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News Letter

ORDO EQUESTRIS SANCTI SEPULCRI HIEROSOLYMITANI

Grand Master on the occasion of the North American and European Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates Meetings said:

A COMMITMENT TO OUR ORDER: TO LIVE THE YEAR OF THE FAITH

It is going to coincide with the Consulta of the OESSH next year and to witness a pilgrimage of knights and ladies from all over the world to Rome

Year of the Faith and New Evangelisation: The Church is mobilised by the Holy Father with regard to these events that are going to be of great significance starting from next autumn and, due to their spiritual nature, obviously involving the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. While presiding at the North American and European Lieutenants which took place respectively in Chicago 31 May – 2 June and in Rome 14 and 15 June, the Grand Master of the Order, Cardinal Edwin F. O'Brien, took the chance to urge all knights and dames to live these events in communion with their own dioceses.

Governor General Agostino Borromeo, in turn, announced that, during the second half of the Year of the Faith (which, after having been proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI's *motu proprio* "Porta fidei", will be starting on 11st November

2012 and ending on 23rd November 2013) the Consulta of the Order will be convoked, which is usually meeting every five years and is called on this occasion to review its Constitution. Immediately after the end of the proceedings, OESSH knights and dames coming from all over the world will make a pilgrimage to Rome, thus witnessing their commitment to the New Evangelisation for the transmission of the Christian Faith, in the light of the indications coming from the special Synod of Bishops dedicated to it and scheduled to be meeting 7 – 28 October 2012.

Reverend Monsignor Francis D. Kelly, Master of Ceremonies of the Grand Magisterium, spoke to the European Lieutenants about these future events, their particular value to the practice of Christian life while serving in the Order and taking part in the initiatives that all the Lieutenancies are called to organise.

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TO OUR ORDER:
TO LIVE THE YEAR
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GRAND MAGISTERIUM
OF THE EQUESTRIAN ORDER
OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE
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THE ORDER CONTINUES ITS GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre is successfully continuing its geographical expansion. In the two meetings of the North American and European lieutenants, it has been announced that the first applications of the aspiring members of the foreseen new magistral delegations of Guam and Latvia are being received by the Grand Magisterium. In Brazil, thanks to the efforts of the member of the Grand Magisterium João de Castro de Mendia count of Rezende, the lieutenancy of São Paulo of Brazil has been rebuilt and foundations are being laid for a new magistral delegation in Recife, capital of the federal state of Pernambuco. The Primate cardinal Josip Bozanić, archbishop of Zagreb, expressed his approval for the introduction of the Order into Croatia, in a message to the Grand Master cardinal Edwin F. O'Brien.

ANOTHER RECORD: IN 2011 11 MILLION EUROS EXCEEDED

While expounding the 2011 final balance and the increasing economical support to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and the Holy Land in general, during the North American and European Lieutenants meetings, the Governor General reported that, thanks to the generosity of all the members of the Order and tireless commitment of all the Lieutenants – to whom Professor Borromeo, also on behalf of the members of the Grand Magisterium, wished to express feelings of deepest gratitude – the most outstanding financial results in the whole story of the Order have been achieved (financial contributions from the members for an amount of 11.6 million Euros). In 2010 a former record had been established for contributions exceeding for the first time the amount of 10 million Euros (10.313). However, in spite of this extraordinary financial effort, the Order has been called to face new challenges with regard to the various necessities and deficiencies the Order is committed to settle in all the key sectors in the Patriarchate's activity: schools, seminary, institutional expenses.

Vice Governor General Patrick D. Powers in Chicago and Consultant Mr. Pier Carlo Visconti, engineer, in Rome, reported on the 2011 final balance, accompanied by "RB Audit Italia" audit company's report, and presented the 2012 budget.

