



### The Franciscan Seal

The seal represents The Franciscan Charism which has always been identified with Christ crucified. Its guidance comes from the Holy Spirit represented by the dove of peace.

The specific cross, commonly called the Crusaders Cross, was adopted by the early Franciscans who worked in the Holy land and established through grace and guidance, an ever-present service and guardianship to these hallowed grounds and all its people.



The Holy Land Foundation has been created to raise funds to continue pursuing Christian ecumenical, cultural and spiritual activities. Service programs include providing employment opportunities, subsidized housing, medical care and academic scholarships, while preserving, protecting and restoring the Holy Sites of Christianity.

**HEADQUARTERS**  
The Holy Land Foundation  
1400 Quincy Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20017  
(202) 269-5430

# The Holy Land

NUMBER EIGHT

## FOUNDATION

*We beseech you to help save the Holy Land.*

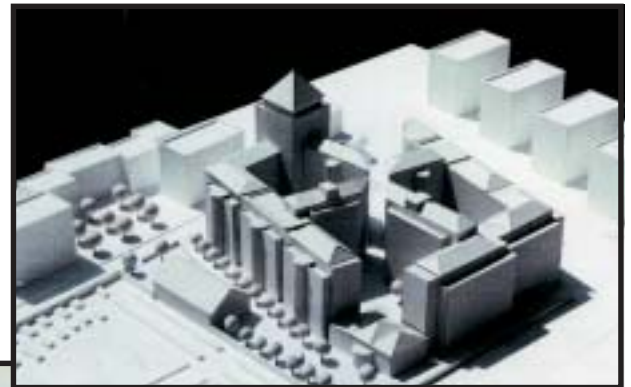
### JAFFA HOUSING PROJECT

The Holy Land Foundation has announced plans for the construction of a housing complex in Jaffa with 120 apartments. As the new millennium approaches, the Foundation is continuing in its mission to construct housing facilities for the people of the Holy Land. Historically, Jaffa was known in the ancient Solomonic era as Joppa. It was an ancient port and the apostle Peter lived there. Today's Jaffa is geographically located south of Tel Aviv where a large number of local Christians reside.

With the help of the Franciscans, the Christian communities in Jaffa have survived. There are several churches and schools in Jaffa and yet there is still a great need for housing. Many of our Christians are continuing to emigrate because of the high cost of renting an apartment in the area.

This newly proposed project would accommodate approximately 450 individuals in need of housing. Mr. Charles Madden, a member of the board of trustees for the foundation is in the planning and promotion of this critically needed housing project. He hopes that in a few years construction can begin depending, of course, on securing funding for this undertaking.

The complex will have a large community center and will house a section for commercial rentals to help defray and to supplement future costs. Several public plazas and gardens with ample parking facilities for the residents are also being planned. Each residential section will rise some five stories with their own inner courtyards. The estimated cost for its completion will be \$15,000,000.00. If you are interested in assisting us financially please make your check out to: **The Holy Land Foundation.**



Presentation of Jaffa Housing Project at the recent meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation. Charles L. Madden points to proposed project. From left: **Fr. Abdel-Masih Fayez-Fahim**, Comptroller of Franciscan Custody, **Fr. Giovanni Battistelli**, Custos and Chairman of The Holy Land Foundation, **Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua**, Honorary Chairman of The Holy Land Foundation, **Charles L. Madden**, Board of Trustees, and **Bishop John Nevins**, Board Member.



The Jaffa Housing Project, Yeffet Street, Jaffa

## LETTER FROM THE CUSTOS

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we move closer towards Thanksgiving and the Millennium it has been a time of great reflection. We in the Holy Land have so much to be grateful for because of you. You, the faithful, have been extremely generous to

The Holy Land Foundation these last five years, since its inception. Your generosity has crossed all



Fr. Giovanni Battistelli, OFM

boundaries of race, creed and culture. It has been a real blessing for us in the Holy Land to see our Christian brothers and sisters given the opportunities to have an education, to help with affordable housing and to secure jobs for the young. It truly is a mission of mercy. Your continued prayers and financial support will help our – your mission to preserve and protect the Christian Community in the Holy Land.

Yes, it is true we have so much to be thankful for – you!

