

News Letter

ORDO EQUESTRIS SANCTI SEPULCRI HIERSOLYMITANI

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REFLECTIONS OF THE GRAND MASTER

The Holy See supports the Bishops of the Holy Land Coordination composed of Catholic Bishops conferences and members of large organizations such as our Order, whose mission can be summarized by the "four P's":

- an ongoing Presence of Christians in the Holy Land;
- Pilgrimage to encourage Christians under threat there;
- Prayer for the Lord's protection and Our Lady of Palestine's intercession;
- Pleading with governments to recognize the right of Christians in the Holy Land.

A good summary of our Catholic Church's commitment to Christianity's fragile future there. But so few world leaders seem to be listening. Among all world leaders, Pope Francis most often takes up the cause of all inhabitants of that Land through frequent references in his audiences and addresses, his historic visit there in May 2014 and the follow-up bringing together the Presidents of Israel and Palestine in the Vatican for the cause of justice in the Land.

By far, the most consistent, meaningful support and promotion of religious freedom and peace in the Holy Land is evidenced by the educational and charitable commitment of our Order of the Holy Sepulchre and similar Catholic missions.

The recent words of the first female Catholic mayor of embattled Bethlehem might serve as



Cardinal O'Brien together with the Holy Father on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 3, St. Peter's Square.

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worthy and valuable reminders to all the members of our Order of our robust promotion in the "Four P's":

"I know that members of the Order are highly connected to the Holy Land. I see them frequently in Bethlehem and I fully appreciate all that you do. Keeping hope and helping people to remain here is something crucial and this is what you are doing."

May we continue to give evidence of our presence in Bethlehem and the rest of those lands under such severe stress, assuring our fellow Christians there of our full solidarity in their efforts to keep our Faith alive in the Land where it began.

Cardinal Edwin O'Brien

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IMPRESSUM GRAND MAGISTERIUM OF THE EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM
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The Order in Union with the Universal Church

WORLD DAY OF THE SICK HELD IN THE HOLY LAND THIS YEAR

On February 11, 2016, the liturgical Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, the 24th World Day of the Sick was solemnly celebrated in the Holy Land, at the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth. Msgr. Zygmunt Zimowski, President of the Pontifical Council for Health Pastoral Care, was Pope Francis' envoy for this spiritual event which, since 1993, has taken place at different Marian shrines around the world. The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Msgr.

Fouad Twal, and his auxiliary bishop and vicar for Israel, Msgr. Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, concelebrated the Mass in the presence of many sick people who were able to receive the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

The papal delegation visited hospitals, nursing homes, and centers for people with disabilities. **"Every hospital and nursing home can be a visible sign and setting in which to promote the culture of**





A delegation from the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers took part this year in celebrations for the XXIV World Day for the Sick in the Holy Land. The event, which took place in Nazareth on February 11, also gave rise to a pilgrimage from April February 6 to 13, during which the delegation visited the Mount of the Beatitudes and participated in the celebration of Mass together with various disabled (see photo).

encounter and peace, where the experience of illness and suffering, along with professional and fraternal assistance, helps to overcome every limitation and division", Pope Francis said in his important message published on the occasion of this World Day of the Sick, eager that it might help to carry out the wish expressed in the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy (*Misericordiae Vultus*, April 11, 2015): "I trust that this Jubilee year celebrating the mercy of God will foster an encounter with these religions [Judaism and Islam] and with other noble religious traditions; may it open us to even more fervent dialogue so that we might know and understand one another better; may it eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination" (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 23).

In the message, the Holy Father proposed meditating on the Gospel story of the wedding feast at Cana (*Jn* 2:1-11) where Jesus performed his first miracle following his mother's intervention. The theme of this World Day fit perfectly within the context of the extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy: "Entrusting oneself to the Merciful Jesus like Mary: 'Do whatever he tells you' (*Jn* 2:5)." Nazareth is the place where the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (*Jn* 1:14). Nazareth is also the place where Jesus began his saving mission, attributing to the words of the prophet Isaiah, as the Evangelist Luke reminds us: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (4:18-19).



