

Frédéric de Ghyvelde

Holy Land History

Translated by Lorraine Daudelin

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

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I am second-generation Franco/American, grandchild of French-Canadian immigrants, I was educated by the Sisters of the Assumption of Nicolet, both in a bilingual parish elementary school, and their private girls' boarding school where the French language and Canadian history played an important role in my education. Further, the Blessed Sacrament Fathers (founded by St. Peter-Julian Eymard) were the chaplains of the boarding school, so there was a strong Eucharistic spirituality. I was introduced to music by my mother, and studied piano with Anna Wise, and organ with Clair Weir.

Advanced education led to a career in **library science** and I worked as a "Research Librarian" catering to chemists and engineers at Monsanto Company. French was now applied to translating Belgian Patents in the fields organic and polymer chemistry and engineering. I was a member of the **Special Libraries' Association and the American Chemical Society**.

I pursued **genealogy** and traced my maternal line through Canada back to France. For relaxation and recreation, I studied **art** with Paul Scopp, Ron Bessette, John Phelps, Mari Funai, Robert Masla etc. and **photography** with Lester Campbell as an adjunct to my interest in art. I am a member of the Springfield Museum Association.

When I retired from that phase of my life, I went back to school... to the Conventual Franciscan St. Hyacinth College and Seminary (Granby, Mass) and pursued studies in **Lay Ministry and Biblical Studies**. I am certified in both. During that time I also pursued a more spiritual avenue of art by studying **Iconography** (the theory, history, spirituality and the actual writing of the icons) in the 12th Century Russian Byzantine Tradition with Orthodox Iconographer Vladislav Andreyev of New York.

TRAVEL: My wanderings have taken me to Quebec (including the Gaspé Peninsula), New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Wales, England, Belgium, France (3 trips), Italy, Greece, Turkey and the Holy Land. If you want to count closer to 'home'; U.S. – all of New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Missouri, Arizona, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, etc. All of my travels must have a spiritual, historical, or cultural goal. I do not go about just for the sake of "having been there".) **L.D.**

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WORKS OF THE HOLY LAND

HOLY LAND HISTORY (78 PAGES BOOKLET)
Translation of «Notice historique sur l'œuvre de Terre-Sainte»

Historical overview

THE WORKS IN THE HOLY LAND

On the occasion of the establishment of the Annual Good Friday collection in Canada, at the request of the Holy See, Monseigneur the Archbishop, and our Monsignors the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Quebec

By
Rev. Father Frederic of Ghyvelde
Custodial Vicar of the Holy Land

Quebec
J.A. Langlais, Editor and Publisher
177 St. Joseph St., St. Roch
1882

INTRODUCTION

Without a doubt, one of the outstanding Catholic works in God's Church has a dual purpose: 1. To reclaim and conserve the Catholicity of the Shrines of Palestine which witnessed all the great mysteries of our Redemption. 2. To work for the conversion of the infidels, heretics and Schismatics who are far too numerous and alas, too powerful in these blessed countries which the Christian tongue so aptly named: The Holy Land!

This work is of interest to all of Catholicism to the extent that more than fifty popes recommended through special Bulls, the origin of this work. It enjoyed the help of our common ancestors, the faithful of old, Catholic France which always provided the support and protection of the governments which succeeded in this very Christian country.

Actually, the first Crusade materialized in France, through the entreaties of the French monk, Pierre l'Ermite (Peter, the Hermit) and a Council presided over by a French Pope (Urban II). Clearly this resulted in the French protectorate of Jerusalem. Saint Louis died on the beach of Africa, and our monarch inherited his zeal for the Holy Sites. Francis I saved them from their eminent loss; Louis XIV and Louis XV protected them, and this French tradition was never interrupted, not even in the most evil days of the Terror. Actually today, more specifically than in the past, the Holy Land Custody finds itself officially and exclusively under the protectorate of Catholic France since the Congress of Berlin.

The Sultans of Egypt and Constantinople came in turn. Despite their own persecutions, they confirmed at a distance throughout the centuries, the French Rights (Latin Catholics) over the main Sanctuaries through a series of *firmans* whose original texts are carefully preserved in our archives in the Holy Land.

Visibly protected by God in the merciful design of his Divine Providence, the work in the Holy Land nonetheless finds itself in great distress. The difficulties of the times causing the considerable reduction of the faithful's offerings.

Upon the simple wish of the Holy See, Monsignor Archbishop, and the Monsignors Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Quebec, being of a single mind, recommend this work to their pious faithful. The pastoral appeal echoes in the hearts of the faithful. Their generous and entirely free offerings prove to our great consolation, that their religious sympathies nonetheless remain with the Works of the Holy Sites. This sympathy continues to grow as

they become better acquainted with them. We could say better acquainted with the nobility and holiness of its origin, the heroic continuation throughout the centuries, the development and actual needs, and especially the incomparable spiritual advantages which the Holy Church bestows upon its benefactors.

With this goal, we publish this Overview the name of the entire Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, to give public witness and all our gratitude to the Bishops, the Clergy and the faithful of the little but beautiful Church of Canada. We very happy to express our sacred debt of gratitude. We manage to contribute something to the glory of God, and attract abundant blessings from Heaven on all those whom we will continue to have the pleasure of calling by the gentle name "brothers" in Canada!

PART I WORKS OF THE HOLY LAND

The Origin and historic summary throughout the centuries

Through divine inspiration in 1219, our Seraphic Father Saint Francis of Assisi, with twelve companions, religious of his Order, boarded a ship at the port of Ancona and left for the Orient. On the way, the saint stopped at the Island of Cyprus where he would soon send Franciscan missionaries, his brothers, and landed at Saint Jean d'Acre (Ptolimaida) in Syria, when he sent his twelve companions, two by two, where he judged their presence to be most useful. He himself boarded with one Brother Illumine for Egypt which he wanted to convert to Jesus Christ, and he arrived at Damietta besieged by the Latins.

The two armies were camped nearby, and it was possible to go from one camp to the other without fear of being massacred. The Sultan had promised a piece of gold to anyone who brought him the head of a Christian. After a lengthy prayer, Francis confidently went toward the city, his holy lips pronouncing these words: "When I walk in the valley of death, I will fear no evil, because you are with me, Lord." Brother Illumine shared his calm and courage. Along the way, the saint spotted two sheep, two dear little sisters. He said to his companion "Have confidence in the Lord, for we see here accomplished the word of the Good Shepherd: "Here I send you like lambs in the midst of wolves." A few steps further, they came upon a band of Sarrasins who submitted them to cruel treatment and put them in chains. Francis said to them, "I am a Christian. Take me to your master." It was the Sultan Malek-el-kamel, known in the West as Meledin.

The Sultan asked them "Who sent you and what is the purpose of your voyage?" Francis replied : "I did not come on behalf of any man, but on behalf of God most-high, to show you and your people, the way to salvation and announce the Gospel of truth." The Sultan gladly listened to the servant of God, pressing him to prolong his stay with him and granted him and his companions permission to preach freely in Egypt. But the saint realized that the hour to preach the holy Gospel with success had not yet arrived, and he resolved to leave Egypt to visit the Holy Sites. From there, he returned to Italy, to his home at Saint Mary of the Angels. The trip of the Seraphic Order's Founder resulted in opening up Egypt to his children, and obtaining the Sultan's benevolence . From that moment the Sultan started treating the Christians with less violence. Other than the rift with the Crusades, he let the prisoners freely return to their respective countries, returned the true Cross removed from Jerusalem by Saladin, and zealously provided for those among them who were the poorest. Soon during his private discussions with Francis, he begged him to ask the Lord in his behalf the grace to attach himself to the religion he found so agreeable.

Several years later, the saint appeared to two of his religious in Syria, and ordered them to find the Sultan who was gravely ill, and to baptize him. Instructed once again by two Franciscans, Meledin secretly swore off his errors, was baptized and went to receive in Heaven the reward for his charity toward Christians. (Life of St. Francis of Assisi – Mame (Tours) 1876.)

With brother Illumine, the saint left Egypt and continued toward the Holy City, which alas, had already fallen once again into the hands of the Infidels. Nonetheless he was able to leave some of the Religious who arrived with him in Palestine, on the holy mountain of Zion. Others he left in Bethlehem near the holy Grotto where the Savior of the world was born. From there he went to Nazareth, and he left others near the holy house where the great mystery of the Incarnation took place, and where they lived for so many years under the venerable roof, Jesus, Mary and Joseph – the entire Holy Family. As for himself, he went to Saint-Jean-d’Acre where he received as in other places as well, a large number of Crusaders as Novices in the Seraphic Order, and he continued to the city of Antioch where he founded a monastery.

Eight miles from Antioch there is a place which is called the Black Mountain, because this mountain is surrounded by a radius of two miles of very dense trees, which gave a very dense and dark shade. There he found the large Benedictine monastery. The Abbot had carefully examined first Friars Minor’s way of life when they came to establish themselves in the area. He with his community renounced all the goods the monastery owned into the hands of the patriarch of Antioch. With the approval of His Beatitude, he and his religious became Franciscans and continued to live in the same convent and the same solitude.

Some years later, here is what happened in this holy retreat: One night, after compline, father guardian (In the convents of our Order, the superiors are called Guardians), a holy man was praying in the somber and silent forest, found himself surrounded by an immense and gentle light, and in the midst of the limpid clarity of this celestial illumination, he distinctly saw a large cortege of people dressed in scarlet, carrying a candle in their hand and respectfully saluting him as they passed.

Behind this first group walked a second, with beautiful green habits, each person forming this group also held a torch in hand, and saluted the religious as they passed, then a third group followed in habits white as snow. Finally a fourth group made up of ten men dressed differently, with an even more venerable air. They had the most resplendent faces and passed like the first. This mysterious procession was formed by a notable Lady of brilliant beauty, walking between two personages who appeared to have attained a ripe age, and the other already having reached a very old age. Father Guardian who understood nothing of this great vision, very confidently and with a great serenity of soul, addressed the noble Lady and begged her for the love of Jesus, to tell him who she was, and who were these other people in her cortege and where they were going with so much solemnity?

The Lady replied “I am the mother of the one in whose love you address your request. The two people who are walking by my side are Saint Peter and the other is Saint John the Evangelist. The persons who make up the first group are the Martyrs; the second the Confessors; the third the Virgins, and the last are the Apostles. We are going to Antioch to receive the soul of one of your Brothers who will die tomorrow morning at the time of Tierce. Know also, venerable Father, that after eight days, we will return to your own Convent with the same solemnity to claim the soul of another religious and bring him with us in triumph to Heaven. The vision disappeared and the Guardian returned to the Convent. That night, after Matins, without saying anything about the great vision he had seen, sent two of his religious

to Antioch. When they returned they announced the death of a Brother who died at the hour of Tierce. So the Guardian assembled his religious in chapter, and explained the vision to all of them in tears. Each prepared himself with an irresistible fervor for the visit of the Queen of Angels, promised for the following week.

