

# News Letter



ORDO EQUESTRIS SANCTI SEPULCRI HIERSOLYMITANI

info.oessh.va

## LET US PRAY WITH OUR BROTHERS OF THE EAST

"Lord our God,

You chose the East to send Your only Son and fulfil the plan of salvation.

It is a young woman of the East, the Virgin Mary, you chose to carry and give birth to Your only Son.

It is in the East that He grew up, worked, and chose His apostles and disciples.

It is in the East where He conveyed Your will and Your teachings, where He performed miracles and wonders.

It is in the East where He gave Himself up.

It is in the East where He accepted suffering and death, and rose again.

It is from the East that He ascended into heaven to sit at Your right hand.

We ask You to give the necessary strength to Your children in the East so that they may be fortified in the faith and hope of Your holy apostles.

Amen."

**Saint Ephrem the Syrian\***

\* Saint Ephrem the Syrian, born in Nisibis (now Turkey) around 306, is venerated in the Eastern Churches, and also in the West. He was proclaimed Doctor of the Church by Pope Benedict XV in 1920. A Deacon, this great theologian is one of the greatest Syriac-speaking poets. He died on 9 June 373 in Edessa, where he had lived for ten years, after contracting the plague while attending the sick.

### The Order in Union with the Universal Church

A LAND THAT CONTINUES TO BEAR FRUITS OF HOLINESS FOR ALL OF ITS INHABITANTS	III
THE POPE WITH THE CARMELITES OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE CONGREGATION OF THE ROSARY SISTERS	V
EXPOSITION OF THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN	VI

### The Order in Union with the universal Church

A LETTER FROM THE POPE TO THE GRAND MASTER	VII
THE SPRING MEETING OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM	IX
THE CARDINAL GRAND MASTER'S VISITS	XI
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN LIEUTENANTS	XI
PARTNERSHIP WITH "VATICAN INSIDER"	XIII

### The Order and the Holy Land

SEARCHING FOR NORMAL DAILY LIFE: THE CHALLENGE OF REFUGEES IN JORDAN	XIV
FIRST MASS CELEBRATED FOR THE FEAST OF OUR LADY WOMAN OF VALOR IN TEL AVIV	XV
SCHOOL SUBSIDIES AND WALLS NOT TO BE BUILT: THE CHALLENGE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES FACE IN THE HOLY LAND	XV

### The life of the Lieutenancies

THE CONTRIBUTION OF LAITY AND FAMILIES TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH	XVIII
CONFERENCE HELD IN TRIESTE ON JOHN PAUL II AND THE HOLY LAND A YEAR AFTER HIS CANONIZATION	XIX



### IMPRESSUM

GRAND MAGISTERIUM  
OF THE EQUESTRIAN ORDER  
OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE  
OF JERUSALEM  
00120 VATICAN CITY  
E-mail: gmag@oessh.va

## REFLECTIONS OF THE GRAND MASTER

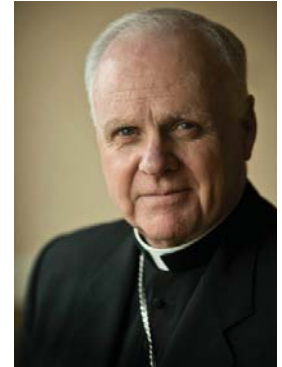
As the pages of our "new and improved" Newsletter will indicate, recent Spring weeks have included several important meetings: our Grand Magisterium and European Lieutenants, both in Rome and more recently, our North American Lieutenants in Quebec.

While these sessions offer welcomed moments for social interaction, they are so crucial for bringing us all up to date on the events, opinions and suggestions of our far-flung members. Important as well, is the chance for us at "Headquarters" to relate our activities and plans, and explain developments that have taken place in recent months.

Interesting it is, that no participants at these meetings receive a salary from the Order at any level...all volunteer! Participants are invariably spirited and candid in their exchanges, and I suspect as much is accomplished during informal conversations as during the often lengthy formal sessions.

In this effort, special credit is due to Professor Agostino, our incredibly hard working and dedicated Governor General, to our competent and insightful Vice Governors General Giorgio Moroni Stampa

and Patrick D. Powers, and to our wise and very experienced Assessor, Archbishop Antonio Franco. Hopefully, their intense efforts to encourage open communication on all sides will encourage our lieutenants to expend every effort, in turn, to deliver information accurately to their every single member.



Above all, we must be united in a fervent intention to keep the Gospel of Jesus Christ alive in His Holy Land. Success in reaching our goal might be measured by words recently offered to our accomplished Holy Land Commission by our Apostolic Nuncio to Israel, Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzarotto:

"There is no other Agency, Society or Order in the Catholic Church that has done more for the Holy Land than the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem".

