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LOVE THE HOLY LAND AND BE LOVED

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Editorial

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BEIT JALA – 2012

Pillars of Peace

On November 21, a ceasefire put an end to eight days of fighting between Israel and Gaza. Now each side takes stock of the "Pillar of Defense." Without much surprise, Israel and Hamas consider themselves strengthened by the conflict that has just seen them opposed. According to the prevailing opinion, the real winner is probably Egypt, whose President Morsi negotiated the terms of the truce. The United States congratulated the new Egyptian president and called on his country to remain a "*pillar of peace in the region*." Hopefully it is not a pillar of sand... There are many issues that could be debated: a "clean" war, a just war, an inevitable war. There would be many feelings to express: hatred, revenge, forgiveness.

All in all, the real question is knowing, from where will come peace? Nowadays, it is easier for specialists to say from where it will not come... The end to violence will never come by violence, no matter what they say.

Bloody Autumn

Patriarch Fouad Twal said that "*a war is never holy*." He "*totally condemns the option of war, violence and destruction that is a threat to the security and stability of the region*." The landscape of the Middle East proves it, very tense in this bloody autumn. Consider that in Syria there are already more than 40,000 deaths in 18 months of uprising; Lebanon is reeling under the accustomed effect of the its neighbors' problems; Israel is preparing to vote in January on the joint list of Likud and nationalist and religious parties, an alliance that condemns in advance the progress of the Palestinian issue. Palestinians are always divided between the West Bank headed by Fatah and the Gaza Strip, in the hands of Hamas. It is in this very tense context, where international impotence is stronger than ever



*In hostilities between Israel and the Gaza Strip
173 Palestinians and six Israelis were killed,
mostly civilians on both sides.*

in the region, which is part of the demand of Mahmoud Abbas for Palestinians to obtain status as a non-Member State to the UN...

In this difficult context, the theme chosen by Benedict XVI for the 46th World Day of Peace, January 1, 2013, vibrates like a plea: "Blessed are the peacemakers." The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, to which the Patriarch was appointed a member, on 29 September, states that this message "*encourages all people to feel responsible for the construction of peace*." How can we not forget in this title the encyclical on peace in the world "*Pacem in Terris*", published 50 years ago, in April 1963? With clarity John XXIII identified the "four pillars" essential to peace. Namely: *truth, justice, love and freedom*. Truth is the foundation of peace if everyone is aware with honesty that, in addition to their rights, there are also duties towards others. *Justice*, he said, builds peace if every man actually respects the rights of others and strives to fully comply with his duties to others. Love is a leaven of peace if people consider the needs of others as their own and share with others what they have, beginning with spiritual values. Finally, *freedom* bolsters peace and will bear the fruits, if in the choice of means taken to achieve peace, men follow reason, and with courage take responsibility for their actions. It will be understood that peace is much more than the absence of war. And the fifth column, forgiveness!

Christophe Lafontaine

Dialogue with Judaism: where is the Church 50 years after the Council?

What have we done with the Council? What should we or can we still do? The Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity has already started to reflect on this theme. Cardinal Kurt Koch invited to a joint meeting in Rome, October 28-30, the Consultants (8), the delegates of some Bishops' Conferences (18) and of course members of the same Pontifical Commission (3).

UN: 100 Palestinian Christians urge the EU to support the State of Palestine

Tuesday, November 13, 2012 one hundred personalities and Palestinian Christian associations urged the European Union to support the demand to elevate, the end of the month, Palestine to a non-member observer state in the General Assembly of the UN in order to "promote genuine peace."

The recent events of Gaza shakes interreligious dialogue on peace

By a curious case of the calendar (political and religious), the Council of Religious Leaders in Israel met Thursday, November 15 in Haifa (after the first Israeli offensive on Gaza) in the presence of the President of the State of Israel, Shimon Peres, who pointed out that religious leaders can foster peace if they work together. The final statement insists on "importance of respect for holy places and cemeteries of all religious denominations."

