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News Letter

ORDO EQUESTRIS SANCTI SEPULCRI HIEROSOLYMITANI

MESSAGE FROM THE CARDINAL GRAND MASTER

From March 27 until April 13, Mgr. Hans Brouwers, Chancellor of our Order, and I will be on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and on official visits to Beirut and to Damascus.

One of the principal reasons for our trip is to pray for the Knights and Ladies of our Order at the Holy Places; another reason is to show our support for the Christians who live in the Holy Land, those who are often called “the living stones” of the Holy Land and to visit some of the projects which receive help from our Order.

While the purpose of our Order, in addition to the sanctification of our members, is principally to offer support to the work of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, it is good to be more fully informed about the other Christians in the Holy Land and in the Middle East – especially in view of the forthcoming Synod of Bishops on the Middle East.



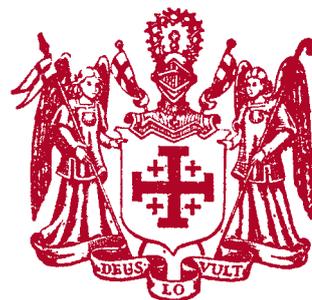
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OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE
OF JERUSALEM
00120 VATICAN CITY



MESSAGE FROM THE CARDINAL GRAND MASTER

Thus, at the kind invitation of Mgr. Robert Stern, General Secretary of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) and of the Pontifical Mission for Palestine, and together with the officers of CNEWA, Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York and Archbishop Alex Brunett of Seattle, we will have the opportunity to meet with many officials of Eastern Catholic Churches and Orthodox Churches to examine how we can work together for peace and progress and for a deepening of our Christian faith in the lives of so many who suffer not only material need but also spiritual hunger.

While many of you will receive this publication after what we hope will be a safe and spiritually fruitful pilgrimage on the part of Mgr. Brouwers and myself, we nevertheless ask you to remember us in prayer that we might become ever more worthy and effective servants of the Lord in and for the land where He lived, died and rose from the dead so that we might enjoy eternal life with Him in the company of His saints!

May God bless you all in the Easter season!



*By Cardinal John P. Foley,
Grand Master,
Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem*



FROM THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM



Changes in the Lieutenancies

First of all the Grand Master, His Eminence the Most Reverend Cardinal John P. Foley, arranged a review of the geographical distribution of the Order's peripheral structures, starting from Italy.

Therefore, effective January 1, 2010, Central and Southern Italy have been divided into the following five Lieutenancies:

1. *The Lieutenancy of Central Apennines Italy,*

the territory of which corresponds to the Ecclesiastical Regions of Tuscany, Umbria and Marche. Its offices are in Florence, and H.E. Baron Giovanni Ricasoli Firidolfi, KGCHS, has been appointed Lieutenant and His Excellency the Most Reverend Mgr. Luciano Giovannetti has been appointed Grand Prior;

2. *the Lieutenancy of Central Italy,*

the territory of which corresponds to the Ecclesiastical Regions of Lazio and Abruzzi-Molise. Its offices are in Rome. H.E. Dr. Saverio Petrillo, KGCHS, has been appointed Lieutenant and His Excellency the Most Reverend Mgr. Franco Croci has been appointed Grand Prior;

3. *the Lieutenancy of Sardinia,*

the territory of which corresponds to the Ecclesiastical Region of Sardinia. Its offices are in Cagliari. H.E. Dr. Efisio Luigi Aste, KCHS, has been appointed Lieutenant and His Excellency the Most Reverend Mgr. Giuseppe Mani has been appointed Grand Prior;

4. *the Lieutenancy of Southern Tyrrhenian Italy,*

the territory of which corresponds to the Ecclesiastical Regions of Campania, Basilicata and Calabria. Its offices are in Naples. H.E. Gen. Avv. Giovanni Napolitano, KGCHS, has been appointed Lieutenant and His Excellency the Most Reverend Mgr. Beniamino Depalma has been appointed Grand Prior;

5. *the Lieutenancy of Southern Adriatic Italy,*

the territory of which corresponds to the Ecclesiastical Regions of Apulia. Its offices are in Bari. H.E. Dr. Rocco Saltino, KC*HS, has been appointed Lieutenant and His Excellency the Most Reverend Mgr. Francesco Cacucci has been appointed Grand Prior.

