

Canada- Atlantic Lieutenancy ANNUAL REPORT 2019

The members of the Canada Atlantic Lieutenancy continued to meet on a regular basis throughout the year to mark important liturgical dates and to get updated on the issues facing the Christians in the Holy Land. Members received the quarterly newsletter, Jerusalem Cross, as well as spring and fall updates with event details for our Lieutenancy. Much of the focus for this year was on the All Canadian Investiture which took place in September in Montreal.

The membership for our Lieutenancy remains the same with 40 members at the end of the year. Members are encouraged to continue to spread the word about our Order and by having events in various churches, we aim to get more visibility for the Order and its mission. This year, the donations sent to the Holy Land were just over \$25,000 plus another \$1,124.00 sent to the Holy Land for masses. All members are encouraged to use the Mass cards for memorial masses or celebratory occasions. We have received very positive feedback when families know there is a mass being said in the Holy Land for a loved one.



This year included two specific events sponsored by the Antigonish-Cape Breton section. First, a mass for Persecuted Christians, in Sydney, in February, was celebrated by Fr Bill Burke and Fr Bedford Doucette. This was well advertised in the community and very well attended by the faithful of that area. The reception that followed provided a great opportunity for members to

tell folks about the Order and the importance of our assistance to the Christians in the Holy Land. Later in August, Fr John Barry, KHS, celebrated mass at St Peter's Church in Monastery for the Feast of St Pius X. The beautiful setting and day provided for great conversation to make us realize how blessed we are compared to the challenges faced by our brothers and sisters living under turbulent political structures. As Christians we are called to assist those less fortunate.

Our Lenten gathering was held early in March at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Halifax, with Deacon Dan Daley, KHS, leading us as we prayed the Stations of the Cross. Members joined together for a dinner at a nearby restaurant for fellowship after our time of prayer.

In May we had our Annual General Meeting at St. Agnes Church. This was done as a separate event apart from the Investiture weekend to provide an opportunity for all members to attend and include those who would not be able to travel to Montreal.



The **All Canadian Investiture** in Montreal, in September, brought together approximately 200 members of the Order from across Canada. There were 36 new members invested and 28 members were promoted. From our Lieutenancy the following were promoted: Sir Thomas Shediak,, KGCHS, Sir Athony Metlej, KC*HS, Dame Sabah Metlej, DC*HS and Dame Siony Sayat, DCHS. Our **Grand Master, Cardinal O'Brien**, presided over the Investiture and spoke to the

members at the banquet. Also in attendance was **Archbishop Pizzaballa, the Apostolic Administrator for the Latin Patriarchate** who, in his address to the members, gave an update on the very serious issues facing various parts of the Holy Land under his jurisdiction. He emphasized that the contribution of the Order is vital to the ongoing sustenance of the schools, hospitals and churches that we support.



Like members all over the world, we celebrated **the Feast of Our Lady of Palestine** by coming together for two events. On Saturday, October 26, Sir Michael Higgins, KCHS, gave a public lecture at Atlantic School of Theology, Halifax, on the Legacy of Jean Vanier. He gave insight into a life of compassion and a quest to improve the conditions for people living with challenges which led to the founding of L'Arche. Sunday morning, members attended mass at Saint Mary's Cathedral Basilica, Halifax, with Archbishop Dunn, KGOHS, presiding as we prayed for peace for our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land.

Our final event of the year was Evening Prayer, led by Fr Brian MacMillan, KHS, in the Marian chapel of Saint Mary's Cathedral Basilica on November 29 to help as all prepare our minds and hearts for Advent and the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

In addition to the Investiture in Montreal, Sir Michel and I travelled on two occasions on behalf of the Order. The Lieutenants of North America met in Houston the first weekend of June to meet with the Grand Master and Governor General as well as collaborate with the other

lieutenants in North America. These meetings bring the leadership of the Order together for spiritual renewal and an opportunity for dialogue to determine best practices in moving forward addressing the challenges as they occur. The Governor General, Leonardo de Visconti, reported that the Order was shifting to an emphasis on Humanitarian, Educational and Pastoral needs in the Holy Land as opposed to simply providing funds for construction projects. One major development that came from these meetings was to develop a website specific for the North American Lieutenancies. Each Lieutenancy would have its own link but the overall framework and history of the Order would be on the main site thereby eliminating the need for this on each site and thus providing a consistent message.

The other trip that was made was to Guadalajara, Mexico in October to participate in the 2019 annual Romeria (small pilgrimage) for Our Lady of Zapopan. We joined members from the Mexico Lieutenancy as well as members from several areas of the U S for the 11 km pilgrimage walk with 2.5 million people of faith lining the streets in devotion to Mary. This was a truly beautiful, unforgettable spiritual experience for which we were extremely grateful.

I wish to thank all members for their support and prayers through the year and encourage all members to share their knowledge of the Order and create more awareness about the Christians in the Holy Land. Deus Lo Vult!.

Respectfully submitted,

Trudy Comeau, DC*HS