy Spirit found in the pocket
of James Joseph Norris's jacket on the day of his death)*

Congregation for the Oriental Churches. In this capacity, the Belgian Cardinal was the Holy See's principal interlocutor for humanitarian assistance and migrant resettlement programs in the Middle East and Eastern Europe administered by the ICMC, of which Norris remained president until 1974. The two men collaborated closely under the pontificate of Paul VI within the broader framework of the Holy See's charitable activities.

When Pope Paul VI established the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* in 1971 to coordinate Catholic humanitarian assistance throughout the world, Cardinal de Fürstenberg participated in its work as a member of the Roman Curia, while Norris represented American and European Catholic lay relief agencies.



On November 17, 1976, the day of his death, a prayer entitled *Act of Oblation to the Holy Spirit*, which Father Thomas A. Judge had composed for him fifty years earlier, was found in the breast pocket of his jacket, over his heart: "Grant that I may always hear Your voice, watch for Your light, and follow Your noble inspirations... Give me the grace to say to You, always and everywhere: Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening." Saint Teresa of Calcutta recognized the spiritual stature of his life, marked by a reputation for holiness (*fama sanctitatis*), and reflected upon it in the light of the Beatitudes in a letter addressed to his widow on November 22: "The friend of the poor (...) has gone home to God. Upon

arriving in heaven, Jesus must have said to him: 'Come home, come to Me, for I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was homeless and you took Me in.' He did this for so many years... I was very happy to be able to attend the Holy Mass that was offered in Saint Peter's (...)."

In light of the Catholic Church's enduring commitment to social justice, Norris's message has taken on renewed relevance today, prompting efforts to make Members of the Order more familiar with the life and witness of this distinguished Vice Governor General, remembered as a "Layman of Universal Charity."

Livia Passalacqua

THE MEETING OF NORTH AMERICAN LIEUTENANTS IN GREEN BAY

The annual meeting of the North American Lieutenants (nine from the USA and five from Canada) took place from June 11 to 13 in Green Bay, Wisconsin, in the excellent facilities of St Norbert College, thanks to the hospitality of Lieutenant Thomas Olejniczak, who is a member of the college's Board of Trustees. Set amidst lush greenery, the venue was ideal for thoughtful discussion, which took place over three days in an atmosphere of great fraternal camaraderie on the modern campus on the banks of the Fox River.

Following a day of in-depth bilateral meetings between the Governor General,

Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone – who was assisted by Vice Governor Tom Pogge – and each of the Lieutenants present, to examine in detail the activities and issues facing each individual Lieutenancy, two days were devoted to a general plenary debate on key issues relating to the Order and the Holy Land.

In his opening address on the first day, the Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, who was accompanied from Rome by Father Maxim Baz, after conveying the Grand Master's greetings and best wishes to the participants, reviewed in detail the progress

The Governor General attended the annual meeting of the Lieutenants of North America, who represent 15,000 Knights and Dames (half of the Order's membership worldwide).

