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REFLECTIONS OF THE GRAND MASTER

How accurately Blessed John Henry Newman prepares the mood for this Advent Season:

"The year is worn out: spring, summer, autumn, each in turn have brought their utmost, but they are over and the end is come. All is past and gone, all has failed... and the austere weather which succeeds, though ungrateful to the body, is in tone with our feelings, and acceptable. Thus the soul is cast forward upon the future... and does it rejoice that there are new heavens and a new earth to come. These are feelings of holy men waiting earnestly for the Advent of Christ."

Through Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds and Magi, the human race for the first time saw God face to face. In earliest days "Advent" marked that "Coming" of Christ – Christmas Day. In time, the scope of the mystery was broadened to include a preparation for his Christmas Coming and his "Final Coming" on Judgment Day.

There is no better way to prepare for these mysteries than by celebrating what is so central to our Faith, his sacramental Coming in the Eucharist – for which we should prepare as well. Through the Sacrament of Penance, may each of us entrust to the forgiving Christ "all that is past, all that is gone and all that has failed" as we earnestly await for the Advent of Christ and the new hope it brings this Christmas.

Edwin Cardinal O'Brien

During his official trip to the Holy Land, the new Governor General received the gift of an icon of Our Lady of Palestine from the priests of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Blessed at the Holy Sepulchre on the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, it was placed on the altar in St. Peter's Basilica during Mass on the Feast day in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Palestine, celebrated on October 25 by the Grand Master of the Order at the tomb of Apostle Peter, in the presence of the members of the Grand Magisterium (see page IX). As we journey towards Christmas, we ask the Lord to live this expectation with the Virgin Mary, illuminated by her deep faith and her victorious hope, in a renewed love for the Church of Christ and the Holy Land.



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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

PRAYING WITH THE POPE FOR THE CHRISTIANS OF THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES

The centenary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches - of which Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre is a member - coincided with the Centenary of the Pontifical Oriental Institute. Marking the occasion, on October 12 the Pope concelebrated a Mass with the Eastern Patriarchs in the basilica of Saint Mary Major in Rome. Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, also a member of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, was present. Recalling the context

of the creation of the Congregation by Benedict XV, during the First World War, the Holy Father reflected on how the current "piecemeal world war" involves the Christians of the Oriental Churches, causing a growing diaspora. Pope Francis invited us to continue praying for our brothers and sisters of these churches, forced to abandon the biblical lands of their ancestors.

"This leads us to ask so many questions, so many whys?" he emphasized in commenting on the first reading (*Malachi 3: 13-20*), in which the people wonder why the wicked often go unpunished. "How many





The Holy Father exchanges the sign of peace with Cardinal Leonardo Sandri during the October 12 Mass marking the Centenary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and the Pontifical Oriental Institute.

times do we do this experience?" asked the Pope before responding: "God does not forget His children, His memory is for the righteous, for those who suffer, who are oppressed and who ask 'why?' and yet they never cease to trust in the Lord."

The Holy Father also indicated prayer as the best means of listening to God, pointing out how praying is an act of trust. "Man knocks with prayer at God's door to ask for grace. And He, who is our Father, gives me that and more: the gift, the Holy Spirit," insisted Francis, assuring everyone that this persevering spiritual commitment will bear its fruit in due course.

ON THE ROAD TO FULL COMMUNION AMONG ALL

During his encounter with the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilus III, last October in Rome, Pope Francis turned a special thought to all the members of the various Christian communities of the Holy Land, expressing the hope "that they will continue to be recognized as an integral part of society and that, as citizens and believers in their own right, they can continue tirelessly to contribute to the common good and the growth of peace, striving to further reconciliation and concord." The Holy Father recalled his moment of prayer in the sanctuary of the empty tomb in May 2014, expressing his joy for the recent restoration of this very holy place. "I rejoice that the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land have worked together in such harmony on this project, as they also did for the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem. I thank Your Beatitude very much for your own efforts in this regard," said the Pope, thanking



A profoundly ecumenical event of great importance for Christians in the Holy Land: the meeting in Rome between Pope Francis and the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilus III.

Patriarch Theophilus III for his commitment and reaffirming his sincere desire to "progress on the path to full unity among all".



BETWEEN JERUSALEM AND ROME

European and American rabbis present a document on relations between Jews and Catholics to Pope Francis

More than 50 years after the conciliar declaration *Nostra Aetate* – a document that marked a major breakthrough in Catholic and Jewish relations – at the end of August 2017 the Conference of European Rabbis and the Rabbinic Council of America delivered a document titled “Between Jerusalem and Rome” to Pope Francis. The text aims to be an official response from these two great realities of the Jewish world. Time was required to elaborate a response to *Nostra Aetate* also because, as the document says, “initially, many Jewish leaders were skeptical of the sincerity of the Church’s overtures to the Jewish community, due to the long history of Christian anti-Judaism.”

The document underlines how *Nostra Aetate*, in addition to conducting a careful analysis in religious terms of the Catholic Church’s relationship with the world and the Jewish communities, has also “paved the way for the Vatican’s 1993 establishment of full diplomatic relations with the State of Israel”. In this line, representatives of the Holy See

and the State of Israel continue to meet today to reach a bilateral agreement such similar to the one that has already been signed with the State of Palestine.

The text continues insisting on the importance of joint action beyond the clear differences: “doctrinal differences and our inability to truly understand the meaning and mysteries of each other’s faiths do not and may not stand in the way of our peaceful collaboration for the betterment of our shared world and the lives of the children of Noah.”

In his address to the delegation that presented him the document, Pope Francis invited them to continue on the path of mutual knowledge and friendship, ending – before he offered his best wishes for the Jewish New Year – with these words: “This is most important: may the Eternal One bless and enlighten our cooperation, so that together we can accept and carry out ever better his plans, ‘plans for welfare and not for evil’, for ‘a future and a hope’ (*Jer* 29:11).”

