

Our first day of Lent 2016 in Jerusalem

Ash Wednesday

On Wednesday, February 10th, we had a mass in the chapel with the contemplative and apostolic sisters, brothers and friends of Sion.

We are invited to live a beautiful time of conversion, personal and community growth. Also, Lent time invites us to go to find Jesus, His presence in our silences and our senses in this land and say like the prophet Samuel *"Speak, Lord; for your servant is listening"* (1 Sam 3, 10).

This year is very special to us since it is our first time here living this moment and that Pope Francis invites us to live in mercy: *"Mercy is what pleases me, not sacrifice"* (Mt 9, 13). So this time asks us to be merciful, to grow in love, to be closer to God and feel His mercy in our lives. Only we need to be amazed by Jesus in this time of preparation in His Land.

We felt that Lent is a favourable time to keep us with all our heart and hear *"Come back to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, rich in faithful love"* (Jl. 2,13) seek and find Him.

Another significant event was that we went to the Sisters of Charity of St. Charles Borromeo in Jerusalem. First, we had a beautiful conference about the Magnificat (Luke 1, 46-58) by Father Stefano. Then, we had a silent and personal reflexion time.

The first part of the Magnificat when Mary said *"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour"*(Lk. 1, 46-47). It is part of creation and glorification of the mercy of God. Mary teaches us how to look our life with God's eyes and her deep relation with God.

The second part of the Magnificat interrogated us about our humility and how I am able to say thank you as Mary. Everybody has special gifts, but there are things that I am not able to do. We need to be humble to accept our limitations.

The third part of the Magnificat is the continuity of the mercy of God since we are sinner. God shows us every day His mercy and love. If we are sinner, God loves us and He is the father who is always waiting for us.

Finally, we had a beautiful liturgy of the First Sunday of Lent to close this first retreat.

Also, we had a delicious lunch in Jerusalem and we enjoyed together this wonderful and sunny day *"how good, how delightful it is to live as sisters all together"* (Psalm 133,1).

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