



The Bulletin

August A.D. 2026 Issue 5



Upcoming Events

- Sept. 11, 2026 Educational Fund Gala
Sept. 13, 2026 Feast of the Exaltation
of the Holy Cross
Oct. 2-3, 2026 Investiture of New
Members
Oct. 25, 2026 Feast of Our Lady of
Palestine online
celebration

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From the Editor's Desk

Caring for the Other

There is a moment in the Gospel that unsettles every comfortable notion of neighborliness. A man lies half-dead on the road to Jericho. A priest passes. A Levite passes. It is a Samaritan — an outsider, a man with every social reason to keep walking — who stops. He does not ask what the wounded man believes, where he is from, or whether he deserves help. He simply sees him, and is moved.

This is the heart of what it means to care for the other: not sentiment, but attention. Not a feeling we wait to arrive, but a decision to stop on the road.

Christ tells us plainly that he hides himself in the stranger — the hungry, the imprisoned, the sick, the one far from home. "Whatever you did for one of the least of these," he says, "you did for me." This is not metaphor. It is the deepest logic of the Incarnation: God has so bound himself to humanity that every human face carries a trace of his own. To turn from the suffering of another is, in some mysterious way, to turn from Christ himself.

For members of a chivalric order, this teaching is not abstract. Our charism has always been institutional as much as personal — schools kept open in the Holy Land, children educated despite conflict, communities sustained through the quiet, unglamorous work of endowments and campaigns. These are not separate from prayer; they are prayer extended into structure, made durable enough to outlast any one of our lifetimes. Cardinal Pizzaballa's decision to remain present among a suffering flock in Gaza is itself a form of this caring — not the caring of distant concern, but of a shepherd who stays.

Pope Francis, reflecting on the Good Samaritan, observed that we are constantly given the choice either to pass by or to draw near. There is no neutral middle ground. Indifference is itself a choice — a quiet refusal of the wounded man on the road.

To care for the other, then, is not primarily an emotion. It is a practice: showing up, staying present, funding the school, visiting the sick brother, writing the letter, remembering the widow. It is small and repeated, and it is how charity becomes visible rather than merely believed.

The Editor.



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2026 Sponsorship Information



— YOU ARE INVITED —

“The Children of the Holy Land – An Evening of Hope and Solidarity”

This evening supports the Holy Land Children's Educational Endowment Fund, ensuring the future of 45 schools of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, serving over 18,000 students and 1,700 educators, providing stability and promise in a region deeply affected by conflict.

*Join us for an unforgettable evening
of fellowship, faith, and unity
in support of the children of the Holy Land.*

Special Guest



His Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo
*Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto
Grand Prior, Lieutenancy, Canada – Toronto*

Date	Venue	Programme	Dress
Friday, September 11, 2026	Venu Event Space, Vaughan, ON	6:00 PM Reception • 7:00 PM Dinner	Black Tie / Business Attire
H.E. Dr. Colin Saldanha KC*HS <i>Lieutenant</i>	Hon. Michael A. Tibollo KHS <i>Honorary Chairperson</i>	Dame Rose Savage DC*HS <i>Gala Chairperson</i>	



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Educating the Living Stones: Why the Order Invests in the Children of the Holy Land

There is an ancient phrase used to describe the Christians of the Holy Land: the "living stones" of the Church. Long before pilgrims ever touch the walls of the Holy Sepulchre or kneel at the grotto in Bethlehem, it is these communities — worshipping, teaching, and raising families amid daily uncertainty — who keep the holy places from becoming museums. A shrine without a living Christian community around it is a monument to the past. A shrine surrounded by Christian families, schools, and parishes is a witness to a living faith.

This is why the education of children in the Holy Land is not a peripheral concern for the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre — it is close to the very center of its mission. The Order exists, in large part, to sustain the Christian presence in the land where salvation history unfolded. And no institution sustains that presence more effectively, or more quietly, than the Christian school.

Consider what a Catholic school in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, or Gaza actually does. It keeps Christian families rooted in a land that offers them constant, practical reasons to leave. It forms children — Christian and Muslim alike, since these schools have long served both communities — in habits of coexistence that the wider region badly needs. It gives families economic stability and a future for their children within their own homeland rather than abroad. And it does all of this while conflict, closures, and economic hardship make the ordinary work of education extraordinarily difficult.

Christian communities in the Holy Land have endured pressures that would have extinguished a less rooted people — displacement, economic siege, and the slow attrition of families choosing exile over uncertainty. In this context, a functioning school is not a convenience. It is often the single institution standing between a family's decision to stay and their decision to leave for good.



