



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

Rediscovering our call to service



"The three Kings", Vittorio Zecchin, 1920 approx.

At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to once again place our intentions in the Lord's Hands as well as our desire to serve Him and our brothers and sisters. This is the essence of our call in the Order, recalled by Pope Francis a few months ago in his speech to associations of the faithful, ecclesial movements and new communities: " The positions of governance entrusted to you in the lay groups to which you belong are none other than a call to serve. But what does it mean for a Christian to serve?" (16 September 2021)

The Holy Father continues asking us to reflect on the obstacles we may encounter on our path of service. His words are a timely warning also for us Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre, just as for every Christian. He calls our attention to two perilous attitudes: the lust for power and disloyalty. " How many times have we made others feel our "lust for power"? Jesus taught us that the one who commands must become like the one who serves (cf. *Lk 22:24-26*) and that "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all" (*Mk 9:35*). Jesus, in other words, overturns the values of worldliness, of the world".

Let us be on guard against this temptation which can assail each one of us and which is often be disguised by the sincerest intentions. Let us learn to be sensitive to recognising when, even in our own service carried out with the best of intentions, there is a desire for power which "expresses itself in so many ways in the life of the Church" and which "nullifies all forms of subsidiarity. This attitude is ugly and ends up emptying the ecclesial body of its strength".

The second temptation, continues Pope Francis, is that of disloyalty, of when "We say in words that we want to serve God and others, but in fact we serve our ego, and we bend to our desire to appear, to obtain recognition, appreciation". At all times it is important to bear in mind that "no one is master of the gifts received for the good of the Church - we are administrators -, no one should suffocate them,

let them grow with me or with what comes after me". May our Delegations, Sections and Provinces be living realities in which the Spirit works and not the expression of the will and governance of a few.

Let us be accompanied at the beginning of this New Year by the example of the Magi: These great wise men humbly set out on their journey and stealing themselves against the fascinating displays of power of those who are not the One they seek. Let us bring our gifts and lay them at the foot of the manger, for it is there that they will be put to good use for the glory of God; it is before a God who becomes a child that we learn to make ourselves small.

Happy New Year!

Fernando Cardinal Filoni

(January 2022)