

JERUSALEM CROSS

ANNALES ORDINIS EQUESTRIS SANCTI SEPULCHRI HIEROSOLYMITANI **2016**



«This is the time of mercy»

Pope Francis

VATICAN CITY - 2017



ANNALES ORDINIS EQUESTRIS SANCTI SEPULCHRI HIEROSOLYMITANI **2016**

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A group of Knights from the Lieutenancy for France, led by
Msgr. Jacques Perrier, while they walk the Way of the Cross on the
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Jerusalem Cross, a new title that demands our engagement

Dear Knights and Dames, dear friends of the Order,

This year our annual magazine, which is published in five languages, has taken the title *Jerusalem Cross*, referring to the banner that we carry.

This new title will also be used for the quarterly newsletter to identify ourselves more clearly. This Cross is not the monopoly of Christians because it also symbolizes the Holy City for our Jewish brothers: the main cross indicates the spiritual center of the world and the other four smaller crosses the cardinal points.

I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to express my gratitude to Professor Agostino Borromeo, who founded this magazine twenty years ago and was Governor General over these last eight years, giving new impetus to the communication tools of the Grand Magisterium through the creation of a new website, available in five languages, that will complement our print publications.

Together with the Communication's Office of the Grand Magisterium, he chose this new name. This development befits the sustained effort to continue to raise awareness of our Order, its mission and its actions in the service of all the inhabitants of the Holy Land.

Therefore, I ask all the Lieutenants across the world to aggressively publicize *Jerusalem Cross*, not only among our 30,000 members but also among people who want to discover the Order and perhaps to be part of it in the future.

Internet will not replace the paper because such a printed document, full of testimonies of life lived, is an object that penetrates everywhere as a mission, especially in public places, and that allows you to "pick up" the cause of the Holy Land, and become more informed in an enjoyable and profound manner.

I wish you all a good read and a good use of *Jerusalem Cross*, asking the Lord to make us more each day ardent witnesses of his love for all.

Edwin Cardinal O'Brien



The Jerusalem Cross, the emblem of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, appears in Cardinal O'Brien's coat of arms.

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An exceptional year marked by Mercy

This issue of our magazine recounts the year 2016 which saw an exceptional increase in donations from our members for the benefit of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, confirming the trend of previous years.

The visits of the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O’Brien, to the Lieutenancies around the world have contributed to this success: the number of members of the Order is increasing and our community life is growing spiritually.

Our awareness of having to assist the new Apostolic Administrator of the Patriarchate, Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, in his office further promotes our mobilization in favor of the many pastoral projects (schools, parishes, reception of refugees ...) in these difficult times for Christians living in the biblical territories.

In the following pages we will discuss the important moments since the beginning of Msgr. Pizzaballa’s ministry, and hear from him first hand in order to know him better. We will also retrace the Holy Year of Mercy, not only in the Holy Land but also in the universal Church and the Order, where our members have actively participated in the Jubilee.

The most detailed accounts of the various Lieutenancies are present on our new site www.oessh.va, which was launched in 2016.

We hope you enjoy reading our annual publication, which as of this year is titled *Jerusalem Cross*, and we invite you to participate even more in the life of our Order through our presence on social media – Facebook (@ granmagistero.oessh) and Twitter (@GM_oessh) – managed by our dynamic Communications Department, so we may share and witness together to the Risen Christ.

Alfredo Bastianelli

Chancellor of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre

THE ORDER IN UNION WITH THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

A DIPLOMACY OF SMALL STEPS TO BUILD TRUST

Interview with Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States within the Holy See's Secretariat of State

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre works hard to be at the service of education and peace in the Holy Land, notably through supporting schools and universities where Muslims and Christians study together in a tangible dynamic of interreligious dialogue. In your view, what does this pontifical institution represent and what do you expect of it during the coming years?

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre continues a great mission of support, both practical and spiritual, for the works of the Church and the

Catholics present in the Holy Land. Through the activities of its members over the years it has shown the Church's concern for the faithful in the Holy Land. In the current context, we all know how much interreligious dialogue is essential. In particular, it is crucial to educate towards a serene dialogue and coexistence to ensure a durable peace for the generations to come. The educational efforts which enable both young Christians, who already come from diverse ecclesial realities, as well as young people from other religions, to grow-up together, to learn, to share and to evolve in a

Archbishop Paul Gallagher with Msgr. Antonio Franco (behind), Assessor of the Order, and Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, during the reception last autumn in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Palestine, at the headquarters of the Grand Magisterium in Rome.



dynamic of harmony, are the true seeds of hope. Without doubt these efforts do not make the headlines, but they lay the foundations for the future and already witness to true fraternity in diversity.

What is your episcopal motto and what does it reveal about your diplomatic mission in service of the Church in “undoing the knots” between nations?

“To walk humbly with God” (Micah 6:8), this is my episcopal motto. It corresponds to the third part of the prophet Micah’s response to the question from the people on what the Lord expects of him.

This motto invites us, first of all, to “walk”, to advance and to look ahead, because we are all on a journey, a path that leads us towards the fullness that God wants to give each of us. This path cannot be undertaken without God, nor can it be undertaken without others, without those men and women entrusted to us, sent to us by the Lord. It is also a journey and a growth in fraternity which demands great humility. In the diplomatic domain in particular, humility is essential, not only in favouring and constructing a true dialogue but it is also indispensable for continuing to work without tiring of building trust, all the while acknowledging the achievements obtained which, by definition, belong only to God.

The Palestinian State was recognised by the Holy See one year after the historic visit of Pope Francis to the Holy Land. How could this recognition tangibly stimulate peace in the Middle East?

For many decades, the conflict in the Middle East has not ceased to cause suffering, doubt, lack of understanding, division and isolation. Time only worsens the situation and its wounds. Yet stability and peace must necessarily lie in justice, the recognition of the rights of each person and the security of all. The two States solution has presented itself for a long time as the best remedy to the conflict and to guarantee a future and a stable peace for the people who are directly affected. It is based on safety, justice and the rights found at the heart of the internationally recognised borders. Enacting such a resolution certainly demands courage, “the courage of peace”, as Pope Francis

says. It also demands determination and consistency. In the long and difficult Israeli-Palestinian peace process, it entails, above all, recognition of the fundamental needs of individuals and peoples. Evidently, the resolution of such a conflict will constitute a fundamental step in favour of peace in the Middle-East.

What is your position on the subject of the resolution adopted by UNESCO last October concerning the holy city of Jerusalem and “occupied Palestine”?

A complex controversy that has been ongoing for a long time, has resurfaced following the resolutions adopted by UNESCO last October. We note that the question, in its basic outline, was essentially treated from a cultural point of view and from the point of view of international rights. The decisions taken by the States must of course be respected. However, we can only reiterate, as the Holy See has already highlighted, the importance of the sacred and universal character of the city of Jerusalem for the three monotheistic religions. In this sense, the recognition of a special statute for the city on an international level is, clearly, necessary. It is to be wished that no party should be deprived of its own historic links with the city of Jerusalem and a realistic solution should be found, which would reflect the identity and the vocation of the Holy City.

Personally, as a man of the Church, where do you draw hope in these obscure times of “a piecemeal war”, and what promising signs can you give regarding a “peace in little pieces” which advances as well, without making the headlines?

That’s a very beautiful question! At times, it can seem difficult to cultivate hope whilst we are witnessing multiple acts of violence, touching most often innocents, children, families, people who cannot defend themselves. The blind violence, which characterises this “piecemeal war”, according to the term used by Pope Francis, has dramatic consequences, as well as causing suffering and injustice. The Apostle St Paul exhorts us to be men and women of hope, hoping, like Abraham, “against all hope”. And so he charges us to work humbly in our daily life, through little acts of peace,



of fraternity, of humility and of reconciliation which are seeds that are indispensable to the construction of a true and enduring peace in which we must never cease to believe in and aspire to. Peace is a gift to patiently look for and which “becomes handmade in the hands of men” – as Pope Francis recently said. The Holy Father himself often makes reference to “diplomacy of small steps”. To some extent, we already have encouraging signs in recent events relating to Cuba, the Central African Republic or Colombia. Here we can certainly also speak of a “peace in little pieces”, a peace which is rooted in the communal consciousness that we are all brothers in humanity and which is fed by faith in Christ Redeemer and Prince of Peace.

Can you speak to us about the vision and engagement of pontifical diplomacy concerning the migrants and refugees of the Middle East? Among those issues which Pope Francis considers priority; can you reveal some of your recent actions?

As you know, the plight of the refugees is an object of particular attention for Pope Francis. He has often expressed his concern for these people through concrete signs and gestures. The Holy See is committed on a diplomatic level in favour of the peace process in the Middle East and for the resolution of problems which are at the origin of migrations. At the same time, the Catholic Church is engaged in aiding refugees and migrants in

numerous ways. Through the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, which supports and coordinates the initiatives of different Catholic organizations and charitable associations, the Holy See looks to respond notably to the concrete needs of refugees present in numerous countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Cyprus and Egypt, without mentioning of course the aid brought to the populations of Syria and Iraq who live in dramatic circumstances. Since September 2014, a central point of information on Catholic agencies has also been put in place – for those who are helping the Iraqi-Syrian humanitarian crisis – in order to facilitate cooperation and the exchange of news among the different Catholic agencies engaged in humanitarian aid for this crisis. In 2016, the ecclesial network rallied more than 200 million dollars which enabled aid to be brought to more than 4.5 million people; a number which remains too small, taking into account the great need, which demands greater mobilization. I would add that from January 1, the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* constitutes one on the principal centres for the new Dicastery for integral human development. In that respect, we can highlight that the Pope himself wanted to reserve the management of the future department for the migrants and refugees, which once again reflects the commitment, on all levels, of the Church in supporting these populations.

Interview by François Vayne

(translation from the original interview in French)

FROM THE JUBILEE OF MERCY INTO A “CULTURE OF MERCY”

The Jubilee of Mercy mobilized the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. There were so many initiatives in Lieutenancies to mark this extraordinary spiritual event that it is not possible to give them all full coverage here. In *Jerusalem Cross*, we recall an important moment of preparation for the Holy Year, through the veneration of the relics of a young saint whose testimony is more relevant than ever, and the pilgrimage in the footsteps of Blessed Bartolo Longo, to Pompei, wanted by the Cardinal Grand Master. Now we are called to pass from this Jubilee to a “culture of Mercy” that permeates our whole life, as indicated by Pope Francis in his apostolic letter *Misericordia et misera*.

The saving power of forgiveness: Saint Maria Goretti has prepared for the Jubilee of Mercy in the United States

Maria Goretti died at age 11 in 1902 while defending herself from an attempted assault. Her last words were forgiveness for her assailant

and murderer, and she appeared to him several times while he was in prison, bringing him the joy of conversion and of approaching Christ through a



Cardinal O'Brien in Nettuno, surrounded by many Knights and those who have responsibility in the Order, on the occasion of the translation of St Maria Goretti's relics to the United States, preparing for the Jubilee.

path of holiness.

Canonized in 1950 by Pope Pius XII, Saint Maria Goretti is a saint to whom many turn and who has worked various miracles. From September to November 2015, relics of the Saint have visited the United States for the first time, in what was called “the pilgrimage of Mercy”. The experience was certainly an occasion for important preparation to live the Jubilee Year, which began on December 8.

Cardinal Edwin O’Brien, who celebrated Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Graces and St. Maria Goretti in Nettuno on November 24, 2014, for the occasion of the transfer of the relics of the Saint in the U.S., said: “I am delighted that the Church in the United States may have the opportunity to celebrate the Holy Year of Mercy through the inspiring story of



Logo of the historic US pilgrimage of the relics of Saint Maria Goretti.

the life and death of St. Maria Goretti! May the opportunity to reverence her relics demonstrate the power of Divine Mercy and forgiveness awaiting every one of us who takes the message of Jesus seriously to heart.”

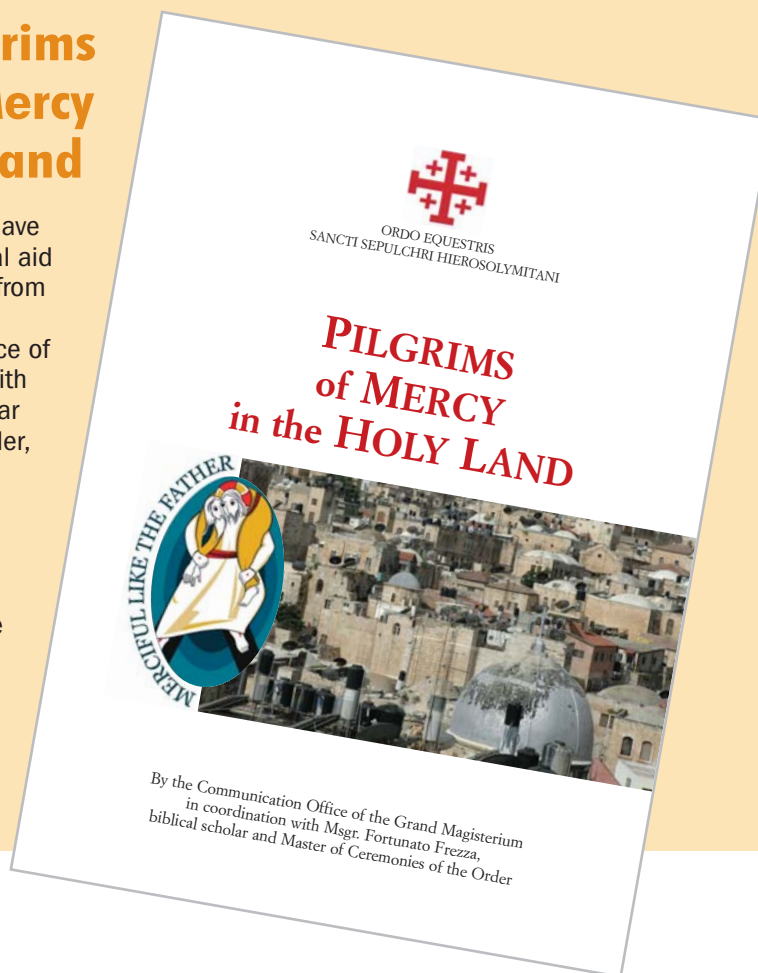
In Italy, in the diocese of Latina south of Rome, where the saint died, the Jubilee of Mercy came to a close in the shrine of Our Lady of Graces, in Nettuno on November 25, 2016 in

the presence of the relics of this great “Martyr of Purity”; the title used by Saint John-Paul II during the 100th anniversary of her death in 2002.

We entrust today’s teenagers to her intercession, in particular the young girls in the Holy Land. ■

Pilgrims of Mercy in the Holy Land

During this Holy Year our readers have been able to download a spiritual aid “Pilgrims of Mercy in the Holy Land” from our website (www.oessh.va). It was prepared by the Communication Office of the Order in Rome, in coordination with Msgr. Fortunato Frezza, biblical scholar and Master of Ceremonies of the Order, and was intended to accompany the Jubilee journey in the Holy Land, mainly in Bethlehem and Jerusalem. This booklet has enabled us to nourish prayer there, in communion with our brothers and sisters who live in the lands of the Bible. This booklet is still as relevant as ever and it can still be downloaded from the website of the Grand Magisterium under the heading, ‘MEDIA’.



Hundreds of Knights and Dames follow in the footsteps of Blessed Bartolo Longo

At the decision of Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, there was a jubilee pilgrimage of Knights and Dames from all over Italy to the Marian shrine in Pompeii, during the month of the Rosary on Saturday 15 October 2016, for the Year of Mercy. The 800 participants of the pilgrimage better understood the works of charity created from nothing, on just "a penny a month", as well as becoming more deeply aware of the truth of the message of God's love, given through the mediation of Our Lady, to the only lay member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre beatified today.

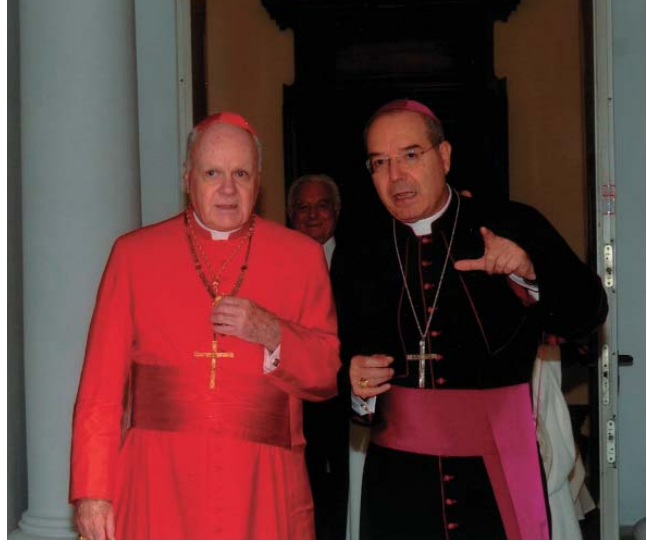
Blessed Bartolo Longo, model of Christian life, of humility and selflessness, was personally invoked by all Knights and Dames, notably through the prayer for his canonisation. After that, leaving on procession through the streets of the Marian city, the pilgrims of the Order passed through the Holy Door of the shrine, before attending midmorning Mass. The reliquary containing the body of the Blessed had, exceptionally, been placed close to the altar underneath the well-known image of the Blessed

Virgin of Pompeii.

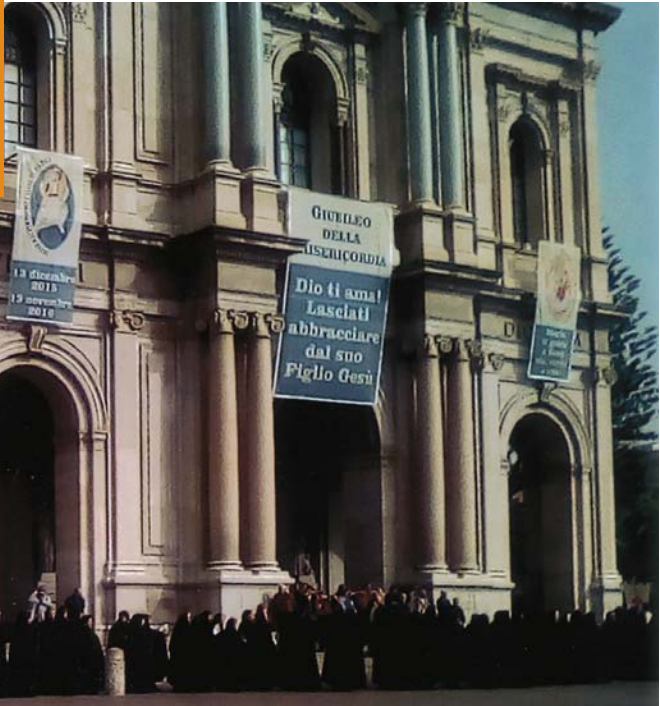
Welcoming the congregation at the beginning of the Eucharistic celebration Msgr. Tommaso Caputo, the archbishop prelate and papal delegate for Pompeii – himself a member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre – strongly underlined that, “through the intercession of the Blessed, the Knights and Dames today entrust their fervent desire to live a Christian life of charity, and to increase the works of moral and material support helping those Christians of the Holy Land and the

During the beautiful and moving Mass at Pompeii presided on by Cardinal O'Brien, Grand Master, Mgr. Antonio Franco, Assessor of the Order, reminded us in his homily that, "in Bartolo Longo we have the model of a Christian who experienced the Mercy of the Father, and who felt compelled to be a living witness of this love, which expressed itself through works of charity". He concluded with a prayer in which the pilgrims united: "May Mary touch our heart and make us merciful, attentive, sensitive, and strive in ourselves to be instruments of merciful love".





The archbishop and papal delegate for Pompeii, Msgr. Tommaso Caputo, Prior of the Section "Napoli - Lady of the Rosary" of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, welcomed the pilgrimage of the Knights and Dames led by the Grand Master in the footsteps of blessed Bartolo Longo, October 2016.



Middle East.”

In his homily Msgr. Antonio Franco, Assessor of the Order, encouraged the Knights and Dames to experience deeply the grace of forgiveness in the final days of the Jubilee of Mercy.

After sharing a joyful meal as a family – raising the idea even then of a future international pilgrimage of the Order to Pompeii, perhaps after the canonisation of Bartolo Longo – the pilgrims came back to the shrine at the beginning of the afternoon for a time of Eucharistic Adoration and the Holy Rosary, honouring also their patron saint just a few days from the feast of Our Lady of Palestine, liturgically celebrated on October 25. ■



Who was the Knight Bartolo Longo?

Interest in the only lay member of the Order to have been declared blessed continues to grow: in fact he appears as a model of Christian life in these difficult times. His life shows us that no earthly difficulties are immune to the liberating power of divine mercy.

Bartolo Longo practiced spiritualism before he turned to lovingly care for others, in the name of the Gospel, creating great works of charity through the power of prayer.

Born February 10, 1841 in Latiano in Puglia, not far from the port of Brindisi, he died in Pompeii on October 5, 1926, bequeathing to the Pope that which had been built for the poor and the glory of God.

During his law studies in Naples, he was a fierce opponent of the Church, and frequented spiritualist circles to become an important member of the Gnostic movement, for which the power of knowledge excels unselfish love.

An encounter with an exceptional priest, Father Alberto Radente, presented to him by Professor Vincenzo Pepe, allowed him to rediscover the path of faith in Christ, even to the point that he made his first communion again.

As part of his new spiritual commitments, he had come into contact with the Countess Marianna de Fusco, a widow, who had sought his council to administer her property in the Valley of Pompeii. He was a prominent lawyer, and so voluntarily offered his business expertise, to help her.

In early 1872, faced with the moral and material misery of the people of this valley in the Vesuvian region, Bartolo Longo, turning to the Virgin Mary, felt in his heart of hearts the call to spread the prayer of the Rosary. He organized popular missions, favoring a collective hope that resulted in the revival of the valley.

A painting of a Marian image, given to him by his friend and confessor Father Radente, transported from Naples on a manure wagon November 13, 1875, became the symbol of the struggle waged by this lawyer for the liberation of a people victim of poverty and despair.

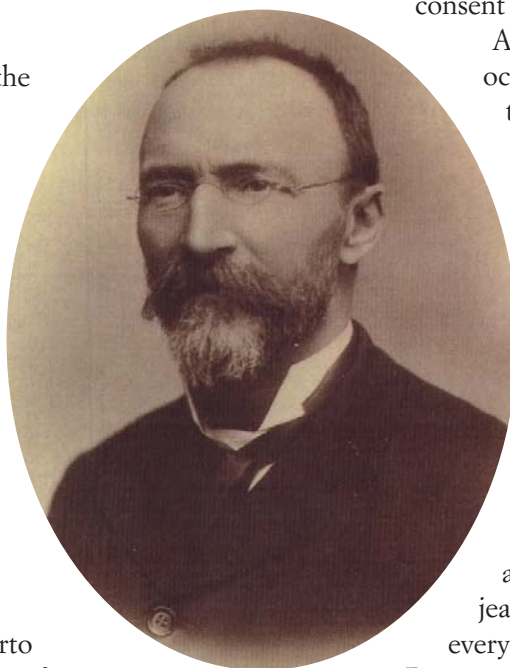
This painting, which is St. Dominic while receiving the Rosary from the hands of the Virgin, was later placed into a new church, with the consent of the bishop of Nola.

Ahead of this image miracles occurred that gradually transformed Pompeii into the “Italian Lourdes”. Starting from 1887, social works such as, for example, an orphanage for girls and a house for the children of prisoners began to develop around the sanctuary dedicated to peace.

In 1885 Bartolo Longo married the Countess de Fusco. The spouses had to face a great deal of slander against them, and, to refute jealous adversaries, they donated everything to Pope Pius X. The Pompeii shrine became, in the early twentieth century, a papal basilica.

The supplication to the Virgin of Pompeii, on May 8, is now recited in all parishes in Italy. It is particularly widespread thanks to the efforts of the Daughters of the Holy Rosary, the female congregation founded by Bartolo Longo and known thanks to a Marian magazine to which the lawyer from Pompeii devoted a great deal of his energy.

