



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

*At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land*

## Christmas message from the Governor General



Photos by François Vayne

Dear friends,

the Holy Land is going through a most dramatic moment. Day by day we closely follow the news we receive from that land we love deeply and for which we put ourselves at service as the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem with great apprehension. And, unfortunately, every day the news hits us with sadness.

The suffering and impoverishment of civilian populations not only in Gaza, but also throughout the West Bank, will have very serious consequences both on the future climate of coexistence and dialogue, and on the economy and the hoped-for resumption of normal life. The wounds will be difficult to heal, as our Christians in the Holy Land tell us through the Latin Patriarchate with which we have a direct line of communication.

At the outbreak of violence, the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, faithful to its mandate, immediately and spontaneously demonstrated extraordinary solidarity in the face of the ongoing tragedy through the generosity of its Knights and Dames, and will have to increasingly do so in the coming months. The resources are always inadequate for the needs, but we work to make the best possible use of them.

Last month we experienced a moment of great fraternity with the meeting of the Consulta, which saw Lieutenants from all over the world converge in Rome, accompanied by their respective Grand Priors, for a common reflection on the formation process in the Order. The opportunity for fraternal exchanges of experiences enriched the meeting, which culminated with a moving pontifical audience, during which the Holy Father confirmed his appreciation for the work of the Order.

Strengthened by this experience of community and driven by our mission of support for the Holy Land in which the Holy Father has reconfirmed us, we wish to draw near to the feast of Christmas with the hope that He who for generations has been acclaimed as the Prince of Peace will come once again, today, in the Land that already welcomed him, to bring the greatly desired gift of peace.

**Leonardo Visconti di Modrone**

*Governor General*

*(December 2023)*