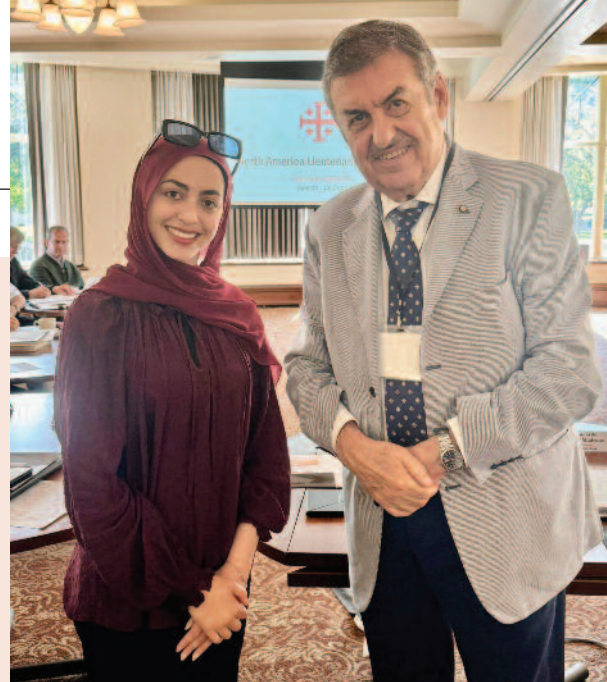


Helda Al-Shawwa's Testimony

I am Helda Al-Shawwa from Gaza City, Palestine. I am 20 years old, and I had lived in Palestine for 16 years. It all started in August 2022, when I was a 16-year-old exchange student in Prairie Farm, a very small town in Wisconsin, in the U.S. The first night I spent with my host mom in 2022, I freaked out because she left the water running in the sink. All I knew was the water tanks' system was such that if you ran out of water, it was game over until the refill. In June 2023, I went back to Palestine to graduate high school with my plan to get my college education in the U.S. In October 2023, the war in Palestine started, which has stopped all aspects of life, including schools, hospitals, and bakeries.

While still living in Palestine, I was applying for colleges. However, that was almost impossible because there was no Wi-Fi connection in the full Gaza Strip, as it was isolated from the rest of the world. The only place that still had a Wi-Fi connection was the only hospital left that hadn't been bombed, which was where my parents operated as doctors. That hospital is where I had to submit my St. Norbert College application. After living for a couple of months in the war, my family immigrated to Egypt, and we became refugees in Cairo. In August 2024, I was a first-year student at Saint Norbert College, majoring in Political Science and International Relations with an economics minor, with plans to pursue a master in public policy.

In a world where water is an international commodity, a 16-year-old-girl showered twice a day every day in Prairie Farm, Wisconsin, while Palestinians plan out when to use the water each day. In a world where no one chooses where to be born, Palestinians were born on the battlefield fighting for their basic rights and their identities. Palestinians deserve to have a voice in the international community, and I am hoping to be that voice for my people.



Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone spares neither time nor energy in forging fraternal bonds within the Order, particularly through meetings with Lieutenants from all over the world (pictured here during the Lieutenants' meeting held in Green Bay, Wisconsin, last June, alongside the young Helda Al-Shawwa, a Palestinian student who spoke at the meeting).

made by the Order since the previous meeting in February 2025 in Miami, in Florida, emphasizing the significance of extraordinary events that had taken place during the year, such as the election of the first North American Pope to the See of Peter, the Jubilee pilgrimage of the Order to Rome last October, the canonization of Saint Bartolo Longo, the publication of numerous writings by the Cardinal Grand Master, and the entry into force of the General Regulations and the publication of the Document on Formation. The Governor General also announced, with general approval, the forthcoming change in the office of Vice Governor for North America, with the appointment of Shawn Cleary to

succeed Tom Pogge.

Great emphasis was then placed on a careful reading of the recent pastoral letter from the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pizzaballa, and the participants listened with great attention to the account of the situation in the Holy Land given by the Director of the Beit Jala Seminary, Father Bernard Poggi.

On the second day, a thorough collective analysis of the statistical data on the funds raised revealed an overall increase in contributions, highlighting, amongst other things, that ancillary fundraising initiatives – such as the *Ensuring the Future* campaign for schools, launched two years ago – had not, on the whole, affected the level of



institutional contributions from Members arising from admissions, promotions and annual fees. There was then a very attentive and lively debate on the Cardinal Grand Master's guidelines regarding the 'Friends of the Order', guidelines which, to some extent, regulate and codify a practice that has long been established by certain North American Lieutenancies, which are particularly active in seeking financial support even outside the circle of Knights and Dames belonging to the Order.

On the subject of honors and protocol, the Governor General clarified the Grand Master's intended objectives regarding a rigorous policy on promotions (which must not be automatic) and the awarding of the Palm of Jerusalem in its various grades (which must be progressive and, at the highest grade, constitute the ultimate recognition for a course of service).

