



The Exaltation of the Cross - September 14

A few years ago I had the opportunity to travel with presidents and administrators of Dominican Colleges and universities in the U.S. I was excited for in my many years as a Dominican it was the first time I would actually be able to see Caleruega, where St. Dominic grew up. High atop one of the hills stood this impressive cross pictured here. Its simple, rugged beauty seemed appropriate for this issue of the IDF newsletter.

On September 14th Christians celebrate the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross. Many people may not be familiar with this feast but legend tells us that Saint Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine, discovered the True Cross in 326 while she was on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was built and remains a place of pilgrimage in Jerusalem.

This feast reminds us of the sacrifice by which our salvation was won. For many religious it marks a season of penitential practices that anticipate the Season of Lent, a time to deepen our life in Christ. In the Mass for the feast we pray, *we beseech you, Lord Jesus Christ, to bring those you have redeemed by the wood of your life-giving Cross to the glory of the resurrection.*

Even in the midst of suffering salvation finds its way to bring hope. The devastation of hurricane Isaac, the struggles of the Middle East, and the challenges of secularization remind us of Christ's Cross even today. Let us join in prayer this month of September and remember those most in need of the hope found in the life-giving Cross of Christ.



courtesy Kathleen Donohue

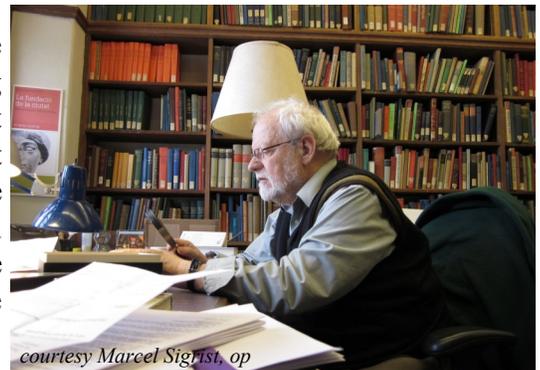
from fr. Marcel Sigrist, o.p.



Director of the **École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem (EBAF)**

For a number of years now I have spent my summers with the great collections of cuneiform tablets, like those found in the British Museum or at Yale. The time allows me to decompress after an academic year in Jerusalem, as well as to gather new epigraphic material that I would like to work on during the year. In this way I have been able to produce many editions of texts. This year, due to particular circumstances of life at the École, I left Jerusalem June 16th to spend 8 days in Alsace for a family celebration. From there I went directly to Oklahoma to catalogue the [Green Collection](#) that interests me above all biblical texts, old as well as new. My interest in the collection is that it includes even cuneiform tablets that date well before the time of Christ. I was able to date the younger ones to the Akkadian Empire and almost completely got through Richard Caplice's grammar. From Oklahoma, I left for the [Babylonian Collection](#) at Yale University in New Haven. During those 8 weeks, I worked on the royal seals of tablets 4,000 years old; seals which were sealed prior to other tablets. The work consisted of noting those that still have a legible seal, not because of the age of the tablet, but because of the more or less good application on the clay. The best parallel would be postmarks on postage stamps that are now only partially legible. It is a thankless job that requires twisting and turning the tablet in all directions so as to be sure you have not missed any symbol on the seal. In short, it is a daunting task, but one that is necessary. From September 19-20, there will be conference on 150 years of French archaeology in the Holy Land organized by the [IFPO](#) (Jean-Sylvain Caillou) and the École Biblique, and on September 21 I will arrive in Jerusalem to retake the task of directing the École.

(Br. Luke Barder, o.p. trans.)



courtesy Marcel Sigrist, op

The International Dominican Foundation



The Foundation is fortunate to have a very dedicated Board of Directors, good people who have generously responded to the call to serve. I am always grateful to those who step up and quietly meet the needs. As I have shared with people the work of IDF I am always glad to tell them about the IDF Board. Most people ask me “What do they do?” So it occurred to me that it might be a question worth answering in the newsletter.



You probably know about my job as President which is part time and keeps me on the road. And you should know that the IDF office is based in New Orleans and Jan Merington works as our Executive Assistant. But what you might not know is the IDF’s structures. We have six committees: Executive, Nominating, Allocation, Development, Finance, and Associates committees. We are now in the process of developing our committee structures and the committee chairs are planning for the coming year. As you can imagine IDF is at a new crossroad as we find ways to meet our mission of supporting the projects in Rome, Jerusalem, and Cairo, especially amid the challenges facing us. I am confident that with your help we will soon be able to raise the kind of financial goals so necessary for these good works.

Many thanks and God bless,
fr Michael



Pictured at left top to bottom: Louise Jordan, who chairs our Associates Committee, and her husband, **John Patrick Jordan**, who is the IDF Secretary and serves on the Associates Committee. **Cynthia LeBreton** (left), the Foundation’s Treasurer, and **Jean Stark**, who is on the International Advisory Board. Joseph Calderone, chair of the Finance Committee, and **Donna Miller Casey**, who serves as co-Chair of the Development Committee. Right: Fr **John Patrick McGuire**, o.p. (left), who is also co-Chair of the Development Committee, chats with Monsignor **James Checchio**, Rector of the Pontifical North American College and IDF Development Committee member. **Look for more members next month!**

Photos courtesy of *Snap-To-It Photography* www.snap-to-it.com



Brief Notices:



ROME, The Angelicum. On Monday October 8th 2012 the **Pontifical University of Saint Thomas** begins its academic year. It will be an exciting start for new students as well as for

fr. Miroslav Adam Konštanc o.p. who begins his first full academic year as Rector. He was nominated *Rector Magnifico* of the University of St. Thomas d'Aquino by the Grand Chancellor, fr. **Bruno Cadoré**, Master of the Dominican Order, on March 26th, 2012 and approved by the Congregation for Catholic Education.

Father Miroslav Adam Konštanc O.P., was born August 2, 1963 in Michalovce, Slovakia. May God bless his work and the works of the Angelicum.

CAIRO, Dominican Institute for Oriental Studies June 2012 Newsletter fr.

Jean Druel o.p. wrote: “On June 27th, we had the chance and great joy to organize Cairo’s first screening of the film “[The Virgin, the Copts, and Me](#),” by the French-Egyptian film-maker Namir Abdel Messeeh. This film received the prize for Best Documentary at the Doha Film Festival in 2011, as well as 3 prizes at the Ismailia Film Festival in 2012 (Best Film, Critic’s Choice, and Best Egyptian Documentary).”



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Drop Us a Note

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Many Thanks!