John Paul II proclaimed him Blessed October 26, 1980 and there have been no shortage of graces to those who invoke him with humility and trust. A recent miracle which involved a Knight of the Order may soon open the path to his canonization so that his example of faith and active charity may continue to grow.



F.V.

Works of “living mercy” rediscovered in the Holy Year

The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we help our neighbour in his spiritual and bodily needs. Pope Francis outlined them in his Bull of Indiction for the Jubilee of Mercy (No. 15): “Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead”.

On Divine Mercy Sunday, at the heart of the extraordinary Jubilee, during Mass on Sunday, 3 April, the Holy Father explained that to be apostles of mercy means to touch and caress the wounds of Christ, present today in the body and soul of so many brothers and sisters.

“Curing these wounds, we profess Jesus, we make him present and alive; we allow others, who touch his mercy with their own hands, to recognize him as ‘Lord and God’, as did the Apostle Thomas”, he insisted. “Let us ask for the grace to never grow tired of drawing from the well of the Father’s mercy and bringing it to the world: let us



The Jubilee was opened in the presence of Benedict XVI and was closed by Pope Francis November 20, 2016 (photo top right), indicating to the whole Church the way towards a “culture of Mercy” which we are called to live in all walks of life.

Going through the Holy Door constituted one of the conditions for obtaining a Jubilee Indulgence, in addition to receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist, actively praying for the Holy Father’s intentions and realising works of Mercy. Sacramentally speaking, Pope Francis has often reminded us of the importance of bringing attention to corporal and spiritual works of mercy as an integral part of making this step, which spiritually continues even after the many different Holy Doors are closed.



ask that we too may be merciful, to spread the power of the Gospel everywhere”. These works of mercy do not end with the Holy Year, now we must

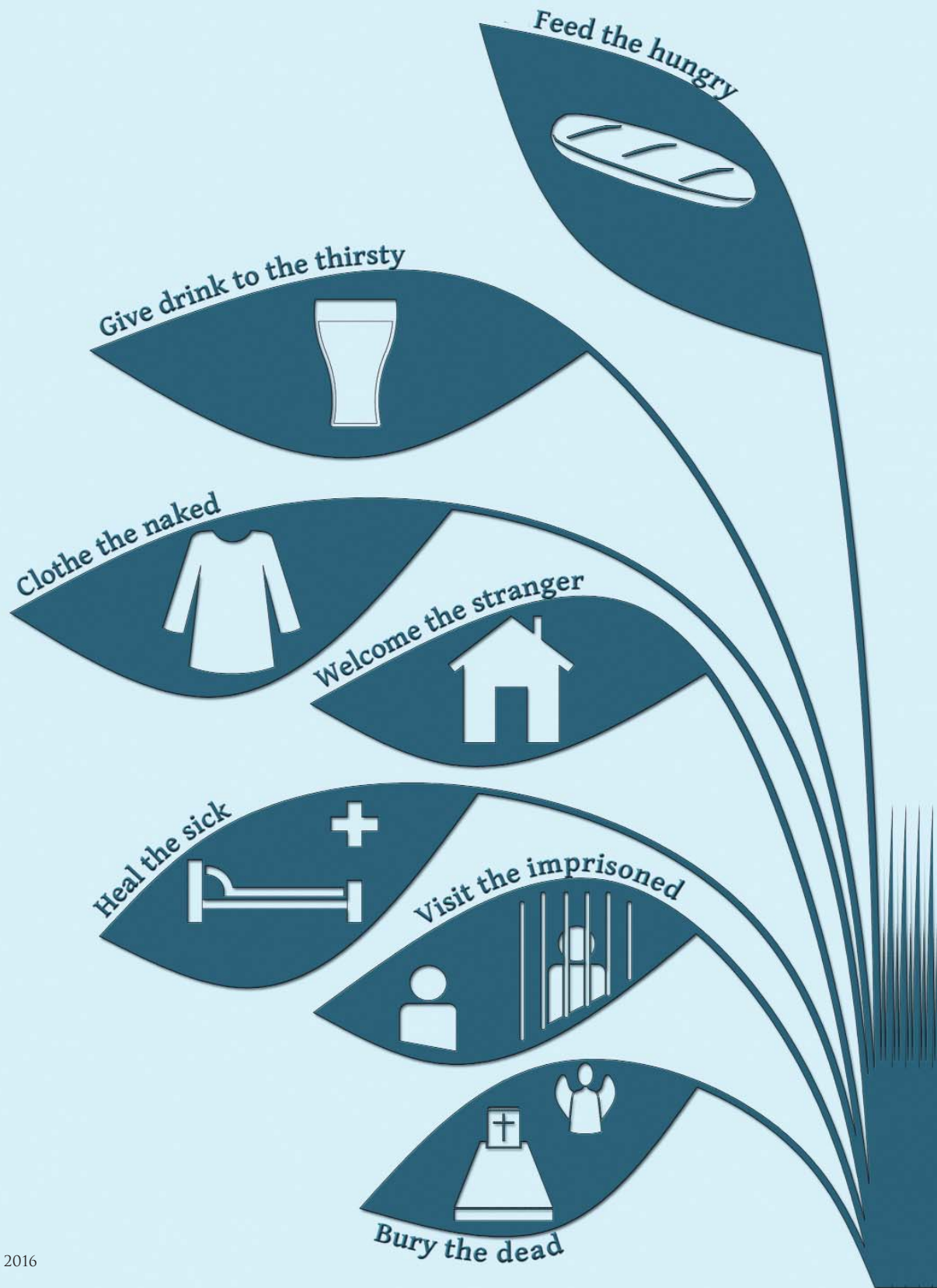
implement a real culture of mercy, as the Pope invites us in his Apostolic Letter published in the aftermath of the Jubilee. ■



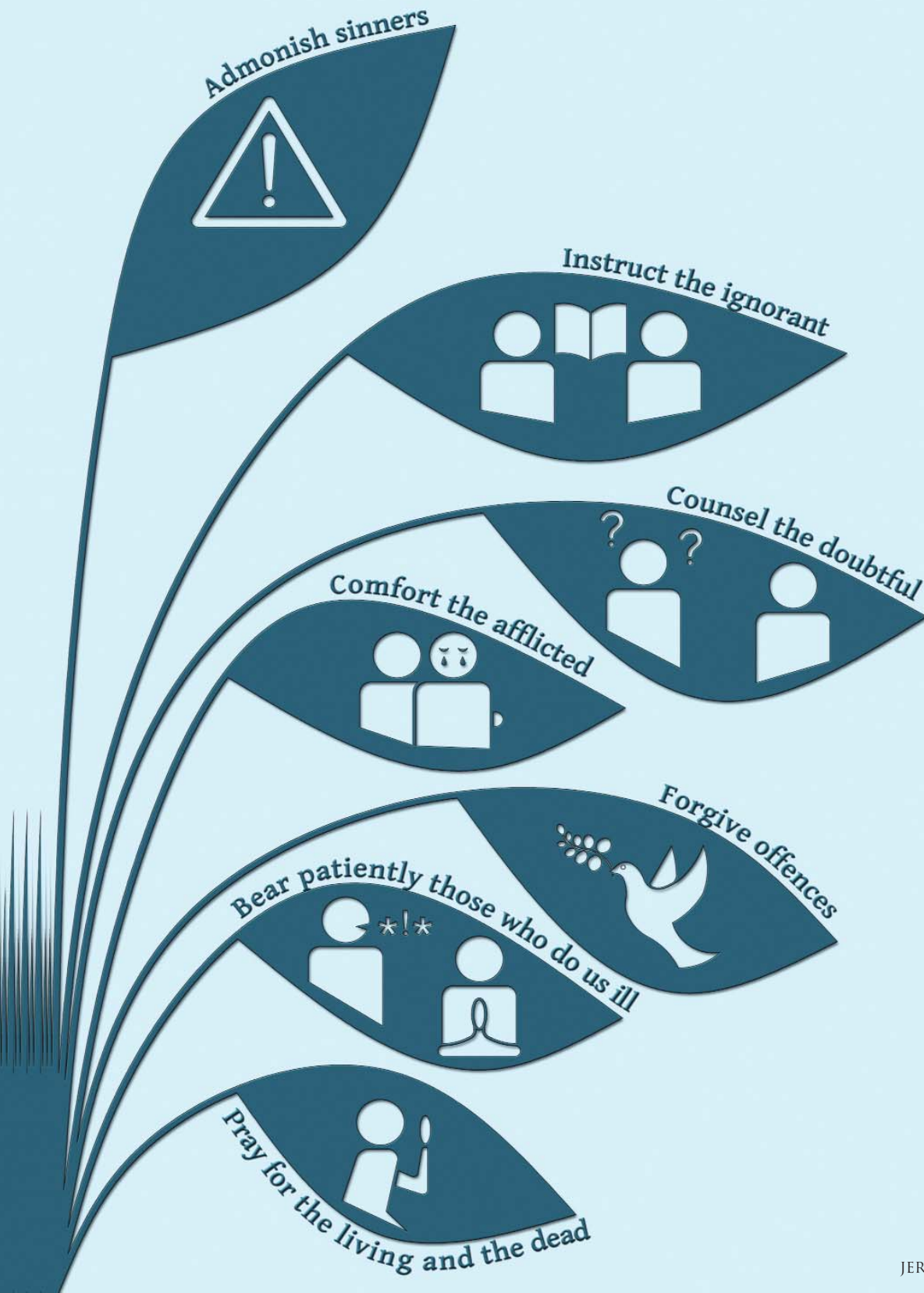
Bicycle pilgrimage “from Francis to Francis”

A dozen members of the Lieutenancy of the Netherlands, who came to Rome during the Jubilee of Mercy, were part of this pilgrimage, cycling from Assisi: from Saint Francis to Pope Francis! The group was welcomed by the Governor General at the Palazzo della Rovere, seat of the Order, close to St. Peter’s Square.

Living the culture of mercy



Corporal and spiritual works of mercy



This is the time of mercy, so that God's caress may reach everyone

During the Jubilee of Mercy, more than 21 million pilgrims passed through the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica while, worldwide, more than 800 million believers experienced this spiritual exercise of crossing the Holy Doors open in diocesan churches or in sanctuaries. And this Holy Year was a form of spiritual training, an exercise to welcome mercy and to become its instruments to bring it everywhere, as the Pope explained in his Apostolic letter *Misericordia et misera* –

Mercy with misery
– publicly signed on
the last day of the
Jubilee Year,
November 20, the
feast of Christ the
King, after Mass in
the presence of the
new cardinals, in St.
Peter's Square.
Among the people
drawn from all
walks of life who
symbolically
received this
document from the
hands of Francis, to
transmit it to the
world, the two
chosen bishops are
members of the
Order: Cardinal
Luis Antonio Tagle,
archbishop of
Manila, and
Monsignor Leo
Cushley,
Archbishop of
Edinburgh.



Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila – Grand Prior of the Lieutenancy for the Philippines of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre – while receiving the Apostolic Letter *Misericordia et misera* from the hands of Pope Francis which opens the future to a culture of mercy in all areas of our personal and social life ...

The Successor of St. Peter publically signed his new apostolic letter *Misericordia et misera* – *Mercy with Misery* – on November 20 – the final day of the Jubilee and the Solemnity of Christ the King – after Mass in St Peter's Square in the presence of the new cardinals. This letter points out “the path that we are called to follow in the future,” remaining faithful to the teachings of Christ. “Mercy cannot become a mere parenthesis

in the life of the Church,” explains the Holy Father at the beginning of this letter, which was officially made available on Monday November 21, the Feast of the Presentation of Mary. “Let us trust in her maternal assistance and follow her perennial counsel to look to Jesus, the radiant face of God's mercy” so that we can realize once more that “everything is resolved in the merciful love of the Father.”

“Like a gusting but wholesome wind, the Lord’s goodness and mercy have swept through the entire world,” wrote the Holy Father, and as “it has truly been like a new visitation of the Lord among us,” that “we have felt his life-giving breath poured out upon the Church.” The time has come to understand “how best to continue, with joy, fidelity and enthusiasm, experiencing the richness of God’s mercy.”

Poverty, *miseria* in Latin, which is the second important word in the title of the Pope’s letter, is found above all in the fact that “today many people have no experience of God himself, and this represents the greatest poverty and the major obstacle to the recognition of the inviolable dignity of human life” (*Misericordia et misera* 18). Mercy is thus an urgently needed remedy for a moral and spiritual poverty linked to “the culture of extreme individualism” in the West which “has led to a loss of a sense of solidarity with and responsibility for others.”

The Holy Father develops the ideas that Mercy must be celebrated, most notably in the sacraments, and that Mercy is lived in the everydayness of our lives, in our encounters with others.

The Missionaries of Mercy, the thousands of priests equipped with the special faculties of the Pope to forgive grave sin, are able to continue their fruitful work in the four corners of the world knowing that, during the Holy Year, confessions increased on average by 30% in numerous locations. Dedicating time to the awakening of consciences to allow for profound repentance, all priests and not only the Missionaries of Mercy, will be able to absolve the sin of abortion, without having to refer to their bishop as was generally the case prior to the granting of this dispensation, not only for women who have committed the act, but also those people close to them who are also responsible, especially in the medical field.

The priests in the fraternity of St Pius X, who are not yet in full communion with the Church, will have the possibility of providing valid and licit confession, just as they did during the Jubilee of

Mercy, “until there is a new position taken on this”. It is, from Francis’ perspective, a hand newly held out, looking towards reconciliation with the Lefebvrist Catholics, who hold to the Tridentine Mass which they consider to be the standard Mass and who are opposed to certain openings supported by the Second Vatican Council, in particular those concerning interreligious dialogue.

Lastly, the Pope wishes that the word of God is above all taken more deeply into the Christian community, and he proposes that one Sunday in the liturgical year be entirely devoted to this, on the theme of mercy, something which will inevitably lead to concrete charitable actions and works.

Socially speaking, he indicates that, “We are called to promote a culture of mercy based on the rediscovery of encounter with others”. “The culture of mercy is shaped in assiduous prayer, in docility to the working of the Holy Spirit, in knowledge of the lives of the saints and in being close to the poor”.

This “cultural revolution” will be supported by the celebration of the World Day of the Poor, on the XXXIII

Sunday of Ordinary time. “This would be the worthiest way to prepare for the celebration of the Solemnity of our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, who identified with the little ones and the poor and who will judge us on our works of mercy (cf. *Mt* 25:31-46)”, highlights Francis.

More widely, he considers that “now is the time to unleash the creativity of mercy, to bring about new undertakings, the fruit of grace”: “the Church today needs to speak of those ‘many other signs’ that Jesus worked, which ‘are not written’ (*Jn* 20:30)” in order to make God’s goodness visible.

“This is the time of mercy”, repeats Peter’s successor five times at the end of his letter – perhaps a reference to the five wounds of Christ – “since no one can think that he or she is cut off from God’s closeness and the power of his tender love”, for it is through the testimony of believers that “God’s caress may reach everyone”.

“ **Now is the time to unleash the creativity of mercy, to bring about new undertakings, the fruit of grace** ”

Pope Francis

F.V.

THE CROSS OF JERUSALEM, THE SYMBOL OF THE ORDER

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre is symbolized by a coat of arms with a large red cross surrounded by four smaller crosses, also red, on white background. It is an evocation of the five wounds of Christ. Pope Francis has referred to it during the Holy Year, speaking of his daily prayer that can inspire those of all members of the Order. In addition, during this Jubilee, marked by great ecumenical concern, the Holy Father visited many countries, among them Georgia, whose flag could be confused with the emblem of the Order as they are similar. The Ambassador of Georgia to the Holy See spoke to *Jerusalem Cross* about the historical ties of her Caucasus country with the Holy Land.

Contemplating the five wounds of Christ

The Jubilee of Mercy, which closed November 20, the feast of Christ the King, saw about 21 million pilgrims flock to Rome, despite the fact that this “decentralized” Holy Year could be fully experienced in every diocese in the world.

During some of the Jubilee events the Pope spoke of the five wounds of Christ and we would like to propose his words to readers as they perfectly illustrate the message transmitted by the Order of the Holy Sepulchre insignia. “Lord, In memory of the five wounds that we carry on our insignia, we pray to You...,” reads the famous prayer of Knights and Dames.

“We can find the definitive icon of the vessel of mercy in the wounds of the risen Lord. Those wounds remind us that the traces of our sins, forgiven by God, never completely heal or disappear; they remain as scars. Scars, we know, are sensitive; they do not hurt, yet they remind us of our old wounds. God’s mercy is in those scars, our scars,” Pope Francis summed up perfectly speaking to the priests, who came to the eternal city for the Jubilee in June 2016. “In the scars of the risen Christ, the marks of the wounds in his hands and feet but also in his pierced heart, we find the true meaning of sin and grace,” he continued, stating that in contemplating the wounded heart of the Lord, we see ourselves reflected in him, as in a mirror, “His heart, and our own, are similar: both are wounded and risen. But we know that his heart was pure love and was wounded because it willed to be so; our heart, on the other hand, was pure



The Cross of Jerusalem, symbol of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, evokes the five wounds of Christ, source of inner purification and spiritual renewal for pilgrims who, like us, are on the path to the Kingdom of God.

wound, which was healed because it allowed itself to be loved”.

Another example of the spiritual logic with which the Holy Father encourages us to move forward is the prayer he recites before going to bed, which he mentioned to pilgrims during the general audience on Wednesday, June 22, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean!” inspired by the Leper’s plea to Jesus (*Luke 5:12*). The Pope added that every night he says five Our Fathers, “one for every one of Christ’s wounds, because Jesus cleanses us with his wounds”.

Could we too not pray invoking the mercy of

the Heavenly Father through the five wounds of Christ, which in becoming scars, are a testament to his victorious love? In the words of Peter's successor, may every member of the Order, called to witness to the power of the Resurrection, renew

their awareness during this Holy Year that: "The real vessel of mercy, then, is the mercy which each of us received and which created in us a new heart. This is the 'new wineskin' to which Jesus referred (cf. *Luke 5:37*), the 'healed sore'."

A national flag that evokes the Holy Land

Meeting with the Ambassador of Georgia to the Holy See, Tamara Grdzeldidze

Madam Ambassador, in your opinion, what key points should be kept in mind concerning Pope Francis' historical visit to Georgia at the end of October 2016?

Pope Francis' visit to Georgia was a highlight in our recent history. He was very well received by all people who listened to his beautiful speeches in the Presidential palace, at the Patriarchate of the Orthodox Church of Georgia and in the Svetitskhoveli cathedral in the ancient capital Mtskheta. People were impressed by his spiritual and nuanced discourses. His personal encounter with the Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia Ilia II was a significant event, 'historical', as the Patriarch called it. It is difficult to predict what a follow up of this meeting will be, however, history knows many examples of such encounters affecting positively the church relations. A meeting between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras 51 years ago is a good illustration to this. Here I will follow words of Pope Francis that our Christian responsibility today is to be hopeful.

The flag of Georgia – five red crosses on a white background – evokes the five wounds of Jesus Christ, and reminds us of how your country was evangelized in early history by a nun who came from Jerusalem, Saint Nino. In the context of Pope Francis' teaching during his stay in Georgia, how can this Jerusalemite spiritual heritage be put at the service of Europe?

The Georgian flag with its five crosses has parallels in other, very different cultural contexts.



For the Georgian identity it has enormous significance. We believe that this flag existed before the Crusades' epoch, it is described in the tenth century Georgian text as the national flag. Christianity in Georgia, as you justly noted, has a long history of relationship with the Holy Land. A few Georgian monastic settlements and manuscripts are found in the Holy Land from the

early ages of the Christianity in Georgia. One of the most interesting liturgical documents from the 7th century Jerusalem has been preserved in the Georgian language.

This pontifical visit to Georgia shows signs of the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church becoming closer, confirming the process launched by a meeting between Pope Francis and the Patriarch of Moscow in Cuba last February. In your opinion, can this gradual reconciliation between the Eastern and the Western Church also function as a source of political mediation and appeasement between Europe and Russia?

It will be difficult to answer a part of your question regarding the European-Russian relations. However, for Georgia, the state which made European choice its priority, it is much more logical to see normal bi-lateral, Catholic-Orthodox, church relations supporting the national vector. I find myself in agreement with my fellow citizens who are not afraid of hard work in order to become a full member of the European family.

Interview by François Vayne

THREE VOICES MARK 30 YEARS OF ASSISI MEETING

During 2016 members of the Order were able to participate in their respective dioceses, in initiatives to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the interreligious meeting in Assisi. To deepen and improve mutual understanding of the great monotheistic religions in the Holy Land, we propose three interviews with reference personalities able to help us to walk on the road of encounter and peace.

Focus report by Elena Dini

Dialogue of life between Christians and Muslims

Interview with Jesuit Father Thomas Michel, expert in Christian-Muslim relations and Islam. From 1981 to 1994, Father Michel worked at the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. He

is also the former secretary of the Jesuit Secretariat for Interreligious Dialogue in Rome and former ecumenical secretary for the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (1994-

From the city of Saint Francis, religious leaders addressed a call to peace to the world, thirty years after the first interreligious meeting in Assisi was organised, at the initiative of Saint John-Paul II.

OSSERVATORE ROMANO



Father Thomas Michel (center) during a convivial meal with some Muslim friends: the dialogue of life also takes place at the table in fraternity.



2008). He taught in many universities around the world and he spent the last semester of 2016 in Rome teaching at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies.

Islam is a world religion which sometimes appears to people like a monolith without distinctions. Can you help our members to have a glimpse into the diversity within the Muslim communities worldwide?

With over a billion people the Muslim world is as diverse as our Christian world. There are cultural differences between one culture and the other, there are theological differences and there are differences in people's approach and reactions to modern life. To start with the cultural differences, most people are unaware that most Muslims do not live in the Middle East but in Asia. The four countries with the highest number of Muslims are Indonesia, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh while Arabic speaking Muslims make up about 20% of the Muslims in the world. One of the mistakes some people make is to identify Islam with what happens in the Arab world while this is only one of the many manifestations of Islam.

There is also a theological variety – which we might also call historical – and this is the difference between Sunni and Shia. This goes back not to a

theological point but to an historical point: did Muhammad appoint a successor or not? The majority of Muslims – about 90% – said he didn't appoint a successor and left the choice of leadership to the community while a minority – about 10% – said he appointed a successor, his son-in-law Ali. Starting with this basic historical disagreement, two forms of Islam developed separately so that today we see many points of divergence between Sunni – the majority – and Shia Muslims. This may lead to conflict, particularly when one group has more economic or political power than the other. We see that happening in countries like Iraq and Bahrain. But we have to take into consideration contexts. If we look at Muslims in United States or in Sweden, there is no conflict between Sunni and Shia Muslims, they go to the same mosque and pray together because the context does not raise any issue.

The third type of diversity concerns how people respond to modernity. Some people see modernity as liberating, as something they want, that is good for Muslims. Other Muslims find they have no problems with technological advancements but they find that there is a cultural aspect of modernity with which they have trouble and they would be suspicious. Others would think that modernity is a plague coming from Western countries to remove

people from God.

So, when we talk about Muslims we really talk about a wide variety of people and approaches to their own religion and to modern life.

Dialogue of life between Muslims and Christians in the Holy Land is to be lived every day. What do you think are the key aspects enhancing the encounter between these communities?

There was an interesting development in Church's thinking when we started talking about dialogue. Paul VI in *Ecclesiam Suam* took the idea that had already been developed by Martin Buber and others that I grow in relationship to talking to you and you grow in relationship to talking to me. However, to many Christians around the world, and maybe Christians in Israel and Palestine were among those, the idea of dialogue sounded very elitist and only for very educated people and religious leaders coming together. Their experience

of Muslims was that of people living next door and they could not come together and discuss the Trinity with them also out of fear of making mistakes. The Church responded saying that they did not have to do that but everyone is called to the dialogue of life and in that dialogue each one of us is called to live one's own Christian faith as deeply and as fully as one can in full acceptance of the Muslims with whom one lives.

This is done by taking care of the elders in the community, by raising children to be God-fearing people, by seeing who are the marginalized, the poor and the needy and opening hearts and institutions to them and in doing so Christians are kind of throwing a "challenge" to the Muslims and they allow themselves to be challenged by the good things the others do: this is what dialogue of life is. Dialogue of ordinary communities comes first and, if that is there, all the other levels of dialogue find their place.

