



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

Another new year of hope



Pope Francis and cardinal O'Brien during the Christmas Mass in St. Peter's basilica. Copyright: Osservatore Romano

In the Middle East, renewed prayers for peace but there is no peace, rather tens of thousands of innocent dead.

In the Holy Land, continuing prayers for freedom but there is no freedom but high, lengthy walls separating families. Prayers as well for justice, where Christian minorities still suffer limitations of their human rights. There is no peace but great suffering on all sides.

It has been said that the challenge of faith is to know why God is permitting evil and suffering without losing faith in God. What an inspiration it should be to us to witness Christians in the Holy Land tenaciously clinging to Faith in sometimes desperate circumstances. And what a source of satisfaction it should be for us as members of the Equestrian Order, to realize that it is our solidarity with them in prayer, pilgrimages and financial help that strengthens faith of Christians there and offers them hope.

Through increased communications such as the Newsletters, Annual Annales, an updated website and our personal visits, we are striving to convince you, each of our motivated members, of the essential role you play in keeping faith and hope alive among Christians in Israel, Palestine and Jordan. And through the committed leadership of our Patriarchate and its allies on the ground there, we can be confident that our sacrifices are keeping churches and schools open, shelters for refugees and orphans are opened and food provided for the hungry of every and no faith.

The 17th century French bishop and theologian Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet suggests that “actions that seem most ordinary are secretly directed by the order of God, and serve his designs without our noticing it, in such a way that nothing comes to pass by mere coincidence.”

We can be sure that what we do in the name of God is somehow being ordered by God's designs in bringing about extraordinary results.

Edwin, cardinal O'Brien

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