For which we offer thanks to Our Lord, and to our every single and generous member.



*The Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre with the Lieutenants from North America in Quebec, in June 2015 (a report on this meeting will be included in our next Newsletter).*

## The Order in Union with the Universal Church

# A LAND THAT CONTINUES TO BEAR FRUITS OF HOLINESS FOR ALL OF ITS INHABITANTS

*Coverage of the canonizations of the first two modern  
Palestinian saints: Mariam Baouardy  
and Marie Alphonsine Danil Ghattas.*

St. Peter's Square was filled with many languages and colors on Sunday May 17, including the colors of the Palestinian flag. The joy of the crowd, and in particular of the 3,000 pilgrims who came directly from the Holy Land, was tangible. Four saints were canonized, two of whom were Mariam Baouardy and Marie Alphonsine Danil Ghattas, daughters of the Holy Land and the first two modern Palestinian saints. Respectively founders of the Carmel of Bethlehem and of the Congregation of the Rosary Sisters, the two saints lived their call to holiness from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Mariam Baouardy died while she was very young in 1878) until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Marie Alphonsine Danil Ghattas died in 1927).

Also present in the square was President Mahmoud Abbas, who had met with Pope Francis the previous day. During their meeting, as reported by an official, "great satisfaction was expressed regarding the agreement reached with regard to the text for a comprehensive Agreement between the Parties, about certain essential aspects of the life and activities of the Catholic Church in Palestine. The Agreement will be signed in the near future\*."

During his homily, Pope Francis recalled Mariam Baouardy's "docility to the Holy



*A delegation of Palestinian Christians in Rome was overjoyed during the celebration on May 17, 2015, paying tribute to the testimony of their canonized compatriots: Saint Mariam and Saint Marie-Alphonsine.*

Spirit", which "made her a means of encounter and fellowship with the Muslim world". He went on to highlight how Marie Alphonsine Danil Ghattas "understood clearly what it means to radiate the love of



\* The global agreement between the Holy See and Palestine, concluded on May 13, was signed on Friday June 26. It clearly recognizes the "State of Palestine". Negotiated over the past fifteen years, this bilateral agreement mainly concerns the activity of the Catholic Church and its legal recognition in the Palestinian Territories, and reaffirms the desire for a resolution of this issue and also of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians in the context of a two-state solution.





*Knights and Dames of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in Saint Peter's Square during the canonization of the two Palestinian saints.*

God in the apostolate, and to be a witness to meekness and unity. She shows us the importance of becoming responsible for one another, of living lives of service one to another."

**"The Holy Land is fruitful and brings forth fruits of holiness!"**

What does it mean today, therefore, to be children of the Holy Land, and what spiritual fruits can this happy event bring forth to Palestinian Christians and the whole Christian community?

His Beatitude Fouad Twal, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, sees this event as a spiritually significant moment for his land: "In the midst of all our difficulties, Mariam and Marie Alphonsine are a light on our path, an invitation not to be discouraged and to keep our eyes fixed on our goal and our shared vocation as Christians: holiness. If today the Holy Land, so torn by violence and divisions, sometimes seems disfigured, our two saints come to restore its sanctity. It is as if Mariam and Marie Alphonsine, by

their example, were saying to us, 'Yes, the Holy Land can be fruitful, and it can bear fruits of holiness.'" His Beatitude continued speaking about the message left by these new saints: "It is a message of hope and love, a message of encouragement to holiness through humility and simplicity." (To read the full interview that Msgr. Fouad Twal released to us go to our official website <http://info.oessh.va> as well as to our partner website Vatican Insider <http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/inquiries-and-interviews/detail/articolo/oessh-40924/>).

The Patriarch's words were echoed at the festive celebration held on Saturday, May 16, at the Basilica of St. Sabina in Rome, where a delegation from the Holy Land was gathered, along with many devotees of the new saints, including members of Order of the Holy Sepulchre from various countries.

Archbishop Maroun Lahham, Patriarchal Vicar to Jordan of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, before entering the prayer vigil, said in all earnestness: "These two saints teach us that the last word is never suffering, it is never abandonment, it is not





القديسة  
مريم يسوع المصلوب باوردي

St. Mariam of Jesus Crucified Baouardy  
(1846-1878)

القديسة  
ماري الفونسين غطاس

St. Marie Alphonsine Ghattas  
(1843-1927)

*Image of the two Palestinian saints with Our Lady of Palestine, who together watch over the Holy Land and all its inhabitants.*

the cross but instead the glory, the resurrection and the light. Calvary is not the last word but the gateway to a better life."