On the eighth day, after Mass father Guardian came down with a high fever and died at the hour of Sext. The Holy Virgin came with her celestial cortege to take his soul and bring it with her to the Home of the Elect...

The Franciscan Mission or Custody was therefore founded in the Holy Land. It included the Island of Cyprus, Egypt, Syria and Palestine, all the countries that Saint Francis himself had visited. Such is the origin of this mission which would extend from Constantinople to the Red sea, and would include within it the most august sanctuaries of the world, holy and noble origin going back directly to Francis of Assisi, the patriarch of the poor, the stigmatized of Alverna. Mission, as we say, that would develop through the ages as we will see further in this article, sustained and encouraged by the roman Pontiffs, placed under the ultimate protection of France. Due to all the persecutions, it would be watered with their missionaries' sweat and cemented with their very blood, to preserve for the Catholic world its precious sanctuaries and for the poor Latin populations of the East, conserve their Faith which is always in such grave peril, in the midst of the infidels.

Upon returning to Italy, Saint Francis sent brother Benoit d'Arezzo as provincial to the Orient where his religious had already built a number of convents. In 1222, the Franciscans built a little residence on Mount Zion near the Holy Cenacle. In 1226, the guardian of the Holy City's convent, brother Jean de St. Martin is consecrated patriarch of Jerusalem. In 1229, Brother Benoit, the provincial minister gave the novice's habit to the emperor of Constantinople, to his friend, Jean de Brienne, who left the scepter and crown to take the humble habit as a disciple of Francis of Assisi.

In 1230, the Bull of Pope Gregory IX made the Franciscans the Guardians of the Sanctuaries. Another Papal Bull recommended the Brothers Minor (the Franciscans) to the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch. Around the this time and during subsequent years, the Sultan of Egypt recognized and granted to the Corded (Franciscans) the rights over the sanctuaries, and saw them as Custodians and masters of Most Holy Sepulcher and Calvary. A new firman from Saladin confirmed their property rights over the Cenacle and the Most Holy Sepulcher. Of all these precious sanctuaries, not one had been conferred to our father Saint Francis nor to his children before their arrival in the Holy Land. The Catholics didn't already own so much as a single inch of land, neither in Jerusalem, nor in all of Judea. It is our Fathers who with the donations from the West, who acquired them little by little, one at a time, at a cost of thousands of difficulties and great suffering. Soon they would have to defend them at the price of their own blood.

The fanatic Ayyubids (Kurds) who had been called against the Crusades overran Palestine, launched against Jerusalem, took over the Holy City, and made a horrible carnage of the Christians. Five thousand Christians were massacred by these barbarians, and with them all the Franciscans who were at Most Holy Sepulcher and the Holy Cenacle (1245).

Other Franciscans in different missions around Palestine soon joined their Jerusalem Brothers in the glory of martyrdom.

The Mamluks pillaged and burned Bethlehem, Nazareth and Arsuf, and put to death several of our fathers. At Safito, two Franciscans were skinned alive out of hatred for the faith, submitted to an inhuman flagellation, then decapitated. Returning from Egypt, The cruel Sultan Bibas sacked the city of Tel-Aviv, ravaged Syria, destroyed our convents of the Black Mountain in Antioch and Tripoli, and massacred all our religious.

Elsewhere there were other martyrs: At Azaz, by order of the Sultan, Father Philip du Puy had his tongue torn out, then all the phalanx of his fingers cut one after the other, then he was skinned alive. After this cruel torture, in the end they cut off his head.

In 1291, a sad date, Saint Jean d'Acre, the last boulevard of the Crusades in Palestine, fell under the power of the infidels. As we know from history, all the Latin clergy, with all that was left of the Crusades in Palestine, as well as all the Religious Orders and the military left the Holy Land. Only the Franciscans remained in the middle of the ruins and general desolation. They would remain thus for nearly *six centuries*, with numberless vexations and continuous tribulations. Even at the cost of their blood, they nonetheless faithfully kept watch over the sanctuaries and the conservation of the Faith among the local Latins.

May we cite here a few examples taken from thousands, to give some idea of the odious, barbaric nature of these vexations and the contradictions which were like the daily bread of our Fathers in the Holy Land over six hundred years.

After the irreparable disaster of Ptolemais and the final expulsion of the Crusades, our Fathers were not however, totally abandoned in their isolation. They were assured of the Holy Father's unfailing solicitude, the Seraphic Order's support, and the Christian princes' great largesse.

Brother Roger Guerin of Aquitaine, French Franciscan and the one of our religious who did the most for the conservation of Catholicism in the Sanctuaries of the Holy Land, was delegated by the Order to open negotiations with the new masters of Palestine. In 1307, he obtained

From the Sultan of Egypt, the ability of the Franciscans to inhabit the sanctuaries and to serve them liberally. In 1337 this same Roger built the convent of the Most Holy Sepulcher, the one on Mount Zion and the one in Bethlehem. After having negotiated a new treaty with the Sultan in Cairo, at which time he transmitted the price of the sanctuaries paid by the pious king of Sicily, Robert of Anjou and his virtuous wife, Sancha of Mallorca. Then the king requested a confirmation from pope Clement VI who, through two Briefs, one with the Minister General of the Order and the other with the king himself, conferred into perpetuity the safeguarding of the Holy Sites to the Children of Saint Francis of Assisi.

By this great act, the Holy Land Works could not have been recognized or confirmed in a more noble, more authentic or more solemn manner. Such guarantees seemed to assure a

tranquil security if not an abundant prosperity. However it was not to be so. Our annals tell us that even during the era of these transactions, the blood of our Missionaries ran under the Muslim scimitar sharpened by vengeance and fanaticism. That's how a Franciscan in Cairo (Egypt) was skinned alive due to hatred of the Christian faith; another was sawed through the middle of his body, and a third was sawed between two boards in Lower Egypt.

In 1365 the Grand Master of Rhodes with one of his allies, sacked the city of Alexandria and retreated laden with booty. The Muslims took revenge on the Christians, especially on the Franciscans of Egypt and Palestine. The twelve religious of Mount Zion were taken by the Soudan and held in a black prison for five years. They were removed from there only to be martyred. Others were removed from assorted convents in Palestine, taken to Damascus where they were subject to terrible imprisonment followed by death... When the Franciscans returned to Jerusalem, they found the Georgians had confiscated half of Calvary, the Armenians had taken the tomb of the Most Holy Sepulcher, and a Muslim dervish had taken over the tomb of the Blessed Virgin!

In 1517 Selim conquered Jerusalem. On this occasion, he imprisoned all the religious of the city into the Tower of David because they wouldn't relinquish the Church's treasure – the Most Holy Sepulcher. When he finally freed them after twenty seven years of captivity, many were dead in their cells. During this time, the Fathers of the Holy Cenacle were the victims of the most odious vexations on the part of the Jews and the Muslims who brought charges against them before the Sultan's tribunal for the most ridiculous accusations. For example, for having caches of arms with the intent of calling the French of the West to come to their rescue; to transform their convent into a citadel where, dominating the city, they could easily bombard it, conquer it and turn it over to the Christians!

Frequently, the Grand Master condemned them without trial, and finally after incessant harassment and intolerable insults, our Fathers were expelled forever from their convent, and the august sanctuary was converted to a mosque which it remains to this day!

For their part, the Greeks tried to obtain the Host Holy Sepulcher, and in the Josaphat Valley, what the Jews and the Turks had obtained on Mount Zion. On the occasion of the restoration of the cupola of the Most Holy Sepulcher and the rock of Anointing done about this time by the Custody of the Holy Land, the Greeks accused the Franciscans of having stolen this rock, of having stolen the Most Holy Sepulcher, and of having stolen... THE BODY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN, AND SELLING IT TO THE POPE OF ROME!

These things must appear hard to believe to those who will read this, yet despite the absurdity, this accusation would cost the Latins fabulous sums of money.

Even the hospitality of our Fathers became for them a cause for vexations and sometimes occasion for grave peril itself. One day, at the convent of Holy Savior, a high Muslim official arrived at the Franciscan convent with a very large contingent to take his meal with his entire retinue. This was cause for great embarrassment and considerable expense for our poor religious. Nonetheless, everything seemed to go well, until one of the junior officers (if our memory serves us right) came to abruptly disturb the joyfulness of the feast. A Franciscan

brother serving at the convent is accused of having let a cat fall into the cistern. His Excellency had drunk water which had been in contact with the cat, and his venerable personage was contaminated – what a crime for this Brother! The order was given to arrest the Franciscan on the spot and throw him in prison with threats of death! Thanks to the strength of prayers and supplications, and finally the gift of several beautiful silk ladies' dresses for the wives of these officials, and several hundreds of dollars (in Turkish value), the poor Brother was freed! Hundreds and thousands of times the Franciscans saw their hospitality paid in kind!

We would think that as we approached more modern times, these aggravations would disappear, to let us also partake in the benefits of a more enlightened civilization! Listen to another instance to the impartial language of history as chronicled by the Order:

On the Island of Cyprus, there were several mass massacres of the Franciscan religious. In 1571 when Selim conquered Cyprus, the convents were destroyed, the churches were converted to mosques and all the religious came under the sword, except for the Custodian and a few brothers who were made slaves.

1579 – On two different occasions an oriental monk brought a cadaver into the Franciscans' garden in Bethlehem, to make it look like a homicide. There were so many affronts that in a single year, it was necessary to go before the Sultan himself against the actions of his sub-alternates.

1581 – At the convent of the Holy Savior, the Cadi of Jerusalem had the oven tipped over (which we used daily to bake a thousand to twelve hundred loaves of bread for the poor, the infirmary, part of the guesthouse free hospitality for our pilgrims). They believed this convent was a fortress capable of receiving up to ten thousand men! The door of the convent was walled over and the Franciscans had to enter and exit through a window.

1600 – Father Francois Manerbe arrived with 44 Franciscans, but the plague had spread mercilessly through Jerusalem, leaving him with three religious. – The convent at Bethlehem is besieged several times by the Bedouins. – The Custody, several religious and their interpreters were put in irons.

1603 – Father Cesairio of Crino arrived in Jerusalem with 47 religious. The insults they had to suffer are unbelievable. The Greeks brought up charges that were ridiculously odious, and they always had to purchase justice at a high price. – Jerusalem is besieged by the Bedouins for 32 days.