The Christians of Jerusalem welcome the Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill

From November 9-14, 2012, the first official visit of Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow in the Holy Land took place. It was an unpublished visit, described by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel as "one of the most important in religious terms after that of Pope Benedict XVI." For H.B. Patriarch Tawadros, the visit of the Primate of the Russian Church was an opportunity to "strengthen the Christian presence in Jerusalem and the Holy Land."

Diocese: Holy Land News

GAZA "We hope this peace is really stable and lasting"

The truce between Israel and Hamas Palestinians in power in Gaza is respected by the evening of Wednesday, November 21 in the Gaza Strip. Fr. Jorge Hernandez rejoices with his parishioners. Testimony of November 22, 2012.

The news of the ceasefire that came into force yesterday evening was received with great joy - and it could not be otherwise. The population has fallen in the streets. Immediately the fireworks party was felt. Visits to family members, to the destroyed places, the return to one's home, in whatever conditions they may be, etc... They are a sign and expression of the desire for peace that reigns in people.

A ceasefire was essential. The situation was terrible (...) This war has given rise to a hatred and a degree of violence that is very difficult to define. Whoever has lost a loved one in these days (father, mother or child) will need much time to reconcile and recover and this in the best of cases. Because it would not be surprising that they decided to take revenge against the culprits. It is here that is seen the axiom "violence begets violence." And that is without end.

We know, the only solution is "forgiveness." Talk of forgiveness in these circumstances may seem strange, but Christian forgiveness, which presupposes justice, is truly the only real solution to this conflict in order to achieve genuine peace and stability. (...) The same people told me that this war was worse than that of 2009, then there were an initial bombardments and then sporadic raids accompanied by firings of small arms. But in these days the uninterrupted roar of drones, F-16's, armored tanks, Apache helicopters, the eerie sound of different types of launched missiles and the appearance of new military technology have meant that they lived a situation "which we had never lived before", as they themselves said. The pressure was much greater and this is really devastating. Now is the time for reconstruction. We must return to "normal" life (...) The "ceasefire" was a must. This does not mean that it has resolved the conflict, but at least allows this population to return to its life in this "open-air prison" that is the Gaza Strip under siege.

We hope that this peace is really stable and lasting.

P. Jorge Hernandez, pastor of Gaza, Gaza priest

Solemn entrance of His Excellency Archbishop Lazarotto into the Holy Sepulchre

The new Apostolic Nuncio to Israel and Cyprus and Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine, H.E. Archbishop Lazarotto, made his solemn entry into the Holy Sepulchre, Monday, November 26, 2012 in the presence of civil and religious dignitaries and also many priests, members of religious communities of the Holy Land and some of the faithful. "According to an ancient tradition - said the Custos, Fr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa - at the beginning of their mandate, the religious leaders (and sometimes civilians) come here to Holy Tomb, the Basilica of the Anastasis (Resurrection), to receive the solemn blessing and official mandate." The Nuncio came at a time of tension and the Patriarch did not fail to emphasize that it is at the Holy Tomb the new Nuncio will receive "the energy and strength for his future mission in a city that to this day wants and seeks justice, peace and reconciliation." The Patriarch then wished him directly, "May the Risen Lord sustain each of your steps along the way."

Wishing a fruitful collaboration, the Patriarch continued, addressing the Nuncio: "May we have the courage to dream and to work actively to make Jerusalem a place of peace and an icon of coexistence and understanding! That we can together to urge our people and responsible politicians to take responsibility to make our differences a reconciled diversity...". The Nuncio responded by expressing "his joy to be at the service of the Holy Land as a pilgrim of peace, a friend of God and a friend of the faithful of the Holy Land."