In the midst of the crowd were those who distributed flags and liturgy booklets. Among them was Ibrahim, who looks very young but is already a doctor living and working near Ramallah. He shared that he was "proud that there are two saints coming from Jesus' land, and that this is a message for the whole world: our land is still alive." When asked what the future had in store for him, he replied: "I'm studying German because I want to specialize in my work, but I want to continue to work for my people and to help them."

The message of Mariam Baouardy and Marie Alphonsine Danil Ghattas is a message that is destined to resound forcefully both within the Church and beyond. Patriarch Twal concluded: "Their search for wisdom and their divine message represent a model of perfection for Christians as well as for Jews and Muslims. Both have Mary, Miriam, as their first name; and this name, common to our three traditions, is also a sign for our time, indicating that they can speak to all three without distinction."

E.D.

## THE POPE WITH THE CARMELITES OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE CONGREGATION OF THE ROSARY SISTERS

The day following the canonizations, Pope Francis met with the spiritual daughters of Mariam Baouardy and Marie Alphonsine Danil Ghattas, who carry forward the legacy of the new saints. The Holy Father asked them to "pray for persecuted Christians who are driven from their homes, from their lands, and are victims of persecution 'with white gloves'".



## EXPOSITION OF THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN

"**T**he shroud draws our attention to the tormented face and body of Jesus and, at the same time, directs our attention toward the face of every suffering and unjustly persecuted person. It takes us on the same path as the gift of love of Jesus," Pope Francis told us on 21 June, after pausing in silent prayer before this icon of "the greatest love" (John 15:13), exposed in the Cathedral of Turin. During the celebration of Mass on the same day in Vittorio Square, he stressed "the faithful love" of the merciful Father, who "makes everything new", and of Whom Jesus is the "face". Cardinal Andrea Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, Honorary Assessor of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, participated in this pilgrimage of the Holy Father, accompanied by Pier Carlo Visconti, Advisor of the Grand Magisterium, three days before the closure of the extraordinary exposition of the Holy Shroud.

The Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre went to Turin from 25 to 26 April, just after the inauguration of the

exposition, to pray before the Holy Shroud for the intentions of the inhabitants of the Holy Land in communion with all the members of the Order around the World.

At the inauguration of the extraordinary exposition on 19 April, the Order was invited to participate in a program on "RAI Internazionale", broadcast on Sundays on the five continents: Mgr Antonio Franco, Assessor, was interviewed by Sister Myriam Castelli about the "Resurrection spirituality", whilst Father David Neuhaus, Patriarchal Vicar for the Hebrew-speaking Catholic community in Israel, intervened live from the Holy Land.

Moreover, the Communication Service of the Grand Magisterium of the Order worked in partnership with the *Edizioni Terra Santa* during the exposition of the Shroud. The free application of an e-book for Smartphones and I pad, downloaded on google play ("Il mistero della Sindone"), enabled pilgrims who went to Turin to become aware of the spiritual mission of the Order.

**"ICON OF LOVE"**

*The Holy Shroud shows us the face of all the persecuted people: this is essentially what Pope Francis said after praying in silence before the Holy Shroud in Turin on 21 June. According to the Holy Father in a speech during the prayer of the Angelus, after the celebration of Mass in Piazza Vittorio in the capital of the Piedmont region, this mysterious shroud is the "icon of love" of Christ. The printed image of the body of a tormented man, tortured and crucified, directs us to "the face of every suffering and unjustly persecuted person," and questions the conscience of each one of us regarding our own personal complicity with evil in today's world.*

## Proceedings of the Grand Magisterium

# A LETTER FROM THE POPE TO THE GRAND MASTER

To Our Dear Brother  
**Edwin Frederick Cardinal O'Brien**  
Archbishop Emeritus of Baltimore

Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem

We are delighted now to turn Our attention to you, Our Venerable Brother, as you prepare to celebrate the golden jubilee of your ordination to the priesthood with a spirit of gratitude and thanksgiving. Indeed, fifty years have passed since that memorable day – the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, 1965 – when, having diligently completed your philosophical and theological studies at the archdiocesan seminary of Saint Joseph in Dunwoodie, you were ordained a priest.

The occasion of this happy jubilee offers us a welcomed opportunity to recall the various stages of your pastoral journey, first in your native Archdiocese of New York, then among soldiers in Vietnam as well as within the United States of America. Later you studied in Rome at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas, earning a doctorate in moral theology. Returning to your archdiocese, you assiduously carried out your many pastoral duties while fulfilling the responsibilities of Vice-Chancellor. You then showed your many talents as archdiocesan Director of Communications and as private secretary to the Archbishop of New York. In the following years, you devoted yourself to the prudent and wise formation of priests, first as rector of St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers and then as rector of the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