THE TOWN OF SANSEPOLCRO CELEBRATES ITS MILLENIUM AND WELCOMES BENEDICT XVI

On Sunday 13th May, Benedict XV went to Sansepolcro, a town in Tuscany which is very dear to the members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, to join the celebration of one thousand years from its foundation. In the main square crowded by greeting citizens, several knights and dames of the Order with a cape were present together with the Arezzo section president, the mayor Mrs Daniela Frullani, in welcoming the Holy Father and the bishop of the Arezzo-Cortona-Sansepolcro diocese, Riccardo Fontana. It was remembered that two pilgrims, Aegidius and Arcanus, back from the Holy Land and "driven by a great ideal", built here the first houses of a "city of justice and peace". And the Pope replied by confirming that "the two saints, in the face of the major changes taking place, began to search for the truth and the meaning of life, on their journey to the Holy Land. On their return, they brought with them not only the stones gathered on Mount Zion but the unique idea" they had conceived there, of building near the source of the Tiber, the river which flows through Rome, the see of Peter's successor, "the *civitas hominis*, an image of Jerusalem, which in its very name, recalls justice and peace". He then expressed his wish that the celebration of the Millennium could be an occasion to reflect that it is, at the same time, an inner journey on the paths of faith and commitment to rediscover the Christian root and serve the common good which "counts far more than that of the individual".



OESSH COMMISSION'S REPORT ON THE UNDER WAY PROJECTS IN THE HOLY LAND

Aqaba Parish Church and Rameh Superior School: the two major buildings near completion

Stella Maris Church in Aqaba, Jordan, and the new superior School in Rameh, Israel, are going to be completed, according to what the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem Commission for the Holy Land has been able to verify on the occasion of its first visit, as part of its institutional duty, to their building sites, last November. Thomas McKiernan, member of Grand Magisterium, and Christa von Siemens, President of the Holy Land Commission and member of the Grand Magisterium too, have respectively made their report during the meetings of North American and European Lieutenants.

These two projects in the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem are the most important among all those financed by the Order during the years 2011 and 2012. The building in Rameh is expected to be ready just before the beginning of next school year; it is a four-floor building whose ground floor will be taken in part by the parish hall. The members of the Commission have cheerfully met some students, many of whom coming from nearby small towns, and the city mayor who is a representative of the local Druze community. The Aqaba building structural works might be completed by this coming summer; however, the financial support for interior fittings has not wholly been granted yet.

The Commission visited the work in progress in Aboud (inside the Palestinian territories) in order to decorously restore the poor convent of the Sisters of the Rosary who are

working for the Parish, and realised that the works of restoration of Mizdar priestly house in Jordan never started, while its rooms are laying in very poor condition and have suffered from water problems.

Also not started are the repairs for structural defects and for the renovations of the Patriarchal Vicarage in Amman, a project which will have to be revised to meet new needs, in particular for the purpose of a better use of the nearby building which is the venue of the Ecclesiastical court and of various offices and to create a connection with the existing hall of the adjoining parish. A visit to the Rusfieh refugee camp is of particular interest, where a priest from Sri Lanka takes care of the small Catholic community and of the Sisters of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, committed to assisting children and handicapped people.

In Madaba, where the Commission verified the progress of the new University, its members were invited to lunch by the family of the patriarch Foud Twal. Finally, the first meeting in Amman with the new patriarchal Vicar, the archbishop Maroun Lahham, was very important.

President Christa von Siemens brought to the attention of the lieutenants of Europe an article by the Lebanese ex-minister Tarek Mitri, for many years Commissioner of the World Council of Churches. On the Beirut newspaper *L'Orient Le Jour*, reflecting on the "role of Christians in the Arab Spring", he stated that their "fear to disappear" is being replaced by "the risk to exist".

CHRISTIANS TOGETHER TO FAVOUR RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ISRAELIANS AND PALESTINIANS

The World Council of Churches, the ecumenical organisation located in Geneva, while promoting from the 28th May to the 3rd June "world week of prayer for peace in the territories of Palestine and Israel", emphasised that "the situation in the Near East requires the collective commitment of the ecumenical partners in order to achieve peace and justice". Among the various initiatives, it organised a eucharistic celebration at the Ecumenic Centre of Cremisan, near Bethlehem.



