Editorial

The Challenge of Education

The academic world has the wind in its sails. Last week, Rami Hamdallah, president of the University of Nablus in the West Bank, announced that he has been mandated by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to form a new government. At the same time, in the West Bank, Gaza and Jordan, students eagerly await the announcement of the results of the Tawjihi (the standardized test given after 12th grade). This is a critical step as the scores will determine the students’ professional future and will allow them to pursue admission to a university.

The Patriarchate is affiliated with two universities, one in Bethlehem and the new the American University of Madaba (located south of Amman). The latter was officially inaugurated on May 30, 2013, in the presence of King Abdullah II of Jordan; Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and His Beatitude Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. 160 years after the establishment of the first Latin Patriarchate school in Salt, Jordan, the University confirms the mission of the diocese in education and in particular, the high academic standards with international academic relations.

In its mission, the university is at the service of both Christians and Muslims. Cardinal Sandri highlighted the importance of this place for interreligious dialogue. In his inaugural speech, Patriarch Fouad Twal stressed the importance of formation for the development of good relations between religions. “There is no conflict between the need to be firmly rooted in one’s cultural and religious traditions, and at the same time, to be open to the identity of the other.”

A Labor of Patience

Without a doubt, education is a great challenge for the Church, and it is of even greater urgency for a tense Middle East. Promoting a culture of peace prepares for a new future paradigm. Accordingly, global participation in this process is indispensable. It is there that the youth of a nation, of a society, lives and learns together. Appealing to education to substitute peace for violence and thereby change the world is the classic mission of a culture of tolerance and solidarity, founded on the principles of liberty, justice, and democracy. Everyone understands that a culture which rejects violence will root out conflict at its source and resolve problems through dialogue and negotiation. Universities have a myriad of distinct and connected responsibilities. The first of which is to discover and transmit knowledge through research and teaching, and the second is for the student to gain understanding through experienced practitioners.

In relation to the recent desecration of the Dormition Abbey on May 30th, Bishop William Shomali, Patriarchal Vicar for Jerusalem reminded us that “it is absolutely necessary to end these acts of vandalism by instilling better education in the young, particularly in school.” Convinced that this “is a long term process,” the Bishop was quick to add that it will require “a lot of patience.”

Christophe Lafontaine
Diocese: Holy Land News

King Abdullah II and the Patriarch Attend the Inauguration of the University of Madaba

The official opening of the American University of Madaba (AUM) was held on Thursday, May 30. AUM is affiliated to the of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and of which Pope Benedict blessed the first stone on May 9, four years ago, during his pastoral visit to the Holy Land. Among the officials present were His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan; His Beatitude Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches who represented Pope Francis.

Fr. Rifat Bader, Director of the Center for Catholic Studies and formation for media explained: “The presence of the King, the Patriarch and Cardinal Sandri authoritatively confirms that the path of the new university institution should be viewed in the context of the great and enduring mission carried out by the Latin Patriarchate in Jordan in the field of education. 160 years ago the early phases of the first school of the Latin Patriarchate beyond the Jordan appeared in what was then a closed and marginal world. Today, that same mission continues to facilitate the birth of a University with high standards and international academic connections, serving the Jordanian people, both Christians and Muslims.”

The American University of Madaba opened its doors in October 2011. Students today are about 850, but the University, at full capacity, can accommodate eight thousand. There are about twenty active courses, concentrated in the areas of information technology, economic sciences and medical health. The Latin Patriarchate has contributed significantly to the building of the university. The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem is a member of the Board of Directors, which now runs the fully independent University, from an academic and financial point of view, on the pattern of other Middle Eastern Universities and is accredited by the certification bodies of the American University of New Hampshire.

Latin Patriarch conveys Easter Greetings to the Orthodox Churches

All the Christian Churches of the Holy Land met on May 7, 2013, to exchange traditional Easter wishes. The Orthodox celebrated Easter on May 5, according to the Julian calendar. For the record, the majority of Latin Catholics in the Diocese of the Holy Land also celebrated Easter on May 5, following a directive of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land (ACOHL).