THE POPE AT COR UNUM'S INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS: "TO LIVE THE WORKS OF MERCY MEANS TO CONJUGATE THE VERB "TO LOVE" ACCORDING TO JESUS"

Last February, during the international congress organized by the Pontifical Council Cor Unum on the theme "Love never fails" (1 Cor 13: 8), Pope Francis addressed the participants commenting on a great text of his predecessor, the encyclical *Deus caritas est*.

"The first Encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI concerns a theme that allows us to retrace the entire history of the Church, which is also a history of charity. It is a story of the love received from God, to be carried to the world: this charity received and given is the fulcrum of the history of the Church and of the history of each one of us. The act of charity is not, in fact, simply almsgiving to ease one's conscience. It includes a "loving attentiveness towards the other" (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 199), which considers the other as "one with himself" and desires to share friendship with God. Charity, therefore, is at the centre of the life of the Church and, in the words of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, is truly the heart of the Church" said the Holy Father before the representatives of the organizations involved in service to the most underprivileged, especially in the Middle East.

"The Encyclical reminds us that this charity needs to be reflected more and more in the life of the Church. How I wish that everyone in the Church, every institution, every activity would show that God loves



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man! The mission that our charitable organizations carry out is important, because they provide so many poor people with a more dignified and human life, which is needed more than ever. But this mission is of utmost importance because, not with words, but with concrete love it can make every person feel loved by the Father, loved as his son or daughter and destined for eternal life with him" added the successor of Peter. He then thanked all those who daily are committing themselves to this mission which challenges every Christian and added that in this Jubilee Year we can all experience the grace of the Jubilee by "putting into practice the spiritual and corporal works of mercy: to live the works of mercy means to conjugate the verb "to love" according to Jesus. In this way then, all of us together can contribute concretely to the great mission of the Church: to communicate the love of God which is meant to be spread".



WORKS OF "LIVING MERCY" FOR THE HOLY YEAR

The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we help our neighbor 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 ask that we too may be merciful, to spread the power of the Gospel everywhere".

The night before in St. Peter's Square, with thousands of pilgrims who came to Rome to represent all those who adhere to the spirituality of Divine Mercy, the Holy Father suggested that every diocese in the world, erect a kind of **"monument" to this Year of Mercy, through a work of living mercy in the form of a structure of mercy: a hospital, a home for the elderly, for abandoned children, a school where none exists, a home for the recovery of addicts...**

"It would be very good for each diocese to consider: what can we leave as a living memory, as a work of living mercy, as a wound of the living Jesus for this Year of Mercy? Let us reflect on this and speak to the bishops about it" the Pope concluded.

The members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, present on five continents, will be particularly keen to respond to this call in their local churches.

POPE FRANCIS VISITS ROME'S SYNAGOGUE

On January 17, 2016, six years after Benedict XVI's visit, and 30 years after the historic first visit by a Pope to the Great Synagogue of Rome - that of Pope John Paul II - Pope Francis paid a visit to Rome's Jewish community. Speaking of this "third" visit, the Chief Rabbi of Rome, Riccardo Di Segni, said: "According to

rabbinical tradition, an act repeated three times becomes *chazaqà*, a fixed custom".

The Holy Father was first welcomed by the President of Rome's Jewish Community, Ruth Dureghello, and the President of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, Renzo Gattegna. He was then greeted and embraced by the Chief Rabbi Riccardo Di





The Jubilee of Mercy is an occasion for Catholics to pay greater attention to the Jewish roots of Christianity, as was underlined by the Pope during his visit to Rome's Synagogue in a mutual dynamic of fraternity and dialogue.

Segni. Pope Francis slowly made his way from the Temple entrance towards the *Aron haQodesh*, or Torah ark, as he stopped to greet all those present, in particular to speak with some Holocaust survivors.

In his speech, he recalled how the Declaration *Nostra Aetate* has "indicated the way: "yes" to rediscovering Christianity's Jewish roots; "no" to every form of anti-Semitism and blame for every wrong, discrimination and persecution deriving from it". Pope Francis went on to insist on the need for greater collaboration in environmental protection and joint efforts in the promotion of justice and peace. The Pope also made an important appeal to both communities to face up to their responsibilities and work together for the development of the city.

