

Courtesy translation

Vatican City, April 16th, 2021

Saint Bernadette of Lourdes

Dear Knights and Dames,

as every year, we are getting ready to celebrate - on April 23rd - the liturgical memory of our patron Saint George, whose anniversary falls within the time of Easter.

We can admire, even in Saint George, an exemplary model of life that, as members of the Constantinian Order, we feel particularly close and that reconfirms our faith, also exhorting us to charity. Even Saint George defends the Gospel against philosophical and political ideologies, often based on a generalized relativism in which, as the Holy Father Francis has reminded us several times, "an anthropocentric immanentism disguised as Catholic truth is expressed".

The extraordinary figure of Saint George has historically materialized in civil and religious life: I am referring to the many religious orders, monasteries, local churches, entire nations, equestrian orders, military and civil corporations that chose him as their heavenly Patron. A great season of faith that makes today's poverty (not to mention misery!) even harsher. Once again we entrust ourselves to the powerful intercession of Saint George to continue this work of protection of our beloved Constantinian Order, of our Grand Master and of all the members.

The image of Saint George reminded and still reminds us that the last word in history does not belong to mankind and not even to all those ideologies that from time to time want to assume the role of liberator and redeemer. The definitive word on mankind and on history belongs only to Christ, the Incarnate Word and our merciful Hope. He, God with us, supports us, accompanies us, judges us with mercy and love. God, infinitely generous, has never stopped giving men the witness of holiness in history, a tangible sign of His love. Through the eyes of faith and educating our hearts to charity, even the most difficult trials can be transformed into a possibility of conversion and redemption. As the Holy Father Francis reminded us in his apostolic exhortation on the call to holiness: "Sometimes life gives us huge challenges that we have to face and through them the Lord invites us to new conversions that allow His grace to be better manifested in our existence. [...] Other times it is just a matter of finding a more perfect way of doing what we already do" (*Gaudete et exsultate*).

Finally, I would like to direct my thoughts to those of you who have personally experienced the disease or have assisted their loved ones: once again I assure each and every one of you my assiduous memory in prayers and am sure that the Lord, full of mercy, will never abandon His children.

As members of the Order, then, all of us, despite the distance, let us accompany our brothers and sisters who have returned to the Father's house with the prayer of suffrage: let the communion among us be the hope of eternal communion from Heaven, where even now the saints and those who have preceded us are beholding the glory of God.

Renato Raffaele Card. Martino
Proto-deacon of the Holy Roman Church
Grand Prior