His Beatitude Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, accompanied by his Patriarchal delegation went to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate to share his Easter wishes with His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III. Present as well were representatives of other Christian Churches of the Holy Land (Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox). Thereafter, all visited the leaders of the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Ethiopian Orthodox. At the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, the Latin Patriarch spoke on behalf of the other Churches conveying well wishes. He mentioned the kidnapping in Syria of Bishop Boulos Yazigi, the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo and Archbishop Gregorios Ibrahim Hanna, the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo and Iskandaroun. Expressing his solidarity with the Orthodox Churches and the two hostages, Patriarch Twal called on the international community to intervene with force for the release of the two Bishops and also to find a solution to the Syrian tragedy.

Christophe Lafontaine
Diocese: Holy Land News

Statement Regarding Israeli Police Measures on Holy Saturday

The Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem issued a statement, concerning the Israeli police measures on Holy Saturday, May for 2013.

“We, the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, watched with sorrowful hearts the horrific scenes of the brutal treatment of our clergy, people, and pilgrims in the Old City of Jerusalem during Holy Saturday last week. A day of joy and celebration was turned to great sorrow and pain for some of our faithful because they were ill-treated by some Israeli policemen who were present around the gates of the Old City and passages that lead to the Holy Sepulcher.

We understand the necessity and the importance of the presence of security forces to ensure order and stability, and for organizing the celebration of the Holy Fire at the Church of the Resurrection. Yet, it is not acceptable that under pretext of security and order, our clergy and people are indiscriminately and brutally beaten, and prevented from entering their churches, monasteries and convents.

We urge the Israeli authorities especially the Ministry of Interior and the police department in Jerusalem, to seriously consider our complaints, to hold responsibility and to condemn all acts of violence against our faithful and the clergy who were ill-treated by the police. We deplore that every year, the police measures are becoming tougher, and we expect that these accidents will not be repeated and the police should be more sensitive and respectful if they seek to protect and serve.

We also denounce all those who are blaming the churches and holding them responsible of the Israeli measures during Holy Week celebrations. On the contrary, the Heads of churches in Jerusalem condemn all of these measures and violations of Christians’ rights to worship in their churches and Holy Sites. Therefore, we condemn all measures of closing the Old City and urge the Israeli authorities to allow full access to the Holy sites during Holy Week of both Church Calendars”.

Pastoral Visit to the Parish of Jerusalem

His Beatitude, Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem visited the Parish of Jerusalem from May 27 to May 31, 2013. The Patriarch visited the Latin Parish of Jerusalem, which includes the Church of St. Savior (Old City), the Church of St. James in Beit Hanina, the Church of the Palms in Bethphage, and the Church in Beit Safafa. On the first day, the entire parish met with the Patriarch. Scouts played drums and bagpipes and led the procession with great spirit. Leading the procession to greet the Patriarch was the Pastor of the Parish, Fr. Feras Hijazine, OFM, accompanied by his vicars, Fr. Simone Herro, OFM and Fr. Nerwan Al-Banna, OFM, as well as Fr. Michel Fahim who helps in the parish pastoral activities. We note that Deacon Samir Hodaly of the Latin Parish is the first permanent deacon of the local Church, ordained in 2009. The number of faithful Roman Catholics of the parish is approximately 5,500.

Immersion

The main objective of the pastoral visit is to know the Diocese, to see firsthand its pastoral and social realities, to listen to the faithful, to exchange ideas with priests, religious, lay pastoral leaders and Christians in general. Following the planned program, the Patriarch toured schools, visited the sick and some families, especially a family living just at the foot of the wall of separation. It was also an opportunity to bless a statue of Jesus in the center of the Muristan (a complex of streets and shops in the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem).

Christophe Lafontaine
Pastoral and Liturgical Life

Feast of Saint James in Jerusalem Kehilla

On Sunday, May 5, 2013, members of the Jerusalem kehilla and friends of the Saint James Vicariate gathered in the House of Saints Simeon and Anne to celebrate the Feast of Saint James. The principal celebrant was Father Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Custos of the Holy Land.