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Proceedings of the Grand Magisterium

THE VISITS OF THE GRAND MASTER

After having celebrated the Investiture ceremonies at Valletta (Lieutenancy for Malta) on September 22-23 and Bordeaux (Lieutenancy for France) from September 29 to October 1, the Grand Master Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, went to Echternach from 20 to 21 October for the Investiture of the Lieutenancy for Luxembourg.

A few days later, members of the Grand Magisterium gathered in Rome for their usual autumn meeting chaired by His Eminence. The Grand Magisterium meeting was also an opportunity to mark together one of the most important celebrations of the Order, the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Palestine, for which the most beloved friends of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre joined the Grand Master at the Palazzo della Rovere, headquarters of the Grand Magisterium, just a few steps from the Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome, where on the morning of the 25th of October Mass was celebrated in honor of the Patroness of the Order.

At the end of October, Cardinal O'Brien returned to the United States to celebrate US Middle Atlantic Investitures in Baltimore. Before being called to Rome to lead the Order of the Holy Sepulchre the Grand Master was the Archbishop of Baltimore.

The last appointments of the year see the Grand Master engaged in Europe and Central America to preside at the Investiture



Around 40 new members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre received investiture on September 30 in Bordeaux, including Cardinal Jean-Pierre Ricard, archbishop of the diocese that hosted these celebrations of the Lieutenancy for France. Several hundred Dames and Knights gathered around Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Grand Master of the Order, and Msgr. Bernard-Nicolas Aubertin, currently in charge of the Lieutenancy.

ceremonies for new members of the Order: in Gibraltar (November 18-19), Loreto (November 24-26) and Mexico City (December 1).



THE FIRST REGIONAL MEETING FOR AUSTRALIAN AND PACIFIC RIM LIEUTENANCIES OF THE ORDER

The first regional meeting of Lieutenants and Magistral Delegates of the region from South Africa through Australia, New Zealand, Philippines, Guam and Taiwan was held in Sydney, Australia on 28 July, 2017.

The meeting was attended by the Lieutenants of the Philippines, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia, the Magistral Delegate from Auckland New Zealand and a representative from Taipei, Taiwan. Unfortunately Guam and South Africa were not able to attend. In the words of the Grand Master's message to the retreat: "This gathering is a sign of the growing strength of our Order in your vast region of the world -

the first to greet the rising sun of the new day". The region is indeed vast. 70 knights and dames attended the event. Because of the great distances, regional gatherings are very special events.

The meeting commenced with the prayer to Our Lady Queen of Palestine. A letter from the Governor General Leonardo Visconti di Modrone expressing his spiritual and personal support and best wishes for this first regional meeting was circulated and read to those assembled. The minutes from the previous meeting which was a meeting only of the Australian Lieutenants were tabled and items not appearing in the agenda were dealt with.

The agenda discussed the spirituality of



the Order, in particular the formation of new members, and we agreed that a major task for the future is the development of a process of formation for future Lieutenants. It is planned to bring possible candidates to future meetings to promote their formation.

We realized that spiritual activities of individual Lieutenancies are similar and range from monthly Holy Masses with the social meeting after the Mass to annual seminar type meetings with visiting speakers and an annual general meeting. In some there is also the practice of praying together the Rosary at the end of Mass.

We considered some means to improve the level of donation which is significantly retarded in Australia by the lack of any tax-deductible ability. We discussed as well about how to attract younger members and about the importance of developing the field of communications. Locally speaking, some

Lieutenancies are producing a newsletter either quarterly or monthly of quite a high calibre.

The idea of a unified national project of solidarity at the benefice of the Holy Land for the five Australian Lieutenancies could give new impulse to the members and result in an increase of the level of donations and there was interest in the issue of the day care centers for the children of foreign workers in Israel and in the projects supporting the Christian refugees, particularly in Jordan. This idea will be further discussed. Everybody was very impressed by the current project by the Lieutenancy for the Philippines of having the priest in Amman, Jordan, to serve the Filipino migrant workers community.

As a visit of the Grand Master to Australia and New Zealand is anticipated in September 2018, the Australian Lieutenants will meet in

Perth, Western Australia, at the end of April 2018. We chose to continue the regional meeting on an annual basis as occurs in Europe and North America.

The Lieutenants meeting was then followed by a retreat⁽¹⁾. The meeting and retreat were highly successful and it is planned to have an Australian national retreat for the Order approximately every two years, the next being in 2019.

Paul Bartley

*Vice Governor General
for Asia and Pacific region*



The weekend of July 28 to 30, 2017, a retreat was preached by Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, Vicar for Jerusalem of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. The three days were a chance to reflect deeply on what it means to be Knights and Dames of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. Msgr. Marcuzzo expanded particularly on the importance of the Resurrection, the need to pass through the Cross to experience a new life in Christ and the special vocation for the members of the Order who have such a direct bond to the Holy Land.

(1) An article about the retreat will be published in the Order's annual magazine, scheduled for release in Spring 2018.



A PILGRIMAGE TO HELP ALEPPO

Frank Hearn, Commander with Star of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, has been a member of Lieutenancy for Ireland since 2001. During his military career he was part of three United Nations peace-keeping missions in the Middle East and between 1970 and 1972, Frank and his wife Margaret lived in Jerusalem from where they often visited Syria. The sad situation in Syria and the devastating violence that struck the city of Aleppo has deeply moved this couple and the conviction that crying for the children of this city was not enough pushed Frank Hearn, Seamus Greenan and his wife Nurse Mags Greenan – accompanied by Martin and Terry Treacy driving the support car – to embark on bicycle pilgrimage from Dublin to Rome with the goal of collecting € 100,000 for this cause. Both



Irish cyclists welcomed last summer at Palazzo della Rovere, in Rome, by the Grand Master.

goals of their mission were achieved: thanks to the generosity of the members of Lieutenancy and other friends more than the originally hoped for amount was sent to the Franciscan friars and the Carmelite Sisters of Aleppo and on June 28 the three cyclists reached Rome where they were greeted by the Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, during the meeting of European Lieutenants who were able to informally welcome and share a convivial meal with these generous and audacious pilgrims.

