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Message from the Grand Master

OUR ORDER: A CENTRAL BODY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Dear Knights and Dames, dear friends of the Order, in this new issue of our quarterly publication I am pleased to share three news items with you.

First of all, the Holy Father has approved our new Constitution, formally confirming that the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem is a Central Body of the Catholic Church. This decision encourages us to serve the Holy Land as an elevated form of participation in the Church's concern as a whole for the Land of Jesus! It is an important 'gift' that involves our great and most generous commitment. It is almost a question of caring for the 'Body' of Christ present in the living and current reality in the Holy Land: the poor, our faithful, school children and young people, migrants, sacred works and buildings.

Furthermore, a text on the Spirituality of our Order is ready; it is currently being translated and is intended to deepen our "vocation" and "mission" which have their roots in the Word of God and in the living Tradition of the Church. I worked on this document during the 'quarantine', with the desire to help you deepen the spiritual meaning of belonging to the Order.

Finally, an updated text of the Liturgy is being studied, as a concrete application of what had previously been mentioned, and with the aim of making our way of celebrating the Vigil of Prayer and the Investiture rite more appropriate



Cardinal Filoni is active in communications outreach to promote awareness of the vocation and mission of the members of the Order, as in this case, during a broadcast last Spring on the Italian public television channel Rai 1, from his Roman office at the Palazzo della Rovere.

and beautiful, in fidelity to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and the liturgical and ecclesiological path of the Church.

As you can understand, this represents a tripod upon which to institutionally, spiritually and liturgically rest our joyful belonging to the Order and to the generous commitments it entails towards the Mother Church of Jerusalem.

Fernando Cardinal Filoni

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GRAND MAGISTERIUM OF THE EQUESTRIAN
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The Order in Union with the Universal Church

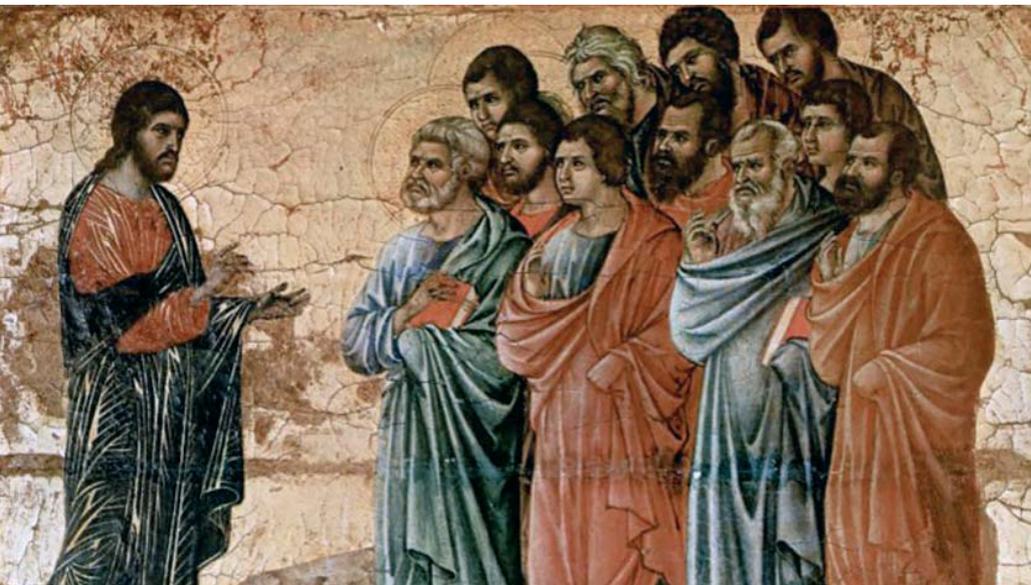
In this issue of the Newsletter we focus on deepening the spiritual teaching offered by the Grand Master between the solemnity of Easter and that of Saints Peter and Paul. During the summer, the Knights and Dames of the Order are invited to internalize his words to draw renewed inspiration from them to fully live their Christian mission (on the official website of the Order in five languages www.oessh.va you will find all the Grand Master's meditations written mainly during the weeks of the pandemic).