The Feast of Saint James is important for the Church of Jerusalem in general, and the Hebrew speaking communities in particular. Saint James guided by the Holy Spirit and with great courage, decreed how Jews and Gentiles could come together in one community. This decision directed the development of the community of the believers in Jesus to become a place of peace between the people of Israel and the nations of the world who come together around the table of the Lord in a shared faith in Jesus as they participate in his supper.

Many friends filled the chapel and priests concelebrated with Father Pizzaballa. At the beginning of the service, Father Neuhaus, Patriarchal Vicar for the Hebrew Speaking Catholics, said: “We do not say to Father Pizzaballa simply ‘welcome’ but rather ‘welcome back!’ after all he built this house and cultivated the community here for many years”.

In his homily, Father Pizzaballa underlined the importance of the unity between the word we speak and the act we do. However, what is important in the well-intentioned act is that it be aligned with the will of God. We do not do the good deed in order to gain honor for ourselves or because we are afraid of what others might say. The good deed is not even the consequence of a call for help. The fruitful deed is good in as much as God is acting through us.

After the homily and prayer of the faithful, a new icon was brought to the principal celebrant, a gift to the Saint James Vicariate from an Italian monk, Andrea Bergamini, who is studying theology with the Franciscans and who has been coming to the Hebrew speaking community for some years now. Andrea “wrote” the icon which shows Saint James among the apostles and the elders at the Jerusalem Council of Apostles, described in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 15. During this feast, Father Pizzaballa blessed the icon and placed it on the wall of the chapel.

At the end of the mass, the faithful gathered in the courtyard in order to prolong the joy of the feast. Thanks to all those who helped organize the feast, to Father Piotr, head of the Jerusalem kehilla, to Benny and the members of the choir, to Andrea and Franciscan Fra Alberto who assisted him, and especially to Father Pizzaballa who returned to us for a few moments in order to join our festivity.

Source: Saint James Vicariate for Hebrew Speaking Catholics in Israel

Silent March for the Bishops of Aleppo

On Tuesday, May 21, about 2,000 Christians marched through Amman, the Jordanian capital with candles in hand, to demand the release of the two Metropolitans of Aleppo – the Syrian Orthodox Archbishop Gregorios Yoanna Ibrahim and the Greek-Orthodox Archbishop al-Boulos Yazigi – one month after their abduction.

Bishop Maroun Laham, Latin Patriarchal Vicar for Jordan told Fides “that all the Christian Churches joined in the march.” The route went from the Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Amman to the Syrian Orthodox Cathedral passing by the Latin Catholic Church of St. Mary of Nazareth. Bishop Lahham read a statement, signed by all the bishops and heads of local Churches and ecclesial communities, strongly condemning the kidnapping of the Archbishops who are “two of the most significant Arab Christian personalities of our time.”

The declaration calls us to pray to “the Almighty Lord so that calm and stability may be restored to our beloved Syria.” The statement also calls for “respect for the Holy Places, especially in East Jerusalem.” Fearing that Jordan may be plagued by its neighbor’s conflicts, the Assembly of the Heads of Churches in Jordan raised its prayers to the Almighty Lord so that calm and stability may be restored to our beloved Syria.”

Christophe Lafontaine

Grand Celebration in the Jerusalem Filipino Community

On Sunday, May 19, 2013, the Filipino community in Jerusalem celebrated not only Pentecost but also Santacruzan and Flores de Mayo in one splendid community day. The two Filipino Catholic communities in Jerusalem, Good Shepherd and San Lorenzo Ruiz, gathered together and were joined by representatives from other Filipino communities in Tel Aviv and Rehovot to celebrate Pentecost.

Exuding Youth, Optimism, and Hope in Zabbabdeh

On Sunday, May 12, 2013, was one of the important days in the parish of Zabbabdeh, north of Samaria: 30 boys and girls of the third and fourth grades received First Communion, and 31 fifth and sixth grade boys received Confirmation. At Easter, 19 children were baptized out of a total of 50 baptisms for the year.