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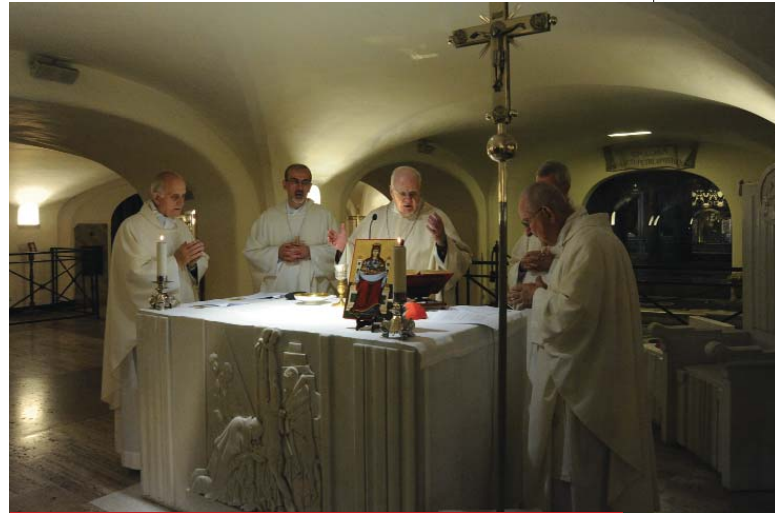
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THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF PALESTINE AND THE MEETING OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM

On the evening of October 24, the vigil of the Feast of Our Lady of Palestine, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien – surrounded by members of the Grand Magisterium – delivered the highest recognition of the Order, the Collar, to the new Governor General, the Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone. Monsignor Antonio Franco received the decoration of Knight of Grand Cross and the Golden Palm of Jerusalem as well as the decree with which he is now appointed Assessor of Honor of the Order from the hands of the Grand Master. The Grand Master also awarded the Golden Palm of Jerusalem to Professor Giuseppe Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, Knight of the Collar, nominating him Lieutenant General of Honor.

The following morning, October 25, to liturgically celebrate the Patroness of the Order, a Mass was celebrated by Cardinal



During the Fall Session of the Grand Magisterium, the Grand Master presided at Mass at the tomb of the Apostle Peter on the feast day of Our Lady of Palestine, Patroness of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

O'Brien at the tomb of the Apostle Peter, in the presence of all the participants in the Autumn Grand Magisterium meeting who carried the prayer intentions of the inhabitants of the Holy Land in their hearts.

During this Mass, concelebrated by Monsignor Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Grand Master invited the members of his supreme council not to lose sight of the Heavenly Jerusalem which is built mainly thanks to the sanctity of "every living stone," as all baptized are called to a precise mission in God's vast plan where everyone has their place. In the late afternoon, Cardinal O'Brien received his guests in the halls of the Palazzo della Rovere, first among whom Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

During these two days of fraternity and gathering, members of the Grand Magisterium also worked on a very dense agenda.



Cardinal O'Brien, together with the Assessor of Honour, the Lieutenant General of Honour, and the new Governor General, all three decorated by him during the recent Grand Magisterium meeting.



The Governor General shared his experience of his official trip to the Holy Land at the end of the summer, rejoicing in the welcome received by the new pastoral and administrative team organized by Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa. The smiles on the faces of the young people he met has strengthened his will to commit himself to developing the Order's action in the service of dialogue and coexistence in the Holy Land. Governor General Visconti di Modrone expressed his desire to establish priorities and to promote synergies, as well as to visit all the Lieutenancies during his mandate, with an emphasis on the importance of following the formation of new members.

Msgr. Pizzaballa, just over a year in his duties, shared some important novelties, including the creation of a new pastoral office of the Patriarchate, primarily responsible for family issues. He also made known the administrative changes, in particular the arrival of Palestinian Christian Sami El-Yousef as the first layman in charge of financial issues in the diocese.

Speaking about the difficulties, he mentioned, for example, the ongoing negotiations with the Israeli Ministry of Education on the topic of subsidies to Catholic schools in Israel, and the problem in Jerusalem of Christian property whose sale in some cases threatens the equilibrium established by the *Status quo*. "Christians of different confessions seek to remain united in this unfavorable context," the Archbishop stressed.

Sami El-Yousef later provided a clear account of the management of the Latin Patriarchate - announcing a nearly \$ 13



Members of the Grand Magisterium worked on a dense agenda on October 24 and 25.

million budget for 2018 - explaining that he wants to empower people at all levels in order to advance on the path of transparency. The audit carried out by Deloitte is an essential point of reference for new operational and professional procedures that will facilitate the control of the deficit. In addition, a qualified lawyer will soon be chosen to advise the Patriarchate that extends over a vast territory - Cyprus, Israel, Palestine, and Jordan - since education in particular is subject to the laws of different jurisdictions.

Sami El-Yousef noted that 80% of the Patriarchate's budget concerns schools, with nearly 20,000 students but less and less Christians. A combination of factors explains this drop such as the fact that in schools that do not offer all levels of education, it is not possible to complete the entire educational process. The Patriarch hopes, therefore, to strengthen existing structures rather than to create new ones. With regards the Beit Jala Seminary, where future priests are formed, and other pastoral institutions the economic situation is positive.

Engineer Piercarlo Visconti presented the Grand Magisterium's budget, underscoring the great generosity of Germany and Italy,



which lead donations after the United States. Asset management, as Dr. Saverio Petrillo explained in detail, gives the Grand Magisterium the security of a "reserve" from which it can draw funds for unexpected expenses.