Meeting the recent request of the Holy See

THE ORDER HAS EXTENDED TO EGYPT THE AID TO ROACO PROGRAMMES FOR THE HOLY LAND

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, through ROACO (Reunion of Aid Agencies for the Oriental Churches) grants every year the financing of various projects for the Holy Land proposed by several Catholic institutions and coordinated by this operational organism of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches to be supported by the numerous international organisations which are part of it. In its last session, which took place from the 19th to the 21st June, and which the General Governor Agostino Borromeo attended, the Order positively confirmed to have met the request made by the Holy See, through the above mentioned Congregation, to extend its help to Egypt and also to Lebanon.

And one of the first projects concerning Egypt was sponsored by the Grand Magisterium with special sympathy, because of its special meaning: the Order has taken charge of the total financing (for the sum of 25,000 US dollars) of the initiative of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, the oldest Catholic association in Egypt, to grant a dowry to a hundred very poor young women, about to get married. Each dowry, for a total of 1,500 Egyptian lira, will let the families of the young women purchase, according to traditions, the first necessary furnishings and fittings.

The Order has also given a contribution of 100,000 euros to start the construction of a centre of rehabilitation for the disabled and of a nursery school for handicapped children in Aguamy, near Alexandria. The compelling proj-

ect, of the total cost of more than 400,000 euros, was promoted by a priest of the patriarchal eparchy of the Catholic Copts, father Youhanna Paul Abadir, who is well aware of its social relevance, having personally experienced a physical handicap, and of its urgency to relieve the needs of many poor people; for these reasons, it was approved by cardinal Antonios Naguib, patriarch of Alexandria.

The third project for Egypt financed by the Order with a contribution of 125,000 euros, consists in urgent works of renovation of the school (attended by 634 girls, 429 of whom are Christian) and of the convent of Beni Sueh (South of Cairo) of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Heart, known as the Sisters of Egypt but present in the whole area of the Middle East.

The other three ROACO projects, of which the Order ensures the realisation, are relative to: in Israel, the enlargement, with the placement of three light prefabricated buildings on the terrace, of the Jaffa (Tel Aviv) College of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, attended by Christian, Muslim and Jewish pupils; as well as the urgent repair or renovation of old windows, damaged by rain and sun, of the monastery of the Discalced Carmelite Sisters Monastery at the summit of Mount Carmel (Haifa), in the 120th year of foundation; in the Palestinian territories, in Bethlehem, the renovation of the water system and of the solar heating of the professional institute, recreation centre and monastery of the Salesians, whose construction dates back to 1863.

NEW MARONITE ARCHBISHOP IN THE HOLY LAND

The Maronite community in the Holy Land has a new shepherd, the monk Moussa el-Hage of the Anthonian Order, appointed archbishop of Haifa as well as patriarchal exarch of Jerusalem, Palestine and Jordan. He is the successor of Mons. Paul Nabil el-Sayah, transferred last year to the patriarchal curia of Bkerke, in Lebanon. Ten thousand Maronite faithful, resident in Jordan, look up to him.



KNIGHTS AND DAMES WITH THE POPE AT THE WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES IN MILAN

The VII World Meeting of Families, which took place in Milan from the 30th May to the 3rd June on the theme "The Family: Work and Celebration", saw the participation in its main events of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. On invitation of the archbishop's curia, groups of knights and dames of the Lieutenancy of Northern Italy were present inside the Duomo, in the evening of Friday 1st June, for the final meeting of the preparatory days; then the following evening, in the Parco Nord of Bresso, in the suburbs of Milan, for the "Feast of Testimonies", together with the Holy Father; and on Sunday morning in the same huge space

(which welcomed almost a million faithful from all continents; in this occasion the members of the Order were wearing a cape) to celebrate the closing Holy Mass, in the liturgical solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity.

"It is not only the Church that is called to be the image of One God in Three Persons", said the Pope in the homily, "but also the family, based on marriage between man and woman. ... Love is the only force that can truly transform the world".

Then he announced that the eighth World Meeting of Families will take place in three years, in 2015, in Philadelphia (United States of America).