Having recognized your skills and your priestly zeal, Saint John Paul II raised you to the rank of Bishop and appointed you Auxiliary of New York on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1996. From 1997 to 2007 you carried out the role of Ordinary of the Archdiocese for the Military Services of the United States of America, tirelessly preaching salvific truths to the enlisted men and women with due consideration to the needs of the present day. Then, in 2007, Our Venerable Predecessor Benedict XVI appointed you Metropolitan Archbishop of Baltimore, whose people you led in the way of truth and holiness for four years. You made great



strides there in advancing the new evangelization, and you took particular care to promote vocations to the priesthood and to the revival of Catholic schools. Now, as you fulfill the duties of Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, which you began in 2011, ever faithful to your episcopal motto *Pastores dabo vobis*, you carefully attend to the spiritual life of this ancient and venerable association. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI elevated you to the rank of Cardinal, thus showing you his particular admiration, thanks, and trust in your outstanding abilities.

Neither are We unaware of the energy and expertise you bring to several Roman dicasteries, especially the Congregation for Eastern Churches, the Congregation for Catholic Education and Institutes of Study, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*. We also wish to acknowledge your zeal, your fidelity towards the Church's Magisterium and your eagerness in carrying out whatever duties you are entrusted with. In both your priestly and episcopal assignments, you have always placed primary importance on the spiritual wellbeing of those you serve, as well as of those with whom you serve.

In a spirit of fraternal charity, therefore, We are extremely happy to join you in giving thanks to God, the giver of all good gifts, and to commend you for your fruitful ministry.

We also extend our most sincere wishes to you, Our Venerable Brother, that the Good Shepherd, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, may vigilantly watch over you with his care and protection. As you celebrate this special anniversary, We wish to impart to you Our Apostolic Blessing, which We also extend to all those who will join in celebrating with you. At the same time, We beg your prayers and theirs, so that We may assiduously carry out the Petrine mission entrusted to Us.

*Given from the Vatican,  
on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015,  
the third of Our Pontificate.*





## THE SPRING MEETING OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM

*Members of the Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre met in the presence of the Grand Master on 21 and 22 April 2015, thereby fulfilling their mission of coordinating the 63 Lieutenancies and Magistral Delegations throughout the world.*

During this Spring session were addressed the questions of the spiritual life of the 30,000 members of the Order, and also the material needs associated with their support of the Catholic Institutions in the Holy Land.

Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Grand Master, opened the meeting, welcoming the presence of the new Master of Ceremonies, Monsignor Fortunato Frezza, renowned biblical scholar, hoping with his help to develop a greater spirituality within the Order. He affirmed his willingness to continue visiting Lieutenancies, having already covered 26 countries. He had planned a dozen additional trips before the end of the year, in particular for Investiture Ceremonies. He said he would then be available to respond to further invitations addressed to him.

The Governor General, Agostino Borromeo, recalled that no Grand Master had ever travelled the world so much, meeting members of the Order on their home territory, trying to promote on-site links with leaders of the local Churches. This will again be the case in October, during the first joint meeting of the Lieutenants of Asia and Oceania in Australia, which will include the bishops who have the responsibility of Grand Priors in the Lieutenancies. In a quick review of recent months, the Governor General also welcomed the development of the Order in Latvia and the Czech Republic, as well as the positive results of the accounts of the

Grand Magisterium. The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Archbishop Fouad Twal, then spoke of the great event of the canonization in Rome on 17 May 2015 of two Palestinian Sisters, Mariam Baouardi and Marie-Alphonsine Ghattas, with the participation of a delegation of about 3,000 pilgrims from the Holy Land.

He stressed the urgency of not forgetting the plight of the people of this region, especially the desperate living conditions of the survivors of the bombing of the summer of 2014 in Gaza, and especially the plight of refugees from Syria and Iraq in Jordan. The Patriarch was pleased that, after a long procedural battle, the Israeli High Court of Justice had invalidated the route of the separation wall which was to halve the Cremisan Valley, thus allowing 58 Christian families in Beit Jala to escape expulsion.

The debate continued for several hours, behind closed doors, on a delicate subject: the unexpected debt that affects the University of Madaba, founded with the support of two Popes, Saint John Paul II and Benedict XVI, in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Archbishop Antonio Franco, Assessor of the Order, analyzed the facts on behalf of the Commission set up a few months earlier by the Secretariat of State of the Holy See, to study the problem. He highlighted the good current academic management of the institution, explaining the debt by initial investments for which payment has not been honoured. A letter to Lieutenants was formulated during the



meeting of the Grand Magisterium, to keep them informed of the decision taken by the Holy See to support the University with new guarantees, through a Vatican Foundation, specifying the lack of responsibility of the Order in this situation, but by appealing to the solidarity of its members in the interest of the universal Church.