As regards the Eucharistic celebrations that accompanied each working day, it is worth highlighting the significance of the consecration of the North American Lieutenancies to the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

which coincided with a similar consecration of the United States on the 250th anniversary of its independence: the ceremony was incorporated into the celebration of Holy Mass in the College chapel dedicated to St Joseph.

One particularly moving moment came with the testimony of a young Muslim student of Palestinian origin who had managed to leave Gaza via Egypt and reach the United States, where she is now studying Political Science.

In his closing remarks, the Governor General gave an assurance that he would bring to the attention of the Cardinal Grand Master and the entire Grand Magisterium the concerns of the North American Knights and Dames, who are strongly committed to increasing resources for the Holy Land, aware that they constitute a significant part of the entire Order, but at the same time – as the Governor General has repeatedly emphasized – united in prayer with their brothers and sisters in all the other Lieutenancies around the world.

A new initiative in Italy to support the Holy Land

With the aim of strengthening efforts to sustain the Christian presence in the Holy Land alive, which is a mandate more relevant than ever in light of the current human and political developments reported in the news, and to help restore dignity to local Christian communities by stemming their exodus, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Grand Master of the Order, has established the "Foundation of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem – Third Sector Entity".

This is a legal instrument under Italian law which will enable donations from the *Friends of the Order* to be collected more effectively, and permit donors to take advantage of the tax benefits provided for under Italian law and to allocate five per thousand portion of their annual tax return to charitable activities in the Holy Land. In addition, the Foundation will make new online tools available to the public to facilitate donations.

This represents a significant step forward in fundraising in Italy: so far Italian contributors – unlike those in other countries – have not been able to enjoy any tax relief on their donations. Italy, with its seven Lieutenancies, contributed 2,400,000 euros to the Grand Magisterium's funds in 2025, and these contributions are largely the result of admission fees to the Order, members' annual dues and donations made on the occasion of promotions.

The Foundation and the tools it now makes available for charitable work will give further impetus to an already considerable level of generosity, and bring Italy closer – including in terms of tax incentives – to the systems already in place in most countries throughout the world.



It is possible to make a donation to the Foundation in several ways. For small donations by credit, debit, or prepaid card, you can scan this QR code.

The Order and the Holy Land

EDUCATION IS REOPENING DOORS OF HOPE IN GAZA

Life Returns to Gaza Parish thanks to a School and Kindergarten

Amidst a landscape deeply scared by conflict and loss, a profound milestone of renewal is taking root in Gaza City. The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem is leading a vital initiative to restore early childhood education, offering hope and a tangible return to life for the region's most suffering communities. By progressively reopening one of the largest school networks in Gaza across two adjacent locations, this project stands as a testament to human resilience and the enduring power of love and care.

The escalation of conflict since October 2023 led to a total collapse of educational services, leaving over 60% of school-aged children without access to learning and putting hundreds of thousands of young minds at risk of severe developmental delays. Before the war, the Catholic educational network operated three prominent schools open to families of all backgrounds: the Holy Family School in *Rimal* neighborhood, the Latin Patriarchate School in *Zeitoun* neighborhood, and the Rosary Sisters' School. As the crisis deepened, these spaces were repurposed, serving for over two years as critical shelters for internally displaced people.

Now, a powerful shift from survival to revival is underway. The institutional anchor of this mission is the Latin School within the Holy Family Parish compound in Zeitoun, which is stepping out of its role as a shelter to reclaim its original educational function, preparing to serve approximately 850

students. Simultaneously, the project is expanding to a second, adjacent location: the newly secured and rehabilitated Building, located almost one kilometer away. This dedicated satellite site will function as a safe, specialized kindergarten, welcoming at least 150 children aged 3 to 5.

