

JERUSALEM

Korrespondenz

Bi-annual report of the Austrian Pilgrims' Hospice



JERUSALEM
Erleben. Gestalten!
Österreichisches Pilger-Hospiz





Die Österreichische Gesellschaft vom Hl. Land

Der Freundeskreis des Österreichischen
Pilger-Hospizes in Jerusalem

gesellschaft@austrianhospice.com

Dear Friends of the Austrian Hospice, Welcome to New Year 2018! May it be a peaceful and healthy year for all of us, rich in encounters and good deeds.



Photo: © Fotostudio Floyd

With these wishes I deliver our current bi-annual report into your hands. It describes our activities in the second half of last year and offers numerous guest contributions on topics relating to the Holy Land and our house.

Our connection to the Pontifical Order of the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is a particularly heartfelt and cordial one: many members of the order generously participated in the general renovations carried out three decades ago. But who and what is this order? Lieutenant Dr. Andreas Leiner offers us a glimpse into the workings of the order in his editorial.

The rubric pilgrim hostel, which of course encompasses our two-century project to represent Casa Austria, also includes a review of the past 14 years: what building measures were already in place here? Sister Vice-rector Bernadette Schwarz offers an insight into pilgrim statistics.

Only now is this region experiencing the collapse of the post-First World War order, a topic discussed at length by our Academy this past December. Dr. Helmut Wohnout offers an in-depth portrait here of Franz Fellingner, a memorable and multi-faceted character who was the long-serving rector of the Hospice at the time of the First World War. Petra Klose reports on our music-related pedagogical work and Katharina Heigl introduces her photo exhibition "Faces in Prayer", a dialogue of different religions with God.

Sister Heidrun Raabe offers us a glimpse over the Old City wall to the German pilgrim house, Paulus House, not two-hundred metres from us. Marie-Armelle Beaulieu offers Easterly insights of a special kind when

she introduces us to the subject of traditional pilgrim tattoos in Jerusalem; our cover picture takes up this theme.

Our tasks in the Holy Land include social work and the peace service of volunteers who join us in lieu of performing military service in Austria. Rector Markus St. Bugnyar writes about his visit to the Mother Theresa Sisters in Gaza and Jakob Götz gives us an overview of his colleagues' motivation in wanting to work in the Austrian Hospice.

In the Other News section we report on the gratifying recovery of Sister Bernadette, the visit of the Provincial Governor Johanna Mikl-Leitner and also of the US Special Envoy Jason Greenblatt. We pay our respects to Curator Dr. Franz Eckert who has preceded us into the heavenly Jerusalem and thank him for his 20-year service.

And as always, I close with a reflection: Easter. The grave is empty. I wish you the joy of resurrection!

Yours

RECTOR MARKUS ST. BUGNYAR



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Pontifical Order of the Holy Sepulchre

By DR. ANDREAS LEINER

The connection of the “Pontifical Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem” to the Austrian Hospice of the Holy Family on the Via Dolorosa has always been a close one.

Brothers from our religious community were instrumental in the recovery and rededication of the building and its subsequent use as a pilgrim hospice, especially for Austrian pilgrims.

At the behest of the Board of Trustees, in 1985 former Lieutenant of the Order, Dr Julius Schuster, and our recently-deceased community brother, Deacon Dr. Franz Eckert, took over the building that had formerly been used as a hospital. The general refurbishment began at the beginning of 1987 under the supervision of the long-standing Chief Commander and later Governor of Vienna, Master Builder Prof. DI Kurt Stögerer. Donations to cover the cost of converting the building into hospice rooms came principally from members of our religious community.

Members of our order are in addition required to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land at least once within the framework of their community life and hopefully experience this visit as the “Fifth Gospel”. The nights participants spend in “our” hospice were and still are a special experience for them.

Our order is a spiritual community, a lay order of men and women, open to clerics too – with full equality, as stipulated by the Second Vatican Council. The leadership has a Cardinal Grandmaster, currently Cardinal Edwin O’Brien, who is appointed by the Holy Father, domiciled in the Vatican State, along with members of the Grand Master’s Office and the Grand Prior, the Patriarch of Jerusalem.

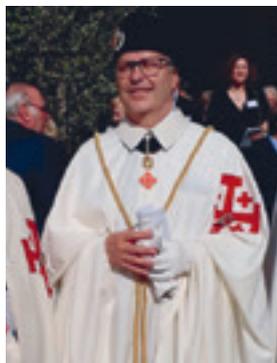
The purpose of the order, according to papal mandate, is on the one hand the promotion of the Christian life of its members and on the other hand the support and promotion of the religious, charitable, cultural and social activities and institutions of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land, in particular that of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Other goals include the preservation and spread of the faith and defence of the rights of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land.

There are currently about 30,000 order members on all 5 continents. In Austria, there are 550 members, divided into 12 commanderies, in which, as the nucleus of our community, the religious life is fostered and cultivated. Members of the order meet once a month in the commanderies for the celebration of Holy Mass, the centre of religious life, as well as for a lecture, questions, discussions and a common prayer. The order also has a special prayer.

In addition there are supraregional order days, Stations of the Cross and May devotions, pilgrimages and retreats. The common prayer time of 3pm each Friday, which connects us with the world church, strengthens our community.

A new prayer-book of the order appeared for the 2017 Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross for all German-speaking lieutenantcies (Austria, Germany and Switzerland).

Photo: © Dr. Andreas Leiner



The Lieutenant of the Austrian Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, Dr. Andreas Leiner

From left to right: Andreas Leiner, Giorgio Moroni Stampa, Jean-Pierre de Glutz-Ruchti, Detlef Brümmer; The Ladies: chancellor Inge Siegl, Donata Krethlow-Benzinger, Ricarda Schulze-Dieckhoff

Photo: © Dr. Andreas Leiner



The holy grave in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre or Church of the Resurrection as it is also called – the focus of our spiritual life – has been the site of the knighting of pilgrims since the Middle Ages. Hence our close relationship with Jerusalem and the Holy Land. In 1496 the Pope granted the Franciscan guardian in Jerusalem the privilege that he, and only he, could appoint Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. This act was instrumental in effecting the transition from the pronounced secular-knightly to the more religious knightly appointment. With Pope Pius IX's re-establishment of the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem, whose 170th anniversary we celebrated last year, came a reorganisation, whereafter the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem was considered an independent entity of ecclesiastical law under the suzerainty and protection of the Holy See and was formally confirmed as a papal knightly order. Under civil law, our order is a legal entity of the Vatican City. Thus, the sole right to grant a knighthood passed to the Latin Patriarch. Our supreme sovereign is the pope. No fewer than three popes were grandmasters of our religious order at the beginning of the 20th century. It was only with the statute of 1949 that a cardinal-grandmaster's office was created in Rome and that a cardinal grandmaster became head of the order.

95 % of the institutional expenses of the Latin Patriarchate are borne by our religious community. The budgetary shortfall of schools belonging to the Latin Patriarchate is 100% covered, and the University of Bethlehem is generously supported. The Latin Patriarchate maintains 41 schools with about 19,000 pupils and 1,580 teachers, as well as 33 kindergartens. The costs of the seminary of the Latin Patriarchate in Beit Jala are also borne by the order.

In recent years, close cooperation has been established with R.O.A.C.O. (Reunion of Aid Agencies for the Oriental Churches), an organisation founded in 1968 and led by the Congregation for Oriental Churches, with Cardinal Leonardo Sandri as prefect. The Holy Father has also expressed the wish that support for the Holy Land be understood in a very broad sense that includes all biblical domains.

On behalf of the Austrian Lieutenancy I would like to extend our gratitude to our community brother and rector, Markus St. Bugnyar, for the warm hospitality which we are always privileged to enjoy on our trips to the Holy Land. Thanks in equal measure to vice-rector Sister Bernadette, who always manages to create a bit of Austria in Jerusalem.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Dr. Andreas Leiner, investiture on
2nd October 1993 in Kremsmünster,
member of the Eisenstadt Commandery
2001 – 2009 Chief Commander of
the Eisenstadt Commandery
2009 – 2013 Governor's Aide
in the Austrian Lieutenancy
2013 – 2017 Chancellor of the
Austrian Lieutenancy
Since 1st January 2017 Lieutenant for Austria**

“Rounding off Austria”

Contemporaries always considered the Pilgrim Hospice in Jerusalem to be THE figurehead of Austria in the Middle East par excellence. 160 years after the completion of the main building, we are rounding off the intentions of our founding fathers with CASA AUSTRIA – thus ensuring that we remain the first address in Jerusalem well into the future.