1605 – Father Gaudence also had to bitterly suffer and pay out considerable sums to have false accusations dropped which, had they not been paid to the Cadi and the Governor, would have condemned all the Franciscans to death or exile, and would most certainly have caused the loss of the Sanctuaries.

1607 – In their hatred of Christians, the Jews demanded payment of *five hundred thousand gold coins* or risk the destruction of Most Holy Sepulcher. Through a merciful intervention from Divine Providence, this infernal order was revoked.

1627 – The procurator general of the Holy Land (Rev. Father Vasquier) and the interpreter were put in irons, accused of having undermined the walls of the city (that is literally) so that in the event of war, an army of Christians could more easily conquer Jerusalem !!!

1630 – Theophane, Greek patriarch of Jerusalem and his nephew, Archdeacon Gregory both converted to Catholicism in their youth and were sent to Rome to continue their studies. They had since returned to the schism. The Archdeacon falsified several documents, forged some firmans, and from the Grand Vizir and the support of the Mother Sultan of Greek origin, agitated unrest among the Hellenes of Constantinople who impaled the French Ambassador's interpreter, as well as that of the Doge of Venice, and imprisoned (unbelievable!) the Ambassadors of France, Germany and Venice!!

1633 - Amurath IV signed *the order to expel the Franciscans from the Sanctuaries that he handed over to the Greeks*. Meanwhile Gregory returned to Catholicism, made his renouncement at the hands of the Commissioner of the Holy Land (Father Antoine Vasquier) and revealed all his turpitudes in the presence of the three above mentioned Ambassadors then retired in Venice where he lead a Christian life.

1635 – The confession of Gregory was examined at the Divan and recognized as accurate, and in 1635 a new firman was delivered in our favor and enacted the following year.

1637 – Theophane ran to Constantinople and obtained by devious means a new firman in his favor. All the Franciscans were able to obtain from the Sultan, was permission, *purchased in gold* for celebrating Mass on the Most Holy Sepulcher. Calvary *was entirely forbidden them*. While this was going on in Jerusalem, the Franciscans in Bethlehem were forbidden entrance to the Holy Grotto (their most undeniable property!) and from that point forward they had to pay the Greeks *an entrance fee* each time they wanted to pray at the site of the Nativity of Our Lord, or at the feet of the holy manger!

1698 In Jerusalem there was a great agitation against the Franciscans because a pig escaped from its stable which was said to belong to them. After having run about the city, it entered the mosque of Omar (which was then indignantly pronounced profaned!).

1701 – The Cadi of Jerusalem brutally persecuted the Christians and renewed the ancient law which set the color of their vestments, forbid them from *remaining seated in the presence of a Muslim*, etc., etc. This law was enforced in many locations such as Aleppo, Damascus, etc. etc. until the last Crimean war.

1756 – Until now, the Franciscans did not have permission to make the necessary repairs to the houses in which they lived. At night, they secretly made interior repairs as best they could, but they could do nothing on the outside. Finally, after insisting and at a fabulous price, they were able to get permission to do the most urgent repairs to the terraces of the *four*

convents in Judea, (Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Saint John of the Desert), and to the Blessed Virgin's Sepulcher which being below ground, was flooded during the great winter rains. The walls of this precious sanctuary which the Schismatics alone occupy today were restored, the doors changed, the roof was entirely done over. The storm drainage was diverted and we built a bridge over the Kidron which still exists today. (O Good Mother, how much longer will you leave in the hands of the Schismatics this beautiful monument built by Saint Helena, restored by our ancestors the Crusaders, and where your children the Franciscans formerly solemnly sang your praises?)

Meanwhile, our Fathers were not lacking property titles. They had the most authentic! Already France, the protector of the Holy Sites had made ancient stipulations on this subject. In 1673, she made new ones in which Louis XIV stipulated recognition of our ancient rights, and obtained a firman. These new stipulations are explained in article 33 from the Sultan's Tribunal which was in our favor. France renewed these stipulations in 1740 and obtained a new firman, determining the value of article 33 of the treaty, CONFIRMING OUR SOLE OWNERSHIP OVER ALL THE SANCTUARIES.

It is neither the authenticity nor the solemnity which is missing from the firmans emanating from the Sultan's tribunal. We include here an extract of one of these documents, important for the fact it is curious as well as for its form. We corrected the spelling while leaving the original style:

"Emperor Osman, Son of always victorious emperor Almat. I, who am by the infinite graces of the All Mighty Creator, and by the abundance of wonders of the chief of his prophets, Emperor of the victorious emperors, distributor of Crowns to the greatest Princes of the earth, servant of the two most sacred and most august cities, beautiful among all those in the world, Mecca and Medina, protector of holy Jerusalem etc., etc."

"To the benign Prince and approved Lord, distributor of the most eminent dignities of his obeyed and honored, and to this destined by the immense divine mercy, Basha Feroue who formerly was Bey of Naplouse and now has for his maintenance the principality of Jerusalem, (whose felicity God preserves!) and to the Reverend Lord, sage and just judge, fountain of the real prudence, oracle of justice and truth, heir of the doctrine of the Prophets, and to this destined by the immense divine mercy. The Lord Moulacady of Jerusalem, (the doctrine which increases) having arrived this sacred mien and imperial Seeing, you know the emperor (the king) of France makes known that of all antiquity, the priests and French religious who serve the Churches and sites of devotion which are so numerous in the city of Jerusalem and in the surrounding areas as well as the pilgrims who come to visit, *are accustomed to not worrying, and live in full freedom* conforming with the imperial stipulations which are among us, and that from all of antiquity they are in possession of the Church of Bethlehem, for while in the past they permitted the Armenian people and the other Christian nations to have a chapel in said Church of Bethlehem to pray according to their usage, *that it is always reserved to them the Grotto where Jesus was born* (to whom be honor and glory!) which is below the Church; and if on several times the other Christian nations wanted to fight for the possession, it was always judged that it was only the French Religious (the Franciscans) who have the right in the Church of Bethlehem and who can celebrate Mass or Liturgies in said Grotto, no

less to light the lamps; and if the other Christian nations have a Chapel and celebrate their Mass or Liturgy in said Grotto, it is only with the permission of the French Religious. This is according to the several commandments of the Sultans of Egypt, who since the conquest of the country were confirmed at the time when reigned my merciful agent Sultan Soliman, of happy memory, (may he be in glory!) and approved by several Cadis...

"This same document recognizes that since antiquity the French Religious are in possession of the most Holy Sepulcher, and the tomb of the Blessed Virgin, etc., and continues thus:

"Finally, that the Churches and sites which the French Religious justly own from antiquity, conforming with the stipulations and titles, which they have in their hands, are renewed, and that they never be troubled in their possession by the Armenians and other Christian nationalities.

"Not only the French emperor (king) required us by letter, but also his ambassador begged us in his name in such a way that, having regard for the supplication which was made to my sublime throne and which the emperor (king) of France always was sincere among my parents and grandparents, and similarly with my eminent Porte (tribunal), that the request is my imperial consent. That's why of all the sites which in antiquity were in the possession and governed by the French Religious, should be rendered and consigned to their hands, and those who want to disturb and worry said religious in the future be deterred and stopped, my imperial commandment intervenes.

I COMMAND that upon the arrival of my high and imperial commandment, accompanied between the daouds of my sovereign Door (Tribunal), the happiness which you enjoy, as contained herein, that the churches and the devotional sites in the city of Jerusalem and its surroundings, which from all antiquity are to be held and owned by the French religious be restituted and turned over to them, and that they be pleased in the same manner and way which they had in the past, and be prevented from being molested, angered or troubled by the Armenians and by other Christian nations....

Starting now, you will use great diligence and take great care in guarding against anything being done against my sovereign and imperial commandment, which after having read, you will consign it *to the hands of the French religious* and add faith to this sacred and imperial seeing mein.

"Written at Daoust Bascha in Constantinople, at the mid-moon of Guimazi el Achir, in the year of the Prophet one thousand thirty (which is the year of Christ, one thousand six hundred and twenty one, on the sixth of May)."

We have already seen by the sad, preceding facts what the Muslim authorities said and the justice of our treaties, and the solemnity of their firmans. The following facts overshadow their ironic conduct. Let's follow the Order's chronicler:

1757 - At the beginning of 1757, French ambassador, the count of Vergennes obtained a new firman from Othman III, confirming the Latins as exclusive owners of the sanctuaries which Louis XIV had rendered to them in 1690. The pretensions of the Greeks had been declared without foundation, and the Pasha of Damascus, had ordered the severe punishment of the three oriental monks who had beaten our Brother sacristan at Holy Sepulcher.

So, here on Palm Sunday, after the Franciscans had retired after their usual procession, the Greeks tipped over our altar adorned before the Most Holy Sepulcher, broke all the silver lamps, tore all the velvet and brocade tapistries which the Franciscans had put in place for the feast. They destroyed everything that belonged to the Latins, striking the Catholics they met and sought to end the lives of the religious. The governor was alerted too late, and deterred by a Greek, his secretary put off to the next day, his visit to the site. However it was too late for the Greeks to deceive him, so he sent the troops to allow the Franciscans to enter Holy Savior, and he declared an act legally and authentically acknowledging the Greeks' vandalism. However, in the interim while he waited for the punishment, one of the three oriental monks who should have been chastised by virtue of the firman cited above, returned from Constantinople where he had purchased the favor of the Grand-Vizier for the sum of *Five hundred million* dollars (Turkish money). He is followed a few days later by a Turkish officer carrying a new *firman which gave the Greeks the Basilica of Saint Helena in Bethlehem, the seven arcades of the Madeleine (IN THE BASILICA OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER), the most holy Sepulcher of Our Lord, and that of the Blessed Virgin!!!*

M. de Vergennes wanted to protest against such a despicable conduct. The Grand-Vizier Regyb-Pasha was content to answer with insolence: "These sites belong to my master the Sultan. He can give them to whomever he pleases, and while they were in the hands of the French until now, His Highness wants from now on that they should belong to the Greeks."

All the catholic ambassadors present in Constantinople wanted to go before the Turkish government as a group, but all were of the opinion such action had to wait for the death of the Grand Vizier. That would happen a few years later, (1762), but the Catholic influence had already forgotten the Franciscans and the Sanctuaries of the Holy Land, as they were approaching the French revolution.

New troubles and new sacrifices were in the offing for the poor Guardians of the Sanctuaries.