As the doors open to the New Millennium, know that you and your families are in our prayers in the Holy Land. We ask the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to fill your hearts with Joy, Hope, and Love!

In the Spirit of St. Francis, I remain a servant of God and yours,

**Fr. Giovanni Battistelli, O.F.M.**

*Chairman, The Holy Land Foundation*

## 1999-2000 SCHOLARSHIP GRANT RECIPIENTS

The Holy Land Foundation is proud to announce the 1999-2000 scholarship grants winners.

The "Scholarship Board" awarded twelve grants from the scholarship grant program.

The award ceremony was conducted on July 30, 1999 in Jerusalem. Fr. Abdel-Masih Fayez-Fahim, Chairman of the Selection Committee, awarded full scholarships to the



following students: Issa G. Kiriakos of Jerusalem, Shadi K. Kort of Jerusalem, Despina Constantinides of Jerusalem, Maram B. Hafiz Sa'id of Jerusalem, Razan F. Freij of Bethlehem, Fadi A. Giacaman of Bethlehem, and Ala F. Salamech of Bethlehem. Partial scholarships were received by the following students: Hadil Atallah of Jerusalem, Vicky Zou'mot of Jerusalem, and Dina Zreineh of Jerusalem; A graduate scholarship grant at the University of Jordan was awarded to Jamil Ujha of Bethlehem. And finally, Radgonde Amer of Jerusalem, was awarded financial assistance for an Ophthalmology residence program in Jerusalem.

Fr. Abdel-Masih graciously acknowledged the wonderful generosity of fellow Christians throughout the world and most notably from the United States. He stated that, "these generous donations for scholarship grants not only give our young Christians a sense of hope for the future but will give them needed motivation to remain in the Holy Land by becoming it's future professionals and productive members of society. Those who donate these scholarship grants are truly investing in preserving the Christian presence in the Holy Land."

## SPECIAL DONOR STORY

Due to an anticipated increase of visitors to the Holy Land, the Franciscan Custody in 1998 issued a worldwide appeal to fellow Franciscans inviting them to come and work in the Holy Land. Fr. Pat McCloskey, a Franciscan friar was teaching at Roger Bacon High School in Cincinnati and answered the call. During his time in Israel, Fr. McCloskey was introduced to The Holy Land Foundation and the work that they were doing for the Christians. He began to learn more about this crisis of emigration...its reasons as well as its solutions.

When Fr. McCloskey arrived back in the U.S., he approached Fr. John Bok, the then provincial of the St. John the Baptist province, to explain the plight of the Christians in the Holy Land. He informed him about the existence of The Holy Land Foundation and described the various programs and projects of the foundation in hopes that the province

could be of some help and assistance. He was aware that from time to time, the province takes on some appeals for organizations throughout the world which help the poor.

After further discussions with the provincial curia, Fr. John Bok approached his brother, Fr. Jim Bok, Director of Development for the province, to see what could be done. Fr. Jim responded quite positively and felt that it was a worthy cause which people would relate. And what a response! An estimated \$60,000 was collected with a few thousand still trickling in today.

Needless to say, both Fr. John and Fr. Jim were very pleased with the response, knowing that this funding will go to those projects which, in the end, will help preserve the Christian presence. The Holy Land Foundation is indebted for such magnanimity.

# EMBASSY OF AUSTRIA HOSTS FUND RAISING RECEPTION

## Presentation of Pope Leo XIII Cross of Honor

From left:

**Fr. Abdel-Masih Fayez-Fahim**,  
Comptroller of Franciscan Custody,  
**Fr. Custos, Cardinal Hickey** and **Fr. Peter Vasko**



From left: **Mark Foulon, Linda Clarizio, Fr. Peter Vasko, and Cardinal Hickey**



From left: **Bishop Nevins**, Board of Trustees of the foundation, **Cardinal Hickey, Fr. Battistelli**, Custos and Chairman of the foundation, and **Fr. Vasko**, President



From left: Austria's **Ambassador Moser, Carlos Villareal, Fr. Battistelli, Cardinal Hickey, and June Allison**

The Holy Land Foundation's annual east-coast fund-raiser was held at the Embassy of Austria on June 9, 1999 in Washington D.C. The reception was sponsored by His Eminence, James Cardinal Hickey, His Paternity, Most Rev. Giovanni Battistelli, O.F.M., Custos of the Holy Land and His Excellency, Mr. Peter Moser, Austrian Ambassador to the United States. In attendance were some 90 guests including Archbishop O'Brien of the U.S. Military Archdiocese and Bishop John Nevins of the Venice diocese in Florida.