Christians in places like Palestine and Syria have

A personal experience of dialogue of life: serving the other to serve God

In 1988 I was teaching Christian theology in Konya, in Turkey. I had an apartment in the old part of the city but it was completely empty. I was telling people at the university and someone told me that he knew a person who may have an extra bed. I went to this person I never met before and I told him who I was and that I was told he could lend me a bed. He immediately took the bed and we brought it to my apartment. People on the street saw me and asked me who I was and I told them I was a professor and I was going to be teaching theology at the university. They thought I was a Muslim but I told them I was a Christian priest. I was asked if I needed anything for the apartment and I told them that a chair would be useful. By the time I went to take the mattress and came back it seemed that people in the streets all knew about the situation and everyone was offering me something. For the next three days people of the neighborhood went on bringing furniture and all kind of objects to my place: glasses, dishes, table, chairs, carpets...

When I came back home after the first day of teaching at the university, there was a man sitting outside my apartment waiting for me. He told me that his wife came earlier that day but the door was

locked and she couldn't come in. He explained me that I didn't need to lock the door. I thought that by doing so I offended the neighborhood telling people that I didn't trust them so I never locked the door again.

So some day I would come back home and on the table there is a covered dish with cooked food. I would eat it and a couple of days later the dish would disappear from my apartment. Some days later other food would appear. Some other days I come back home and I would find my clothes washed and ironed. This went on for about six months and I never saw who did it because they knew when I was teaching at the university and they used to come when they knew I was not at home.

At the end of the semester, it was time for me to leave and I told a man in the neighborhood that I had a final request. Some of the women of the neighborhood were really good to me and I wanted just to meet them once and thank them. The man told me I didn't have to meet them and thank them: they didn't do it for me, they did it for God and God who sees what they do in secret would give them their reward. This is dialogue of life.

Father Thomas Michel

been doing that for centuries: they share culture and language, sing the same songs, tell the same jokes and watch the same movies. And when they share also the best of their faith, that is when dialogue of life happens.

The Year of Mercy closed in November 2016. How do you think we can draw upon the common theme of mercy in Christianity and Islam to foster theological and practical reflections?

Mercy is definitely an important topic. There have been many academic conferences about this topic during the Holy Year but I also know of many places where Christians and Muslims got together out of academic contexts to talk about God's goodness. We often say that Christianity is about love and Islam about something else but Ibn Sina [Avicenna, a Muslim philosopher] basically said "God is love" and is all about love. There are indeed a lot of aspects that we don't know about the other's faith.

We also have to remember that God is not indifferent to what we do in this world and that His mercy is not limited to any one group. He is merciful to all of us and this is a common witness we have to make. Both Christianity and Islam also teach that mercy is something that you do, it is not a feeling. You are merciful when you concretely try to help who is in need.

In September 2016 in Assisi, the Holy Father celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Interreligious gathering for the World Day of Prayer for Peace. How can prayer help us to draw closer together?

Prayer happens when we consciously realize that we are in God's presence. We can have different ideas about who God is but I think we can pray as Abraham and Melchizedek did. It is in prayer that we become aware of God's qualities and when you acquire this awareness together with someone else, it becomes more difficult to be suspicious or to be angry at the other. ■

Christians and Jews today: "Encounter must be face to face"

Interview with Belgian Rabbi David Meyer, lecturer at the "Cardinal Bea" Center for Judaic Studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University. Rabbi Meyer has taught in various countries, from Belgium to Peru, from China to Italy. In this interview he tells us about the approach to the other in Jewish tradition and the complexity of interreligious dialogue in the Holy Land in addition to his personal experience of dialogue

Going back to the sources of Jewish tradition like the Talmud, what is the place historically given to those who are not part of the people of Israel within the Jewish community?

Judaism tries to avoid relationships with pagan practices: the idol-worshippers would be completely rejected from any possibilities of contacts.

Within those who are not pagans but non Jews there are the Noahides, those who follow the seven laws of Noah which are considered to be the



Rabbi David Meyer and his friend, the Jesuit Father Philipp Gabriel Renczes, director of the Cardinal Bea Center for Judaic Studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.

foundation of any human society. If one follows these laws, relationship with the Jewish community is not problematic, one can live within the boundaries of the Jewish society and be treated with respect. The Noahide laws is all you need to have an encounter between Jews and non Jews but it does leave the non Jews in a marginal place.

For a long time (until the 14th century) there was a debate about whether or not Christianity was part of the Noahide group or not because of the Trinity. The Trinity was problematic for Jewish thinkers during the Rabbinic period and early Middle Ages.

In the 14th century there was an important teaching by a rabbi, known as “the Meiri” from Provence, who said that Christianity and Islam were ethical monotheisms so that really brought Christianity and Islam on a very close footing with Judaism. The premises for this idea were put down, although still ambiguously, by Maimonides in the 12th century. From that day on, the idea that you can be part of an ethical monotheism also outside Judaism became a quite powerful message and

quite in advance for its own time. That gave the foundation to the possibility of dialogue.

In your opinion, what are the key differences in living dialogue between Christians and Jews in the Holy Land and in the other countries in the world?

Dialogue between Christians and Jews is not easy because of historical realities that need to be faced, theological differences, prejudices even 50 years after the Second Vatican Council and the *Nostra Aetate* Declaration. In the Holy Land it is additionally difficult because of the political situation.

Christianity in the Holy Land is historically made out of Arabs so it falls into the conflict between Israelis and Arabs, Palestinians in particular. Second, the question for Israeli Jews and Jews in general all over the world is that the State of Israel is an element of Judaism, a cornerstone. It is then difficult to have a religious dialogue in Israel bypassing political issues because the reality is a political reality and because the political

A very diverse Jewish world

There has been diversity in Judaism for a very long time, even at the time of the Temple there were different branches of Judaism: Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes. Some branches remained within Judaism, others were excommunicated and became something else, for example the Qaraites.

With the rise of modernity greater diversity was officially created. When Judaism was faced with modernity and the ability to leave the ghettos, the issue was how such a tradition – that was essentially created by rabbis who lived in a ghetto – could adapt outside the ghetto. This led to a certain split within Judaism between the Orthodox and non Orthodox world as to how to incorporate modernity.

The different approaches to modernity take place at two levels. The first question is how to face the gap you may sometimes witness between the medieval Halakha [the legal norms of Judaism] and life as an equal citizen in a mixed and complex society. The second question is to what degree scientific understanding and criticism of tradition are incorporated. In Judaism you may have those who



believe that the Torah has been given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai and that includes both written and oral Torah and those who have a more critical approach and who consider that Rabbinical Judaism and even Biblical texts are the result of a creative process and that impacts on the authority of the founding texts.

On account of this it is translated into different movements ranging from the more Orthodox to the more Liberal:

■ **The Hassidic movement** inherited its tradition from Polish society. Within them there are different kinds of Orthodoxy, sometimes at odds with each other but essentially it is a group which abides to Jewish law as they understand it and who are really

presence of the State of Israel is a mode of expression of Jewish identity.

The Catholic Church just celebrated the closure of the Jubilee of Mercy. In what ways do you think that we can draw upon the common theme of mercy in Christianity and Judaism (both in describing God and in considering the call to implement mercy in our lives) to bring about theological and practical reflections?

The issue of mercy is complicated because there are a lot of assumptions. We assume that mercy is at the center of Catholicism and Judaism. In Judaism mercy is not different from the proper enactment of justice and dialogue might actually be difficult on this topic. Furthermore, mercy is also what brings suffering: mercy entails a certain patience with those who are not behaving as they should. If you want to be merciful, you don't bring the judgment immediately, you give an opportunity to repent, to change, you give time to words to convince but while you give time to this person, innocents suffer. So mercy is not without consequences.

There is a discussion on content that needs to be considered: what do we really consider merciful and what fits into that category and I am not sure that Judaism and the Church would reply in the same way.

Is there any personal experience of dialogue and encounter that you may want to share?

I have lots of experiences of dialogue, for example here at the Pontifical Gregorian University where I am teaching. What I think is important to share is that any experience of dialogue has to take into account the time factor: dialogue is not something you do occasionally, once in a while. You grow into dialogue when you start knowing people, it is an ongoing effort which happens after you create friendship and trust. Dialogue is not conferences, it is not a lecture in a conference room nor a declaration. Encounter is face to face: it is when you meet someone who tells you something to which you react and respond and through your response he replies and so on. Dialogue shakes both worlds: his world and my

not at all penetrated by modernity issues. You can sometimes recognize them by their kind of clothing and the Yiddish language that they speak.

■ **Standard Modern Orthodoxy** is the result of the thought of Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch, a 19th century rabbi who established this movement that doesn't reject modernity as long as it doesn't impact on tradition. It would be no issue to drive a car and watch TV but modernity would not change the way you think about your own tradition and that created the mainstream movement within Orthodoxy.

■ **Crossing the Orthodoxy divide**, there are the non orthodox groups. The **Conservative movement** has a real love for tradition and tries to cope with modernity by looking back into traditional texts and trying to find legal loopholes that would enable to incorporate modern issues. Sometimes this implies minimal adjustments but other times it requires major shifts such as the role of women. Conservative Judaism generally considers man and woman equal in terms of ritual aspects while we know for sure that traditionally this is not the case. Tradition is seen as a dynamic organism and by working smartly within it and with elements in one text or the other, they are

able to incorporate within tradition values that may be considered outside tradition.

■ A little more to the left there is the **Reform movement** which is more liberal. They made a lot of changes in terms of liturgy and the use of Hebrew but from a legal point of view the Reform movement considers that if you have values outside your tradition, these are just incorporated as external values, not pretending to find a loophole in the tradition.

■ **Liberal movement** is more to the left. It considers itself to be a radical movement and affirms that Judaism is facing a real crisis linked to modernity, the Shoah and the ability to work in society. Therefore Judaism needs a real reshaping of its beliefs and systems. One point they are really strong about is the reintroduction of the self into Judaism. The minimal unit for a Jew is normally the Jewish family, while for Liberals it is the individual. This is a modern and interesting concept which allows to acknowledge that Judaism has a problem with the self, by always overemphasizing the community aspect.

Rabbi David Meyer

world. What I learnt here is that it takes a lot of time and energy because you cannot take it for granted and you have to be involved, be prepared, work, let yourself be surprised, destabilized and demystified.

The other thing I have learnt is that the only real encounter is symmetrical and sadly in Jewish-Catholic dialogue it rarely happens because there is an a priori, that is that the Church needs Judaism but Judaism does not need the Church because Judaism was there first. The reality is that nobody was there before anybody else. There was a Biblical tradition and out of that Biblical tradition came a Christian tradition and a Rabbinic one and these two have equal roots within Biblical Judaism and equal distance from it. Rabbinic Judaism is no more in line with Biblical Judaism¹ than Christianity is.

Here I discovered that I allow myself to consider that I have as much to give to Catholic students who want to learn about Judaism as I have

to learn from their Christian thinking. What Christianity has done throughout the centuries is an authentic reflection of pre-rabbinic Jewish idea of its time as Rabbinic Judaism is and when the two traditions separate later on, Judaism became what was not in Christianity and viceversa. The reality is that you discover that a good part of what Christianity has put to the forefront of its thinking has a very strong Jewish echo. Encounter then is not only about curiosity, it is about rediscovering something about your tradition that your tradition has extinguished for practical and historical reasons.

¹ By "Rabbinic Judaism" we intend to describe the ways, traditions, customs and ways of thinking that were developed by the rabbis after the destruction of the Temple. "Rabbinic Judaism" is therefore very different from "Biblical Judaism" where Temple, Sacrifices and Priestly rituals were the defining constituents of how Judaism was lived before the fall of Jerusalem.

A Palestinian Muslim approach to non-violence

Professor Mohammed Abu-Nimer serves as Director of the Peacebuilding and Development Institute at American University. He is also Senior Advisor to the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) in Vienna. He has conducted interreligious conflict resolution training and interfaith dialogue workshops in conflict areas around the world and written extensively on peacebuilding and non-violent responses to conflicts.



and 1986. During that period living in Israel-Palestine was challenging also because of the occupation in the West Bank and the struggle for equal rights and citizenship. I had the chance of being in contexts where Arabs and Jews could meet and I devoted a great deal of my time and my life to facilitate encounters between Palestinians and Israelis. In fact many Israeli Jews lived nearby Palestinians but they never

had the chance to meet and talk with them. So we started an encounter program to support the idea of living together and coexist in the same land.

This happened before Oslo took place in 1993 and it became fashionable to talk about peace issues. But at that time it was a very pioneer and new idea considering the challenge we had as Palestinians living in Israel to work against discrimination and for equal rights.

You were born into a Palestinian family living in Israel. What was your perception of the situation in that land when you were a young student? What did you decide to do? What is your feeling right now?

I grew up in the North part of the country and I attended university in Jerusalem between 1981

Let's talk about peacebuilding and Islam: what

are the important resources Muslims can use from their religious tradition to work for peace and conflict transformation? Pope Francis often talks about “a culture of mercy”. What role may mercy play in the Islamic context?

I have worked in many countries like Niger, Pakistan, Iraq and I have always believed that Islam as a religion has a solid framework to promote peace, coexistence and harmony. Non violence in itself is part of Islamic theology. In areas of conflict, when you work with Muslim communities promoting peacebuilding, you can rely on values like forgiveness and reconciliation which are part of the faith. The problem is about the lack of functioning political, social, educational and economic infrastructures. That makes challenging to speak and apply the Islamic idea of peace.

Regarding the issue of forgiveness, mercy and reconciliation, I find inspiring to talk about it and see similarities with Christianity. In Islam, if you forgive you gain a greater reward than choosing revenge and fighting back. As for Mercy, this is one of the names of God in Islam. Any action a Muslim does should be made in the name of the Merciful. The concept of Mercy is very foundational in Islam

and you can see it in the Qur'an, in the prophetic tradition (Sunna) and it was not difficult for Muslims to relate to Pope Francis' message in that regard.

We just celebrated the 30th anniversary of the interreligious gathering in Assisi for the World Day of Prayer for Peace. In your opinion, what role does prayer play for groups of believers in conflict transformation?

Prayer is a powerful form of building alliance and relationships and conflict transformation is all about building relations. Any form of spiritual rituals can be a powerful tool and a way to feeling the pain of the other and enter in solidarity with those who are the victims. Everyone can engage in that practice one way or the other, ritualized or not, and it gives people the chance to reflect and take things beyond.

For example, when Muslims go to Mecca for the pilgrimage there are about 2 million and a half people together, connecting with each other and calling to peacebuilding and coexistence, the same way as Christians do when they gather in places like Jerusalem or Rome. Praying together for peace sends an incredibly powerful message. ■

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THE CHARISMA OF MOTHER TERESA IN THE HOLY LAND

The presence of the charisma of Mother Teresa, who was proclaimed a saint by the Holy Father on Sunday September 4, 2016 in St. Peter's Square, illuminates the streets of the Holy Land in the joy of a smile and in service.

The Missionary Sisters of Charity arrived in the Diocese of Jerusalem in 1970 and today have active communities in Gaza, Jerusalem, Nablus, and Bethlehem and, in Jordan, in Amman, Ermaimim and Rusaifeh. Some are active in reception centres, caring for the elderly or those with disabilities and giving support to poor families. In other realities they are a roving presence visiting families in their homes, and even enlivening catechism.

Moreover, in Nazareth, there is a community of the Contemplative Missionary Brothers of Charity. Besides the three classic vows – obedience, poverty, and chastity – the brothers profess a fourth official vow: to freely and wholeheartedly serve the poorest of the poor. On June 15, 2013, on the occasion of the solemn profession of five members of the congregation, the patriarchal vicar for Israel, Msgr. Giacinto Boulos Marcuzzo blessed their new chapel dedicated to the Holy Family of Nazareth, like all

the chapels of the Contemplative Missionaries of Charity. The altar contains the relics of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Saint Mariam Baouardy, Saint Marie Alphonsine Ghattas and Blessed Charles de Foucauld.

Mother Teresa made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1982 and, on that occasion, visited the Houses of Peace (Dar al-Salam) of her congregation in Amman (Tla Al-ali), Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nablus and Gaza. She also visited the seminary of the Latin Patriarchate in Beit Jala where she wrote on the guestbook that love is the foundation of a priest's life.

The Missionaries of Charity have several active centers across the Middle East. We remember, with deep emotion, the community in Yemen which witnessed the violent loss of four sisters killed on March 4, 2016 one of which, Sister Anselm, had lived for some time at one of the houses in Jordan.

During the press conference for the canonization of Mother Teresa on September 2 at the Vatican Press Office, Sister Mary Prema Pierick, superior general of the Missionaries of Charity, responded to a journalist's question asking what the

future saint of Calcutta would have said about the current situation in the Middle East: "Dear brothers, love one another, take care of each other and come to each other's aid because we are all children of the same heavenly Father and are created to love and be loved. The evil that we commit in conflict is to no one's advantage but God wants to see us united".

We join in prayer and thanksgiving for this woman of God whose life has brought many fruits to the Holy Land and throughout the world. ■



The Saint from Calcutta during her visit to the seminary in the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem at Beit Jala, in November 1982. Today the Missionaries of Charity, the women's religious institute founded by Mother Teresa, who was canonized last September 4, have seven communities in the territory of the Patriarchate.

THREE NEW CARDINALS ARE MEMBERS OF THE ORDER

Three members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre have emerged from amongst the new cardinals created by Pope Francis on 19 November. We offer our heartfelt congratulations to their Eminences Cardinals Blase J. CUPICH, archbishop of Chicago and Grand Prior of the

Lieutenancy USA North Central, Carlos Osoro SIERRA, archbishop of Madrid, and Renato CORTI, archbishop emeritus of Novara. We assure them of our spiritual union with them, in this new phase of their mission to serve entrusted to them by the Church.

Cardinal BLASE J. CUPICH, Archbishop of Chicago (U.S.A.)

Msgr. Blase J. Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, United States of America, was born in Omaha, Nebraska, U.S.A., on March 19, 1949. He obtained a Bachelor's degree in philosophy in 1971. From 1971 to 1975 he was student at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, and studied theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. In 1979 he obtained a licentiate and in 1987 a Doctorate in sacramental theology at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

He was ordained a priest on August 16, 1975 for the archdiocese of Omaha and held various roles in parishes and in offices for liturgy and formation. On 30 June, 2010 he was appointed bishop of Spokane, Washington. On September 20, 2014, Pope Francis appointed him as metropolitan archbishop of Chicago. He was chairman of the USCCB Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People (2008-2011) and of the National Catholic Educational Association Board (from 2006-2008) and is member of numerous committees of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States of America. He is a member of the Congregation for Bishops.



GENNARI

Cardinal CARLOS OSORO SIERRA, Archbishop of Madrid (Spain)



GENNARI

Msgr. Carlos Osoro Sierra was born in Castañeda, province and diocese of Santander, on May 16 1945. He graduated in philosophy and theology at the Pontifical University of Salamanca and was ordained a priest on July 29, 1973 in Santander, remaining incardinated in that diocese. After priestly ordination he held various pastoral ministries particularly in formation and in youth ministry. On December 27, 1996, Pope John Paul II appointed him as bishop of Orense. He received episcopal ordination on February 22, 1997. On January 7, 2002 he was promoted to the metropolitan see of Oviedo. From September 2006 to September 2007 he was also apostolic administrator of the diocese of Santander. On January 8, 2009, he was transferred by Pope Benedict XVI to the metropolitan see of Valencia. On August 28, 2014 Pope Francis appointed him as metropolitan archbishop of Madrid. Since March 2014 he has served as vice-president of the Spanish Episcopal Conference.

Cardinal RENATO CORTI, Bishop emeritus of Novara (Italy)

Msgr. Renato Corti was born in Galbiate in the province of Como and the diocese of Milan (Italy), on March 1, 1936. He was ordained a priest on June 28, 1959 by Msgr. Montini, the future Pope Paul VI, and was parish co-operator in the oratory of Caronno Pertusella from 1959 to 1967. He then served in the archbishop's College of Gorla as spiritual director. In 1969 he moved to Saronno with the same mandate, then served as rector for theological studies from 1977 to November 1980, when he was selected by Archbishop Martini as vicar general.

Elected to the titular see of Zallata and appointed auxiliary bishop of Milan on April 30, 1981, he was ordained in the same year. Appointed Bishop of Novara in 1990, he held this office until 2011, when the Pope accepted his resignation for reasons of age.

In 2015, Pope Francis entrusted him with the task of writing the meditations for the traditional Way of the Cross on Good Friday at the Colosseum.



GENNARI

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM

CROSSING THE HOLY DOOR WITH CARDINAL O'BRIEN

During the Jubilee of Mercy, the staff of the Grand Magisterium had the joy of passing through the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica in the company of the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, on February 22, 2016. The staff remembered the intentions of all members of the Order in their prayers, in a special way those who are going through times of illness or difficulty.

Msgr. Fortunato Frezza, Master of Ceremonies of the Order and Canon of St. Peter's, led the group in this intensely spiritual moment which constitutes one of the conditions for obtaining a Jubilee indulgence, in addition to receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and actively praying for the Holy Father's intentions and carried out spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

The accompanying photo shows the staff of the Grand Magisterium along with the Grand Master, the Governor General Agostino Borromeo, the then Chancellor Ivan Rebernik and Consultor Pier Carlo Visconti, on having passed through the Holy Door, next to the Altar of the Chair of St. Peter, in the well-known papal basilica.



ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM AND THE CONTINENTAL MEETINGS OF LIEUTENANTS

The following summaries (meetings of the Grand Magisterium and Lieutenants' continental meetings) were drafted immediately following the meetings and are included in this publication of *Jerusalem Cross* for the Order's historical archives.

The Spring Meeting of the Grand Magisterium

Opening proceedings on April 12, following the inaugural Mass celebrated at the Palazzo della Rovere – seat of the Grand Magisterium –, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien strongly encouraged participants at the meeting of the Institution's

governing body to study the Pope's recent apostolic exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*, "a hymn to family life", and to promote its reading among the members of the Order.

After presenting his new secretary, US Air Force



The Chancellor Ivan Rebernik, concluding his term of office, was publically thanked for all of his work on behalf of the Order by the Grand Master and the Governor General in the presence of members of the Grand Magisterium who had gathered in Rome. In recognition, the Chancellor received the Golden Palm.

chaplain Father John Bateman, the Grand Master announced his forthcoming visits to the Lieutenancies and Magistral Delegations, in particular for the first Investiture in the Czech Republic, and later to the Pacific and Asia where the Order is growing. He underscored that he counts on the members of the Grand Magisterium to cultivate bonds with Lieutenants in the major regions of the world.

The Governor General, Agostino Borromeo, also thanked Cardinal O'Brien for his steadfast commitment to visiting the Lieutenancies around the world, an activity that stimulates all of the Order's vital forces to come together and support the "culture of encounter" in the Holy Land. The Governor hailed the generosity of members of the Order which has enabled the collection of 13.5 million Euros in 2015 for the benefit of the "living stones" of the Church in the territory of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which extends from Jordan to Cyprus. After having warmly thanked the Chancellor Ivan Rebernik for his work during his recently concluded four-year term of office, the Governor officially welcomed lawyer Flavio Rondinini as the newest member of the Grand Magisterium, who will also be responsible for managing staffing issues.

In his speech, the former Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Grand Prior of the Order, Msgr. Fouad Twal, described the situation in the Holy Land, with special emphasis on the 'discrimination' that Catholic schools in the Holy Land are facing, now that they have been deprived of the certainty of government subsidies, which are in discussion. He also stressed the challenge of migrants, especially refugees who today make up

about 20% of the Jordanian population. Among the various relevant issues touched upon, Msgr. Twal mentioned the construction of the "Cremisan separation barrier" and the tragedy that this represents for Palestinian Christian families whose livelihood depends on the cultivation of olive trees in this valley near Bethlehem. He also stressed the urgent need for the resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, particularly at a time when public attention is being diverted from this central question of international law by the wars in the Middle East.

