



SECRETARIAT OF STATE

No. 76.917

From the Vatican, 6 October 2007

Dear Father Pizzaballa,

The Holy Father has received your letter of 24 August 2007, and he has asked me to thank you. He appreciates the sentiments which prompted you to write to him about the work of the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land.

His Holiness was pleased to learn of the fruits that have emerged from the Foundation's work among the Christian community in your country, providing educational opportunities for so many young people who suffer economic hardship. He wishes to encourage you in the noble work that you do in channelling the offerings of the faithful around the world for the benefit of those in Jerusalem, after the manner of Saint Paul (cf. *1 Cor* 16:1-3). As the Holy Father wrote in his 2006 Christmas Message to Catholics living in the Middle East Regions, they are called at this time of trial to be "courageous and steadfast in the power of the Spirit of Christ, knowing that they can count on the closeness of their brothers and sisters in the faith".

His Holiness will pray for you and those you serve. Upon all who are associated with the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land he cordially invokes his Apostolic Blessing.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Secretary of State

The Reverend Pierbattista Pizzaballa, OFM
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