Photo: © Fotostudio Floyd

By **MARKUS ST. BUGNYAR**

The main building of our foundation, now known as the “Austrian Hospice of the Holy Family in Jerusalem,” was built rather swiftly under the auspices of the Archbishop of Vienna. Barely two years passed between the laying of the foundation stone on New Year’s Eve 1856 and completion of the shell in October 1858: every hand in the Old City capable of doing so worked on the foundations and in the quarry that was specially purchased for this purpose.

If you leave the Old City today through Lion’s Gate in the direction of the Mount of Olives, you will come across the Muslim cemetery on both external sides of the gate on a hilly incline. Excavation material from work undertaken to prepare solid foundations for the hospice is in part responsible for creating this hill. It is known that Jerusalem is located in an earthquake zone. Statistically, there are largish tectonic movements about every 100 years. Our ancestors wanted to play it safe. The last major earthquake on July 11th 1927, with its epicentre in Jericho and a magnitude of 6.3 on the Richter scale, claimed about 500 lives, but did not damage our house. The investment was worth it.

The rock on our property on which we wanted to build a “solid house” turned out to be lodged very deep in the ground. Our foundations are 14 metres deep (measured from the doorstep of the ground floor in the main building); no one anticipated that nor of course factored it into the equation when determining the construction budget. In order to save costs and money for the interior design, the builders were forced to renounce the idea of an elaborate façade and – most importantly for the economic feasibility of the enterprise – also of the two side wings which were intended to flank the Via Dolorosa

and El Wad Street. This unavoidable decision was tragic in so far as it was these very side-wings that were supposed to house a large proportion of the pilgrim guestrooms. The single-storey main building, as it was at the time, was conceived as a purely representative building with reception room, salon, library and chapel. In the following decades, pilgrims housed in the basement had to make do with rather cramped circumstances. Inevitably, this led to revenue losses and to a much lower level of comfort than had been intended, not to mention the fact that only a very limited number of pilgrims were able to take up residence here.

Rectors of the hospice repeatedly tried to return to the actual intentions of our founding fathers in terms of the size and use of the pilgrim hostel, but this turned out to be impossible – at times for political reasons and at other times for budgetary considerations. Ultimately, it was the long duration of our work as a hospital for the Arab population of the Old City (from 1946 to 1985) that pushed our plans to expand existing facilities into the distant future.

Against this background our Casa Austria is not a new, but an “old mandate”, which we are finally implementing; an extremely ambitious project with a two-century gestation period. Exactly 160 years after the completion

Every Donation helps! I'd like to personally ask for your help to support us with tackling this enormous task.”

Photos: © A.H.



Our Casa Austria is already taking shape. Please support us in this endeavour and ensure your memory in Jerusalem by inscribing your name in the Holy City

of its first shell, in the summer of 2018 the Austrian Pilgrim Hospice will finally attain its originally-intended size with the addition of Casa Austria. The work on our construction site is progressing well; and – by no means to be taken for granted – we are on schedule and on budget. We expect Casa Austria to be completed by summer 2018 and hope to house the first guests, after a trial run, in autumn 2018.

Currently we are working on a smaller archaeological salvage excavation: a room from the time of the Crusaders, located directly next to the Via Dolorosa, was discovered during building work in 1946 and has already been mapped and documented. The current project allows further conclusions to be drawn about the ancient treasures that were lying undisturbed on our premises.

We are very grateful for the active support of our friends. Small and very large donations have already found their way into our building-block campaign account.

Our donor wall next to our house chapel is slowly filling up with the names and logos of private donors and companies. There we demonstrate our gratitude and our commitment to remember these generous people in our prayers in the Holy City. Every little contribution helps us enormously! So I would like to personally ask you to support us in this mammoth task!

You will find a transfer form for YOUR CASA AUSTRIA in this issue of Jerusalem Correspondence. Because, just as we did at the outset of our work here in the Holy Land, we consider ourselves “Austria in the Middle East”. Help us now, a full 160 years after the initial construction, to complete „Austria in Jerusalem“ for the benefit of our guests and to ensure our house a solid economic foundation. I thank you from the depths of my heart!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Markus St. Bugnyár (born 1975) has been the rector of the Austrian Pilgrims' Hospice in Jerusalem since April 2004. His term of office has witnessed the general renovation of the sisters' house and the expansion of the Viennese Coffee House. As the driving force behind the Hospice Academy, he organises intercultural concerts and scientific symposia and publishes material on the history and present of the pilgrims' hospice.

Stations on the Way

The construction of Casa Austria is the largest project undertaken by the Hospice since the extension of the main building in 1929. But which structural measures have we realised on our own in the last 14 years?



Photo: © A.H.

By **MARKUS ST. BUGNYAR**

Leaving aside routine maintenance work, which projects from which our pilgrims still benefit today went beyond the expectations? Two approaches have to be differentiated: those projects which we planned in advance and those which were more or less forced upon us, arising as they did through unexpected events.

The collapse of the northern part of our outer wall which separates the Hospice area from the public street behind our house, is an integral part of the pre-history of our Casa Austria. On the first day of the Iraq war in March 2003, this part collapsed dramatically, bringing down trees and rocks with it, penetrating into the basement of the main building and causing severe damage to the entire area, especially to the kitchen fixtures. Since the City Hall also considered the remaining outer wall to be decrepit, mere reconstruction of that section (carried out between September and December 2003) was not adequate; additional relief and drainage drilling along the entire route was required, an activity that ultimately (thanks to “administrative hurdles”, at which the Orient excels) lasted until 2008. These rein-

forcement measures gave the curator at the time, Dr. Franz Eckert, the idea for what he called the “Living Wall” – the precursor of today’s Casa Austria.

The year 2004 witnessed the renovation of the air extraction systems for the kitchen and the dormitory area and the replacement of the electrical installations in the basement which were damaged in 2003. An initial survey for a new smoke detection system was also carried out in this period.

The preparatory work for the cleaning and renovation of the water pipes in the main building was undertaken by my predecessor and executed by a German company from January to February 2005. While the innovatory method used was not entirely successful, and initial signs of trouble became apparent as early as November of the same year, we have nonetheless enjoyed a temporary breather from the hitherto regular collapse of the water system. In the upcoming renovation of the main building all pipes will have to be replaced. In the context of this project, smaller works were carried out on the bathrooms and public toilets, as well as in the former sisters’ house.

Our guests have enjoyed much more outdoor seating since June 2005 when we laid the area in front of the house with stone slabs, as well as the large platform in the coffee garden. In the interests of the safety of our guests and for insurance purposes we installed our first camera surveillance system in the summer of the same year. We used this occasion to update our control boxes, which are now state of the art.

Since Spring 2006, there has been the option of a “family-dorm” in the dormitory area: smaller than the large dormitories and of course not gender segregated, these rooms have their own built-in washbasin.

Despite the unfortunate incident she was witness to in March 2006, this lady remained faithful to our house:



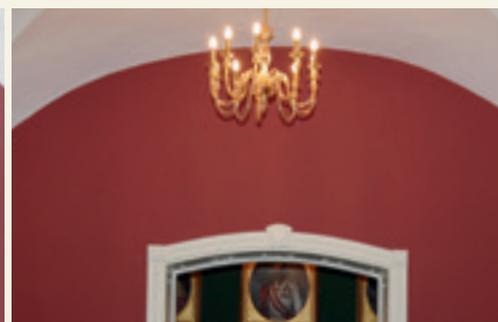
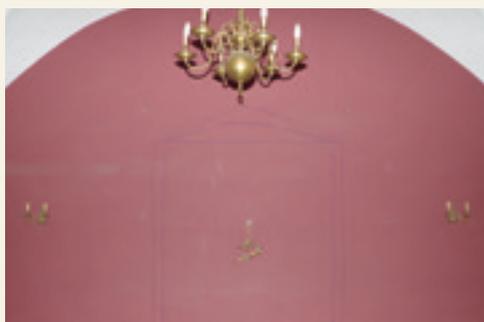
Photo: © A.H.