Cardinal Hickey eloquently addressed the guests by outlining the crisis that the Christians in the Holy Land are facing - the on-going emigration from the region. It is an issue Cardinal Hickey stated, "that must be brought to the attention of all Christians throughout the world; for without a "Living Presence" in the very

land which Christ founded His Church, we diminish the importance of our religious roots and heritage." He continued by congratulating The Holy Land Foundation for its commitment in helping to stem this ongoing exodus of Christians. Cardinal Hickey emphasized the success of the foundation and especially the \$450,000 worth of scholarship grants that have been awarded to over 26 Christian Palestinian students as well as the 15 housing units that have been constructed for occupancy at affordable rent in the Jerusalem area. His prayer is that the Foundation continues in its efforts to make a difference in providing motivations for our young Christians to remain in the Holy Land.

Fr. Peter Vasko, O.F.M., President of The Holy Land Foundation, thanked his Eminence for his remarks and then called upon His Paternity, Most Rev. Giovanni

Battistelli, O.F.M., Chairman of The Holy Land Foundation, to present to His Eminence, the Leo XIII Gold Cross of Honor. His Eminence was presented with this honor because of his continued support and love of the Holy Land and the mission of the foundation. Following the presentation, Fr. Vasko introduced Archbishop O'Brien and Bishop Nevins, the latter being a member of the national board of trustees of the foundation, for additional remarks. Both prelates praised the work that the foundation has already accomplished and indicated the importance that all Christians, no matter their denomination, "should take up the tasks of doing their part to raise both awareness and funding to resolve this crisis of Christianity in the Holy Land."

## FR. SILAS MUSHOLT MEMORIAL FUND

On August 5, 1999, Fr. Silas Musholt, OFM, a well known friar and guide in the Holy Land, died of a stroke in the United States. Representing the mid-western United States, Fr. Silas served as the Commissary of the Holy Land in St. Louis for the Franciscan Custody. He also served as a guide with the Custody for six years with different groups especially the northern lieutenancy of the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre.

Fr. Silas was deeply interested in the work of The Holy Land Foundation. Consequently, he worked closely with the foundation in helping to create awareness as well as funding for the various programs needed by the foundation. He especially understood the great need to create basic and affordable housing units for young Christians.

In honor of Fr. Silas and his dream, The Holy Land Foundation has established a memorial fund to raise \$300,000 for the construction of three housing units in Jerusalem in his name. These housing units would at least partially fulfill his dream of assisting our Christians with affordable housing.

If anyone would like to join us in Fr. Silas' memory or know others who would like to participate towards this "memorial fund," please address your inquiries to: Mr. Richard Sontag, Tekton Ministries, 910 Oakwood Trail, Indianapolis, IN, 46260 or e-mail: [tektonrs@indyweb.net](mailto:tektonrs@indyweb.net).

## THREE NEW TRUSTEES APPOINTED

The Holy Land Foundation welcomes Robert L. Sheeran, Anthony F. Sansone and William R. Joyce, Jr. as the newest members of our Board of Trustees.

Mr. Sheeran retired in 1991 as a Sr. Vice President of Merrill Lynch and has served on extensive community Boards and Commissions throughout the nation. He remains active in his community affairs in his home state of Washington.



Mr. Sansone is the Chairman and CEO of the Sansone Group based in St. Louis. His civic and community interests include: Member of the Board of Directors of Royal Bank & Trust; Trustee of the St. Louis Archdiocesan Fund; Co-Founder and Trustee, Vitae Society; and numerous other organizations in the St. Louis area.



Mr. Joyce is a lawyer in the New York/Washington, D.C. area and has been in

private practice since 1951. His list of community interests are many including: Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Battle of Britain Museum Foundation; Consul General to Republic of Bolivia; Catholic Academy of Sciences; Director and President, Hanaya Financial Corporation; and participates in many other worthy organizations.

Mr. Sheeran, Mr. Sansone, and Mr. Joyce are dedicated to the mission of the foundation in preserving the Christian presence in the Holy Land.

