

# **Meeting of English-speaking Commissaries in Washington DC**

**29 June – 3 July, 2015**

## **Report of Carl Schafer OFM, Commissary of the Holy Land (Australia)**

Within the Franciscan Province of the Holy Spirit, three Commissariats of the Holy Land exist for fund-raising and promotional purposes. They are co-ordinated by friars: Carl Schafer (Australia), Anthony Malone (New Zealand) and Joseph Nasanathan (Singapore/Malaysia).

### **Location of the Commissariat in Australia**

Carl Schafer OFM resides in Maryfields Friary, Campbelltown NSW, and travels to the OFM Provincial Office, 47 Victoria Street, Waverley NSW, when required to work as the Commissary. The Commissariat does not have an office or staff of its own but is generously hosted by the OFM Provincial Office and serviced by two staff members. Angela Sivris, Secretary and Receptionist of the Provincial Office, acts as Secretary of the Commissariat. Tim Sheil, Assistant Bursar of the Holy Spirit Province, acts as Bursar of the Commissariat. All correspondence for the Holy Land Commissariat is addressed to the Provincial Office. The Holy Land Commissariat (Australia) is not billed by the

Provincial Office for the services of its staff members or for any expenses.

### **GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION 2015**

The major task of the Commissariat is to organize throughout Australia the Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land. The Commissary designs the poster with the invaluable help of Marie Armelle Beaulieu in Jerusalem who provides the image chosen by the Commissary on [www.custodia.org](http://www.custodia.org). The Secretary orders two sets of address labels of Australian parishes from the National Office of the National Council of Priests. The Commissariat pays for the first set. The NCP generously donates the second set.

The Commissary sticks address labels on envelopes on two occasions. A team of volunteers from Waverley Friary spends a morning at the Provincial Office inserting items in envelopes, also on two occasions.

#### **First mail-out:**

Around Ash Wednesday, three items are posted to 1,263 parishes in Australia. The items are: Letter about the Collection and about free collection envelopes; Order form for collection envelopes; Order form for *The Holy Land Review*. The Secretary sends out Good Friday envelopes as the orders come in.

#### **Second Mail-out:**

Three items are inserted into large envelopes addressed to the parishes together with two copies of the poster. The theme of the poster in 2015 is “We Venerate the Cross”. The three items are: Sheet of instructions about the Collection; Statement of Income in the previous year, listing the donations from Australian archdioceses and dioceses and from the Maronites and Melkites; Letter of the Commissary to the people of the Church of Australia, on Good Friday. This mail should be received before Palm Sunday.

### **Other Mail:**

The Custos of the Holy Land reports to the Congregation for Oriental Churches on how the money apportioned by the Congregation to the Custody of the Holy Land has been spent in the past year.

The Congregation for Oriental Churches sends “The Custody of the Holy Land Summary Report Holy Places” to the Apostolic Nunciature in Australia, who copies the document to the Commissariat in Waverley. It is important that the document be sent and received early. The Summary Report usually arrives too late for sending to the Bishops before Good Friday. Early or late, the Secretary sends the Summary Report to the Bishops of Australia and to Catholic newspapers, together with the Letter of the Commissary.

Tim Sheil ofs, Bursar, sends **The Annual remittance and report** of the Good Friday Collection to Friar John Sebastian OFM in Washington DC and copies it to Friar Larry Dunham OFM, Commissary (USA). The annual report of the Australian Commissariat is also sent to Friar Ibrahim Faltas OFM, Bursar of the Holy Land Custody in Jerusalem through his Assistant Paola Brambilla, who sends to Tim the report templates for use with the annual report. Total receipts in 2014: Aust \$1,320,057.08.

On 1 July, the Secretary sends reminders to those bishops and financial administrators who have not returned the Good Friday Collection. Angela follows up, by phone in August, any non-responses.

On 1 December, the Secretary sends Christmas cards to all bishops, financial administrators and subscribers to *The Holy Land Review*. Some of the bishops and subscribers reciprocate our Christmas Greetings.

### **THE HOLY LAND REVIEW**

Another important task of the Commissariat is the distribution of *The Holy Land Review*, a quarterly magazine, shipped from the Holy Land Commissariat in Washington DC to the Office of the Commissariat, Waverley NSW, and posted to 174 subscribers in Australia at \$25 a year or a token donation. Subscription Renewal Forms are sent to current subscribers with the first edition of the current year. An

Order Form for New Subscriptions is sent to the Australian parishes once a year (see First Mail-out above). Proceeds from subscriptions are added to the Good Friday Collection.

## **PILGRIMAGES FROM AUSTRALIA**

Two Australian friars have conducted pilgrimages from Australia to the Holy Land in 2014.

Paul Ghanem OFM, with Harvest Pilgrimages, conducted *Journey of Christ*, for 35 pilgrims from Australia and New Zealand, from 18 to 29 May 2014.

Giles Setter OFM and Paul Ghanem OFM, with George's International Tours, conducted *Franciscan Pilgrimage to the Holy Land*, for 27 pilgrims from Franciscan parishes in Australia, from 20 to 30 September 2014.

The Commissary received Information about *Hearts Aflame: Walking with Jesus in His Land*. It is organized by Magi Pilgrimages for priests and religious by the Salesian Pontifical University of Jerusalem and the Custodia Terrae Sanctae. Magi Pilgrimages is starting operations from Australia.

## **VADEMECUM**

The Commissary attended the III International Congress of Commissaries, held in Jerusalem, in 2012. The Commissaries worked on composing a Vademecum for the use of the Commissaries of the Holy Land. The text was translated from Italian into English by Carl Schafer OFM at the request of Giorgio Vigna OFM. The text has been largely expanded into the Vademecum ratified by the OFM Minister General on 12 March 2015.

## **Holy Land Commissariats Liaison Office, Jerusalem.**

Carl Schafer OFM translated also a page of Information about the Liaison Office from Italian into English at the request of Giorgio Vigna OFM, Director CLIO.

## **WEB SITES**

The Province's web site ([www.franciscans.org.au](http://www.franciscans.org.au)) features a page on the Holy Land Commissariats (/ministry-and-mission/holy-land).

The web site of Carl Schafer OFM, as the Commissary of the Holy Land in Australia ([www.franciscans.org.au/sfo](http://www.franciscans.org.au/sfo)) also features a page (/sfo33/33.htm). His Letters to the people of the Church of Australia, from 2008 to 2015, can be

downloaded. The page includes also links to: [Custody of the Holy Land](#), [Holy Land News](#), [See the Holy Land](#), and [Jesus's Holy Land Panorama](#) .