



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

2018 Annual North American Lieutenants' Meeting

From 31 May through 2 June 2018, Toronto, Ontario, Canada



At the end of May, the 16 North American Lieutenants gathered for their annual meeting in **Toronto**, Ontario. It was their fourth time meeting in Canada, having previously met in Toronto, Montreal and Quebec City. The meeting was hosted by **Hugh MacKinnon, the Lieutenant of Canada Toronto, and his wife Laura.**

Grand Master Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Governor General Count Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, and Lieutenant General Count Agostino Borromeo travelled from Rome to attend the meeting. Additionally, **Vice Governor General Patrick Powers** and four members of the Grand Magisterium attended along with **Monsignor John Kozar**, President of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), and **Monsignor Robert Stern**, President Emeritus of CNEWA and a consultant to the Order.

On Thursday evening, 31 May, Monsignor Stern celebrated the opening Mass in the historic Basilica of Saint Paul in the Corktown neighborhood of East Toronto. Happily, it was the sixtieth anniversary day of his priestly ordination. **Cardinal Thomas Collins, Archbishop of Toronto**, welcomed the Lieutenants and their wives and provided details on the history of the oldest Roman Catholic congregation in Toronto. Following Mass, a reception and dinner was held in a local restaurant with the Grand Master and Cardinal Collins in attendance.

On Friday, 1 June, the Grand Master gave an opening address in which he referenced Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation ***Gaudete et Exsultate*** (Rejoice and Be Glad) and stressed the importance of the annual Lieutenants Meeting. Cardinal O'Brien urged the Lieutenants to invite their clergy members to take a more active role in the life of the Order and to clarify the duties of Knight Chaplains in each Lieutenancy.

Governor General Visconti di Modrone addressed the group and provided some reflections on the first year of his mandate. He thanked the Lieutenants for their support and emphasized the importance of the Order's focus on human investment and education. He provided an update on the Columbus Hotel, revisions to the Constitution, and the **recent appointment of Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzarotto as the Assessor** of the Order. Vice Governor General Patrick Powers gave a detailed presentation on the Order's finances.

Count Borromeo provided details for the upcoming **Consulta**, the status of the Constitution, the *Instrumentum Laboris* for the Consulta, and the establishment of three new Commissions addressing Protocol, Economics, and Spirituality.

Professor Thomas McKiernan, President of the Holy Land Commission, presented an update on its February 2018 site visit to the Holy Land. In addition to an explanation of the projects currently underway, the Commission will emphasize education, humanitarian aid, and pastoral care.

On Friday evening, following an intense day of work, Lieutenant Hugh MacKinnon and his wife, Laura, hosted a reception and dinner for all of the meeting participants at their home. It was our pleasure to have Cardinal Collins with us once again.

The morning of 2 June was devoted to the topics on the agenda such as communications, accounting and data base systems, Madaba University, and member recruitment. After a short break, Monsignor John E. Kozar, President of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), provided a poignant **update on the refugee crisis in Syria, Iraq** - changing from refugee-based to re-settlement needs, **and the Kingdom of Jordan**. Citing the importance of the CNEWA's presence, he shared with the group how millions of refugees are still displaced. He said that CNEWA is there on a humble scale and that the refugees' basic needs are being met with "Pastoral Accompaniment."

Shortly before breaking for lunch, the Grand Master announced that the Holy Father, Pope Francis, had conferred upon **Joseph Spinnato**, member of the Grand Magisterium, the **highest rank of the Order of Saint Sylvester**. The Cardinal thanked Lieutenant of Honor Spinnato for his many years of service to the Order and the universal Church. Following the presentation, time was dedicated to an "open forum", which allowed the Lieutenants the opportunity of discussing themes such as renewing the spiritual lives of the Knights and Dames, the legacy program, and the new Squires program being established in North America.

Late Saturday afternoon, the Lieutenants and their spouses attended Mass at the magnificently restored Cathedral Basilica of Saint Michael the Archangel in the Garden District of Toronto, where the Solemnity of Corpus Christi was celebrated by Cardinal Collins. A special addition to the liturgy was hearing the famous Saint Michael's Boy Choir chant the parts of the Mass.

The meeting officially concluded on Saturday with a closing reception honoring the Grand Master and Governor General.

John Carmen Piunno

Member of the Grand Magisterium

(July 2018)