On behalf of the Grand Magisterium's Holy Land Commission, Professor Bartholomew McGettrick, explained that the increase in teachers' salaries in order to assure the quality of teaching in the schools of the Patriarchate, is a continuous effort

destined to last and to increase in the years to come. He then summarized ongoing projects concerning the school and parish house in Jaffa of Nazareth, Israel, as well as the church of St. Paul in Jubeiha, Jordan, where Engineer Adolfo Rinaldi went on an inspection mission this fall. The project of mosaic and craft workshops – to give work to Christian refugees from the Middle East in Jordan – attracted the attention of the Grand Master, who asked the Order to step up its communication of this subject.

Chancellor Alfredo Bastianelli pointed out that the Grand Magisterium's communication media are increasingly sharing the initiatives that may interest all Lieutenancies. He gave an example of the innovative App created by the Lieutenancy for Switzerland thanks to which the Members Directory is automatically updated.

Lastly, discussions turned to the upcoming Consulta in November 2018, which is being coordinated by Lieutenant General Agostino Borromeo, on the mandate of Cardinal O'Brien. This five-year event will be the occasion to study the new constitution of the Order, soon to be approved by the Secretariat of State of the Holy See.

F.V.



During the annual Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Palestine, the Grand Master welcomed guests to Palazzo della Rovere, first among them the Holy See Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin.



The Order and the Holy Land

From September 10 to 16, 2017, Ambassador Leonardo Visconti of Modrone, Governor General of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, made his first official visit to the Holy Land. He was accompanied on this trip by a delegation composed of Msgr. Fortunato Frezza, Master of Ceremonies of the Order, Thomas McKiernan, President of the Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium, Professor Bartholomew McGettrick, member of the same Commission, and the author of this report who is the director of the Order's Communication Office in Rome.



**THE NEW GOVERNOR
 GENERAL OF THE ORDER
 MAKES FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT
 TO THE HOLY LAND**

During this visit, the Governor General was able to spend time with his hosts at the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem – in Israel, Palestine and Jordan – focusing his attention on the ongoing projects supported by the Order in the field of education, pastoral care and ministry for refugees. This visit providentially took place during 170th anniversary of the restoration of the Latin Patriarchate and the reorganization of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre by Pope Pius IX in the summer of 1847.

Before his departure, the Governor General had the opportunity to meet with the Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, in order to prepare for his pilgrimage since the Archbishop was unfortunately in Rome for the meeting of the newly

In Galilee, the Governor General inaugurates construction work on a new kindergarten at the parish school of Jaffa of Nazareth and a new priest residence.





The Grand Magisterium delegation, accompanied by the Governor General, was received at the Latin Patriarchate by Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, New Patriarchal Vicar for Jerusalem.

appointed bishops.

"Mabruk": it is with this word of blessing, pronounced in Arabic, that Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, Patriarchal Vicar for Jerusalem and Palestine, welcomed the Governor General and the delegation accompanying him, explaining that "this word evokes the thanksgiving we owe for the good that has been received as well as the strength needed to do the good that remains to be done." "This is all I need," said Ambassador Leonardo Visconti of Modrone, eager to make the most of this trip to aid him in the tasks that await him in his new position.

The group then went to pray at the tomb of the first two patriarchs of Jerusalem appointed after the restoration of the Patriarchate in the nineteenth century, Msgr. Giuseppe Valerga and Msgr. Vincenzo Bracco, entrusting to their intercession the success of this visit to serve the "living stones" of the Holy Land.

The first leg of the journey took them to Jaffa of Nazareth, Galilee, where the Governor laid the cornerstone for an addition to the parish school and new priest residence, made possible by the help provided by the Order. The new Chancellor of the Archdiocese, Father Ibrahim Shomali, the new director of administrative services, Sami El-Yousef, and Father Iyad Twal, director of the Patriarchate schools,

accompanied the delegation.

In his speech, Father Hanna Kaldani, recently appointed Patriarchal Vicar for Israel and a member of the Holy Sepulchre, recalled the importance of this school for the families of the region, particularly for the Christian community. Hundreds of local



The cornerstone and commemorative plaque in Jaffa of Nazareth contains a tribute to the members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre for the help offered to the school and the parish.

authorities were present, including the mayor of the city, all deeply honored that the Governor of the Order had come to meet them. The Governor told them he was particularly "impressed by the smiles of young students which convey a joy that makes us grow in the faith and encourages





Brother Peter Bray, Lasallian religious and president of the University of Bethlehem, shows the Governor General the Palestinian geographic situation from the University terrace.

us to always serve people first."

The next day, the delegation met Joseph Hazboun, director of the CNEWA - Pontifical Mission in Jerusalem, an organization that relies on the support of both the Archdiocese of New York and the Congregation for Oriental Churches. "Since Pius XI founded CNEWA in 1926 and the establishment of the Pontifical Mission by Pope Pius XII in 1949, we have sought to help the Palestinian people, victims of occupation, striving to relieve their suffering through actions that nourish hope in new generations," said the director. Ambassador Visconti di Modrone responded by sharing his desire to create momentum fostering

THE MYSTERY OF THE EARTH

A testimony from Msgr. Fortunato Frezza, Master of Ceremonies of the Grand Magisterium of the Order

I have often wondered: What speaks more to us of mystery, a fertile, lush countryside, or an arid sandy expanse? A hill of olive trees and vines or a rocky canyon?

These terrains speak each in its own way, but the flowering of the fields and the green of the hills have the charm of tender and friendly words. Rather it is far more arduous to understand the harsh and repulsive voice of rock, sand and cliff.

I was mulling these thoughts during the week from September 10 to 16, when I was called to witness the first official visit of the new Governor General of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre to the Holy Land, Count Leonardo Visconti di Modrone.