His Eminence the Cardinal Grand Master has also elevated the Magistral Delegation of Canada Atlantic to a Lieutenancy and ratified H.E. Frederick R. MacGillivray, KC*HS as Lieutenant and His Excellency the Most Reverend Mgr. Anthony Mancini as Grand Prior.



Changes in the Grand Magisterium

I inform you also that by order of His Eminence the Cardinal Grand Master, on January 15, the following changes have been made within the Grand Magisterium:

1. upon expiry of their respective mandates, the Most Reverend Mgr. Juan J. Dorronsoro, Chancellor of the Order, and H.E. Count Mario Cantuti Castelvetri, KGCHS, Member of the Grand Magisterium and President of the Permanent Commission for the Examination of Nominations and Promotions, have been appointed respectively Chancellor of Honor and Dignitary of Honor. I wish to express to both of them my most heartfelt gratitude for the commitment and dedication they demonstrated in carrying out their various tasks;
2. he Most Reverend Mgr. Hans Brouwers, Vice Chancellor of the Order, has been promoted Chancellor of the Order and, at the same time, President of the Permanent Commission for the Examination of Nominations and Promotions.

The following Members join the Grand Magisterium:

3. H.E. Dr. Nob. Alberto Consoli Palermo Navarra, KGCHS, Lieutenant of Honor of the former Lieutenancy for Central Italy and Sardinia;
4. H.E. D. João de Castro de Mendia Conde De Rezende, KGCHS, Lieutenant of Honor of the Lieutenancy of Portugal;
5. H.E. Dr. Michael F. Whelan, KCGHS, Lieutenant of Honor of the Lieutenancy for England and Wales.



MGR. WILLIAM HANNA SHOMALI – NEW AUXILIARY BISHOP TO JERUSALEM

H.H. Pope Benedict XVI has nominated Mgr. William Shomali, priest and chancellor of the Latin Patriarchate, as Auxiliary Bishop to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, H.B. Fouad Twal. The news was broadcast on 31 March 2010 by Vatican Radio at 13.00 local time.

Mgr. Shomali, born in Beit Sahour (Palestine) in 1950, has served for 8 years in the parishes of Jordan, 19 years as professor then as rector of the Seminary of Jerusalem and for 7 years as General Administrator. For many years, he has animated the Committee of liturgy and sacred music.

The new candidate earned his doctorate in Liturgical Studies from the Pontifical University of Saint Anselm in Rome and continues to teach the same subject at the Seminary. He also has a degree in English Literature from the University of Yarmouk (Jordan).

Upon receiving news of his nomination, Fr William said: “I am moved by the confidence shown to me by the Holy Father, my Patriarch and the priests of my diocese. I promise to be a faithful servant of Christ and of my people, to work with all my strength to sustain the faith and hope of believers, to strengthen ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and to work for peace and reconciliation in this Holy Land, torn by divisions.”

Patriarch Twal commented on the nomination expressing his satisfaction and promised that his prayers and those of the faithful will accompany the new bishop, especially during this Holy Week. The Episcopal ordination is scheduled to take place on 27 May in Bethlehem.

Curriculum Vitae of Mgr. William Shomali

15/05/1950	Born in Beit Sahour (Palestine)
05/09/1961	Entered the Junior Seminary of Beit Jala
1972	B.A. in Philosophy and Theology
24/06/1972	Ordained priest in Jerusalem
15/08/1972	Assistant priest in Zarqa North (Jordan)
04/07/1975	Parish priest in Shatana (Jordan)
01/06/1980	Degree in English literature from Yarmouk University
01/09/1980	Professor and director of the Junior Seminary of Beit Jala
06/05/1989	Doctoral thesis in Liturgy
01/09/1989	Professor of liturgy, vice-rector and dean of studies at the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology of the Major Seminary
06/01/1998	General Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate
02/08/2005	Rector of the Latin Patriarchal Seminary of Beit Jala
03/09/2009	Chancellor of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem
31/03/2010	Nominated by Pope Benedict XVI as auxiliary bishop to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and Titular bishop of Lydda



2010 SYNOD OF BISHOPS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

Pope Benedict XVI has announced a special Assembly of the Synod dedicated to the Middle East, from the 10th to the 24th of October 2010. The decision to hold the meeting was in response to the desire expressed for quite some time by the Eastern Catholic Churches. It was announced by the Pope during a gathering held on September 19, at Castel Gandolfo, with the Eastern Patriarchs and Archbishops.