Faced with these growing difficulties, particularly with regard to social, healthcare and education problems in Palestine, the Patriarch proposed a larger participation of the Grand Magisterium to the general reflection, in the framework of a Committee which could also focus on better school management, in addition to the projects regularly followed by the Holy Land Commission. This proposal was discussed at length and will be the subject of further study, given that various members of the Grand Magisterium supported the use of local experts. A broader collaboration with the Patriarchate was happily taken into consideration during the exchanges that took place, particularly in the drawing up of a five-year development plan.

An effort for real, consolidated dialogue between the Order and the Latin Patriarchate

The 2015 budget presented by Father Imad Twal, general administrator of the Latin Patriarchate, shows an overall higher deficit for the institutions, the seminary and the schools

compared with previous years: this was attributed to the decrease in donations from sources other than the Order of the Holy Sepulchre which, for its part, has instead sizeably increased its regular contributions.

Father Imad Twal echoed the Patriarch's urgent appeal to the Grand Magisterium, especially regarding Catholic schools that form the future pillars, lay and ecclesiastic, of the Holy Land, given that some in Jordan risk closure. One of the problems is the low wages of teachers and staff – 80% of whom are members of the Christian community – leading to the exodus of teachers to state structures. In agreement with the Patriarchate representatives, the Grand Magisterium will send a specific set of questions to the general administrator to better understand the reasons for the deficit and try to remedy them as part of its effort for real consolidated dialogue.

On this point, the Vice Governor, Patrick Powers, reiterated the willingness of American members of the Order to help form tomorrow's leaders in the Holy Land while the Patriarchate will commit itself with a rationalizing logic capable of restoring Catholic education to its position of excellence.

The Holy Land Commission, which is led by Thomas McKiernan, described its ongoing and future projects, which include renovations in two

Jordanian schools. The Commission also confirmed its willingness to engage in a prospective study of a pastoral nature with the Patriarchate. This would involve, beyond existing material projects, "strategic planning" aimed at saving the Catholic schools which are essential for the consolidation and the future of the local Church.

In his analysis of the state of the Grand Magisterium accounts, Engineer Pier Carlo Visconti revealed that the annual aid sent to the Holy Land has passed from 9.3 to 11.3 million euro, while the Grand Magisterium expenses have decreased. The contributions for schools continue to grow (3 million euro in 2015 compared to 2.5 the previous year). The Assessor of the Order, Msgr. Antonio Franco, outlined how the Vatican Foundation St. John the Baptist has been able to repay the debts of the University of Madaba and ensure development in the coming years.

Concluding his term of office to great applause, Chancellor Ivan Rebernik provided details on the Order's statistics showing the entry of 1,250 new members in 2015 (a total of 28,787 worldwide). He also presented a summary report on communications and his work on the Grand Magisterium's archives, which have been reorganized thanks to a lengthy restructuring project including their digitalization.

The Grand Magisterium's autumn meeting

It was in the presence and with the active participation of the new Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem as of September 2016, Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, that the members of the Grand Magisterium were gathered together, with the Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, on October 25 and 26, in Rome. During the second day of the session, Mass in honour of Our Lady of Palestine was presided by Msgr. Pizzaballa in the church of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Roman shrine of the Divine Mercy, before the annual reception in the Palazzo della Rovere, seat of the Order, where Cardinal Edwin O'Brien received his guests, of whom Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State for His Holiness Pope Francis, was at the top of the list.

At the beginning of the meeting, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien warmly welcomed Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, whom he had accompanied just one month before during his solemn entrance into Jerusalem. The Grand Master equally greeted Msgr. Bernard-Nicolas Aubertin, Archbishop of

Tours and Consultor of the Grand Magisterium, future head of the Order in France, as well as the ambassador Alfredo Bastianelli, new Chancellor of the Order.

The Governor General Agostino Borromeo thanked the cardinal for his travels which had

already led him to meet 90% of the Lieutenancies, reinforcing the dynamism and renewing the enthusiasm of members everywhere, but particularly in countries far from Europe. He also announced that Msgr. Pizzaballa had joined the Order, and is nominated for Pro Grand Prior. He praised the expansion of the Order, notably in Northern Europe, with the creation of the Sweden-Denmark Lieutenancy, and its continuing development in Asia and the Pacific region, for which Paul Bartley is becoming Vice Governor General.

Msgr. Pizzaballa then described the situation in the Holy Land, expressing his wish to personally meet all the priests of the Patriarchate, and to create councils planned by canon law. The young archbishop, who enjoys the complete confidence of the Holy Father, has launched a call to the members of the Order, to not hesitate in participating in this joint reflexion, according to their competencies, showing availability and openness to dialogue, and willing transparent communication between the two institutions. He further asked that the Order participates in the restoration works, even just symbolically, for the

aedicule of the Holy Sepulchre, the Basilica which has forever been considered the cathedral of the Catholic Church.

The meeting was followed by Fr Imad Twal's (responsible for the economical questions of the Patriarchate) presentation shining a light on the specific expenditures of the seminary, where numerous future priests are studying, and taking stock of the aid brought by the Order to the parish and the three Catholic schools in Gaza (936,000 dollars).

The Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium then presented their report following the site visit conducted last summer by Bartholomew McGettrick and Heinrich Dickmann. Solidarity and subsidiarity characterise the action of the Commission serving the projects of the Patriarchate assumed by the Grand Magisterium, especially in the social and educational domains, which remains attentive to people in a dynamic of accountability and empowerment.

The preliminary report of the Grand Magisterium's accounts, put together by the Engineer Pier Carlo Visconti, appears to be very



The feast of Our Lady Queen of Palestine, in October, is marked every year with a reception at Palazzo della Rovere, seat of the Order situated near St. Peter's Square: the Grand Master, together with the Grand Magisterium, receives guests, friends of the Holy Land, including first Secretary of State of His Holiness Pope Francis, numerous cardinals, bishops, prelates and ambassadors.





The time of the Grand Magisterium's meeting always starts with a Eucharistic celebration. In commenting on the Gospel (Lk. 13: 18-21) Cardinal O'Brien held in high esteem the greatness of the vocation of the members of the Order, reminding us that, "God sees all of one life's potential, which we cannot even imagine, even in the darkest times and when we see ourselves as unworthy." The following day, Msgr. Pizzaballa emphasized the gratuity of Salvation, taking as reference Luke who gives us the image of the narrow door (Lk. 13: 22-30): only those who have experienced being saved as something independent to their good works, can pass through this door. "Accepting the fact that Salvation is free, is truly to take the 'narrow' path, because for us it would be easier to buy it through our works thus not owing anything to anyone." But God invites us to enter into the "inverted" logic of his Kingdom.

positive; the expenditures have dropped and the members' donations do not cease to increase in proportion to the international development of the Order.

The work of the Grand Magisterium has also helped the schools of the Patriarchate, which concern nearly 20,000 students whose future is threatened by financial difficulties, especially with respect to the need for a rise in teachers' salaries. In accordance with suggestions of the Grand Magisterium, which have been expressed many

times in the past, Msgr. Pizzaballa plans to unite forces progressively through bringing all the Christian schools together, including those beyond the Patriarchate, with the aim of defending their common interests.

In concluding the meeting, amongst other subjects dealt with in-depth, Chancellor Bastianelli highlighted the remarkable increase of members between 1 October 2015 and 30 September 2016 (1457 admissions). The next meeting of the Grand Magisterium will be held 3 and 4 May 2017.

North American Lieutenants Annual Meeting

In early June the North American Lieutenants gathered for their annual meeting in Baltimore, Maryland. It was the first ever meeting of Lieutenants in the Premier See of the United States.

His Eminence, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Grand Master, and Governor General Agostino Borromeo, travelled from Rome to attend the meeting. Vice Governor General Powers, and four members of the Grand Magisterium, attended two days of meetings along with Monsignor John E. Kozar, President of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), and Monsignor Robert Stern, President Emeritus of the CNEWA and consultant to the Order.

On Thursday evening, June 2, the Grand Master presided at Vespers in the historic Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Most Reverend William E. Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore, welcomed the group to Baltimore. Following Vespers, a reception was held in the Archbishop's residence where Archbishop Lori greeted guests and provided details on the history of the first Roman Catholic diocese in the United States. The Archdiocese of Baltimore was established as a diocese on 6 November 1789, with Father John Carroll as the first Bishop of Baltimore. Baltimore was later established as an Archdiocese in 1808. It is here where the Catholic University of America was founded, the site of the First Synod and Councils

of Baltimore, and where Baltimore Catechism was promulgated.

The meetings commenced with the Grand Master giving an opening address in which he emphasized the importance of the annual meeting, and asked that the Lieutenants continue their efforts in renewing the spiritual lives of the Knights and Dames. Governor General Borromeo also addressed the group and provided an update on the hotel, which thus far is entrusted to the Columbus society, and the recent appointment of the Order's new Chancellor, His Excellency Ambassador Alfredo Bastianelli. Vice Governor General Powers gave a detailed presentation on the finances of the Order.

The two days of meetings included a wide variety of topics ranging from the daily operations of a Lieutenancy, to finances, liturgy, pilgrimages, and candidate formation. Several newly appointed Lieutenants attended and the meeting provided them the opportunity to observe and participate in various discussions.

Professor Thomas McKiernan, President of the Holy Land Commission, gave an update on the construction projects currently underway in the Patriarchate and insight into the planned 2016 programs. Monsignor John E. Kozar, President of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association

The Lieutenants of North America and their consorts during the meeting which was held in Baltimore, in the United States, last June.



(CNEWA), having recently returned from the Middle East, provided first-hand insight into the refugee crisis facing Christians in Kurdistan.

On Saturday morning, the Lieutenants and their spouses attended Mass at the historic National Shrine of Saint Alphonsus Liguori, located in downtown Baltimore, where Monsignor Robert L. Stern was the principal celebrant and homilist. The

final day of meetings included discussions about the legacy program, recruitment efforts, microcredit opportunities, the Squires program, and activities planned during the Year of Mercy. The meetings officially concluded on Saturday with an evening dinner honouring the Grand Master.

John Carmen Piunno

Member of the Grand Magisterium

Annual meeting of European Lieutenants

The European Lieutenants of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre held their annual meeting at the headquarters of the Grand Magisterium in Rome, June 27 and 28, 2016. Welcoming them, the Grand Master Cardinal Edwin O'Brien spoke of the importance of the Jubilee pilgrimage to the Marian shrine of Pompeii, October 15, in the footsteps of Blessed Bartolo Longo, the first lay member of the Order to be beatified, a model of holiness for all the Knights and Dames. European Lieutenancies were particularly invited to send their delegates on this pilgrimage, organized by the Italian Lieutenancies.

Following on from this, the Governor General, Agostino Borromeo, spoke of giving priority to prayer and Christian formation, thanking the Cardinal for his "fruitful stimulus of the Order's spiritual development," seen in his actively taking part in Investitures on all five continents. The Governor then spoke of how the members of the Order, encouraged to become increasingly involved in the commitments they have taken on, were more generous than ever considering that donations have reached, for the first time, more than 13.5 million euro (here we must take into consideration the past year's fluctuating currency exchange rates). The continued growth and expansion of the Order, especially in Eastern Europe and Latin America, was outlined by the newly appointed Chancellor, Ambassador Alfredo Bastianelli. He also unveiled the new website of the Grand Magisterium, in five languages, which will foster the Order's international communications (www.oessh.va).

Engineer Pier Carlo Visconti, gave a presentation of the Grand Magisterium's financial budget, noting a favorable trend and a positive year, thanks to reduced costs and increased revenue. Pierre Blanchard, a member of the Grand

Magisterium, went on to explain that this positive result is also the fruit of the Grand Magisterium's prudent management of revenues in favour of the Holy Land.

Archbishop Antonio Franco, Assessor of the Order, then gave an outline of the financial situation regarding the San Giovanni Battista Foundation, the institution established by the Holy See to support Catholic universities and in particular that of Madaba, Jordan, to promote a culture of encounter. Last year Lieutenancies responded to the Grand Master's call to support this Church institution, whose development is promising and, through the Foundation, the Secretariat of State has provided a loan that the Latin Patriarchate will have to repay over five years.

Other topics that were covered include the frustration expressed by Lieutenants in the delay in the reconstruction of Gaza, despite considerable funds having been allocated. However, for the moment the Israeli authorities generally continue to prohibit the export of products that are not food, clothing and medicines to this territory. The Lieutenants are also interested in the evolution of the social reality in Israel, a country that sees the Hebrew-speaking Catholic community in expansion due to the number of migrant workers, in particular from Asia, whose children are educated in Israeli schools.

The president of the Holy Land Commission, Thomas McKiernan, gave a presentation on the Order's involvement with the Vicariate for migrants in Israel, in helping the younger children of immigrants through the establishment of a professionally organised daycare center. He also spoke in detail of the other projects of the Grand



European Lieutenants gather around Cardinal O'Brien during their Spring Meeting at the Order's headquarters in Rome.

Magisterium in the Holy Land for 2016: a kindergarten in Jordan that will allow the development of a school, the expansion of a playground at another school, a contribution for a nursing home in Taybeh, Palestine, and an increase in teachers' salaries in the Patriarchate schools, which is vital in order to preserve the quality of education.

In this context the Commission has proposed a five-year plan to simplify the management of schools and to improve provisions for social security contributions and staff pensions, to the Patriarchate. "We want to be part of the solution, not the problem," said the Vice Governor General in America, Patrick Powers. He was referring to the issue which faces the new Apostolic Administrator, Father Pizzaballa, one he will have to attempt to resolve. In fact, Fr. Pizzaballa joined the group over dinner Monday night, honouring the Lieutenants

and the whole Order with his presence. Through his cooperation, the Order can count on a healthy coordination of aid, with each Lieutenancy being able to devote 10% of its resources to projects other than those of the Latin Patriarchate, for example to aid the Catholic communities of the Greek-Melkite and Maronite churches.

The meeting was followed by a lengthy exchange on how to reach out to the non-active members of the Order. Some of these are very old but still in communion of prayer with the Holy Land, while others have distanced themselves, even morally. In this regard, a committee chaired by the Chancellor will present proposals to the Grand Master. Concluding, Cardinal O'Brien spoke of his desire that ordained members of the Order be increasingly integrated into the spiritual accompaniment of Knights and Dames' missions. ■

NOMINATIONS AND PROMOTIONS

A Vice Governor General for the Pacific and Asia region

The continuous development of the Order in Asia and the Pacific region led the Cardinal Grand Master to appoint October 20, 2016, Dr. Paul Bartley Vice Governor General with a special assignment for this region. Member of the Order since 1997, Lieutenant from 2004 to 2012 of the Lieutenancy of Australia Queensland and, later, a member of the Grand Magisterium, Paul Bartley joins Patrick Powers and Giorgio Moroni Stampa in their mission to collaborate with the Governor General



and assist him in the performance of his duties. At present the Order has five Lieutenancies in Australia, a Magistral Delegation in New Zealand, in addition to Lieutenancies in the Philippines and in Taiwan which Cardinal O'Brien visited during his trip in September 2016, when he was accompanied by Bartley.

Welcome to Ambassador Alfredo Bastianelli, new Chancellor of the Order

The Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, has appointed Ambassador Alfredo Bastianelli as Chancellor for a term of four years. Bastianelli is a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Gregory the Great and a Grand Officer of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic.

Born in Rome on January 26, 1951, he married Fiammetta Fiorentino in 1983, and is father to three sons: Giovanni Battista, Ascanio and Niccolò. A graduate in Law, the new Chancellor served the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for many years,

holding positions at the Italian Consulate in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and at Italian embassies in Canada, Mozambique and Indonesia, in addition to the Permanent Representation at the European Union. He then served as Ambassador of his country in Angola, Cyprus and Belgium.



Alfredo Bastianelli has also been a Gentleman of His Holiness since 2007. The members of the Order, present throughout the world, wish him welcome, and join together in prayer, entrusting his new mission to Our Lady of Palestine.

Flavio Rondinini, member of the Grand Magisterium

The Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre has a new member in the person of Supreme Court lawyer Flavio Rondinini.



Born February 9, 1962 in Faenza, he graduated in Law from the University of Bologna and holds a licence in canon law from the Pontifical Oriental Institute. He is also the author of several reference books. As a member of the Order of

the Holy Sepulchre, he has collaborated professionally with various realities of the Holy See, in particular with the Secretary of State and the Congregation for Eastern Churches. Married with three children, he is also a reserve officer in the Carabinieri. Cardinal O'Brien officially welcomed him to his new international role during the Spring meeting of the Grand Magisterium.

Ambassador Ivan Rebernik appointed Honorary Chancellor

On 12 December 2016, the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, appointed Ambassador Ivan Rebernik Chancellor of Honor. Member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre since 2000, Ambassador Rebernik fervently served the Order as Chancellor from 2012 to 2016.

During those years he has closely chaired the work of the Order's Commission on Appointments and Promotions and supported the



communications development of the Grand Magisterium of the Order that led to the opening of the new site in five languages and entry into the world of social media. In addition, he promoted the reorganization of the Grand Magisterium archive given his valuable and long experience in the library sector.

Father John Bruce Bateman, secretary of the Grand Master

In the early days of January 2016 father John Bruce Bateman was presented at the offices of the Grand Magisterium as the new secretary of Cardinal O'Brien. He was ordained a priest in 1996 in the diocese of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and for the past 12 years has served the Church as a parish priest, in addition to serving as a military chaplain.



On his arrival to Rome he said: "This assignment was a big surprise for me. In recent years I began to feel a spiritual closeness to persecuted Christians and I am glad to be able to work for the Christians in the Holy Land. Without my knowing it, God was preparing me for this task."

Collar bestowed on Vice Governor Generals and Lieutenant General

During the meeting of European Lieutenants which was held in Rome at the headquarters of the Grand Magisterium of the Order, at the end of June, the two Vice Governor Generals, Patrick Powers for North America and Giorgio Moroni Stampa for Europe, as well as the Lieutenant General Giuseppe Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, received the Collar of the Order, from the hands of the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, thus becoming part of the class of the Knights of the Collar, the Order's highest rank. The Collar was bestowed on the evening of June 27 during a convivially shared meal at the end of the



The bestowing of the Collar took place on the sidelines of a convivial meal shared at the end of one of the days of work.

day's working session.

The Collar is an honor conferred on the highest authorities, as in the case of the King and Queen of Belgium in 2015, in exceptional cases. For the highest offices within the Order, the Collar is bestowed as a sign of recognition for the work done.

In the Order's history, the first lady to have received the Collar was Elizabeth Verreet who was also the first woman member of the Grand Magisterium.

IN MEMORIAM

Archbishop GIUSEPPE DE ANDREA was born in Rivarolo Canavese on 20 April, 1930. He was ordained a priest in 1953 in the Consolata Missions Institute. He served in the Diocese of Greensburg, Pennsylvania (USA), for more than two decades.

He was called by the Holy See to serve in the office of Permanent Observer to the United Nations in New York from 1983 to 1994. Subsequently for five years he worked for the Vatican as the Undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People.

Monsignor De Andrea received the fullness of the priesthood in 2001 and was appointed titular Archbishop of Anzio. He also received the responsibility of serving as Apostolic Nuncio to Kuwait, Bahrain and Yemen, in addition to serving as Apostolic Delegate to the Arabian Peninsula.

In 2003 he was also appointed Apostolic Nuncio to Qatar. In 2005, upon having reached the age limit, he retired from diplomatic office.

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem has been fortunate enough to benefit from the experience and pastoral care of Msgr. De Andrea in the years when he served as Assessor of the Order (2008-2013), a position which he carried out with special dedication from 2011-2012, the period of time between the resignation of the Grand Master Cardinal Foley and the moment his successor, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, took possession of his position. From that time until his last days, as Honorary Assessor, he was always close to the mission of our Knights and Dames, and sustained it with his efforts and prayers.

Monsignor De Andrea passed away on June 29, 2016, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, and all members are united with the Grand Master, in accompanying this friend and supporter of the Order with prayers as he has returned to the house of the Father.

* * *

ALBERTO CONSOLI PALERMO NAVARRA: Lieutenant Emeritus for Central Italy, member of the Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher from 2010 to 2014, the lawyer Alberto Consoli Navarra participated actively in the Commission of Appointments and Promotions. Married to Marinella Bottani, Dame of the Grand Cross, both have shown great willingness towards the Order helping to create bonds of fraternity and solidarity among the members. The Knight of the Grand Cross died on May 13, 2016, at the age of 81. We assure his wife and his family of the profound gratitude of the Order and our closeness in prayer for the repose of Alberto.



MARY O'BRIEN

Mary Curri van O'Brien, entered as a Dame of the Order in 1987, was Lieutenant for USA Northwestern from October 2008 to September 2015 and is now a member of the Grand Magisterium of the Order. A resident of San Francisco, she is married with four children and six grandchildren. In this testimony O'Brien recalls the path that led her to give herself more and more to service within the Order up to her appointment as a member of the Grand Magisterium.

"My appointment as a member of the Grand Magisterium was not a surprise to some of the members of the Order, but it certainly was to me! My involvement with the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre has been a journey of many years.

I have served for many other non-profit charities along the way. Catholic Charities of San Francisco and Santa Rosa were my passion for 25 years and I was on various fundraising committees. All volunteering was done while my husband, Terry,

PLACES HER LOVE FOR THE HOLY LAND AT THE SERVICE OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM

and I raised our four children. My motto learned from my father: Take the “t” out of “can’t” and you can!

Starting in 1987, I was one of the younger members of the Order, and with my husband, the annual meetings were our “vacation.” We spent three days every year enjoying the liturgies, learning about the Holy Land, and renewing our friendships with other members of our Lieutenancy. My involvement started slowly with chairing the Saturday theme nights and Sunday



banquets for the 900+ members of our expanding Lieutenancy.

In 1993, I was appointed the area representative for the Santa Rosa Diocese, and held that position until 2003 (10 years) when I was

appointed the Chancellor for the Lieutenancy. The year 2008 was difficult for all the members of our Lieutenancy: our Lieutenant, John McGuckin, was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Three weeks before our planned annual meeting in Oakland, California, I was asked to preside over the entire annual meeting. No sooner was I appointed to the position of Lieutenant (only woman at that time among 58 men) in October 2008, and then I received notice that I was expected to attend the Consulta in Rome the end of November.

Our Lieutenancy is the smallest numerically in the United States, but one of the largest geographically from Alaska to California (8

Western states and 21 Dioceses) My travel miles have increased over my seven years as Lieutenant by visiting our members in their Dioceses, and meetings in Rome and Bethlehem. I have served on the Bethlehem University International Board of Regents for the last four years.

The best description of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre membership is: Prayerful, committed and generous. Many times throughout the year, our members come together to pray for the suffering of the families in the Holy Land at retreats, annual meeting liturgies, and especially on Good Friday when Knights and Dames take up the special collection in their parishes for the Holy Land.

Our membership has been committed and generous to the Christians in the Holy Land. We have nine scholarships for students attending Bethlehem University. We also support a parish school in Mafraq with tuition subsidies, two summer school programs in Mafraq and Ader, the Our Lady of Peace Center for special needs children in Amman, Jordan, and tuition support for a Seminarian at Beit Jala.

One of my favorite commitments is a program our Lieutenancy started five years ago in honor of my predecessor, known as the “McGuckin Mentoring Program,” for Bethlehem University. Over 50 students in the last five years have been able to travel to the United States and Australia for six weeks in the summer, and be mentored by various employers. This is due to the commitment and generosity of our members. When the students return to Bethlehem, they are eager to give back to their University and their homeland with their new business knowledge.

It has been an incredible journey in assisting with the mission of the Order, and I look forward to serving as a member of the Grand Magisterium, even if I am the only woman for now!”

CARDINAL O'BRIEN CALLS FOR SUPPORT FOR THE LATIN PATRIARCHATE

It was my pleasure to attend the Installation of Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa as Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate in September. Having spent twelve years as Custos of the Franciscans in the Holy Land he is so very well versed on the challenges facing Christians there as he is experienced in dealing, with trust and respect, with the many religious and political communities that claim that Land as their own.