I knew well that in the Holy Land both terrains touch each other, extending each one into their own area. I knew the fertility of that garden of Galilee, which is the plain of Esdrelon, as well as the harsh saltwater of the Dead Sea valley.

Yet I could hardly reconcile the two ends of that blessed land.

And yet, coming down from Jerusalem to Jericho, I was convinced that the repugnance of the rugged rock hides the mystery of the speechless gaze, of pure absolute essential contemplation, free of the fascinated attraction for other things. And I was reminded that right there among that inhospitable aridity, the mystery of Samaritan charity (*Luke 10, 30 and following*) and the mystery of love of enemy (*Luke 6, 27 and following*) were revealed by the Prophet of Nazareth, a love that is hard like a rock but also essential, a love which does not seek its own interest, a love which does not take into account the evil received, but which pardons all and bears all things (*1 Corinthians 13, 4 and following*)

And yet, once I climbed Mount Nebo, I saw an expanse like ashes, but I better perceived the voice in the desert, even the mystery of the arid desert, but Promised Land. Moses, who had already seen the revelation of the Mystery, the fulfilment of the Promise (*Deuteronomy 34*) could end his journey there.

At that moment I thought of the new Governor General, who stood by me; I remembered all of us, Dames and Knights of our Order, experiencing a thrill of happiness: that land is also our Earth, which conceals the mystery of "our" Sepulchre and keeps it in the depths of its arid and vibrant rock.



Msgr. Fortunato Frezza, Master of Ceremonies of the Grand Magisterium, shows to the Governor General the biblical territories in which the holy story of the people of God is rooted.



coordination between all the initiatives that encourage coexistence and dialogue in the Holy Land.

In this spirit, the Governor General wanted to stop at the University of Bethlehem. This institution is crucial for young Palestinian students with over 3000 enrolled in the five faculties, including a nursing school whose building is currently being developed.



Ambassador Leonardo Visconti of Modrone together with Father Yacoub Rafidi, new rector of the Beit Jala Seminary, in front of the Marian icon of the chapel in which the future priests of the Latin Patriarchate pray every day.

Father Francesco Patton, Custos of the Holy Land, together with the Governor General and two members of the Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium (Thomas McKiernan, president, on the left and Bartholomew McGettrick on the right).



Lasallian Brother Peter Bray, president of the University, welcomed the Governor General and asked him to thank the members of the Order who have sent about nine million dollars to support this "oasis of peace" over the last twenty years, allowing so many students to keep hope alive, despite the separation wall and the "segregation" that cripples Palestinian territories stifled by unrelenting colonization. Because of the wall and the restrictions on movement some of these young people have never been able to go to the Holy Sepulchre and have never even seen the sea that is only a few miles away. From the university terrace we could see this disturbing and progressive "corralling" that seems to confirm a "strategy of chaos" destined to exasperate the population - we were told - "just as happened in Gaza."

That afternoon the Governor General and the delegation went deeper into Palestine, to Beit Jala, the town next to Bethlehem, where Father Yacoub Rafidi, rector of the Seminary, and his team welcomed the delegation. "You are part of our family," said the rector, grateful for the regular aid provided by the Order for the formation of future priests of the Patriarchate. This year there are nearly sixty seminarians, twenty of whom are in the Minor Seminary.



"The mission of Monsignor Valerga, who founded this institution in 1852, continues with a missionary spirit, because we want faith in Christ to grow in the land of our fathers, patriarchs and prophets," added Father Rafidi, showing the Icon of the Seminary, unique in its genre, representing the Virgin holding the Child Jesus, dressed in cassock and surplice, in her arms.

The second day also included a meeting with Father Francesco Patton fm, appointed Custos of the Holy Land a few months ago, who is close to the new Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate, Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, the former Custos. Father Patton welcomed the Governor General to the headquarters of the Custody for their meeting, during which he described the mission of the Franciscan Friars in the holy places over the past 800 years. This, he said, was to preserve the presence of Roman Catholicism during the period when the Patriarchate did not have a physical representation.

From October 16 to 18 the celebrations of this anniversary were attended by Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches and representatives of the episcopal conferences

from around the world.

Father Patton, with his extraordinary natural authority, insisted on the urgent need to help Christian families, especially by supporting the education of young people, and found himself in agreement with the Governor on the need to work towards a "global synergy" in this field, in order to



Traditional dances welcome the Governor General to Naour, Jordan, where the Order funded the expansion of a Latin Patriarchate school.

"INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIAN TRANSFORMATION"

A testimony from Bartholomew McGettrick, member of the Holy Land Commission of the Grand Magisterium of the Order

In experiencing first hand the work of the Order to support the priorities of the Church it is encouraging to see attention being given to the formation of young people; enabling them to live worthwhile lives of hope, of love and of justice.

There are tensions in the area – the political context remains challenging. The "new leadership" that is in place still faces the problems of the insecure governmental support for Christian schools; the tension of rational planning in a culture dominated by tribal interests; and reconciling the hope of the Gospel with the pain of daily life. All this leads to a world that is spiritually fragile.

Yet, the parishes and schools do what they can. The University of Bethlehem is a beacon of hope and an oasis of peace; the Seminary at Beit Jala is a spring of spiritual optimism. These are institutions of Christian transformation. Throughout the Holy Land there are many people who carry a spirit of dedicated valour in bringing the Christian message to people of all faiths and the Order is justifiably proud to support this.





The Delegation of the Grand Magisterium and representatives of the Patriarchate at the construction site of a church in Jubeiha on the outskirts of the Jordanian capital, with the architect in charge of the work.

strengthen the transmission of faith and Christian formation, a weak point and a "real problem", unfortunately, found in many educational institutions.

