



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

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

The twinning between Bethlehem and Lourdes



The municipalities of Lourdes and Bethlehem have announced a historic twinning of the two cities that will bring their destinies closer together in mutual support and the development of greater collaboration between the cities of Europe and Palestine.

The Marian city of Lourdes and the birthplace of Christ have formalized their historical twinning. In an interview granted us by **the Mayor of Lourdes, Josette Bourdeu**, she explains that these two cities are “universal symbols which overcome all divisions, to deliver a **message of fraternal peace** and tolerance to our world which suffers under the harshest turbulence”.

A page of history is about to be written through what this mayor of the French Republic presents as “a pact of exemplary friendship, one of unflinching mutual support”.

In collaboration with **the Mayor of Bethlehem, Vera Baboun**, the two leaders have outlined areas of cooperation, particularly common interests in the field of religious tourism, to welcome new pilgrims from South America and Asia. Their aim is to offer to future visitors from these distant lands, a “European” circuit which could integrate, for example, Lourdes, Czestochowa, Fatima and the Holy Land.

“Bethlehem, despite the hindrances which onsite we cannot ignore, over the past few years has built the foundations of true international recognition through an **extraordinary network of cities worldwide**. This recent twinning between Lourdes and Bethlehem solemnly registers itself on this long list. And know this; I am particularly proud of it. It is a beacon of solidarity, a form of justice which no wall can stop” clarified Josette Bourdeu.

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