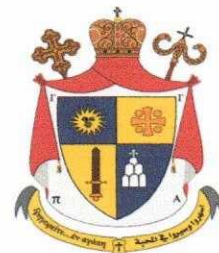


**PATRIARCAT  
GREC-MELKITE-CATHOLIQUE**

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Jerusalem the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Dear Sponsors, Knights of Colombus Councils, and their members

I praise and thank our Lord and God for your gathering and celebration of the Eucharist at the Cathedral of the Transfiguration in Toronto this 22nd of October 2017, on the Feast of Saint John Paul II. From Jerusalem, I am in communion with you all during the Liturgy.

I also want to thank you all for your love and donations to our needy students of our school in Beit Sahour. Thank you for helping our Christian students from all the congregations, Catholics, Orthodox and others.

Our Greek Catholic Patriarchate School (Our Lady of the Shepherds) in Beit Sahour has a very good reputation. This year, the school again had very good results at the official examinations, and we congratulate and thank Mrs. Sawsan Istephan the directress as well as all the staff of the school.

We thank specially Past Grand Knight Sir Hikmat Dandan founder of this project, who is full of Holy Zeal and has been tireless looking for more sponsors to the school of Beit Sahour.

Thank you also to the General Administrator of our Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Archimandrite Elie Nammour who is supervising the schools very closely, along with his work with the parishes and the projects in the Diocese.

The Sponsors are helping the students and their families (with the donation of C\$500) in meeting their fees which are already low compared to the actual cost of their education\*. The shortfall in fees and the costs of running the school lead to a general deficit at the end of the year, which will reach around 150,000 USD this year.

This scholastic year 2016/2017 we had the great surprise from a Canadian lady who asked us to celebrate one mass only for the repose of the soul of her parents, and she donated \$10,000 Canadian. Wow! It was a good amount and with it we could cover a part of the general deficit of the school. God Bless her for this donation. I offered the mass she asked for, in Jerusalem, for the repose of the soul of her late parents and I am still praying for her and for her late parents mentioning her name and theirs every day.

Dear Sponsors and Councils with your donations you are encouraging the Christian families to live with dignity and to stay in the Holy Land. Unfortunately, many are tempted to immigrate

from the Holy Land and the Middle East because of the political, economical and social situation as well as the insecurity. We, the Assembly of the Catholic Bishops, are doing our best to encourage our people to stay in the Holy Land by helping them with the fees for the schools. We also are helping in building projects to provide them apartments at affordable monthly rents.

I am myself (at 77 years old) still traveling and knocking at many doors everywhere to collect donations so we can face all these needs for the diocese because, unfortunately, our parishioners are not able to financially help the diocese. Indeed, many families are facing many difficulties, as also many university students in the diocese cannot afford the fees of their universities.

Dear Past Grand Knight Sir Hikmat, dear Sponsors, Knights of Colombus, Councils and members, thank you again for your great love to our people in the Holy Land, including Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Beit Sahour (the shepherds' fields). This Jerusalem Students Program continues to help the school tremendously, and it encourages the stability of our Christian families in the Holy Land. We encourage each of our Sponsors and Councils to continue to renew the sponsorship. Be sure that every day, yes **EVERY DAY** from the Holy City of Jerusalem, I pray our Lord for **you all** asking our beloved Lord and God to give you back one hundred fold what you are giving to our Christians in the Holy Land.

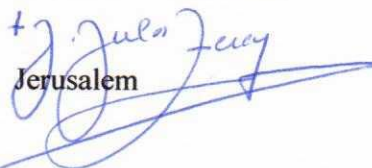
May this Liturgy celebrated in the Cathedral of the Transfiguration on this beautiful day of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, feast of Saint John Paul II, transfigure you all and make you shine within the faith and love of our Lord Jesus Christ by your love to the needy people in the Holy Land and to all the Countries in the Middle East.

May God protect your families your parishes your dioceses and your beautiful country CANADA.

**From Jerusalem I bless you all + in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

**Through the intercession of Our Holy Lady and Virgin Mary the Mother of God  
And the prayers of Saint John Paul II                      AMEN**

+Archbishop Joseph- Jules Zerey

  
Jerusalem

*\*The school fees for a student are really \$1,500 US but we ask the parents to pay only \$1,000 US per year. This is reduced for some needy students to \$600 US with your subsidy. The Patriarchate must then find a way to cover the general deficit remaining after collecting the fees and your sponsorships.*