



CUSTODIA TERRÆ SANCTÆ

Jerusalem 06 November 2025

Prot. BA-753-RT/25

Letter to the Friars of the Custody of Holy Land
Storic event in Ghassanieh (Syria)
Saturday 8 November 2025

Dear Brothers,

May the Lord grant you his peace!

I wish to share with all of you a great joy that concerns not only our fraternity in Syria, but the entire Custody of the Holy Land.

On Saturday, November 8, 2025, in the parish of Ghassanieh, we will experience an event of extraordinary ecclesial and human significance: after fourteen years of suffering, violence, and war, the homes and lands of the Christians of that region will finally be returned to their rightful owners.

The meeting, in addition to the friars and the local community, will be attended by the Apostolic Vicar of Aleppo, Bishop Hanna JALLOUF, the Greek Orthodox Bishop of Latakia, His Excellency Athanasius FAHED, and the Pastor President of the Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, the Honorable Ibrahim NUSEIR, along with representatives of the various Christian communities in the area.

With them we wish to give thanks to the Lord for this sign of reconciliation and hope, which providentially falls within the Jubilee of Hope.

The commitment and perseverance of our friars in Syria—among whom we gratefully remember Bishop Hanna JALLOUF, br. Anton LOUXA, br. Diaa AZIZ, br. Louai BSHARAT, and Brother Khoukaz MESROB—have made this long-awaited achievement possible. They, together with their brothers who preceded them, have safeguarded with faith and courage the Christian presence in a land wounded, yet ever alive in the heart of Christ. We also remember Father François MURAD, martyr of this village, whose memory and testimony illuminate our path.

On this day of grace, we hear the words of the prophet Isaiah resonate: "*Return to your country with joy, and your eyes will see consolation*" (Is 51:11).

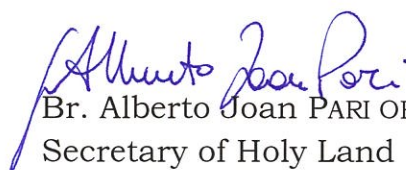
This return is a sign of community rebirth, of the strength of faith, and of the power of forgiveness, upon which every authentic reconstruction is founded.

CUSTODIA TERRÆ SANCTÆ

I therefore invite every fraternity of the Custody to join spiritually with the brothers of Ghassanieh in prayer and gratitude, so that this sign of hope may become for all of us a call to fidelity and perseverance in service to the Gospel, even in the most difficult situations.

May the light of the risen Christ, our true Peace, continue to illuminate Syria and all the lands entrusted to our Custody, and make our ministry of peace and reconciliation fruitful.

Fraternally,


Br. Alberto Joan PARI OFM
Secretary of Holy Land




Br. Francesco IELPO OFM
Custos of Holy Land