Christophe Lafontaine



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Diocese: Holy Land News

The water bill that threatens to close the doors of Holy Sepulchre

The AFP reports: *"The bank accounts of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, charged with a part of part of the Holy Sepulchre, the exalted holy place of Christianity, have been blocked by an Israeli management-of-water resources company, according to the Israeli newspaper Maariv, claiming a mountain of arrears."* It was formerly the responsibility of the city government of Jerusalem to secure the payment of water bills. But after the transfer of the management of the water supply to the private sector, debts for water bills have accumulated. *Maariv* said that these measures have been taken by the Hagihon Company which asks 9 million shekels (i.e. \$ 2.1 million - 1.8 million Euros) in arrears accumulated



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over the years. The management company of the water network has asked the administrative courts to block the bank accounts of the Israeli Greek Orthodox church. The President of the National Coalition of Christians in the Holy Land, Dimitri Diliani, a Palestinian Greek-Orthodox, told AFP that the issue of water bills is not the only problem. According to him, it is a way to put pressure on the Churches and to allow Israel to impose new measures on the holiest of the holy places of Christianity. For this reason, according to the newspaper *Maariv*, the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate threatens to close the Holy Sepulchre. A decision cannot be implemented without the support of the Latin and Armenian Churches of Jerusalem, co-responsible of the Holy Place. The Israeli Ministry of Tourism said that the problem is between the Municipality of Jerusalem and the Church, but that it will speak for a mediation to finally resolve the problem quickly.

Christophe Lafontaine

The Commission for Relations with the Jews met in Bethlehem

The Commission for Relations with the Jews of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land (AOCTS) met in Bethlehem on November 9 and 10, 2012.

The meeting began on Friday morning with a lecture by H.B. Latin Patriarch Emeritus of Jerusalem Michel Sabbah. His Beatitude explained the local context in which dialogue with the Jewish people has developed and the complex issues that must be dealt with in this dialogue. He proposed a practical program for dialogue on three levels: dialogue with local Jews in Israel, theological reflection within the Universal Catholic Church and education of local Christians about Jews and Judaism. The afternoon and evening on Friday were devoted to the experience of the Jewish liturgy. Father Rafic Nahra offered an introduction to Jewish liturgy, centered on Friday evening prayer in the synagogue. After the introduction, members of the committee

went straight to the Kol HaNeshama Synagogue in West Jerusalem to attend the Friday evening service. They were warmly welcomed by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman, a well-known and active participant in the dialogue with the Church and a dedicated activist for peace. Saturday morning was devoted to a long discussion on the fundamental constituents of Jewish identity. The discussion focused on the intricate and complex relationships and the different elements that make up the modern Jewish identity: religion, historical experience, ethnicity, and modern nationalism. At the end of the session, the committee members confirmed their commitment to continue this work: to study and promote awareness of the importance of this subject among local Christians, offering to Catholic Ordinaries its advice on relations between Jews and Christians in the particular context of the Holy Land.

Source: Vicariate for Hebrew Speaking Catholics in Israel

Pastoral and Liturgical Life

Many initiatives in support of Gaza

In the face of the intensity of the fighting between Gaza and Israel, there were born many forms of support in the Holy Land and elsewhere to help the victims of the conflict.

Prayer

JERUSALEM - The Sabeel group held, on November 20 in Jerusalem, an ecumenical prayer service to support victims of the recent events in Gaza. The prayer was held in the Dominican convent of Saint Stephen, in Arabic and English.

BEIT JALA - On November 18, in the Church of the Annunciation, Beit Jala, H.E. Bishop Shomali, Auxiliary Bishop in Jerusalem, celebrated a Mass for the children of Gaza. The celebration took place in the presence of the Orthodox pastor, the civil authorities of the city (members of the Legislative Council, the City Council ...) and several associations of the city.

IN PORTUGAL - Wednesday, November 21, the Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre celebrated Mass in the Church of the Incarnation of Lisbon. The Mass was

presided by Fr Gonçalo Portocarrero de Almada with a specific intention: for peace and for the Christians of the Holy Land, especially in Gaza.

Financial support

The Holy Land Association is worried about the development of the situation in the Gaza Strip, of which the local population is the first victim. The Franciscan Association supports for many years the Christian community in Gaza (approximately 2,500 people) through the project "Emergency Gaza" which is divided into two activities: support for disabled people in the Gaza Strip and support for Christians in need in the Strip Gaza

Appeal for humanitarian organizations

On November 19, 38 humanitarian and development organizations including *Catholic Aid and Action Against Hunger* has launched a very urgent appeal to world leaders collectively.

