



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

The Shrine of Deir Rafat



In 1927 Msgr. Luigi Barlassina, then Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, decided to erect a shrine in honor of Our Lady Queen of Palestine in Deir Rafat, a village between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv where there was already a Christian community. In 1933 the title of "Queen of Palestine" was officially recognized by the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

The structure included a school, an orphanage, a convent and the Sanctuary on whose facade a six meters high statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary was erected, with the inscription "Reginae Palestinae".

The Patriarch Barlassina also had a translation of the angel's greeting: "Hail, Mary" inscribed in different languages on the church vault. The words were translated into over 280 languages and the Christian artist of Jerusalem, Mubarak Saad, painted them onto scrolls held aloft by a multitude of angels singing hosannas.

In the left aisle of the sanctuary there is a painting of Our Lady Queen of Palestine who stretches out her hand, in sign of protection, over the land. In the landscape below you can see the sea of Haifa with the Sanctuary of Carmel and the city walls of Jerusalem. Two angels, one on her right and one on her left, hold out the crown and scepter to the Mother of Jesus and our Mother.

Over the years the structure has become a shelter and center for spiritual retreats. Today, the Little Sisters of Bethlehem serve in the Shrine bringing forward a project of prayer, care and support for young people in difficulty. Every year, on October 25, the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Palestine, pilgrims from throughout the Diocese and beyond gather in Deir Rafat.