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Message from the Grand Master

WOMAN OF DIALOGUE, MOTHER OF ENCOUNTER

In October we are preparing to celebrate the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Palestine, patroness of the Order and constant presence alongside the Christians of the Holy Land and all of us, Knights and Dames.

This year our celebrations around the feast of October 25 will be necessarily different from those of previous years and I would like to invite you to take advantage of this circumstantial adaptation to experience this spiritual occasion that is offered to us at a deeper level.

Mary gives herself to the world and to the Church in an ever new way, through history and different cultures. This is why we invoke her with different titles that respond to the realities that she takes to heart in our stories. But what is the specificity of our patroness?

Woman of dialogue,

Mary welcomes in her embrace the Land of biblical promises and of her Son, a land of many faces and many cultures. We find her in Bethlehem, where she places Jesus in a manger and presents him to the world: from the shepherds of the nearest fields to the Magi who come from afar; in Nazareth where Jesus grows, within the social context of his time; in

Cana where she is already advocate of humanity's thirst for fullness with her Son; and in Jerusalem where she listens and keeps the prophetic words of Anna and Simeon regarding the new-born baby she carries in her arms until the day when she will stand beneath the cross and Jesus will entrust her to John and will entrust John and all of us to her.

Mother of the Encounter, Mary does not fear diversity or new paths. Indeed, she herself opens them up to us. In her arms we rediscover closeness to each other, we rediscover



The statue of Our Lady Queen of Palestine in Deir Rafat, in the Holy Land.

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ourselves brothers and sisters. She cares about us all because we all have a place in the heart of her Son and the Jerusalem that she cradles in her arms reveals this clearly.

Today we learn from Mary to be men and women of dialogue and encounter. The small actions of our daily life may not change international systems but they can bring us closer to each other: in our families, in our dioceses, in our cities and even in the

Holy Land.

We live in a moment in which social distancing is a key and necessary word.

Let us work, Dames and Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, so that in our life we may be able to experience spiritual closeness with our neighbour – through listening, prayer, intercession and concrete acts – in the school of Mary.

Fernando Cardinal Filoni

The Order in Union with the Universal Church

GIVING THANKS FOR FIFTY YEARS OF PRIESTLY LIFE

"Psalm 84 is called the 'Song of Pilgrimage.' In the Liturgy of the Hours, the prayer priests and consecrated persons are called to mark their day with it, the following verse is recited: *"Blessed are those, whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage"* (v. 6). This expression contains a blessing for those who undertake a 'journey' in faith, a spiritual 'journey' that involves a commitment of

great personal importance: I am thinking of baptism, of those who join in Christian marriage, but also the choice of priestly and consecrated life.

As a priest, I recited this verse whenever the Liturgy placed it before me; it was like renewing the request for blessing for the commitment I made at my priestly ordination, on July 3, 1970, in the Mother Church of Galatone, at the hands of Bishop





Eucharistic celebration presided over by Cardinal Fernando Filoni on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Antonio Rosario Mennonna, of revered memory. I recite it also to find support in God for fidelity to Him and to the sacramental grace I received."

These were the first words of the homily Cardinal Fernando Filoni delivered at the Mass he presided on July 4, 2020 in Galatone (Lecce) to give thanks for 50 years of priestly life starting from that place in which his "yes" was pronounced. From Puglia, then, the mission entrusted to him by the Church led Cardinal Filoni to many different places in the world at the service of the Word of God: "I have lived many years in various countries: Sri Lanka, Iran, Brazil, China / Hong Kong, Iraq, Jordan and the Philippines; I remember everything about each one: events, ecclesial life, people," he recalled. His family, the clergy and his friends, as well as religious, civil and military authorities attended the Eucharistic celebration. The Cardinal concelebrated with, among others, Cardinal Salvatore De Giorgi - from Lecce - the archbishop of Lecce, Msgr. Michele Seccia, and the bishop of Nardò-Gallipoli, Msgr. Fernando Filograna, co-organizer of the event together with the mayor of the town, Flavio Filoni. A delegation of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, led by the Lieutenant for Italia Meridionale Adriatica Ferdinando Parente, attended the event.

