

News Letter

ORDO EQUESTRIS SANCTI SEPULCRI HIEROSOLYMITANI

Special edition

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The entire text of the Holy Father's address to the members of the *Consulta* and the pilgrims can be found on the Holy See's web-site (www.vatican.va) - in Italian under the heading "Discorsi", in English "Speeches", in Spanish "Oraciones", in French "Discours", in German "Ansprachen", in Portuguese "Orações". Under the same heading one can find a **video** of the Audience.

The homilies of the Grand Master during the liturgical celebrations of the pilgrimage are also on the Holy See's web-site www.vatican.va (however only in Italian and English). To find them, search for the heading *Altri organismi* or *Other offices*, and enter into the site of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and click on the head *Messaggi* or *Messages*.

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GRAND MAGISTERIUM
OF THE EQUESTRIAN ORDER
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The Consulta gathered in Rome from 10 to 12 September

THE GRAND MASTER COMMITS TO THE RENEWAL OF THE STATUTES

The Order should be spiritually demanding in the recruitment and the continuing formation of the members and open to the new generations and to families

"The renewal of the Statutes, which are about fifty years old, is particularly important to us", said Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Grand Master of the Order, opening the work of the *Consulta* that from 10 to 12 September saw gathered the members of the Grand Magisterium and the leaders of the 62 Lieutenancies and Magistral Delegations who came from 35 countries to Rome on the occasion of the international pilgrimage. The work was done in the hospitable *Crowne Plaza Hotel* and was begun with the concelebration of the Mass, presided each morning respectively by the Grand Master, the Assessor, Archbishop Antonio Franco, and by the Grand Prior, Patriarch Fouad Twal, together with many priests.

Inviting the members of the *Consulta* to work on the project of a new Statute and reassuring them of his attentive presence, the Grand Master thanked the representatives of the Vatican Secretariat of State and of the Con-

gregation for the Eastern Churches, the Order's preeminent partners in conformity with the Papal will manifested constantly throughout history. The Cardinal then invited the Order to be particularly demanding in the selection and continuing formation of its members and to be more open to the young generations, in particular to the families, in order to arouse fresh energies to be put at the service of the Holy Land, and their commitment to participate in the life of the local Churches. He also invited the Order to study new solutions in the field of communications which would be able to make room for themselves and to be welcomed by the more important channels of information in order to "witness even more fully to the our activity", with particular reference to the interest shown by the media on the occasion of the press conference of 4 September at the Holy See when the historic pilgrimage of the Knights and Ladies and the *Consulta* were announced.

The Governor General presented the *Instrumentum laboris*

FACE THE CHALLENGES OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Illustrating then the *Instrumentum laboris* for the revision of the statutes of the Order, Governor General Agostino Borromeo emphasized the necessity of this undertaking, reminding all that the Order has grown considerably - about 50 years ago, in 1966, there were only 11 Lieutenancies - so much so that today it includes 30 thousand members in 62 Lieutenancies and Magistral Delegations, who assure an increasing material support for the Holy Land. Such a growth could allow the Order to extend its charitable activity in the future to the Christians in other parts of the Middle East. A deepening and development of the Order's activity and its witness are also

necessary for the local Churches, including in topics of a financial nature, the Governor General said, recalling in that regard the Encyclical *Lumen Fidei* (n. 51) where the Pope states that the exercise of charity is the Christian's "main road".

This «new vision» not only seems possible, but also necessary, 150 years after the Order's restructuring desired by Pope Pius IX in 1847, at the same time of the re establishment of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which had ceased to exist in 1187. "Today's urgent situations are evident in Syria and in Iraq, as well as in Egypt ...: the Order's growth in the world allows us now to consider broadening



our activity to all the regions where the Church was born and spread from the earliest years, without taking away – rather increasing – what we are now giving to the Holy Land” said the Governor General, specifying that it

is now a question of “giving the Order the conditions to face with greater dynamism the challenges of the Third Millennium and make its activity on behalf of the Christians of the Middle East more effective”.