## SCHOLARSHIP NAMED FOR PEGGY GREDINGTON

It is with sad regrets to inform our readers that our public relation consultant, Peggy Gredington, passed away unexpectedly in the early part of this year. She served the foundation with outstanding professionalism in both the fields of marketing and public relations. We will all miss her.

In her honor, an anonymous donor has established a scholarship in her name that will honor her memory and reflect her dedication, hard work, consistency and sensitivity. May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace. Amen.

## Millennium Pilgrimages to benefit

### The Holy Land Foundation

The Holy Land Foundation is pleased to announce three Millennium Pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Fr. Peter Vasko, O.F.M., President of the Foundation, will be the guide and spiritual director. With over 15 years of experience living in the Holy Land, Fr. Peter's knowledge and insight will ensure you of a most fulfilled spiritual journey. You will be able to see first hand the work of the Foundation and the plight of the Christian people. What better way to celebrate the Great Jubilee than to trace the history of salvation in the land in which it took place.

#### Pilgrimage dates:

July 17-26, 2000

September 12- 21, 2000

Dec. 27, 2000 thru Jan. 5, 2001

For information and a brochure contact:

#### Tekton Ministries

Pilgrimage Office

5158 N. Kenwood Ave.

Indianapolis, IN 46208

Telephone: (317) 253-9604 or

toll free (888) 850-MARY

Fax: (317) 254-1544

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# ISRAELI PLAN FOR BETHLEHEM REPLICA TO LURE AWAY VISITORS

by Said Ghazali

Palestinian human rights groups say that Israel is building an Israeli replica of Bethlehem on the edge of Jerusalem to attract tourists and deprive the Palestinian city of millions of tourists. Israel's construction plans, if implemented, would also restrict Palestinian movement between Jerusalem and Bethlehem by turning an existing checkpoint into a permanent one.

The statement condemned Israeli construction activities which will "radically advance the system of apartheid that has developed under the guise of the Oslo Process." The Bethlehem replica, called Bethlehem Israel, consists of hotels and tourist facilities which would divert tourism away from Bethlehem and deprive the biblical city of its income from tourism.

Millions of tourists are expected in the region to commemorate the end of the second millennium. Israel has started implementing its plans to attract tourism, according to a statement signed by the Badil Resource Center, the Jerusalem Center for Women, Palestinian Human Rights Information Center and the

Women's Technical Affairs Committee.

The statement said that new bypass roads in various stages of construction will link the southern settlement of Gilo on the West with Har Homa settlement under construction in the East of the main Jerusalem-Bethlehem road. "The bypass roads will split Bethlehem in two and demarcate the new expanded borders of Jerusalem with illegal Jewish settlements expanding from all directions."

The Israeli plan for the check point separating Jerusalem and Bethlehem will cause fragmentation to the Palestinian population and the immediate surrounding territory, the joint statement said.

A map, given to the District Coordinating Liaison Office, details the conversion of the existing checkpoint into a permanent checkpoint to be used exclusively by tourists. A parallel 150-200 meter long road will be opened on the east of the Hebron Road with a 700 car parking lot and a 650 meter pedestrian road to be used by Palestinians.

A reinforcement wall has been constructed around the existing checkpoint. The foundations for the road have been laid and the parking lot is ready for operation.

The checkpoint will be ready within one month, the sources said.

The army has seven security towers in the area overlooking the tomb of Rachel. The site has long been a hot spot of clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian stone throwers.

The Efrat settlement to the south of Bethlehem is creeping toward the city making any future development and expansion for Bethlehem and the surrounding cities of Beit-Jala and Beit-Sahour impossible. Around 70,000 Palestinians are now living in a cage like situation.

"It is inconceivable that at the same time that Bethlehem and the Palestinian people are preparing to welcome the world for the millennium celebrations, Israel is using these same celebrations as a cover to further restrict Palestinian access to Jerusalem and confiscate more land in the Bethlehem area," the statement said.

(Reprinted with permission from *The Jerusalem Times* dated August 20, 1999).