Chemin Neuf Community Celebrates 40th Anniversary

The Chemin Neuf Community, present in Israel since 2000, first came to Jerusalem where it shared in the life of the Ecce Homo Convent with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Sion, and now in Nazareth, at the Mary of Nazareth International Center. On Saturday, May 18, the community celebrated the 40th anniversary of its foundation together with members of the whole community from different countries, and especially with Fr. Laurent Fabre, the founder and superior general.

French Protesters in Jerusalem Defend the Family

On Sunday, May 26, 2013, a demonstration was held by 85 French people, who reaffirmed their opposition to the French Toubira law that opened the way for same-sex marriage and child adoption that it allows. They affirmed their adherence to traditional man-woman marriage and the father/mother/child line of descent.

Middle East Symposium on Autism in Amman

On April 23, 24 and 25, the Middle East Symposium on Autism, organized by Our Lady of Peace Center, was held in Amman, in collaboration with the American University of Madaba and LDS (Latter-day Saints) Charities.

Concert in Ramallah as Easter Approaches

More than 700 people gathered in the Cultural Palace in Ramallah on Sunday, April 28, for a concert organized by the three choirs of Ramallah, Beit Sahour and Beit Jala at the time of preparation for Holy Week.

First Communion Celebration in Zarqa

Zarqa North in Jordan is one of the largest parishes of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. On Friday, May 24, 72 children received First Communion from Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, Patriarchal Vicar for Israel and the parish priest, Fr Elie Kurzum, scj.
Our Church in the Middle East

Holy Land Prepares for World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro

The Vatican this week published the program for Pope Francis for the next WYD, and the Holy Land is preparing 115 young people who will go to Rio. The group will be accompanied by Bishop William Shomali, Auxiliary Bishop for Jerusalem and Palestine, and Father Aziz Halaweh, Chaplain of Youth Catholic Students in Palestine.

On July 13, 95 young people from Israel and 20 from Palestine will leave for Brazil to join Pope Francis for the 28th World Youth Days which will be held in Rio de Janeiro this year. This will be the first apostolic trip of the Holy Father.

Bishop Shomali will accompany this group of young Christians from Israel, Bethlehem, and Ramallah, along with Father Aziz Halaweh, Ecclesiastical Assistant for the youth in Palestine and parish priest of Taybeh. The delegation is scheduled to be in Rio one week before the arrival of Pope Francis. They will join other young people from around the world and participate in several spiritual and cultural events in the parishes.

The group will be hosted by the Diocese of Niteroi (in the state of Rio de Janeiro) with the generous support of the Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Brazil, which Bishop Shomali will visit. He and Fr. Aziz will also visit Canção Nova TV in connection with the upcoming launch of the Christian radio in Taybeh.

Between catechesis, cultural visits and international meetings, the delegation of the Holy Land is preparing for a busy week of activities leading to the four major events planned with the new Pontiff. It was announced last week by the Holy See Press Office that the meetings will be held between July 25 to July 28 as follows:

- Thursday, July 25 at 18:00, welcome ceremony along the Copacabana beachfront, greetings and address of the Pope.
- Friday, July 26 at 18:00, Stations of the Cross will be held along the Copacabana beachfront, address of the Holy Father.
- Saturday, July 27 at 19:30, Prayer Vigil will be held with the Holy Father at the Campus Fidei of Guaratiba.
- Sunday, July 28 at 10:00, the Pope will celebrate Mass for the 28th World Youth Day at the Campus Fidei of Guaratiba, followed by the Angelus prayer.

To best prepare for the World Youth Days in Rio, the 115 youth participants from the Holy Land are invited to participate in the three meetings in Ramallah during the next few weeks.

Ecumenical Conference on the Situation of Middle East Christians

Power, social injustice, threat of extremism and Christian-Muslim relations are among the main themes of a Conference about the presence and witness of Christians in the Middle East that took place in Beirut on May 21-25. His Beatitude Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem participated in this forum. He recalled that “we, the Christians of the Middle East in general, and the Christians in the Holy Land in particular, are pilgrims on this land, but we are an integral part of its identity and of its soil.” While the historical period of the “Arab Spring” has brought the Middle East to “a dangerous and bloody turning point”, Patriarch Twal expressed his solidarity “with every refugee family and all the dear martyrs, to every owner of a demolished house in the region, particularly in the ruthless events of recent days in our beloved Syria. We, the children of the Holy Land, understand very well the meaning of the words displacement, deportation, murder, injustice, evacuation and exile.”