During Mass the Cardinal gave thanks to God for "the service of the Eucharist and pastoral charity in the Church and for all those brothers and sisters who have accompanied me throughout these years."

With regards the duties of a priest, he commented: "From the time of his preparation for the sacred ministry, a priest knows well that he always has two primary tasks to devote himself to: the first - according to biblical teaching - is his dedication to the Most High: "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart*" (Dt 6:5; Mt 22:37); Saint Cyprian, bishop and martyr, taught not to "*put anything before Christ*". It is a nice lesson to keep in mind. The second, alongside the same commitment, is the exercise of pastoral charity, that is, service to one's neighbour and to all those whom the Lord will entrust to him and whom he will meet on his way."

For the occasion, numerous messages of good wishes reached the Grand Master, first of all that of Pope Francis, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, a Dicastery formerly headed by Cardinal Filoni.

About ten days later, at Palazzo della Rovere, on July 13, in the presence of the staff members of the Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, Cardinal Fernando Filoni presided a thanksgiving Eucharistic celebration for his 50 years of priesthood. Msgr. Tommaso Caputo, Assessor of the Order and archbishop Prelate of Pompei, who concelebrated the mass, congratulated the Cardinal on behalf of all the Knights and Dames, assured him of their fervent prayers for his ministry, and asked Our Lady of Palestine for her protection.



Proceedings of the Grand Magisterium

THE GRAND MASTER'S BOOK ON THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE ORDER AVAILABLE SOON

"E tutta la casa si riempì del profumo dell'unguento" ("And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume"): this is the title of the book by Cardinal Fernando Filoni published by the Vatican Publishing House which will be available in bookstores in Italian from the second half of December 2020. Other language versions will follow in 2021.

During the lockdown the Grand Master of the Order dedicated himself with attention and care to drafting this text which aims to sustain Knights and Dames in living their spirituality daily in the light of the Holy Sepulchre.

In the prologue, Cardinal Filoni writes: "Often members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem pose the question as to whether membership of this ancient and

noble institution implies a specific 'spirituality'. This is a pertinent question given that it is not a simply honorific chivalric Order; rather it is a vital and active entity with responsibility and commitments that have been gradually entrusted to it by Pontiffs."

The text then takes the reader by the hand and accompanies him in the discovery of the two central dimensions of the spirituality of the Order: the biblical and the ecclesiological. From the anointing of Bethany to the foot of the Cross, from the empty tomb to the stretch of road travelled with the disciples of Emmaus, Cardinal Filoni invites us to follow

in the footsteps of Jesus in the land we cherish so much and in the holy land of our daily lives. The grace granted to us in baptism introduces us into the life of the Church, the mother who accompanies the journey of the Knights and Dames of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. It is in this ecclesial dimension, firmly attached to the Word of God, to prayer and to the sacraments that the spirituality of the Order grows, matures and becomes a gift for the Universal Church.

Today we discover that the ointment with which Mary ardently desires to anoint the

body of Jesus, is in our hands today.

We can choose what to do with it, and over the centuries Knights and Dames have been offered one proposal:

"Membership of the Order allows us to continue the same work of Mary



Detail of a mosaic by Father Rupnik (Redemptoris Mater Chapel in Vatican City), illustrating the Gospel episode in which Mary of Bethany anointed Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair. «And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume» (John 12,3).

of Bethany, that is to anoint ourselves the 'Body of Christ', which is the Church, in which Jesus now lives. I refer to the Church in its universal and local reality, but, in particular as members of the Order, to the Mother Church of all the Churches, that of Jerusalem with its faithful, pilgrims, refugees, the poor that Jesus left to us," the Grand Master affirms.

By fulfilling this mission, anointing the Body of Christ today, we will contribute for our small part to spread the perfume of the ointment in the house we have the joy of living in, our Church.



THE ORDER IS GROWING ON THE LATIN AMERICAN CONTINENT



An interview with Enric Mas, Vice Governor of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre for Latin America

The new position of Vice Governor for Latin America was created a few months ago, what

does your mission involve?