One interesting response to this call for collaboration in the city has been the creation of "The Jubilee Cultural Routes" (www.leviedelgiubileo.it). The Jubilee of Mercy has also become a precious

opportunity to help people discover the heritage and history of the Roman Jewish community with a particular focus on the common root of Mercy that is shared by Judaism, Christianity and Islam, as also mentioned in the Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee, *Misericordiae Vultus*. This cultural and spiritual journey called "A thousand religions in Rome: from the ancient world to the present day", not only takes in the city's Jewish sites, but also the Grand Mosque of Rome, by the famous architect Paolo Portoghesi.

Following the visit to the Synagogue of Rome, Pope Francis was invited by the Islamic community to the Great Mosque. The Holy Father has accepted the invitation but has yet to establish the date of the visit. Thus the Jubilee of Mercy is also proving itself to be – especially for the members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre – a good year for encounter and dialogue with the other two great monotheistic religions present in the Holy Land.



BETHLEHEM AND LOURDES: A SOLIDARITY BASED ON JUSTICE THAT NO WALL CAN PREVENT

The Marian city of Lourdes and the birthplace of Christ have formalized their historical twinning. In an interview granted us by the Mayor of Lourdes, Josette Bourdeu, she explains that these two cities are "universal symbols which overcome all divisions, to deliver a message of fraternal peace and tolerance to our world which suffers under the harshest turbulence".

A page of history is about to be written through what this mayor of the French Republic presents as "a pact of exemplary friendship, one of unflinching mutual support". In collaboration with the Mayor of Bethlehem, Vera Baboun, the two leaders have outlined areas of cooperation, particularly common interests in the field of religious tourism, to welcome new pilgrims from South America and Asia. Their aim is to offer to future visitors from these distant lands, a "European" circuit which could integrate, for example, Lourdes,



The municipalities of Lourdes and Bethlehem have announced a historic twinning of the two cities that will bring their destinies closer together in mutual support and the development of greater collaboration between the cities of Europe and Palestine.

Czestochowa, Fatima and the Holy Land.

"Bethlehem, despite the hindrances which onsite we cannot ignore, over the past few years has built the foundations of true international recognition through an extraordinary network of cities worldwide. This recent twinning between Lourdes and Bethlehem solemnly registers itself on this long list. And know this; I am particularly proud of it. It is a beacon of solidarity, a form of justice which no wall can stop" clarified Josette Bourdeu.

You can read the full text of the interview on our partner site Vatican Insider:

<http://www.lastampa.it/2016/04/01/vaticaninsider/eng/inquiries-and-interviews/bethlehem-and-lourdes-strengthen-their-connections-r2uEfbfBDgF5DffMKvdMVN/pagina.html>



THE HOLY LAND COORDINATION DENOUNCES SELFISHNESS THAT CLOSES DOORS

The Coordination of the Bishops Conference in support of the Church in the Holy Land, supported by the Holy See, gathers together bishops who, representing the bishops' conferences, have the Holy Land at heart for historical and pastoral reasons. Since 1998, the Bishops' Conference of Great Britain has played a leading role in relation to the work of this group that, every year, responds to the invitation of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land. Over time, this Coordination has been enriched by people who know the Holy Land well and members of large organizations, such as the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. As the Grand Master of the Order rightly said at the beginning of the Newsletter, the Coordination customarily uses four "P's" to describe its mission: "P" for a presence for Christians in the Holy Land; "P" for praying with and for them; "P" for pilgrimage (the work of Christians in the Holy Land depends largely on pilgrimages, and the future of these pilgrimages depends largely on the living stones who are the local Christians); "P" for pleading (the Coordination defends the cause of these Christians publicly and with those who govern).

This year, for example, the Coordination has noted that the territory of Bethlehem is gradually decreasing. "Its access to water is decreasing. Its inhabitants' freedom of movement is decreasing, for example with the construction of the 'Cremisan wall'. This wall is not intended to increase security in general, but to protect the settlers who illegally occupy, in the eyes of international law, this part of the territory," highlights Msgr. Michel Dubost, an eminent member of the Coordination and

President of the Council for Interreligious Relations of the French Bishops' Conference, in an interview granted to the Communication Service of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre⁽¹⁾. "Only a miraculous awakening of international public opinion could possibly change anything. But the way in which their bishops, about ten in number, were treated by the Israeli police tells people: 'We have the strength and nothing will prevent us from doing what we want to do'", said the French bishop.

