



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

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

## On the Investiture



Many will have noticed the photo that appeared in Newsletter No. 67 of the Investiture ceremony in Naples, published again here. The photo gives me the opportunity to reiterate once again that the role of the "Sword" has not disappeared from the Ritual, but we find it again in the Prayer Vigil at the moment when the candidates are invited to take up their own symbols: for the Dames the "Jar of Fragrant Oils" and for the Knights the "Spurs" and precisely the "Sword."

The "Sword," at the moment it is presented to the Candidate-Knight, should be unsheathed and brought to the level of the forehead and held for a few seconds. The candidate may reflect at that moment that that symbol reminds him or her of his or her commitment to truth, justice and loyalty, typical chivalric virtues.

In this way the symbolic value is not only not lost, but integrated with the spirit of the Order, since ours is an Order that is linked to the Mystery of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord; therefore, the "Astylar Cross," placed on the shoulder of the new Knight or the new Dame, is the most suitable instrument in the Investiture.

I would still like to add another thought that seems important to me: while the "Sword" remains in the realm of the symbol (with debated meanings), the Cross, as sacramentum fidei (bond of faith), is linked to the mystery of Jesus' death; therefore, the Cross, from patibulum (instrument for condemned), is changed to Signum salvificum (sign of salvation).

Now, with the imposition on the shoulder of this Signum salvificum (the astylar Cross), the constitutive formula ("I constitute you..."), the handing over of the Cross (to be worn on the neck) and the Mantle, the novum (the novelty) is enacted, and the Knight and the Dame assume their new, high dignity.

**Fernando Cardinal Filoni**

*(January 2023)*