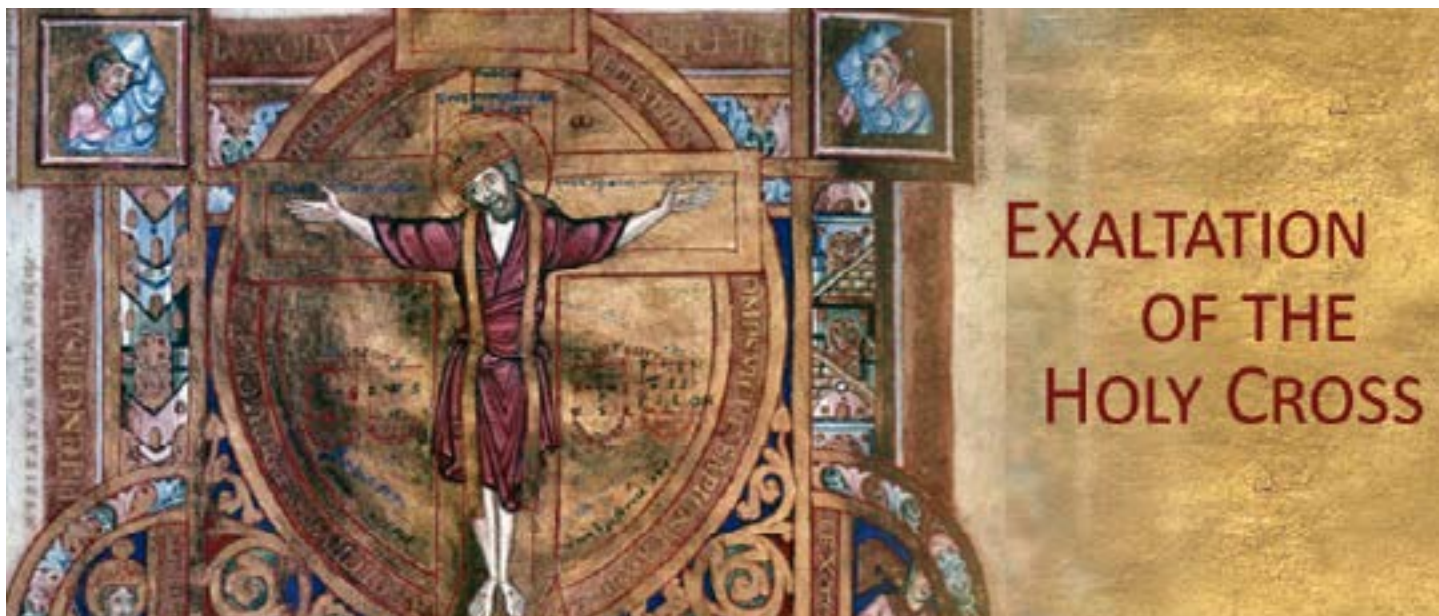
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This is the quiet logic behind the Order's Ensuring the Future Capital Campaign and the Holy Land Children's Education Endowment Fund: that an endowment, patiently built and carefully stewarded, can do something that emergency relief cannot — guarantee that a school still exists in ten, twenty, fifty years' time. Charity meets an immediate need. An endowment protects a future.

When a member of the Order supports this work, they are not simply funding tuition. They are helping ensure that in fifty years, there are still children in Bethlehem learning their catechism in the same town where the Word was made flesh. They are keeping the living stones living.





The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – September 14

This is one of the oldest feasts in the Christian calendar, celebrated on September 14 by Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and many Anglican and Lutheran churches. It stands apart from Good Friday's meditation on the suffering of the Cross and focuses instead on the Cross as an instrument of triumph and glory.

Historical Origins

The feast has two founding events woven together. The first is the dedication of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem on September 13, 335 AD, built by Constantine over the site of Calvary and the tomb. According to tradition, Constantine's mother Helena had traveled to Jerusalem and discovered the True Cross, and the relic was solemnly "exalted" – lifted up for veneration – for the crowds gathered for the dedication.

The second event gave the feast a new layer of meaning. In 614 AD, the Persian King Chosroes II conquered Jerusalem and carried off the relic of the True Cross. The Byzantine Emperor Heraclius waged a long campaign to recover it, and in 629 AD he returned the Cross to Jerusalem – entering the city barefoot, in humility, according to the accounts. This restoration was celebrated with enormous solemnity and became fused with the original September 14 observance.