Expressed by representatives of the Holy See THE CHURCH’S GRATITUDE FOR A GENEROUS SERVICE

The Governor General then referred to the address by the Grand Master to vigorously express the the Order’s heartfelt gratitude to the representatives of the Holy See who had taken part in the *Consulta*, bearing witness to the strong bond uniting the chivalric institution with the Holy Father. “Your charity is very important for the Christians of the Holy Land, you who have always taken care of the holy places for all of us”, declared Mons. Peter Wells, Assessor of the Vatican Secretariat of State, emphasizing the Church’s gratitude for the generous service and constant dedication of the Order in their regard”.

At the beginning of his intervention he had assured his listeners that Pope Francis, “who as Bishop of Rome presides in charity, was keeping the work of the *Consulta* in his prayer, wanting to support “the only institution so closely united by statute to the Holy See”.

The Secretariat of State together with the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, which are especially close to the Order, are by statute represented in the *Consulta*. For this reason, in a message read by the Undersecretary, Mons. Maurizio Malvestiti, the Prefect of the Congregation, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, who was on a mission in Kazakhstan, thanked the Knights and the Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre for “their truly extraordinary contribution coming from every part of the world on behalf of the Holy Land” and recalled “the energetic collaboration” by means of the ROACO (Riunione Opere Aiuto Chiese Orientali” that is the “Reunion of Aid Agencies for the Oriental Churches”), the organism in which the Order participates. He indicated the many nations that comprise the “Eastern territories” entrusted by the Sovereign Pontiffs to the Congregation that refers to the Holy Land in the broadest meaning of the word. Lastly, with regard to the Christian East, he recommended continuing to pay particular attention to the application at the liturgical level of the Council’s vision of the Christian East and to the formation of candidates to the religious and monastic life.

The address of the Grand Prior, Patriarch Fouad Twal OUR PRIMARY END IS STILL AID TO THE HOLY LAND

Before introducing the work, the Governor General presented the Grand Prior of the Order, the Patriarch of Jerusalem of the Latins Fouad Twal, who said that he was sure that the new Statutes will preserve the Order’s main purpose, which is that of helping the Christians of the Holy Land.

The Patriarch chose to recall the impor-

tance of the social and educational activities in particular, activities that promote dialogue between Christians and Muslims in the Holy Land in their daily living. Referring to Pope Francis’ meeting with the King of Jordan, which took place at the end of August, the Grand Prior invited the Order to be ready for a prospective visit of the Pontiff to the Holy



Land in the near future, which will allow the Holy Father to become familiar with both the completed works and the ongoing projects that are fostering interreligious dialogue and peace in the Middle East. (In this regard he mentioned the example of the schools of the Patriarchate in Jordan that were kept open during summer vacation to accommodate the children of the refugees who had fled from the civil war in Syria). And since the works and projects involve the Christians of the Holy Land, the Patriarch issued a new appeal to visit them on the occasion of the pilgrimages to offer

them strong moral support, conscious that their "survival" is threatened, as it is, unfortunately, even in other countries of this region. They have to face violence, and need solidarity. Despite this, the Patriarch expressed his concern over an institutional broadening of the activities of Knights and Ladies to the whole of the Middle East. The Governor General assured him that his address would be given thorough consideration during the work of the *Consulta* and in the drafting of the new Statutes, in view of the important challenges that the Order must face in fidelity to its roots.

Expressed by the Work Groups for the new Statutes

GUIDELINES ON SPIRITUAL AND SOLIDARITY COMMITMENTS

Three groups of Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates, gathered in language groups, over a three-day period studied the proposed revisions of the text of the Statutes in the light of the Second Vatican Council, the new Code of Canon Law and the challenges facing Christianity at the beginning of the Third Millennium. They reaffirmed the Order's primary commitment of prayer and economic support for the Church of Jerusalem – the place of the Lord's Resurrection and the *raison d'être* of the Order – in particular for the Latin Patriarchate, its parishes, seminary, schools, social and charitable agencies, although not remaining insensitive to the necessities of Catholics of other rites and the urgent humanitarian needs throughout the Holy Land.

