



# CUSTODIA TERRÆ SANCTÆ

Jerusalem, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Prot. BA-76-RT/21

Dear Brothers,

## ***May the Lord give you Peace!***

At the end of the audience on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, Pope Francis said: *"The day after tomorrow, God willing, I will go to Iraq for a three-day pilgrimage. For a long time I have wanted to meet those people who have suffered so much; to meet that martyred Church in the land of Abraham. Together with the other religious leaders, we shall also take another step forward in brotherhood among believers. **I ask you to accompany this apostolic journey with your prayers**, so that it may unfold in the best possible way and bear the hoped-for fruits. The Iraqi people are waiting for us; they awaited Saint John Paul II, who was not permitted to go. One cannot disappoint a people for the second time. Let us pray that this journey will be a good one"*.

Therefore, accepting the request of Pope Francis, I invite all the friars of the Custody to accompany this visit with special and intense prayer. In particular:

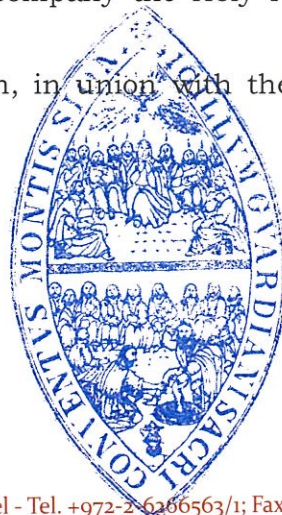
- **Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> March**, I invite you to a day of fasting and to offer the Way of the Cross (Via Crucis) for the success of the Pope's journey, and to bring to maturity the fruit of the Spirit which is *"love, joy, peace, patience, benevolence, goodness, fidelity, meekness and self-control"* (Gal 5:22);
- **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March** I invite you to pray the rosary as a community and to personally read Chapter VIII of *"Fratelli Tutti"* (No. 271-285) dedicated to religions in the world at the service of fraternity. I ask you to conclude the rosary with the Trinitarian prayer that Pope Francis places at the end of his Encyclical *"Fratelli Tutti"*;
- **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March**, the Vigil Office of Readings that we will celebrate at the Holy Sepulchre during the night and the subsequent Eucharistic Celebration on Calvary will be in suffrage for the victims of war and to ask for the gift of peace throughout the Middle East. I ask you to do the same in your various fraternities;
- **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March**, I ask you to accompany the Holy Father's return journey with personal prayer.

Let us live this moment with faith, in union with the Holy Father and with our brothers in Iraq.

Fraternally,

*Fr. Marco Carrara*

Fr. Marco CARRARA OFM  
Secretary of the Holy Land



*Fr. Francesco Patton*

Fr. Francesco PATTON OFM  
Custos of the Holy Land