



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

Annual Peace Day for the East



“This is an initiative coming from Lebanon and all the Eastern Catholic Patriarchs have welcomed it,” said Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, on the occasion of his trip to Rome in June, a few days before the launch of the ‘Peace Day for the East’. “We decided to unite at the regional level to pray for and invoke peace in our territories, noting that this prayer often comes from outside, from the whole world, but that we, here, especially, must consecrate this time together,” noted Archbishop Pizzaballa.

Therefore, celebrating the 130th anniversary of Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, the Justice and Peace Commission of the Council of Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops in the Middle East – located in Lebanon – has set the first ‘Peace Day’ on 27 June 2021. On that day, at 10 am, in churches throughout the East, the faithful prayed intensely “to implore God’s Mercy and His Peace on the beloved Middle East, where the Christian faith was born and always lives, despite the suffering.”

In a letter published the same day, Pope Francis addressed the Catholic Patriarchs of the Middle East, joining in their prayer and declaring in particular, “Truly be the salt of your lands, give flavor to social life, wishing to contribute to the building of the common good, according to those principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church which so urgently need to be known, as was indicated by the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Medio Oriente* and as you wished to recall in commemorating the hundred and thirtieth anniversary of the Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum*.”

Members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre joined in the prayer through virtual media, particularly the social networks of the Grand Magisterium and the Latin Patriarchate. In this year dedicated to St. Joseph, the Middle East was consecrated to the Holy Family during a Mass celebrated in the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth on Sunday, June 27, in the presence of all the Ordinaries of the Holy Land. An icon of Mary, Jesus and Joseph – adorned with relics from the basilica – was blessed, before departing on a pilgrimage to Lebanon. It will stop in all the countries of the Middle

East and will arrive in Rome presumably on December 8, 2021, for the closing of the year that the pope has consecrated to the faithful Custodian of the Universal Church.

(July 2021)