1798 – Bonaparte entered Egypt and immediately 80 soldiers were sent to guard the convent of the Holy Savior and agitate against the Christians in Jerusalem. Father Procurator and a Discreet (member of the Council of the Holy Land) were thrown in prison. The populace invaded the convent and pillaged it. The religious had to flee. They were captured and locked in the most Holy Sepulcher, to be *burned alive* if Bonaparte advanced on Jerusalem. When he arrived in Tel-Aviv, all the Christians were locked inside the most Holy Sepulcher for two and a half months.

An order from the Tribunal delivered the Armenians and the Greeks, but the lay Catholics and the Religious were freed only after a ransom of 60,000 dollars was paid by the Franciscans. The plague struck Tel-Aviv and all the Religious died of it except the Procurator.

In Jerusalem, the nineteenth century started with the memory of two dark and sad events:

1808 – In the night of October 11 and 12, a criminal hand set fire to the most Holy Sepulcher. In this terrible tragedy, our fathers appealed to all the Catholic powers, to no avail. (These were such bad times.) Meanwhile the Greeks obtained a firman to reconstruct the sacred Monument and they took advantage to erase all the Latin inscriptions and to destroy the tomb of Godefroy de Bouillon and of Beaudoin.

1810 – The night of July 20 our Brother Sacristan saw the Greeks remove sacrilegiously the entire part of the rock that contained the very cavity in which the holy cross of Jesus had been planted on top of Calvary. This act so impressed the poor religious, he died of grief, three days later. The Greeks also took the rock of the Angel, and loaded these precious relics on a ship at Tel-Aviv bound for Constantinople, but a storm at sea sank the boat, and these precious relics disappeared beneath the waves along with the two boats which accompanied them.

Europe was no longer sending donations. Our Fathers were left without resources and were forced to borrow to pay wages. Not having any more credit, they saw the hour coming when they would have to leave the Orient, abandoning the Sanctuaries. Food was rationed, they were reduced to one simple dish of beans per day. In this extremity, the Superiors permitted all the religious to return to their native lands if they felt they were not strong enough to survive such a dire privation. *They all stayed.* Divine Providence watched over them and help arrived...

Now, pious and benevolent souls who read these lines, would it not be easy to conclude from the simple exposition of these preceding facts, that since the beginning of the thirteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century, that is during the long time of *six centuries* the Franciscans of the Holy Land endured a life of true martyrs? *Martyrs of patience* unceasing in this malevolence, of calumny, of all sorts of painful vexations, scorn, tyrannized even inside their own residences; *martyrs to charity*, the plague, that frequent calamity in the Orient that always cut down with such a terrible violence, taking a large number of our religious; *more than six thousand* died accordingly, victims of their devotion to the guarding of the Holy Sites, and for the salvation of their brothers, the local Catholics. *Martyrs of blood, two thousand* giving their lives for Jesus Christ, dying for the most part as we have seen, amidst cruel torture!

But all their suffering has passed! Presently, they have left us with a Faith preserved in the hearts of the local Catholics, and the rich treasure of our *august Sanctuaries!* Today pilgrims come to pray with a freedom and a security which they often do not find in their native countries. From the heights of the Celestial Jerusalem, these glorious martyrs send down their powerful intercession upon the earthly Jerusalem, and on all the Benefactors, the most abundant and most vivifying benedictions.

Each year our Fathers had to pay the governor, the judges and other Turkish notables, *twenty to twenty-five thousand* francs for the sole right to guard the most Holy Sepulcher and the other Shrines!

1846 – The Holy See re-established the dignity of a patriarchate to Jerusalem. The first titular was Msgr. Valerga, secretary before Msgr. Villardal, Franciscan, apostolic vicar of Aleppo and first apostolic delegate of Syria. A few years earlier in 1840, Msgr. Guasco, a Franciscan, was the first apostolic vicar to Egypt, and apostolic delegate to Egypt and Arabia. Their two actual successors are also Children of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Before there were any Latin Bishops in the Orient, the Custody of the Holy Land received great faculties and a number of privileges from the Holy See. It was the apostolic delegate for all of the Orient; the Custodian could give the sacrament of Confirmation and Minor Orders, use the crosier and the miter, consecrate chalices and confer the order of the Holy Sepulcher. Now he has none of these privileges, except to celebrate with the crosier and the miter, nonetheless *toties quoties* with the Patriarch if he is present (Synopsis of the history of the seraphic Order by Father Marie-Leon Patrem, apostolic missionary and present discreet of the Holy Land (Paris, 1879).)

ILLUSTRATIONS



Franciscans friars praying near the Holy Sepulcher



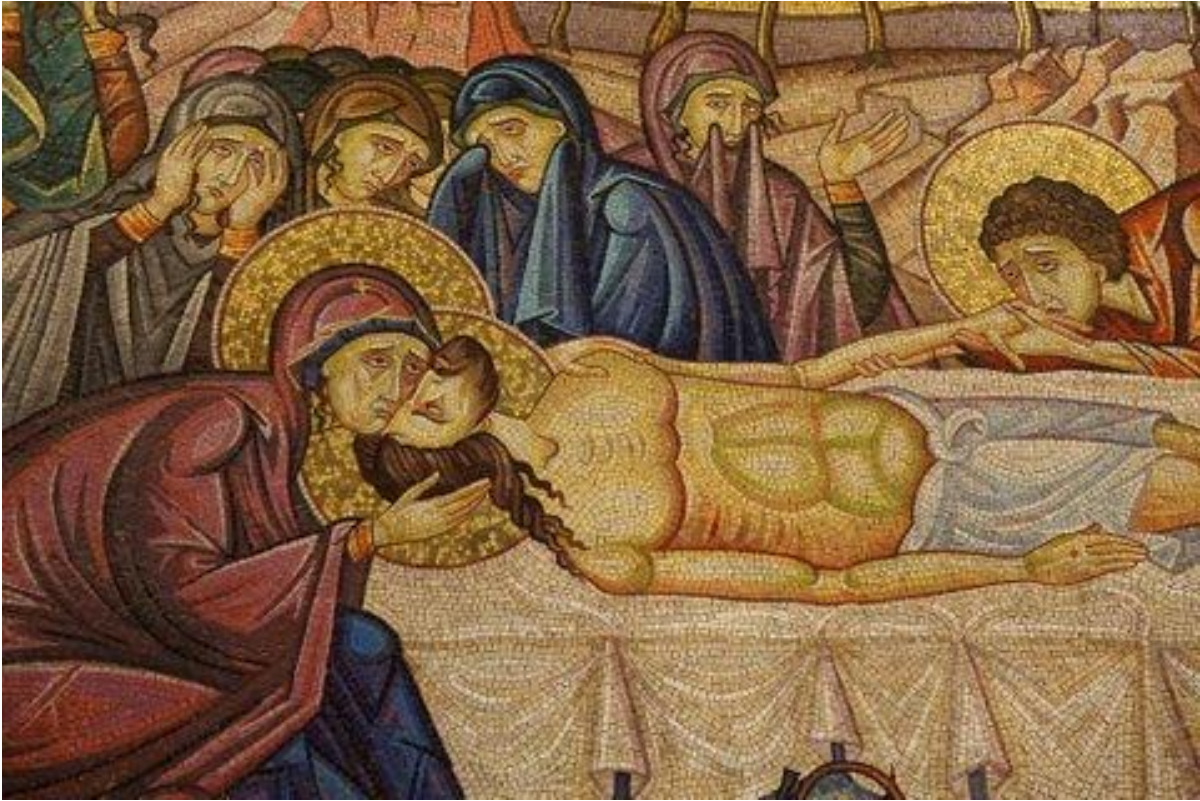
Jerusalem. Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher



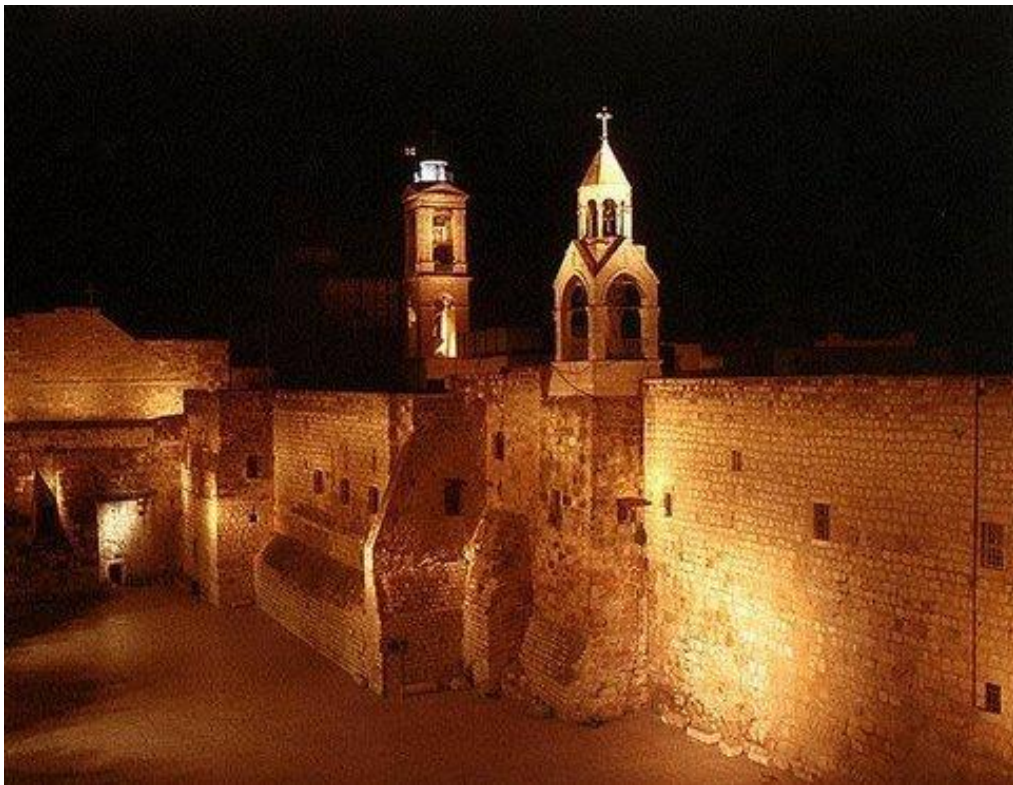
Jerusalem. Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher



Jerusalem. Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher, Latin Chapel



Jerusalem. Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher. Mosaic of Deposition