Rooted in the universal values of peace, acceptance, and human dignity, this intervention represents the very essence of humanitarian solidarity. It moves beyond emergency relief to invest in the intellectual and emotional architecture of a better future. Central to this recovery is the presence of qualified educators. Drawing from an established network of expert teachers, the school ensures that these children are not merely minded, but truly nurtured. Furthermore, recognizing the deep psychological toll of prolonged warfare, the Latin Patriarchate is integrating vital psychosocial support. Through structured routines, creative play, and professional care, the initiative directly addresses the devastating trauma experienced by the youngest victims, helping them process their reality and reclaim a sense of normal childhood.

Safety remains the foundational pillar of the entire operation. In a city where infrastructure is heavily compromised, the Latin Patriarchate is establishing a secure, dedicated bussing system. This transport network will bridge the gap between displaced camps or temporary living spaces and the protective environment of the





Thanks to the Catholic parish in Gaza, young members of the parish and their Muslim neighbors have been able not only to survive the restrictions imposed by the war, but also to regain hope thanks to the reopening of schools, as demonstrated by the Patriarch of Jerusalem's visit at the end of June 2026.

school classrooms, ensuring that the journey to education does not come at the cost of personal security.

By providing guaranteed transportation, the project removes a massive psychological barrier for families who are eager for normalcy but paralyzed by the dangers of a fractured landscape. This logistical lifeline does more than connect points on a map; it creates an unbreakable corridor of care where children are shielded from external hostility from the moment they leave their families until they safely return. Within these walls, education becomes an active form of peacebuilding, where mutual respect and healing take root.

The impact of this reopening is already echoing through the community, awakening

profound joy in the hearts of children and their parents alike. For mothers and fathers, seeing their children step onto a school bus with backpacks instead of facing another day of unstructured uncertainty brings an overwhelming sense of relief and dignity. For the children, the classroom offers a sanctuary of smiles, peer interaction, and discovery. By replacing the sounds of destruction with the vibrant hum of learning, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem is proving that even after the deepest darkness, life, peace, and hope can beautifully break through.

George Akroush

*Director of the LPJ Development Office
Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem*



GAZA PARISH RECEIVES RECOGNITION IN ROME

On June 18, Father Yusuf Asad was received by the Grand Master, Cardinal Filoni, at the headquarters of the Grand Magisterium of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem in Rome. An Egyptian priest from Asyut and a member of the Institute of the Incarnate Word, Fr. Yusuf serves as assistant parish priest of the Holy Family Parish in Gaza. He led the small Christian community, working alongside the religious sisters to provide for every need and organise shelter and assistance when Israel's offensive in the Gaza Strip began following the Hamas attacks of October 7. Father Gabriel Romanelli, the parish priest, was outside the Strip at the time, having gone to procure medicines, and it took him several months to secure permission to return.

On June 12, at Palazzo Corsini, the National Academy of the Lincei awarded the 2026 Extraordinary "Antonio Feltrinelli" Prize to the Catholic Holy Family Parish of Gaza, in recognition of an exceptional undertaking of moral and humanitarian value on behalf of the people of Gaza. Fr. Yusuf attended the ceremony, which was held in the presence of the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, together with Msgr Iyad Twal, Patriarchal Vicar in Jordan, who accepted the prize on behalf of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and His Beatitude Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa. Msgr Twal spoke of the experience of the Holy Family Parish, which has become a small enclave of survival, where faith has remained inseparable from the practical necessities of bread, medicine and blankets, in one of the places where the collapse of all human protection is most starkly evident.

Livia Passalacqua

Cardinal Pizzaballa planted an olive tree as a symbol of hope during his recent pastoral visit to Gaza at the start of the summer.



THE ONGOING COMMITMENT OF THE AID AGENCIES FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES

The Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone – accompanied by the Director of the Order's Communications Office, François Vayne – participated from June 15 to 18 in the General Assembly of ROACO (Reunion of Aid Agencies for the Oriental Churches), presided over by Cardinal Claudio Gugerotti, in the presence of Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle and Rev. Fr. Francesco Ielpo, Custos of the Holy Land.