PEACE TO YOU! THE MESSAGE

During his Urbi et Orbi message on Easter Sunday, in this moment of crisis that is enveloping the world, the Holy Father asked Christ, he who is "our peace", to enlighten everyone who has responsibility for conflicts, "that they may have the courage to support the appeal for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world." More specifically, with regard to the Holy Land, the Pope hoped that "this be the time when Israelis and Palestinians resume dialogue in order to find a stable and lasting solution that will allow both to live in peace." For its part, the Order

of the Holy Sepulchre continues to work concretely and discreetly for peace, as the Pope pointed out in addressing the members of the Grand Magisterium and the Lieutenants on November 6, 2018 on the occasion of the Consulta: "with your commendable commitment, you too offer your contribution to build the path that will lead, as we all hope, to the achievement of peace throughout the region." In fidelity to this service and in the name of this commitment, one week after Easter, on the occasion of Sunday *in Albis*, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Grand Master of the Order, invited us to deepen





"The disciples needed to be pacified: "Peace to you!" And Jesus showed the signs of his passion, the clear evidence of himself. His was also a greeting [...] but the formal greeting in itself was not enough; rather the content of it, the tone of voice, the gazing and letting oneself be gazed back into one's eyes, the seizing of a serene facial expression, these yes, were inalienable clear signs to understand who actually stood before them, and most of all, that which he held in his heart... The face is the transparency of the soul."

our reflection on the theme of peace which we have been asked to welcome as a gift from God.

Peace to you! Does such well-wishing make sense? Peace assumes a state of military belligerence or psycho-sociological distress. Jesus uses it as the first expression in his encounter with the disciples. He does not use it with Mary Magdalen, whom he calls instead by name. She was stricken by the death and the unjust condemnation imposed on the Master; she was not in crisis with him.

It was different for the disciples: there were those who had denied knowing him, committing perjury, and those who had slipped away in the darkest moment. Confronted with the saddest events, in the end, the questions were, who really Jesus was? Was he the Messiah? Towards his end, why did he meet such an ignominious death? As for his words: did they not seem somewhat nebulous and removed from reality? His works, what to think of them now? In Caesarea Philippi, they had set themselves apart from the people's opinions: but now? His condemnation and killing: what sense did they have? In short, war was internal.

The disciples needed to be pacified: "Peace to you!" And Jesus showed the signs of his passion, the clear evidence of himself. His was also a greeting, a graceful gesture. And He did not shirk from it. But the formal

greeting in itself was not enough; rather the content of it, the tone of voice, the gazing and letting oneself be gazed back into one's eyes, the seizing of a serene facial expression, these yes, were inalienable clear signs to understand who actually stood before them, and most of all, that which he held in his heart.

The face is the transparency of the soul. Even the psalmist had said it: "*Vultum tuum Domine requiram* - Your face, Lord, I seek" (Ps 27:8) wanting to understand the feelings of the Most High. God also looked at Cain's face and saw that he was in crisis towards him: "Why is your face downcast?" (Gen 4:6), he asked. The true nature of the face, the secret it conceals, lies beyond its appearance. The question, which can both be a plea for help and a threat, always manifests the living presence of the "Other" and, of course, conceals a trace of the infinite (E. Lévinas). In Christ, writes Benedict XVI, "charity in truth becomes the Face of his Person" (*Caritas in veritate* 1).

The risen Jesus does exactly this, as he reveals the Face of his 'Person': he greets the disciples, frightened, locked in the house for fear of the Jews, strayed by the events and by their own behavior. They doubted whether the friendship of the Lord was still intact: Had our ancestors not hidden after betraying the word of the Creator? And was Moses not placed in the hollow of the cliff and covered by the hand of the Most High so as not to see his face when the people, frightened for



having betrayed the Covenant, asked him, man of God, to speak to him? Does the child not hide after his disobedience? And does man not also deny the evidence in a court of law?

At the greeting, "Peace to you!", they "rejoiced"; the voice of the Risen One was, in fact, reassuring, the hands with the sign of the nails and the pierced side were His very own: Jesus was alive! And this was to them the most important thing: He was really alive! He was not a ghost! Even Thomas wanted to have the same carnal experience of the Risen One and to us Jesus left a beatitude that they, the disciples, could not enjoy: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (Jn 20:29).