On Wednesday, the delegation headed to Jordan for a two-day visit. Bishop William Shomali, Patriarchal Vicar for Jordan, welcomed the General Governor to Naour, on the great outskirts of Amman, for the inauguration of a kindergarten and a new classroom wing in a parish school of the Patriarchate.

A festive welcome was provided by a band, traditional dances and a wide number of people who came to represent the Christian community and to witness the blessing of the new rooms, underscoring the importance of the event, which was widely reported by local media.

In the Kingdom of Jordan, the Catholic Church benefits from a rare stability in the region: in Jordan Christians are far more numerous than they are in Palestine or Israel, which justifies important projects such as building new places of worship. The Governor General and the delegation visited the construction site of the parish church of St. Paul's in Jubeiha, north of Amman, in a neighborhood where more and more

Christians have come to work in the Jordanian capital. The parish community already has 1,500 families, that is, about 7,000 people, and the completion of the new church is greatly anticipated. The parishioners have shown how deeply they care for this project through their own financial gifts towards the initial construction work. The help of the Order will follow.

On Thursday, September 14, the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the program included a pilgrimage to Mount Nebo from which Moses, before dying, could see the Promised Land. In this holy place, entrusted to the Franciscan friars of the Custody, one recalls Moses' staff on which was mounted a bronze serpent. All who were bitten by a serpent and looked at



Meditation and prayer time on Mount Nebo, Jordan, where Moses contemplated the Promised Land towards which he had journeyed for so long.





Some refugees at work making mosaics in Madaba, Jordan, in a center supported by the Order.

the bronze serpent were healed: a sign of anticipation of the cross of Christ that saves us from eternal death.

The delegation prayed on this mountain, facing Jerusalem, with the texts of the liturgy of the day that exalt the mystery of our salvation, asking God to protect all the inhabitants of the Holy Land.

En route to Mount Nebo, the Governor General visited some Iraqi refugees working in Madaba, 30 kilometers south of Amman, a Jordanian city with a large Christian

community. In a workshop, made up of portable buildings, refugees make mosaics which are for sale. The Order participates in the financing of these humanitarian activities, together with Caritas and the French Embassy. Salam, a 31-year-old refugee who was wounded during an attack in Mosul and escaped from Qaraqosh with his family, told us that it is easier for the Syrians to think of returning home after Daesh's defeat rather than for Iraqis, afraid of the instability that persists in their country. "Our faith in Christ is a solid rock, we have nothing but God," Salam testified, a man whose words and face we will not forget.

Bishop Mauro Lalli, chargé d'affaires of the Nunciature in Jordan, invited the delegation of the Order to dinner. He was very impressed by the work carried out in the region by the Knights and Dames, "not just to keep faith in the holy places but to nourish it."

Returning to Jerusalem on Friday, the Governor met with the Palestinian priests with whom he had a frank and direct dialogue during a lunch offered at the Latin Patriarchate. On that occasion, the Governor received an icon of Our Lady of Palestine,

LISTENING TO THE "LIVING STONES"

A testimony from Thomas McKiernan, a member of the Grand Magisterium and president of the Holy Land Commission

When our members go on pilgrimage, especially for the first time, they generally visit the sacred shrines and sanctuaries. When the Holy Land Commission makes a site visit, it goes to examine the projects being financed by the Order. This visit by The Holy Land Commission was a combination of both programs with an added dimension. The goal was to arrange a program that allowed for face to face dialogue, a style the Governor prefers, with individuals with whom he will work over the next several years and also include stops at sacred places and our current projects.

This objective was to visit not only the building stones but more importantly the living stones for whom we have provided churches, schools and other structures. We did both in addition to meeting our important partners at the Latin Patriarchate and others. Using a military metaphor we got "into the trenches" and more.

The daily news will tell you there is very little to be happy about in the Holy Land and that is a topic for a different reflection. During this visit I can honestly say there was not very little to be happy about; there was a lot to be happy about.





Meeting of the Grand Magisterium delegation with the project team of the Latin Patriarchate led by Sami El-Yousef, the new director of administrative services.

painted by one of the Little Sisters of Bethlehem and blessed in the afternoon by Msgr. Fortunato Frezza during the pilgrimage of the Delegation to the Holy Sepulchre for the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows.

At the end of the stay, the delegation met again with Sami El-Yousef and his team, which included a pair of young French volunteers, Claire and Charles-Edouard Guilbert, who are in charge of the project office. This afforded the group the opportunity to review the assistance the Order provides. They reported on projects that have been completed, illustrated ongoing projects and proposed future projects, all in a climate of deep confidence. These will be discussed at length during the next meeting of the Grand Magisterium at the end of October.

A final appointment before returning to Rome allowed us to speak with Claudio Maina, director of the Secretariat of Solidarity, an office of the Apostolic Nunciature. Its mission, in coordination with the Congregation for Oriental Churches, is to distribute aid to Catholic schools that do not belong to the Latin Patriarchate. He reported that some Christian families have difficulty in paying the tuition fee. "Religious identity is lost and, too often, profitability is the working principle. The Order must ensure that the transmission of faith is not marginalized in schools that receive its support," he recommended, echoing the Custos' reflection. In the Holy Land only 25% of Christians profess to practice their faith while 55% of Jews and 65% of Muslims

practice their faith.

The personal relationships established, the insights received and the observation noted during the week-long visit are important first steps for the Governor General to help orient him during these first days of his mandate. This will make communication with the Patriarchate easier in the years to come. This journey undoubtedly opens up a new and promising chapter in the collaboration between the Order and the Church in the Holy Land.

François Vayne



On the day of the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, at the Holy Sepulchre, the members of the Grand Magisterium delegation carried all of the intentions of the Knights and Dames around the world in prayer.