Msgr. Dubost commented: "Our world is afraid. Fear creates divisions and locks people in their territories. It is necessary to go incessantly to meet the other, without fear. But, for this to happen, you must be confident in yourself and, I would say, above all, in God. What strikes me is the difficulty some Christians have in understanding that Christ is victorious, that forgiveness is victorious, that mercy is victorious. It is true that mercy involves risk, but selfishness leads to spiritual death, which ought to be feared more than physical death!".

During their annual visit to the Holy Land, the Coordination was able to admire the Church of Jordan and the entire kingdom on site. Jordan hosts millions of refugees, including Palestinians and Yemenis... "We must say it, make it known", emphasizes Msgr. Dubost, "and refuse to lock ourselves in the selfishness that discredits us."

(1) The interview on the Holy Land Coordination can be read in its entirety on our page on the Vatican Insider website:

<http://www.lastampa.it/vaticaninsider/eng/order-of-the-holy-sepulchre>



Proceedings of the Grand Magisterium

THE SPRING MEETING OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM

The Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre – consisting of about twenty members of different nationalities – gathered around the Grand Master in Rome, on April 12 and 13, 2016, for the customary Spring meeting, the first of the year.

Opening proceedings 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, Air Force 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



AMORIS LAETITIA, THE JOY OF LOVE

Dedicated to "love in the family", the highly anticipated post-synodal apostolic exhortation was published on April 8 during a press conference chaired by the Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, an eminent member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. *Amoris Laetitia* – "the Joy of Love" – is a great text of pastoral outreach signed March 19, the feast of Saint Joseph, by Pope Francis. This apostolic exhortation, is a splendid synthesis and reference text as well as source of hope. It merits further study, particularly the chapters dedicated to love and marriage, intimate relations and the need to continuously choose each other, one step at a time. *Amoris Laetitia* places special emphasis on preparation for marriage on accompanying couples in the early years of their marriage and in particular during those crises that can also be a sign of a growing emotional maturity. "Each crisis has a lesson to teach us; we need to learn how to listen for it with the ear of the heart", noted the Pope. "May we never lose heart because of our limitations, – he concluded – or ever stop seeking that fullness of love and communion which God holds out before us".





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.

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 Patriarch of Jerusalem, Grand Prior of the Order, 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 government subsidies. 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 Commission for the Holy Land. 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 Commission for the Holy Land, which is led by Thomas McKiernan, described its ongoing and future projects, which include support for a home for the elderly in Taybeh and 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 (see *Annales* 2015, p. 61-62).

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.

François Vayne

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 Italian Supreme Court lawyer, Flavio Rondinini. Born February 9, 1962 in Faenza, he graduated in law at the University of Bologna and also obtained a license in canon law at the Pontifical Oriental Institute. He is the author of several books of reference in the field. As a member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, he has collaborated professionally with the various realities of the Holy See, in particular with the Secretariat of State and the Congregation for Eastern Churches. Married with three children, he is also a reserve officer in the Carabinieri, the Italian military police. Cardinal O'Brien officially welcomed him to his new international role during the spring meeting of the Grand Magisterium.



JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE TO SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII

By decision of the Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, October 15 next the Italian Liutenances will make a Jubilee pilgrimage to the Shrine of Pompeii. Many are expected to participate, not only the Italian members of the Order, but also all the Knights and Dames of the world who wish to attend, knowing that the various Lieutenancies will have to organize travel and accommodation for their members.

Mass at the altar of the Virgin is scheduled at 10 am and the recitation of the Rosary will be followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 4pm, in the chapel dedicated to Blessed Bartolo Longo, before passage through the sanctuary's Holy Door. Blessed Bartolo Longo, who until now was the only lay member of the Order to be beatified, was defined by St. John Paul II as a "man of the Virgin". In his homily at the beatification, October 26, 1980, the Pope said of him that "for the sake of Mary, he became a writer, an apostle of the Gospel, a speaker of the Rosary, founder of the famous sanctuary in spite of the enormous difficulties; for love of Mary he created

charities, he became a beggar for the children of the poor, he turned Pompeii into a living citadel of human and Christian goodness; for love of Mary, he endured tribulations and slander in silence, he underwent a long Gethsemane, trusting in Providence, ever obedient to the Pope and the Church".