The Latin American continent represents great potential for our ecclesial institution and this justified the appointment of a Vice Governor to coordinate the development of the Order in this area of the world. I travelled a great deal before the pandemic, meeting Grand Priors and Lieutenants. This contact continues principally through virtual means while we await the return to normality.

We emphasize the spiritual life and commitment of the members within their dioceses, where they are a sort of ambassadors of the Holy Land, to quote an expression of Cardinal Pietro Parolin. Brazil has two Lieutenancies and we are planning to expand further into this immense Catholic nation. The Order's annual magazine is distributed here thanks to a generous initiative of the Lieutenancy of Portugal, which financed the translation and production of the *Jerusalem Cross* in Portuguese.

The Order is also present in Argentina, Colombia, Venezuela and Mexico. For the moment we have around 400 members in total, but the development projects in Ecuador and Panama allow us to count on a future growth in the number of Knights and Dames, despite the crisis that is hitting this part of the world hard.

How do you go about choosing new members of the Order, careful to avoid those who are more interested in appearing than in serving?

Our relationship with local bishops is essential. In this regard, I received very clear instructions from the Grand Master Cardinal Filoni and from the Governor General Leonardo Visconti di Modrone.

It is the bishops who help us to identify and choose men and women of the Church, capable of offering the right image of the Order, avoiding those candidates who seek social promotion, for example. Even the members already engaged in our institution turn out to be excellent advisors, as they know their respective areas well, thanks to the exercise of various professional activities. The spiritual life of Knights and Dames represents a priority for us, as does their parish commitment. We insist a lot on deepening the formation of candidates within the peripheral structures of the Order.

The relationships between the Lieutenancies of Latin American countries allow for multiple exchanges of experiences and a positive mutual stimulus. It is not the quantity of members that matters, but the quality of their Christian witness and the pastoral will to support the Mother Church in the Holy Land.

How does the Order currently represent a space in which its baptismal vocation is expressed?

I work as a lawyer, I am married and I have three children. My commitment to the Order is a way of serving the Church, that is, the Catholic community. I believe that it is very important to boost awareness of the fact that the Order is a modern and avant-garde institution in many ecclesial aspects, since the baptized lay people fully assume the utmost responsibilities, be they men or women, under





Vice Governor Enric Mas, together with the Governor General and the Grand Master.

the aegis of the Grand Master appointed by the Pope, in collaboration with – but not dependent on – the clergy.

Leo XIII allowed women to enter the Order

at a time when they did not vote and this was a revolutionary decision. With the same impetus, we continue to offer women an important place and, in fact, some of them are at the head of certain Lieutenancies. Beyond the distorted archaic image of the Order, I am happy to testify that my vocation as a lay person – priest, prophet and king through baptism – is fully expressed in the Order itself, a spiritual family that reminds us that the Church is above all a community of brothers and sisters who love each other.

Interview by François Vayne

TWO NEW MEMBERS OF THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM

By decision of the Grand Master, Professor Vincenzo Buonomo – rector of the Pontifical Lateran University – and lawyer Michael Scott Feeley – former head of the Western USA Lieutenancy – were appointed members of the Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. Vincenzo Buonomo and Michael Feeley – both born in 1961 – are both Knights Grand Cross. We wish them a happy and fruitful mandate in the service of the Holy Land, in the context of the advisory council which aids Cardinal Filoni and spreads his provisions regarding the important direction of the Order.



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The Order and the Holy Land

THE ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE SUPPORTS THE LATIN PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM IN RESPONDING TO COVID-19

Cardinal Filoni revealed in May that the Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre had established a special "Covid-19 Humanitarian Support Fund". The Cardinal had acted upon the wish of so many Knights and Dames who wanted to demonstrate their communion with the brothers and sisters of the Holy Land severely struck by the health and economic crisis caused by Covid-19.

Despite such difficult conditions at the global level, generosity has not diminished and in recent months the Grand Magisterium of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre was able to send, in addition to the regular aid planned each month, about 3 million euros (of which around 2 million were specifically for the Covid-19 fund) to

the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, in order to respond to the humanitarian needs of its faithful.