Theological Meaning

The feast holds a paradox at its heart: an instrument of Roman execution is venerated as the throne of God's glory. The key text is John 3:14-15 — *"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life."* The Greek word **hypsōthēnai** means both to be lifted up on the cross and to be exalted in glory. John's Gospel exploits this double meaning throughout: the crucifixion and the glorification are not sequential events but a single act.

This is the theological move the feast celebrates. The Cross is not merely the prelude to the Resurrection — it is itself the moment of exaltation. Christ reigning from the Cross is already the King enthroned.

Liturgical Expression

In the Roman Rite, the Preface for this feast describes the Cross as the place where *"he who overcame our enemy might triumph, and what was cast down might be raised."* The antiphon for Evening Prayer on September 14 echoes the paradox directly: *"We adore your Cross, O Lord, and we praise and glorify your holy Resurrection, for behold, because of the wood of a tree joy came to the whole world."*

In the Byzantine tradition the feast is called **Hypsosis tou Timiou Stavrou** — the Elevation of the Precious Cross — and is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the liturgical year. It is observed as a strict fast day, unusual for a feast, which underscores that the glory celebrated is inseparable from the suffering.

Connection to the Order of the Holy Sepulchre

For members of the Equestrian Order, this feast has particular resonance. The Jerusalem Cross — five crosses symbolizing the five wounds of Christ — is the Order's emblem, and September 14 is a focal point of the Order's spiritual identity. Many Lieutenancies hold special observances on or near this date.

The feast is ultimately an invitation to see the Cross not as a tragedy subsequently redeemed, but as the form that redemption takes — the strange wood through which, as the ancient hymn **Vexilla Regis** puts it, *"God has reigned from a tree."*



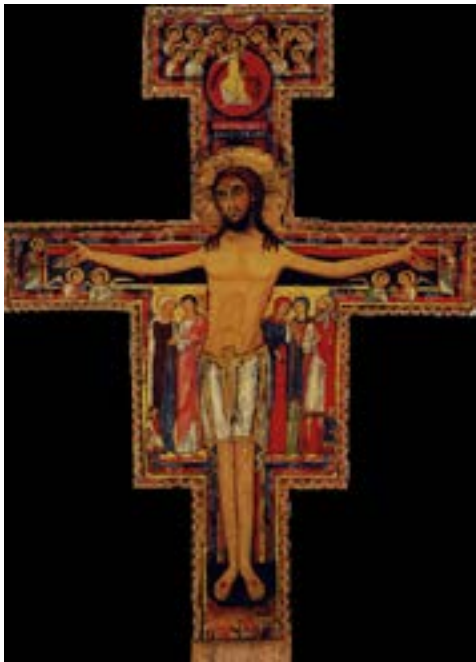
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The Cross of San Damiano

The Cross of San Damiano is one of the most significant images in the history of Christian spirituality, inseparable from the story of Francis of Assisi.

The cross itself is a painted icon on wood, Byzantine-Umbrian in style, created in central Italy probably in the late 11th or early 12th century. It depicts Christ not in agony but in triumph – eyes open, standing erect on the cross, robed in a long garment, a figure of serene authority. This iconographic type, the *Christus triumphans*, was common in early medieval art and shares the theological instinct of the Feast of the Exaltation: the Cross as throne, not defeat. Around Christ are grouped the figures of Mary, John the Beloved, Mary Magdalene, and other witnesses, along with angels and saints, making the icon a vision of the whole economy of salvation gathered at the foot of the Cross.



The cross hung in the small, crumbling chapel of San Damiano just outside Assisi. Around 1205, the young Francis – still a wealthy merchant's son, unsettled and searching – stopped to pray before it. According to the earliest accounts, the icon spoke to him: "Francis, go and repair my house, which as you see is falling into ruin." Francis took this literally at first, selling cloth from his father's shop to pay for repairs to the chapel. Only gradually did he understand the deeper meaning – that it was the Church itself, not a stone building, he was called to rebuild.

That moment before the San Damiano Cross is considered the founding event of the Franciscan movement. Clare of Assisi later made the chapel her home, and the Poor Ladies – the Second Order of St. Francis – lived there for decades.

After Clare's death in 1253, the sisters moved to the Basilica of Santa Chiara in Assisi, and the cross went with them. It hangs there today, in a chapel off the nave, still venerated. The original San Damiano chapel outside the walls remains as Francis left it – simple, austere, and largely unchanged.