A TIME OF CHANGE FOR THE VICARIATE OF ST. JAMES

After twelve years serving Hebrew speaking communities in the Vicariate of St. James, Father David Neuhaus asked the Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem to be replaced in his duties, offering his resignation on August 14. The Hebrew-speaking Catholic community and the pastoral for migrants is certainly represented by the faces of the many Christians from different regions of the world that render the Church of the Holy Land even more universal. However, for many of us the face of that community was also in many ways that of Father David.

Father David is an Israeli Jesuit born in South Africa to a Jewish family and he converted to Christianity at the age of 15. Strongly engaged in dialogue with the Jewish world and with all communities living in the Holy Land, he was in the forefront of supporting the rights of many foreign workers, some of whom Christians, and migrants living in Israel. In particular, Father David gave an important boost to the creation of kindergartens where younger migrants could be safely welcomed. In this important activity, it is nice to remember how other local realities have collaborated,

such as Unitaf, an Israeli NGO that took advantage of the approach of the Rosh Hashanah celebrations in mid-September to thank Father David for everything he has done down through the years and bid him farewell.

On September 2, Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa announced the name of his successor: Father Rafiq Nahra. Born in 1959 in Ismailiya, Egypt, to a family of Lebanese origin, Father Rafiq emigrated from Egypt to Paris where he entered the Seminary. He continued his theological education in Rome and in 1992 he was ordained a priest in Paris by Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, a man of the Church of Jewish origin. In 2004 he moved to Jerusalem where he immediately started to serve the Vicariate of St. James. He recently completed his doctorate at the Hebrew University in Hebrew Thought. Father Rafiq directs the Maison Lustiger in Jerusalem, which belongs to the Diocese of Paris, but in recent years he has also been in charge of the Kehillah (Catholic Hebrew-speaking Community) in Jerusalem, in addition to giving great support to the children of the migrant communities at the "Saint Rachel" Centre in Jerusalem.

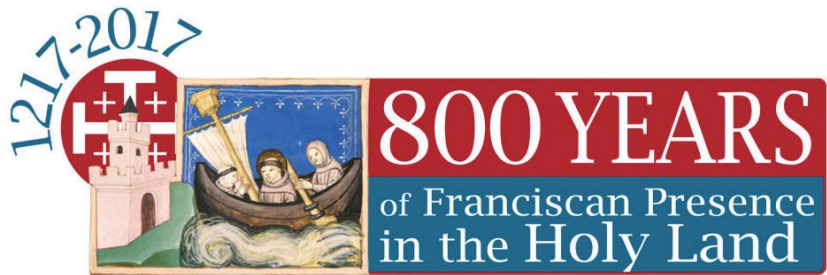
800 YEARS OF FRANCISCAN PRESENCE IN THE HOLY LAND

800 years have passed since Fr. Elias da Cortona landed at Acri. 800 years of Franciscan presence, of their custody of holy sites, pilgrimages and charitable activities in the land of Jesus inspired by the charisma of the poor man from Assisi. "The seraphic Father Francis, in the Chapter of

Pentecost of May 1217, opened the Order to the 'missionary and universal' dimension, sending his friars to all nations as witnesses of faith, fraternity and peace; and in this way the Province of the Holy Land was created, initially referred to as 'Overseas' or 'of Syria': This is how Pope Francis



The logo of the 800th anniversary of the Franciscan presence in the Holy Land recalls the long voyage of Saint Francis and his companions through the waters of the Mediterranean.



summons the beginning of the Franciscan adventure in this part of the world in his message sent to Father Francesco Patton, the current Custos of the Holy Land.

From October 16 to 18, celebrations for this anniversary were held in Jerusalem, in particular with the presence of the Minister General of the Order of the Friars Minor Michael Perry, the Prefect for the Congregation of the Oriental Churches, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, the Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa and Custos of the Holy Land, Father Francesco Patton.

In a homily delivered on October 17, Cardinal Sandri spoke of the mission of the Custody and how it fully carries forward the intuition of Saint Francis. As with the seraphic Father Francis, the Lord said to go

and reconstruct his Church, so the Franciscan fathers of the Holy Land are required to be guardians of the holy places and this does not only imply the material aspect of the custody of the sanctuaries. As the Holy Father emphasizes, renewing the mandate of the Franciscan Friars, "I do not wish to forget, aside from the guardianship and enlivenment of shrines, your commitment to the service of the local ecclesiastical community. I encourage you to persevere gladly in supporting these brothers of ours, especially the poorest and weakest; in the education of young people – who often risk losing hope in a context that is still without peace –; in welcoming the elderly and the care for the sick, living out the works of mercy in a concrete way in daily life."

GUCCIONE
 SINCE 1975
 DECORATIONS OF KNIGHTLY ORDERS

Order of the Holy Sepulchre
 Papal Equestrian Orders
 Order of Malta
 Italian Dynastic Orders and Orders of the Italian Republic

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The Life of the Lieutenancies

CELEBRATING THE LITURGICAL MEMORY OF BLESSED BARTOLO LONGO

The liturgical memory of Blessed Bartolo Longo (1841-1926), which is celebrated every year on October 5, is dear to the Knights and Dames of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. The only lay member of the Order to be beatified, Bartolo Longo is an example for our members of constant prayer, active charity, and love for the most needy. From Pompeii, a city that he helped regenerate thanks to the grace of recitation of the Rosary, the Blessed continues to inspire initiatives of prayer and charity worldwide.

For example, the New Galicia Section of the Lieutenancy for Mexico, organized a Eucharistic celebration last October 5 in the Chapel of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, seat of the Section in Guadalajara. Like them, several other members celebrate this recurrence, taking the opportunity to trustingly seek the intercession of the

Blessed.