His human and spiritual path, which is in itself a message of love, shows us how great the mercy of God is and how profound the conversion of a heart can be. **Every day, in Pompeii, pilgrims experience the triumph of grace over the ruins of sin, according to Bartolo Longo.** In the recent issue of the Order's magazine, *Annales*, Msgr. Tommaso Caputo, the prelate archbishop and papal delegate of Pompeii, prior of the "Napoli - Lady of the Rosary" section of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, told us: "Seeing the sanctuary and all the works of charity built from scratch, with "a penny a month", allows us to touch with our own hands the truth of God's message of love, through the mediation of the Virgin, gifted to Bartolo Longo, not only for himself, but for all of us".

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 last. The staff remembered in their prayers the intentions of all members

of the Order, 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. In recent months, Pope Francis has often reminded us of the importance of uniting the sacramental aspect to corporal and spiritual works of mercy (see article on page V).

The accompanying photo shows the staff of the Grand Magisterium along with the Grand Master, the Governor General Agostino Borrromeo, the 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.

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MANY MEETINGS SCHEDULED FOR CARDINAL O'BRIEN OVER THE NEXT THREE MONTHS

Cardinal Edwin O'Brien had the opportunity of meeting the members of the Grand Magisterium for the usual Spring meeting (April 11-13), at the Order's headquarters in Palazzo della Rovere, and in the coming three months he will meet with a significant number of Lieutenants for the regional meetings of the Lieutenants of North America (June 2-4 in Baltimore, the United States) and of Europe (June 27-28 in Rome). In addition, the Grand Master was present for the first Investiture of the Magistral Delegation for the Czech Republic in Olomouc: the Grand Prior Msgr. Jan Graubner, the Archbishop of Olomouc, received the Investiture on April 16 (see photo on the right), and the following day was the turn of the new Knights and Dames. On June 10 and 11, His Eminence will preside over the Investiture ceremonies in Pelplin, Poland.



Cardinal O'Brien presided at the first ceremony of Investiture in Olomouc, in the Czech Republic, during the beautiful ceremonies held April 16 and 17.



The Order and the Holy Land

«A MUSLIM LEAVING OUR SCHOOLS WILL NEVER BECOME A FUNDAMENTALIST»

Father Faysal Hijazeen is the director of the schools of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. In an interview he recently granted us, which can be read in full on our partner site Vatican Insider, Fr. Faysal tells us about the fundamental work carried out by educational institutions in the Holy Land.

Could you describe the network of Catholic schools in the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem? How many are there, where are they located or situated, how do they function?

The network of Catholic schools in the Latin Patriarchy extends through the entire territory of the Patriarchate: Israel, Palestine and Jordan. There are 3 schools in Israel and 5 nurseries, welcoming 2,700 pupils. In Palestine there are 14 schools and as many nurseries, for 6,200 pupils. In Jordan the numbers are greater: roughly 10,000 pupils attend 25 schools (and as many nurseries). Each school functions in line with the parish. The schools are situated mostly in villages, welcoming both Christians and Muslims, putting themselves at the service of the poorest. The network of schools functions in line with the different ministries for education.

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.

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.

And so daily life at the school is a meeting with 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.⁽¹⁾ An education without material means is an education which dies very quickly. The Order keeps the mission of education in the Latin Patriarchate alive.

⁽¹⁾ 82% of donations for teaching are fruit of the tireless generosity of members of the Order.

CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST: AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN ROME

From February 24 to 26, 2016, Rome hosted an international conference organized by the German Bishops' Conference entitled "Between World Society and Regional Transformations: Christians, Christian Churches and Religion in a Changing Middle East". Msgr. William Shomali, Patriarchal Vicar for Jerusalem, was present and brought the particular viewpoint of the Holy Land in the current Middle Eastern situation.