The meeting provided an update on the emergencies affecting the Holy Land and an assessment was given of the possible repercussions for the region arising from recent political developments and the ongoing peace negotiations.

Following a discussion on the need to support Christian communities suffering in the Middle East, particularly in southern Lebanon, and an address by the Apostolic Nuncio to that country, Monsignor Paolo Borgia, the members of ROACO each pledged their support for the solidarity projects proposed by the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches. The Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, announced that the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem will fund three projects in support of the Holy Land. With a total contribution of €222,000, the Order will support renovation works at the Monastery of the Brigidine

Sisters on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem and at the parish of the Assumption in Ashrafieh, Jordan. It will also support the educational and psychological assistance program run by the Latin Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, located in the Jabal Al-Hashimi district, for Iraqi refugee children in Jordan.

At the conclusion of the General Assembly, on June 18, the members of ROACO were received in audience by the Holy Father. While thanking the Order of the Holy Sepulchre and the member institutions of ROACO for their support, the Holy Father stated, among other things: "My dear friends, as I look at you and reflect on the quiet, benevolent service you carry out – and on the many benefactors who, through you, channel resources to those in need – I cannot help but think of how much money, in this dark period of history, is being wasted on killing, squandered by so many who foment wars. While you generate life, they sow death; while you reach out to your brother, they seek enemies to crush; while you create dialogue, they seek monologues; while you open paths of hope, they lock people into fear; while you build the future,

they destroy the present."

At the conclusion of the audience, the Governor General conveyed to Pope Leo XIV the profound devotion of the Order's thirty thousand Members and the assurance of their prayers.

During the papal audience granted to the ROACO participants, the Governor General assured the Holy Father of the constant prayers of all the Members of the Order.



The life of the Lieutenancies

RECENT INVESTITURES, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ORDER'S AUTHORITIES

SOUTH AFRICA

The Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, attended the Prayer Vigil and Investiture ceremonies of the South African Lieutenancy in Cape Town on Friday 1 and Saturday 2 May, during which fourteen new Members were admitted to the Lieutenancy. Welcomed by Lieutenant Juan Luis Cabral, the Governor General conveyed to the only Lieutenancy currently established in Africa the greetings and spiritual closeness in prayer of the Grand Master, Cardinal Fernando Filoni. He also expressed the hope that the presence of the Order may soon be extended to other countries on the continent where initial contacts have already been established. The Vigil and Investiture ceremonies took place at Our Lady of Good Hope Church and were presided over by the Grand Prior, His Eminence Cardinal Stephen Brislin, in the presence of His Excellency Sitembele Sipuka, Archbishop of Cape Town. During an extensive discussion with Cardinal Brislin, the Governor General also examined prospects for the establishment of a second Lieutenancy in the country. Addressing the new South African confrères, the Governor General encouraged them never to forget that they belong to a family united by its love for the Mother Church of Jerusalem, present on every continent of the world, which – overcoming every distance and, despite differences of language, united in the same faith – prays and works for peace and justice in the Land of Jesus.



THE NETHERLANDS

Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, presided over the Investiture ceremonies held in the Dutch city of Hengelo on May 8 and 9, 2026. The Vice Governor General Enric Mas represented the Grand Magisterium. Seventeen new Members were admitted to the Order, including six Dames, in the presence of Lieutenant Johannes Krapels and Grand Prior Bishop Cornelis Van den Hout, as well as the Lieutenants for Luxembourg, Belgium, Austria and Malta. Representatives from Germany, Switzerland-Liechtenstein, Ireland and France were also in attendance. The Prayer Vigil and Investiture ceremonies took place in the Saint Lambert Basilica. The Mayor of Hengelo, himself a Member of the Order, warmly welcomed all participants at a reception held in the town hall.



