



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

The empty tomb is not the emptiness of God. His silence is not His absence

The Grand Master's message for Easter 2020



Lent, with the daily accompaniment of the Word of God, has guided us towards Easter. This year's Lenten period has been completely unique due to the concomitance of a pandemic (Covid-19) that has shaken the world and our plans; however, it is also a time which for many has become, perhaps, a period of profound reflection on our existence ("What is man?"), the mystery of God ("O God where are you?") and our relationship with him ("Who am I for God?"). Here we will not dwell on providing a philosophical-anthropological response.

Sacred Scripture reveals to us that the Creator, "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man (#d#m, the earth) became a living being" (Gen 2:7); but because of man's loss of knowledge and because man moved away, God had to speak to him "at many times and in various ways" (Heb 1:1). However, it would seem that this has been insufficient, as fear and pain have continued to torment us, so much so as to lead us to believe that the silence we received in place of the response that we would have liked was manifest proof of the absence of God. Jesus, in his incarnation, is the complete response of God, and the empty sepulchre, where everything seemed to vanish, never really represented the emptiness of God, but a maternal womb that was about to make life burst forth again; a life that was no longer as before. Easter, in a humanity afflicted by pain and immense evil that sometimes seems to inexorably overcome it (how many evils, how many wars, how much individual violence!), becomes a new prophecy; it is the re-founding of the relationship between God and His creature: "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me" (Is 49:15-16). This for us is the Easter of Jesus!

Dear brothers and sisters, to the amazement of Mary of Magdalen, the women, Peter and John before the empty tomb we are invited to welcome the Angel's announcement: "Do not be afraid, for

I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen...you will see him." (Mt 28:5-7).

I would like to renew the same announcement to everyone and extend it to every Member of our Order, with the hope that the mystery of the risen Jesus will produce great joy, that it will bring peace and a renewed spirit. With Mary, the mother of Jesus, the women and men who had seen the Lord die and buried, now be witnesses of his resurrection.

Fernando Cardinal Filoni

(April 12, 2020)