Special attention was given to the formation of the members of the Order, their spiritual growth in moral integrity, and their generous witness of commitment to the service of the local Churches, while looking forward to

and encouraging a strong collaboration between the Lieutenants and the Bishops, many of whom are Grand Priors.

The participation of illustrious jurists, members of the Grand Magisterium or Lieutenants, allowed the formulation of proposals to change and update the present norms, taking into account the civil law of the various countries and with respect for diverse traditions, as well as the necessary financial transparency, though it has already been introduced long ago. A common recommendation emerged from the discussions: give the Statutes some type of regulations which, precisely because they are less rigid, can be more easily updated, although with respect for the history and ideals of the chivalric institution, whose vocation is founded upon the exercise of charity.

The proposals from the *Consulta* will be studied by a commission that will propose the text of a new Statute to the Grand Master who, after examining and giving his approval, will present it for the approval of the Holy Father.

HOW TO VIEW AND ORDER PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EVENTS

Photographs of the work of the **CONSULTA** (10-12 September) can be viewed at the site www.carlamorselli.com (password: consulta) where they can be ordered.

Photographs of the three days of the **PILGRIMAGE** (13-15 September) can be viewed at the site of the Photographic Service of "L'Osservatore Romano" www.photovat.com. On the menu bar you will find information and instructions for on-line ordering and for permission for their publication.



THE MEMORABLE AUDIENCE WITH POPE FRANCIS: THOUSANDS APPLAUDED HIM AND RECEIVED HIS SPECIAL BLESSING

A memorable event in the history of the Order was the audience with our Holy Father Francis: especially because it was unprecedented, as a Pontiff had never given a special audience to such a great number – more than four thousand – of Knights and Ladies, their families and invited loved ones. Although it is true that in the past, every five years – it has become traditional – at the conclusion of the work of the *Consulta* the members always had the honor of being received by the Pope, but their number was always limited: the members of the Grand Magisterium, the Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates, the representatives of the Secretariat of State and the Congregation for the Eastern Churches and the personnel of the organizational secretariat. This time the conclusion of the work of the *Consulta* coincided with the beginning of the International Pilgrimage for the Year of Faith and that afforded the opportunity to ask the Holy Father – which he graciously granted – to extend the audience to all the members of the Order present in Rome. Many of them came especially for this exceptional event and they were in such great numbers that only the immense Paul VI Audience Hall was able to contain all of them that afternoon of 13 September. Each one in ceremonial dress; an unforgettable sight!

The emotion in seeing Pope Francis appear, with a smile for everyone, evoked the warm applause resounding throughout the Hall, giving witness to the shared joy that shone forth on the smiling faces of each and every one. The Grand Master – accompanied by two other Cardinal members of the Order: Andrea Cordero di Montezemolo, Archbishop emeritus of the Basilica of St. Paul's Outside-the-Walls, and Carlos Amigo Vallejo,

Archbishop emeritus of Seville – took the floor (*the text of his address follows*) to present the assembly to the Holy Father who would give his longed-for address (*a summary of which follows too*), listened with great attention and greeted at its end by the applause of all those present who, remaining standing, would then receive his paternal blessing.

This was followed by an homage to the Holy Father by the Grand Master, the Cardinals, the Grand Prior, Patriarch of Jerusalem of the Latins Fouad Twal, the Bishops, first of whom was the Assessor, Msgr. Antonio Franco; then the Lieutenant General Giuseppe Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, the Governor General Agostino Borromeo, the Vice Governors General Patrick Powers and Giorgio Moroni Stampa, the Chancellor Ivan Rebernik, all the members of the Grand Magisterium as well as all the Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates who had participated in the *Consulta*.

Especially moving was the Pope's encounter with several handicapped or infirm Knights and Ladies, accompanied in their wheelchairs by their confreres in their capes, who were given words and gestures of comfort, often a caress, but always a special blessing.

The audience was preceded by a catechesis by Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, during which the illustrious theologian insisted on the penitential dimension of the pilgrimage in this Year of Faith, within the perspective of a "change of heart" in adhering to Christ and of a profound movement of inner conversion that gradually involves the Church herself and all of humanity.