In this regard, the Patriarch stated that “there is no doubt that the Palestinian problem is at the center of all the conflicts in the Middle East in the last hundred years.” He reflects “ever more painfully” that “the media and the international community have stopped recalling our plight and have turned their full attention to the situation in Syria.” For him, the international community must not “ evade this truth.” He continues: “We appeal for definitive action for true peace in the Holy Land by eliminating the historical injustice that has affected the Palestinian people on the basis of justice, truth, love and freedom, established in compliance with the resolutions of international legitimacy, which are trampled on every day, and legitimate human rights, beginning with the right to self-determination.”

Eritrean Pilgrims at Patriarchate
For the first time, a group of Catholic pilgrims visited the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem on Friday, May 17, 2013, led by the Bishop Mengesteb Tesfamariam of Asmara (the capital of Eritrea).

Ecumenical “Procession of the Virgin” in Haifa
After the Palm Sunday procession in Jerusalem, the procession in honor of the Blessed Virgin in Haifa is certainly the largest gathering of Christians in the Holy Land. The customary schedule was unsetttled by “the unification of the Easter Feast.” The faithful repeatedly asked, “when will the ‘Procession of the Virgin’ in Haifa be held?” It finally took place on Sunday, May 19, the third Sunday of Easter according to the Julian calendar.

Feast of the Transfer of the Relics of Saint Dominic
Every 24th of May, the Dominican Order celebrates the feast of the transfer of the relics of Saint Dominic. Mass was celebrated at the Basilica of Saint Stephen in the Dominican convent.

Rosary Sisters’ Golden Jubilee
Projects of the Latin Patriarchate

2013 Projects
(part 1 of 2)

Before the summer, we invite you to know about the construction projects for 2013 which the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem foresees for the coming months. Restoring churches, convents, schools, building a university library, upgrading a children’s playground...all these are possible, thanks to your generosity.

Renovation of the Rectory in the Convent in Na’our

Na’our is a small village southwest of Amman. Originally a farmland, it is now mainly a residential area. During the Ottoman period, the village welcomed many Chechhnians whose descendants still reside there today. Economically speaking, it is a poor area with high levels of unemployment. Agriculture and commerce are the major sectors of the economy. Many parents especially Christian families do not have the means to pay school tuition for their children. The parish serves about 300 people in its pastoral activities.

The rectory and the religious convent needs roofing work and walls to separate the buildings.

Library for the American University of Madaba

The American University of Madaba (AUM) is the natural continuation of the educational services of the Latin Patriarchate in Jordan. The 45 schools of the Latin Patriarchate in Jordan graduate close to 500 students each year.

In response to the demands for accreditation of the ministry of higher instruction to the norms of American universities, as well as international standards, the Latin Patriarchate is currently constructing a 3,000 sq. m. 
library. With this investment, AUM is responding to its mission of education built on knowledge. The building for the library will have four floors divided as follows:

1) Welcome area and student services
2) Principal stacks, with reference rooms, periodicals (in English and Arabic), and special collections
3) Conference rooms, basic services online and with catalogues
4) Management, security services, etc.

The library will serve 500 students at a time and will foster an atmosphere for reflection, study, and the exchange of ideas. The reference works which will accumulate over the years, as well as the increasing amount of material, was taken into consideration in the planning and conception for the library.

It will welcome teachers, students, and researchers for the general population and will be a center for international exchanges and research for AUM. The architecture of the library is such that it is energy-efficient and modern while retaining the traditional lines and style of the Middle East.

Renovation of the Church in Ajloun

The Church of Ajloun in Jordan was constructed in 1929 for the Christian community in the north of the country. It is home today to 200 families. The site is in the proximity of several villages, and therefore is essential to the Christian community.

Projects:

The exterior and interior of the church need some restoration work to make the edifice more welcoming to parishioners and visitors. One partition of the church has water damage and is severely cracked. The necessary projects include the roofing, re-flooring certain surfaces, and plastering the ceiling and some walls.