In his address, the Pope explained:

For my part, I feel that I have an important duty in promoting that synodality so dear to Eastern ecclesiology and noted with appreciation by the Second Vatican Council. I fully share the esteem that the conciliar assembly reserved for your Churches in the decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, and that my venerable predecessor John Paul II reemphasized above all in this apostolic exhortation *Orientalis Lumen* and wish to see the Eastern Catholic Churches “flourish” to accomplish “with new apostolic vigor ... the task entrusted to them ... of promoting the unity of all Christians, especially Eastern Christians, in accordance with the principles of the decree, on ecumenism” (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, Nos. 1, 24). The ecumenical horizon is often connected with the interreligious one. In these two spheres the whole Church is in need of the experience of coexistence that has ripened in your Churches from the first Christian millennium.

...

For this reason I will take this occasion to announce the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for the Middle East convoked by me and which will be held October 10-24, 2010, on the theme “*The Catholic Church in the Middle East: Communion and Witness: “The Multitude of Those Who Became Believers Were of One Heart and One Soul” (Acts 4:32).*”



Lineamenta: The Aim of the Synod

The Special Assembly for the Middle East of the Synod of Bishops has a two-fold goal: to confirm and strengthen Christians in their identity through the Word of God and the sacraments and to deepen ecclesial communion among the particular Churches, so that they can bear witness to the Christian life in an authentic, joyful and winsome manner. Our Catholic Churches are not alone in the Middle East. There are also the Orthodox Churches and Protestant communities. This ecumenical aspect is basic, if Christian witness is to be genuine and credible. “That they may all be one, so that the world may believe” (Jn 17: 21).

3. Thus, communion has to be deepened on all levels: within the Catholic Churches in the Middle East themselves, among all Catholic Churches in the region and in relations with other Christian Churches and ecclesial communities. At the same time, we have to strengthen the witness we give to Jews, Muslims, believers and non-believers.

4. The synod also offers us the opportunity to assess the social as well as the religious situation, so as to give Christians a clear vision of the significance of their presence in Muslim societies (Arab, Israeli, Turkish or Iranian), and their role and mission in each country, and thereby prepare them to be authentic witnesses of Christ where they live. Accordingly, this involves reflecting on the current situation, which is a difficult one of conflict, instability and political and social evolution in the majority of our countries.



... AND THE WORK OF THE HOLY LAND COMMISSION

The part played by the Holy Land Commission in selecting Projects has often been mentioned in the Newsletter. But how does this body operate? Does it look purely at written submissions or is there a completely different side to its work? A report by Constance van Wesemael in the latest Riddertijdingen – the newsletter issued by the Netherlands Lieutenancy – sheds new light on the subject, telling not of the usual kind of visit but of the writer's first journey to the Holy Land as a Member of this Commission. With the kind agreement of the author and of the Netherlands Lieutenancy, we print below a summary of the article.

After a postponement, the working visit took place from 13 to 24 September 2009. Together with the President of the Commission, Mme. von Siemens, and the other Members (Vice-Governor General Adolfo Rinaldi and Tom McKiernan KGCHS), I travelled to the sites where the Order supports Projects. We had two aims: to check on the progress of the 2009 Projects (in the main, schools that had been completed) and to inspect Projects that might be suggested by the Latin Patriarchate. In this regard, the Patriarchate is driven by a very particular conviction: if we want to maintain the presence of Christians in the land of Jesus' birth then we must pay the greatest possible attention to Christian education. "The best way out of poverty is a good education" are the words on everyone's lips. And the Grand Magisterium stands firmly behind that point of view.

Improving the level of schools in Jordan

The Patriarchate has more than 40 schools in the Holy Land. Currently, the first improve-

ments to educational levels must be made in Jordan because our schools in that area are behind state and private schools, in terms both of buildings and tuition. So this visit was intended to set up good contacts with those responsible in the Latin Patriarchate, but also with other partners.

Which schools did the Holy Land Commission visit?

We went to:

Hashimi Grades Kindergarten through 8. About half the children are Christian, the other half Muslim.

