



International Dominican Foundation

December 2015

President's Message: And the Word Became Flesh

And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth (Jn. 1:14). At Christmas Mass during the day, we hear these beautiful words proclaimed during the Gospel, and when we see the crèche scene with the Mother of God and St. Joseph surrounding the Christ child in the manger with the shepherds looking on in awe, for a moment we can be caught up in the transcendent event as if taken out of time to take in eternity's breaking into time. How does one capture in words the significance of the Word of God becoming incarnate as a tiny infant boy? How is one to grasp all of the paradoxes present in this most unassuming scene: the Creator of all things being given birth and human life by a creature? He who possesses all things and holds all things in existence being born amidst material poverty and humble circumstances? The King of Peace comes to a world that is desperate for peace and yet one that rejects him for the threat his peace means for the order of the world. The Son of God has come to us to be *Emmanuel* (God among us), to take the one thing that we could give him that he lacked—the ability to suffer—so that he might win for us eternal salvation and access to the joy, peace, and love we so lack.



Adoration of the Magi, Fra Angelico, O.P. (1387-1455) and Fra Filippo Lippi (1406-1469)
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

The joy of Christmas is in part being transported spiritually to the scene of Christ's birth in Bethlehem over two thousand years ago, to wonder in amazement with the shepherds, who have heard the angel's message and now see what all generations have hoped for, but the movement of the shepherds also remind us that the joy of Christmas leads to action. The Gospel according to Luke says after finding Mary, Joseph, and the infant lying in a manger, the shepherds *made known the message that had been told them about the child...Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.* Christmas contains the seed of evangelization, that is proclaiming the good news. It is a font of praise and blessing. To see, experience, and understand—even if only partially—bears fruit in the communication of the coming of the Christ child to others and the praise of God.

This beautiful Christian truth is close to the heart of the Dominican charism expressed in two of the mottos of the Order of Preachers: *to praise, to bless, and to preach* and *to contemplate and to hand on to others that which has been contemplated.* This joy and vision animates the works and projects of the Dominican Order and are certainly central to the mission of the Angelicum, the École Biblique, and IDEO.

In recent months, we have tried to highlight how the mission of each of these three projects is having a concrete impact on the lives others. In a sense, the enlightening activity of the Incarnation is extended. We are most grateful to all of our benefactors who help us keep the spirit of Christmas alive in the works sponsored by the IDF, and we ask you again in this season of giving to be generous this Christmas season. In the articles that follow you will see some of the costs facing each of these three institutions. We are not asking any one of you to cover these costs individually, but instead to do what you can so that we collectively as part of the Body of Christ can cover these expenses and continue to form others to praise God and proclaim to others *all they have heard and seen.*

-Fr. Allen Moran, O.P.

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The Ecole Biblique Celebrates 125th Anniversary

On Sunday, November 15, 2015, The Ecole Biblique commemorated its 125th anniversary. Founded in 1890 by Fr. Marie-Joseph Lagrange, the Ecole remains at the forefront of biblical and archaeological research. In the interview below, Fr. Jean-Jacques Perennes reflects on the past 125 years of the Ecole and his hopes for the future. *The interview was conducted by Manuella Affejee, journalist with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (<http://bit.ly/11mlmkw>)*

Fr. Pérennès begins by saying, that it is not easy to summarize the 125 years of the Ecole Biblique's existence, especially since it underwent important changes of context. First, politically: the end of the Ottoman Empire, the two world wars, the creation of the State of Israel, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, etc. Then on the ecclesial level: the study of the Bible has dramatically changed, to move to Vatican II and its consequences. I do recall over these 125 years that the Ecole Biblique has lasted and managed to pass through many challenges founded by religious men who have given their lives totally to this project. It is still our goal today to be present here in Jerusalem, in this eight centenary of the Dominican Order, as an excellent study center for the Word of God, sustained by religious who have totally devoted themselves.

A figure remains inseparable of the Ecole Biblique, that of Fr. Marie-Joseph Lagrange. What does this great figure inspire to you? What more remains of his intuition?

The figure of Fr. Lagrange remains indeed a big inspiration to us all, for he was able to launch a scholarly study of the Bible, taking into consideration sometimes the intervention of modern science, while doing it *in medio ecclesiae*, despite the very harsh and sometimes unfair criticism he had been subjected to on behalf of hierarchy and/or some of its members. We hope that the ending up of his cause of beatification will allow shedding light on this possibility to be at the same time a great scholar and a great believer.

How is it possible to explain hesitancy, almost hostility of certain figures to Fr. Lagrange and his historical-critical method of the Bible? (Let us just remember former relations with Rome which have never been easy!)

Part of the hesitancy towards his person is due to his era: the 19th century brought up new revolutionary ideas to Bible-linked science: history, linguistics, epigraphy, archaeology, etc. Certain discoveries were sort of a genuine shake up for a literary and naïve reading of the Biblical text which few Catholics practiced, except for highly educated clerics. The boldness of Fr. Lagrange and his first companions was to take seriously challenges posed by modern science to believing readers, without rejecting everything, as was done by men like Renan or Loisy. Other hesitancies were more cyclical: for example, the animosity of this or that German Jesuit which can be explained on the one hand by the consequences of wars of 1870 and 1914. What is deplorable is that the impeachment and the slandering could have influenced certain judgments brought against Fr. Lagrange. From this side, times have so much changed. But it is very confusing regarding all what Lagrange has borne, as shown in his biography written by Fr. Bernard Montagnes and the scrupulous study of his writing by Fr. Maurice Gilbert (1).