In a context of religious indifference,



where "the topic of God is no longer a problem", the Archbishop invited his listeners "not to give in to pessimism", but rather to let themselves be challenged, resisting the "dictatorship of subjectivism" without ever failing to seek the reasons for believing. On this point he quoted Saint Augustine, explaining the difference between "believing Jesus" or "believing Him" and "believing in Him". ... Indeed, he explained, "believing in Him means loving Him" and this changes the whole perspective because in this way the person of Christ is placed at the center: "faith is not based on an idea, but on a person". He then emphasized the importance of living this spiritual relationship in commun-

ion with the Body of Christ that is the Church, thus regaining an awareness of "ecclesiality", not merely in a purely institutional sense, but in a truly supernatural dimension. To illustrate his topic, Archbishop Fisichella quoted the Prologue of Saint John the Apostle's Gospel in which the "I" becomes a "WE" - "that which our eyes have seen, that which our hands have touched, ...we proclaim to you" - thus suggesting to the members of the Order to contribute all together to the construction of the "architecture of human relationships" which the Pope speaks of in his Encyclical *Lumen Fidei* (n. 51), and from which a more just society, founded on peace, can be born.

Pope Francis' address to the pilgrims in Rome for the Year of Faith

«OFFER HOPE AND PEACE»

THE TASK ENTRUSTED TO THE ORDER BY THE HOLY FATHER

"An ancient bond ties you to the Holy Sepulchre, the perennial memorial of Christ Crucified who was laid there and of the Risen Christ who conquered death. May Jesus Christ Crucified and Risen truly be the centre of your life and of each of your personal and group projects. To believe in the redemptive power of the Cross and the Resurrection to offer hope and peace. In a special way, the Land of Jesus needs it very much!" This is one of the more significant passages of the important address given by the Holy Father to the more than five thousand Ladies, Knights, their family members and invited guests who nearly filled the Paul VI Audience Hall on 13 September and who greeted him with a lengthy and warm applause.

He began by expressing "my appreciation and encouragement for the initiatives of solidarity that the Order fosters on behalf of the Holy Places and that in recent years have

been further developed and broadened". He had previously greeted the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, thanking him "for the words that he addressed to me on behalf of you all", and the Grand Prior, the Patriarch of Jerusalem for Latins, Fouad Twal. He then said that "In this Year of Faith, your pilgrimage is to the Tomb of the Apostle Peter, and is marked by prayer and catecheses on the theme of faith. Starting with these elements, I would like to let my thoughts be guided by three words, that I already presented at the start of my ministry as Bishop of Rome, but that can also offer motives for reflection for your Order's activity. The three words are: *to journey*, *to build* and *to confess*."

"1. To journey... Each one of us can either be a "wanderer" or a "pilgrim". The time in which we live sees so many people who are "wanderers", because they lack an ideal life and often are unable to make sense of



what is happening in the world. With the sign of pilgrimage, you show the will not to be "wanderers". Your journey is through history, in a world whose confines are always broadening, barriers are being broken down and our journey is connected ever more closely to the journey of others. You are witnesses of the profound meaning, of the light that faith brings, ... with your gaze on the future, ... to give society a more human face.

2. To journey in order to *build* a community, above all with love. The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem has an almost thousand-year history; ... it has enjoyed the special attention of the Bishops of Rome. ... Your pilgrimage has a charitable purpose, to benefit our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, especially those most in need, who are living through a time of suffering, tension and fear. And our Christian brothers and sisters who are suffering so much. With great affection I send them a greeting and an embrace, to all - Christian

and non-Christian - assuring them of my daily prayer.

3. However your journey to build is born of *confessing* in an ever deeper way the faith; it grows from continued commitment to nourish your spiritual life, from permanent formation to an ever more authentic and consistent Christian life. the profession of faith and the testimony of charity are closely connected and are the strong key points that qualify your action".

