

## **In the Heartland With Bishop Pates**

### **EOHS Visitors to Bless Des Moines**

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre (EOHS) Northern Lieutenancy will bless the city of Des Moines with its presence from September 20-23. Some 600-700 strong they will gather for their annual meeting.

The EOHS dates back to medieval times where it had a mission to protect the site of the Holy Sepulchre. Since then it has evolved into an organization whose mission revolves around where the events in the life of Jesus took place. They are a world-wide organization, headquartered in Rome, currently under the leadership of Cardinal Edwin O'Brien from the United States.

The Diocese of Des Moines has \_\_\_\_\_ members who belong to the Northern Lieutenancy. Others in the lieutenancy come from North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska. 18 new members from the Diocese will be inducted into the Order on Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The mission of the EOHS embraces three levels of involvement.

The first is personal. Each Knight and Lady is encouraged to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Places. Such a journey inevitably stimulates an ongoing conversion in the individual's life. The experience of being in the places where Jesus walked, where he taught, where he performed miracles, where he was born and in particular where he died and rose cannot help but make a lasting impression on the pilgrims. Moreover, this personal growth is augmented insofar as the pilgrimage is shared with brothers and sisters from the Order which instills shared memories and stimulates much inspiration.

The second activity of EOHS is to support and enable the preservation of the Holy sites. Religious communities, especially the Franciscans, have been designated custodians of those places enshrined in the Old and New Testaments. Preserving them requires considerable financial support and the Knights and Ladies have responded most generously to this challenge.

The third activity of the Order is to support the life of Christians living in the Holy Land today. Such support includes assistance to the Patriarch of the Latin Rite in Jerusalem. His outreach includes parishes, schools, hospitals and other agencies of charity. Life is particularly difficult for Christians living in Israel and Palestine. Israeli occupation of the West Bank, their establishment of illegal settlements and the maze of walls and fences have made life particularly burdensome for contemporary Christians. Unfortunately, because of such stress many have emigrated from these lands to situations where they might live more peacefully.

One remarkable institution that is thriving is Bethlehem University. Operated and staffed by the Christian Brothers, the students are recipients of an outstanding education which sows seeds of

hope. Because of this education, they have the prospect of a future filled with meaning and satisfaction.

Great thanks are in order to the members of the EOHS from the Des Moines Diocese. They have gone to great lengths to extend the best of Iowa hospitality to their fellow members of the EOHS. In particular, special appreciation is owed to Doug and Marilyn Sharp who are serving as General Chairs of the Des Moines event and Ron and Sue Pogge who serve as the diocesan coordinators of the EOHS. Both of these couples along with their local associates have done superb work in making preparations for this significant gathering.

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### **Peace Negotiations Between Israel and Palestine to be Applauded**

The initiatives of President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry in playing key roles in resuming peace negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian representatives are to be strongly applauded.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East pushed hard for such a development. Because of directions taking place between these two countries, dusk was descending on the possibility of a two state resolution – Palestine and Israel as separate countries with defined borders. There was less and less time to achieve an optimal resolution of this problem.

Americans because of our substantial support of the Israelis over the years play a pivotal role in encouraging and facilitating these negotiations. Achieving peace between these two countries is critical to the long-term pacification of the region we identify as the Middle East.

There was a strong, prevailing pessimism that it was not possible to even begin talks between these two countries. Against all odds, they have begun. No doubt the negotiations will be difficult, require groundbreaking concessions by both countries and negotiations will have to encounter seemingly impassable road blocks.

But the good news is dialogue is established. Such gives credence to Pope Francis' dictum in resolving such problems: "dialogue, dialogue, dialogue." Certainly much needs to be done. **But peace is possible.** Our prayers for its achievement are urgently needed and will be effective as all prayer is.