The spreading of the Ecole is now international. What are the fields where the Ecole was distinguished? What are the fields/competencies which it would like to bring forward?

The Ecole Biblique was distinguished by major works in biblical matters: the great comments of Fr. Lagrange, history and geography works on Palestine made by his first assistants such as Frs. Abel and Vincent, then de Vaux, Benoit, Boismard. These founding works enabled the Ecole "to run as school" – that is to prepare generations of Bible students who came for training here under the guidance of these tutors. These students are currently professors in their turn, throughout the world. The Ecole was then known through publications like the Biblical Review or associated collections (*Etudes bibliques et Cahiers de la revue biblique*) without forgetting numerous works written by professors. Mention should be made of the successive editions of the *Bible de Jérusalem*, first in booklets, then in successive editions. The *Bible de Jérusalem* is an annotated Bible with, for each book, an introduction summarizing the term of exegetic research which develops over the years. This *Bible de Jérusalem* has practically fed the Christian people and prepared the renewal of Vatican II. Later the Ecole Biblique became famous through its contributions to major archaeological sites like Qumran, Tell el-Far'ah, Tell Keisan, Khirbet es-Samara in Jordan, and more recently Blakhiyeh and St. Hilarion Monastery in Gaza, added to various sites maybe less spectacular but sensitive in the Jerusalem area. These excavations, in the course of publication, which contribute to deepen our knowledge of the Biblical areas and of Palestine, were carried out through limited financial means of the Ecole Biblique which does not earn the support of powerful foundations or organizations.

The initial objective of the Ecole Biblique was to "get the Biblical studies out of their primitive look" and to work towards a credible and serious exegesis. 125 years have passed along; one might say that the objective was reached. What would be the new intellectual challenge of the Ecole Biblique henceforth?

Actually we might consider that the hard work undertaken by generations of professors known to the Ecole Biblique now raises this discipline up to the level of a true scientific discipline, as shown by partnerships of research, wound up between the Ecole Biblique and other church and lay universities. We should underline here the outstanding character of our library, one of the best all over the world. (*Continued on page 4*)

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(Continued from page 3)

Funds and the way it is being run and put at the disposal of researches make thereof an exceptional tool appreciated beyond the borders of the country where we live. Each generation brings forward new challenges. Today the Ecole Biblique carries a very ambitious project, called “*La Bible en ses traditions*”, whose objective is to broaden our understanding of the Bible through the history of its reception in miscellaneous fields, such as patristic, liturgy, history of the art, etc. This new approach in coordination with updated technologies announces yet further developments in the times ahead. At the time where religious fundamentalists come back forcefully into the world, including the Christian world, this critical and believing approach of the Scripture is relevant.

You are the new Director of the Ecole Biblique. What impulse would you like to inject into this anniversary-year?

My main effort this year is to renew the teaching body, to enrich it with new skills. The scientific study of the Bible at this high level of specialization is very demanding, requires a true ascetism, a thor-

ough involvement. Not everybody is ready for such an effort. Praise the Lord, the Order of the Dominicans draws today still more young people, devoted and generous. It is a true blessing which we receive with gratitude in this year marking the 8th centenary of the Dominican Order. This generation should later be able to draw lessons from the experiences of previous generations.

From this point of view, it is not useless that the Ecole Biblique be borne by a religious community which prays and celebrates liturgy together and proves in its daily life the call for brotherly love embodied by the Word of God.

I would also like to promote cooperation among different Biblical institutions of Jerusalem who will gain much from working together, which we have successfully started with the *Studium Biblicum Franciscanum*.

[1] Cf. MOUNTAINS Bernard, Marie-Joseph Lagrange. A critical biography, Editions du Cerf, 2004, 625 p. ; Maurice Gilbert, MJ Lagrange, the Scripture in the Church, Editions du Cerf, Lectio Divina 142 1990, 225 p.

L 'Ecole Biblique Celebrates 125th Anniversary

A Mass of Remembrance on November 15th

In light of the terror attacks on Paris, the anniversary mass at the Ecole Biblique was offered in remembrance of the victims and their families. Joining several Dominican friars was the Latin Patriarch, Consul of France, several ambassadors and French nationals.



From left to right:

- 1 - The prior of St. Stephen's, Fr. Martin Staszak, greets the Melkite Bishop of Jerusalem Mgr Zerey with Fr. Jean Jacques Pérennès.
- 2 - Fr. Staszak and Fr. Pérennès greets the General French Consul, Mr. Hervé Magro.
- 3 - First row, French General Consul, Mr. Magro and on the other side, the Ambassador of Palestine to the Holy See.
- 4 - Frs. Staszak and Pérennès in the processional.
- 5 - The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Mgr. Fouad Toual with the incense.