NORTHERN ITALY

On May 15, on the eve of the Investiture ceremonies held in Milan, Msgr Mario Enrico Delpini, Metropolitan Archbishop of Milan – the historic See of Saint Ambrose, where Saint Augustine was baptized – received the insignia of the Order from the Grand Master in the grand chapel of the archiepiscopal residence, built in the time of Saint Charles Borromeo and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Numerous Knights and Dames took part in the Prayer Vigil and, on the following day, in the Investiture ceremonies organized by the





On the occasion of the Investiture Ceremony in Milan, Cardinal Fernando Filoni also wished to meet the priests and bishops who are Members of the largest Lieutenancy in Italy.

Lieutenancy for Northern Italy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. The celebrations were presided over by Cardinal Fernando Filoni in the presence of the Governor General, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, a Milanese by birth and in spirit.

Before the customary meeting with the candidates held prior to the Prayer Vigil and devoted to

reflecting on the commitment the candidates are about to undertake at the conclusion of a year of formation and on the charitable mission of the Order during this particularly difficult period for the Holy Land, the Cardinal Grand Master requested, departing from established practice, to meet with the ecclesiastical Members of the Order belonging to the Lieutenancy for Northern Italy.

This meeting, followed by a time of fellowship, took place at the Lieutenancy headquarters at Santa Maria della Pace. Among those present were Cardinal Oscar Cantoni, Bishop of Como and Grand Prior Emeritus; Bishop Maurizio Malvestiti, Bishop of Lodi and Grand Prior of the Lieutenancy; numerous bishops; and around fifty priests and religious Members of the Order, representing the various Sections and Delegations of the Lieutenancy for Northern Italy. The discussion focused on the role of clergy within a lay Order such as ours, also in light of the *Compendium*, a document devoted specifically to this important and sensitive subject and recently published by the Cardinal Grand Master.

On May 16, during the third day of his visit to Milan, the Cardinal Grand Master invested thirty-seven new Members of the Lieutenancy for Northern Italy in the chapter church of Santa Maria della Pace. The new Members were welcomed by Lieutenant Angelo dell'Oro, Knight Commander with Star; Governor General Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone; Vice Governor Enric Mas; the Lieutenant for Belgium; the Lieutenant for Malta; the Lieutenants of the other six Italian Lieutenancies; Anna Maria Iacoboni, Dame Grand Cross and Member of the Grand Magisterium; and numerous representatives of European Lieutenancies.



SWITZERLAND AND LIECHTENSTEIN

The Investiture Ceremonies for the Lieutenancy of Switzerland and Liechtenstein took place from May 29 to 30, 2026 in Chur Cathedral, while the Sunday Mass of Thanksgiving was held in Vaduz Cathedral (Principality of Liechtenstein) on May 31. There, ten new Members, including the Abbot of the territorial abbey of Saint-Maurice, were admitted to the Order by the Cardinal Grand Master. Present were the Governor General of the Order, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, the two Vice Governors General Jean-Pierre de Glutz-Ruchti and Enric Mas, the Lieutenants and representatives from twelve other Lieutenancies – some representing the Order of Malta – six bishops from Switzerland, Liechtenstein, France and Jerusalem, as well as political figures from the Canton of Graubünden.

Concurrently, a new Lieutenant and a new Grand Prior have taken up their posts within the Lieutenancy for Switzerland and Liechtenstein. At the end of her eight-year term, Donata Krethlow-Benziger handed over her post to the new Lieutenant, André Zumthurm-Nünlist. The Grand Prior, Charles Morerod, Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg, also handed over his post to Bishop Felix Gmür, Bishop of Basel, after eight years of service.



BELGIUM

In the presence of Knights and Dames, Cardinal Fernando Filoni presided over the Feast of Corpus Christi on Thursday June 4 in Liège, the Belgian city where this form of Eucharistic devotion originated in 1246, thanks to the mystical vision of Saint Juliana of Cornillon and her friend, the Blessed Eve the Recluse.