The Supreme Pontiffs gave our Order the mission of helping the Church in the Holy Land, and particularly the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. In all these years, in addition to the fulfilment of the needs of the latter, we made significant efforts to support the Catholic institutions that do not depend on the Patriarchate as well as to help many initiatives of the Eastern Catholic Churches. However, in this particular moment, I want from now on to publicly guarantee our availability and our total support to Archbishop Pizzaballa in the delicate service which Pope Francis has decided to assign him.

The Archbishop, as he declared in his speech given on September 21st, gave himself the task of “acceptance, listening, discernment and orientation of the path of the Church in the next years.” During his episcopal consecration, in Bergamo on September 10th, he had already expressed the auspice that “the ability to meet and accept each other starts again in Jerusalem, building bridges, roads and not walls, for us and for all the Church.”

This exacting agenda encompasses broad horizons that compel us to demonstrate our spiritual proximity to the new Apostolic Administrator through our most efficacious means, prayer. Material tools must also be made available to realize it and, as an Order, we have a particular responsibility to provide him with all the necessary resources.

Therefore, I appeal urgently to our members to make further efforts with their usual generosity in order to make the necessary means available to Archbishop Pizzaballa.

I am sure – and for this I thank them – that



During the installation of the new Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem on 21 September 2016, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, assured Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa of his support and that of all the Knights and Dames.

Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates will know how to satisfy these expectations, with conscience and loyalty. I, together with my closest collaborators and the whole Grand Magisterium, commit to remain in contact with the Patriarchate and coordinate our combined effort to the best of our abilities. On the other hand, I am certain that our new Archbishop knows very well the importance of his own duties and is aware that our attentive management of the donations from Knights and Dames is necessary for the efficient fulfilment of the mission given by the Holy See.

I know that I can depend on all of you and, therefore, express my highest gratitude. I also restate our spiritual and material proximity to Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, wishing full success upon the challenging path he has started to tread.

Edwin Cardinal O'Brien

GRAND MAGISTERIUM PROJECTS

Thomas McKiernan, president of the Grand Magisterium Holy Land Commission outlines ongoing projects in addition to the regular aid provided by the Order to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem for its institutions (parishes, schools, health facilities, pastoral care of migrants and the Hebrew-speaking Catholic community, communication works ...). His text, published during summer 2016 on our website www.oessh.va was updated on December 31, by the Grand Magisterium Communications Service.

PROJECTS ALREADY UNDER WAY

A high school in Israel

Three-year project, started in 2015

In 2015 a project was started in Jaffa of Nazareth, in Israel. It is a three-phase project to reconstruct the school to include a high school with a computer lab, a science lab and an indoor gym. To enable these additions, the community house of the religious sisters had to be moved as well as the priest's residence to the new kindergarten building. This will be the third high school that we have supported in Israel, after Reineh and Rameh.

It took a long time for construction to begin because of the numerous and expensive permits required by the Israeli government. Most of these permits have been granted and so work has begun. In 2015, the Order had pledged to contribute \$ 865,000 to the realization of the first phase of the project, of which 260,000 were granted in 2016 and the remaining will be paid during 2017 based on the progress of work.



GRAND MAGISTERIUM PROJECTS

A Church in Jordan

A joint venture between the parishioners and the Order

Another project started in 2015 is the church and multipurpose parish hall at Marj Alhamam in Jordan, an area with about 30,000 residents. The parish is home to about 300 families, 1500 parishioners with a total Christian population of about 4000 people. The church and the hall will be open to all. A lot of the initial work was paid for by a local Christian benefactor and the parishioners themselves, so it is therefore, a joint venture between the parishioners and the Order. The cost of the project amounted to \$ 494,000. The church was inaugurated on September 2016.



ABOUNA.ORG - PHOTO BY OSAMA TOUBASI

Amman's Our Lady of Peace Center

A place of encounter and sharing for the Church in Jordan

Also in 2015, work began on the Our Lady of Peace Center near Amman, Jordan. The Our Lady of Peace Center, established in 2004, specializes in assisting families with members who have limited physical and social abilities. Currently Jordan is the most stable of the Middle East countries, thus the Our Lady of Peace Center (photo p. 53) has become a regional nerve point for retreats and meetings for priests, scouts. The project transformed an existing structure, partially complete, into a conference center and residence for the priests and nuns working at the center. The cost was \$ 141,000.

Extraordinary help for the people of Gaza

In summer 2014, following the operation “Protective Edge” in Gaza, Cardinal O’Brien called on members of the Order to make an extraordinary effort to help the people of Gaza. The contributions amounted to \$ 936,000 and helped to meet various needs until October 2016: integration of the payment of school fees of students and salaries of teachers of Catholic schools, the renovation of the buildings annexed to the Latin parish (home of the parish priest and parish offices) in addition to pastoral activities, psychological support for children and medical and humanitarian aid. The renovation of the Holy Family parish is still ongoing and will continue through this donation in 2017.



A kindergarten for the children of foreign workers in Israel

The joint initiative of the Order in collaboration with the Vicariate for Hebrew-speaking Catholics is important because every year a sum of 60,000 euro is sent by the Grand Magisterium of the Latin Patriarchate for the pastoral care of this community. In addition to this help, the Grand Magisterium also donates 50,000 euro at the beginning of the year to the Patriarchate for day nurseries for the infant children of foreign workers of the Hebrew language in Israel. Finally 40,000 euro is donated for the pastoral care of migrants, ensured by the Vicariate under the responsibility of Father David Neuhaus.



The Vicariate for Hebrew-speaking Catholics in Tel Aviv has reported that migrants and refugees are in need of assistance for their children while they are at work, given the low wages they receive to support their family. Often, between 40 to 50 small children are kept in rooms without windows or with the light off (to keep them asleep), supervised by an unskilled worker. Two or three children die every month. Thanks to the intervention of our Order and private donors, as well as the energy of Father David Neuhaus, Patriarchal Vicar, and an important legacy received from the United States, we are responding to this dramatic reality. The Holy Land Commission has discovered a situation for which everyone should be ashamed and today we can be proud to see a significant improvement. This is just one example of the ways in which the Holy Land Commission has expanded its mandate.

NEW PROJECTS IN 2016

Work on the safety standards of two Jordanian schools

Besides the increase in wages, three other projects were presented in 2016 representing a total cost of \$ 1.5 million.

The Hashimi Kindergarten in a poor quarter of Amman no longer conformed to Jordanian law; nursery schools must be on the ground floor so that children do not run the risk of falling down stairs. If these rules were not followed, the school would have been closed. The school in Tla Al-ali in an even more poverty stricken area, needed more space for games for children or it too faced closure. The school is home to 300 students for the most part Christian, who are cared for by 30 teachers. The cost of these two projects was \$ 911,000.



An increase in teachers' salaries

Urgent action to safeguard the quality of teaching in Catholic schools

The Latin Patriarchate executives have insisted that we aid them in increasing the salaries of teachers in Palestine and Jordan. During our previous visit, Msgr. Maroun Lahham, the then Patriarchal



Vicar in Jordan, had expressed his great sadness at the loss of good teachers due to low salaries in our schools. The Latin Patriarchate then proposed an apportioned increase in salaries over five years which, in practice, allow an average increase in Jordan of around \$ 720 and in Palestine of around \$ 1,060. The cost sustained by the Grand Magisterium in 2016 was \$ 454,000.

Other contributions in 2016

The Order also contributed to the costs of a nursing home in Taybeh, Palestine, and a Catholic Documentation Center in Amman, Jordan.

THE ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE COLLABORATING IN ROACO PROJECTS

Each year, as part of the Reunion of Aid Agencies for the Oriental Churches (ROACO), the Order of the Holy Sepulchre commits to support some projects, expanding its mission of solidarity in the Holy Land, meaning all the biblical territories, and all the Catholic communities in addition to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

At the ROACO 2016 Spring meeting, the Order has agreed to collaborate in projects for the Catholic communities of the Greek-Melkite Church and of the Rosary Sisters who welcome a thousand pupils, in Gaza, in very difficult conditions.

■ The Greek-Melkite community of Nazareth has about 10,000 faithful. The Church of St. Joseph, built 50 years ago, works to meet the spiritual needs of parishioners, as well as hosting prayer meetings for students of the annexed Greek-Catholic school twice weekly and many other parish activities. Work began on badly needed renovation two years ago, with a local contribution covering 60% of costs. The Order of the Holy Sepulchre contributes specifically to about 75% of the costs for the fence project to protect the church from vandalism which unfortunately



The Order gives its support to all the biblical land so that the land where God has made His promise is always open towards the spiritual expectations of humanity. (Picture: Cabidoche)

has recently damaged the structure.

■ There is a small Christian community of Catholic Greek-Melkite faithful and Greek-orthodox faithful in the village of Bi'ina, next to Akko, in northern Israel. The Melkite Church of Saint Peter, built in 1907, has 250 parishioners.

The project supported by the Order will provide for the construction of an annex to the church to accommodate religious and social activities for the local community and the surrounding villages.

■ The last project that the Order has committed to in 2016 through ROACO, is the renovation of the Sisters of the Rosary School in Gaza. This school, run by a Latin rite Catholic congregation of women



religious founded by Saint Marie-Alphonsine Danil Ghattas, welcomes about 900 students – of which only 9% are Christians, considering the small number of Christians left in the Gaza Strip – and provides schooling from pre-school to the age of 15-16. The Order will fund the renovation of the toilets and kitchens, as well as realize side access stairs to the facility and install a new drainage system. ■

Thomas McKiernan, President of the Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium attended the ROACO Assembly which took place in Rome on June 2016

In this picture he (first left) is with (from left to right) Archbishop Georges Bacouni, Archeparchy of Akka Greek-Melkites; Msgr. John Kozar, President of CNEWA and Bishop Jacob Aerath, Syro-Malankar eparchy of St. John Chrysostom of Gurgaon, India. The President of the Commission told us: “For me, currently a member of the Holy Land Commission, which focuses mostly on the needs of the Latin or Roman Catholics of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, my participation at R.O.A.C.O. was a ‘crash course’ about those parts of the world where Latin and Oriental Catholics live side-by-side and reminded me of another comment of Pope John Paul II that the Catholic Church ‘breathes with two lungs’- East and West alike – rather than with only one Western, or Latin, lung.”



With the Holy Land Commission of the Order listening to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem

From 22 to 30 August 2016 two members of the Holy Land Commission of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, Dr. Heinrich Dickmann and Professor Bartholomew McGettrick, accompanied by the head of the Communications Service of the Grand Magisterium, – in the exceptional absence of Thomas McKiernan who presides the Commission – made a working visit to the territory of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, meeting the persons concerned in the diverse projects, current or future, essentially in the fields of humanitarian service, the education of young people and the life of parish communities. A summary of these days, presented here in form of a testimony, illustrates the mission of the Order and the challenges the Latin rite Catholic Church must overcome today in the Holy Land.

Hope, love, justice: a motto to better serve the Holy Land

Our journey started on the feast of the Queenship of Mary, August 22, by a short pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Palestine, at Deir Rafat in Israel. There, a religious of the Little Sisters from Bethlehem, member of the contemplative community who animates the shrine, told us of how the habitants of the near Kibbutz came to help clean the aggressive graffiti left by Jewish extremists on the walls of their monastery, manifesting an interreligious solidarity which goes deeper than the apparent tension. This testimony opened a week of meetings for us under the banner of hope, love and justice, during which brotherly links could be seen everywhere, confirming in us the great desire to strengthen them.

Accommodated at the seat of the

Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, in the heart of the Holy City, we shared fraternally our meals with the recently named Apostolic Administrator Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Msgr. William Shomali, then Patriarchal Vicar for Jerusalem and Palestine¹, and the community of priests who live there.

The first evening we visited Msgr. Michel Sabbah, Patriarch Emeritus, who lives with the sisters of Saint Brigette on the Mount of Olives. He spoke to us of his regular pastoral service at Taybeh, an entirely Christian village in the north of Israel. The following morning we went to the hospital Saint-Louis of Jerusalem where the director, Sister Monika Düllmann nurse and theologian, spoke to us with enthusiasm of the interreligious dialogue lived around the sick. In this hospital which specialises in palliative care, Jewish, Christian and Muslim patients alike receive care and respect from the sisters, the personnel and volunteers who come from many different countries. “Health unifies everyone,”



Moment of silence at the Our Lady of Palestine sanctuary in Israel.



Sister Monika, director of the Saint-Louis hospital in Jerusalem.

summarises Sr Monika, congratulating in particular the collaboration of many rabbis amongst the chaplains of the establishment, where, “the love of the human being is more important than all the rules”. This hospital, founded at the end of the 19th century thanks to the generosity of a French Knight, the baron of Piellat, has been recently brought up-to-date with regulations through the help of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, in particular its huge ‘Kosher’ kitchen, adapted to the demanding rituals of the Jewish Religion, is something entirely new. The example given by this Religious woman opens up prospects for a dialogue of life more successful in knocking down walls than all the theoretical discussions.

Education a priority project

Next we attended a meeting concerning the projects of the Patriarchate, in the service offices managed by Henrique Abreu, a Brazilian Knight of the Order who voluntarily put himself at the disposition of the Church in the Holy Land from almost three years until December 2016. These projects, totalling thirty and representing approximately 15 million euros, are presented on the website of the Patriarchate in a very thorough way, with a clear outline of what the Order is funding (<http://project.lpj.org/>). During this meeting the question was posed concerning the salary of the teachers in the schools of the

Patriarchate, a call for it to be raised in order to avoid large numbers of teachers leaving to go to other establishments, private or public. Because the quality of the teaching depends on the quality of the educational staff, the members of the Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium have asked for a 5-year plan to be put into place that aims to rationalise help and better distribute it, paying particular attention to the deficit of schools in the Patriarchate in Palestine. The new Director of Schools, Fr. Iyad Twal, has promised to talk with the Apostolic Administrator on the subject of this plan as a priority. Other projects for 2017 have been voiced, amongst which are the completion of a new church in Amman, a religious book shop needing development in Beit Sahour, Palestine, and more building works in a convent of sisters at Madaba.

In the context of both institutional relations and friendship, the team of the Order was also able to meet with the director of the Pontifical Mission in Jerusalem, Sami El-Yousef, who told us about his humanitarian trip to Gaza, a very disadvantaged zone, where his organisation in particular favours job creation with a view to support the life of the small local Christian community.

The visit continued to Beit Jala, near Bethlehem in Palestine, with an exchange between the parish priests, then dinner together in the seminary of the Patriarchate. The priests described the tragic situation with which many young people are confronted; imprisoned by the dependency on drugs, internet pornography and sometimes earning money through prostitution. The Latin Patriarchate is trying to develop activities for them, in particular through the Scouts, supporting as many families as possible in this challenge. The youth camps run by volunteers, like the one organised by French volunteers in Ramallah this summer, should multiply, and a call has been put out for volunteers who speak English.

Jordan, a refuge of peace for Arab Christians

The next day we left for Jordan for two days, accompanied by Fr. Imad Twal, head of the administrative services of the Patriarchate, himself

originally from Madaba like the Patriarch Fouad Twal who has just retired. We made a stop at the school of Tla Al-ali, at Amman, which is helped by the Order and we spoke with the Director, Majida Kawar. “Education is a ministry of Hope”, noted the professor Bartholomew McGettrick one of the members of the Commission during the conversation, commenting on the success of this Jordanian school where 300 students study, for the most part Christian. Then we discovered another reality, still in Amman, in an extremely poor neighbourhood in Hashimi where a nursery for infants will soon be built thanks to the action of the Order. The town of Amman was only several hundred inhabitants in 1930, it is now more than four million, as Msgr. Maroun Lahham then Patriarchal Vicar for Jordan explained to us.

There are still 70,000 Latin Catholics in Jordan, out of six million inhabitants, whilst the Christians together formed half of the population before the arrival of the Palestinian refugees, which today total two million.

We were taken to the construction site of a church, at Jubeiha, in the northern suburbs of Amman, a quartier increasingly frequented by Christians who have come to settle there. The young 34-year-old parish priest explained to us that the current church is no longer sufficient for the 1,500 families, and he is continuing to gather together the money needed to finish the church Saint Paul, whose construction was stopped more than a year ago. However, Mass continues to take place there for 7,000 people, with tarpaulins put up to give cover from the rain, whilst they wait for building works to restart. Great was our joy on seeing this believing community, glowing with faith and enthusiasm. The adjacent parish school, one of the twenty-five schools of the Patriarchate in Jordan², is also in need of modernising, as we verified ourselves.

The members of the Commission, when going on site visits to specific projects, often also have the occasion to observe certain malfunctions which can then be resolved by working in tandem with those responsible in the Latin Patriarchate.

We followed our route to the Centre of Our Lady of Peace, still in Jordan, constructed



Tour of the Holy Land Commission: Jubeiha, outskirts of Amman, where a church is being built.

originally to care for people with mental handicap in the spirit of Jean Vanier’s movement, *Foi et Lumière (Faith and Light)*. There are twenty who come to the framework of four classes and follow daily therapies without being accommodated onsite. This house also has a pastoral activity with a community of Religious, in welcoming groups. The Order is financially committed here with respect to the Centre’s kitchen, the sisters’ accommodation and painting the building.



Our Lady of Peace Center in Jordan.

TESTIMONY

Hebrew speaking Christians a growing minority

The visit continued with Fr. David Neuhaus, Patriarchal Vicar for the Hebrew-speaking Catholics, who has charge of the pastoral care of 150,000 immigrants and refugees currently present in Israel, of whom 60,000 are Catholic. Fr. Neuhaus showed us the buildings of a new welcome centre, currently under construction for the infants and young children of foreign workers in Jerusalem, in the court of a convent of Capuchins. Thanks to this structure, their parents have thus the possibility of earning a daily living knowing that their children are kept in good conditions, their situation often otherwise being precarious. Six infants recently died because they



Father Neuhaus, in charge of the pastoral care of migrants in Israel, is involved in the important work of caring for the children of foreign workers.

were kept in an inhumane manner somewhere else, without any care. With respect to this humanitarian crisis, the Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium is very committed with Fr. Neuhaus, all the more so as these Hebrew-speaking Christians originally from foreign countries are increasingly more numerous and they will be an important part of the future of the local Church. The second generation immigrants or refugees will be entirely Israeli from a cultural point of view, but no one can say yet if they will be able to legally stay in the Holy Land.

After this very moving time spent with Fr. Neuhaus we went to Ramallah, in Palestine, to talk to the Directors of schools. The necessity of raising the teachers' salaries from 5 to 10% appeared to be a priority once again, in order to preserve the quality of teaching; "the important thing is not what we teach but how we teach," according to the expression of one of the members of the Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium. The Order is already financing the first part of salary raise in 2016.

Mother Church: a universal vocation

At the end of the week we were able to go to Bethlehem where we met the Dean and the vice-chancellor of the University of Bethlehem, Br. Peter Bray, in his establishment, which is a true oasis of peace and dialogue in the Holy Land, and one of the teachers explained to us how she organises internships in the region, in local communities and businesses, so that the students might be well prepared for the service they should later give to the development of their country.

Not far from there, very close to the separating Wall in Jerusalem, we visited the sisters who run the *Centre of Our Lady of Sorrows*, a retreat house for forty elderly and poverty stricken people. The Religious women would like to restore the Centre, making it bigger in order to welcome more people, with the help of a young new director.

On Sunday we were expected by the priest at Beit Sahour, in the area close to Bethlehem where the angels announced the news of the Saviour's birth to the shepherds. The Christian community is

On the right, view of Bethlehem University from the terrace of the Christian Brothers Schools in Palestine. Below, the basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, in the heart of Jerusalem attracts pilgrims from around the world, including many members of the Order who experience the joy of visiting the Holy Land in the footsteps of Jesus.



small local WYDs in Bethlehem, with the presence of European youth in order to build friendships and strengthen solidarity. All of these local activities, an expression of the pastoral care of the Patriarchate, are possible thanks to the permanent and persevering solidarity of our members.

Before leaving, our hearts full of the faces of the people we had met, we crossed on foot the streets of Jerusalem, and made a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, praying in the empty tomb for the Church in the Holy Land and for the Knights and Dames, so that the relationship of good collaboration between the Patriarchate and the Order may be strengthened.

A new page of history opens for the Church in the Holy Land which is undertaking a decisive step, and is perhaps being asked to remember ever more closely its vocation to universality: she is the Mother Church where all languages and cultures must feel at home. It's the spiritual richness of this Family Church that we have experienced and wish to serve.

François Vayne

lively and numerous, and a religious bookshop supported by the Order generates funds which enable diverse pastoral activities. The parish priest is head of a movement for the young Christian students and he plans on organising

¹ In February 2017 Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Msgr. Maroun Lahham by his Patriarchal Vicar for Jordan office and was appointed in his place Msgr. William Shomali.

² The Patriarchate also has fifteen schools in Palestine and six in Israel.

The new website and social media of the Grand Magisterium

On Tuesday June 28 last, during the European Lieutenants meeting in Rome, the Grand Master Cardinal Edwin O' Brien officially launched the Grand Magisterium's new website, which is now available in five languages: www.oessh.va. All members, Knights and Dames, but also friends of the Order and press can now subscribe to the Newsletter via email. Each Lieutenancy can send texts and images to be included, as well as links to articles published in the press. This site will be able to reflect the universality of the Order, and the dynamism of its members and create links, where possible, to the Lieutenancies various publications in the corresponding language areas.

At the beginning of last summer, parallel to the creation of the new website in five languages (www.oessh.va), the Grand Magisterium created a Facebook page (@granmagistero.oessh) and a Twitter account (@GM_oessh) to increase the daily communication between all members of the Order. The 30,000 Dames and Knights of the Order in the world and their friends, are therefore invited to join us on these social networks in order to testify to the dynamism of the life of the Lieutenancies in service of the culture of encounter in the Holy Land.

The screenshot shows the website's layout. At the top is the logo and title: "GRAN MAGISTERO - VATICANO ORDINE EQUESTRE DEL SANTO SEPOLCRO DI GERUSALEMME". Below this is the tagline "Al servizio delle pietre vive in Terra Santa" and a search bar. The navigation menu includes "Home", "Chi siamo", "Nella Chiesa", "Gran Magistero", "Terra Santa", "Luogotenenze", and "Spazio Media". The main banner features a close-up of a young child's face with the text "Il sostegno dell'Ordine ai progetti in Terra Santa: zoom sul Centro pastorale di Tel Aviv". Below the banner are several content blocks: a newsletter sign-up, a "Galleria Foto" section with a photo of a meeting, a "Rassegna Stampa" section with a news snippet, and a "Le Ultime News" section with multiple article teasers. A "Facebook Twitter" button is visible in the top right corner of the page.

To subscribe to our Newsletter

Facebook
Twitter

SEEING CHRIST LOOKING AT HUMANITY

The new Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, was appointed to this role by Pope Francis June 24, 2016, the feast day of St. John the Baptist, and then elevated to the dignity of archbishop. His episcopal ordination took place on September 10 in Bergamo's cathedral. On September 21, Msgr. Pizzaballa made his solemn entry into the Holy City, Jerusalem, through the Jaffa Gate, accompanied by the Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. On September 30, he was officially welcomed to Jordan, one of the countries in which he carries out his pastoral function, and on October 16 it was the turn of the Patriarchal Vicariate in Israel, in Nazareth, where he celebrated a Mass in the Basilica of the Annunciation in the presence of numerous delegations. "I want to be the bishop of all and for all and count on the full cooperation of all of you": this was the heart of his message during the various stages of his inauguration as head of the Mother Church in the Holy Land.

Interview with Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa

Excellency, we would like to help our members get to know you better, on a deeper, more spiritual level. How has Saint Francis inspired your pastoral ministry?

I belong to the Franciscan religious family and the example of the saint of Assisi is therefore at the center of my life and service to the Church. The reason why I followed Francis was because he was in love with Christ in his humanity and when he saw humanity, he saw Christ. This would be how I interpret my role as pastor today in Jerusalem: first of all start afresh from Christ and my encounter with him in every living reality. The love of Jesus Christ must enlighten our pastoral choices. If our first concern are needs we will always be frustrated but instead if we start from our relationship with Jesus Christ, it illuminates all of our problems from within. A heart filled with joy for the salvation we have been gifted addresses difficulties in a different way, in an open dialogue



and this is even more necessary in Jerusalem where there are so many divisions, fears, closures, both religious and political. A Church free from fear is open. We have nothing to lose and, as St Peter said to the impotent at the Beautiful Gate, the entrance

to the Temple of Jerusalem: “I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk!”.