The collapse of our outer wall led to a process of reflection and thinking which finally started the completion of the Hospice – 160 years after the main site was built.

The colourful glass windows of the renovated sisters' house are intended to remind you of church windows.

And last but not least, our Viennese Coffee House: bigger and more suited to the needs of our group travellers. A place in which to sit and plan the next day in peace.

Photos: © A.H.



after lunch the guest felt she needed a little rest and retired to her room, when suddenly she noticed that the dropped ceiling had come loose and came crashing to the ground. Luckily, she was able to leave her room in time and get help. What was the cause? A structural survey showed that the dropped ceilings on the second floor had been poorly constructed at the time of the general renovation. By September 2006 they had all been replaced but as an immediate measure, all guests were transferred to other rooms and/or guesthouses.

In April 2007 the redevelopment of our entrance area from the Via Dolorosa to the main building began; the last time this was done was in the 1930s. The stones of the walls got uncovered, and new lighting and handrails installed. In June / July of the same year, the new fire alarm system was finally put into operation.

After careful planning, work on the sisters' house started in December 2008, which basically involved renovating a bungalow dating back to the end of the 19th century. The walls were criss-crossed with serious cracks, and the northern corner of the house was already suffering from subsidence. The house was completely gutted, and the dropped ceilings were removed and newly constructed, the open veranda areas were closed in so as to allow for more living space according to the new room distribution. Today, the bungalow houses the management department and volunteers from Austria. The work was completed in April 2009.

Some guests believe the chandeliers on the ground floor are old. However, they come from Italy and were only installed here in February 2009 – together with the light fixtures on the other corridors and in our salon.

The Emperor's Room (Kaiserstüberl), a separate annex in our Viennese coffee house, was not always there either. This annex was for a time part of the lobby, but this too was not part of the original conception of the house. In fact, the rector's apartment was once here,

specifically during the time the building was used as a hospital. With the establishment of the Emperor's Room, the related parts were reunited, as can be seen by a cursory examination of the different floor motifs in these areas. As of March 2010, the public toilets were restored to their present form, the offices moved to the ground floor, and rooms 101 and 108 renovated and furnished with air-conditioning.

In April 2010, the first expansion stage began of our new building in the garden: the City Hall insisted on an immediate start of work to avoid further damage to the outer wall. You cannot dig in a city like Jerusalem and not find anything. An archaeological rescue excavation that was to last for a year was the logical consequence. Every epoch was attested, from the Mamelukes, to the Crusaders and Ayyubids, ending with the Byzantine stratum. After completion of all construction work, this archaeological park on our premises will be open to the public and will add another attraction to the Austrian Hospice.

Over the course of four years we cleaned and made usable all seven cisterns on our property. Some of them seem to have antique processing marks. Apparently, these caves were discovered in the 19th century and converted into cisterns.

Who can still remember our old elevator? I always chose to go up on foot; however, since July 2011, that legacy is finally history. And since spring 2012, when the chapel and salon were equipped with air-conditioning, we definitely sweat less at our services and events.

The attentive observer will not have missed the small barbecue in the garden. As of January 2013, we have been able to offer our groups a barbecue in the summer.

Franz Fellingner

– an Austrian churchman in the Jerusalem of the First World War

By **HELMUT WOHNOUT**

One hundred years ago, as official representative of the Catholic Church Franz Fellingner was responsible for welcoming General Edmund Allenby into Jerusalem. The then 52-year-old was rector of the Austro-Hungarian pilgrim house during the war years.

He was undoubtedly a supporting actor at the handover of the Holy City on December 11th 1917. Indeed, world history was written at that moment, ending centuries of Muslim rule over Jerusalem. Was it a historical coincidence that put Rector Fellingner in the spotlight of world politics? Or did he deservedly become the highest representative of the Catholic Church in Jerusalem at the end of 1917?



Photo: © A.H.

In 1913 Fellingner was appointed rector of the Austro-Hungarian pilgrim house in Jerusalem for the second time. He had served in the hospice previously, between 1902 and 1906. In 1906 he would have liked to stay longer, but concerns about his pension made him leave. In 1913 the question of his pension was clarified and Fellingner returned as rector. His fluency in languages, his broad scientific horizons as a biblical scholar, but above all his affable nature, earned him great esteem in Jerusalem.

Two of his traits became particularly apparent with the outbreak of the First World War.

On the one hand, he was an imperial patriot. He followed the course of the war with sympathy, donated money to the medical care of Austro-Hungarian soldiers and hoped for an imperial victory. On the other hand, he saw himself as a man of the Catholic world church in Jerusalem. It was natural for him to work for any spiritual institution subjected to repressive measures as an institution of the now enemy states of the Ottoman Empire. This was especially true after the outbreak of war in Europe. Although the Ottoman entry into the war in 1914 took place after some delay, it had a lead-up. On August 2nd 1914, the High Porte and the German Empire had concluded a secret alliance. From this point on, preparations for war began in Jerusalem. The male population was for the most part drafted into the military, and horses, donkeys and mules were requisitioned. In the city martial law prevailed. Administrative hardships became the order of the day. The Ottoman capitulations with the European powers were abolished and celebrated like a military victory. This made it possible to severely limit the privileges of the Europeans. Hard times befell the clergymen and nuns from the states of the Entente.

Dr. Franz Fellingner, vice-rector from 1900 to 1902, rector from 1902 to 1906 and again from 1913 to 1935.

ACADEMY

Our Academy addresses the history and significance of the Bible, the Holy Land and the role of pilgrimage in scientific publications, exhibitions and lectures, as well as the contemporary history of the Middle East. The chief focus is on intercultural dialogue and music education in cooperation with local partner institutions.

The Austro-Hungarian and German church institutions were in a better position. They were considered institutions of countries allied with the Ottoman Empire and could count on diplomatic support.

At the end of October 1914, the authorities began requisitioning French, English and Russian ecclesiastical institutions for military purposes. The French church protectorate was declared terminated. With the Sultan's entry into the war, the situation became even more precarious. Mistrust of foreigners led to house searches. Nationals of enemy states were gathered up. As of mid-December, they were forced to leave Jerusalem. According to Fellingner's calculations, nearly 400 members of religious communities were affected by April 1915.

Only in the second half of December did the situation in Jerusalem change for the better. On 18th December Djemal Pasha and his German General Staff Officer von Kressenstein entered the city. On December 24th 1914, Jerusalem received a German general as city commander.

During this critical period, in the autumn of 1914 Fellingner had helped clerics and religious community members of the enemy states. His excellent contacts helped him. As a representative of a country allied with the Ottoman Empire, he was in a favourable position. When the French clergy and community members were evicted, he gave them lodging in the hospice. He was able to protect some French clergy from arrest and deportation. In addition, he turned the pilgrims' house into a place of storage for church objects, works of art, books and scientific papers from the French institutions.

With the presence of the German military in Jerusalem from the beginning of 1915, peace and relative security were restored. Confidence returned to the Christian population, even as the fighting began in late January 1915 along the Suez Canal. Officers and members of the German ambulance service were put up the hospice.

The attempt of the Ottoman army in February 1915 to cross the Suez Canal failed. The Turkish army

leadership then began to prepare a second attempt with the military support of its allies. Even before the outbreak of war, it was clear that the Austro-Hungarian mountain artillery division was extremely efficient in desert warfare. In the spring of 1916 two mountain artillery divisions were sent to Palestine. When he signed the marching orders, Emperor Franz Joseph apparently said: "Well, I don't think we'll be seeing them again!"