Msgr. Shomali's speech invited those present to reflect upon how the facts we read and believe to be objective are instead highly influenced by viewpoints. "In Jerusalem, history and geography are read differently: those which the Palestinians call the 'occupied territories' for Israel are 'disputed territories'", he says. The problem is that one is incapable of opening itself to the narrative of the other.

"With the Muslims", Msgr. Shomali continues, "we live and suffer together. We try to educate Christian and Muslim children together to live in respect. Our goal is that of creating a new way of thinking, even if this is becoming increasingly difficult in a radicalized Middle East." We share a lot with the Jews: it is enough to remember that Jesus was a Jew. However, the political situation hinders a true dialogue.

The Patriarchal Vicar concluded on a note of profound hope linked to our faith: "Jerusalem is a city of great surprises; it is the city in which Jesus rose on the third day. Let us therefore continue to pray!"



THE NECESSITY OF REKINDLING HOPE: THE CHURCH'S SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES IN JORDAN

Father Rifat Bader is the director of the Catholic Center for Studies and Media in Jordan and the pastor of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Naour, a short distance from the capital Amman. The Catholic Church in Jordan is an integral part of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, together with that of Israel, Palestine and Cyprus. In this interview, Fr. Bader speaks to us about the Catholic Church's commitment to supporting many migrants who are fleeing Syria and Iraq.

Among the various initiatives that Fr. Bader spoke to us about, we look at the great experience of schools open to young immigrants who in this way have the chance to continue their education: "A total of 290 Syrian students have enrolled in the school located near my parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Naour - Jordan. Students age from 4 to 15 years old. They attend classes on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 4 PM to 7 PM. Among them are 120 students who attend public schools and have academic weaknesses. They take "remedial classes" on Saturdays from 3 PM to 8 PM. This school opened its doors to these students on January 19, 2016. This is one of the schools for Syrian children, and

we have 10 schools organized by Caritas in many different cities and villages."

When asked about what motivates the various institutions to get so profoundly involved with these brothers who are fleeing from war, Father Bader responds: "Jordan is a safe haven for peace in the region. Our duty as citizens and as Christians is to alleviate the suffering of people from all walks of life. I have realized that these people have lost everything in life. They lost their homes, jobs, properties and businesses. They even lost all glimmers of hope to ever enjoy a life free from problems. They lost their future. It is our duty to bring them hope in accordance with our means. This is the message we have learned from the Gospel."



The Catholic Church in the Holy Land is at the forefront in welcoming refugees from the Middle East, above all in the organization of schooling for children and young people. The Order greatly contributed to these actions in 2015 through a generous donation to Caritas Jordan.



PILGRIMS OF MERCY IN THE HOLY LAND

On our website, info.oessh.va, in the Annales section, the "Pilgrims of Mercy in the Holy Land" booklet is available in English, Italian, French, Spanish and German. For Lieutenancies or individual members who will be going on pilgrimage to the Holy Land during this Year of Mercy, this booklet aims to accompany them on their journey: from the preparation for the pilgrimage to returning home. In the Land where Jesus was born, lived, died and rose again, we invite you to make a particular reflection in certain holy places, accompanied by the biblical texts and passages of the Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee, *Misericordiae Vultus*. Even if one is not able to go, this booklet can be an aid for following Jesus' footsteps to the discovery of his Mercy in personal meditation.