To go even further into the heart of your spirituality, could you explain your choice of episcopal motto for the members of the Order?

Just before the official announcement of my appointment, I read this passage of the Word of God in chapter 12 of the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians in which it is written, “My grace is sufficient for you.” In fact, I feel like a late-comer, not entirely qualified for the role as I am an Italian in the Holy Land, a Franciscan but not there because I am a Franciscan, here for an Arab church, but I do not speak Arabic. I can see all of these limitations inherent in this choice so my only option is to entrust myself totally to grace.

You have spoken of how the writings of a French Jesuit of German origin, Christoph Theobald, inspire you. Can you draw any useful insights from his work “The revelation” to help members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in their spiritual life ?

This Western society, where everything changes so quickly, is no longer Christian and I wonder how we can be Church today, how can we reach people who do not welcome faith anymore and do not know Jesus Christ in a “post-Christian” society. I found an original thought in Christoph Theobald’s insights: It is not a question of converting people

A few days after his appointment as Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa described the territory of the Patriarchate in an interview published in full on our website www.oessh.va

“As you know, the Patriarchate extends from Jordan to Cyprus, passing through the Holy Land (Israel and Palestine), with the heart of Jerusalem. It is a vast territory and quite diverse, where politically, socially and pastorally speaking the issues are completely different.

but to awaken in them the desire for Christ and to live every encounter in this light. Christ is already present in the world and has conquered death, all we have to do is bring him into the world, reveal his presence and awaken the consciousness of the people to God’s love that is waiting for them.

The shrine of Our Lady of Palestine in Deir Rafat, Israel, is very important for you. How are you going about inviting the faithful to visit it and promote it?

Our Lady of Palestine, the patron saint of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, plays an important role in the life of the Christian communities of the vast diocese that the Pope has sent me to serve. Of all the shrines of the Holy Land, often linked to a specific territory, that of Our Lady of Palestine gathers together all of our local Church, beyond different sensitivities, or origins, or language. I



Msgr. Pizzaballa during his official entrance into Jerusalem, accompanied notably by Cardinal Edwin O’Brien, Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

In Jordan, the political environment is stable. Compared to the tragedies in the countries that surround it, especially in Syria and Iraq, it is a calm and serene oasis. But even here, as is the case everywhere, there are plenty of problems: the economy remains fragile and there is a serious problem of unemployment among the youth. The vast number of refugees, who are mainly Syrian, is creating a serious unease from a social point of view. It must



Father Pizzaballa, just three days after his appointment as Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, was received at headquarters of the Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre by the Grand Master and the Governor General and shared a convivial meal with European Lieutenants.

want to develop the reception capacity of this place, especially so that young people, couples, families can gather there for their spiritual refreshment.

Over 27 years you have had the opportunity to get to know the reality of the Holy Land, starting with the Franciscan Custody, the Hebrew-speaking Catholic community, the Latin Patriarchate, as well as other Christian churches and non-Christian communities. What do you think is the meeting point to

be noted that the efforts of the whole country to help those who are desperate are admirable, but it remains objectively difficult to offer opportunities to hundreds of thousands of people who arrived so suddenly, above all, as we said, in an economical context that is already fragile.

In the Holy Land the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a political reality that is known to all and honestly I would not know what to add in this regard. We hope that the political earthquake that has shocked the Middle Eastern ports will also cause the rulers of Palestine and Israel to meet again in order to give a perspective to their respective peoples that is not only to accuse one another. It seems that they are redefining a new equilibrium between the various Middle Eastern countries. In the Holy Land it is also time for a new language that offers prospects and a

allow all these actors to cooperate for the good of this land?

My experience is that someone has to start taking chances, without being afraid of losing, and starting from the shared reality. We encounter each other in service to the poor, in the common humanity, and there we build a relationship which can open to other horizons. You cannot meet each other starting from a dialogue of faith or great principles because this can create barriers.

As Pro Grand Prior, is there a particular message you want to entrust to the Knights and Ladies of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre?

I would invite you to continue your prayers and support for this land and to continue to come on pilgrimage. Through your presence in our villages and in our cities you create a universal network of spiritual solidarity, vital to the survival of our Church of Jerusalem, the Mother Church, called to keep in touch with all the Churches of the world. Also, not everyone can come here and so you can bring the Holy Land to your own realities and answer your call to be “announcers” of the beauty of these places that are not only narrated by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but also by the great passion of a rich and vibrant community that inhabits them.

**Interview by François Vayne
and Elena Dini**

future. The alternative to this is only war.

In Cyprus too it seems that discussions between the two sides have become easier. We hope that this is the case not just in appearances.

In this context of great change, our pastoral activity also changes. The changes, in fact, not only concern the macro-political, but also (and I would say especially) the societies of the respective countries. The role of the family, the youth field and the world of work are rapidly changing in the Middle East. Interreligious dialogue, in a context of a growing fundamentalism, poses new and difficult questions. The relationship between the Christian churches is faced with common needs of coordination not only on a pastoral level. The questions are many, therefore, and we will try to understand and to work together as a Church to find the possible answers.”

TRIBUTE TO PATRIARCH EMERITUS, MSGR. FOUAD TWAL

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre thanks the Patriarch Emeritus Msgr. Fouad Twal who has filled the role of the Grand Prior of the Order over the past eight years, joyfully welcoming members during pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and often visiting the offices of the Grand Magisterium in Rome.



Msgr. Fouad Twal together with Msgr. Antonio Franco, Assessor of the Order, and Msgr. Fortunato Frezza, Master of Ceremonies, during one of the Masses celebrated in Palazzo della Rovere, on the occasion of a Grand Magisterium meeting.

Fouad Boutros Ibrahim Twal was born October 23, 1940 in Madaba in Jordan. He entered the seminary of Beit Jala in 1959 and was ordained priest on June 29, 1966. He was parish vicar in the Church of the Holy Family in Ramallah, Palestine, and then the pastor at St. George's Church in Irbid, Jordan and later in the church of Mary Mother of the Church in Marka, in Jordan.

In 1972 he began his studies in Canon Law at the Lateran University in Rome and in 1977 entered the diplomatic service of the Holy See and was sent to Honduras, Cairo, Berlin and Lima. On May 30, 1992 he was appointed bishop of Tunis. Ordained Bishop on July 22 of that year, he was later appointed Archbishop of Tunis in 1994.

In 2003 he was appointed president of the Episcopal Conference of North Africa

(C.E.R.N.A.) and in September 2005 Pope Benedict XVI appointed him Archbishop Coadjutor of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. In addition, he was elected president of Bethlehem University in 2006 and appointed a member of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue in 2007.

On June 21, 2008 he succeeded His Beatitude Msgr. Michel Sabbah, becoming only the second Arab Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. On 24 June 2016, Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Msgr. Fouad Twal for reasons of age.

On July 12, 2016, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas gave the Jerusalem Medal to Patriarch Emeritus in gratitude for his pastoral activity and for the service he has rendered to the Palestinian people and the Catholic Church in Palestine. ■

FATHER FRANCESCO PATTON, THE NEW CUSTOS OF THE HOLY LAND

Among the various changes that have directly involved the Holy Land in 2016, we recall the appointment of Father Francesco Patton as the new Holy Land Custos on May 20, 2016. After his first vows September 7, 1983 at the age of 20 and his solemn vows on October 4, 1986, Father Patton was ordained a priest on May 26, 1989. In 1993 he obtained a Licentiate in Communication Sciences at the Pontifical Salesian University of Rome. He held various positions within the Franciscan Order and also, in the wider ecclesial community, in the Archdiocese of Trento.

“I received the news with surprise and even fear and trepidation – the new Custos told Vatican Radio – knowing that it is a complex and delicate reality, of great importance for the Order and for the Church”. His request to the local community

was to be welcomed as a brother: “I would say that I humbly approach the Christian communities of the Holy Land. I come with a heart filled with great love for this land. I also ask to be welcomed and helped to carry out my service for the good of the people who live there and for the good of the people who come to study, for pilgrimage or, simply, out of curiosity for these places. But what I am really asking for is that I be welcomed as a brother. “

From June 6, his solemn entry into Jerusalem, until June 18, Father Patton was warmly welcomed by local communities, in Bethlehem, Jaffa and Nazareth. We wish the new Custos the very best in his important ministry and that he may be illuminated by grace and accompanied by the Spirit.

Father Patton (center) is the new Custos of the Holy Land, succeeding Father Pizzaballa. As Superior of the Franciscans of much of the Middle East, he is in charge of ensuring the reception of pilgrims to the holy sites in coordination with the local leaders of the various Christian churches.



“A MUSLIM LEAVING OUR SCHOOLS WILL NEVER BECOME A FUNDAMENTALIST”

Father Faysal Hijazen was director of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem schools. He unexpectedly passed away during the year. In an interview he granted us a few months before and that we publish here in tribute to him, we spoke about the vital work carried out by more than forty schools in the Holy Land that gather approximately 20,000 students and 1,500 employees.

Why does the Patriarchate give such pastoral importance to these schools where a great number of Muslims are also welcomed?

Education is an important sector of the Latin Patriarchate. The first reason is that through education, we can target the human person in the totality of its identity; in order to strengthen the faith of the people, we must be present in society carrying values of respect, of acceptance of others.

Pastorally, the schools allow us to practice the different Sacraments close to the pupils. Religious lessons enable Christians to deepen their knowledge of the Bible and to strengthen their

faith. Celebrations organised in the schools for the different liturgical seasons (something made possible by the presence of a school near parish churches) enable us to live unity with Christians, because all Christians come, no matter what rite.

Muslims are welcomed in these schools and attend Islamic religious lessons all along their academic life. Their presence in the school is a chance for the Latin Patriarchate to teach values like openness to others, respect, and values which in themselves are fundamentally Christian: love of your neighbour, forgiveness. A Muslim leaving our schools will never become a fundamentalist.

What do you do to develop a culture of openness and encounter in the schools of the Latin Patriarchate, by what sort of initiatives?

The Religious lessons are mixed, one hour a week, Christians and Muslims. We study big themes which are for example “Living together”, “studying together”, “meeting the other”... the rest of the time dedicated to religious classes is spent according to the religion of the pupil.





Father Faysal Hijazen (pictured third from left), who died unexpectedly during 2016, directed the schools of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem with passion and dedication from 2013.

And so daily life at the school is a meeting with the other. The children who play in the playground, at football, with marbles, they play together without asking the religion of the other. The schools in the Latin Patriarchate enable us to build bridges between religions, between different cultures. These bridges go over the walls which often surround our hearts.

How is the action of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre essential for the educational work of the Latin Patriarchate?

Let me be clear: without the support of the Order, our schools would have closed a long time ago. One third of our outgoings is covered by the Order, through its generosity and its donations. An education without material means is an education which dies very quickly. The Order keeps the mission of education in the Latin Patriarchate alive.

What do you see as the future for all these schools and what message would you like to pass on to Western Christians?

Our schools should respond to the needs of a society faced with an increase in fundamentalisms. The future asks us to be even stronger in order to face up to the fundamentalist bodies in our societies. Whilst there is a school of the Latin Patriarchate open, respect and openness will be taught and so the schools enable us to cope to the reality of our society.

Here is my message to our Western Christian brothers: Think about your Christian brothers here who are in need of your moral, spiritual and material support. Think about resolving the political problems of countries to make a better society.

Twinning our schools with Western schools in France, Germany, and other countries gives our pupils openness to the world and is a way to meet values forgotten in our society such as love of your neighbour and not the rejection of him who is not like myself, or forgiveness, which is very difficult to be accepted. Do not forget that the children in our schools today, are the leaders of tomorrow's society.

SPOTLIGHT ON ORDER INITIATIVES IN JERUSALEM AND BETHLEHEM

When pilgrimage brings us to the Holy Land, there are many places that deeply touch our hearts but there are two cities in particular that leave a mark on all: Bethlehem and Jerusalem. This year we want to dedicate two small special reports for our readers to some of the thousands of faces of these two cities through certain events of this 2016.



In Jerusalem

*I rejoiced when they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the Lord.”
And now our feet are standing
within your gates, Jerusalem.
(Ps 121:1-2)*

Jerusalem is the city of many holy places, of many religious communities and many pilgrims. A city that fosters the local dimension, with the same problems and the beauty of every city, but at the same time is universal. Let's begin with a look at our special place, that from which our Order takes its name: the Holy Sepulchre which has undergone restoration work this year. Msgr. Jacques Perrier, former Grand Prior of the Lieutenancy for France, offers us a historical clarification regarding the aedicule covering the empty tomb of Christ in the Holy Sepulchre.

We will then shift our focus to the road that normally leads to the Holy Sepulchre: the one on which Jesus took his steps to Golgotha. Right next to the first station of the Via Dolorosa, in March the Terra Sancta Museum, to which the Order contributed, was inaugurated. A few stations later, precisely at the fourth, where we commemorate Jesus' meeting with his mother, we find the Armenian Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Spasm where a small religious community of women, the Disciples of the Divine Master, carry out a ministry of prayer for peace in the Holy Land, giving the opportunity for daily Eucharistic adoration to those who want to join them. A special invitation to “stand with the Lord” that the Knights and Dames on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land can welcome.

Jerusalem is also a city with so many needs, especially for the small and weak. Following this, we will read about the opening of the new Rachel center for the migrant children and the Our Lady of Sorrows hospice which is next to the separation barrier and that welcomes the elderly regardless of their economic ability.

Restoring the Aedicule of the Holy Sepulchre

Msgr. Jacques Perrier, who used to be Grand Prior of the French Lieutenancy, offers us an historic perspective on the subject of the Aedicule, under restoration in 2016, which enshrines the empty tomb of Christ in the basilica of the Holy Sepulchre.

The angel announced to the women who had come to embalm the body of Jesus, “Why look for the living amongst the dead?” The fact remains that: the believer keeps the place where the body of Jesus was deposited, for veneration. It appeals to the concreteness of the faith. Particularly for the members of the Order.

During the second half of the 20th century, the basilica was restored. The cupola was once again opened to the sky and light came down on the “aedicule”, according to the term which refers to the small building covering the tomb itself.

Alas, the light showed that the aedicule was in very bad condition. The three principal communities, co-guardians of the edifice (Greek Orthodox, Latin Catholic and Armenian Apostolic) decided to restore it. Works started at the end of the summer.

In Constantine’s basilica, the tomb had been excavated from the rock slope out of which it had been dug. But the tomb itself was conserved. On October 19, 1009, the Caliph Al-Hakîm decided to destroy it. The pics of those charged with demolishing it wiped out all that was in relief and halted at the funeral layer carved in the rock. A few



years later, the basilica was restored, with much difficulty, until the arrival of the crusaders, which now leaves us with the current building.

Since this time, the original rock has been put on top of a marble slab, that which the pilgrims venerate, which protects it. It was in 1810, during the construction of the current aedicule, that the original rock appeared for the last time. Since an identical reconstruction has been planned for the restoration, there is a risk it will disappear, once again, for several centuries.

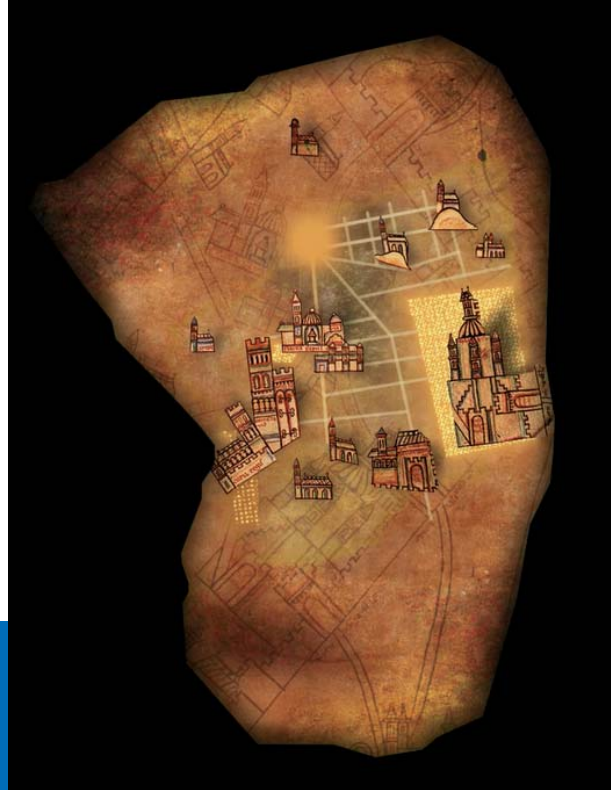
Msgr. Jacques Perrier
Bishop emeritus of Tarbes and Lourdes

Experiencing the Journey of the Cross: the first section of the *Terra Sancta Museum* opens

A few days before Holy Week 2016, a week which like every year invites Christians to follow Jesus’ steps in Jerusalem, including the mystery of his passion, death and resurrection, the first section of the Terra Sancta Museum, on the Via Dolorosa, was inaugurated. Hosted at the Monastery of the Flagellation – which preserves the remains of the Antonia Fortress, where tradition

indicates that Jesus was condemned, and from which pilgrims usually begin to walk the Via Crucis – the museum opened its doors on March 17 and can be visited with a track available in eight languages, including Hebrew and Arabic. Visitors have the opportunity of taking part in a 15-minute multimedia experience that aims to prepare them for a personal journey of the Way of the Cross.

Music, images and voices accompany pilgrims to discover the history of this place and the urban evolution of Jerusalem, as well as to invite them to take their place in an unbroken chain of pilgrims who for millennia put their steps in those of Jesus to Golgotha, and all the way to the now empty tomb. The Order was happy to be able to contribute, at the direct initiative of the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, to the implementation of this project which will include the realization of a hall dedicated to the Knights and Dames of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.



Through advanced multimedia technology, visitors to the Terra Sancta Museum can discover the urban development of Jerusalem through the centuries. The photo shows one of the phases of urban expansion in the millennial history of the city.

Being with Our Lord: an hour of adoration during the pilgrimage to Jerusalem

The pilgrimage to the Holy Land allows us to carve out a space in our lives to rediscover the beauty of being with Our Lord, retracing his steps.

In the colorful and bustling streets of Jerusalem's old town, we can choose to walk the Via Dolorosa, sharing in Christ's journey to Calvary, certain of his victory over death.

We are often consumed by the frenzy of the moment, by the noise, by too many things going on around us and within us and this experience becomes difficult to live fully.

Marking the annual publication of *Jerusalem Cross* 2016 we also announce the next edition of a spiritual support for 2017 which invites the Knights and Dames of the Order who have the good fortune to experience a pilgrimage to the land of Jesus to pause in prayer along the Via Dolorosa, to give in to the joy of a moment of Eucharistic adoration, to experience refreshment for the soul bearing in their hearts a special intention for peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East. Prayer enables us to fulfill our mission of supporting the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, not only materially but also spiritually.



The spiritual guide (available on the media section of the website of the Grand Magisterium, www.oessh.va) is a booklet to guide you in the experience of Eucharistic adoration in Jerusalem, at the Armenian Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Spasm, the fourth station of the Via Dolorosa, or, in common purpose and prayer, at any point you may find yourself.

The Rachel Center opens its doors in Jerusalem

On September 5, a new welcome centre for the infants and young children of foreign workers in Jerusalem, was inaugurated inside a convent of Capuchin friars. The Order is very happy to be able to contribute to this project. Dedicated to Rachel, the great biblical figure of a suffering mother, the centre receives twenty-five babies during the day, thirty children on average come to do their homework after school, and sixty teenagers are able to meet together there at the weekend. Two playpark areas, one for infants and toddlers and the other for older children, a dormitory and playrooms, offices, meeting rooms and a small apartment for volunteers are part of the ensemble, situated in the neighbourhood of Talbieh.

Indians, Africans, Filipinos, Sri-Lankans, and

Sudanese – who speak Hebrew due to their activity in the country – have the possibility of earning a daily living knowing that their children are kept in good conditions, their situation often being otherwise precarious. Seven infants recently died because they were kept elsewhere, in ‘pirate’ nurseries, without any care and in an inhumane manner, whilst many others are deeply traumatised from staying in these “baby warehouses”.

The Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium is committed to helping Fr. Neuhaus with respect to this humanitarian crisis; all the more so as the Hebrew-speaking Christians, originally from foreign countries, witnesses of the universality of the Church, are increasingly numerous.

On November 10, the Apostolic Administrator



Inauguration of the Rachel Center, which welcomes children of foreign workers, presided over by Abp. Pizzaballa.

of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, blessed the center. Also present were Msgr. William Shomali, Msgr. Giuseppe Lazzarotto and Msgr. Antonio Franco, Assessor of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. During his homily, Msgr. Pizzaballa insisted that “these children sat in this courtyard represent the whole Church, in all its diversity, Jews and Arabs, religious and secular, migrant workers and asylum seekers, they are called to be one heart and one soul.” In fact, the center aims to help children to

integrate into Israeli society in which they live and the activities aim to give them an attentive and respectful education and to teach them the Hebrew language.

Father David Neuhaus, Latin Patriarchal Vicar for Hebrew-speaking Catholics, coordinator of the migrant communities in Israel and now director of “Saint Rachel Center”, commented: “The waiting list is already long, but our hope is that the center will grow, to continue to welcome and serve those who need it most.”

The Home of Our Lady of Sorrows

Caring for the elderly with love: the Home of Our Lady of Sorrows in Jerusalem.

The Home of Our Lady of Sorrows, in the neighborhood of Ras El-Amud, near the separation wall in Jerusalem, welcomes elderly Palestinian men and women of all denominations. This center was supported, in the past, by the Knights and Dames of the Order, and on September 18 celebrated the 150th anniversary of the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of Sorrows, to whom it belongs. This congregation was founded by Marie Saint Frai and Father Dominique Ribes on March 28, 1866 in Tarbes, France, and has a particular charisma and compassion for the elderly, the sick and the poor. We spoke with Jean-François Klos, director of the Home of Our Lady of Sorrows, in Jerusalem.



the group of the Home (employees, volunteers and the entire community gathered in this project) began with a family celebration. There were games organized involving young and old in a joyful atmosphere.

The midday barbecue allowed us to meet again with friends of the house in a simple and friendly way.

In the afternoon Mass, presided by the Father Abbot of Latrun Monastery, allowed us to give thanks for the work done in all these years by the Daughters of Our Lady of Sorrows.

The celebration continued with songs and dances to end the evening with a performance that recalled the lives of our founders, Marie Saint Frai and Father Dominique Ribes.

At the end of this wonderful day, we held a torch light procession gathering all participants in prayer.

On Sept. 18 you celebrated the 150th anniversary of the Congregation in the Home of Our Lady of Sorrows. What can you tell about this beautiful day?

The 150th Jubilee anniversary of the Daughters of Our Lady of Sorrows was an important moment of sharing, joy and emotion. The day organized by

Can you speak to us about the history of this home, are there important moments that you like to remember?

During a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the Superior

General of the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of Sorrows was shocked by the poverty in the Holy Land. In November 1957, His Beatitude the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Monsignor Alberto Gori, a Franciscan, inaugurated the House of Our Lady of Sorrows, on spacious grounds on the road that goes from Gethsemane to Jericho. Thus, the desire of the Daughters of Our Lady of Sorrows to take care of these poor people became reality.

The monastery of Latrun was the first to support the Daughters of Our Lady of Sorrows, both spiritually and materially, and the ties between the two communities remain very strong, sharing the same devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows. Over the years the Order of the Holy Sepulchre has helped in development and upkeep.

Marie Saint Frai wanted to dedicate all his time to the service of the poor. How is this vocation practiced in Jerusalem with the elderly?

In Jerusalem we welcome the elderly regardless of their resources and their origins. Families contribute whatever they can according to their means. The poorest are welcomed free of charge.

What is a typical day at the Home of Our Lady of Sorrows?