On Saturday June 6, the Lieutenancy for Belgium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre celebrated its centenary in Brussels. On this historic occasion, the Grand Master, accompanied by the Apostolic Nuncio to Belgium and Luxembourg, Monsignor Franco Coppola, and the Apostolic Nuncio to the European Union, Monsignor Bernardito Auza, presided over the Investiture of eleven new Knights and Dames in the chapter church of the local Lieutenancy, Notre-Dame des Victoires au Sablon.

The King's Representative honored this anniversary with his presence, recalling that His Majesty King Philippe and Her Majesty Queen Mathilde are Members of the Order.

Numerous Members of the Grand Magisterium took part in the celebrations: the Vice Governor General for Europe, Jean-Pierre de Glutz-Ruchti, representing the Governor General; the Vice Governor General for Latin America, Enric Mas; the Chancellor of the Order, Alfredo Bastianelli; and the Honorary Vice-Governor General, Giorgio Moroni Stampa.

The large gathering, immersed in an atmosphere of intense prayer, welcomed the Lieutenants who had come in person to celebrate the centenary: from Malta, Portugal, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Northern Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, France, Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein.



Culture and History

A BOOK THAT INSPIRES THE NEXT CHAPTER OF OUR LIVES

Fernando Filoni

My Days Are In Your Hands. Men and Women In The Footsteps Of Jesus
Barnes&Noble, July 2026

There is a beautiful Gospel image: that of the Sower scattering seeds which, nourished by the light of the Gospel, germinate and bear the fruit of holiness. In this work of spirituality, Cardinal Fernando Filoni first presents figures from Salvation History and then men and women who followed Jesus, illustrating the journey that led them to encounter "the true light that

enlightens everyone" (Jn 1:9). The Author leads the reader almost by the hand to grasp the "real, intellectual and existential" pilgrimage of the human person in following the footsteps of Christ. These are men and women of flesh and blood who allowed themselves to be seized by Christ, the source of holiness, and captivated by Him, by that Risen Lord who "breaks open the forms of



The presentation of Cardinal Filoni's new book in Milan, in May 2026, attended by the Order's local authorities and the Governor General.





Father Stefano Stimamiglio, editor-in-chief of the weekly magazine Famiglia Cristiana, moderated the meeting in Milan dedicated to the Grand Master's book, published in Italian by Edizioni San Paolo in 2025.

Was it not she who announced to the fearful disciples that the Lord was going before them into Galilee? And Saul the persecutor, powerfully touched by the Lord, was

life we know, and matter itself is transformed into a new kind of reality" (Benedict XVI).

These men and women have names and faces and, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, they have allowed hope to become the salt of their lives and the bread of charity that sustains their steps. With the Psalmist, they all bear witness: "I trust in thee, O Lord; I say, 'Thou art my God. My times are in thy hands'" (Ps 31:15-16). Christ, the Faithful One, is the reward of those who follow Him steadfastly in doing the will of God, ever mindful of Jesus' words: "By your endurance you will gain your lives" (Lk 21:19).

The greatest consolation of a man or woman of God is to carry God's own passion within the heart. Thus Mary Magdalene, standing before the Risen Lord for whom she had wept beneath the Cross, rejoices at the sight of him risen.



transformed into Paul, the zealous herald of new life, who could proclaim: "But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal 6:14). We also encounter Augustine of Hippo, who wandered through hypocrisy and error until Christ became his "inner teacher". Then there are those whose lives became truly extraordinary: Helena, the noble pilgrim

who rediscovered the Cross in Jerusalem; Francis of Assisi, whom Christ conformed to Himself by granting him the gift of the stigmata; Edith Stein, the Jewish atheist who, touched by Christ, chose as a religious the name Teresa Benedicta of the Cross; Brother Charles of Jesus, the apostle of fraternity; and Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who recognized Jesus in the poorest of the poor and fell in love with Him. May this book reward your patience and perseverance. Happy reading.

Livia Passalacqua