Most High glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart.
Grant me an upright faith,
secure hope and perfect charity.
Fill me with understanding and knowledge
that I may fulfill your command. Amen.
(prayer of Saint Francis before the Crucifix of San Damiano)



The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem- Currently Happening

Cardinal Pizzaballa's recent activity

Cardinal Pizzaballa began a visit to the Patriarchate of Venice on July 8, 2026, aimed at strengthening solidarity with the Holy Land.

-Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem

This was Cardinal Pizzaballa's third pastoral visit to Gaza in the past year, alongside Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III, following earlier visits in July and December 2025. They were accompanied by Josef D. Blotz of the Order of Malta, and the visit included interfaith dialogue at Al-Azhar University and the planting of an olive tree symbolizing peace.

-Catholic World Report

In a July 1 conversation with Vatican News/Limes, Cardinal Pizzaballa described dire conditions in Gaza and the West Bank, saying eight people were reportedly killed in central and southern Gaza with two more killed near Khan Younis in a drone strike, and described a lack of rule of law in the West Bank, where Israeli settlers face few restrictions while Palestinians face checkpoints and land restrictions. He also noted that even basic school supplies are being blocked as "dual-use goods," hampering efforts to reopen schools.

-Vatican News

Ordinations and Pastoral Life

Three new priests were ordained for the Patriarchate: Fr. Fadi Qandah (Mafraq, Jordan), Fr. Malek Al-Qalanzeh (Ader, Jordan), and Fr. Jiries Abu Khalil (Jifna, Palestine), formed at the Latin Patriarchate Seminary of Beit Jala.

-Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem

Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem

On July 1 (Feast of the Most Precious Blood), Cardinal Pizzaballa ordained ten Franciscan friars to the priesthood at the Basilica of the Agony at Gethsemane.

-Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem

The Galilee Youth Ministry Office concluded the first phase of its 2026 summer program, combining spiritual formation, fellowship, and celebration for young people



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across Galilee parishes.

-Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem

Cardinal Pizzaballa also authored a Biblical Litany to the Holy Spirit, tracing the Spirit's presence from Genesis to Revelation.

-Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem

The Church of St. Clare in Jerusalem was dedicated, with its altar consecrated (July 18) **-Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem**



Dedication of the Church and Consecration of the Altar

Monastery of Saint Clare – Jerusalem

Ez 47:1-2, 8-9, 12; 1 Cor 3:9c-11, 16-17; Jn 2:13-22

Dear Poor Clare Sisters,

Your Excellency,

Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord,

Today is a day of grace and remembrance. We are in Jerusalem, the city the Lord chose as His dwelling place, the city where the Word offered His life on the Cross and rose again for the salvation of the world. In this Holy Land, just a few steps



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from Calvary, where Christ's side was pierced by the lance, we are granted the grace of celebrating an event that concerns not only one community or one religious family, but the whole Church. It is precisely here, where blood and water flowed from the pierced Heart of the Savior, that we consecrate today a church dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is no accidental choice: this house among the houses of Jerusalem is placed under the sign of perfect love – the love that holds nothing back, the love that gives itself to the very end.

We are not simply blessing a renovated building. We are not merely celebrating the completion of a fully restored architectural work. Today, the Church takes a house built by human hands and hands it over forever to God. In a few moments, these walls, these spaces, and this altar will be anointed with the sacred Chrism, perfumed with incense, and illuminated by the light of the Risen Christ. These signs remind us that these stones are set apart from ordinary use and become a visible sign of God's presence among His people. Yet the Liturgy of the Word reveals that the deepest meaning of this rite concerns not first the stones, but the people.

Saint Paul has spoken to us with clear and powerful words: "You are God's building" (1 Cor 3:9), and again, "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" (1 Cor 3:16). This is the first truth we must keep in our hearts today. The church we are consecrating is beautiful. Its walls are strong. Its altar is precious. But all of this would be meaningless if the living temple, which is the People of God, did not exist. Before the stones comes faith. Before the building comes the community. Before the stone altar comes the living sacrifice of men and women who offer themselves to God.

For this reason, the anointing of the walls and the altar recalls the anointing each one of us received in Baptism and Confirmation. Just as this church is consecrated today, so every Christian has been consecrated by the Lord. Just as this place now belongs to God, so too our lives belong to Him. Just as these walls will be marked with Chrism, so our hearts bear forever the seal of the Holy Spirit. The true miracle of this celebration is not that this church becomes holy unto the Lord; the true miracle is that God continues to make His dwelling in us.