Want to know more?

Click on these three links to watch.

[Jerusalem video](#)

[Rome video](#)

[Cairo video](#)

Ecumenism in Action: Fr. Filix Yohannan writes from the Angelicum



I am Fr. Filix Yohannan, the youngest of three children. I am a married orthodox priest, and my wife and I have one little ‘princess’. I come from Kerala, one of the smallest states in India, and from one of the minority cultural communities in India. Traditionally we are known as St. Thomas Christians or Malabar Christians, and I belong to the Indian Orthodox Church. Our Church does not come under the jurisdiction of Rome. It is locally headed by the autonomous *Catholicos*. The Church is theologically and traditionally a part of the Oriental Orthodox communion of churches.

Now you may ask how I came to Rome and for what? I came to Rome six years ago under a scholarship of the Catholic Committee for Cultural Collaboration, a Vatican initiative formed under Pope Paul VI aimed at “re-establishing fraternal ties between the Catholic Church and the venerable Eastern Churches”. I have completed my Licence in Biblical Theology and currently doing my doctoral studies at the Angelicum

University. I live in the *Convitto Internazionale San Tommaso d’Aquino*, a hostel for priests run by the Dominican fathers which is next door to Angelicum.

I am not the first from our community who came to study at the Angelicum. H.E. Mathews Mor Timothios (Fr. Mathew Baby, 2001) and Fr. Reji Kochupappu (2009) got their doctorates in Biblical Theology from this university. So through these former students this university was very familiar to us, and for my studies I was allowed to choose the Angelicum.

The cultural experience that I get from the university is priceless. Students from all over the world really provide the perfect opportunity to see the Universal Church. The spiritual atmosphere that I get from the Dominican fathers and sisters complements my theological studies and, moreover, helps me grow spiritually.

That the university gives high quality education at low cost tuition is also appreciated. The fee structures are affordable for students, and, moreover, the time table of classes up to 7:15 pm also helps students to do and arrange their religious duties.

Of course it is not the edifice that makes the university best, but the great professors, the courses and the ambience. However we cannot avoid the role and necessity of adequate infrastructure and physical environment. Better quality classrooms will enhance the education.

This university is a paradigm example for theological institutions that should be teaching, learning and worshipping communities. Like the Dominican community and university supporting the Church I hope I, too, can share the experience of being a witness of Lord not only by teaching but also by loving the Church and serving it with humility. Pope Francis reminded us in his address of January 11, 2014, on the 50th anniversary of the Catholic Committee for Cultural Collaboration that “the path of reconciliation and renewed fraternity between the Churches...need[s] the experience of friendship and sharing that...[arises] from the mutual understanding between members of different Churches, and in particular the young people initiated into sacred ministry.” I believe and think this is what my Church is expecting from her students who are here in Rome. Studying here will help both Catholic and Orthodox students broaden the horizons of their minds and knowledge, and thus they will get to know each other and experience friendship, not from a distance, but by being together, by meditating, learning and sharing the word of God.

All who pray and donate are the benefactors of the Church. When you support the Angelicum University you support us, and when you all support us, spiritually and financially, it is for the benefit and the unity of the Church and thus is for the glory of God.

Upcoming Conference at IDEO



IDEO is glad to announce its coming conference, on commentary in post-classical Islam, due to take place in Cairo on January 14-16, 2016, funded by the European Delegation in Cairo. It is entitled “The Sciences of Islam: Between Repetition and Innovation”, and will be devoted to the function of commentary in the post-classical Islam. Around twenty international participants are registered.

See page six for flyer and details on the 800th Jubilee Pilgrimage to Spain, France and Italy



In the Footsteps of St. Dominic | Pilgrimage Itinerary | June 5-17

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800th Jubilee Pilgrimage: In the Footsteps of St. Dominic with the International Dominican Foundation



In the Footsteps of St. Dominic | Pilgrimage Itinerary | June 5-17

SPAIN, FRANCE & ITALY: June 5 — 17, 2016

Celebrate the 800th Jubilee of the Order of Preachers on pilgrimage with the International Dominican Foundation. Travel with friends and friars as you enrich your faith and retrace the earliest days of St. Dominic.

- Madrid • Calurega • Burgo de Osma • Toulouse • Albi • Fanjeaux • Prouille • Carcassone •
- Bologna • Florence • Siena • Rome •

[CLICK HERE for Itinerary and complete details!](#)

Pilgrimage includes:

Daily mass, roundtrip airfare, 4-star hotels, luxury motor coach, professional guides, breakfast and dinner and unforgettable experiences! **Fr. Michael Demkovich** plans to join the pilgrimage and provide spiritual direction to the IDF group. While in Rome, the group will visit the **Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum)**, one of the projects of the International Dominican Foundation.

Per Person Rates by Occupancy:

SPAIN, FRANCE & ITALY

Double: \$5,165*

Single: \$6,145*

**Price subject to change pending departure location*

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If you wish to travel with friends or with others from a particular ministry, please indicate so.

**Tour dates and prices are subject to change.*