The contributions sent to the Holy Land have permission to respond immediately to a series of urgent necessities, as described by the administrative director of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Sami El-Yousef: "With the humanitarian aid received, we have been able to help over 2,400 families at more than 30 parishes with basic needs including food coupons, hygiene and baby supplies, medicines, and electric meter refills. This was done through the parish priests and parish councils who collaborated with local authorities to ensure fair distribution." Furthermore, he continued, "1,238 families in Jordan and 1,180 families in Palestine were supported

with their unpaid tuition fees."

"We are grateful that the special aid sent to the Covid-19 Fund did not substitute the regular commitment of our members in contributing to the daily life of the diocese of Jerusalem, but rather was added to it," concluded Governor General Leonardo Visconti di Modrone.



A meeting of the local Catholic community, in the Holy Land, during the health crisis.



MSGR. PIZZABALLA THANKS THE ORDER

In these four years of service to the Latin diocese of Jerusalem, in the Latin Patriarchate, I have been able to personally ascertain the role of the Knights and Dames of the Holy Sepulchre for this Church, not only in the context of educational and pastoral activities, but in general for the life of the diocese as a whole.

Four years ago, at a particularly difficult moment for the Patriarchate, the Knights and Dames – through the Grand Magisterium – showed their solidarity and closeness by encouraging and also concretely supporting the processes of revision and control of the administrative life of the diocese, which had become urgent and necessary.

During these four years, through pilgrimages and with initiatives in their respective territories, the various Lieutenancies have nurtured their bonds with the various realities of the Latin Patriarchate, not only in words but also with tangible facts.

All of this has been reconfirmed in this last year marked by the Covid-19 pandemic and during which the Patriarchate found itself facing a new emergency, just as we had believed our situation to be improving. As a result of the measures decided by the various governments to tackle the pandemic, in fact, a large part of our population found itself facing a drastic cut in wages, and a general economic situation even more fragile than usual.

Thanks to the support of the Grand Master with the Grand Magisterium, our appeal to the Knights and Dames had a

response that went far beyond our expectations and that gave us the necessary breathing space to manage this emergency with greater serenity. We were all amazed and humbled by the immediate response and its scope.

2020 was also the year that, despite the many emergencies, nevertheless marked the end of a tiring path of restructuring and resolution of difficult pre-existing situations. The large debt which the Patriarchate owed to the Saint John the Baptist foundation,

linked to the University of Madaba, has been fully repaid. This has reduced the overall debts that burdened the Patriarchate administration by almost 60%. It was possible thanks to the painful relinquishing of some property, which however, was not essential for the Patriarchate. We now have a structured plan to conclude the remaining commitments soon as well.

Much remains to be done, but we are now at the end of a positive path for the life of the diocese of Jerusalem.

I wish to thank the Grand Master, both the current one and his predecessor, for their support and encouragement; through them, our thanks extends to the whole Order of Knights and Dames of the Holy Sepulchre, without whom all that we have accomplished to date would have been impossible.

Thank you for being, for this small but important Church, the concrete and tangible sign of Divine Providence!

+ Pierbattista



25 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF CATECHESIS

The Catechetical Office of the Latin Patriarchate celebrates its 25th anniversary and welcomes its new director.

"**T**he last commandment of Jesus before ascending into heaven referred directly to preaching the Gospel to all nations. [...] Throughout history, the Church has developed many forms in the service of proclaiming the Word of God; one of these is Catechesis," writes Msgr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa in the foreword of the booklet prepared to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Catechetical Office of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Back in 1994, the office was founded to provide educational, pedagogical, doctrinal and spiritual help in the area of catechesis for the Christian Education teachers not only working in the institutes run by the Latin Patriarchate but in all Christian schools in the region.

Sister Virginie Habib has run this office for the past 15 years until July 2020 and she says: "The programs and activities of the Catechetical Office contribute to the ongoing formation of the Christian Education teachers in an integrated and comprehensive manner, encompassing all aspects required to fulfill their mission in the best possible way." "The final goal is to educate a new generation fully aware of their Christian faith, able to live what they believe within

their church and society," she adds.