The presence of these troops had immediate and direct implications for the hospice. On February 14th it became a convalescent home for Austro-Hungarian and German soldiers. But it remained an ecclesiastical institute under the direction of Franz Fellingner. Thus, the danger of requisition evaporated for the duration of the war. In the spring of 1916, there were two stays of larger contingents of Austro-Hungarian artillery units in Jerusalem. Fellingner made sure that the soldiers visited the holy places and invited the Patriarch to the hospice to meet the commander of the units housed there. However, it was not only German and Austro-Hungarian officers that enjoyed the hospice's hospitality. When the commander-in-chief of the Syrian theatre of war, Djemal Pasha, received a visit from his siblings in Jerusalem, he chose to house them in the hospice.

One of the reasons for the military intervention of Austria-Hungary in Palestine was the strengthening of the ecclesiastical position of the monarchy in the Ottoman Empire. Along with Cardinal Gustav Piffel, by March 1915 Fellingner assumed that not all French congregations would come back after the war. A takeover of some of the closed institutions thus seemed a realistic idea. He hoped that Austria-Hungary would be chosen to represent the interests of the Catholics in the Holy Land at future peace conferences. This would involve undoing the damage done to the Church on account of the abolition of the capitulations. The renewed Turkish offensive in the summer of 1916 failed. That it was at least possible to stop the British counterattack relatively quickly was due to the excellent Austro-Hungarian batteries. But from that point on, the British had gained control over the war.

Photo: © A.H.



**Franz Fellingner on 19th July 1931
on a visit to Nablus**

The front line ran from Gaza to Be'er Scheva. Gaza had been evacuated by the Turks. The Tyrolean priest Georg Gatt had been running a mission station there since 1879. Now an old man, he had to get away and was able to get through to Jerusalem. There he found a warm welcome in the hospice. The first two offensives of the British at Gaza in March / April 1917 ended with defensive successes for the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the British breakthrough as far as Jerusalem was postponed. But in 1917 there were signs of exhaustion in Jerusalem. The civilian population in particular was suffering from hunger and epidemics. The Ottoman troops acted like brutal occupiers towards the Arab inhabitants. The Jewish inhabitants were suspected of collaborating with the enemy and were punished accordingly. Already in the spring of 1917 Djemal Pasha had urged the remaining foreign consuls to arrange the departure of their nationals. The staff of religious institutions were excluded. The young Turkish general wanted to evacuate Jerusalem and deport the population to Syria and Transjordan. The military argument – in truth – was a pre-text, Djemal Pasha was seeking to fulfil his ideal of the Turkization of the city. Thanks to a German intervention he was discouraged from pursuing his disastrous plan.

The supreme command of military activity in Palestine had been held by the Central Powers since the spring of 1917 in the figure of German General Erich von Falkenhayn. On his arrival in Jerusalem, he immediately requisitioned several Catholic houses. Once again it became apparent how clever Fellingner had been to convert the hospice into a convalescent home for soldiers of the Central Powers. He was thus able to keep the house under his control.

When the British made a breakthrough in the wake of the third Gaza offensive at Be'er Sheva in late October, Jerusalem moved into the combat zone. Famine and epidemics became more and more oppressive. People longed for the British in the face of their misery. At the beginning of November, Fellingner stated: "The situation is getting worse in the city, the mortality rate is growing apace." Fellingner tried to help the civilian population, for example by distributing bread to starving families. On November 10th, Falkenhayn left with his military personnel for Nablus. Shortly thereafter, the Austro-Hungarian consulate officials left Jerusalem with Fellingner's vice-rector. Fellingner himself categorically refused to leave the hospice. He rightly feared the house would be plundered and devastated were he to go.

It looked as if the Turks were trying to destroy the city in the event of a forced retreat. As soon as this became known, there was a massive diplomacy effort on the part of Germany and Austro-Hungary to bring about the peaceful surrender of Jerusalem. At first it seemed that the Turkish military would not respond and would prepare the defence. This involved all church dignitaries, including the Catholic Patriarch, his auxiliary bishop and all Italian patriarchate priests, having to leave the city. Before their departure Fellingner was called to the patriarchate. In these exceptional circumstances, the administration of the patriarchate was transferred to him. A decree of appointment was issued, by which he became Pro-Vicar General of the Diocese of Jerusalem. He was equipped with all the rights of the patriarch during the latter's absence. He was interimistically promoted to the highest representative of the Catholic Church in Jerusalem and as such was to participate in the handover of the city.



Photo: © Helmut Wohnout

On the 7th and 8th December, the British made incursions into the Turkish defensive positions. Now the Turks gave in to pressure from their allies. They withdrew their troops. Muslim rule over Jerusalem was over, that of the British began.

It lasted from the 9th to 11th December 1917 and took several attempts before the mayor of Jerusalem was able to hand to the British the capitulation left to him by the Sultan's governor. The ceremony, which took place on December 11th, was a carefully planned and performed staging of British war propaganda. Photographers, even movie cameras, were at the ready when General Allenby entered the city where he was met by dignitaries and representatives of all faiths. A statement was read that contained the promise to preserve and protect the holy places of the city for the faithful of all religions and denominations. Subsequently, the religious dignitaries were introduced to him. The Pro-Vicar General of the patriarchate, Franz Fellingner, welcomed him into Jerusalem on the part of the Roman Catholic Church.

Again, back to the question posed at the outset: was it more than a historical coincidence that Fellingner stood at the head of the Jerusalem patriarchate in the months of 1917/18, which were so crucial to the history of Jerusalem? Probably not. In his role as rector of the Austrian pilgrim house, Franz Fellingner stood out as a priest with an exceptional personality. He took on the role temporarily assigned to him in the patriarchate with a great sense of responsibility. He did this prudently and intelligently understood how best to represent the interests of the Catholic Church. It is not surprising that after the return of the patriarch in November 1918, Fellingner continued to maintain his position as pro-vicar general of the diocese in addition to the administration of the hospice.

What Fellingner had done for the Catholic Church of Jerusalem during the war years was made clear by the following incident: at the beginning of 1920 he received visits to the hospice from three French bishops, headed by the Archbishop of Rouen and later Paris, Cardinal Andrea du Bois. They came to thank Fellingner on behalf of the French Church for all he had done for them.

The special position of Fellingner in the Jerusalem church had reverberations for the pilgrim house: the hospice was confiscated by the British in mid-February 1918. They turned it into an orphanage for children of the Syria and Palestine Relief Fund. Thanks to his position in the patriarchate, the house was returned after a comparatively short period of time, at the end of August 1919.

In the spring of 1929 Franz Fellingner's achievements received special recognition from the Holy See: he was made Auxiliary Bishop of Jerusalem. In general, a Roman Auxiliary Bishop was installed in this capacity. All the greater was the surprise when the Holy Father, probably on the recommendation of Patriarch Luigi Barlassina, opted for Fellingner. As a result, the Italian and French consuls in Jerusalem remained conspicuously distant from episcopal consecrations. Was it momentary disappointment or was there something different in this case? Namely, that the old rivalries between the European powers of the pre-war and the war years in relation to their role as Catholic protectorate continued to play out in the interwar period, even though the large multi-ethnic state of the Habsburgs had long since given way to the small state of Austria.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Helmut Wohnout, studies of history in Vienna and Washington, doctorate in Graz. Department head at the Federal Chancellery, Managing Director of the Karl von Vogelsang Institute for Research into the History of Christian Democracy in Austria.

„Somewhere there's a place for us“ – A place for all of us



Photo: © Petra Klose



Photo: © Petra Klose

By **PETRA KLOSE**

This song from Bernstein's musical "West Side Story", along with classical songs and opera arias presented by the mezzo-soprano Annette Lubosch, thrilled the audience in the packed Emperor's Salon on the occasion of a concert on the first weekend of Advent. The renowned artist was accompanied by Ingmar Beck at the piano. The sought-after conductor had spontaneously offered his services when he heard that the Austrian Hospice Academy needed a man on the piano after a late cancellation. The concert was preceded by days of intensive workshops with gifted musicians from the region.

Third in the team was the alto and vocal pedagogue Veronika Dünser, who has already worked with the Academy several times, and whose Jerusalem protégés, Hiba Awad and Rita Tawil, have emerged as proud teenage winners of international singing competitions. What better proof could there be that investing in the talent of young musicians is bearing fruit?