After breakfast, we meet every morning in the

chapel for Mass. Then we provide simple motor activities, wellbeing (manicure, hairdresser) or manual work (painting, drawing). After lunch and rest, we have the daily recitation of the Rosary at 15. During the afternoon and evening the elderly receive visits from their families or the students in Jerusalem for some conversation and to listen to some music together. After dinner our guests retire to their rooms to rest while some decide to stay a little and converse on the terrace, enjoying the cool evening air. Life is simple in the Home. We seek in particular to maintain a friendly environment.

You are in a “mixed neighborhood” in Jerusalem, where people of the three monotheistic religions live together. What is your experience and what do you see as your mission in the midst of this diversity?

We are a place of peace: that’s what we are often told by families that come for the first time before entrusting their parents to us. The garden, the birds and the chicken coop create an atmosphere of well-being and tranquility. Our neighbors are often generous and bring gifts to the elderly in food (milk, eggs, pasta, rice, cheese ...). They all have a deep respect for this mission and for their elders.

Interview by Elena Dini

The story of Marie Saint Frai and his work among the poor

Even as a child, Marie Saint Frai had a compassionate heart and tried to help the poor. So, together with her brother, she would distract her parents and hide a part of her meal and take it to the poor. Whenever she received some money it was all for her brothers, the poor!

Her heart became ever more open to compassion and, when anyone came knocking on her door in the evening to ask for bread, they were never refused. When there was bad weather, she would never leave the poor outside. They were welcomed into her house. Donating bread was not enough, so she began to welcome the sick. In the city the rumor spread that Miss Saint Frai welcomed those in need. Requests multiplied. Soon there was no more space and temporary hospitality became permanent. Mr. Saint Frai accepted that, because of the lack of space, many poor slept with him in the same room.

On the death of Mr. Frai, there were 20 “poor” received into his house and depending on the family. But what to do? What was God’s will? Marie thought she might finally realize her dream: to give herself to God as a religious. She prayed and decided to write to the Superior General of the Daughters of Charity. But after several exchanges of correspondence, she realized she could not enter the convent and continue to help her poor. With the encouragement of her confessor and spiritual director Msgr. Laurence, she continued on with her work. It was through the poor who knocked at her door that Marie Saint Frai decided to answer her call. She wanted to continue to serve the suffering Christ and inhabited by his Presence, exuded his compassion.

Jean-François Klos



In Bethlehem

*But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel
(Micah 5:2)*

If Jerusalem particularly speaks to the heart of the Knights and Dames of the Order for the fundamental bond with the Holy Sepulchre, Bethlehem is no exception in the heart of every Christian. It was here, in this small village that the Savior of this world came into being.

Today Bethlehem is a complex city, both internally and in its relations with the outside world. A few kilometers from Jerusalem, but divided by the separation barrier, with a declining Christian population, this place which witnessed the birth of Jesus is also incredibly full of associations, institutions, good works and charity which deeply affect the local population and all the pilgrims who come.

We will not have the opportunity to dwell on every reality but in the next few pages we will read the experience of Bethlehem University, supported by the Order for many years, in an intimate interview granted to us by its vice-chancellor, Peter Bray. Then we will focus on an initiative fostered by various local schools that allows high school students to learn the art of debating: the Debate Club. The Western USA Lieutenantcy contributes to this project to give young people the means to know how to explain themselves, to learn to listen to others and present their reasoning. Concluding this special focus, a brief update on the restoration of the Basilica of the Nativity and the extract of an interview with the Mayor of Bethlehem, the Catholic Christian Vera Baboun.

Bethlehem University: an Oasis of Peace in the Holy Land

Peter Bray is a brother of the Congregation of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (FSC) founded by John Baptist de La Salle. Brother Bray comes from New Zealand and is currently the vice chancellor and president of Bethlehem University in Palestine. He has extensive educational experience over more than thirty years of administration in educational institutions. He holds a doctorate in leadership from the University of San Diego, USA, and has taught and explored his field of leadership in Universities and other educational institutions in many countries. He moved to Bethlehem University in November 2008 and has been in the position of Vice Chancellor at Bethlehem University since the beginning of 2009.

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre has been supporting this initiative for over twenty years allowing Universities to carry out their educational mission and to ensure a presence of peace.

Brother Peter Bray, what makes the Bethlehem University that you supervise an oasis of peace?

There is a concerted effort on the part of faculty and staff to create an atmosphere where people (students, faculty, staff and visitors) feel safe and are aware that there are people around them who really care about them. Many of our students come from backgrounds and environments which are harsh or dangerous, so it is important that when they step on campus they know they are respected, that there is a graciousness about the relationships that exist here and that as a Christian university we are seeking to live Jesus' command to love one another.

How many male and female students do you welcome each year? Where do they come from and what are the courses they mostly attend?

The students at Bethlehem University come from a rather restricted area because of the difficulties the Palestinian have with movement. Before the Separation Wall was constructed in Bethlehem in 2005, there were students from Ramallah and north of Jerusalem coming to



Brother Peter Bray, president of the University of Bethlehem, in the company of Bartholomew McGettrick (right) and Heinrich Dickmann, members of the Grand Magisterium's Holy Land Commission.

Bethlehem University. However, since the construction of the Wall, coming from such areas is very difficult, so the places from which students come are virtually restricted to Bethlehem, East Jerusalem and Hebron. They come to Bethlehem University to study in five faculties and an Institute. These are the Faculties of Nursing, Education, Business, Science and Arts as well as in the Institute of Hotel Management and Tourism. Around 78% of the students at Bethlehem University are female.

Is interreligious dialogue happening among students?

I think one of the very important contributions Bethlehem University makes to Palestine is that it provides an opportunity where Christian and Muslim students are able to engage with one another in an atmosphere that helps them come to understand and appreciate one another. About 26% of the students are Christian and this means there is a significant body of Christian students on campus making it impossible for Muslim students to be here and not engage with Christians. A number of our Muslim students have not met a Christian until they come on campus and that engagement leads them to get to know and

appreciate them.

Apart from their engagement with one another in class, particularly the classes on Religious Studies where together they explore Christianity, Islam and Judaism, the extra-curricular activities, athletics, the workshops and the colloquy that students have on campus, bring them closer to each other. They learn how to accept one another's point of view or how to counter argue and open their minds to the wider world. And so, the campus comprises an intellectual hub, an oasis of peace and a safe place where students enjoy their day in a beautiful atmosphere with attractive facilities.

For you, as a religious man, what does this experience in the Holy Land represent? What are the most significant moments you lived? May you give us a testimony?

Some of the most significant moments for me have been in relation to students here at Bethlehem University. I have been incredibly inspired in walking with students through some of the challenges they face. I found it inspiring to sit and listen to a student talk about the fact that his house

had just been demolished for the second time and to have him reflect on the fact that the Israelis have taken his house, they have taken his land, they have taken his freedom, but they cannot take his education! It is this resilience that I see in so many students who deal with the implications of Occupation and still live a full life. I find it uplifting to hear a student talk about the fact that she is a twenty year old girl and she wants to live life to the full. She is aware of the Occupation, the restrictions, the challenges, but states strongly that it is not inside her, she is not going to be dominated by them in terms of how she thinks about what she will do. She will make her own decisions about living life to the full in the context in which she finds herself.

Knowing that what I am involved in is bigger than my agenda, bigger than my prejudices and desires, leads me to develop a trust in God's providence and an awareness that I live in the presence of this God the whole day. It is God's agenda that I am committed to. It is God's call that I am responding to and for the time that I am working here, it is God's work that God is doing

Short history of Bethlehem University

Bethlehem University emerged from the visit of Pope Paul VI to the Holy Land in 1964. Pope Paul wanted to do something to support the Palestinian people, but it was not clear what that might be. In the early 1970s Archbishop Pio Laghi, the Apostolic Delegate to Palestine, wanted to follow up on this desire of Pope Paul, but there were difficulties in deciding on the best way to do this. Towards the end of 1972 and the beginning of 1973, Archbishop Pio Laghi called together some of the senior educators of Jerusalem and Bethlehem to discuss the possibility of an institution of higher education. At one stage the suggestion was to create a teacher training college to provide teachers for the Catholic schools. However, Brother Jean Manuel FSC, at that time Director of the Collège des Frères in Jerusalem, argued this was too limited a vision and he pushed very hard for a university. The reason for this was that at that stage there was no registered university in Palestine and any young people wanting a university education had to go outside Palestine, many never to return. As a way of moving things forward, Brother Jean, on behalf of the De La Salle Christian Brothers of the region, offered the site in Bethlehem where the Brothers' school was operating, as the place where the university could be situated. Eventually, this suggestion was accepted and with the help of Archbishop Pio Laghi, the support of the Vatican's Congregation for Oriental Churches, and the Superior General of the De La Salle Christian Brothers, an agreement was reached for Bethlehem University to be located in Bethlehem and to be a joint venture between the Vatican and the De La Salle Christian Brothers. Very soon after that agreement was signed some 112 students walked onto the campus, on October 1, 1973, to begin Bethlehem University.



Artistic representation of a dove of peace at Bethlehem University.

Brother Peter Bray

About a year ago the mayor of Bethlehem Vera Baboun thus described the situation in the city entrusted to her administration

“**W**hat happens in Bethlehem affects the Catholic population just as it affects everybody. This city is now segregated from Jerusalem, and the faithful of Bethlehem can hardly go to pray at the Holy Sepulchre: it is easier for people coming from Europe or America to go to the Holy Sepulchre than it is for a 21 year-old man from Bethlehem.

It is not a normal process and we are fighting abnormality; we are living an abnormality and trying to adjust to it. Our young people lose their lives and yet there is no solution at the horizon.

With the absence of peace, I face many complicated situations as a Mayor. Since 82% of the Governorate of Bethlehem is zone C, meaning that it is controlled by Israeli administration and security, it is an unbelievable challenge for me to practice my authority and serve the people.

In the Governorate we now have only 48,000 Christians out of 200,000 inhabitants. There is also a new wall in Cremisan which leads to the confiscation of the land of 58 Christian families.”



Vera Baboun, the Mayor of Bethlehem, and Msgr. Shomali, then Auxiliary Bishop of Jerusalem, releasing doves as a sign of hope that peace may be reached in the Holy Land.

through me.

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre is committed next to you so that the University of Bethlehem may respond to contemporary challenges in giving an education of quality. What is the field in which Knights and Dames supported you the most and what message do you want to send them?

Bethlehem University is financially always in a difficult position. The students contribute only about 36% of the operating budget and so the Development Office at Bethlehem University has to find some 64% of the \$13 - 14 million annual budget. One of the miracles of Bethlehem University is that somehow for over forty years it has been able to raise that portion each year to enable Bethlehem University to survive and prosper. In the struggle to find that 64% of our operating budget, the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, as an international body, is the most

supportive of any such group in the world. We are deeply grateful to the Knights and Ladies around the world for that support. This comes from various parts of the world and since 1995 the Order has contributed more than US\$6.6 million to Bethlehem University. There are a variety of ways this support is given: as scholarships and students support; as Faculty and Department support; for capital projects; to help with the purchase of the Mount David property; for equipment and books; and particularly for the unrestricted gifts, which enable us to respond to the unpredictable needs as they arise. Bethlehem University is very grateful for this amazing support.

We want to create the environment and provide the opportunity for our students to live life to the full, to face and overcome the challenges they face, despite the restrictions, despite the suffering they endure. The support of the Order is enabling us to do this and for that we are deeply grateful.

Interview by François Vayne

Support critical thinking and debate: the Bethlehem Debate Club

An initiative funded by the USA Western Lieutenancy

Sometimes words just seem to be a set of sounds one after another and yet convey meanings and are our way to get in touch with each other, to describe the world and to express what we believe in and that we carry in our hearts.

The gift of speech and the ability to express ourselves and to argue our thinking is at the heart of an initiative

promoted by the Debate Club of the De la Salle Brothers College in Bethlehem. This school was founded by the brothers of the Order in 1893 and since then has pursued its mission of providing high quality and cutting edge education to local youths. To date about a thousand students are enrolled.

In December 2014, the school principal, George Naber, decided to introduce a program

into the school that gives an opportunity for students to compete with their peers from around the world putting to the test their critical thinking and analytical skills, the knowledge of important facts about the world and society, their ability to argue logically and carefully and to wisely articulate a debate through the format proposed by the



“After three years of being a part of the Debate Club I no longer take things for granted. I have begun to discuss many more issues with my friends because debating has developed my critical thinking. I also learned how to present my ideas and my thoughts in an appropriate manner so that people can understand me. This has improved my interpersonal skills. I was a shy girl who never felt at ease in speaking in front of other people, but now I have grown more sure of myself and am a person who can discuss, debate and argue her point. Debating has taught me to be an objective person. Through debate you learn to listen to those who think differently and to understand their points of view and this helps to get a clearer idea of the general situation.”

Dana Ewaiwi

“People ask me: ‘What does debating mean for you?’ I have a lot of answers to this question but perhaps the most important one is that debating has become a friend who helps me. Debating has enabled me to think quickly and deeply about each topic and to arrive at a solution to problems. It has given me strength and logic in negotiating with my family and my friends. In addition, it has provided me with the speed and clarity necessary to draw up a convincing answer to any question I may be asked. If I look at how I was a year ago and how I am today, I would say that there is a huge difference. I had great fun at the World School’s Debate Championship and Slovenia. I have had many experiences and made new friends with great people: my life has changed.”

Vanessa Abu Kova

World School's Debate.

Since then, thanks to the cooperation with international guests, like Professor Alfred Snider of the University of Vermont, a process that aims to create a healthy culture of debate in the Lasallian school and, hopefully, throughout Palestine has begun. Already in just two years dozens of academies have emerged and five other schools have participated. In 2015, the best students were selected to take part in the World School's Debate Championship in Singapore and the World School's Debate Academy Slovenia. In 2016 there was the first local championship in Palestine and two international events in Slovenia and Germany.

The USA Western Lieutenancy of the Order has

willingly supported this project allowing the students selected to live these important experiences of discussion and formation abroad. In the letter of thanks received by the school, the headmaster George Naber and the coordinator of the Debate Club Muna Kattan, write: "While we brought forward the debates, while we were preparing, forming and coordinating, we always had in mind that we had to make you proud of the support that you have given us."

The Debate Club of the De la Salle brothers' school in Bethlehem has its own facebook page where you can keep in touch with the students and follow their updates:

www.facebook.com/freresbethlehemdebate

The "new face" of the Basilica of the Nativity

The Basilica of the Nativity has seen many things over the centuries: wars, earthquakes and even deterioration due to lack of work on stability issues and waterproofing of the roof. Since 2012, UNESCO has recognized it as a heritage site.

The basilica is managed by three religious communities: Orthodox, Armenian and Catholic. For the past three years an Italian firm, Piacenti SpA, has been working on the restoration of this sacred place for millions of faithful who live here or come on pilgrimage. Initially the tender issued by the Palestinian Authority was only for the restoration of the roof and windows of the basilica but later the work was expanded. In 2016, the company was responsible for the restoration of the mosaics, bringing to light, among other things, the figure of a beautiful angel that had been hidden by plaster.

During the meeting with the Reunion of Aid Agencies for the Oriental Churches (ROACO) June 16, 2016, Pope Francis made reference precisely to this angel: "I have been told that in the course of restoration work in Bethlehem, on one of the walls of the nave a seventh angel in mosaic has come to light, forming with the other six a sort of procession towards the place commemorating the mystery of the birth of the Word made flesh. This can lead us to reflect on how the face of our ecclesial communities can also be covered by 'incrustations' as a result of various problems and sins. Yet your



work must unfailingly be guided by the certainty that, beneath material and moral incrustations, and the tears and bloodshed caused by war, violence and persecution, beneath this apparently impenetrable cover there is a radiant face like that of the angel in the mosaic. All of you, with your projects and your activities, are part of a "restoration" that will enable the face of the Church to reflect visibly the light of Christ the Word Incarnate. He is our peace, and he is knocking at the doors of our heart in the Middle East."

The works in the basilica will continue in the coming years depending on funding which now comes from both states and individuals, Christian and non. You can follow the restoration process and receive updates on progress by visiting the website: www.piacenti.org ■

THE LIFE OF THE LIEUTENANCIES

Through various testimonies of members of the Order, we want to underline the wealth of commitment of the Knights and Dames as they follow Christ throughout the earth. Our website www.oessh.va carries in depth stories of the lives of the Lieutenancies revealing a diversity of activities all oriented to the service of the inhabitants of the Holy Land.

WITNESSES OF THE RISEN ONE IN PRAYER AND ACTION

Solidarity with those closest: Knights and Dames bring relief after the earthquake in central Italy

Following the strong earthquakes that hit central Italy from the month of August on, we publish this testimony received from the Order's Rieti Delegation (Lieutenancy for Italy Central). Sharing this experience reminds us of the importance, as Knights and Dames of the Order, to always listen to the needs of those who are closest to us.

On August 24, 2016 the territory of the province of Rieti, in particular the towns of Amatrice and Accumoli suffered a massive earthquake that flattened entire villages leaving 298 dead and 388 wounded.

There are also some of our brothers among those who have suffered the loss of loved ones and damage to property, one of whom is Knight Augusto Colangeli, the owner of a supermarket that collapsed in the quake. He arrived on the spot before the emergency services and did not hesitate to retrieve as much of his produce as possible to provide to the people affected.

The Rieti Delegation immediately activated its apparatus to raise funds for earthquake victims. Spontaneous offers were received from the Knights of Lazio amounting to 5,270 euro.



Since the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem in the Holy Land also supports schools, the Rieti Delegation Council has determined that the amount collected be allocated

to a project for the physics, chemistry and biology laboratory of the Amatrice High School.

On September 30, Delegation Prior Msgr. Gottardo Patacchiola and the Knight Fr. Mariano Pappalardo, celebrated a mass in memory of the earthquake victims in the church of Santa Chiara in Antrodoco, a town close by to the areas affected by

the earthquake. At the end of the Mass, Fr. Mariano held a conference on “The 5 wounds a source of Mercy.”

Thank you all for the solidarity shown to our delegation of Rieti.

Anna Maria Iacoboni Munzi

Delegate for the Rieti Delegation to the OESSH

From WYD in Poland to “Olympic Games” in Ramallah: the Order of the Holy Sepulchre’s summer service for the Church

During the months when normally activities wind down in anticipation of vacation, there were many possibilities to be at the service of young people around the world.

Just days after the end of the intense and moving World Youth Day experience in Krakow, a Knight of the Polish Lieutenancy, Janusz Kamiński, comments: “In 1984 I was 22 and I was in Rome when John Paul II invited young people from all over the world by giving them the Jubilee Cross”. That was the beginning of the World Youth Days and Janusz remembers “the warmth and care that I received in Rome from the organizers and the people who had hosted us. It was then that I decided I wanted to welcome young people in the future and this year finally I had the opportunity to do so”.

Thus Janusz’s home became an intercontinental

guest house during the World Youth Day with three priests from Japan. “I think the most memorable and touching moment was when Japanese priests were leaving from our house, and they said “ittekimasu”, which in Japan is used



Between the Olympic Games at Ramallah in Palestine, and WYD in Krakow, the members of the Order – of all generations – dedicated a lot in service of the Church last summer.

when someone is leaving one's own home and to which you respond "itterashai" which means "go and come back again". That was the best sign that they felt right at home".

Several other members of the Order opened the doors of their homes to welcome the young people who flocked to Krakow last week. Knight Jacek Antoni Rutkowski says: "Many have offered hospitality to pilgrims, prayed with them, and told them something about our nation and its history, including over 850 years of the Order in Poland", and have participated in the organization of the event itself. In particular, the Adoration Altar in Brzegi was created by the renowned Polish artist Mariusz Drapikowski, Knight Commander of the Order. Now that the celebrations are over, the altar will be brought to the Shrine of Our Lady, Mother of the Word, in Rwanda.

Meanwhile, a group of young French volunteers went to the Holy Land where from July 20 to 30 they ran a summer camp in the Latin parish of Ramallah, offering ten-day of games, songs, discovery, learning French and encounter

on the theme "Olympic Games".

The project was proposed by Charles-Edouard Roed-Guilbert, squire of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, who had already organised a first camp in Ramallah in 2015. From 30 children last year, this year the camp welcomed 70.

Claire de Puybaudet and Guillaume Malnoy, two volunteers, shared their experience with us: "Among the many things that we observed and which amazed us, was the closeness between the Christian and Muslim communities. They all live in harmony and undertake certain public initiatives to organize activities that involves the different actors of the their community. If the joy of children and communities were not enough to win our hearts, then the hospitality, of the community in which we lived and those who assisted us, the gratitude of parents, really made us feel fortunate to have been of this budding adventure". They conclude: "Today we are certain of one thing: this summer camp transforms us more and more each day."

An appeal to support education and vocations in the Holy Land

The testimony of Gregory Tugendhat, a young member of the Order.

I am approaching 40 with dual British & French nationality, married to a Dutch wife with two children aged 4 and 3. I am a member of the Belgian Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre and live in Luxembourg. I have been a Knight of the Order since June 2010 and was fortunate to have the Cardinal Grand Master of the time, the late Cardinal Foley, officiating at the ceremony in the magnificent Brabantine Gothic Church of our Blessed Lady of the Sablon in Brussels, complete with stained glass windows in the Choir depicting an Investiture ceremony.

I discovered the existence of the Order through



family. I had the chance to speak with relatives about the significance and the role of the Order in society today. My interest was encouraged and supported by my wife. I was living in Brussels at the time.

Joining the Order was a deeply personal choice and the subject of much prayer but the process in my case was very much about the couple, in a shared dynamic of reassuring and inspiring reflection. I was drawn to the primary goal of the Order, namely that of supporting

Christians in the Holy Land through a combination of prayer and regular contributions to fund impactful projects. The projects supported are



Gregory Tugendhat, family man and Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, during the Marian procession for the Solemnity.

and Universities, Seminaries and Hospices, meeting the people who work there, who inhabit and depend on the various assistance, is unique and makes everything immediately more tangible once you have seen, touched and heard.

The activities are many and frequent. In August 2015, I participated in Paris for the procession in the streets and the river surrounding the Notre Dame Cathedral on the feast of the Assumption. In October I joined a retreat in Wavremont focussing on the *Evangelii Gaudium*. I was in Nancy in December for the 770th annual procession in Saint Nicholas

Basilica. In May 2016 I accompanied the retreat to Rome over the Feast of the Ascension to reflect on Mercy and Forgiveness.

When I joined the Order, there were two members under the age of forty five in the Lieutenancy. We will be not far off twenty as of 2016. The Order has created a lot of opportunities to meet new and interesting people who share common values and a desire to deepen their faith.

diverse and take in activities such as funding educational institutions, and supporting seminaries. A teacher once said of me that I would either be a teacher or a Priest so perhaps the idea of supporting both simultaneously was already dormant within.

Within five months of becoming a Knight of the Order I went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The opportunity to visit as a Knight, the schools

Praying the Rosary at the heart of the fraternity experienced in the Order

A testimony from Karen McClintock of the USA Western Lieutenancy about a community prayer initiative that united Knights and Dames in California.

“Oh, Almighty God, we, the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre, who throughout the centuries have watched and witnessed at the gloriously empty tomb of Jesus, beg you to send us forth again, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, clad in the armor of our faith, with good works as our sword, in the loving service of Christ Our King. Amen”

Just how do we do that? We may be fortunate enough to visit the Holy Land on pilgrimage and witness the empty tomb, but how do stay on-task, in loving service of Christ, with our goal of supporting Christians in the Holy Land when it is

7,500 miles away?

This evening I will attend a First Monday Rosary Dinner in my Pasadena, California neighborhood with fellow Knights and Ladies. We will share personal intentions and repeat our ongoing actions for peace and justice in the Holy Land. We will then pray the Rosary together and share a home-cooked meal prepared by our host/hostess for the evening. We have done this monthly for over a dozen years. In that time, I have come to know my fellow Knights and Ladies in a uniquely rewarding manner. Throughout the nine dioceses of the Western USA Lieutenancy at 16

different locations, our members gather in prayer and fellowship on the first Monday of the month in solidarity with each other, the Christians in the Holy Land, and the Universal Church.