The Master now needs to recover his friends, to entrust them to continue His mission. To call back everyone, men and women, including those who, leaving Jerusalem, were going to Emmaus disappointed and sad. He will also call Saul, the killer of Stephen, who persecuted Him, for the nascent Church. But they, the Eleven, will be His witnesses, Apostles in the world. Reconciled he sends them to Galilee, where it all began and where they had the memory of the freshness of the early days.

The peace of Christ goes beyond personal disorder to which we often reduce everything, and carries us to draw upon the unique depths and riches of the person of Jesus and his message of salvation; the 'peace' of Christ then is above all a theological fact, and this has relevance in the Church, but, at the same time, also in society and in the political sphere. On the contrary, the gift of the Risen One would be tamed to contingent realities or to subjectivist visions, if not of controversy, inside and outside the Church. 'Peace' is therefore a theological place, because it is a gift from Christ; it is a

supernatural gift that helps us to confront ourselves with reality; not the opposite.

At the moment when Jesus wished peace, we, for example, cannot forget that that greeting – "Peace!" – was already in the name of Jerusalem, the holy City he loved intensely and for which he had cried: "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace!" (Lk 19:41). Jesus did not cry for the walls that, sooner or later, would have fallen with time and for the various bloody wars in the history of the City, but for those who would have carried its harsh consequences. He cried also for the people of then and of today: like those of Syria, of Iraq, of Libya, of Afghanistan, of Yemen and of all the unnamed guerrilla-wars scattered on

every continent. Our societies are in need of peace and of reconciliation in terms of human inclusiveness, socio-economic understanding, respect for human rights so frequently violated.

We will not be the great architects of this peace, on an inter-relational level, maybe resorting to a well-known evangelical image,

we could call ourselves small workers; but peace, in international relations, in economic disputes, in political and ideological diatribes must, however, be sown, because Christianity is presence: "gift and duty", said Benedict XVI. If on the one hand the gift consists in being gratified by the inner closeness of God, on the other our witness consists in creating the conditions for peace; refugees ask for this, humanitarian workers beg for it, the many victims implore it, and, above all, children plea for it, asking themselves: "Why was I born? Is this the world that belongs to me?" This is the very question I was asked during the tragic days of Isis, in Iraq!

Fernando Cardinal Filoni

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CHURCH: WHO ARE YOU?

A meditation for the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul.

Pentecost is traditionally considered the liturgical feast in which the mission of the Church began. Nobody denies this. But you, Church, who are you, what do you say about yourself? It is not a provocative question, because identity is the basis of every mission. John the baptizer was also questioned by those who had been sent to him from Jerusalem: Why are you baptizing? Who are you? I am "voice", he said, I am not the Christ. You will have to wait for the Christ; it is he who will be consecrated by the Holy Spirit (cf. *Jn* 1:19-33).

Jesus will also be questioned by the Sanhedrin: Are you the Christ? Tell us. Are you the Son of God? Answer. Jesus answered, and was declared blasphemous, guilty of death! (cf. *Mt* 26:59-66). Then Pilate will also ask him: Are you the king of the Jews? It was not true, but he was condemned anyway (cf. *Jn* 19, 1-16).

Finally, the Apostles will also be asked: With what power and in whose name do you preach and do this? (cf. *Acts* 4:7) In the midst of preaching and persecution, the apostolic Church began its mission.

On the occasion of the Second Session of the Second Vatican Council, Paul VI asked the question in the Council Chamber: Church, what do you say about yourself? Who are you? The dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* was born, in which the Council Fathers wrote: "*Since the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely*



The statues of the apostles Peter and Paul – the pillars of the Church – dominate the hall of the Palazzo della Rovere, symbolizing the existential bond that unites the Order of the Holy Sepulchre with the universal Church.

knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race." (LG 1). The close bond with the person of Jesus was reiterated, as if to underline even more clearly the indissoluble nature and union with Christ. It is what some tendencies today would surreptitiously like to review, affecting its sacramentality

and indissoluble union and reducing everything to a human organization oriented by opinions, ideologies, consents, presumable majorities, according to the most current forms of socio-political organization.