A novelty this time was that Austrian Hospice Academy lessons were not only held in the hospice, but could also be experienced "on the road." The musicians visited children in Bethlehem, Kufr Aqab and the Barrenboim Said Foundation in Ramallah. Ingmar Beck also gave an orchestra workshop. Through small tours like these, children also benefit from the musical offerings of the Academy at times when it is not possible to travel to Jerusalem. The exchange with European musicians is also an inspiration for professionals from the region. Children, parents and teachers are profoundly

grateful for this special opportunity and for the many unforgettable experiences within the framework of the Austrian Hospice Academy which gives them the courage to make music in a place of conflict. The human encounters and cultural impressions are equally exciting for the teachers of the Academy and will continue to resonate for a long time.

Highlights of the last Academy were Veronika Dünser's musical accompaniment of the Sunday Mass in the chapel of the Austrian Hospice as well as the concert mentioned in the beginning, which was financially supported by the German Representative Office in Ramallah.

Given Jerusalem's unparalleled cultural wealth, Annette Lubosch's goal was to create a programme that would address this indescribable diversity. Visitors of different nationalities and religions responded to the musical performance with calls of bravo and stormy applause. And so the celebratory mood have raised some people's hopes that the place written about by Bernstein, this "Somewhere", of which it says "We'll find a new way of living, we'll find a way of forgiving" is not so far away, and that the Emperor's Salon of the hospice might have been a small part of it that evening.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Petra R. Klose, born in Vorarlberg, studied Theatre and German in Vienna. Additionally trained in ballet and harp. She has worked in the fields of dramaturgy, direction and production for the Vienna Festival, the Bregenz Performing Arts Festival, the Vienna Konzerthaus, the Burgtheater and the Opéra National de Lyon. Founder of an agency for artists and cultural projects in Vienna, she has worked with events' organisers such as the Aix-en-Provence Festival, the Glyndebourne Festival, the Mozart Week in Salzburg, the Theater an der Wien, the Bolshoi in Moscow, the Teatro Real in Madrid, the Staatsoper in Berlin, the Musikverein in Vienna, and La Scala in Milan.

Faces in Prayer

Katharina Heigl

By THE EDITOR

Thirty faces, overwhelmed by the beauty of prayer, meditation. The exhibition “Faces in Prayer”, presents intimate portraits of people of different faiths. At a time when religion is so often used as an excuse for violence and political manoeuvring, we often forget that the cause of many problems is not religion itself, but the people who use it as a tool for power and indoctrination.

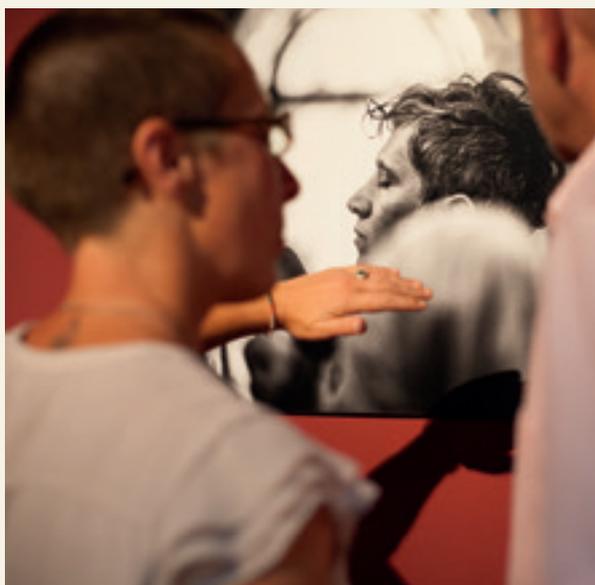
In her project “Faces in Prayer” Katharina Heigl seeks to emphasize the individual aspects of religion, far removed from politics. Religion as a source of power that can give life structure and moral guidelines. The portraits show that people of different faiths may have more in common than one might initially think.

The religion to which the people depicted in the photographs belong does not emerge from the images – and that is intrinsic to the concept of the exhibition: for the close-ups of the faces make the beauty in concentration and dedication the focal point, and not the name of the higher being with whom the portrayed communicate. Hanna, a student and one of the subjects, explains: “In prayer, I find strength. And I can really feel how I cultivate trust when I do not have to be alone. I can feel something happening beyond my control.”

The photographer, Katharina Heigl, collected the portraits on a journey through many different churches, synagogues, monasteries, mosques and also private households in Israel and Austria. “I am very grateful to all who have been portrayed because they have shown me so much beauty,” she explains, “and so much trust.” Being photographed in such an intimate moment is certainly not easy, and nor is the decision to allow it in the first place.

The exhibition, which is supported by the Austrian Cultural Forum Tel Aviv, was on display at the Austrian Hospice between 13th September 2017 and 31st January 2018.

Photo: © A.H.



Exhibitions at the Austrian Hospice. Our topics also familiarize guests with issues and problems in the region.

Photo: © A.H.



Katharina Heigl

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katharina Heigl is an Austrian director whose documentary films focus primarily on cultural and political topics (for example: “Srebrenica – The Return of the Dead”, “Heimat 2.0”, “Austria is gearing up”). The idea for the project “Faces in Prayer” came about while researching her new film project “Looking for God”, which is currently in development.

Congregatio Jesu in Jerusalem

By M. HEIDRUN RAABE

When my plane took off for Tel Aviv on September 1st 2009 I hardly knew what to expect. Everything needed getting used to, the dirty streets in the Arab part of the city, the souk in the Old City with its Oriental stalls, the call of the muezzin. But then, as compensation, the grandiose view from our terrace onto the Old City with such vivid representations of the three religions: the Dome of the Rock, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Hurva Synagogue. Just opposite us is Damascus Gate, through which Orthodox Jews go to the Western Wall and Muslims to the Temple Mount. Damascus Gate is also witness to occasional bloody clashes between Palestinians and the Israeli police. This area is home to the Schmidt School and the Paulus House, my new place of work, and that of the Congregatio Jesu since 1989.

The Paulus House, built in 1908 as a guesthouse for German pilgrims with donations from German Catholics, has a varied history: it was the seat of the first Governor of Jerusalem, Sir Ronald Storrs (1917-26) during the British Mandate. Only in 1947 was it returned to the actual owner, the German Association of the Holy Land. Following the establishment of Israel, the Schmidt School, a school for Arab girls, established in 1886, found itself in the Israeli part of Jerusalem. The Arab girls could no longer reach their school. In 1950 it was transferred to the Jordanian part of the city, to the Paulus House in East Jerusalem. It was not until the Six-Day War of 1967 that East Jerusalem became Israeli, albeit with a special status. When the new Schmidt School was built next to the Paulus House in 1965, the Paulus House could accommodate pilgrims again.

The Schmidt School and Paulus House were then headed by the Borromeo Order. The take-over of the school by the Maria Ward Sisters in 1989, an order which had been working in education for centuries, came about during the first Intifada (1987-1991), the uprising of the Palestinians against the Israeli occupation, when lessons could only take place when the situation allowed (the same occurred during the second Intifada 2000-2005). Unfortunately, the political situation has not changed much to this day.



Photo: © Raabe

In this volatile environment, the Schmidt School is a place where Palestinian girls feel safe. Here they forget the often difficult situation at home or encounters they have at the checkpoints on the way to school if they are traveling from the West Bank. The school offers them the option of taking the Palestinian Tawjihi school leaving examinations or the German international Abitur, which gives them opportunities abroad. Since 2009 the Schmidt School has functioned as a German school overseas. The Muslim and Christian girls benefit from the most modern teaching methods, learn teamwork and independent thinking, as well as democratic values, tolerance and respect for the other, which is of fundamental importance in this region. The fact that religious sisters are active in the school, be it in teaching, pastoral work or administration, has a special significance here. For the Palestinian community, which suffers from the Israeli occupation and endures harassment and the infringement of rights, the sisters are a guarantee of reliability, integrity and stability. They enjoy great trust among the 83% Muslim parents and the 17% Christian. The empowerment of girls in a still very patriarchal society is of great importance and fits in perfectly with the conception of Maria Ward schools around the world.