Amélie de La Hougue

Masses in honor of the Blessed Marie-Alphonsine

Sunday and Monday, November 18-19, religious communities of Nazareth and Jerusalem paid tribute to the founder of the Sisters of the Rosary, Sister Marie Alphonsine (1843-1927), who was beatified in 2009. In Nazareth, the bishop, His Excellency Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, celebrated Mass with five priests. In addition to a dozen of the Rosary Sisters of Nazareth, including the General Mother Superior of the Congregation, 200 faithful were present as well as a group of 150 pilgrims from Italy, who made a stop expressly for the occasion.

In his homily, His Excellency Bishop Marcuzzo said that not even for a moment did this religious passionate woman doubt the words of the Virgin Mary: "The rosary is your treasure ..."

The following day, in the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary in Jerusalem, Bishop William Shomali presided at the Mass, in the presence of some bishops and priests, religious men and women, including the Mother General, Sister Hortense, Director of the School of Beit Hanina and several Sisters of the Rosary. Enlivening the ceremony marking the anniversary of the baptism of the Blessed Marie-Alphonsine, the choir "Hope" from Jerusalem participated.

The Auxiliary Bishop of Jerusalem was asked to offer Mass for peace in Gaza, calling on the intercession of the Blessed Marie-Alphonsine, whose life was marked by prayer, miracles, obedience and charity to the poor.

Laurent Charnin



Great success for the Congress of the Legion of Mary

Friday, November 9, 620 members of the Legion of Mary, 10 priests and 20 religious gathered in Bethlehem for the Tenth Congress in the Holy Land. Two themes chosen for this meeting: the Eucharist and the role of the spiritual director.

The return to the Redemptoris Mater Seminary with His Excellency Bishop Marcuzzo

Monday, November 12, 2012 the Latin Patriarchal Vicar for Israel, H.E. Bishop Giacinto Marcuzzo Boulos officially inaugurated the new academic year at Redemptoris Mater Seminary of Korazim during a pastoral visit. He also held a press conference and celebrated the Holy Mass.

Family Club in Nazareth: "Are we really believers?"

The Family Club of the Latin parish of Nazareth, chaired by Usama Karam and animated by Nabil Totry, is very active and follows a regular and creative annual program. In the ambit of this program on November 13, H.E. Bishop Marcuzzo was invited to the pastoral center, Mar Anton, to present to the nearly 200 faithful present a lecture with the provocative title "Are we believers? Do we know in what the faith consists?" An issue directly suggested by the Year of the faith.

Farewell to P. Angel in Tel Aviv

Father Angelo Ison, OFM was the official chaplain of the Filipino community in the last ten years. Saturday, November 17, 2012, a celebration was held in the Chapel of Divine Mercy in Tel Aviv to bid him farewell.

Inauguration of the new school Rameh

On November 29, 2012, His Beatitude Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, and His Eminence Cardinal Edwin Frederick O'Brien, Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem blessed the new School of the Latin Patriarchate in Rameh.

Our Church in the Middle East

Monsignor Twal reacts to the instability in the region that touches the Latin Patriarchate in Gaza and Jordan

Communiqué: Benedict XVI launched, Wednesday, Nov. 21, an appeal to “the authorities of the two parties” (Israel and Hamas) urging them “to take bold decisions in favor of peace.” Following the Holy Father, the Latin Patriarch, Archbishop Fouad Twal totally condemns the war in Gaza. Secondly, the Patriarch invited his fellow-Jordanians to be calm while their country is shaken by events.



An the Israeli offensive on Gaza enters its second week, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem expresses his deepest sympathy to the victims of the operation “Pillar of defense.” Archbishop Fouad Twal, horrified by the enormous damage of this war, said that he considers it a human and economic catastrophe. Tuesday, November 20, the Patriarchate has been able to reach by phone the Latin parish of Gaza at the time of the funeral of an Orthodox Christian. On that occasion, he showed all the spiritual and moral support he could give on behalf of the Mother Church. He confirmed to the religious communities there and to the parishioners that he would be in Gaza to celebrate Christmas, on December 16th. A pastoral visit, set each year in the same period.

