



GRAND MAGISTERIUM – VATICAN  
EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF  
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM

*At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land*

## Update on the Grand Magisterium's projects in 2017



The Governor General of the Order inaugurated the new classes at Naour School on September 13, 2017, during his first official visit to the Holy Land.

### PROJECTS CARRIED OUT TO DATE

#### **A new recreation courtyard for the Tla'el Ali school (Jordan)**

The project – dating back to 2016 – was completed thanks to the contribution of the Lieutenancy for Germany (\$ 127,000): the school in Tla'el Ali was in need of a larger recreation courtyard, or was in danger of closing.

#### **New classrooms for the Naour school (Jordan)**

Another construction to which the Order has contributed in 2017, to the tune of \$ 261,000, was the construction of the second floor of the school in Naour, a Jordanian city located west of the capital Amman and home to a small Catholic community. "Because the classes were already hosting 45 students per room (223 in total) and because of the increasing demand of enrollment from Christian families newly arrived in the area, it was necessary to build a second floor. Enhancing a good educational environment is crucial for our schools where the Latin Patriarchate members strive to help the youth in growing with a faithful heart and a broad mind", explained Sami El-Yousef, the new administrative director of the Patriarchate. The new structure was inaugurated by the Governor General Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, in the presence of Msgr. William Shomali, patriarchal vicar, on September 13, 2017 and now the work has been completed. The Lieutenancy for Western Spain and for Northern Italy contributed to the definitive realization of this project, which began in 2016.

#### **Renovation of the church in Gaza**

The renovation of the Church of the Holy Family in Gaza, scheduled for 2015 – following the bombings that hit the local population in 2014 – was finally achieved this year, to the immense joy of the small local community. The cost of construction equal to about \$ 226,000 – was sustained in a special way by decision of the Grand Master. Sami El- Yousef thanking the Order, explains: “The Church of the Holy Family had severe damages in its foundations columns, beams of infrastructure, bad water leaks from the roof, walls and windows and severe sinking of the foundation, thus presenting a potential risk of collapse. Therefore and during the winter season, masses were interrupted and canceled due to water leaking in the church. It became urgent and necessary for the parish to rehabilitate the church, which is located in a very utilized compound; the project achievement really helped to create a community center where a lot of people gather.”

## PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

### **Teachers’ salaries**

As in 2016, some of the funds were allocated to the increase in teachers’ salaries in the Patriarchate schools, an important measure to continue offering high-level education to pupils and students. In 2017, the Grand Magisterium sent \$ 800,000 to the Latin Patriarchate to meet these needs and ensure quality Catholic teaching. We hope that the contributions of the Lieutenancies will avoid the Grand Magisterium’s having to resort to its reserves in 2018, since the economic demand will increase, in particular because of the severance and provident fund for professors that the Patriarchate must cover.

### **A kindergarten in Hashimi (Jordan)**

Hashimi’s nursery school no longer conformed to Jordanian law: the kindergarten must be on the ground floor, so that children do not risk falling down stairs. Without a timely intervention the school would have been closed . The project – which started in 2016 – continues thanks in particular to the Lieutenancies for Northern Italy, Western Spain, England and Netherlands, which donated \$ 329,000. The outstanding cost is \$ 372,000 that the Lieutenancy for France has pledged to pay in 2018.

### **A school is flourishing in Jaffa of Nazareth (Israel)**

In Jaffa of Nazareth, Israel, a new parish building is being under construction, both to create a nursery school and to move the presbytery to the edge of the school. This project has been ongoing since 2015. The Lieutenancy for Switzerland is supporting all costs – for a total of \$ 1,700,000 in two phases, half of which in 2017 – allowing the school of this parish to have more space to accommodate a larger number of students. Education is indeed a matter of fundamental importance, both for the local Church and for society. “There is a great need to improve the existing 12 grades of the school, by upgrading the existing and deteriorated facilities and to offer more space in order to respond to the increasing number of students”, Sami El-Yousef told us, on behalf of the Latin Patriarchate. “There is also an urgent need to shift the priest residence and office, the kindergarten and the sisters’ house from the school old convent, so the 4 existing floors of the school building can be remodeled”, explains Sami. “Although the project was at a standstill in recent years, work is now proceeding rapidly and well, since the foundation stone was laid on September 11 by Governor Leonardo Visconti di Modrone. On the occasion of a visit to those places in November, it was exciting to see the joy of

the teachers with the progress of the work. They have waited so long to have a renovated school, fully able to offer the high quality education they wish to impart!”

### **A new church in Jubeiha (Jordan)**

In 2017, the Grand Magisterium pledged to support a cost of about one million dollars for the completion of the construction of the church of Saint Paul in Jubeiha, Jordan. Jubeiha is a village located on the outskirts of Amman and where the first parish was founded in 1991, when there were still few houses in that area, which was mainly agricultural. Over the years, the population increased and – on the initiative of some parishioners and benefactors – work began on a church to accommodate the one thousand Latin faithful. Unfortunately, a lack of funds means the project was never completed. But now it has been relaunched, in the hope of being able to soon give to parishioners – who gather in a nearby room – an appropriate place to celebrate the liturgies. The Lieutenancy for Germany has already paid about a third of the sum needed, through the Grand Magisterium (approximately 300,000 euros). “Due to the unfinished works on the location, weather conditions and no contention work, the construction of Saint Paul church, launched with local contributions, was in bad and dangerous condition. In order to prevent any advancement on the dramatic deterioration of the grounds surrounding, in addition to complete and deliver a proper church where the parishioners are able to pray and attend holy masses (the priest had no choice but to celebrate the holy mass in the school hall) the Latin Patriarchate with the support of the Order decided to complete the project”, Sami-El Yousef, the Latin Patriarchate’s administrative director, told us.