And he concluded in this way: "May the Lord help you always to be firm, sincere ambassadors of peace and love among brothers. It will be he who makes your work fruitful. May the Virgin of Nazareth help you in your mission to look after with love the Places where Christ lived, healing and blessing "all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him". May you also be accompanied by my blessing, which I impart to you and to the entire Order".

IN THIS WAY THE GRAND MASTER PRESENTED TO THE HOLY FATHER THE PILGRIMAGE, THE GOALS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ORDER

Most Holy Father,

It is a joy and an honor for the members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem to be received this afternoon by the Bishop of Rome and Successor of Peter. Members present here represent some 30,000 Knights and Ladies spread through 35 countries.

The goals of the Order are first, to promote the holiness and advance the spiritual life of each member and, secondly, to offer moral and material assistance to the Church in the Holy Land with particular attention to the needs of our Latin Patriarchate.

This week, representatives from our 62

lieutenancies have gathered in Rome to explore how better we can fulfill these goals. This *Consulta*, which convenes every five years, will hopefully inject a renewed missionary spirit through out all of our lieutenancies. Emphasis was placed on the importance of regular pilgrimages to the Holy Land. We are enriched by these prayerful visits to the place of Christ's Death and Resurrection and to the many sites where He walked, preached and healed.

Pilgrimage, as well, offers us the opportunity to demonstrate human and spiritual solidarity with Christians and others remaining there and to reach out to and, indeed, to touch the lives of those we seek to help. Our Order accounts for the major portion in



meeting the Patriarch's need in support of (79) parish and pastoral centers, the Patriarchal seminary and 44 schools (36% of our students are Moslem). Not to mention countless other initiatives to care for the spiritual and physical well-being of so many of every religion living under very trying circumstances.

In recent years of world economic downturn, our members' donations have increased annually. Pilgrimages allow members to see and experience close and first-hand, the enormous benefits brought about by their annual 12 million Euros contributions. This includes encouragement for families to remain in their

homeland in the face of massive emigration.

Especially grateful for and supportive of Your Holiness' dramatic call for peace and reconciliation in the Middle East and the Holy Land, we continue to pray that our efforts are helping advance that cause.

Holy Father, our Order has a history rich in customs and, as you see before you, even in pageantry. Inspiring all we are and do as members, however, is a deep love for Christ and his Church. This meeting with Your Holiness will surely reinforce that love and commitment.

Please be assured of our gratitude and loyalty and most especially, of our prayers.

THE LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS IN HONOR OF MARY, QUEEN OF PALESTINE AND IN EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

*In St. John Lateran Basilica prayer for the Bishop of Rome,
"the universal sign of charity", and a polyphonic concert of sacred music*

At the center of their "spiritual journey", as the Grand Master Cardinal Edwin O'Brien expressed it, the Knights and Ladies celebrated the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, faithful to their commitment of a life consecrated to the moral and material support of the Christians in the Holy Land, particularly of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. During the opening Mass on Friday, 13 September, in the Papal Basilica of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls, at which all came dressed in their capes, the Grand Master dedicated the pilgrimage to the heart of the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Palestine, "God's first dwelling in this world" and "the pillar of Faith". In a profoundly Marian thrust, the assembly enthusiastically intoned the Ave Maria of Lourdes, thus expressing their desire to walk in the footsteps of she who was the first disciple of her Son.

Faithful to this bond with the Holy Fa-

ther, on Saturday morning, 14 September, the Knights and Ladies went to the Pontifical Basilica of St. John Lateran where they were received by Cardinal Agostino Vallini, the Pope's Vicar for the Diocese of Rome. "We are here to pray for the intentions of the Bishop of Rome who is himself the universal sign of charity" said Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, making reference to the appeal of Pope Francis for "a poor Church", a Church that is faithful to the Beatitudes, and inviting the members of the Order to take advantage of the pilgrimage to renew in their heart the spirit of service to the Church of the Holy Land and to the Church in their own homeland. A concert of sacred music (with the chorales "Musicanova" and "Eos", directed by Fabrizio Barchi) accompanied the prayer of the individual participants, many of whom went to the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the confessionals opened for the occasion



and ready to welcome the pilgrims in all the languages.