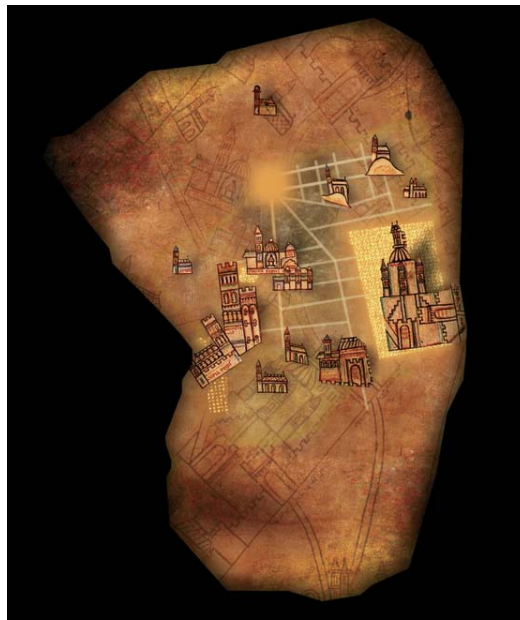
OPENING OF THE *VIA DOLOROSA* SECTION AT THE TERRA SANCTA MUSEUM

A few days before the week that invites every Christian to follow Jesus' steps in Jerusalem, included in 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 be part of an unbroken chain of pilgrims who for millennia retrace the footsteps 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.



The Life of the Lieutenancies

CONCRETE SOLIDARITY

In October 2015, following continuous reports of the arrival of migrants to European shores, fleeing from tragic conditions in the Middle East and global South, the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien circulated a letter on welcoming refugees among Lieutenancies and Magistral Delegations.

The responses have been both prompt and generous. One of note among the many initiatives is the invitation of the Lieutenancy for Italy South Tyrrhenian, which counts 39 Delegations, to Presidents and Delegates to contact their diocesan Caritas and help set up teams of professionals who can ensure those categories of migrants who are welcomed support not only on the social, legal and administrative level but also on a cultural level.

Lieutenant Giovanni Napolitano says: "It is with great satisfaction that I can report that there are many Knights and Dames willing to offer, their professional help, free of charge". Looking to the future he concludes: "It is now possible to express our heartfelt solidarity and, in particular, overcome that 'barrier of indifference'." It is increasingly clear that we must respond to the needs of the world around us that is knocking on our doors as Christians and, specifically, as members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

THE GIFT OF THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND

From the Lieutenant of Portugal – a land particularly blessed with the presence of the Marian shrine of Fatima – we receive a beautiful testimony on the depth of their community experience on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which took place at the beginning of this year, and during which was celebrated the Investiture of 12 Knights and Dames.

"Pilgrimages are always a very exciting time for all of our members who participate wholeheartedly in the work and aid which, considering the little resources and availability of a small country and a small Lieutenancy, we send to the most needy people in the land of Christ.

For several years, the Lieutenancy for Portugal has been making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land every two years, which adheres an average of 70 participants.

Apart from the visits to holy places, from

Nazareth to Jerusalem, a significant moment is that of the Investiture of new Knights and Dames in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, a practice which our Lieutenancy was able to resume, after centuries in which no member of the Order had been able to receive the Investiture in this place.

Normally the program of the pilgrimage includes visits to the work to which we have contributed, so as to see "on site" the existing shortcomings, or those remedied.



This has the beneficial effect of helping the local Christians to feel that we are with them, that they are not alone in their difficulties and that, on the other side of the world, there are people who care about them and are trying to make their lives less painful.

And what can be said of the profound experience of our pilgrims? What a thrill it is to feel every grain of sand on the walls that have been restored thanks to our Lieutenancy's funding!

The way you feel before the simplicity and littleness of a drop of paint that, covering the walls, brought color and joy to the lives – so tried – of boys, girls, young and old, Muslims, but all Palestinians, with a history of suffering and hardness that we

know so well and have witnessed. This was the case in Aboud and Taybeh, as well as in Deir Rafat with the Sisters of Bethlehem, in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Palestine. We saw joy in the faces of these people, who were truly grateful for having received this simple assistance from us.

With a clear goal, the Knights and Dames of the Lieutenancy for Portugal, over whom I have the honor to preside, reaffirm their commitment, enthusiasm and joy in saying "yes" to the challenges of the future, secured in the vocation to service and holiness that the Order proposes, and firm in the mission that God has entrusted to us."

Nuno de Bragança Van Uden
Lieutenant for Portugal

In the next quarterly Newsletter (Summer 2016), the Lieutenancies are invited to bear witness to the ways in which the members live the Year of Mercy. To share your experiences contact us at: comunicazione@oessh.va

www.osservatoreromano.va

A window to the world

L'Osservatore Romano's new and updated website now offers news in six languages

Please support the Holy See's newspaper so that it can offer more services without charge and continue to spread the words of Pope Francis around the world.

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