The Patriarch strongly affirms that this war brings absolutely nothing good for anyone. The bombings hit everyone, children and parents. Each one takes refuge in the corridors of limitless fear. On the one hand, the Palestinians in Gaza that suffer the disproportionate air strikes of Israel, and on the other side, Israelis distressed by rockets from Gaza.

Some groups of pilgrims have canceled their visits. Already there hangs the dark shadow of war. Yet, God knows how pilgrimages contribute to peace. They are a sign of spiritual, human and economic solidarity, for all the inhabitants of the Holy Land. The Patriarch recalled that a war is never holy. He utterly condemns the option of war, violence and destruction that is a threat to the security and stability of the region. For this, he invites all people of good will and all those who have in their hands the destiny of their people to act. He implores them to think of the innocent.

“You have to understand” – he reminds – “that the situation in the Gaza Strip is equivalent to an open-air prison, and that, for this reason, the desperate inhabitants are far from having a normal life.” The Patriarch hopes in the diplomatic efforts of the Arab League, Egypt and Israel to reach a truce, while recognizing that the truce is not the best solution. “It means,” he insists strongly, “a just and lasting solution” must be found. And he concludes: “We must pray to God to give peace that men fail to achieve.”

The JEC has celebrated its 25th anniversary in Amman

Friday, October 26, His Excellency Bishop Shomali, Patriarchal Vicar for Jerusalem, celebrated the Jubilee Mass for the 25th anniversary of the JEC (Jeunesse Etudiante Chrétienne, Young Christian Students) movement founded by H.E. Bishop Salim Sayegh, who attended the celebration.

Shalom of Galilee: the ‘Alleluia’ festival inspires young people

The Catholic Community Shalom held in Nazareth, October 27, 2012, a grand festival for the young people of Galilee, in the large auditorium of the school of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Objective: To celebrate the Blessed Mariam Bawardi whose feast day is celebrated on the day of her beatification (November 13).

The priests of the Latin Patriarchate complete their annual retreat in Jordan

The annual Priests of the Latin Patriarchate Retreat, held this year in Jordan, was completed on November 8. His Beatitude Fouad Twal recounted to the priests what he experienced during the recent Synod on the New Evangelization for the transmission of the Catholic faith in the presence of Pope Benedict XVI.

Publication of the 4th Volume of the Catechism in Hebrew

The Vicariate of St. James for Hebrew-speaking Catholics has published the fourth volume of the catechism for children in Hebrew. The book, titled “Learning to know the Mass”, is designed for Christian children assimilated into Israeli Hebrew-speaking society (from Jewish families or families of migrants).

Feast of the Multiplication of the Loaves: a chance to ask the miracle of peace

The Patriarch, Fouad Twal, presided, Saturday, Nov. 10, 2012, over the feast of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes in Tabgha, on the shores of Lake Tiberias, in the place where occurred one of the most famous miracles of Jesus. For the Patriarch, this was the opportunity to make the appeal to the share, given the large number of Syrian refugees in the diocese, and also to ask the Lord for the miracle of peace.

Our Church in the Middle East

In the Diocese, to the east, Jordan

The Patriarch affirms he shares the concerns of Jordanians and their families about the cost of living. He also shares the concerns of those who are to lead the country in a time of global and local crisis, not to mention the responsibility for the presence in the country of hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees. For the Patriarch, these events are not the solution.

During his visit to Egypt for the enthronement of the Coptic Patriarch Tawadros II, many have shared with the Patriarch the pain of seeing the unrest hitting Jordan, known for its stability, where logic and the good sense of managers and directors are often recognized. The Patriarch sincerely hopes that there will be “wise people who care about for the good of Jordan” and “wealthy people” who, in good conscience and love, are invited to come to the aid of poor families. They have the courage and generosity to open their hearts and their hands to alleviate the suffering of its inhabitants.

“We carry this region, its leaders and its people, in our prayers in our holy places,” states the Patriarch.



Patriarchate and Holy See, one voice for Palestine

Palestine became a non-member observer state of the United Nations on Thursday, November 29, 2012. The Latin Patriarchate thanks the Holy See for the quick response and statement in favor of the UN recognition. The statement was published in the LPJ website.

