



AD POPULUM

VETUS ROMANUS APOSTOLATUS



"*Rogate*"

A PASTORAL EPISTLE TO THE FAITHFUL

Carissimi

*"Pray ye for the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem: and abundance for them that love thee."*¹ The Psalmist fervently urges us to offer our prayers for the wellbeing and tranquillity of Jerusalem. Jerusalem in the Bible refers both to the holy city but also often as a synonym for the holy land of Israel, as well as our eternal home with God.

Throughout history, individuals who follow a divine path have sought solace and inspiration in the Psalms during moments of jubilation and periods of immense tribulation. The eloquent and jubilant expressions found within the psalms provide us with the means to extol an indescribably marvellous deity. In times of distraction or anxiety, the Psalms serve as a poignant reminder of the immense power and unwavering love of the God we dedicate ourselves to. Moreover, when grief overwhelms us to the point where words fail, the lamentations of the psalmists articulate our anguish with profound clarity.

In this humble plea of the Psalmist, we are reminded of the profound significance this sacred city and the land in which it rests holds in the hearts of those who cherish it.. The Psalmist implores that abundance be bestowed upon those who hold Jerusalem dear, emphasizing the importance of supporting and uplifting those who devote their love and dedication to this cherished place. These sentiments are so apt for our time, as we reel from the atrocities perpetrated by Hamas terrorists on Israel's soil last weekend.

We might find ourselves disheartened by the images and reports of innocent Israeli men, women, and children being slaughtered, as well as the terrible indignities forced upon them by the terrorists. Nevertheless, these words from the Psalmist act as an enduring reminder of the efficacy of prayer and its profound ability to influence the lives of others. In a world frequently marked by strife and disharmony, the Psalmist urges us to channel our thoughts and intentions towards cultivating peace in Jerusalem, Israel.

We may think of the Psalmist's call for abundance to be granted to those who love Jerusalem as a testament to the deep connection individuals have with the Holy Land. It maybe thought to speak to the recognition of the tireless efforts made by countless individuals who work tirelessly to preserve and protect the rich history and cultural heritage there and in Jerusalem itself. May God shower them with abundance, and bless their unwavering commitment and dedication to preserving those places and artifacts that speak to the peace from above promised to us below.

The Psalms provide solace by redirecting our focus towards our compassionate and trustworthy Shepherd. They serve as a reminder that He reigns supreme, with no force

¹ Psalm 121:6 [122:6] Rogate quae ad pacem sunt Jerusalem, et abundantia diligentibus te

surpassing Him or lying beyond His dominion. Throughout history, the Psalms have shaped our liturgies, guided our worship, and anchored our daily lives, particularly for those who pray the Prayer of the Church. Indeed, much of the New Testament's teaching on Christ's continued work as our Prophet, Priest, and King in his state of exaltation is founded firmly upon the book of Psalms. These sacred songs offer reassurance that, regardless of our emotions or circumstances, God stands beside us unwaveringly and with benevolence.

Remember, this is the land where the Holy Family dwelt, where Our Incarnate Lord walked and talked exemplifying His Gospel of God's love and where He gave His flesh and outpoured His sacred blood for the redemption of the whole of humanity. Our faith is incarnational - the material as well as the spiritual matters. The Holy Land is so-called because of the significance it has for us, where *"the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*² Christians cannot and should not be ambivalent to the fate of the Holy Land and all who dwell therein.

The Holy Land is not just an abstract concept or an ideal; it is a tangible reality. The Psalmist's words serve as a reminder of the lasting significance of Jerusalem and its importance to people from diverse faiths, cultures, and backgrounds today. Jerusalem is a city that has stood the test of time, symbolizing hope and serving as a unifying force. As we respond to the call of the Psalmist, let us come together in prayer, seeking peace and prosperity for Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and offering unwavering support to all those who hold it close to their hearts.

As members of the Old Roman apostolate, it is our responsibility to exemplify the principles of love, peace, and reconciliation found within the Gospel. With this in mind, I strongly encourage you to carefully consider the request presented by the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries in the Holy Land³. They urge us to observe a day of fasting and prayer on Tuesday, October 17, dedicated to the pursuit of peace and reconciliation. It is our Christian duty to respond in solidarity with our Christian brethren, as well as with Israeli citizens from all walks of life and Jewish people all around the world.

During our period of fasting, we might think of those too grief-riven to eat, and those unable to access food and water. We might think about those sacrificing themselves to defend their country and the families anxious about their fate. We might remember those praying for the return of loved ones held hostage, children wickedly separated from their parents. We might think about those living in terror, fearful their homes may be attacked again, or those not knowing where to find shelter from violence. We might remember those oppressed and misrepresented by a heartless regime who cares nothing for their plight as they plow their agenda of terror.

As we offer our prayers for peace, it is crucial to distinguish between Hamas terrorists and the Palestinian population they oppress, and to express our concern for innocent Palestinians impacted by the Israeli military response Hamas has wrought upon them. Equally important is extending our heartfelt sympathy to the Israelis and members of the Jewish diaspora who have been profoundly affected. Additionally, let us encourage fellow

² John 1:14 Et Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis : et vidimus gloriam ejus, gloriam quasi unigeniti a Patre plenum gratiae et veritatis

Christians to exhibit empathy and provide support to their Jewish and Palestinian neighbours. The peace of God is intended for all. Let us all be ambassadors for His peace.

May the Lord grant us the wisdom and courage to work towards peace and reconciliation in the Holy Land and throughout the world. *Rogate quae ad pacem sunt Jerusalem.*

J.D.



Brichtelmestunensis
S. Wilfridi Ebor MMXXIII A.D.

مجلس رؤساء الكنائس الكاثوليكية في الأرض المقدسة



אספת ההגמוניים הקתוליים
של ארץ הקודש

THE ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC ORDINARIES OF THE HOLY LAND
Latins, Melkites, Maronites, Syriacs, Armenians, Chaldeans, Custody of the Holy Land

Prot. n. 37/2023

Jerusalem, October 11 2023

"Since he is not the God of disorder but of peace" (1 Cor. 14,33)

Dear brothers and sisters,
may the Lord indeed give us His peace!

The pain and dismay at what is happening is great. Once again we find ourselves in the midst of a political and military crisis. We have suddenly been catapulted into a sea of unprecedented violence. The hatred, which we have unfortunately already been experiencing for too long, will increase even more, and the ensuing spiral of violence will create more destruction. Everything seems to speak of death.

Yet, in this time of sorrow and dismay, we do not want to remain helpless. We cannot let death and its sting (1 Cor 15:55) be the only word we hear.

That is why we feel the need to pray, to turn our hearts to God the Father. Only in this way we can draw the strength and serenity needed to endure these hard times, by turning to Him, in prayer and intercession, to implore and cry out to God amidst this anguish.

On behalf of all the Ordinaries of the Holy Land, I invite all parishes and religious communities to a day of fasting and prayer for peace and reconciliation.

We ask that on Tuesday, October 17, everyone hold a day of fasting, abstinence, and prayer. Let us organize prayer times with Eucharistic adoration and with the recitation of the Rosary to Our Blessed Virgin Mary. Although most probably in many parts of our dioceses circumstances will not permit large gatherings, it is possible to organize simple and sober common moments of prayer in parishes, religious communities, and families.

This is the way we all come together despite everything, and unite collectively in prayer, to deliver to God the Father our thirst for peace, justice and reconciliation.

With sincere prayers for all,



+ *Pierbattista Card. Pizzaballa*
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Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem
President of the ACOHL