



## ORDO MILITARIS ET HOSPITALARIS SANCTI LAZARI HIEROSOLYMITANI

MAGNUS L. MAGISTER, CITRA ET ULTRA MARIA, PRÆCEPTOR BOIGNACI, COMITIS DOBRZENSKY Z DOBRZENICZ  
EMINENTISSIMUS DOMINICUS CARDINALIS DUKA O.P., CAPELLANUS GENERALIS  
SUB ALTO PATROCINIO DOMUS REGIÆ FRANCÆ

### THE GRAND MASTER

Hæc dies quam fecit Dominus, Alleluia!

The recent atrocity in Paris focuses our mind on the call to embrace a sacrificial life of service, understanding that during this season “*Christ became obedient for us, even to death, death on a cross.*” It is a reminder that to fully understand the glory of the Resurrection, we must first experience the tribulations of Holy Week.

The Declaration of Legitimacy, promulgated in 2013, encompasses the essence of who we are as an ancient Order of Chivalry. During this most glorious of Solemnities I ask you to contemplate the importance of its opening exhortation: “*The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is, since its origin in the Holy Land, a Catholic institution. Its spiritual vocation was solidified with the search for Christian unity during the nineteenth century.*”

In a very real sense it reinforces our identity through 3 clear facets: **tradition** as we embrace our foundations in the very city where Our Lord walked the road to Calvary and Easter; **catholicity** as a universal Order reaching out to all people of good will with the offer of God's mercy, so often spoken of by our Holy Father Pope Francis; and **spirituality** through which we support the marginalised, the abandoned and the sick.

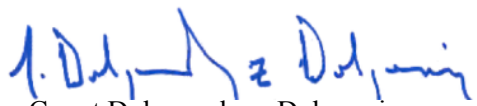
The Apostolic Exhortation *Laudato Si* speaks of a spirituality that embraces the whole of creation. It reminds us that the Earth, as our mother and common home, requires protection. In these simple words, our Holy Father is challenging us to cultivate a spiritual awareness that does not put man above all creation, rather placing ourselves at the service of God's beautiful works.

In a subsequent address to the Polish Bishops, our Holy Father focused on two pillars of the Gospel which I see as fundamental tenets for us to follow in the Order. He acknowledged that Christ's teaching, “*Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me*” has to be underpinned by a genuine belief in the *Beatitudes*. It is, in fact, through these teachings that we promise serve God as brothers and sisters in the Order of Saint Lazarus.

The hardship of Holy Week reminds us of the broken world in which we live. The joy of Easter reminds us of the hope to which our Faith and our vocation calls us. Our Blessed Lord himself reminds us that those who are truly blessed are those who share the qualities that He values; these are what make us truly noble, not the qualities valued by the world.

I pray that you and your families will have a blessed Eastertide and go forth with new hope.

In the name of God, the Virgin Mary and Saint Lazarus,

  
Jan Count Dobrzensky z Dobrzenicz  
50th Grand Master