Fuheis al Alali: One of the largest schools in Jordan, with around 600 pupils in six classes that need to be expanded to nine.

Naour und Madaba: Two Members of the Commission visited these schools. Naour is suffering from damaged buildings and drainage problems and its sanitary facilities must be renovated. Daily worship is held right beside



the toilet blocks (the Muslims see this as a lack of respect for our faith!). Also, there is no playground for the kindergarten. In the current academic year the school was attended by a total of 260 children (from kindergarten upwards)

There are four schools in Madaba: from kindergarten to elementary, plus a middle school for boys and another for girls. Two of these establishments are in Madaba Ma'in, the other two close to Madaba Balad. Here too, drainage problems are at the root of many difficulties.

The kindergarten classes are the biggest in Jordan. The school will build a large hall for sports and cultural activities, to be used by all types of school.

Wahadneh: Two other Members of the Holy Land Commission (including Mrs. van Wese-mael) visited this school in the north of Jordan. Owing to its strategic location, this school is especially important to the Patriarchate even though not that many Christians live in the area. There are, however, scattered Christian communities (of the 7,000 people living in the region around 800 are Catholics). There is a good understanding between Christians and Muslims.

This school, which can take 190 elementary and kindergarten pupils, is in urgent need of renovation. On our return journey we also passed the school at Ajloun and made a detour to Ajloun Castle – a ruined fortress dating back to the Crusades.

Kerak: is about two hours by car from Amman. For part of the way the road runs alongside the Dead Sea. The priest in charge is Fr. Samir Madanat; he is very dedicated and very active as a priest, doing all he can to keep his 400-450 parishioners in Kerak. For the young people,

he provides a program of activities that includes music, games and dancing; the scouts are also involved in the program. Kerak has one classroom for the kindergarten pupils and only three classrooms for the elementary school; these need to be brought up to six. The school currently has 280 pupils. The building must be renovated and the sanitary facilities and furniture must be replaced. Fr. Samir would prefer a “combined complex” uniting the church, school and another building alongside the road in order to create a closed block for the Christians. However, this ambitious plan has yet to be evaluated. Finally, the group was invited to a fantastic meal: a whole lamb on a spit!

In Israel and Palestine respectively our route took in the following schools:

Rameh: This school is near the Lebanese border and has around 400 pupils at this time. The school must be enlarged to better accommodate the elementary grades.

Reneh: This is run jointly by Fr. Elias Odeh and the Sisters of the Rosary. The work required here is not renovation or extension of the school but a question of the Sisters' accommodation. The layout must be arranged so that each of the four Sisters has her own room and bath and there should also be a common room.

Bir Zeit: A total of 500 children aged from 4 to 17 are divided into kindergarten, elementary and middle school groups. The parish is one of the oldest in Palestine.

Work is currently underway on a six-room extension to house laboratories, computer room and staff room. Also a common room and a space for joint activities. The Project has been subject to a number of delays because of poor concrete. When we visited, the work



was around 90% complete. There is a further piece of unused land behind the building that should be put under roof and connected with the common room.

Seminar von Beit Jala: 90 seminarians are taught in the so-called Small and Large Seminaries. Eight bedrooms, a priest's room, sanitary facilities and additional amenities for more students to undergo initial training are being created in the attic space. The students stay for about a year and the rector has been faced with an additional problem: suddenly there were more than eight students in the formative year; where could he put them?

The working visit also gave us the opportunity to make contact with many of those responsible for looking after the Order's Projects. We were constantly warned that the schools in the three regions of the Holy Land must offer an educational level that can help to guarantee the Christian presence.

At the end of the article Mrs. van Wesemael comments: "I have received a very clear impression of the task carried out by those who work for the Latin Patriarchate and of the way in which seemingly insoluble problems are solved." They also have to deal with many difficulties caused by the wall that makes travel sometimes possible, but sometimes impossible. The road is bordered by huge stretches where the olive trees have just been sawed down in order to create a kind of No Man's Land. It is pitiful to see it. The people in the Holy Land have to live with all these difficulties – and they do so in an amazing way; their faith in God is very strong in their lives.

The author's last sentence states:

"As Members of the Equestrian Order we can certainly contribute our little building blocks to the works of the Latin Patriarchate that the Grand Magisterium proposes to us; we should support them further, materially and through our prayers. They deserve it!"

