



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

The Grand Magisterium's 2016 Autumn Meeting



It was in the presence and with the active participation of the new Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, that the members of the Grand Magisterium were gathered together, with the Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, on October 25 and 26, in Rome. During the second day of the session, Mass in honour of Our Lady of Palestine was presided by Msgr. Pizzaballa in the church of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Roman shrine of the Divine Mercy, before the annual reception in the Palazzo della Rovere, seat of the Order, where Cardinal Edwin O'Brien received his guests, of whom Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State for His Holiness Pope Francis, was at the top of the list.

At the beginning of the meeting, **Cardinal Edwin O'Brien warmly welcomed Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa**, whom he had accompanied just one month before during his solemn entrance into Jerusalem. The Grand Master equally greeted **Msgr. Bernard-Nicolas Aubertin**, Archbishop of Tours and Consultor of the Grand Magisterium, future head of the Order in France, as well as the ambassador **Alfredo Bastianelli**, new Chancellor of the Order.

The Governor General Agostino Borromeo thanked the cardinal for his travels which had already led him to meet 90% of the Lieutenancies, reinforcing the dynamism and renewing the enthusiasm of members everywhere, but particularly in countries far from Europe. He also announced that Msgr. Pizzaballa had joined the Order, and is nominated for **Pro Grand Prior**. He praised the expansion of the Order, notably in Northern Europe, with the creation of the Sweden-Denmark Lieutenancy, and its continuing development in Asia and the Pacific region, for which Paul Bartley is becoming **Vice Governor General**.

Msgr. Pizzaballa then described the situation in the Holy Land, expressing his wish to personally meet all the priests of the Patriarchate, and to create councils planned by canon law. An 'audit' managed by an outside organisation should allow a decisive step in financial reorganisation. The young archbishop, who enjoys the complete confidence of the Holy Father, has launched a call to the members of the Order, to not hesitate in participating in this **joint reflexion**, according to their competencies, showing availability and openness to dialogue, and willing transparent communication between the two institutions. He further asked that the Order participates in the current restoration works, even just symbolically, for the aedicule of the Holy Sepulchre, the Basilica which has forever been considered the cathedral of the Catholic Church.

The meeting was followed by **Fr Imad Twal's** (responsible for the economical questions of the Patriarchate) presentation shining a light on the specific expenditures of the seminary, where numerous future priests are studying, and taking stock of the aid brought by the Order to the parish and the three Catholic schools in **Gaza** (936,000 dollars).

The Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium then presented their report following the site visit conducted last summer by Bartholomew McGettrick and Heinrich Dickmann. Solidarity and subsidiarity characterise the action of the Commission serving the projects of the Patriarchate assumed by the Grand Magisterium, especially **in the social and educational domains, which remains attentive to people** in a dynamic of accountability and empowerment.

The **preliminary report of the Grand Magisterium's accounts**, put together by the **Engineer Pier Carlo Visconti, appears to be very positive**; the expenditures have dropped and the members' donations do not cease to increase in proportion to the international development of the Order.

The work of the Grand Magisterium has also helped the schools of the Patriarchate, which concern nearly 20,000 students whose future is threatened by financial difficulties, especially with respect to the need for a rise in **teachers' salaries**. In accordance with suggestions of the Grand Magisterium, which have been expressed many times in the past, Msgr. Pizzaballa plans to unite forces progressively through bringing all the Christian schools together, including those beyond the Patriarchate, with the aim of defending their common interests.

In concluding the meeting, amongst other subjects dealt with in-depth, Chancellor Bastianelli highlighted the remarkable **increase of members** between 1 October 2015 and 30 September 2016 (1457 admissions, being nearly 50% more than the year before). The next meeting of the Grand Magisterium will be held 3 and 4 May 2017.

François Vayne

(November 3, 2016)



THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATIONS DURING THE MEETING OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM

The time of the Grand Magisterium's meeting always starts with a Eucharistic celebration. In commenting on the Gospel (*Lk. 13: 18-21*) **Cardinal O'Brien** held in high esteem the greatness of the vocation of the members of the Order, reminding us that, "God sees all the potential of our life, even in the darkest times and when we see ourselves as unworthy, it is that which we can only imagine".

The following day, **Msgr. Pizzaballa** emphasized the gratuity of Salvation, taking as reference Luke who gives us the image of the narrow door (*Lk. 13: 22-30*): only those who have experienced being saved as something independent to their good works, can pass through this door. "Accepting the fact that Salvation is free, is truly to take the 'narrow' path, because for us it would be easier to buy it through our works thus not owing anything to anyone." But God invites us to enter into the "inverted" logic of his Kingdom.

Mass in the church of Santo Spirito in Sassia - October 26, 2016



Reception for the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Palestine - October 26, 2016