The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem is in agreement with the Holy See, and welcomed the good news for the Palestinian people, and congratulated them for this diplomatic success. This step marks a significant shift to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and is an incentive for peace.

The Patriarchate also congratulates President Mahmoud Abbas, considered as a moderate man and a man of peace.



Our Lady of Palestine celebrated in Portugal

Sunday, October 28, 2012, the feast of Our Lady, Queen of Palestine, was also celebrated in Portugal, being one of the most important feast of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in the world. The solemn Mass was celebrated in the Church of the Incarnation, in Lisbon, chaired by the ecclesiastical Master of Ceremonies added Father Chev. Miguel de Aguiar, and witnessed the presence of about sixty Knights and Dames of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. The Church was full of faithful, friends of the Holy Land.

Declaration on the occasion of the election Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria, by the AOCTS

The Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land (AOCTS) expressed its joy in a joint statement that followed the appointment of Tawadros II, the new Pope of Alexandria. “*In union with Egypt’s Christians we pray in the hope that Your Holiness, in a context dominated by Islamists, guides us and serves our largest Christian community in the Middle East.*”

H.B. Twal at the enthronement of the new Pope Coptic Orthodox

Sunday, November 18, 2012 in the Cathedral of St. Mark in Cairo (Egypt), Tawadros II was enthroned “Pope of Alexandria, Patriarch of All Africa on the See of St. Mark.” Patriarch Fouad Twal went to the ceremony to “congratulate” and “give support” to the new Patriarch of Egypt in his mission.

Intercultural dialogue: much remains to be done...

A meeting on the preservation of cultures was held November 1-3 in Bochum (Germany). The Patriarchal Vicar for Jerusalem, His Excellency Bishop William Shomali, was invited, as a representative of a country that has experienced a long conflict and needs reconciliation.

Projects of the Latin Patriarchate

Building rehabilitation of the nursery and the kindergarten of the Latin Patriarchate in Haifa

At the end of August, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem began the repair work in one of its kindergartens and nursery schools in Haifa. The project was urgent because it had to match the security measures required by the Ministry of Education, facing short or long term closure.

The kindergarten and nursery of the Patriarchate accommodate 84 children, aged between 2 and 5 years. They are Christians or Muslims and all are from Haifa and its vicinity. "The work was urgent," said Mirvat Shuqha, head of the center. "We fought to keep this center." In fact, unhealthy environments could lead to its closure, and "the children would really be sorry for not being able to come here." Seven people are employed to run the house, which opened its doors 23 years ago, in 1989. The rehabilitation project lasted a month, between the end of August and the end of September and allowed for addressing numerous needs:

- Renovating the playground of the kindergarten, reclaiming the soil, painting the walls with bright and gay colors suitable for small children, ensuring the closure of the site in order to prevent any accident.
- Doing interior work on the nursery in the building, renovating the kitchen and bathrooms of employees, to ensure the safety and cleanliness of the facilities, repainting the windows and balconies.
- Redoing the floor of the courtyard in front of the nursery that had cracks and change the outdoor playground.

Choices of safety first

Those in charge of the recovery plan had to make choices, taking into account the budget that had been allocated to them. They wanted to focus, as a priority, on the safety of the environment. A safety that, thanks to the new work will be provided daily. For example, a new system of closures has been put on all doors so that no child risks remaining locked in a room. The new doors are equipped with a system that prevents doors closing on the children's fingers. The games have been re-painted with a suitable and healthy paint. Even the barriers have been made safe, as well as the windows.

Attention was also paid to the welfare of the children and the staff. The air intakes of the air conditioning system were renewed, as well as the ventilation system in the bathrooms. The colors and paintings on the walls were carefully chosen so that children can "see something beautiful" around them.

The work lasted nearly a month and was completed at the end of September. Mirvat Shuqha declares that they are "very happy" for these changes because now, thanks to the donors, children and employees can benefit from a place which, although simple, is now safe, pleasant and clean.