Instead members of the Lieutenancy USA North Central tell of the dedication of an altar to Blessed Bartolo Longo at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Pompeii, which is in Chicago, wanted and financed by voluntary contributions of Knights and Dames of this US Lieutenancy. This altar is a replica of the one inside which the body of the Blessed is placed under the altar at the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary in Pompeii and contains an effigy of the Knight wearing the mantle of the Order. "We have begun the process - they tell us from the US North Central Lieutenancy - to have the altar recognized as the national sanctuary of Blessed Bartolo Longo."

To learn more about this important spiritual figure, visit on our website the 2016 special focus marking the jubilee pilgrimage of the Order to Pompeii.

THE LIEUTENANCY FOR PORTUGAL AND AN EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE AND PRAYER WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

For the first time in its history the Lieutenancy for Portugal organized a volunteer program in the Holy Land for a group of young Portuguese students. Over a period of three weeks, these young people lived in the town of Saint Mary Magdalen where they helped the Legionaries of Christ in the construction of the Magdala Project.

At Magdala, the day begins early. The

alarm clock rings at 6:30 am and after breakfast, there is half an hour of prayer time before work begins. And thus, every day for the group of dozens of volunteers from all over the world who came to help build the dream of Magdala.

The spiritual journey of our young people, always accompanied by the tireless Father Timothy Meehan, L.C., as well as contact local Christians and pilgrims of all





Young volunteers – who came to serve for a pastoral project thanks to the Order's Lieutenancy for Portugal – together with the Custos of the Holy Land.

nationalities made this stay truly unforgettable

Today Magdala is far more than a hotel and a magnificent church on the shores of Galilee. Following the discovery of a first-century synagogue, Magdala has become an important pilgrimage site for Jews as well as for Christians.

Hundreds of pilgrims arrive every day and they need to be welcomed, given guided tours, helped to prepare liturgical ceremonies, and given the possibility to buy refreshments and souvenirs. However superficial these activities may seem, they allow the dream of Magdala to become reality. The work of volunteers makes Magdala's millennial stones come to life!

The Lieutenancy for Portugal wanted this volunteer program to be accompanied by a

personal deepening of the faith, in addition to contact with the institutions of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land. In this regard, during the free moments, pilgrimages were organized to the Holy Places, always accompanied by a Knight of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

Young volunteers also had the opportunity to meet some of the preeminent members of the Latin Church of Jerusalem, such as the two patriarchs emeritus, Archbishop Michel Sabbah and Archbishop Fouad Twal, Father Francesco Patton, Custodian of the Holy Land, as well as other Franciscans and Priests of Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. This contact with the reality of the Holy Land rendered the mission of our young volunteers something truly special.

At the end of this rich experience with the reality of our Mother Church and with Christians of Jerusalem, living stones on the paths walked by Jesus Christ, our young people returned home with a heart filled with joy and the desire to always be present in the Land in which God was made man.

Tiago Teles de Abreu

THE CLOSURE OF THE CENTENARY OF THE APPEARANCES OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA IN ROME

On Friday, 13 October 2017, a celebration was held in St. Peter's Basilica, presided by the Papal Vicar for the Vatican City, Cardinal Angelo Comastri, to mark the closure of the centenary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima. Before the Mass, a great procession in Via della Conciliazione brought together many members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre for Central Italy, alongside the volunteers and the disabled or sick of the UNITALSI pilgrimage association (the Roman - Lazio Section). Those taking part in the event prayed a Rosary for Peace in the Middle East and in the whole world before the statue of Our Lady of Fatima, blessed by Pope Francis at the beginning of his pontificate.



MEETING GOD IN THE UPPER ROOM

The Grand Master, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, recommends the recently published book "Meeting God in the Upper Room" by Msgr. Peter Vaghi. "It is an exceptionally good and timely spiritual reading for our English-speaking members."

The sacred places in the Holy Land bring us back to the foundational events of our faith that have happened there. The great room on the upper floor, of which the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles speak to us, the Cenacle, has a peculiar feature: it has seen the occurrence of several events that today continue to speak to each of us and to the whole Church.

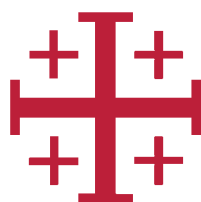
It is here that Jesus celebrated the last supper with his apostles, where the washing of the feet took place; where the apostles except Thomas saw the Risen Jesus; it was here that Jesus appeared a week later also to Thomas, and finally, it is here where the Holy Spirit fell on Mary and on the Apostles gathered on Pentecost. Many events in the same place have led Monsignor Peter J. Vaghi to more profound reflection on the great treasure that this room still has to give to us today. His book, "Three moments to change your life. Meeting God in the Upper Room," wants to be not only an invitation to re-read the biblical texts that tell us about the events of the Cenacle but a real spiritual instrument that helps us to "be in touch again and again with our God who lives and moves in our very midst, the God of the Upper Room. Just like the apostles, each one of us needs to spend some time in the upper room in our

own hearts, drawing close to God in prayer". That is why each of the fourteen chapters of this book end with a paragraph devoted to personal reflection, preparing the Upper Room, in our own heart, to meet with God.

This place, this room, has been carefully thought out and chosen by Jesus for the last supper, as the Gospels tell us, and it did not just "happen" that Jesus and his disciples were there for this last intimate meal they shared before of the Master's Passion. And if the physical site was important to those who lived, walked and followed Jesus in his earthly life, to the point that they remained connected even after his death, this is the place where the Church we form was born and where the sacraments of the Eucharist, of the Order and of Reconciliation were delivered to Her.

Msgr. Vaghi concludes his book on Pentecost: "Until now, the events of the Upper Room have taken place in private. But Pentecost changes everything" (103). The apostles open the doors and become witnesses of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is also our destiny and our calling, supported by the example and the benevolent gaze of the first to have accepted this mission: Mary of Nazareth, Mother of God and our Mother.

Elena Dini



ORDO EQUESTRIS SANCTI SEPULCHRI HIEROSOLYMITANI