The meeting then resumed, following the original agenda. The General

Administrator of the Patriarchate described several human issues in the Holy Land, including housing of families in Jerusalem, reception of migrants, teachers' salaries, and pastoral care of young people, many of whom wish they could go to Krakow in 2016 for World Youth Day.

With 67 parishes and 43 schools for 90,000 faithful Catholics of the Latin Rite (42,000 in Jordan, 30,000 in Israel and 18,000 in Palestine), the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem is facing many challenges – from Cyprus, through Israel and the Palestinian Territories, to Jordan. The Order of the Holy Sepulchre supports various projects each year to help with the situation, in addition to the monthly assistance paid to the Patriarchate for institutions like schools for example.

The President of the Holy Land Commission, Thomas MacKiernan, presented a report on those projects after a field visit in March. In 2014 the Order helped the Centre for Migrants in Tel Aviv,



*In a Jordanian parish of the Latin Patriarchate: caravans installed to lodge refugees from other countries of the Middle East.*

the school of Mafraq, the Zarqa parish, and the Na'our school. Among the new proposals in 2015, the Order will help fund a home for children in the Galilean parish of Jaffa, a multicultural area at the Centre of Our Lady of Peace in Jordan, and a home for refugees in a parish church of Amman.

The Grand Magisterium, which manages donations from all Lieutenancies, had a better record than the previous year, with 10,981,000 Euros in total, as explained by Engineer and Advisor Pier Carlo Visconti. Pierre Blanchard, for his part, described asset management and securities investments of the Order in the service of the institutions of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Finally the Chancellor Ivan Rebernik kept members of the Grand Magisterium abreast of the latest work involving communications of the Grand Magisterium, especially the creation of a new website in progress, and the important work undertaken to better conserve the historic archives.



## THE CARDINAL GRAND MASTER'S VISITS

Cardinal O'Brien traveled to Disentis, Switzerland, from May 8 to 10, to preside over the Investiture Ceremony. Most recently, in early June, the Grand Master attended the American Lieutenants Meeting, which took place in Quebec.

In September, His Eminence will visit various Lieutenancies for the Investitures: Scotland (September 5), Sweden (September 7), Slovenia (September 12) and USA Northwestern (September 20). In the same month, Cardinal O'Brien will attend the World Meeting of Families with the Holy Father in Philadelphia.

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN LIEUTENANTS

On 11 and 12 May 2015 some thirty European Lieutenants of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre held their annual meeting at the Palazzo Della Rovere, headquarters of the Order, situated near Saint Peter's Square, Rome, in the presence of the Grand Master of the Order, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, and representatives of the Grand Magisterium.

In opening the session the Grand Master specially welcomed the new Master of Ceremonies, Mgr Fortunato Frezza, responsible for supporting the spiritual life of the Order, as well as new Lieutenants from Germany and Portugal, and the Magistral Delegate of Latvia, a country where the first Investiture took place last November. He then stressed his willingness to continue to visit members of the Order





*The European Lieutenants gathered in the Palazzo Della Rovere, in May 2015.*

on all continents, to offer his contribution in mobilizing them in favour of Eastern Christians, many of whom have found refuge in the parishes of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, particularly in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The Governor, Agostino Borromeo, continued by responding immediately to a libel that Lieutenants had received in previous days concerning the Columbus hotel. Clarifying the situation, he explained that, since 2001, in compliance with the Constitution of the Order, the successive Grand Masters decided to increase the financial "reserve" in order to maintain and restore all of the block of the Palazzo Della Rovere, part of which has been leased to the Columbus Hotel for the past fifty years. The latter will vacate the premises soon and the future rental envisaged with another company should enable the Order both to cover all expenses of the Grand Magisterium and to generate profits for the Holy Land. There is therefore total transparency in this operation, as was

demonstrated by the Governor who,

having explained the situation, decided personally to forgive his accusers, and to extend a hand of friendship in view of the forthcoming Jubilee of Mercy. Lieutenants unanimously assured the Grand Master and the Governor of their full support.

After this clarification the Chancellor Ivan Rebernik spoke of the numerical growth of the Order, presenting the statistics of the previous year, rejoicing that nearly 300 new members have joined the Order, offsetting recorded deaths. He also spoke of the communication efforts made in recent months, particularly with the decision to create a new website in five languages, at the level of the Grand Magisterium, in conjunction with the services of the Holy See.