Bethlehem. Basilica of the Nativity



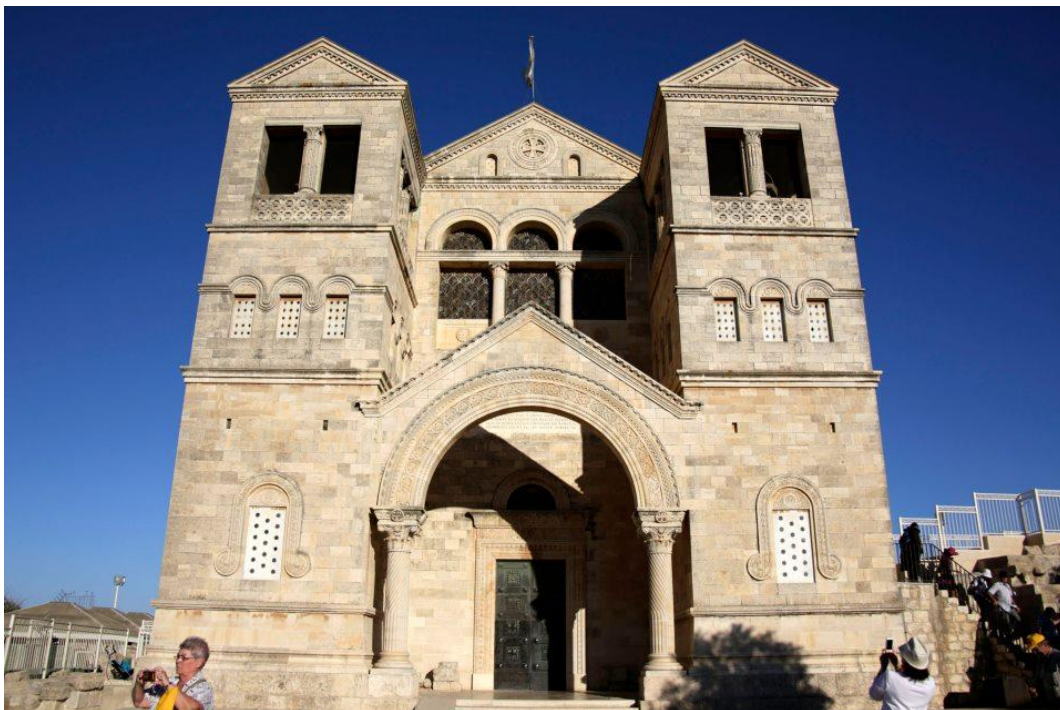
Bethlehem. Basilica of the Nativity



Jeerusalem. Basilica of the Nations. Gethsemani



Jeerusalem. Gethsemani



Mount Thabor. Basilica of Transfiguration



Franciscans in pilgrimage to the Jordan River



Mount of Beatitudes

PART II WORKS OF THE HOLY LAND

Present status

Rereading the Holy Books, the Christian soul always joyfully stops at the passage of the Acts of the Apostles where St. Luke, speaking of the first faithful of Jerusalem, praises them *multitudinis Autem credentium erat cor unum et anima una*: The multitude of believers were of but one heart and one soul. (Acts 4:32). Eighteen centuries later, it was given to the poor children of Francis of Assisi to repeat these words in the Holy City, of the same faithful of Jerusalem, and it was during one of the most powerful ceremonies which we have ever seen; the reestablishment of the patriarchy of Jerusalem.

May 4, 1879, a young Count of Lyon M.A. of P. built (admirable example) with his own hands, a monumental hospice at the Jaffa gate, for our infirm and dear sick, and had prepared everything for the laying of the cornerstone. All the civil, religious and ecclesiastical authorities were to come attend this religious ceremony. No one was missing from the list of invited guests. His Excellency the Governor General of Palestine (Pasha of Jerusalem), a Muslim, was invited. Would he dare accept to participate publicly in a Catholic ceremony? This example would be set a precedent in history. We nonetheless simply invited him, and much to our surprise, his excellency graciously accepted.

The choice of preacher for this event fell upon our humble person.

A large stone black was placed at the foot of a gigantic terebinth to serve as pulpit, and we saw arranged in a semi-circle under a rustic tent, His Grandeur, Msgr. the Patriarch, at his right the Provincial Governor (Pasha of Jerusalem) with several notable pilgrims, both clergy and secular, on his left the French Consul, the first civil dignitary among the Latins, and Most Reverend Father Custodian. Then came the other dignitaries of the Custody, the clergy and patriarchate and the superiors of the different Catholic establishments of the Holy City. A bit further, were standing the Brothers of the Christian Schools and a small group of their students, the good Sisters with their orphans, and finally at the back, a crowd of Latins from Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and an indescribable mixture of Greeks, Russians, Armenians, Copts, and perhaps some Jews and Muslims.

We saw before us, beyond this multitude of human heads, the extended long line of the Holy City's crenelated walls and above them in the direction of the mid-day sun, the holy mountain of

Zion. This imposing scene reached to the core of the soul, the view of the holy Cenacle (sadly converted to a Muslim mosque) reminded us of the admirable discourse of the Last Supper, when the very gentle and meek Jesus said to his disciples: "I give you a new commandment (a commandment that before the coming of Jesus Christ, man was never able to understand!) *that is that you love one another as I have loved you;*" Before dying, with His great love for us, Jesus preached to His disciples the great law of fraternal charity! Jesus made us this ennobling promise *you are my friends if you love each other.* Jesus, the Divine Jesus repeated again from His sublime, loving heart: *I command you to love one another!*

And it is always there, on that holy mountain that we are moved to contemplate the most loving Jesus raising his eyes toward heaven, toward His celestial Father, and saying these divine words: *PATER, VENI HORA, my Father, the hour has come.* I ask for my disciples and for all those who will believe in me by their ministry... (and what do you ask, Oh Loving Jesus?) *UT SINT UNUM SICUT ET NOS!... that they be united as you my Father and I are also united.*

For this occasion, we took as subject for this discourse, fraternal charity, the union of hearts, the union of souls, *cor unum et anima una* and we dared to say to all our Latins of Jerusalem, even before this crowd of separated brothers, come together to witness this feast: "Misinformed pilgrims wrote in the reports on the Holy Land that were published in the West, that we do not love each other as brothers! ... Our answer to that uncharitable insinuation itself not very charitable, Religious residents of the Holy City, you have it before you... this venerable assembly proves it entirely by its example. Yes! This cordial reunion of all the authorities of the Holy Land, of all the founders and directors of charitable works, of all the Religious Communities (The poor Carmelites, themselves cloistered were represented by one of their Fathers.) is and will always be a victorious protest against those who didn't fear to speak unfavorably about us without knowing us.

The era of bloody persecutions seems to have passed for us. All the misunderstandings must also disappear. We are starting a new era... and we addressed each one, with deference, veneration and fraternal abandon, praises justifiably merited, and we didn't find anyone there to contradict us.

Two years later, His Grandeur Msgr. the Patriarch went to Tel-Aviv to

bless the chapel of the Catholic hospital , impressive construction built by the generosity of a pious French merchant, and we were able to bow again with abandon *Beati misericordes*. Blessed are the merciful. Yes, Blessed are you my Brothers, for I only see here in this elite audience but merciful souls *all abandoned to the spiritual and corporal works of Catholic charity*.

I see this venerable Pontiff who comes to bless this beautiful chapel, he whose condescending goodness goes so far that his paternal heart is always ready to pour abundant benedictions, not only on the docile and grateful children but again, in the example of the divine Master, on the ingrates and the rebellious if he met any.

I see these Ministers of the Sanctuary, and the white robe of the desert missionary (the missionaries of Algiers) and these robes? Of the poor, all priests and servants of Jesus Christ, whose hearts are united by fraternal charity vibrating in unison with the heart of their first pastor and Father.

I see in this enclosure, the dignified representation of Catholic France in the Holy Land which has worked for so many years despite the constantly recurring difficulties, to multiply around us the most beautiful works of Christian charity, and these honorable colleagues who witness by their presence, the same sympathies and encouragement for us. We know they are cordially sincere.

I see in this noble young man, who was recently in a similar circumstance (the laying of the cornerstone for the hospital in Jerusalem), we extend the most joyful congratulations. I see him with virtue pushed to heroism, at the gates of the Holy City monument of his generous charity. And you, beloved brother, chosen by God, among all the beings to raise here in the first port of the Holy Land, this establishment which will say to all the pilgrims of the world, as well as to future generations, your rich donation in behalf of our brothers, the poor... ah!... accept then.....

And when, somewhat earlier, the zealous Missionaries arrived to whom France had entrusted the church of Saint Anne (which she owns) near the healing pool, we could , at the reopening of that sanctuary, in the midst of a rejoicing crowd, have wished them welcome in these terms:

Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel, qui facit mirabilia solus (Ps 71). This monument to the faith and the piety of our Fathers, after six centuries of profanation and neglect, is finally given over to a Catholic cult, the Blood of the Divine Lamb will flow once again on the quiet altar during the August Sacrifice. The word of God will awaken the echo asleep in this ancient vaulting, and it was to a poor Child of Francis of

Assisi that was reserved announcing the first praises and to invoke the protection of good Saint Anne, who brought into the world, the August Virgin Mary herself in the crypt of this blessed sanctuary.

Thank you Excellency (Msgr. the Patriarch) it is you, first pastor of this incomparable diocese, you whose benevolence shows itself from day to day more paternal for all the souls confided to your pastoral solicitude. It is you who hastened the realization of this consoling solemnity.

To you also worthy son of Catholic France (M. the French Consul) who continues to nobly carry out in our midst, the mandate which was given you by the our Mother Country, the protection of the Holy Sites. To you also our sincere gratitude. You contributed in large part, with As much dedication as intelligence to fine elite souls that the Holy Church solemnly accepted as guardians of these gentle sanctuaries.

A capable architect (Mr. M ... who was present at the ceremony), authorized to delve with full hands in the treasury placed at his disposition by the munificence of his government (The French government had made available almost a million for this restoration.) knew, by the most glorious restoration to surface in the midst of the rubble, this beautiful edifice and to put it before our joyful eyes in its ancient majesty.

Everything was ready... and you came, beloved fathers, truly spoiled children of God, after six centuries to be the very happy guardians of this holy shelter; oh, yes you will faithfully keep it and fill it with noble occupations, be most welcome in the midst of all the brothers... we only see there sympathetic souls, hearts sincerely united who understand the language.