At these casual dinners, we celebrate one another's triumphs and empathize with one another's challenges. We express gratitude for the act of meeting regularly – something our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land would never take for granted. We laugh together, cry together, and we pray together. We have even worked together to draft our own meditations on the Mysteries of the Rosary. In doing so, we have brought the mysteries closer to us as a Rosary Group and as an Order.

While we all pray privately and have our personal prayer traditions, there is something very special about the Catholic devotion to praying in community. “where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them”, we really do feel His presence. I definitely feel His presence at our First Monday Rosary Dinners.

And there is something uniquely human about

preparing food for one another in our private homes. There is a humility that equalizes us; focuses our attention on the important attributes that have brought us together. There is a graciousness about opening our homes to one another – without pretense, but with genuine warmth and welcome.

I am open to receiving the sanctification we pursue as Knights and Ladies and our monthly Rosary Dinners bring me a bit closer to that goal. Our Rosary Dinners help clad us in the armor of our faith to, in fact, serve Christ our King.



Some Knights and Dames pray the rosary together as a community in the apartment of one of the members of their Lieutenancy.

“All with the same rights as witnesses of the Resurrection”

Being a woman in the Order of the Holy Sepulchre

The testimony of a Dame of the Lieutenancy for Austria highlights the important place of women in the Order, of which they have been part since 1871.

Is being a woman inside the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem different to being a man? In my personal experience, a passage from the Book of Genesis (cf. *Gen 1:27*) is tangible in our Order: “God created man in his image; in

the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

The fact that we are fully accepted is what distinguishes our communities, thus creating a family atmosphere and a “religious homeland”, in which each and every member contributes to the development of the charisms. Dames, Knights, lay members and clergy: we all have the same rights as witnesses of the Resurrection.



While the official positions are still mostly occupied by men, Dames are represented in the Grand Magisterium, they hold board positions in Lieutenancies and Delegations where they give essential input to charitable and social outreach, in

the liturgy, in the organization of pilgrimages and common prayer. They can also take on the role of Lieutenant, Chancellor or Secretary and this is already happening in various Lieutenancies.

Our Lieutenant for Austria, Karl Lengheimer, gave great importance to women occupying more space within the Order, of which they have been members since 1871. And thanks to his personal commitment, Dames are now represented on all of the Order's

delegations. The close working relationship between men and women are growing at all levels and we can perfectly describe this reality with the expression "the Order family."

Eva Maria Leiner

United in love for each other and for the Holy Land

My love for the Holy Land led me on a journey that drew me close to the Order and to becoming a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre. In December of 2008 I met Manuela. From the outset I spoke with great transport of the Order and invited her to take part in the meetings and the monthly catechesis.

Thus it came to pass that a fire of love for the Holy Land kindled within her too and she subsequently decided to become a Dame of her own free will.

We received the Investiture from the hands of cardinal Pietro Farina, in October 2009 in the Basilica of Our Lady of Graces in Benevento, the same church we were later married on February 19, 2011.

Little Dante Maria was born from our union, who is now 5 years old. We nourish the desire in our hearts that one day he can, if deemed worthy, become a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre.

We both see a divine plan in our story, that He had a particular path for us to follow and brought us together in mutual love and attention for the Holy Land.

**Massimo Contini
and Manuela Libera Streppa Contini**



IN ROME AND THE WORLD: THE INTENSE ACTIVITY OF THE GRAND MASTER OF THE ORDER

As every year, the Grand Master of the Order, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, took the opportunity to visit many Lieutenancies and Magistral Delegations around the world without missing the important occasions of life of the Church and of the Order in Rome. This year the two meetings of the Grand Magisterium were held from April 11 to 13 and October 24 to 26 at the headquarters in Palazzo della Rovere, as well as the meeting of European Lieutenants (June 27-28), while the regional meeting of the Lieutenants of North America took place in Baltimore (USA) June 2 to 4.

On April 17, the Grand Master celebrated the first Investiture of the Magistral Delegation of the

Czech Republic in Olomouc, preceded by the Investiture of its Grand Prior, the archbishop of Olomouc Msgr. Jan Graubner.

On June 10 and 11, His Eminence presided at an Investiture ceremony in Pelplin, Poland; then he went to Pompeii, to the Marian shrine of the Virgin of the Rosary, founded by Blessed Bartolo Longo, a member of the Order, for the Investiture organized by the Lieutenancy for Italy South Tyrrhenian on June 24 and 25. From July 22 to 24 he was in Ireland for an Investiture in Maynooth.

The months of September and October were full of events for the Grand Master. September 3 he was in Madaba, Jordan, for the delivery of diplomas to new graduates of the University. From



Investiture in Paris. Lieutenancy for France.

September 5 to 18, the Grand Master travelled to the Pacific region where he presided over Investiture ceremonies in Guam, Taiwan and the Philippines. On September 21, Cardinal O'Brien again travelled to the Holy Land in order to welcome the new Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, on the occasion of his solemn entry into Jerusalem. A few days later, on September 24, His Eminence was in France where he celebrated the Investiture ceremony of thirty new Knights and Dames in Paris.

The month of October began with a visit overseas for the installation of the new Grand Prior of the USA Western Lieutenancy on October 1, followed by an Investiture in Tucson, Arizona, the next day. On October 4, Cardinal O'Brien received the Adelia prize, awarded by the Saint Pio Foundation in Tuckhaoe, New York. On October 8, the Grand Master was in Barcelona to celebrate the Investiture of the Lieutenancy for the Eastern Spain.

Another important moment of this month of the Rosary was the Jubilee pilgrimage of the Italian Lieutenancies – strongly desired by Cardinal O'Brien – to Pompeii, spiritual home of Blessed Bartolo Longo, the only lay member of the Order to be beatified. Having presided over the Investiture ceremony of the new Hungarian



Investiture in Barcelona. Lieutenancy for the Eastern Spain.

members in Budapest on 22 October, the month ended with the usual fall meeting of the Grand Magisterium at the headquarters of the Palazzo della Rovere in Rome. This year the meeting was held on October 25 and 26 to permit the celebration together, on the actual day of the anniversary, on October 25, of the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Palestine.

In November, the Grand Master celebrated two Investiture ceremonies in the United States: on November 5 in Boston and on November 18 in New York. On December 3 in Anagni (Italy), Cardinal O'Brien received the International Bonifacio VIII Award "... for a culture of Peace"



Investiture in Budapest. Lieutenancy for Hungary.

Investiture in Olomouc. Magistral Delegation for the Czech Republic.



from the City of Anagni 2016 and the International Award “Misericordes sicut Pater” for his work as Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre and his intense episcopal activity.

Returning to the United States in December, the Grand Master presided at Mass in Shreveport, Louisiana, for the 150th anniversary of the apparition and the miracle of St. John Berchmans, a seventeenth century Belgian Jesuit who appeared supernaturally to a dying American novice, who was later cured. During this celebration it was possible to venerate the relic of the heart of the Saint. On that occasion, the cardinal also met with a delegation of members of the Order.

On his return to Rome, Cardinal O’Brien participated in the celebrations of the Christmas season at the Vatican with the Holy Father.



Among the Knights and Dames of the Lieutenancy for USA Eastern who received the Investiture in New York, there were also five members from the Bahamas (Picture by Peter Ramsey, from the website Magnetic Media tv).



Investiture in Pelplin. Lieutenancy for Poland.



3

Visits to the Pacific and East Asia

From September 5 to 18, the Grand Master Cardinal Edwin O'Brien traveled to the Pacific and East Asia for two weeks of visits during which he celebrated three Investiture ceremonies: in Guam (1), Taiwan (2) and the Philippines (3), where the Order is growing.

In Guam, His Eminence received a gift from the Magistral Delegation: a copy of the statue of the patron saint of Guam, Saint Marian Kamalen. The statue dates to 1700 but its origin is shrouded in mystery. Nonetheless, it has a rich cultural history that stretches back to 1941, during World War II when Japan bombed Guam on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8. The statue of Saint Marian Kamalen was placed in safe and guarded by a girl who is now member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. Cardinal O'Brien's tour continued to Taiwan where the joy of another Investiture, celebrated on September 11. The last leg of this transatlantic trip was in the Philippines, a majority Catholic Asian country. The Grand Master was welcomed by Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Grand Prior of the Lieutenancy for the Philippines, Metropolitan Archbishop of Manila and President of Caritas Internationalis, who concelebrated the ceremony of Investiture of new Knights and Dames of the Order held September 15.



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IMPORTANT MOMENTS IN THE LIFE OF THE LIEUTENANCIES WORLDWIDE

Some Lieutenancies wanted to send the report of their activities during the past year. We invite our readers to read these texts rich in experiences on our site available in five languages – www.oessh.va – under the heading “Lieutenancies”. The photos that we publish on the following pages illustrate some great moments experienced by members of the Order of the different Lieutenancies who have written to us to bear witness in the publications of the Grand Magisterium.



ITALY CENTRAL - In addition to the various activities organized by the Lieutenancy for Italy Central, there were opportunities to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary and entrust actions in favor of the Holy Land to her. In particular, June 17 to 20, there was a pilgrimage to Lourdes, organized by the Rome Section headed by Lieutenant Saverio Petrillo.



SWITZERLAND - The Lieutenancy for Switzerland has experienced several intense moments during 2016, particularly from the spiritual point of view. In the picture a beautiful memory of the Investiture celebrated in Locarno in the church of Saint Francis.



USA WESTERN - The USA Western Lieutenancy has particularly taken to heart the invitation to dialogue between Jews, Christians and Muslims that Pope Francis addressed at the beginning of the Jubilee of Mercy. The Very Reverend Father Alexei Smith, a member of the Order who works in the ecumenical and interfaith office of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles recounts the many opportunities that the Lieutenancy has promoted at the level of mutual understanding and common social actions, from Phoenix to Salt Lake City and from Los Angeles to San Diego.

AUSTRIA - Since the beginning of the Jubilee of Mercy, many activities have involved the Lieutenancy for Austria in an atmosphere of joyful belonging to the universal Church by recalling the vocation of Knights, as stated by a member of the Order “to be a Knights also means being merciful”.



PHILIPPINES - During the 2011 pilgrimage to the Holy Land of the Lieutenancy for the Philippines, the then Patriarch Fouad Twal spoke to the Knights and Ladies of the need to forge a chaplaincy dedicated to Filipinos in Jordan. This community numbers about 45,000 and they need to be guided and accompanied spiritually by someone who knows their language and culture. The Lieutenancy took this request to heart and December 19, 2016, Father Gerald Metal arrived in Amman. In this photo we see him during the celebration of the Feast of the Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan along with various members of the Filipino community.

NETHERLANDS - One of the moments that particularly touched the Lieutenancy for the Netherlands in 2016 was the closure of the Priory of Emmaus in Maarsen, near Utrecht. The sisters of this community have been a faithful presence and support for the Lieutenancy since its foundation and for the past 60 years. In the photo we see the gift of the chalice from the superior of the community to the Lieutenancy and that will be the visible sign of the union in prayer between the nuns and members of the Order.



SPAIN WESTERN -

The Jubilee of Mercy has been a special year of grace. Particularly for new Knight Jean-Phillipe André Sendat of the Lieutenancy for Spain Western who received Investiture in Madrid on November 5, "Entering the Order of the Holy Sepulchre during the Year of Mercy was as if Jesus came to meet me. I feel joy, enthusiasm, peace, a desire for justice, compassion for others. I feel I have a big challenge ahead of me: the new evangelization and to offer hope to the Christians of the Holy Land".



FINLAND - In September 2016, the Lieutenancy for Finland traveled to Sweden in the footsteps of the saints, especially St. Bridget, on an annual pilgrimage. In fact the good news spread to the southwestern part of Finland from Sweden during the XI-XII century. Among the places visited during the pilgrimage, the brigidine convent of Djursholm, near Stockholm, where the group was joined by some Knights and Dames of the Lieutenancy for Sweden to celebrate Mass and for a convivial encounter.



USA NORTHEASTERN - In 2016, the USA Northeastern Lieutenancy celebrated its 35th anniversary. It was a great joy to share this moment with the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, and the Grand Prior, Cardinal Sean Patrick O'Malley, on the occasion of the Investiture ceremony that was held on November 5 in Boston and during which 50 new Knights and Dames were welcomed into the Order, bringing the number to 900 members of the Lieutenancy.



CANADA QUEBEC - On Saturday, December 3, Archbishop of Quebec Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix, Grand Prior of the Lieutenancy for Canada and Quebec, presided over the ceremony of Investiture at the Basilica-Cathedral of Our Lady of Quebec. Four new Knights received the Investiture during the ceremony. *(Photo by Daniel Abel, official photographer of the Basilica-Cathedral of Our Lady of Quebec)*

A KNIGHTLY INVESTITURE IN JERUSALEM IN 1413

The historical origins of the Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre is, of course, controversial. Contrary to what has been stated by ancient authors, authentic documentation has never been found to support the argument that the Order arose at the time of the Crusades and, even less, that it was founded just after the Christian conquest of Jerusalem in 1099 during the first crusade¹. According to current studies, it can only be claimed, based on irrefutable sources, that it was during the fourteenth century that noblemen and gentlemen first began to boast of the title of Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, after receiving their investiture – or renewing an oath previously taken in Europe – in Jerusalem, at the basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, according to the ancient codes of chivalry.

In the context of traditional medieval knighthood, these knights were part of a particular branch. Its members, however, did not operate within a legally structured institution, nor had a Grand Master as their head. On returning to their native lands, they resumed their place in society, returning to their everyday life within their own family². A prime example of this traditional practice among the European aristocracy is provided by the journal, published a few years ago, of the pilgrimage made by a high ranking Italian nobleman to the Holy Land in 1413³.

This precious document gives us a brief but detailed account of the journey there and back, made by Marquis Nicolò III d'Este, Lord of Ferrara in northern Italy, from 1394 to 1441. As befitted his rank, the Marquis had a great retinue, consisting of ten nobles, the Franciscan friar Francesco da Lendinara (accompanied by a brother friar) as chaplain, a doctor, some officers and a large number of servants, each one tasked with carrying out a variety of duties, for a total of fifty people. The officers included Chancellor Luchino dal Campo, who had been given the task

of drafting the diary of the whole trip.

Having left on April 6, 1413 bound for Venice, the party set sail on the 14th. After several stops, they landed in Jaffa, Palestine, on May 11, and then travelled directly to Jerusalem, arriving four days later. The first two days were devoted to the veneration of various places in the Holy City mentioned in the Gospels. Then, on the afternoon of May 16, the party made its entry into the Holy Sepulchre. In the evening the sacred edifice was closed by the Muslim authorities (the chronicler notes that its keys were held by “Turkmen”), the Ferrarese pilgrims, accompanied by some friars from the Franciscan Custody, remained inside, visiting and praying in the various chapels and Aedicule. Having finished their devotions, they were warned by the religious that the investiture would be preceded by the singing of the divine office and the celebration of three masses: those who had not yet confessed, were invited to the sacrament of penance. The others could eat, rest or pray, as best they believed. It was not, therefore, a real Vigil of Arms, but a night long vigil in the holy place (the so-called *incubatio*).

At midnight, the liturgy began with the singing of the divine office, which was followed by the celebration of three masses, the last of which was celebrated in the Holy Sepulchre itself. Then, after the distribution of the Eucharist to candidates to knighthood, preceded by the Marquis, he then initiated the investiture of six gentlemen, according to the customary rite: interrogation of the applicant to ascertain his intentions and awareness of the obligations that assumed, bestowing of the sword.

At this point, however, the ceremony undergoes a variant, which is the one that most interests us here. One of the gentlemen present, Messer Alberto della Sala, who was already a knight, relinquishes his sword and spurs of gold, saying he desired to renounce his previous

investiture “to be made a knight at the Sepulchre”. His sword was once again bound to his side. Thus, the entire group moved to the altar on Mount Calvary, where the Marquis bestowed the golden spurs on all.

Another episode enriches the narrative. The narrator notes how Nicholas III, though a knight for some time, had never worn the Spurs. In that particular circumstance, on Calvary, he asked Messer Alberto to tie on only the left golden spur (the left side of the body was considered the most noble, because it is where the heart beats) in eternal memory of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land. As for the other spur, he reserved the right to put it on only at the end of the next pilgrimage that he intended to fulfill to Santiago de Compostela. The ceremony ended with a sung Mass, after which those who had not received communion during the Mass at the Holy Sepulchre all received the Eucharist⁴.

The brief narration by Luchino dal Campo, presents us with an opportunity to make some observations. First, it proposes an albeit brief description of an investiture ceremony in the Holy Sepulchre. Unlike what will happen a century and a half later, in the fifteenth century, the clergy (in this case, the Franciscans of the Custody) only fulfills the priestly ministry, with the administration of the sacraments and the

celebration of Masses. The Investiture ceremony is officiated by a lay man, the highest ranking knight. Second, it is obvious that the sword and golden spurs were the most characteristic outward signs of knighthood: and this especially helps us understand why we still use them today, even though they are endowed with a different symbolic meaning. Third, we have documentary evidence of how previously invested Knights, gave up the title they had already acquired, to take on another one, that of “knight at the Sepulchre”. The report does not specify whether that name was also adopted by others, but it is likely that this was the case, if we consider the words spoken by the Marquis, who urged everyone not to forget “where they had received this Order of Knighthood.”⁵ Finally, the clarification of Nicholas III of wanting to put on another spur at the end of a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela shows how the religious investiture was further enhanced when its ritual – or part of it, as in this case – took place on having achieved the sacred goal of a pilgrimage.

However, on the morning of Wednesday, May 17, at the reopening of the doors by the “Turkmen”, the group emerged from the sacred building not without having paid a tribute in money. On the afternoon of that same day, the Marquis and his entourage left for Bethlehem. After visiting the Basilica of the Nativity and the



Jan van Scorel (1495- 1562), 12 members of the Confraternity of Pilgrims in Jerusalem from the city of Haarlem (Haarlem Frans Halsmuseum). The top left corner, an image of the shrine of the Holy Sepulchre. Of note, the fourth character from the left wears a Jerusalem cross around his neck.



The image shows three pilgrims from the 15th century, paying a tariff as they enter the Holy Sepulchre, depicted in stylized form on the right side and characterized by Christ's empty tomb.

surrounding places, the next day they returned to Jerusalem, where, on May 19, they began the return trip. It ended in Ferrara, July 6, 1413: the pilgrimage lasted around 92 days.

An incident that occurred on the way back, however, deserves mention. During the trip to Venice, the ship carrying the party dropped anchor in Cyprus. And during the stay on the island, an unusual dinner took place. Faced with a lavish spread, the most delicious dish being made from roasted peacocks, the Marquis and the new knights each pronounced a solemn vote. To understand the context, please note that at the time the peacock was considered a symbol of immortality because it was believed that his flesh could not rot: therefore, the most solemn oaths were pronounced over it. In this case, Nicholas III vowed that at the first feat of arms to which he would be called with a company made up of over a hundred men on horseback, he would lead the attack and that until he could fulfill his vow, he would fast every Friday. The rest uttered similar oaths, some explicitly assuming the obligation to fight the Turks and Saracens, others promptly pledged to observe the rules of honor, and others still swore allegiance to the Marquis⁶.

This brief ceremony became a more temporal

aspect to the religious ceremony celebrated in Jerusalem during the investiture. In the tradition, new knights feel obliged to recall the values of medieval chivalry: military courage, a sense of honor and loyalty to one's lord. And this tradition will be perpetuated among the knights of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem until the nineteenth century, when the medieval chivalry was but a distant memory.

Agostino Borromeo

¹ J.-P. de Gennes, *Les Chevaliers du Saint-Sépulchre de Jérusalem*, 2 volumes in 3 tomes, Cholet 1995 – Versailles 2004, I: *Origines et histoire générale de l'Ordre*, pp. 259-262.

² A. Borromeo, *L'Ordine Equestre del Santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme* in "Bollettino del Circolo S. Pietro" 132, n. 1 (January-June 2001) pp. 50-53.

³ Luchino dal Campo, *Viaggio del marchese Nicolò d'Este al Santo Sepolcro (1413)*. Edition and commentary by Caterina Brandoli, foreword by Franco Cardini, Firenze 2011

⁴ Luchino dal Campo, *Viaggio del marchese Nicolò d'Este*, cit. pp. 189-191; p. 282.

⁵ Luchino dal Campo, *Viaggio del marchese Nicolò d'Este*, cit. p. 190

⁶ Luchino dal Campo, *Viaggio del marchese Nicolò d'Este*, cit. pp. 236-241.





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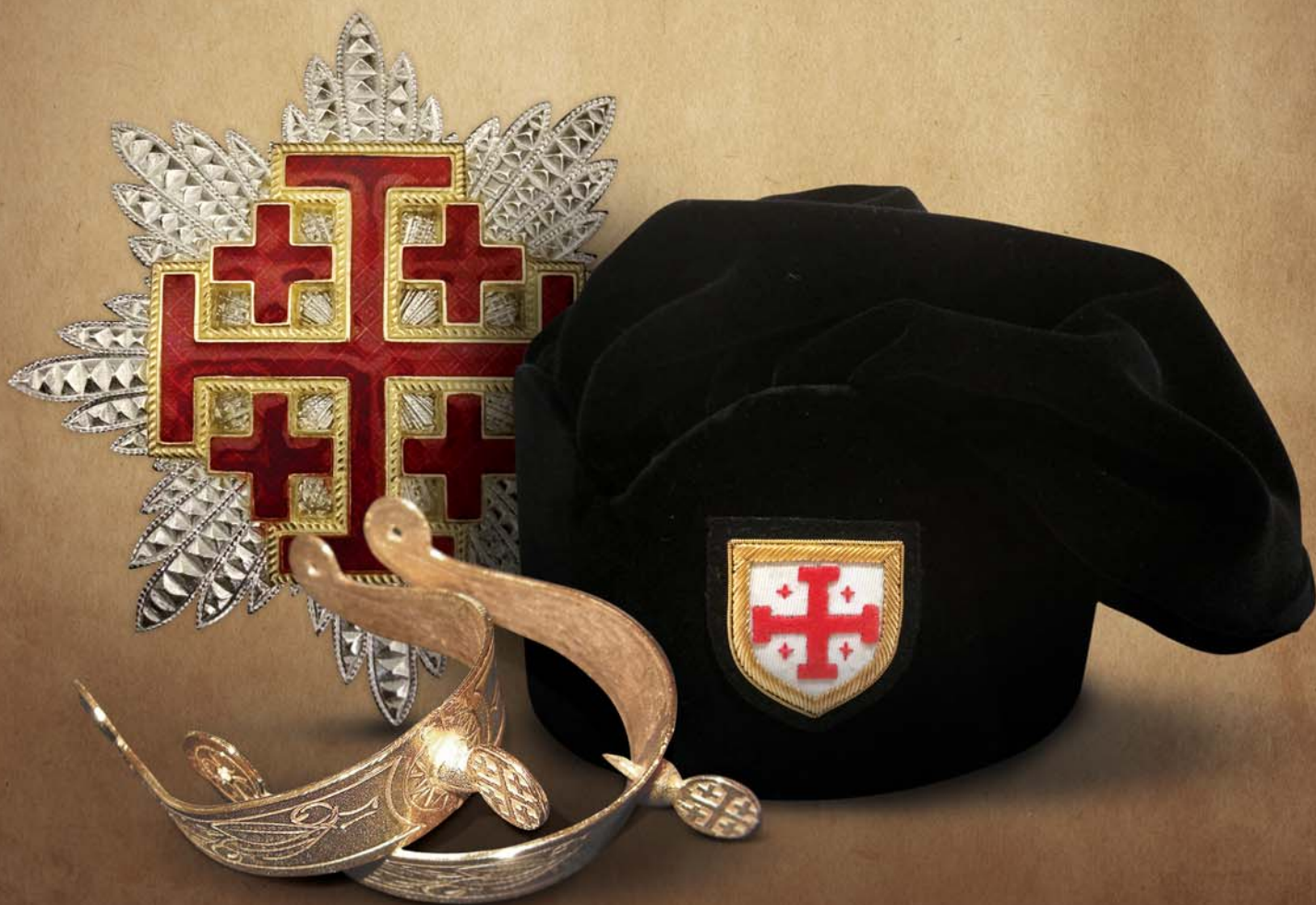
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