ISRAELIAN ARCHEOLOGIST EXPLAINS THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JESUS

The famous Israeli archeologist Dan Bahat, responsible for the excavations in Jerusalem which led to the opening of the tunnels in the area adjacent to the Temple Mount, in a conference held on the 17th May at the Biblical Festival of Vicenza, explained the reasons of the authenticity of the Holy Sepulchre of Jesus. First of all, he said, "it was outside the city walls"; then "there was a cave there"; then there are: the first Christian testimony in Jerusalem of a pilgrim of the II century a.C, the construction of the first church in the IV century by emperor Constantine and, fifty years later, the finding of the Cross by Helena, his mother. Bahat thus stated that "archeologically speaking, it makes no sense to identify the sepulchre of Jesus with the Tomb of the Garden, as protestants do".

A VOLUME ON THE ORDER PRESENTED TO THE POPE

A group of dames and knights of the Marche section, lieutenancy for central Apennine Italy, attended the 27th June hearing of Benedict XVI, in Vatican City. They were guided by the prior, the archbishop of Ancona Edoardo Menichelli, and by the president Antonio Matri. At the end the Holy Father was presented with copy number one, suitably bound in white leather, of the volume *The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. Tradition and renewal at the dawn of the Third Millennium*, a compelling and praiseworthy work by two of its members, Cristina Belli Montanari and Umberto Lorenzetti.

The four chapters of the book trace back the history of the Order, they outline its present role, they sum up its spirituality and illustrate its ceremonial; a rich documentation can be found in the appendix.



THE POPE IN SEPTEMBER IN LEBANON WILL DELIVER THE EXHORTATION ON THE SYNOD FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

Two years after the special assembly of the Synod of bishops for the Middle East - it took place in the Vatican from 10th to 24th October 2010 with the participation of the Grand Master, of the Governor General and of the President of the Holy Land of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem - Benedict XVI will deliver to the Church the apostolic exhortation which sums

up and develops its themes. The occasion will be his trip to Lebanon, set from 14th to 16th September; a visit which, sources from the Palace of Presidency in Beirut reported, "will confirm the depth of historical relations which bind Lebanon to the Holy See and will lead to the reaffirmation of the statute, the role and the mission of Lebanon as witness of freedom and fraternity".

GEORGE DOTY, KNIGHT GRAND CROSS, HAS DIED. HE FINANCED THE RESTORATION OF ANASTASIS

The knight Grand Cross George E. Doty died in New York on the 24th April at the age of 94. United States Eastern lieutenant from October 1990 to June 1993, he was one of the greatest benefactors of the Church of the Holy Land and went down in the history of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem for having financed the restoration of the Anastasis cupola, after decades of degradation; an intervention which, because of the co-ownership of the Basilica between the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, ruled by *statu quo* regime, required lengthy negotiations mediated by the Pontifical Mission for Palestine, in particular by its director in Jerusalem, father Denis Madden (today auxiliary bishop of Baltimore) and by the secretary general mons. Robert Stern, both illustrious members of the Order. Accompanied by his wife, Marie G. Ward, George Doty presided, on the 2nd January 1997, over the inauguration ceremony which was a great ecumenical event.

Born in New York on 15th February 1918, George Doty was, as a successful *investment broker*, a representative of the US high finance. His Catholic faith was exemplary and he received the investiture to knight of the Order on the 9th April 1981. Held in high esteem also for his "remarkable dynamism" by the archbishop of the metropolis, cardinal John O'Connor, Grand Prior of the Lieutenancy, and by the vice Governor General F. Russell Kendall, he was called on the 4th October 1990 to direct the United States Eastern lieutenancy. He was awarded by Grand Master cardinal Carlo Furno, on 19th May 1997, the Gold Cross for Merit; he had received, on 10th September 1993, by his predecessor cardinal Giuseppe Caprio, the Silver Palm.

He was the father of five children. He visited Rome several times, also in his quality of Patron of the Arts of the Vatican Museums.

TO THE HOUSE OF THE FATHER

Also called to the house of the Father:

- the wife, lady Helen, of the Knight of the Collar Mr. Pier Luigi Parola, engineer, Governor General of Honour,
- knight commander with star dr. Glenn Coorey, once lieutenant of the Australia NSW lieutenancy.

Governor General Agostino Borromeo sent messages of condolence ensuring prayers for their soul, also in the name of the members of the Grand Magisterium of the Order.

