

Vatican City, April 5th 2020

Palm Sunday

Dear Knights and Dames,

I wish to be close to each of you and your dear families during this difficult period; in particular, I pray in particular for those who are suffering for illness or for the loss of their loved ones because of this pandemic which has changed many people's lives.

The rules, which have been imposed and are necessary, prevent us from living the Holy Week and Easter by directly participating in the liturgical celebrations of the Sacred Triduum, which are so important and solemn and introduce us to the joy of Easter of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The words of the liturgy of the Easter Vigil are comforting and full of hope: *the Christ of yesterday and of today: the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega. Time and centuries belong to Him. Glory and power are for Him forever and ever. Amen. Through his glorious holy wounds, may the Lord Christ keep us and protect us. Amen. May the light of Christ who is rising gloriously disperse the darkness of the heart and the spirit.* Let's repeat these words several times: it is the *lex orandi* that the Church proclaims on Easter night.

The faith in the Lord of life represents for all of us the great medicine that truly heals the wounds of the soul and the body. I hope that prayers and spiritual communion will accompany us in these days so that the certainty that *God is Father and is taking care of all his sons* will not be weakened.

I know that our Order, following the Grand Master's appeal, is particularly involved in several charity initiatives. Let's remember the Lord's teaching: *Truly, I say to you: each time you do these things in favour of one of my younger brothers, you do them for me* (Mt 25:41).

In the text "Per un cammino spirituale dei Cavalieri e delle Dame Constantiniani", it is recommended to "support the charitable initiatives proposed by the

Order, paying particular attention to social and hospital assistance works". I also encourage every initiative in favour of those who are suffering and their families. Everyone should feel involved in this regard as much as possible.

During the Easter period, Mary, Mother of the Risen Christ, accompanies us: let's invoke her every day with the prayer of tradition: *Regína cæli lætare, allelúia. Quia quem merúisti portáre, allelúia. Resurréxit, sicut dixit, allelúia. Ora pro nobis Deum, allelúia.*

Wishing you and your loved ones a happy Easter, I bless you.

Renato Raffaele Card. Martino
Grand Prior