



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

Statement of the Grand Master on Closing of Holy Sepulchre

Dear Knights and Dames, Brothers and Sisters
in the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of
Jerusalem:

The events of recent days in Jerusalem are
alarming and merit the special attention of our
Order.

In a rare and desperate initiative to keep
Christian life alive in the Holy Land, Christian
Churches leaders have decided to close the
doors the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to
protest the Municipality of Jerusalem's

systematic campaign against the churches and the Christian community in the Holy Land.

Betraying international treaties and centuries of practice, all Christian properties, except
churches themselves, are being taxed tens of billions of dollars. This includes hundreds of
agencies, including Christian schools, hospitals, homes for the needy, health care facilities,
and pilgrimage centers such as the Notre Dame Center in Jerusalem. Many church assets
are being frozen, fines threatened, and hundreds of thousands of dollars seized from
Christian churches in an effort that will severely curtail Christian freedom of practice. These
are acts of unprecedented discrimination against Christians.

I encourage all our Lieutenancies members to offer prayers in light of this further evidence
of Christian discrimination. And at a time when Western governments tend to show special
favor to Jerusalem, members might bring these anti-Christian discriminatory actions to the
attention of government leaders.



Edwin Cardinal O'Brien
Grand Master
Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem

(February 26, 2018)