In the afternoon of that unforgettable Saturday, in St. Peter's Basilica, during a solemn Mass, the Order's pilgrims included in their intentions a prayer to "receive the wisdom of the Spirit that emanates from the Cross". "How grateful we are and privileged to celebrate the Cross of Christ in surely the most famous but also - outside the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem - the most venerated temple in Christendom", said the Grand Master with joy, on the occasion of the feast so closely related to the dedication of the Basilica of the Resurrection, erected over the Tomb of Christ. He then recalled one of Pope Francis' programmatic points that could be both a suggestion to recover essentiality and an examination of conscience for the whole Order: "When we profess Christ without the Cross, we are not disci-

ples of the Lord, we are worldly...".

He then wanted to make his own the very meaningful words of Romano Guardini, an invitation to the Knights and Ladies to reclaim the Sign of the Cross as a daily protection against temptation and as an expression of their desire to unite, through love, all of their personal sufferings to that of Christ.

For their entrance into the Basilica, the procession of Ladies and Knights gathered in the Piazza of the Roman Protomartyrs, on one side of the Basilica; passing under the Arch of the Bells and then, after winding dramatically up the stairs, they entered through the central portal. At the conclusion of the Mass they took only part of the same route, because almost half of the immense stairs had been prepared for their use for a group photo, with everyone going their separate ways after the pictures were taken.

AN EXCEPTIONAL INVESTITURE IN SAINT PAUL'S BASILICA DURING THE CLOSING MASS

Strengthened by these special moments of meditation and prayer, the pilgrims gathered once again for the closing Mass in the Basilica of St. Paul's Outside-the-Walls, the place for venerating the relics of the Apostle to the Nations, a person and model of radical conversion. The gonfalon of the Risen Christ was carried by some Knights who led the procession with the highest authorities of the Order, in an atmosphere of intense recollection, awaiting the investiture of 34 new Knights and Ladies, 25 from France and 9 from Brazil.

In the course of his homily, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien recalled Blessed John Paul II who considered the Pontifical Order as the "Honor Guard" of the Holy Sepulchre of the Lord, and urged all the pilgrims - after these three days lived in the sign of conversion - to bear witness to the whole world that the Sepulchre is empty "because Jesus Christ is alive in our hearts and in our works of love for all, especially those who live in the Land where He walked". After the singing of the *del Veni Creator*, the Grand Master, holding the ceremonial sword, received each of the petitioners, inviting them to become "Guardians of the Cross" before being covered by the cape as a sign of their new membership, welcomed by an embrace of the head of their Lieutenancy and the Governor General Agostino Borromeo who at the conclusion invited the assembly to read together, with one heart, the beautiful prayer of the Knight and Lady, as they had done at the end of the other liturgical celebrations.

On Sunday morning - with weather which was not too nice at the end - the pilgrims had the privilege of visiting the Vatican Gardens in language and nationality groups with the help of guides; there they were able to admire the botanical specimens as well as the many monuments.



THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PILGRIMAGE

The pilgrimage was organized by the Grand Magisterium by means of a special Commission, presided over by Chancellor Ivan Rebernik who used to good advantage the expert and efficient structure of UNITALSI (from the Italian acronym, "Italian Association for Transporting the Sick to Lourdes and the International Shrines") in placing the pilgrims in hotels and moving them about in Rome by means of tens of busses. The invaluable liturgical celebrations were prepared through the dedication and commitment of the Order's Lieutenancy for Central Italy, led by Knight of the Grand Cross Saverio Petrillo, aided by the lay Ceremonial Official, Knight of the Grand Cross Luigi Giulianelli, as well as by the directors and members of the Rome Section of the Order. In addition to their taking care of the ceremonies of the event – with the aid of Monsignor Adrian Paccanelli, the Liturgical Master of Ceremonies, who planned the liturgical events – the Lieutenancy helped with the publications and took part in the organization of the polyphonic concert of sacred music performed on the morning of Saturday 14 September at the Basilica of Saint John Lateran. It met with huge success due to its rich program and excellent execution. The Musicanova Choir and the EOS Women's Choir under the direction of Maestro Fabrizio Barchi, performed selections of Gregorian chants and pieces by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina and as well as works by Biebl, Britten, Dobrogosz, Festa, Lotti, Mendelssohn, Pergolesi, Poulenc, Purcell, Verdi. Last of all, the Lieutenancy for Central Italy welcomed the thousands of individual pilgrims. We cannot fail to mention the collaboration of the personnel of the Papal Basilicas and, in the Vatican, of the Pontifical Swiss Guard and the Gendarmes of Vatican City State.