In addition to the engineering work, the church seats must be replaced to welcome the current number of parishioners, especially the elderly. The restoration project would also include the window frames, replacing shattered windows, and installing working ventilation for winter.

Renovation of the Sisters’ Convent—Latin Vicariate of Amman

The convent for the Rosary Sisters has not had any renovation work in the past ten years, which has led to some deterioration in the building.

The restoration work covers: bathroom renovation, repair of wall, ceiling, and tile joints, painting of rooms, and replacing and installing some broken equipment in the bathroom and the kitchen.

Amélie de La Hougue

To read more, please visit www.lpj.org:

• Patriarch’s speech at American University of Madaba inauguration (May 30, 2013)
• Christian participates in “inter-religious conversation on end of life” (May 21, 2013)
• An Appeal concerning the two Bishops kidnapped in Syria (May 13, 2013)
• “I concelebrated with Pope Francis” (May 10, 2013)
• Declaration on Cremisan by the Salesian Middle East Province (May 6, 2013)
Death of Mario Bianchi, a great friend of the Holy Land

The Holy Land has lost a great friend in the person of Mario Bianchi, 66, a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, who died of cancer. Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, Patriarchal Vicar for Israel, represented the Patriarch at the funeral held in Como in the parish of Rebbio on Saturday, May 25.

Mario Bianchi came to the Holy Land more than a hundred times. An Italian Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, he was President of Como-Sondrio section and director of TGR (Tourist Group of Rebbio), for tours and pilgrimages. Without a doubt, Mario Bianchi was passionate about the Land of Jesus.

He generously adopted several seminarians and supported numerous schools and parishes. He also helped various religious institutions, such as the Sisters of St. Dorothy.

At the funeral on May 25, Bishop Diego Conti celebrated Mass and forty two priests concelebrated, including Bishop Marcuzzo and also five priests of the Patriarchate: Fr. Aziz Halaweh, Fr. Nidhal Kanzua, Fr. Wissam Mas-saedeh, Fr. Shawki Baterian, Fr. Aktham Hijazeen.

Many Knights of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre were present: Dr. Pier Luigi Parola, former Governor-General; Attorney Silverio Vecchio, Lieutenant for North Italy; Marco Vigoni, Director of Pavia; Gianfranco Guarisco, President of the Lombardy Section; Maurizio Ponti, President of the Como-Sondrio section and 17 other knights and ladies. Four knights, dressed in their distinctive white mantles with the red cross of Jerusalem that symbolizes the five wounds of Christ, were honor guards around the casket. The parish church of Rebbio was packed and filled with thousands of faithful.

Loyal support to the Holy Land

The profound homily was delivered by Fr. Angelo Riva, a friend of Mario Bianchi. Bishop Marcuzzo read a letter from the Patriarch who warmly thanked his friend on behalf of all the bishops, priests, and faithful of the Latin Patriarchate and the Holy Land for his “faithful support to the Holy Land.” Bishop Marcuzzo later read a letter from Patriarch Emeritus Michel Sabbah, addressed to the daughter of the deceased and the letter of the Latin Patriarchate Seminary in Beit Jala expressing gratitude. Bishop Marcuzzo then concluded his speech with these words: “Mario was, is and will be my friend and brother. He was a real person who believed and lived many human and Christian values. He was also a great friend of the Holy Land and a great benefactor of the Seminary. He is still present by the fruits of his works, including the priests present here. He will be remembered and commemorated by all of us who knew and loved him, because we want to honor his memory by collecting his precious heritage of virtue and works, reliving them and passing them on.”

The heavenly Jerusalem...

Mario Bianchi, 66 years old, was born in Como, in the parish of Rebbio (a region of Lombardy, Northern Italy). He died of cancer on May 23, 2013, after enduring long suffering in a true Christian spirit. He departed for the heavenly Jerusalem, leaving his wife Cristina, a son Michel (so named in reference to Patriarch-Emeritus Michel Sabbah), and a daughter Myriam (who learned Arabic and works at the Franciscan Media Center in Jerusalem).

Amélie de La Hougue