The Engineer Pier Carlo Visconti for his part presented the financial report of the Grand Magisterium, showing an increase in donations for 2014. Pierre Blanchard gave details on the management of investments and securities. President of the Holy Land



Commission of the Grand Magisterium, Thomas McKiernan stressed the need for a kindergarten for the Saint James Vicariate serving the Hebrew-speaking Catholics in Israel, before describing the three projects in 2014 in Jordan: work in the parish of Mafraq, in that of Zarka North, and for the school of Na'our. The 2015 projects are related to the parish of Jaffa in Nazareth, Israel, and the adjoining school, the Center Our Lady of Peace which hosts refugees in Jordan, and to the parish of Marj Al-Hamam, Amman, where caravans are installed for the Middle East refugees. "No other organization does as much as you for the Holy Land," said Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzarotto, the Apostolic Nuncio in Israel and Cyprus and Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine, receiving the members of the Holy Land Commission.

The debate with the Lieutenants related in particular to the wish to see the emergence of more projects of a pastoral nature, which will be passed on to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which addresses requests to the Grand Magisterium that are, indeed, often related to its real estate capital in Jordan, currently the most stable country in the Middle East for Christians.

The issue of recruitment also occupied part of the meeting; the Lieutenants affirming their desire to strengthen the quality of Christian life of members, men

and women, so that through their testimony, the Order can develop further, away from worldliness, ensuring that those only seeking honours and medals are excluded to better accommodate humble and generous candidates, truly committed to Christ, engaged in their local church. "The difficulty is not to find candidates, the difficulty is to find good candidates," summed up a new Lieutenant. Everything will be done now for the evangelical renewal of the Order, in the spirit of the pontificate of Francis.

The debate continued on the issue of the significant debt relating to the University of Madaba, following the information letter addressed to Lieutenants after the meeting of the Grand Magisterium, in late April. Archbishop Antonio Franco, Assessor of the Order, recalled the decision of the Holy See to save this university founded in Jordan with the support of two Popes, noting that the Order – which has no responsibility in this issue – is invited to participate in this action through a Vatican Foundation. The members of the Order, especially through their connections, can help the Providence of God to gradually restore the financial equilibrium of the university that is seen in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as an institution involving the Church of Rome.

F.V.

## PARTNERSHIP WITH "VATICAN INSIDER"

The Communication Department of the Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre has, for some weeks, worked in partnership with the Vatican Insider site, where from now on our news will be well circulated in English, Italian and Spanish. The letter of Cardinal O'Brien for Easter was, for example, posted on this site. This is a secular site, attentive to the teachings of Pope Francis, moderated by journalist Andrea Tornielli of La Stampa. To communicate effectively we could not remain isolated. Last autumn, the headquarters of the Grand Magisterium hosted a diplomatic conference, organized in conjunction with the Vatican Insider, in the presence of Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of the Holy See: the event, reported in the December Newsletter, marked the beginning of our collaboration with this site (<http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/>).



## The Order and the Holy Land

# SEARCHING FOR NORMAL DAILY LIFE: THE CHALLENGE OF REFUGEES IN JORDAN

In recent years Jordan had already become the home of 30,000 Iraqi refugees. Due to the ISIS militants' advancement to Mosul and the Nineveh Plains, some 17,000 new refugees have knocked on the doors of the Hashemite Kingdom, which has granted them entry visas thanks to the generosity of King Abdallah II. They are men, women and families who were denied their property, and who, in many cases, were persecuted because of their Christian faith.

There are various challenges that they face upon arriving to Jordan: finding a place to settle, dealing with the necessary procedures for documents, and attempting to overcome the trauma, so that they, step by step, can begin to live a normal life again. It is within this context of necessary support for those who have lost everything and are trying to get back on their feet that the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, in collaboration with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem's "Our Lady of Peace" Centre in Amman, has financed special activities for the refugees who are welcomed there.

A day trip to Petra was organized and took place on April 18, which included a guided tour, lunch and horseback riding for several dozen refugees who are hosted by the Centre. Father Ala' Amat, director of the "Our Lady of Peace" Centre, said that "the importance of this initiative lies in wanting to revive hope within these families, and to strengthen their courage".

The Lieutenancy of Portugal has directly taken to heart the situation of these families' children and their need to be reinserted as



*Education is necessary for refugees to enable them to regain confidence in the future.*

soon as possible back into a normal environment. "If you think for a moment about the whirlwind of emotions that afflict a child who has been removed from his environment", explains Nuno Maria Michael Gabriel Rafael de Bragança van Uden, Lieutenant of Portugal, "it is clear that we must not only feed and clothe the children, but also support their emotional stability. Education, through teaching, but also through the regular evaluation of their undertakings, such as being in a classroom, having a professor and being part of a project: this is a tool that allows these children to get back on the path of life."

Thanks to the support of the Portuguese Lieutenancy, the Centre in Amman has set up courses in English, computer science and physical education for children who now have the opportunity to go to school again. This project is showing great results and helping young people to gradually regain confidence in the future.