Photo: © Raabe



The Paulus House in Jerusalem.

Sister Ecaterina Ciobanu from Romania is the administrative head of the school and has a lot of contact with the parents, and of course with the teachers and pupils. Sister Julia Milcova from Slovakia is in charge of pastoral work. It is rewarding to see how every morning the Christian girls eagerly come to morning prayer in the chapel – Catholic, Melkite, Greek Orthodox, Protestant, Maronite, Coptic and Armenian. My role as chair of the school is an official one, since I represent the school's parent, the Congregatio Jesu. After strenuous efforts by the then headmaster Mr. Rüdiger Hocke, the school was awarded the seal of quality "Exzellente Deutsche Auslandsschule" (Excellent German Overseas School) in 2015.

The Paulus House is the other place where the sisters work. It is a guesthouse catering mainly to German pilgrims. We are there for guests at all times, be it in the dining room, for which Sister Josephina Lee from Korea is responsible, or at the reception. It is very important to us to offer guests a pleasant ambience in which they feel comfortable.

My time in Jerusalem has been greatly enriching. The encounter with so many people, the ever-changing guests, the Arabic staff in the school and Paulus House, the craftsmen, Christian, Muslim and Jewish, and our volunteers, with whom we live together, is exhausting, but also wonderful. My insight into the religions, which are so important in Jerusalem, has also been enriched.

It goes without saying that life here in the country is also a spiritual experience. Living in the land of Jesus is a tangible experience for the believer.

If we sisters up sticks at the end of August 2018, we will return to Germany enriched, but also with a great deal of concern about what is going on in this country. Let us all pray for peace and reconciliation for the people here, for Muslims, Jews and Christians.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sister Heidrun Raabe

**Born 1943 in Leitmeritz/ Sudetenland
(today Czech Republic)**

**1945 forced out of the Soviet occupation zone
1945–1956 resident in Lutherstadt Eisleben
until escaping to the west to Fulda;
high school diploma**

**1964–1969 studied German philology,
philosophy and geography at the Gutenberg
University in Mainz**

**From 1970 teacher in Bingen, then in Mainz
Joined the Congregatio Jesu in Mainz in 1972,
teacher at the Maria Ward School until 1994
1995–2008 Headmistress**

**2009 to present – in Jerusalem as Superior of
the Community CJ, director of the Paulus House
and representative of the administration
of the Schmidt School in Jerusalem**

Do you know the seal of Jerusalem?

It is an ancient tradition that Western Christians have adopted from Oriental Christians: tattooing on the occasion of a Jerusalem pilgrimage!

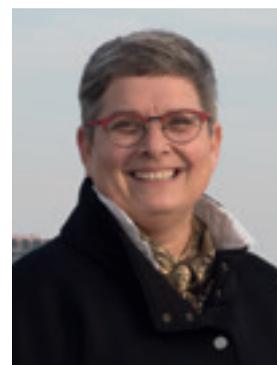


Photo: © Marie Armelle Beaulieu

By **MARIE ARMELLE BEAULIEU**

Alban hesitates. Should he get tattooed during his stay in Jerusalem? Alban is 20. He is currently studying in Turkey, but he was able to take a few days off to make his first pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Jerusalem is a shock to him. Everything fascinates him, everything grips him and his faith is completely shaken up. He takes this spontaneous journey with Emma, who already knows the city. At the age of 20, on the occasion of her third pilgrimage to Jerusalem last summer, Emma had the Jerusalem Cross tattooed on the inside of her right forearm. It was she who told her friend about this custom. "It's not a simple tattoo," explains Emma, "it's the seal of Jerusalem."

"The seal of Jerusalem," was the name long before the English traveler Cook brought the word "tattoo" here in the eighteenth century; this sign has been "engraved" or "marked" with ink into the skin for 700 years in Jerusalem. In the case of pilgrims from the west, this sign on the skin was witnessed for the first time in 1484. In the diary of his pilgrimage Jan van Aelst de Mâlines mentions a knight who had recently died. When being prepared for burial, it was discovered that his body was tattooed with two "complete circular shapes interspersed with palms and crosses, as was the custom of knights. One circular shape was on his back, the other on his torso. A cross on his left shoulder, a second on his right shoulder. Neither his first nor his second wife, or his father or mother, or anyone else, knew about it." Jan had had himself tattooed in Jerusalem.

"Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm" (Song of Songs 8:6)

Tattooed, yes, but not just any tattoo. Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries pilgrims' diaries refer to this tradition again and again. They adopted this custom from Oriental pilgrims, especially Coptic Christians, who already knew this technique from the time of the Pharaohs. Coptic Christians get their first tattoo in the shape of a cross on their wrist at the age of 5, and a second if they make their way to Jerusalem. Until well into the 19th century this tattoo was the only souvenir to testify to a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and which would without doubt find its way home. Any other souvenir could be lost in a plunder of the caravan or in a shipwreck. This custom became increasingly obsolete as the traffic routes for Western pilgrims became safer, when pilgrim souvenirs became more and more industrialised and tattoos became a fad for people of dodgy character. One of the last Jerusalem pilgrims from the West to be tattooed at the end of the 19th century was Edward Windsor, later King George V., who reports in his correspondence: "I was tattooed by the same man who tattooed my father." Edward VII, who visited Jerusalem as Prince of Wales, Albert Edward of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, had had a Jerusalem cross tattooed onto his arm. His tattoo artist had proudly affixed a handwritten testimony of the visit of the future English king to his business premises.

How dearly would Wassim Razzouk like to possess such a valuable document! In 2010 he revived the family tradition. This Copt in his forties is following in the footsteps of his father, grandfather, great-grandfather and great great-grandfather, tattoo artists par excellence! In recent years, the walls of his studio in St. George Street, just outside the Old City of Jerusalem, have been filled with newspaper articles that tell the story of this 500-year-old family tradition. Tattoos are one of the most popular fashions today, but the Christi-

Photo: © A.H.



Photo: © Marie Armelle Beaulieu



an tattooing industry has experienced an unexpected renaissance. “People come from everywhere. There are Oriental Christians throughout the world who have left their ancestral homelands and are now tattooed during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the holy-days. And there are huge numbers of Europeans, especially German speakers, who do the same. Many of them would never have thought of getting tattooed, but here they do, because it’s the cross that they are wearing as a tattoo! “Wassim’s eyes light up. “Just recently, some American soldiers called me to their hotel because they no longer come to the Old City since President Trump’s declaration. I tattooed 20 people here on a single evening! They all opt for the Jerusalem Cross. The classic! The Oriental Christians are more likely to choose those forms of cross that correspond to their native tradition. The Syriac Christians also like to add a few words in Aramaic, the language of Jesus. I increasingly use the old wooden stamp templates that were owned by the family for generations. They show the Blessed Virgin, the Risen One, the tomb of Christ ... “

Alban, who is still hesitant, seeks the advice of a friend of Emma, who had herself tattooed at the age of 47. She ruminated for three years before coming to her decision. When questioned by the boys on the subject, she tries to talk them out of it if they are only doing it because they want to be “young Catholic rebels” and want their friends to see how cool they are, as if it were a fashion symbol: “Look, I’m Catholic, but not just because I’m tattooed.” Alban, who was baptized only two years ago, listens attentively. “There is no more beautiful cross and none more indestructible than the one you got that day,” explains Emma’s friend in reference to the day of his baptism. Learn to live in faith with that cross. “Because the Jerusalem Cross is neither a toy nor a fashion accessory. It is a commitment. A commitment to all who

see it on your hand, one must be prepared to account for it and to answer questions about it. It is a commitment to yourself, something by which you have to live and it serves as a reminder to you every day. And finally, it is also a commitment to the Christians of the region, whose tradition you are subscribing to. These Christians, who are so often exposed to mortal danger, keep the faith alive in the Middle East. “

This answer inspires Alban. His mind is made up. He will not go to Wassim. “You cannot do that kind of thing lightly. This is not a fashion but a commitment.” Alban looks at his arm. “I’ll be back. I need to delve deeper into the mystery of Jerusalem and get to know the people here better and the circumstances in which they live. “Alban is calm and content about his decision. He gently strokes the spot on his arm which he wanted to get tattooed. Another time.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marie-Armelle Beaulieu was born in 1965 and studied classical literature in Paris. She gave up her studies to enter the Benedictine Order on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. After six years of contemplative life, and before taking vows, she decided to change the course of her life and became a journalist. She is convinced that these two vocations are two sides of the same coin, “because God loved the world so much.” After about 12 years of professional experience in France, she offered her skills to the Franciscans in the service of the French edition of their journal. Since 2005, she has been overseeing the Terre Sainte Magazine (Holy Land Review in French) and the official website of the Franciscans of the Custody.