The sacramentality of the Church is situated, in truth, in its most intimate and profound nature, that is, in its self-awareness, infused by Christ; this is why the Church can never be reduced to a simple human organization, much less a 'right' or 'left', for the preserve of 'conservatives' or 'progressives'. The Church, like Eve, is taken from the pierced side of Christ crucified. Existentially and ontologically, therefore, it draws its nature from the very nature of the incarnate Son of God: divine and human at the same time. The Church, therefore, the new Eve, is loved and 'adored' by her Bridegroom. Hosea glimpsed its beauty and sang this relationship in almost carnal terms.

Borrowing a happy expression from Benedict XVI (*Jesus of Nazareth* - from entering Jerusalem to the resurrection), we can also say that the Church is presence: gift and task. It is a "gift" as it is given to us, but we do not possess it; it is a "task" for the



mission entrusted to it by Jesus. On the eve of the Council, John XXIII had indicated it *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher). As a 'bride', she is inextricably linked to him: she preserves her Bridegroom in faith and in her heart as a 'Eucharist', synthesis and summit of sanctifying relationship and eternal presence.

A fruitful motherhood involves a task: it is the generator of children in the grace of Baptism, it is regenerating in remission and forgiveness, it is consoling in illness, it is the dispenser of every blessing in marriage and in the priesthood.

John XXIII also wanted to indicate her as 'Teacher': not only, therefore, generating for 'Grace', but also for the

'Truth', which she is obliged to bring to all peoples and to the whole human race, according to the aforementioned expression of the Council. In this task, it becomes an instrument of peace and union, without ideological, political or military calculations, but in the humblest service of man in times of unrest, social changes and imbalances that violate dignity, freedom and the human person. Benedict XVI comments that it is

precisely under the cross, that is, in the highest and most sublime moment of donation and love, the Church of the "pagans" began, going beyond the Jewish dimension; he added that, *"beginning with the cross, the Lord gathers men for the new community of the universal Church. By virtue of the suffering Son they recognize the true God"* (ib.).

If we repeat the question now: Church, who are you? Perhaps the answer may appear more evident: "I am gift and mission, mother and teacher". Any other answer would be reductive and sometimes misleading.

Thinking of the sinner forgiven by Jesus in the house of Simon the Pharisee who scattered perfumed ointments and tears on the feet of the beloved Master, or of Mary of

Bethany who thanked him with a similar gesture for her brother Lazarus brought back to life, or of Joseph of Arimathea who paid no attention to expenses to perfume, with conspicuous ointments, the Body of the Lord removed from the cross and ready to be entombed, we must in truth recognize that we actually need, and more than ever, to take care of this "Body", this "Bride" of Christ, of this "Mother" of ours, the Church, wounded by abject apathy, by incalculable violence, by mortifying criticisms, by attempts at manipulation, more or less hidden, and by weighty sorrows, especially when they occur at the hands of those who belonged to her.

However, one must be careful not to accept the twisted and moralistic reasoning of those who would always like to blame it for all the human miseries of their children; Jesus himself had dismissed the hypocritical reasoning of Judas, who lamented the waste of money in the purchase of ointments by those who – like Mary of Bethany – loved him. The Church must be loved! Of course, it is easier and more profitable to reprimand or criticize it!

It is essential for every child to love their mother, listen to her as a good teacher, welcome her as an incomparable gift (indeed it is only when she is lost, that her true value is appreciated!) and support her in the task entrusted to her to give Jesus and to bring to Jesus. To Peter, as to John for Mary, the Lord entrusted the custody of the Church on her earthly pilgrimage. Peter is her "son" and "guardian" at the same time, on this pilgrimage.

In his spiritual Testament, Paul VI wrote to the Church: *"May you be aware of your nature and your mission; may you have a sense of humanity's true and profound needs; and walk in poverty, in other words free, strong and in love with Christ"*. These words still apply!

Fernando Cardinal Filoni

“ **In his spiritual Testament, Paul VI wrote to the Church: *“May you be aware of your nature and your mission; may you have a sense of humanity's true and profound needs; and walk in poverty, in other words free, strong and in love with Christ"*. These words still apply!** ”



Proceedings of the Grand Magisterium

POPE FRANCIS APPROVES THE NEW CONSTITUTION OF THE ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

A letter from the Governor General to all the Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates.