TWO BOOKS FOR THE LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS AND A FOLDER FROM THE VATICAN POST OFFICE

During the three days of their pilgrimage (13, 14 & 15 September) to the Basilicas of Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside-the-Walls, St. John Lateran and Saint Mary Major, the pilgrims were accompanied by a 332 page book, edited by the Grand Magisterium, in five languages (Italian, English, Spanish, French and German), which was primarily – but not only – a resource for the liturgical celebrations. In fact, it began with a message of welcome from the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, and included an article by the Governor General, Agostino Borromeo, a university professor of Church history, on the meaning of a Christian pilgrimage to Rome over the course of the centuries; it also contained an introduction of an exegetical and spiritual nature by Msgr. Adriano Paccanelli, a liturgist and official of the Secretariat of

State of the Holy See and the Ecclesiastical Master of Ceremonies of the Lieutenancy for Central Italy; and the Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei* with which Pope Benedict XVI announced the Year of Faith. In addition, the presentation of the Basilicas was accompanied by some historic and artistic information edited by the Knight Commander Sandro Barbagallo, curator of the historical collections at the Vatican Museums. The Latin Mass texts were accompanied by pages of musical notation for the Gregorian chant and translations again in five languages of the Bible readings, Psalms and Gospels. The closing pages contained the translation of the Prayer of the Knights and Ladies and the Prayer to Our Lady, Queen of Palestine.

Another 116-page book accompanied those pilgrims who had begun their pilgrim-



age on 10 September. It included the presentation in five languages of the Churches of the *Gesù*, and of the Holy Spirit *in Sassia* and the Basilica of *Santa Maria in Trastevere* and the Latin texts of the Masses celebrated there. Here too in five languages was the Prayer to Our Lady Queen of Palestine.

In collaboration with the Grand Magisterium, the Vatican Postal Service commemorat-

ed the central event of the Pilgrimage, the Papal audience on 13 September, with a special philatelic cancellation and an illustrated folder entitled "Pope Francis meets the Ordo Equestris Sancti Sepulcri Hierosolymitani" containing a brief history of the Order in five languages, a photo of a recent meeting of the Cardinal Grand Master with Pope Francis and the famous prayer of the Knights and Ladies.

FIRST SUMMIT MEETING FOR THE CHRISTIANS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Unprecedented was the summit meeting on the Christians of the Middle East which was held in Amman on 3-4 September 2013, on the initiative of King Abdullah of Jordan. There were, in fact, approximately 70 participants, including Patriarchs, Bishops, priests and representatives of many communities who discussed the theme of: "Challenges for the Christian Arabs". Among these was the Patriarch of Jerusalem of the Latins, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch. The presence of Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, was also significant. The leaders of the Eastern Churches expressed their concern because of an increasingly widespread Islamic tendency to paint the Christian Arabs as foreigners. "The Christians are at home in the Middle East and, like all the other citizens, they should have the right to express themselves especially by means of the main mass media, which they unfortunately are not often able to do", the Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal, Grand Prior of the Order, said in summary, pleading the cause of the necessity of teaching Christians and Muslims how to communicate, especially in the schools, thus allowing an ever greater spread of a spirit of peace in public opinion.

SEVEN INTREPID BELGIAN CYCLISTS ON A PILGRIMAGE TO JERUSALEM

On 5 September at Palazzo della Rovere the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien and the Governor General Agostino Borromeo received six Belgian pilgrims journeying towards Jerusalem. Since their departure from Brussels they had already traveled approximately two thousand kilometers... by bicycle! "The seventh one will join us in Istanbul", explained Ghislain della Faille, one of the two members of the Order who are participating in the undertaking.