One of our most consoling souvenirs of the Holy Land, is having the occasion to preach everywhere in all the great annual retreats or in the solemnities of these circumstances, the great law of fraternal charity, the indissoluble union of hearts, and to have met everywhere the souls that admirably put it into practice; at the Ecce Homo by Father Ratisbonne (whose conversion and works are so well known); in the midst of the numerous and beautiful community of the Daughters of Zion; with our excellent Carmelite Mothers, at the sanctuary of the Pater on the summit of the Mount of Olives, and with the Sisters of the Bethlehem Carmel, in the shade of the Holy Crib; in all the houses of our devoted Sisters of Saint Joseph; with our worthy children of the Venerable de la Salle and in all the religious communities that live in Egypt under the direction of our Fathers; with

the worthy founder of our catholic orphanage in Bethlehem (Don Belloni, priest of the Latin Patriarchate, canon of Most Holy Sepulcher.); in the intimate conversations with him as with the devoted priests who help in the direction of this meritorious work. Everywhere we found souls who, like us, think that the divine Providence now awaits new works for the development of our Palestinian Christians, and the conversion of Muslims and the Schismatics who prepare themselves, and these works, we will not accomplish them except with understanding, union and the harmony of souls!

This union (and may God be blessed a thousand times) exists among us, and we will continue our reciprocal efforts so that they will become even more specific, that the pilgrims who come to us from all the countries of the world can say of us, in reality, what the Holy Books said of the first faithful of Jerusalem; they have everything in common, nothing divides them, they work for the common good and they have but one heart and one soul, *cor unum et anima una*.

The era of bloody persecutions is closed; the era of the greatest freedom has started for us in the Holy Land. As we have seen, new workers have come to work with us in the same vineyard. The Latin Patriarchate was reestablished in the Holy City, and properly said, actually forms a diocese consisting of Palestine, the island of Cyprus with a small Christian population but comparatively large for that country, a Catholic population often to twelve thousand souls but will the patriarchate, poor like the Custody, have the resources to maintain the establishments within it and the works that it manages?

In its wisdom, the Roman Court studied this question and resolved it. The Sacred Congregation of the Propagation, with the voice of its Prefect, His Eminence Cardinal Barnabo, of pious memory, established on June 3, 1861 that the result of the Good Friday collection would be given entirely to the Franciscans, but in order to establish a balance, and provide the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem *a revenue in commiserate with his high position* – the Franciscans will renounce in favor of said Patriarch, the nomination of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher as well as the offering of *a thousand, two thousand, or three thousand francs (two hundred, four or six hundred dollars)* which each Knight gives upon his nomination, and further they will be required to give to the chancery an annual sum of *eight thousand* dollars. The work of the Propagation of the Faith added to that a necessary supplement for the suitable and complete maintenance of said patriarchate, and that it would not suffer, although Msgr. Patriarch had told us personally that His Grandeur was reduced to begging for the maintenance of his own work in Palestine.

Now the works of the Holy Land which receive absolutely nothing from the Propagation of the Faith, because she is expected to make do with the Good Friday collection, what means does she make of this collection? Charitable souls who will read these lines, permit us to make a simple expose of the multiple works she feeds outside of the guarding and maintenance of all our *august sanctuaries*.

Table of the establishments and works of the Franciscan Custody in the Holy Land:

46 convents or residences
39 schools, orphanages, works, etc.
38 parishes
44 Sanctuaries

In the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem

In Judea

In Jerusalem – *Convent of the Holy Savior* acquired in 1559 to replace the one at the Holy Cenacle taken by the Turks in 1551. It is the main convent of the mission and residence of Rev. Father Custodian and his Council, the young Religious who are doing their Theological studies, as well as the Religious who are charged with the following works:

Chapel of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mount Calvary – outside the basilica.

Chapel of the Holy Grotto of the Agony – in the Josaphat Valley.

A provisional workroom for young girls, etc.

A large guest house providing free hospitality for Pilgrims.

In Jerusalem – Convent of the Most Holy Sepulcher where the religious are in charge of the Catholic cult solemnities in the Basilica, the maintenance of Basilica, the Sanctuaries of Calvary, the Most Holy Sepulcher, the Saint Madeleine, the Apparition of Our Lord to the Blessed Virvin, and the invention of the Holy Cross.

In Bethlehem – Convent of Saint Catherine, where our young Religious, leaving the Novitiate, finish their studies in Humanities, and whose personnel is responsible for the following work:

Guarding (day and night) *and maintaining the Sanctuaries* of the Nativity (the holy Manger and the Altar of the Three Kings), Saint Joseph, the Holy Innocents, Saint Jerome (with the tombs of St.

Eusebius, Saint Paula and St Eustasia).

The chapel of the Milk Grotto

The Latin Parish (3 to 4,000 catholics)

The free primary school for boys

Free Visiting of the sick (home nursing)

Guest House for pilgrims.

SAINT JEAN IN MONTANA

Convent of Saint John the Baptist – where the young Religious who have completed their Humanities in Bethlehem, do their three years of Philosophy, during the year of *Recollection* and whose personnel has the following responsibilities:

Maintenance of the Sanctuary of the Nativity of the Messiah's holy precursor.

Chapel of the Sanctuary of the Visitation on the side of the mountain.

The Seraphic College where the young postulants who desire to enter the religious life and to stay in the service of the Custody, do their preliminary studies.

Latin Parish with the maintenance of the poor, widows, orphans, etc. like everywhere else in the Orient.

Free primary school for boys.

Primary school for girls in the care of the religious of Our Lady of Zion.

Chaplaincy of the orphanage of the religious of Our Lady of Zion.

Guest House for pilgrims.

In Emmaus – Maintenance of the Sanctuary of Saint Cleophas;

Guest house for the pilgrims.

In Ramleh – Residence; maintenance of the Sanctuary, *Latin parish*, *free school* for boys,

Guest house for pilgrims.

In Tel-Aviv – (main port for the Holy Land) – Residence;
Latin parish,

Sanctuary of Saint Peter,

Free primary school for girls under the direction of the Sisters of Saint Joseph;

Guest house for pilgrims.

In Saint-Jean d'Acre - Residence,

Latin parish,

Free primary school for boys,

Chaplaincy for the Dames of Nazareth,

Guest house for pilgrims.

IN GALILEE

In Nazareth – Convent of the Annunciation with the main Novitiate of the Custody.

Parishes made up of Latin Catholics and united oriental rites.

Service and maintenance of the Sanctuary of the Incarnation.

Chapel of the Sanctuary said to be Mensa-Christi.

Chapel of the Sanctuary built over the workshop of Saint Joseph.

Free elementary school for boys.

Free visits for the sick.

Free pharmacy.

Guest House for pilgrims.

Sanctuaries more distant from the city, but left in the care of the Religious of Nazareth:

Sanctuary on the hillside

In Naim - Sanctuary of the resurrection of the son of the widow.

In Cana – Sanctuary of the Home of the Wedding where water was changed into wine.

In Sepphoris - Sanctuary built over the place of good Saint Anne's home.

At Mount Tabor – Residence;

Service and maintenance of *the sanctuary* of the Transfiguration

Guest house for pilgrims

At Lake Tiberias – Residence,

Service and maintenance of *the sanctuary* built on the place where Our Lord said to Peter: *tend my lambs; tend my sheep*

A small parish

Guest house for pilgrims.

ON THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS

In Larcana The Convent of Saint Mary of Graces, from which the Religious provide the following:

Latin parish (of 500 to 600 souls)

Free primary school for boys.

Chaplaincy for the community of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

Military chaplaincy for the anglo-Irish garrison of the Island.

In Nicosia – Residence –

Parish,

Free primary school.

In Limassol- Residence –

Small parish

Orphanage

Free primary school.

IN THE APOSTOLIC VICORATE OF ALEPPO

In Phoenecia

In Beirut - Residence,

Procurator of the mission.

In Harim - Residence,

Courses in Arabic languages for our missionaries

In Damascus – The Convent of Saint Paul

Courses in Arabic

Primary school

Parish

Chapel of the sanctuary built over the site of Ananias' home.

In Sidon – Residence,

Primary school

Chaplaincy for the Community of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

In Tyre – Residence, *parish, primary school.*

IN SYRIA

In Tripoli City – Residenc

Primary school

In Tripoli – Post – Residence

Parish

Primary school for boys

Primary school for girls.

In Latakia -Residence

Parish

Primary school for boys

Primary school for girls.

In Aleppo – Convent of Saint Mary of Jesus with the following works:

Parish

Mission church

College

Free day school

Chaplaincy of the boarding school of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

In Kariat-el-Kinyet – *New mission,*

Parish,

School etc.

IN ARMENIA

In Marash - Residence,

Parish

Two schools

numerous conversions among the Armenians.

In Yeni-Kale – *New mission, parish, etc.*

In Aintab - *New mission, parish, schools, etc.*

At Constantinople – *A procurator* for the mission.

IN THE APOSTOLIC VICARATE OF EGYPT

In Alexandria - Convent of Saint Catherine with the following work:

Parish (of 30 to 40,000 souls) with a pastor for each of the respective countries, French, Italians, Arabs, Maltese, Germans and Greeks.

Free school

Chaplaincy for the boarding school and day school of the Brothers of Christian Schools (1000 to 1200 students).

Chaplaincy for the hospital maintained by the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul.

In Ramleh near Alexandria – Residence, *parish, etc.*

In Damanhur - Residence, *new mission*

In Kafr-el-Zaiyat - Residence, *parish, school, chaplaincy* for the Franciscan Sisters.

In Cairo – Convent of the Assumption with the following work:

A parish of 15 to 20,000 souls with a pastor for each of the respective countries, the French, the Italians, the Arabs, the Maltese and the Germans

Mission at the center of the new city

Mission in Old Cairo.

Chaplaincy of the boarding school and day school for the Brothers of Christian Schools (8 to 900 students).

Chaplaincy for the large establishment of the Sisters of Good Shepherd at *Chaubra*.

Chaplaincy for the General Hospital near the edge of the desert, maintained by the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

Chaplaincy for the large establishment of the Franciscan Sisters in the city.

Free primary school.

In Boulaq - Residence

Parish,

Chaplaincy for the Franciscan Sisters.

In El-Mansoura - Residence, *parish*, etc.

In Damietta - Residence, *parish, school, chaplaincy* for the Franciscan Sisters.

ALONG THE MARITIME CANAL

In Port-Said – Residence (on the Mediterranean)

Parish (of 4 to 5,000 souls)

Primary school for boys

Chaplaincy for the Sisters of Good Shepherd and the General Hospital they serve.

In Ismailiya- (in the center of the isthmus) – residence

Parish

Primary school for boys

Chaplaincy for the Franciscan Sisters.

In Suez (on the Red Sea) – Residence,

Parish

Primary school

Chaplaincy for the Sisters of Good Shepherd and the General Hospital they serve.

This long list which mentions the service and maintenance of more than forty sanctuaries, thirty eight parishes, and almost forty schools, orphanages, etc., we conclude that such a vast administration requires relatively considerable sums. So, with the exception of the large parishes of Egypt which are just about self-sufficient, all the others are generally poor and have virtually no revenue, so that it is solely at the mercy of the Good Friday collection that they are maintained and that we thus conserve the Catholic Church.