Excellency,

dear Confrère and dear Consœur,

It is my pleasure to inform you that on May 11, 2020, His Holiness Pope Francis approved the new Constitution of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. It is the fruit of an adaptation undertaken in light of the ongoing reform of the Curia, aimed at emphasizing the commitment to promote the spiritual growth of the members of the Order and at highlighting the charitable element in favor of Catholic Sites and Institutions in the Holy Land.

The new Constitution indeed grants primary importance to the vocation to holiness of every Christian and aspires to be an instrument for the deepening of the spiritual life and progress in personal sanctification, in a context in which faith is practiced and lived in all of its aspects.

Furthermore, the new Constitution

underlines how, by means of its structure and activity, the Order directly participates in the solicitude of the Roman Pontiff for the Holy Sites and Catholic Institutions of the Holy Land, in a framework of charity and apostolate at the service of the dignity of the human being.

Finally, the new Constitution formally confirms the legal status of the Order as a Central Entity of the Catholic Church.

The Italian text is the official version of the new Constitution. The Cardinal Grand Master has arranged for it to be translated into various languages which will be reviewed by the Vice Governor Generals before their distribution to all the Lieutenancies and Magistral Delegations together with its implementing Regulation.

While thanking you for your kind attention,

Leonardo Visconti di Modrone
 Governor General

The new Constitution of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre is one of the main results of the five-year assembly, the Consulta, which took place in autumn 2018, in the presence of the members of the Grand Magisterium and of the Lieutenants who came from all over the world (In our photo: Pope Francis surrounded by participants in the Consulta of the Order).



A VIRTUAL MEETING OF NORTH AMERICAN LIEUTENANTS

The pandemic required everyone to adapt to a new concept of social distance and new ways of meeting and working. As already discussed in the previous issue of the Newsletter, the usual meeting of the Spring Grand Magisterium was held through the exchange of reports from the leaders of the Order and a subsequent discussion via email.

June is also customary month for the meeting of North American Lieutenants, who chose to meet virtually this year. On June 5 the 15 Lieutenants, under the coordination of the Vice Governor General for North America Tom Pogge, gathered through an online platform. They had the opportunity to listen to the words of welcome and introduction of the working session given by Cardinal Fernando Filoni, the new Grand Master, who still has not had the opportunity to meet many of the local leaders of the Order in person, having taken up his duties just before the start of the pandemic. After the Grand Master, it was

the turn of the Governor General to address the assembled group and share with the participants the latest news from the Grand Magisterium, before listening to updates from the Holy Land by Sami El-Yousef, CEO of the Latin Patriarchate from Jerusalem.

Following these interventions, Angeles Borrego, treasurer for North America presented a collective report that illustrated general figures for the geographical area of reference regarding the number of members, contributions and economic transfers to the Grand Magisterium to support its activities in the Holy Land. Each Lieutenant then had the opportunity to briefly outline what characterizes their Lieutenancy, what makes it "unique": it was a way to discover many beautiful experiences and strengths and share them.

Vice Governor General Pogge welcomed this first successful virtual meeting experience that shows how solidarity and sharing can and should continue in this period of mandatory social distance.

The first virtual meeting of the North American Lieutenants with the Grand Master and the Governor General took place on June 5, in a particularly familiar atmosphere.



The Order and the Holy Land

CORONAVIRUS CANNOT STOP PROJECTS IN THE HOLY LAND

Despite the limitations imposed by Covid-19 in the past months, various projects proposed by the Latin Patriarchate in 2019 and financed by the Order have been completed, thus giving now a stimulus to recovery in this summer of multiple challenges.

Among the projects concluded immediately before the lockdown, the expansion of the Thomas Aquinas Centre in Gaza. This centre was born in March 2018 with the aim of helping young Christians acquire the skills necessary to be better prepared to face the job market. The Centre offers courses in English, IT, project management and religious training as well as promoting contacts with foreign professionals and institutions to allow young people who have no access to travel to gain international experience and learn from other cultures. The project allowed the Centre to create two more rooms to accommodate more students.

Moving on to the Catholic community in Israel, another successfully concluded project concerns the Saint James Vicariate for Hebrew-speaking Catholics and the Vicariate for Migrants and Asylum Seekers. The linguistic uniqueness of this Vicariate has made the translation of various liturgical and biblical resources indispensable over the years for the study and

teaching of Hebrew speaking Catholic communities. Now among the texts available in Hebrew for catechesis and formation there is also the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit*, the book "The four loves" of C.S. Lewis and various articles on the Vicariate website.