In the Gospel we have heard the account of the cleansing of the Temple. Jesus enters His Father's house with authority and drives out everything that defaces it. His action may appear severe, but it is born of love. Zeal for His Father's house consumes Him. Yet immediately afterward, the Lord goes beyond the stone temple and speaks



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mysterious words: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn 2:19). The Evangelist explains: "He was speaking about the temple of His body" (Jn 2:21).

Christ is the true Temple. In Him, God and humanity meet definitively. In Him, heaven and earth embrace. In Him, every sacrifice finds its fulfillment. And we know that the body of Christ is a body with a pierced Heart. Indeed, the Gospel reminds us that "one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out" (Jn 19:34). That open Heart is the source of the new humanity, the sanctuary from which the life of the Church flows.

For this reason, today the consecration of the altar is the very heart of this rite. The altar is not merely a sacred furnishing: the altar is Christ. It is His pierced Heart, the inexhaustible source of love and mercy. It is the table of sacrifice and communion. Upon this altar the Eucharist, the memorial of the Lord's Passover, will be celebrated. Here death will be conquered by life. Here the Crucified and Risen Lord will continue to give Himself to His people.

The vision of Ezekiel showed us a stream flowing from the Temple. At first it is only a trickle, then it becomes a river, and finally a sea of life. Wherever that water flows, everything comes to life again. The barren land becomes fruitful, the dead waters are healed, and every creature recovers life. The Fathers of the Church saw in this prophecy an image of Christ and of the sacraments flowing from His pierced side.

Indeed, that stream is an image of the Savior's open Heart on Golgotha, from which blood and water flowed. Blood and water: the Eucharist and Baptism, the sacraments that continually flow from that Heart and that will continue to be celebrated and drawn from this altar. Today we have seen this water in the rite of sprinkling: it has brought us back to our Baptism and reminded us that we have been immersed in Christ's death and resurrection.

But this prophecy also concerns the mission of this monastery. From this place, dedicated to the Sacred Heart, an invisible stream of grace must flow – not through great external works, not through noise, not through power, but through prayer, adoration, and a life hidden with Christ in God. Like Ezekiel's river, the contemplative life bears fruit where no one sees it and reaches hearts it may never encounter. The love of God, poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 5:5), finds here a silent yet powerful reflection, like water that continues to flow even when no one is watching.



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In this wounded Jerusalem, where the streets still bear the weight of division, may this church dedicated to the pierced Heart of Christ become a visible sign that love is stronger than every wall and that peace is still possible. And from this place, so close to Calvary where that Heart was opened for all, may there rise an unceasing prayer for the gift of reconciliation, so that Jerusalem, a city so often contested, may rediscover her vocation as a mother who welcomes all her children.

Dear Poor Clare Sisters, today this church is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus within the monastery that bears the name of Saint Clare. This is no insignificant detail. Saint Clare desired to be nothing other than a mirror reflecting the light of Christ: poor with the poor Christ, humble with the humble Christ, completely surrendered to the Divine Bridegroom. Her life was a lamp always burning before the Lord.

You know that she tirelessly invites you to fix your gaze upon the pierced Heart of your Bridegroom. And it is precisely from the Heart of Jesus that you can learn what the Master Himself said: "Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart" (Mt 11:29). Gentleness and humility: this is the treasure that this church of the Sacred Heart entrusts to you. In a few moments we shall see the lights of this church shine forth. May they be the symbol of your vocation.

In a city, Jerusalem, so often marked by tension, wounds, and division, the Lord calls you to safeguard here a light that must never be extinguished: the light of adoration, fraternity, and hope. Your cloister life does not separate you from the world; rather, it places you at the very heart of the world – indeed, in the very Heart of Christ, who loved the world to the very end. Like Moses on the mountain, like Mary at the foot of the Cross, and like Clare before the Blessed Sacrament, you are called to bring before God the joys and wounds of all humanity.

Dear brothers and sisters, in a few moments the altar will be anointed, incense will rise toward heaven, and light will fill this house. These are all signs of a deeper reality: God comes to dwell among His people. Today the angels and saints join in our praise. The relics placed beneath this altar remind us that holiness is possible and that the Church is built upon the witness of those who gave everything to Christ.



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Let us pray that this house may truly become what today's liturgy asks it to be: a house of salvation and grace, a place of prayer and peace, a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem, and a foretaste of the Kingdom to come. And may all who enter this sanctuary perceive not only the beauty of its stones, but the living presence of God's love, which continues to pour forth from the Heart of Christ upon every creature.

Amen.