## PLEDGE

Yes, I wish to help maintain and preserve our Christian presence in the Holy Land and support The Holy Land Foundation with a gift of:

\$1000    \$500    \$100    \$50    \$25    Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

Your contribution will be used to create scholarships and jobs, provide subsidized housing, and help restore the Tomb of Jesus in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. **"Your plenty at the present time should supply their needs so that their surplus may one day supply your needs, with equality as the result."** (II Corinthians, Chapter 8, Verse 14)

Please fill in the information and insert your check made payable to The Holy Land Foundation. Thank you & God bless you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- I would like to receive The Holy Land Newsletter  
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11/99      In order to update our mailing list and save postage costs, please let us know if you are receiving multiple copies of the newsletter or have changed your address.

A Christian exodus, unlike any in our history, is presently occurring in the Holy Land.

In the middle of this century, 25 percent of the population of the Holy Land was Christian. Today, as we near the second millennium, it is less than three percent. Specifically, out of more than six million, there are only 160,000 Christians now living in the Holy Land. This is a crucial situation, demanding that we join together and take action before Christianity ceases in the land where Christ founded His Church.

We need your help now! We hope and pray the Lord will touch your hearts and that you will be able to play a role in helping preserve and maintain our Christian presence, religious roots and heritage in the Holy Land.

Please send your donations to:  
 The Holy Land Foundation  
 1400 Quincy Street, NE  
 Washington, DC 20017  
 Telephone: (202) 269-5430  
 Fax: (202) 526-3527

# Many Thanks

Our special thanks go to our former board members, Nancy Calcagnini and Henry "Hank" Baer. Because of their dedication and generosity many programs were set in motion to help assist our Christians in the Holy Land. We are pleased to announce that Mr. Baer will remain as the legal advisor to the foundation.

# POLL UNDERSCORES DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELIS

Over 61% of Palestinians support or strongly support the peace process jump-started by the 1993 Oslo Accords signed between the Palestinians and Israel. This figure compares with the 64.3% of Israelis who also said they were on the side of peace.

These two figures challenge the obstacles, which have been standing in the way of the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations over the last couple of years.

An Israeli lady who works at an insurance company in the Talpiot suburb of West Jerusalem wasn't so sure. Most of her clients are Palestinians from East Jerusalem. Sometimes she shops in the heart of the city.

Will there be a lasting peace? "It is a hard question," she said. She is probably among those 34.2% of Israelis who are pessimistic or very pessimistic. Palestinian pessimism is 31.5%.

These two polls are part of the "People to People" program, an organization funded by Norway to help build bridges and weave ties between Palestinians and Israelis. "A deeper look into the attitudes on both sides shows a clear discrepancy between Israeli and Palestinian attitudes on many different aspects of the peace process," say the poll's organizers.

Israelis and Palestinians expressed different opinions in regard to the idea of an independent Palestinian state. The majority of

Israelis (64.7%) oppose the establishment of a Palestinian state with the 1967 borders including East Jerusalem as part of the final solution to the conflict. The majority of Palestinians (52.7%) support the idea. The poll of 1,641 Palestinian men and women was conducted by the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC) – and included citizens from the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and refugee camps.

The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research, in Tel Aviv University, polled 1,001 people including Muslims, Christians and Druze populations and residents of the settlements in the West Bank and Kibbutrim. The margin of error is 4.5%.

Assessments of each side's sincerity in pursuing peace were made. The majority of Israelis consider the Palestinian Authority sincere in pursuing peace, while only 11% of Palestinians believe that the Israeli government is sincere in this regard. The majority of Palestinians (88.5%) do not believe in Israel's genuine desire for peace, as opposed to 38% among Israelis who think so about the Palestinian Authority. More than 46.6% believe that both sides are responsible for the deadlock in the peace process.

The sense of security among Israelis has increased. The poll shows that 21% of the respondents believe that their personal security had improved since the launching of the peace

process, compared with 9% in the late December poll. The sense of Palestinian personal security has declined from 64.2% to 45.9%.

(Reprinted with permission from *The Jerusalem Times* - dated March 19, 1999)

## New Public Relations and Development Firm Selected

In May of this year Tekton Ministries was selected to continue the public relations/development efforts on behalf of The Holy Land Foundation. We are pleased to announce that the office has been moved to Indianapolis and is ready to move forward and help the Foundation take the next step into the new millennium. Tekton Ministries is headed by Richard Sontag. You may contact the office at:

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