Among other small projects, the Youth of Jesus' Homeland Palestine – which gathers 3500 young Christians in Palestine from 7 to 35 years of age – was able to buy a second-hand seven-seater vehicle to facilitate its activities, while the school of Zababdeh in Palestine has managed to purchase new IT media to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Finally, in view of a summer of social distancing and the creativity this will



A visit by the Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem to Gaza. This Palestinian territory where the population is in a condition of extreme suffering is generously supported by donations from the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.





With the help of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, the Saint James Vicariate for Hebrew speaking Catholics, as well as the Vicariate for migrants and asylum seekers have prepared the translation of liturgical and spiritual texts, intended for Catholic Hebrew speaking communities.

developed positive relationships and mutual acceptance despite the differences by demonstrating the ability to forgive and grow spiritually and socially". The initiative was a great success in the parish of Fuheis in Jordan where 800 children of all ages and 100 volunteers attended the summer camp. The purpose of the camp organized by the parish of Jifna

demand in looking for ways to better enjoy relationships, we recall the beautiful project of summer activities with young people financed by the Order which in 2019 allowed 29 parishes in Jordan, 4 in Israel, 12 in Palestine and 5 groups from the Saint James Vicariate and 5 from the Youth of Jesus' Homeland to build summer camps for two to four weeks with 7000 children. Summer camps are an excellent opportunity to socialize, grow in faith and create communities for all young people, especially for those who come from areas of tension and with disadvantaged situations who often have fewer opportunities.

The parish of Ein Arik in Palestine wrote that it had received several requests to extend the summer camp by popular demand, despite the camp having reached its conclusion. From Beit Sahour they speak of how "children and young people have

in Palestine was to "bring the children together in church and help them recognize that God loves them, calls them and teaches them. This occasion has planted seeds in the hearts of these young people and now the Lord will carry on the work in their hearts," they affirm.

The last day of the summer camp is always a moment of great celebration and from the parish of Aljoun in Jordan they say: "The children loved the last Friday of the camp. We mounted the inflatables and a swimming pool in the large courtyard of the church. The parents were so satisfied and grateful for the impact this camp had on their children's lives, especially regarding their love for the church and the desire to be there daily."

For this year we particularly remember all these young people in our prayers.

Elena Dini



Summer camps for children are an integral part of small humanitarian projects financed by the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in 2019.



HOW TO LIVE IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE HOLY LAND DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In May, Cardinal Fernando Filoni launched an appeal for humanitarian support to particularly help Christians in the Holy Land who are facing even greater difficulties due to the grim economic situation. Various contributions from the Lieutenancies have arrived for this special fund.

In an interview with the North American Lieutenancies website, Governor General Leonardo Visconti di Modrone reminded members that for some time it will not be possible to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Given that the financial sustenance of Christians in the holy places is linked to the tourism sector, how can we try to keep such an important support for them? The invitation – which extends to all Lieutenancies – is to allocate a part of what we would have spent on the pilgrimage to a solidarity fund: in this way it will be possible to continue offering the necessary help to those most affected by the economic



The Governor General Leonardo Visconti di Modrone during the virtual meeting with the North American Lieutenants.

crisis brought about by the emergency.

So let's try to live our pilgrimage to the land of Jesus in encountering the living stones in this phase in a new way that respects the fulfillment of our mission as Knights and Dames.

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The Life of the Lieutenancies

SANTA MARIA TA' DONI CHAPEL IN RABAT, MALTA, TRANSFERRED TO THE MALTESE LIEUTENANCY

June 4, 2020 was a historical day for the Maltese Lieutenancy of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre as it took custody of the historical chapel of Ta' Doni in the Parish of Rabat in Malta. This would not have been possible without the support of Msgr. Charles J. Scicluna, Archbishop of Malta and Grand Prior, who granted the Chapel to the Lieutenancy in response to a personal request of Roberto Buontempo, Lieutenant for Malta.

The Lieutenancy of Malta plans to make full use of the Chapel by organising religious functions for its members and for the public in general.



GUGGIONE

SINCE 1975

DECORATIONS OF KNIGHTLY ORDERS



Order of the Holy Sepulchre

Papal Equestrian Orders

Order of Malta

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