



## PATRIARCHATUS LATINUS - JERUSALEM

بطريركية القدس لللاتين

Prot. N. (1) 1/2022

Jerusalem, January 1 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May the Lord give you peace!

Pope Francis, by the Motu Proprio *Aperuit Illis* of September 30, 2019, established that "the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time be dedicated to the celebration, reflection and dissemination of the Word of God" in order "to make the people of God grow in religious and assiduous familiarity with the Sacred Scriptures, just as the sacred author taught already in ancient times: 'This word is very close to you, it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may put it into practice' (Deut. 30:14)." (n. 15). The Pope offered an ecumenical outlook, on the occasion of the 1600th anniversary of St. Jerome's death: "The Bible is the book of the Lord's people who in listening to it pass from dispersion and division to unity. The Word of God unites believers and makes them one people" (n. 4).

With this inspiration, in several occasions during the past years, Catholic faithful and brethren of the Reformed churches had already gathered to read entire sections of Sacred Scripture. This practice was also inspired by the statement of the Second Vatican Council: "The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures as she has the Body of Christ itself, never failing, especially in the sacred liturgy, to nourish herself with the bread of life from the table of both the Word of God and the Body of Christ..." (*Dei Verbum* VI,21).

This year our Church in Jerusalem, with gratitude for the gift of being able to live in this Holy Land - from where, as the prophet Micah says: "... [from Zion] shall go forth the law and [from Jerusalem] the word of the Lord..." (Micah 4:2), and where "the Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14) - accepts the Pope's invitation and proposes, for this year, the integral reading of the New Testament on the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time (January 23) throughout the territory of the Patriarchate (Palestine, Israel, Jordan and Cyprus). Everyone is invited to participate: parishes, religious or lay communities, youth groups, families, individual believers. Participation can be done personally or communally, according to what each one can give and with the time that each one has.

Trusting in God's grace, we will thus spread over the Holy Land, and from here over the entire world, "the incorruptible seed of the Word...living and eternal" (1 Pt 1:23), the authentic "fragrant scent" that makes people fall in love (Cant 1:3). The various and necessary indications and instructions to adhere to and concretely participate in this "Sunday of the Word of God" will be given to everyone in the coming days through an email that will be created especially for this, and will also be found on a page that will be prepared on the website of the Latin Patriarchate. May the Word bear abundant fruit in all of you, and may the Lord bless each of you!