Amélie de La Hougue



Before the works



During the work

To read more, please visit www.lpj.org :

- The AOCTS is addressed to the monks and nuns of the Holy Land (25 November 2012)
- GAZA - "For the sake of our children: stop the war to build peace" (21 November 2012)
- Michael Sabbah recognition of Palestine to the UN Peace factor (20 November 2012)
- Interview with Patriarch: "We live in the embarrassment of an uncertain future" (14 November 2012)
- UN: 100 Palestinian Christians urge the EU to support the State of Palestine (13 November 2012)
- Archbishop Antonio Franco, two sent to the service of the Church of the Holy Land (9 November 2012)
- Declaration of the AOCTS, followed the election of Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria (6 November 2012)
- Speech by Michel Sabbah against the recruitment of Christian Arabs in the Israeli army (November 1, 2012)

Order of the Holy Sepulchre

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land Cardinal O'Brien, Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre

His Eminence Cardinal Edwin F. O'Brien, Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, came on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land from November 26 - December 2 and was welcomed by the Latin Patriarchate H.B. Patriarch Fouad Twal. With his coming to the Holy Land, the Patriarch wants to pay tribute to the work of all the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre.

Monday, November 26, 2012, 17:30 hours: His Eminence Cardinal Edwin F. O'Brien set foot in Jerusalem. He was greeted by His Beatitude, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Fouad Twal, by his vicars and the new Apostolic Nuncio to Israel and Cyprus, the Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine, H.E. Archbishop Lazzarotto, who had made his solemn entry into the Holy Sepulchre that morning. The procession of priests and seminarians slowly climbed up the street and headed for the co-cathedral of the Latin Patriarchate where *The Credo* of the Year of the Faith was recited by the numerous and gathered assembly. Then H.B. Archbishop Fouad Twal symbolically handed over the shell of the pilgrim to His Eminence, Cardinal O'Brien, Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem who succeeds Cardinal Foley in this office. Afterwards, he was given the mission of directing and leading the Order. He also has the task of maintaining relations of the Order with the Holy See and with the highest international ecclesiastical and civil authorities.



Tuesday, 27 November 2012 14:30 : After a visit to the religious communities in the morning (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, the Custody of the Holy Land, the Armenian Patriarchate) the Cardinal was received into the Franciscan Basilica of the *Anastasis*, led by many Franciscans with the Custos, Fr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa. On this occasion, the Patriarch Fouad Twal wished to state in his speech the extreme importance of the event, stressing the unfailing nature of the links that exist between the Latin Patriarchate and the Equestrian Order: *"Dear Eminence"*, he said in his speech addressed to the Cardinal in English, *I thank you on behalf of the faithful of the Latin Patriarchate for having taken the time to be with us, to know us and know our needs. It is a joy for us to work with you in the fulfillment of the mission that the Holy Father has entrusted to you. We are particularly grateful for the generous and enthusiastic interest that you and the Grand Magisterium, as well as many Knights and Dames of the Order throughout the world, have for the Holy Land. We welcome your support and your solidarity with gratitude. As you continue your work, know that we put our hope, our aspirations and confidence in you. We assure you of our prayers in the fulfillment of our common mission."*

It is true, as H.B. Archbishop Fouad Twal often gladly recalls, the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre is historically linked to the creation of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem: *"Since its inception it was intended to defend the Patriarchate. (...) But today, it continues in its calling, strengthening institutions, defending Christians and also building schools."*

In fact, Thursday, Nov. 29 will be the official opening of the new school of the Latin Patriarchate in Rameh (upper Galilee) to be blessed by His Eminence Cardinal Edwin F. O'Brien and H.B. Archbishop Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch. A school whose construction would not have been possible without the generosity of the Knights of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

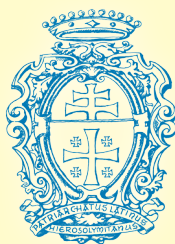
The last three days of the official visit of Cardinal O'Brien will take place in Jordan, with a stop at the University of Madaba and an audience with His Majesty King Abdullah: *"in order to advance the idea of Muslim-Christian dialogue"*, says H.B. Archbishop Twal.

Laurent Charnin

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