Helping the Missionaries of Mercy in Gaza

In the days after Christmas we received a donation from a Styrian parish which held a collection at Christmas for the children's home and orphanage of the Mother Teresa Sisters in Gaza.

By **MARKUS ST. BUGNYAR**

Nablus, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Gaza all have branches of the Missionaries of Mercy, their white habit with the easily recognisable blue stripes redolent of Mother Teresa who visited the Holy Land 30 years ago. They look after the poorest among the needy in the spirit of the saints.

We feel especially connected with the convent in the Catholic parish in Gaza city; vice-rector Georg Gatt founded this church as a mission station in 1879. The Gaza Strip is today one of the most densely populated areas in the world: 4,152 people live in one square kilometer; just over 50% of the population is currently under 15 years old. At the moment, unemployment is about 65% and a majority of the population lives below a poverty line.

There are only a few Catholics living here; the parish priest speaks of 180 to 200 souls at most. The larger Christian community is that of the Greek Orthodox churches, but even their number does not reach much more than 1,200 souls. Many internally displaced people in the Gaza Strip took refuge in our community during the last war hoping that they would be safer here than in other places. Even though it is small, the community cannot turn a blind eye to such calls for help. On the one hand, because it is committed to brotherly love, and on the other hand because as a minority, they are reliant on the goodwill of the majority.

The Mother Teresa Sisters in Gaza are involved in a special act of brotherly love: they run a home for newborns and children up to the age of 7, with about 55 places. Many mothers feel overwhelmed by concerns about their children, in part because they might not have enough money to meet the needs of everyone in the family. Many children in this home suffer from severe physical and mental problems. Amongst the traditional rural population in Gaza, marriages between first cousins are not unusual.

OUR SOCIAL WORK

Awareness of the needs of our neighbours is one of our most important tasks. Thanks to our guests we have been able to create numerous jobs in the Holy Land and to provide a solid income for our local staff.

In addition, our social fund helps out in a variety of emergencies. We invite you to take an active role in working for the good of the Holy Land.

ABOUT

Georg Gatt was born in 1843 in Vinaders (Tyrol/Brenner) in Austria. In 1871 he was appointed vice-rector of the Austrian Hospice of the Holy Family and in 1873 he became headmaster of St. Peter's School for Boys which was set up by Pater Ratisbonne. In 1979 he founded the Catholic Mission in Gaza. He considered his main role the establishment of a solid financial footing for the parish and the provision of education for the young. Gatt acquired properties in the vicinity and operated a steam mill in Ashdod. He supported the parish for 26 years before his death on 6th June in Jerusalem, where he was buried in the Con-Cathedral.

Photo: © Andres Bergamini, LPJ



On a visit to Gaza.

During my visit to this home I was very touched by the complex and diverse needs of these vulnerable young children. The sisters, in conjunction with local Muslim women, are doing really impressive work with these children. While I was moved to tears, the children and sisters beamed hopefully at me. Nobody talks about their problems here; rather, they are grateful for the time they have to be together.

At the back of the building a laundry room does more than serve daily hygiene needs. Some of these children have a considerably curtailed life expectancy because of their illnesses. The sisters stay by their side until their last breath. And when they prepare the little ones for their final journey, they read a New Testament quote written in large letters on the wall above the tub in the farthest back room: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40).

Photo: © A.H.



Georg Gatt with Rector Dr. Jakob Andre (left 1911–1913) at the Austrian Hospice.

Peace Service

By JAKOB GÖTZ

At some point, everyone has to face it – every young Austrian that is who is eligible for military service: the decision between military service and civilian service. Arguments, time windows and ethical principles are discussed to the point at which one's original goals are obscured and a fog descends. What most of these people overlook is the fact that there is a third option: voluntary service abroad.

A seemingly endless range of boot camps and civilian service options abound. They all hold out the promise of being versatile and demanding, punctuated by worthwhile experiences. However, they all have one thing in common: they are experienced in familiar surroundings, in a familiar culture, with familiar people, the support of family and friends, embedded in a familiar environment.

These options are certainly comfortable. After all, you do not have to forgo your beloved Schnitzel or the dependability of your bus driver on a route you know so well. But they have one major drawback: you are missing out on the opportunity of a year removed from your cosy environment and life-altering experiences not possible at home. Experiences that are demanding, challenging, and infuriating – but which in their entirety amount to one of the most formative and exceptional of one's life.

The decision to pursue voluntary service abroad is certainly no easy one, as it requires a greater willingness to take risks. But if, after that decision has been made, you are sitting in the sun-lit garden of our house, peacefully sipping a *mélange* and watching enchanted guests stroll by, you will quickly come to the realisation that this isn't so foreign after all. If you sit a little longer and order a slice of *Sachertorte*, you will inevitably find that others are drawn to join you. The sound of the *muezzin* complements the aroma of fresh *falafel*, cloves, and *caraway* that wafts up from the street below. The exotic Oriental architecture on the horizon is broken only by the bare silhouettes of modern hotel buildings. Rabbis

PEACE SERVICE

As part of our peace service we see our mission as providing survivors of the Holocaust and their families with the opportunity to talk about that chapter of our history in in-depth encounters. Our volunteers should also have the opportunity to get to know the respective viewpoints of the parties to the conflict in the region.

glide past Muftis, German pilgrims mingle with day-tippers on a day of abstinence from Tel Aviv. You are in Jerusalem, one of the most important sites in world history, at the intersection of world politics, deeply embedded in a conflict of clashing religions and cultures. If you are feeling particularly adventurous you may want to venture beyond the safe and protective walls of the enclave otherwise known as the Austrian Hospice. Now you have arrived. Colours, smells and sounds penetrate the sense organs and permeate the soul. You might be working in the Austrian Hospice, but you are experiencing the Orient. Working as a volunteer here ensures this experience – year after year.

Life here in the hospice is naturally also connected with work. Exactly what this entails depends entirely on the particular talents of each individual. Often, these only come to light after a stay with us: working here is said to have brought forth artists, photographers and artful baristas. Some prefer the world of the Viennese coffee house, where their creative talent finds outlet in the loving decoration of a cappuccino, while others discover their talent as mentors to pilgrims, physically manifested in the form of the ever-helpful receptionist. A job in the kitchen is just as likely as one that involves the administration of cultural events.

So it's a symbiosis. On the one hand, the work of volunteers is indispensable. Without them, the Austrian Hospice could not live up to its social and cultural mandate, a task which goes far beyond being a mere guesthouse. For us volunteers on the other hand, a year in Jerusalem is a unique opportunity to develop, to learn a foreign language, to get to know the local cultures and people, to work out what we want in the future and not least to find ourselves.



“Israel and Palestine are both very beautiful countries, each in its own way. Unfortunately, because of the ongoing conflict between them, the countries are usually not known for their beautiful cities, landscapes or sites. The location of the Austrian Hospice in the middle of the Muslim Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem is perfect for experiencing the coexistence of different religions and cultures.”

