

Feast of Our Lady Queen of Palestine

Reflection by Fr. James Michael Jankowski, KHS



Throughout the history of the Church, Our Blessed Mother has been graced with many titles and honors. Praying the Litany of Our Lady gives testimony to the numerous ways in which her memory is honored and her reliable intercession sought.

The last Sunday of October finds the members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem honoring Mary under her title as Our Lady, Queen of Palestine. It was July 15, 1920, when Latin Patriarch Luigi Barlassina, on the occasion of his solemn entry into the Cathedral Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, consecrated the diocese to Mary, and gave her for the first time the title “Queen of Palestine.” In a little village between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, named Deir Rafat, the same Patriarch built the first shrine to Our Lady, Queen of Palestine in 1927. In 1933 the Sacred Congregation for Rites officially recognized the title of our Blessed Mother as “Queen of Palestine.”

Closer to our time, Saint John Paul II, in 1983, 50 years after the institution of the Feast, addressed the Lieutenancies of Northern and Central Italy, urging them to be witnesses to Christ every day and to place the work of the Order in the Holy Land under the protection of Our Lady. After a request made to the Holy Father in 1993 by the Grand Master of the Order, Cardinal Giuseppe Caprio, Saint John Paul II decreed the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Palestine as the Patroness of the Order on January 21, 1994.

As we embark on the 25th anniversary of Our Lady, Queen of Palestine as the Patroness of the Order, we remember our constant need to seek her intercession as we pray for the end to strife and conflict in the Holy Land of Christ and in the Holy Landscape of the Church throughout the world. A crusade of prayer for peace through the intercession of Our Lady, will help maintain the peace of Christ in the Holy Land of our hearts so we may renew our trust in the words of Christ who promised to Peter: “you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.” (Mt 16:18)

And so we rely on the maternal care and protection of our Blessed Mother for the peace in the Holy Land where she lived, for the Church she guides with a mother’s love and for all her children created in the image and likeness of God.

Our Lady, Queen of Palestine: Pray for us!
Mary, Mother of the Church: Pray for us!
Our Lady, Queen of Peace: Pray for us!

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