"You are brave and generous, I thank you for the witness that you are giving to all those you will meet on your journey on behalf of the moral and material support of the Christians in the Holy Land", the Grand Master told them before

giving them his blessing.

"The initiative, which is part of the observance of the Year of Faith, aims at raising funds for the Crèche (orphanage) of Bethlehem", said Daniel van Steenberghe, director of pilgrimages to the Holy Land for the Lieutenancy of Belgium, who thought up the project. At the beginning of September they had already raised 73,000 Euros.

Traveling an average of 70 kilometers a day, the pilgrim cyclists should reach their destination at the beginning of November, having pedaled some 5600 kilometers. Their many friends are following their daily accounts of their journey on the internet: 5 September <http://saintsepulcre-jerusalemavelo.blogspot.be/>



THE ROOF OF THE BASILICA OF THE NATIVITY TO BE RESTORED SOON

In Jerusalem, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch, the Armenian orthodox Patriarch and the Franciscan Custos of the Holy Land, namely the persons in charge of the *status quo* of the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem illustrated the restoration work involving the now decaying roof, and the extremely deteriorated stained-glass windows. A large number of personages attended the press conference at the end of August, including the Apostolic Delegate of Jerusalem, one of the Auxiliary Bish-

ops of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, the Palestinian Prime Minister and the Mayor of Bethlehem. The work has been entrusted to an Italian company and the cost will be approximately two million Euros. Fifty per cent of the cost has been guaranteed from Palestinian donations, and the remaining sum from the Holy See and some countries, including France, Russia, Hungary and Greece among them. In June of 2012 UNESCO included the Basilica on the list of the World Heritage Sites.

GRAND MAGISTERIUM AND HOLY LAND COMMISSION MEMBER MICHAEL FRANCIS WHELAN DIED ON 31 JULY 2013

Knight of the Grand Cross Michael Francis Whelan returned to the home of the Heavenly Father on 31 July at the age of 74. Born at Birmingham, he resided at Ashleigh, a town in Warwickshire, and belong to the Lieutenancy of England and Wales, which he had served as Lieutenant for two successive terms, from June 2001 to the beginning of 2010 when he was named a member of the Grand Magisterium, and then a member of the Commission for the Holy Land. He was an illustrious physicist, an expert in cryogenics, who did his studies and research at the Universities of Leeds, Oxford and East Anglia; he also turned his interests to information technology.

Condolences for his death were expressed to his wife, Norah, a Lady of the Grand Cross, in the messages from the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien and from the Governor General, Agostino Borromeo, who recalled his personality, style, lovability, dedication and valuable collaboration; especially in the Holy Land Commission. A necrology was published in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Holy See's daily newspaper. Representing them at his funeral, which was celebrated on 14 August in St. Francis of Assisi Church in Kenilworth, was Knight of the Grand Cross Prof. Bartholomew McGettrick, member of the Grand Magisterium. The solemn funeral Mass was celebrated by the Grand Prior of the Lieutenancy, the Most Reverend Kevin John Patrick McDonald, Archbishop emeritus of Southwark, and by Archbishop Patrick Altham Kelly of Liverpool. Present with the Lieutenant David Gilbert Smith were numerous Knights and Ladies and the Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University, Brother Peter Bray. Unable to send one of his closest aides to the funeral, the Patriarch of Jerusalem and Grand Prior of the Order Fouad Twal expressed his condolences to those who shared with Whelan the responsibilities of their commitment to the Holy Land.

Michael Whelan was invested as a Knight in 1985, was named Knight Commander in 1992, Knight Commander with Star in 1998 and Knight of the Grand Cross in October 2001, with a *motu proprio* by the Grand Master at that time, Cardinal Carlo Furno. In October 2009 the latter's successor, Cardinal John Patrick Foley, conferred on him the Golden Palm of the Order. In addition to his wife, he is survived by three children and two grandchildren.