ANDRES BERGAMINI

## FIRST MASS CELEBRATED FOR THE FEAST OF OUR LADY WOMAN OF VALOR IN TEL AVIV

On May 9, Msgr. Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, Patriarchal Vicar for Israel, celebrated the first Mass for the Feast of Our Lady Woman of Valor in the Centre that was recently opened for Hebrew-speaking Catholics and Migrants in Tel Aviv, due to the substantial support of the Order that has taken to heart the situation of these faithful and the need for a centre that would welcome them. Hundreds of people attended the Mass, which was accompanied by hymns in the various languages that are spoken at the Centre: Tagalog, Konkani, Sinhalese, and Hebrew. After Msgr. Marcuzzo's moving homily on Mary and the figure of the Woman of Valor in the book of Proverbs (Prov 31:10-31), the Mass ended with words of gratitude from Fr. David Neuhaus S.J., Patriarchal Vicar for Hebrew-speaking Catholics and Coordinator for the Pastoral care of migrants. The celebration continued with a meal shared in fraternity.

## SCHOOL SUBSIDIES AND WALLS NOT TO BE BUILT: THE CHALLENGE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES FACE IN THE HOLY LAND

Often in the Holy Land the witness of the Christian community and the complexity of the situations in which the Church has to operate are two sides of the same coin.

Claudio Maina, Director of the Secretariat of Solidarity for Schools and Institutions in the Holy Land\* which supports schools that are neither linked to the Custody of the Holy Land nor to the Latin Patriarchate, expresses in an



\* The Secretariat of Solidarity was established by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in 1977, at the request of the agencies that are part of ROACO (Reunion of Aid Agencies for the Eastern Churches). It is dependent upon the Apostolic Delegation in Jerusalem and works closely with papal representatives, primarily in the service of Catholic schools in the Holy Land (Palestine, Israel, Jordan and Cyprus) which supports schools that are neither linked to the Custody of the Holy Land nor to the Latin Patriarchate.



interview, published in full on the Vatican Insider website (<http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/world-news/detail/articolo/oessh-41340/>), his concerns about the situation surrounding Catholic schools in the Holy Land. It is evident that "there is serious concern weighing on schools in Israel over threats from the Ministry of Education to drastically reduce funding, while in Palestine it has still not yet been possible to create a pension fund for teachers". In addition to this there has been a decline in Christian children attendance at these schools. Of the 56,000 children who attended Catholic school last year, 48% are Christians, while the majority of the others are Muslim, and some are also Druze or Jewish. Maina said: "One might wonder why, given that the decline is due only partially to emigration. There are many reasons that cannot be generalized. However, if we look at the poorest areas, it is often the burden of school fees that makes Christians turn to public schools." In order to curb this phenomenon – we might add – the Order provides significant aid to schools of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and a portion of this is used to pay for the education of boys and girls who come from families in need.

### **"Christian Schools are not for sale"**

On May 27, the Office of Christian Schools in Israel organized a demonstration in front of the Ministry of Education in Jerusalem. They were protesting political discrimination, which for three years has been exerted by the Ministry against Christian schools through a gradual reduction in state subsidies, while schools that accommodate Jewish students continue to receive them in their entirety. On September 1 of last year, a day-long strike had been canceled when the Ministry showed a willingness to negotiate. Since then a commission has been created, which, after eight months of work, has proposed



*Catholic schools in the Holy Land encourage interreligious dialogue and the culture of encounter, thus contributing to peace. For example, in a school in Haifa there are little phrases on the walls of the playground encouraging children to love one another (here we can see teachers and pupils trying to put these "slogans" into practice each day through games).*

that Christian schools become part of the public system, and therefore lose the ability to carry on Christian education. Faced with this unsatisfactory proposal, a group of about 700 people gathered in protest, using slogans such as "Take your hands off our schools" and "Christian schools are not for sale".

Claudio Maina recounted some of his experiences of daily life in Catholic schools in the Holy Land, and stressed that education imbued with Christian values is an important tool to promote coexistence and dialogue. The Rosary Sisters' school in Gaza, for example, seems an oasis of peace in a city where you can still see the consequences of the conflict: "The religious and teachers are ingeniously finding ways to help children recover from the traumas of the conflict and return to a normal life. Another example is a school in Jordan where most of the students are Muslim. Every year at Christmas they send me an envelope containing some money, the result of the students' small sacrifices, which they wish to send to help other poorer children. Then there is the example of a school in Haifa, Israel, where in the courtyard you see large murals illustrating their mottos: to love everyone, to love first, to love our enemies... Every morning the students and teachers are invited to choose one of these mottos together and to put it into practice during the day."