Thomas Winkler



“A year in Jerusalem is not like spending a year abroad in the US or France. In the Muslim quarter of the Old City, one is constantly confronted with the omnipresent Middle East conflict, with clashing and seemingly incompatible narratives. But it also offers the opportunity to better understand the environment in which one moves daily – both the Arab and the Israeli one. “

Felix Michler



“This region has a long history, an intense conflict and countless cultural treasures. Through the Austrian Hospice we were able to immerse ourselves in all the facets of Jerusalem and gain experience that gives us a new perspective on what is happening in the world. “

Valentin Weber

“ I made exceptional use of my year in Israel-Palestine. In retrospect I can state that I did an incredible amount to improve myself, both externally in the sense of the things I did, as well as internally in terms of character development. “

Jakob Possert



“I have learned to be much more independent and to integrate into a completely new environment with lots of new people. I experienced the house community with its Austrian management, Austrian volunteers and Arab employees as greatly enriching. “

Simon Kaufmann



“Even learning how to wash dishes or clean toilets expands your horizons. After all, we lived with Mummy before we started our peace service. “

Laurenz Greuter



“Nestled between long and often exhausting schooldays and an uncertain future, right now as a student, these 12 months will remain in my memory forever as some of the most carefree and at the same time adventurous.

I was not only able to get to know a fantastic city, its people and working life, but also myself in different ways. “

Ferdinand Altenburg





Returning to us



Dr. Franz Eckert, with the Latin Patriarch Fuad Twal, blesses the newly renovated sisters' house.

By THE EDITOR

Vice-rector Sister Bernadette back in Jerusalem

In the days before Christmas, Sister Bernadette returned safely to Jerusalem and to the Austrian Hospice. Guests could not fail to notice that we had been forced to do without her organising and guiding hand for way too long. We and the entire staff are relieved and grateful that both the procedure in June and the subsequent therapy had a positive outcome. Sister Bernadette is back in her element and is already looking forward to the numerous pilgrims who are staying over Lent and Easter.

Hospice as the meeting place of diplomacy

US Special Envoy Jason Greenblatt seems to like our house. In recent months he has been our guest twice. Representatives of the EU member states to the Palestinian Authority came to us for an informal exchange after President Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of the state of Israel. Jason Greenblatt came to the meeting in our salon to inform us about current developments.

Johanna Mikl-Leitner and Rector Bugnyar on the roof of the pilgrim hostel. In the background the Dome of the Rock, the most famous landmark of the city.

Curator Dr. Franz Eckert †

Permanent Deacon Prof. Franz Eckert was head of the Board of Trustees of the Austrian Hospice of the Holy Family in Jerusalem for more than 20 years. His experiences as a Knights Templar, which often took him to Jerusalem and Gaza, enabled him to carry out his role in an extraordinary way. His lasting and most palpable achievement is certainly our Casa Austria, which is rapidly taking shape. When the Jerusalem City Hall forced us to renovate our outer wall in 2007, he came up with the idea of a "Living Wall", a residential unit in the northeastern part of our garden. In fact, a much more developed project is currently being realised. 160 years after the topping out of the main building, the guest capacity originally intended is finally being reached.

Governor Johanna Mikl-Leitner zu Gast

On 19th September Governor Johanna Mikl-Leitner honoured us with her visit. Rector Bugnyar took this opportunity to present the Casa Austria project to her and ask for the support of the Province of Lower Austria and also of the Provincial Governors' Conference since the hospice serves pilgrims from all provinces. Following the example of the Austrian Bishops' Conference, the provincial heads reacted positively to our request.



Pilgrims from near and far, German and foreign-speaking guests

The Jerusalem Correspondence issue of 18/2017 described and explained what the word HOSPICE, pilgrim hospice, originally meant: a simple hostel to house pilgrims.

I am often asked from where the pilgrims and guests staying in the Austrian Hospice come.



Photo: © A.H.

Photo: © A.H.



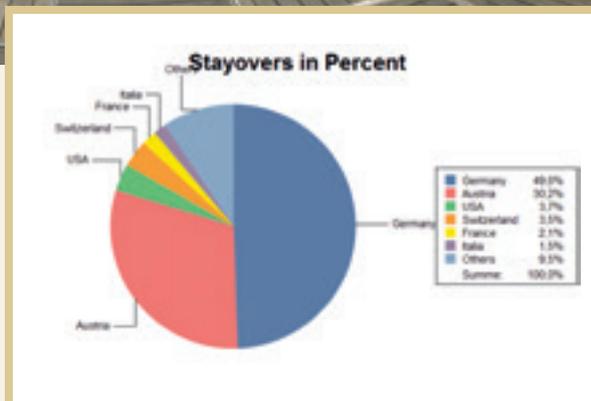
By **SISTER BERNADETTE SCHWARZ**

Statistics for overnight guests for the year 2017 reveal that over 80% come from German-speaking countries, namely Germany, Austria and Switzerland; the remainder from foreign-language speaking parts of the world such as the USA, France, Italy, England, Israel, Netherlands, Canada, Argentina, China and 48 other countries ranging from South Africa to Japan.

Among the pilgrims and visitors in our coffee house and on the roof terrace, foreign-language guests make up the majority. As our rooftop is one of the most famous vantage points in the Old City, many guides come here with their groups to show them the beautiful and impressive views and the panorama of the city of Jerusalem.

The view leads you from the Mount of Olives over the Temple Mount – and behind it on clear days even to the mountains of Jordan – and the Jewish Quarter with the white dome of the Hurva Synagogue up to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. “Simply breathtaking!” murmur visitors.

Dear pilgrims from near and far, dear German and foreign-speaking guests, especially dear regulars, I look forward to your next visit!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sister Bernadette Schwarz, born on 24th November 1948 in Schloss Brunnwald/ Vorderweissenbach, 1970 Sister of the Cross, from 1971 to 1998 Treasurer for the Province Oberösterreich-Salzburg, from 1999 to 2008 Procurator in the Benedictine Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem. Since 1st March 2008 responsible for household management and since 1st September 2011 vice-rector of the Austrian Hospice of the Holy Family

He is risen, truly risen.

By **MARKUS ST. BUGNYAR**

Much has happened in between: between the closed doors of the disciples in the Gospel (to which we are twice referred) and the masses in the Book of Acts, all of whom expect healing and solace from the apostles.

In the gospel they were still afraid of having to suffer the same fate as their Lord; in the Book of Acts they can hardly wait to preach this Lord, to testify, to pass on his healing and radiant power. Without considering that now they really will have to be able to bear the consequences.

What happened between these two extremes is what we call Easter: the experience that the one who died, unexpectedly, lives again; thus death was deprived of the final word about a human life, and has only the penultimate word.

The resurrection cannot be proven in the strict scientific sense; this is precisely what the methodology prohibits.

A life after the biological end of life in a new, unknown mode of being cannot be explained by means of logic and science.

In short, what is supernatural can remain supernatural, without looking silly if it no longer satisfies earthly demands.

Have we not often enough experienced the fact that many analytic explanations of world and life, society and people, were only valid for one generation, and that the next generation laughed at the previous ones?

No, believers may treat this annual goading of the impious in relaxed fashion: who laughs last laughs best.

And one thing is already very clear: a believer despairs less easily and quickly on his deathbed than a heathen.

Much has happened in the meantime: from the simple and humble beginnings of the early church a global institution has developed, stratified in the course of history into endless permutations with a variety of tasks and facilities.

But one thing has remained: the view of Jerusalem. The yearning for the Holy Land, the Holy City.

Photo: © Andrea Krogmann



The Holy Grave in Jerusalem.

It is the centre of the life of Jesus, it is the mother of the Church, it is the source of inspiration for the global Christian community.

So it makes sense only if our ancestors wanted to be anchored precisely here, wanted to gain a foothold here, where Jesus' soles touched the ground.

Since time immemorial, the land and the city have been a "sacred landscape" in which the history of man meshed with that of God. Every particle of dust in the region could in theory have some advantage over us, namely that it (figuratively) "saw" Jesus, bore Him. Hence the reverence with which pilgrims visit the holy places.

But still more: A God who becomes man at a specific time in a concrete place requires a critical investigation into history, the analytic determination of the places where he resided.

Moreover, a god incarnate distinguishes us from other religions, whose gods are on high and issue orders from great distances, or lose themselves in the universe of the cosmos. God as a person, as an addressable counterpart for us humans, is inconceivable for them.

The indispensable foundation of this belief is the material presence of the church in Jerusalem.



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I am very grateful to you!