Nonetheless, upon reflection it would occur to an attentive reader that if these places are poor, why not create some industry, and especially, why wouldn't they cultivate the land?

These otherwise well-intentioned people but too quick to judge, directly reproached us with a regrettable naivete for thusly maintaining the all the faithful, poor populations of the Orient .

This reproach is as sufficiently grave as it is not merited, which is why the benevolent reader will forgive us for summarily replying here under the heading of simple enlightenment.

Create some new industry. Is that such an easy thing, where the poor Latin populations are located in the Orient?

What little industry exists in this desolate region naturally belongs entirely to the Muslims, the Masters of these countries. Then they find themselves in the hands of the Schismatics who have incomparably more resources than we do. If our Latin Catholics wanted, to the prejudice of their Faith, reclaim the favors of the Turks or the Greeks, they would quickly meet all their needs. But, thanks be to God, our Latins wanting to conserve the faith of their Fathers, remain in their mediocrity, since our resources are too limited until now, to create new industries for them.

As for cultivating the land, it must be understood in advance, if it applies to the Latins of Jerusalem, who have by far the most poor, we must remember Jerusalem sits in the middle of a rocky, sterile mountain chain. In these mountains, the only fertilizer scattered here and there in the valleys they contain is the rain that falls only in the winter. During the other eight or nine months of the year, all this desolate nature is left under the burning rays of the sun which devours it. Cultivation on a large scale is not possible. One would have to desert the city and transport the people onto the plains. That could be done bit by bit. We have an ardent desire to do it with a firm hope, but we cannot carry it out. It would be a very difficult task which would require a lot of time and effort which we would reserve for the premises of Canadian colonists. If God deems to bless our enterprise, which was absolutely impossible in the past for lack of security and a vast number of obstacles which is impossible to mention here. May the reader, in a regrettable naivete, judge after all if we really deserve the reproach of maintaining these poor Latins of Jerusalem.

Do we want to speak of Bethlehem? Again the reproach falls more completely upon faults and we can't let ignorance formulate it, for the activity of our Bethlehemites has become proverbial. They are a singularly industrious group who live with an extreme economy and sobriety. We maintain them as best we can, and we encourage them wholeheartedly. We have the consolation of seeing far less need than in Jerusalem, the city of sadness and poverty.

These considerations about Bethlehem and Jerusalem apply proportionately to all the other parishes of the Holy Land, and we believe they are sufficient to convince the impartial reader of the great severity of the reproach formulated above against us.

Here, benevolent readers, is the other reproach which in our humble opinion, is even more grave than the one preceding it. (God permits it for our greater good!) We have been accused of being poor administrators, and consequently, misusing the offerings of the faithful!

To people who made this wanton accusation which only ignorance can explain, we have the displeasure of having to reply to this reproach, as formulated. It was not addressed to us but to the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation. It is this Congregation which directs us, which reviews our books and which control down to the last penny and in this way, authorizes and generally orders the projects which we will take on and the necessary accompanying expenses. If in reality we deserved this reproach, would the Roman Court tolerate such an abuse for the *six centuries* that it rules us? However this prejudice exists, and we say it here to our proper confusion, I partake in it myself before my entrance in charge, as vicar of the Holy Land Custody.

Fortunately since it was possible for us to bring the public to a more favorable judgment by reminding him as examiner and judge in all our main enterprises, it is because among other things, we were involved most recently, in one of the most important projects.

Charged by the Council for the Holy Land, with the direction of the work on the new parish church of Bethlehem attached to the *August Sanctuary* we remember after several months of intense work of demolition and where the foundations in certain locations already reached depths of *twenty five to thirty feet* we called in the most knowledgeable person in such projects and we asked him in the name of all, to tell us impartially, what price he attached to the already completed above mentioned work (also including the large quantity of beautiful stones which had been cut for the pilasters).

He told us, at least *eight thousand dollars* would not be too high an estimate! However, our expenses were not even *three thousand*! No one wanted to believe it, but the figures were there and there were witnesses to it.

We go into these details to alert our Canadian Benefactors against such gossip, which despite everything, still is rumored around the world, and which would be too painful to hear if they were to believe it as true.

We sincerely hope that God who reads to the bottom of hearts *Deus autem intuetur cor*, to let the sincerity of our witness reach the Canadian people with the same benevolence and sympathy with which they nonetheless greet my humble person, and that Providence, always so merciful will never permit their generous offerings be misused, and that they never be deprived of the great spiritual advantages Holy Mother Church accords them in exchange for their alms, about which we will now say a few words in the next part of this booklet.

PART III WORKS OF THE HOLY LAND

Spiritual Benefits

Beatius est magis dare quam accipere (Acts. 20-35) It is better to give than to receive. This word of the Divine Savior to the first faithful, applies itself in its fullness to the charitable souls who by their donation of Good Friday for the maintenance of the Works of the Holy Land. But may our voice cease to permit the great voice of the Father of all the Faithful be heard.

Pius VI, of holy memory, in his Bull: *inter coetera* (July 31 1778) renewing the Bulls of his predecessors after exciting the consideration the Faithful in favor of the Holy Sites in Palestine through his holy exhortations, opens his paternal heart entirely to unleash a river of spiritual riches:

This Holy Pontiff, designated by God as dispenser of the unending riches of the Church by opening them in favor of the Faithful inspired to release a part of their temporal goods given them by divine Providence the for pious and holy Christian charity of works in the Holy Land, said: "To give them in the fullness of our authority and within the extent of our powers, we give these generous Benefactors of the Holy Sites, participation in the spiritual fruits and merits resulting in the oblation of the Holy Sacrifice, the prayers , fasting, penances, travel, pilgrimages, and other pious acts accomplished by the professed

Religious of this order, the Franciscans and the Christians who inhabit the Holy Sites or who, with God's blessing go to venerate them, we affiliate them with these fruits and merits for the expiation of their sins and special measure of eternal life. We associate them in the Lord, gather them in the Lord, and nourish in our heart a reassuring hope that once admitted to such a fertile and holy participation, they will joyfully persevere with an unshakeable faithfulness, giving thanks to God the Father who rendered them worthy of being admitted into the heritage of the Saints."

Let us attentively examine the extent of such privileges with the authority proclaimed, and we will be forced to say that there is nothing exaggerated in our words, when upon our arrival in Canada, we said that the works of the Holy Land *remained in God's Church a unique, work apart, and which needs to be well known to attract to her the religious sympathy of all the true Catholics.*

Now a word about all the fruits and merits *omnium spiritualium fructuum et meritorum* to which the Benefactors of the Holy Land are participants in such abundance, bestowed by our Holy Mother the Church.

Ex Sancrosantis sacrificiis. Masses celebrated for our benefactors – The Masses which we celebrate each year in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, etc. that is in the most august Sanctuaries of the world exceed *twenty five thousand!*

Again, one could ask us how it is possible to offer so many Masses in a single year, and where we find so many priests to celebrate them. In another brochure (Three Months at Holy Sepulcher), we will give the statistics of all the personnel of the *four Main Convents of Palestine* which serve the Sanctuaries, with a description of the religious ceremonies, processions, pilgrimages etc., which are done all for the spiritual benefit of our Benefactors, and we will see, in part, the number of masses is rigorously counted and further the prayers and other satisfactory works in an abundance which holy Pontiff Pius VI did well to say that in view of *such favors* his paternal heart nourished the invincible hope that our Benefactors continue to joyfully contribute their donations to the Holy Land, *gratias agentes Deo Patri* thanking God the Father who rendered them worthy of being admitted to participate in the heritage of the Saints, *qui disnos eos fecit in partem sortis sanctorum adscribi.*

In Canada, a small misunderstanding also occurred on the occasion of a pious publication having the title:

Almanach des âmes du Purgatoire... printed in Montreal with the permission of the Ordinary. It claims that the Mass intentions (which are collected by the association) are sent to the missionaries of the Order of Saint Francis in a paragraph entitled: Advantages no. 4 adds: "The associates who also give a true donation to the mendicant Order of Saint Francis participate as such in all the same good works which are done by the Third Order, and have part in the Masses which are celebrated in the major Sanctuaries of the Order in the Holy Land.

Different letters from our Fathers addressed to the Order's Treasurer, speak likewise. Finally what stopped troubling our Benefactors, are the following words which we read on the back of the *Almanach...*

These Masses were sent to the French Missions in the Holy Land. On the other hand, seeing that during our stay in Canada, we never accepted a single stipend for Masses which were offered to us in incalculable abundance to be celebrated in the sanctuaries of the Holy Land. We were judged as contradicting ourselves and were asked an explanation. We subsequently wrote to the Reverend Father Custodian which he replied at once in a first letter : "You do very well not to accept any Mass intentions, for you know that we already have too many obligations (with regards our Benefactors).

... In a second letter which we just received here, in Paris, at our Commission for the Holy Land, the Reverend Father Custodian told us: "...as for the Masses for the souls in purgatory, I can say that last year I received a few from M. Ricard (treasurer of the cause) and I sent them to the Beirut delegation, (the Franciscan apostolic Vicariate of Syria). His Paternity can reply that if on occasion Father Custodian receives Mass intentions, he receives them for the

Maronites, the Delegation, etc., but not for our Religious: *pei Maroniti, Delagazione, etc., ma non pei nosri Religiosi* in the sanctuaries.

From all that, it is easy to conclude that the Mass intentions sent *even in the Holy Land* by the pious association of Montreal, are never fulfilled in the Sanctuaries and that consequently, our Benefactors are never deprived in any way from the incomparable spiritual benefits to which they are entitled as a result of their giving faithfully, joyfully each year in the Good Friday collection *for the service and maintenance of the Sanctuaries*. Finally, in the past it did rarely happen that pilgrims obtained that Masses were celebrated for them in some Sanctuaries. To prevent all abuse in this regard, last year with the knowledge of Msgr. the Patriarch, we issued a discretorial decree in which we set a very high tariff on the stipends, for the express purpose, if possible, of discouraging such demands in the future.

During our illness while staying at a Canadian rectory, on a winter evening, by the fireside, in a small family gathering, we gave a few intimate details on the nature of life which our Religious lead in the great convent of Holy Savior in Jerusalem. They prevailed upon me to write these things in a publication. We simply include excerpts here but nonetheless with a certain little repugnance, because we were forced to speak too directly to our proper family, always referring to a brochure on Holy Sepulcher, a complete detail of all the good works in favor of the Benefactors of the Holy Land.