Throughout these years, many activities have been run by the office, starting with the visits to schools. Without doubt spending time to become better acquainted and more familiar with each situation is a priority. Workshops and training courses for teachers have been regularly offered for different topics as well as spiritual retreats and visits to the Holy Sites.

Interreligious dialogue is "an inseparable dimension of our daily life in the Middle East and the practice in this field comes before the theory," explains sister Virginie. The topic of dialogue with other faith communities is therefore present in an indirect way while the office has engaged more explicitly in ecumenical issues. "Our catechism books have this approach and we try to deepen it through our discussions on certain topics, like sacraments, saints and the Virgin Mary," affirms Sister Virginie who shares that the office decided to open its doors to all Christian schools to ensure that everybody, not only Catholic teachers, is being offered the possibility of training and formation. "The advantage of this approach is that through these meetings and interactions over these years, the Christian



*Training sessions
 are regularly
 organised in the
 Diocese of
 Jerusalem for
 Christian education
 teachers.*



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Father Haddad, Director of the Catechetical Office of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Education teachers became one team: they share the same vision and goals although they are teaching in different schools. Furthermore, the experience of a larger group from different backgrounds is more enriching than a small group from the same context," concludes the former director of the Catechetical Office.

On August 5, 2020, Father Remon Haddad was asked to take over the responsibility of director of the Catechetical Office from "the respected Sister Virginie Habib who has worked with love and devotion in this office for many years," he says. Father Remon is 31 years old, a priest since 2016 and now serving also as an assistant priest in the parish church of Ramallah and assistant to the spiritual leader of the Youth of Jesus'

Homeland Palestine. Looking ahead to his new charge in the Catechetical Office, Father Remon intends to continuing to "support teachers with courses and activities and also provide all the modern and electronic educational tools they need." A teacher himself, he comments: "I love teaching Catechism in schools, I have been teaching for six years and I will continue to teach at the Latin Patriarchate school "National College" in Ramallah." He is planning to conduct religious activities for students, such as Bible competitions, and help the students know better their Holy Land through visits to the holy places.

Reflecting about parish life, Father Remon adds: "A book especially written for our diocese Sunday Schools will soon be published, containing biblical texts and attractive lessons in new and fun ways. This book will help the parish leaders to deliver the Word of God to the children."

Father Remon concludes by thanking the Order of the Holy Sepulchre for its constant support and with a request: "I ask you to pray for me so that the Lord would grant me and those who work with me in this ministry success."

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The Life of the Lieutenancies

PARISH SISTERHOOD AND HOW A LIEUTENANCY CAN SUPPORT THE HOLY LAND IN ITS DIOCESE

About two years ago, St. Mary's Parish in Holliston, Massachusetts USA began planning its 150th Anniversary. Parishioners stressed that the anniversary should be more than a celebration of their past and wanted it to be an opportunity to reach out to others in new ways. The Parish priest of St. Mary's, Fr. Mark J. Coiro, proposed the idea of adopting a "sister parish" – a Catholic community of faith somewhere in the world with which they could enter into a relationship of mutual blessing and support.

The Northeastern USA Lieutenancy opens contacts in the Holy Land for St. Mary's Parish

During a 2016 St. Mary's Parish Pilgrimage to the Holy Land led by Fr. Coiro, both he and the parishioners who took part were shocked at how difficult life is for the Christian minority there. The parish therefore settled on the Holy Land as a worthy "sister parish" prospect. Fr. Coiro, a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, reached out to Gerry Foley, the Lieutenant of the Northeastern USA Lieutenancy, to request assistance in identifying a parish in the Holy Land. Lieutenant Foley reviewed the request at the June 2019 meeting of the North American Lieutenancies and Cardinal O'Brien, then Gran Master, was very supportive of the idea.

