



COMMISSARIAT OF THE HOLY LAND

February 1, 2010

Dear Pastor and Parish Leader,

You are invited to help make the Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land a success. We thank you for your past support. On the back of this letter, you will find a summary report.

This year, we ask you to support the Christians of the Holy Land and all the ministries there as follows:

1. AWARENESS. Post the Good Friday Holy Land Collection posters on bulletin boards, on your parish website, in your bulletin, early in Lent. An electronic version of the poster can be found at www.myfranciscan.com

2. PROMOTION. If your bishop has given an endorsement of the collection, quote it in your bulletin and website. If you have been to the Holy Land, share your own reflection and give a personal endorsement for works of the Church there and the need for support.

3. INFORM. Before Palm Sunday inform your people when the collection will be and explain that it supports the work of the Church in the Holy Land. Use the enclosed bulletin or pulpit announcements.

4. COLLECT. Some pastors take up the collection on Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) to give everyone an opportunity to contribute, even those who may not attend Good Friday services. If you wish, tell people they can put an envelope marked Holy Land Collection in the collection any time during Holy Week.

The sites made holy by Jesus and his early followers have always been precious to Christians. St. Helena and her son Constantine identified some of them; Crusaders fought to protect them; in 1219-1220 St. Francis of Assisi went to the Holy Land (Egypt, Syria and Palestine). The friars have kept a presence there ever since. In 1342 Pope Clement VI formally entrusted the Holy Places to the care of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land.

Today keeping Christianity alive in the Holy Land and serving the people there is the urgent goal of the Church. The primary means of support for this work is the Good Friday Collection. It is a Pontifical Collection, directed by Pope Benedict XVI and his predecessors. We know we can count on your assistance. Holy Land Christians, all the clergy and religious working there deeply appreciate your help!

Fraternally,

Fr. Jeremy Harrington, O.F.M.

Jeremy Harrington
Washington

Warren Rouse, O.F.M.

Warren Rouse
West

Joe Rogenski, OFM

Joe Rogenski
Midwest

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Friar Jeremy Harrington, OFM
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Friar John-Sebastian, OFM
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Statement of Accountability

The Commissariat of the Holy Land for the USA

Year Ended December 31, 2008 (2009 report will be issued later this year).

REVENUES

Good Friday Collections \$ 14,748,015.84

EXPENDITURES

Program services:

Support to the Custody of the Holy Land \$ 13,932,624.50

Support to other charitable organizations \$ 5,500.00

Supporting services:

Administrative \$ 436,289.16

Fundraising \$ 43,280.30

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$ 14,417,693.96

This data is extracted from the audited financial statements.

Custody of the Holy Land Programs

Pastoral Ministry

The Custody provides pastoral ministry in 29 parishes, three of which – Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth – are the largest in the Holy Land. Pastoral ministries are also present in shrines, chapels and oratories. In addition, the Custody provides spiritual direction and counseling to residents and pilgrims and assists the Secular Franciscans, as well as religious communities and diocesan clergy. The Custody reaches out to all to promote peace and reconciliation.

Charity and Assistance for the Poor

The Custody cares for all of the poorest social classes, both Christian and non-Christian. In its housing program, the Custody provides hundreds of rental apartments to families who pay only a sum proportionate to their incomes. Other housing is made available, rent free, to the least fortunate. Restorations of currently uninhabitable dwellings in the Old City of Jerusalem will allow 300 more families to remain there. Needy families also receive help with medical treatment and pharmaceutical costs.

Education and Scholarships

The Custody operates schools – open to everyone, regardless of religion or nationality – in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Jericho, Nazareth, Jaffa, Lebanon, and other places throughout the Holy Land. Scholarships are awarded to young Christians for their continued study. The Custody also runs a printing press; receives and educates pilgrims; and sustains the Magnificat Institute which brings together students and teachers from all backgrounds, including Jewish, Muslim and Christian, through their bond and love for music.

Maintenance and Care of the Holy Land

The Custody maintains and repairs all of the Holy Land parishes, shrines, chapels and oratories assigned to its care. Major renovations have been done at the Chapel of St. Helen and the ancient Milk Grotto in Bethlehem. Work has been completed at the Flagellation and Gethsemane in Jerusalem, and at Cana and the Sanctuary of St. Peter in Jaffa.