Holy Savior is the central convent of the entire Custody, consequently it contains the most Religious. Actually that is where Reverend Father Custodian resides with his council; and as many as twelve apostolic penitents also live there, the pastors of the parish and the chaplains of the various Sanctuaries. It is also there that we find the Theology students for our young religious for the entire mission, as well as the professional schools, the print shop, the bindery, the forge, the woodworking shop, the carpenter shop, the bakery, etc., etc., the orphanage, the choir etc.

In warm climates such as Palestine, there are professions that are naturally difficult, the blacksmith, the baker suffer in front of their fires; the mason brothers feel the strength of the sun from their scaffolding, the carpenter and the woodworkers also experience more than once during the day, the perspiration running down their foreheads. Well! All these good religious (who do not seek the praises of men, God alone suffices them) do all that with a great simplicity.

At Holy Savior, we don't have to get up at Midnight like at Holy Sepulcher. It was observed that because of such a nerve-wracking climate in this country, the health of the young Religious students could not resist it, but our good and elderly brother Sacristan opens the Church around one o'clock in the morning, and those of us who keep vigil at the foot of the Sanctuary can see arriving, one after the other, the poor, infirm brothers (they come down to the church from the general infirmary.) greyed by their service to the Mission, to begin their prayers, the stations of the cross, and to go to confession. They are already gathered for Mass by *three thirty* at which time they almost all receive Holy Communion. The four o'clock Mass is their Mass of Thanksgiving; at 4:30 they attend a third Mass during which the entire Community is united for meditation; after that they are permitted to take breakfast which

consists of a simple cup of black coffee, with a bit of dry bread for the small number who wish it. Then at sunrise (which during the entire year is the start of the work day for the Orientals) like the sunset fixes the end of the day; which give a natural average of *twelve hours* left when each goes to their respective workshop, and works with the workmen until the dinner hour without interruption. After dinner, they give an act of Thanksgiving before the Blessed Sacrament, and a very short rest.

For those who are able, after *one hour* the workshops open again and we work *without interruption* until the sun sets, after which, each brother has a bit of relaxation. Generally he spends it in Church to say his Regular prayers, wait for the Community's evening meditation and evening prayer. At eight o'clock they take a collation which, especially during the frequent days of fast, is very light, and they return for a time to the Church, and then go to pray in their little cells, and take the rest they so seem to have deserved.

In the meantime, the Choir Religious engage in other spiritual exercises and carry out ceremonies which are described elsewhere. Such is the life our *forty to fifty brothers* lead at the convent of the Holy Savior.

They offer their long and difficult days of work, as well as that of their apprentices or their master craftsmen with all their prayers to God, for all their benefactors, from *one, two or three* o'clock in the morning. That is to say for all the people who participate by offering a donation to the maintenance of the works of the Holy Land. And those are the religious which we treat, too often, as being lazy, being useless mouths, giving them more or less by an excess of condescendence, credit for a bit of work carried out early in the morning, *consecrating*, as we have formerly read ourselves in works by non hostile people *their afternoon to rest!*

May the pious reader forgive us for digressing. We didn't do it for recrimination, but only by love of the truth, and with the intention of pleasing God while seeking with this little confidence, to edify the pious souls who will read these lines and who will accept it with the same spirit which made me write it.

And now, religious souls of Canada, selected people, rejoice, abandon your hearts to bliss. Too happy, you know to recognize the choice graces which the Father of Mercy and the God of all consolation spreads to you with so much abandon. In the midst of the sad defiances of nations formerly so Christian, when revolution and the insolent banner of apostasy and blasphemy parades everywhere, you remained faithful to the ancient faith of your fathers. Ah, keep this most precious depository of your faith, like the pupil of your eyes, *ut pupillam oculi*. Hell is in frantic rage, the devil, like a raging lion, prowls around you, and he absolutely wants to devour you. Strongly resist him with your Faith.

You are nonetheless all associated with the Work of the Holy Land, work so full of benedictions. Beloved Brothers, if our age permitted it, if the white hair undulates on our head, we would add with the great Apostle *fratres desideratissimi*, our joy and our crown, *sic state in Domino* remain firm in the Lord. For that, turn your sights, the sight of your Faith toward this Holy Land which many among you will soon see, we have a profound hope, with

the eyes of their proper body. These communications have nonetheless become easier, the distances are reduced and the costs really astonishingly reduced. Oh! It would be so delightful, beloved brothers, to return a second time amongst you, to enroll many under the banner of pilgrim, to take a great Canadian pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to accompany it to all the *august sanctuaries*. Hope and pray, it is nonetheless possible. Here we want to express more than a simple desire and our thought stops at a purely free hypothesis.

While waiting the realization of this great project which, joined to your association with the work of the Holy Land, may be in the designs of Divine Providence, the safeguard of your faith and your nationality, called as you are to a great destiny, to the witness of the most eminent men among you, whose penetrating gaze already scrutinizes the future and which doesn't hesitate to say that the little Canadian people, if they remain firm in the Faith of their fathers, if they resolutely close the door on the revolution of modernism, is called to rapidly become a great people, which will one day dominate all the vast regions which stretch from Mexico to the pole, and which will be made an exclusively Catholic country.

Let us say that in the interim, go in spirit to the Holy Land, and arrive on the soil of this promised Land, as once Moses before the burning bush, remove your shoes with respect, and say to yourself:

"This soil I emotionally trample with my bare feet, *terra sancta est*, that's the Holy Land, this land," said Saint Bernard "where the true Orient came from on High, by the great mercy of our God, visited us first; where He was incarnated, where He lived among us, where He suffered and where He died for our salvation; where he resurrected gloriously and where He returned to his Father, in the beautiful paradise to prepare a beautiful place for us!" Come forward with respect and barefoot, and arriving before the Holy City, salute her with the same loving soul as Saint Bernard and say with all the effusion of your grateful hearts: *salve, civitas sancta*, hail Oh Holy City, chosen by the Most-High to serve Him as tabernacle; hail, city of the Great King, theater of all his greatest miracles; hail, Queen of the Nations, possession of the Patriarchs, mother of the Prophets and cradle of the Apostles, origin of our Faith and glory of the Christian people; great things have been said of you, City of God! ...

From there, transport yourself in spirit, to the white city of Nazareth, whose name means *flower*, and remember that it is there that the *Flower of the fields*, the *Lily of the Valley* which was to blossom at Bethlehem, was mysteriously hidden in the stem, in the admirable stem of Jesse. Contemplate the Daughter of Judah, the August Virgin of Nazareth recollected in her oratory, lend an attentive ear to the Angel's salutation and try to understand well and entirely this grand Mystery! For, it is there, in this blessed Sanctuary, that our Fathers offer daily the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and pray with the entire Latin population, for you, Canadian souls, in exchange for your donation on Good Friday for the maintenance of this Sanctuary, that is what your offering deserves!

From Nazareth, follow the young, delicate and timid Virgin of Judah, going in all haste, carried on the wings of obedience, to the mountain country to give to all of us, an admirable example of the true fraternal

charity to her cousin Elizabeth. At *Saint Jean in Montana*, as you have previously seen, our Fathers are the guardians of two precious sanctuaries, the nativity of Saint John the Baptist, and the site of the Visitation where Mary pronounced her unequalled canticle: *Magnificat anima mea Dominum* where again the religious and the faithful pray incessantly for you, who have become their benefactors.

From *Saint John of the Desert*, continue on to Bethlehem, you are only three short miles away, and there Contemplate the *Flower of Nazareth* blossomed in a mysterious grotto; the baby Jesus is lovingly resting in His little manger; pay him a visit with the little shepherds, adore him with the Magi-Kings; abandon yourself to the gentle joy that all pilgrims invariably experience upon arriving for a first time in this ancient city of David, and freely give way to all the sentiments of the most sincere gratitude. Our Fathers celebrate each day several Masses in the Holy Grotto, as well as in the neighboring grottoes, and each night, they have a long procession while praying for all the Benefactors of the Holy Land.

From Bethlehem to the Holy City it is only about five miles! Jerusalem! The name alone what memories are awaked in the soul of the true pilgrim!... The divine Agony in the garden of Olives; the Flagellation and the Crowning of Thorns, of Pilate's praetorium; the Cross and the Passion; the death and the Sepulcher; the glorious Resurrection, and the admirable Ascension of Jesus our Divine Master. All the great mysteries of God's infinite love for us are recalled in as many Sanctuaries, at the interior of the city and near her enclosure; and from the bosom of these sanctuaries arise day and night, from the earthly Jerusalem to the celestial Jerusalem, the prayers of our religious and the pious faithful mingled with the incense of sacrifice and the always fulfilled voice of the adorable Victim who poured out all His blood there for the purchase of our souls.

Oh lovable and divine Jesus, grant us in your inexhaustible goodness that all the pious souls who therefore come in spirit on the great pilgrimage of the Holy Land, will do it with the sentiments which animated your holy Mother, who after your Ascension, she really visited every day, all the memorable places where you unleashed your miracles; with the sentiments of all the great souls who have since imitated her example; with the sentiments of this admirable gentleman pilgrim which your great servant Saint Bernardino of Sienna, or Brother, transmitted the history to us.

This brilliant gentleman also made his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, landing at the first port of the Land of miracles, he purified his soul of his least blemishes by confessing with great pain and receiving Holy Communion; then he set out to visit all the sites which remind us of the great mysteries; Nazareth, Bethlehem, the Jordan, Tabor, the Cenacle, Gethsemani, the Praetorium, Calvary, the Holy Sepulcher, the holy Mountain of Olives... Everywhere his heart burned with love, and it is love that dictated this prayer at the site where Jesus going to Heaven, left in the rock, an imprint of his divine feet.

Oh Jesus, my most amiable Savior, where will I search for you now on earth, since it is here that You left to return to Heaven, where you are seated at the right hand of the Father? Ah, permit me to follow you, draw me to Heaven, near you! Hardly had he finished his prayer,

that he gently gave his soul to his Creator! He had died of love. An autopsy was done on his body; the ardor of his love had split his heart; engraved were the words *Jesus my Love!*

Pious Canadian souls, for whom we write this booklet, if we dare hope for each of you the singular favor which Jesus granted this fervent gentleman, at least let us ask with all the fervor of our soul, with all our

Brothers in the Holy Land, for all of you who are the very generous Benefactors of the Holy Land, God's merciful grace of choice so that you will always live a Christian life here on earth, and at the final hour, hands full of good works, you will be ready to appear before your Judge, your soul full of confidence, and that the last movement of your heart, like that of this admirable gentleman, will be a loving thrust toward God!

The End