Fr. Coiro was able to connect with Dr. Sami El Yousef, the Chief Executive Officer of the Latin Patriarchate, who

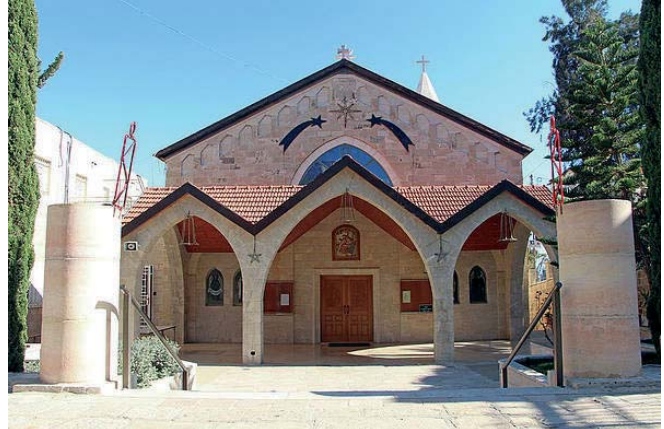
identified Our Lady of Fatima in Beit Sahour as a possible sister Parish. In January 2020 St. Mary's Parish Council agreed to invite Our Lady of Fatima Parish, and in February 2020, Fr. Issa Hijazeen, the Pastor of Our Lady of Fatima, accepted the sister parish relationship proposal.

Both parishes began by supporting each other in prayer. Fr. Issa pledged that each First Friday the Evening Mass at Our Lady's would be offered for the parishioners at St. Mary's in Holliston. St. Mary's is reciprocating with a monthly First Friday Morning Mass for Our Lady's parishioners. At St. Mary's, all of the weekend Masses include an intercessory prayer: "For Father Issa and the people of our Sister Parish, Our Lady's in Beit Sahour." Every Wednesday



The Nunes Family of St. Mary's Parish (Massachusetts, USA) with the gifts collected to be sent to the Holy Land for Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Beit Sahour.





St. Mary's Parish in Holliston (Massachusetts, USA) and Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Beit Sahour (Palestine) are sister parishes thanks to an initiative of the USA Northeastern Lieutenancy of the Order.

night, at Adoration, Fr. Issa prays for the people of Holliston.

Covid-19 does not stop work on the project

A March 2020 St. Mary's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land was scheduled to include a visit and Mass with Fr. Issa at Our Lady's. St. Mary's parishioners donated over 200 new English language books, educational DVD's, and colored pencil sets for the pilgrims to carry with them for the children of the Patriarchate School in Beit Sahour. When queried, Father Issa had indicated that these items would be the most useful – especially the books as the schoolchildren spend one hour a day in English reading.

Unfortunately, the pilgrimage was postponed due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, so the gifts had to be shipped over instead. Additional school items will be collected and carried over when the pilgrimage can safely take place, hopefully in March of 2021.

"This initiative brings to life great energy and enthusiasm within the St. Mary's Parish community towards Our Lady of Fatima in Beit Sahour," comments with joy Gerard Foley, Lieutenant of the Northeastern USA Lieutenancy. "This personal awareness and zeal generate greater interest in the Order among young and old at St. Mary's. It's such interest that helps the Lieutenancy to grow with appropriate candidates and to increase funding to support the Catholic Church and

Christian presence in the Holy Land," he concludes.

Looking ahead

The two parishes are also exploring the possibility of a St. Mary's sponsored Scholarship to fully fund the tuition of a Beit Sahour student each year. They are also hopeful that St. Mary's Boy Scouts of America Troop 14 will be able to form connections with the Boy Scouts of Palestine Troop at Our Lady's Beit Sahour. It will be interesting for the boys to learn what scouting is like in another land and culture.

St. Mary's is currently in the process of setting up an information bulletin board in its Parish Center to help people learn about their new sister parish. It will include the history of Our Lady's in Beit Sahour, updates, information on the challenges of Christianity in the Holy Land, and ways to get involved.

Everyone looks forward to seeing how this new relationship between fellow Catholics in Holliston, Massachusetts and Beit Sahour evolves. The hope is that this will lead to personal friendships, spiritual enrichment, and better understanding of the lives of Catholics in different parts of the world. As this new experience successfully develops, the Northeastern USA Lieutenancy will encourage other parishes in the Lieutenancy to consider other sister parishes in the Holy Land.