*The construction of a wall in the Cremisan Valley will not go forward, thanks to a courageous decision by Israeli judges who listened to the arguments of the local population.*

### **A battle won against the Wall**

Another difficult situation for the Holy Land is that of the separation barrier. It is with great joy that on April 2, after nine years of legal disputes, the final verdict was released from the Israeli Supreme Court on the construction of the wall in the Cremisan Valley (which would have caused the separation of two Salesian religious houses and expropriated land belonging to 58 Christian families) which was described as "damaging to the local population and the monasteries of the valley". In addition, the courts noted that "the plan of the Wall, as

suggested by the Ministry of Defense, is not the only option that would permit a guarantee of security with the least possible damage, in compliance with Israeli Administrative Law." As reported by the Patriarch Fouad Twal during the Spring session of the Grand Magisterium, this excellent news is considered as "a great victory for democracy in Israel", as the judges have been courageous in making this decision, ordering the army to draw up alternative routes for the wall and for the local community who "since the petition in 2006 have met every Friday to celebrate Mass in this place."

## **TAILORING SUPPLIES**



CAPES  
MEDALS  
ACCESSORIES

*Barbiconi*  
Sartoria ecclesiastica

BARBICONI SRL Via Santa Caterina da Siena 58/60 - 00186 Roma - Italia

[www.barbiconi.it](http://www.barbiconi.it) - [info@barbiconi.it](mailto:info@barbiconi.it)



## The life of the Lieutenancies

The Lieutenancies are invited to contact us to share their experiences:  
[comunicazione@oessh.va](mailto:comunicazione@oessh.va)

# THE CONTRIBUTION OF LAITY AND FAMILIES TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

*Excerpts from an interview with Helene Lund, Magistral Delegate of Norway.*

*In view of the forthcoming Synod on the Family in October 2015, we would like to offer a brief reflection on the life of the laity within the Order, and in particular on the importance of families.*

In the year 1988, John Paul II published the apostolic exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, highlighting the role of the laity within the Catholic Church. "With this Exhortation the lay faithful are invited to take up again and reread, meditate on and assimilate with renewed understanding and love, the rich and fruitful teaching of the Council which speaks of their participation in the threefold mission of Christ": the priestly, prophetic and kingly (CL 14). The entire Church is called to work in the Father's vineyard, and in this mission that has been entrusted "the lay faithful have an essential and irreplaceable role: through them the Church of Christ is made present in the various sectors of the world, as a sign and source of hope and of love" (CL7).

The Equestrian Order of the Holy

Sepulchre, as a lay institution placed under the protection of the Holy See, feels this call in a special way. During her visit to Rome in 2013 for the gathering of the European Lieutenants, Helene Lund, Magistral Delegate of Norway, shared her thoughts on the topic with the Communication Service of the Grand Magisterium of the Order, saying: "The majority of the faithful in the Church

are the laity, and we are called to witness to our Faith and to be part of the Church's mission. For this reason, working with other laity, and being part of an order that is composed mostly of lay people, sustained with the help of priests, is a blessing, and it encourages people to understand their daily lives within the light of the work of the Church."\*

As a wife and mother of two children, Helene

considers her bond with the Holy Land as a "family matter", which she and her spouse



\* The full interview with Helene Lund, Magistral Delegate of Norway, will be published in the *Annales 2015*, the Order's international publication.



*The Norwegian Magistral Delegate, wife and mother, shown here during a recent working session at the Grand Magisterium of the Order.*



share with their children, whom they are planning to take to the Holy Land on pilgrimage in the Fall. On the importance of family life, Helene says: "I think that when you recruit new members, it is important to

invite them to reflect on their family ties. Belonging to the Order must be something that unites, and it is important to have the support of your spouse so that it can become a blessing to the family."

## CONFERENCE HELD IN TRIESTE ON JOHN PAUL II AND THE HOLY LAND A YEAR AFTER HIS CANONIZATION

"John Paul II, light of the Holy Land" was the title of the conference organized by the Trieste Delegation of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, which was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pope Wojtyla's death. The event took place on Saturday, May 16, in the Church of San Michele del Carnale. Msgr. Giampaolo Crepaldi, Archbishop of Trieste, Roberto Vitale, Delegate of the Order for Trieste, and Enzo Livia, Holy Land historian, turned the spotlight on the marks that this Pope from the East has left on the world. Through personal memories, they recounted John Paul II's love for the Holy Land, and for the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, but above all, they spoke about the man behind World Youth Day, remembering, on the first anniversary of his canonization, the Pope who became a Saint. "Karol Wojtyla was undoubtedly one of the most beloved popes in Church history," said Roberto Vitale, "and one of the most influential figures of the twentieth century. I remember when this man, in October 1978, looked out from the balcony of St. Peter's after his election, and invited the faithful to correct him if he had not expressed himself well in the Italian language. He was a humble man with a great communicative strength, which never wavered, even during his long illness."

