



*Notre Dame de Sion*  
"SAINT JOHN IN MONTANA"  
*Congregational Novitiate Jerusalem*

Ein Karem, Sunday, 21 October 2018

As the summer heat has changed into autumn warmth and refreshing winds in both morning and evening, it was most enjoyable with the High Holidays of the Jewish Community. In the months of September and October we had the arrival of Erika from Brazil and Iulia from Romania. Now we anticipate the arrival of Helen from Costa Rica.

Our participation in the Paris Assembly was life giving. It was so encouraging to see and hear of the life of the Congregation with so much openness and eagerness to engage in the needs of the world. We began with the reading from Gen: 21:11, "And the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, "Where have you come from and where are you going?" Piluca had us begin with this question which we also will hear in the Novitiate community as we begin our Formation program. At the start of the assembly we asked ourselves the basic question, and hear in the novitiate we ask "Why do I choose to live Religious life in Sion? Where am I coming from and where am I going?" A further question "Are we aware of those in this world whose suffering and poverty have become the norm of everyday life for so many?"

As part of my volunteer project I go once a month to Gaza with Sr. Susan, a longtime friend of mine. If any of you would like to follow the Gaza project of the Daughters of Charity, the blog address is: <http://daughtersofcharity-gaza.blogspot.com/>

During my stay in Israel from 1982 to 1988 I had visited Gaza with Sr. Susan. She would go every second week and from time to time I would go with her, she would drive with a van filled with toys for the Kindergartens, clothes for all ages and milk for the little children.....and now 30 years later the situation is worse and no end is in sight. It is incredible!

Celia went on to the UNANIMA International meeting in New York after the assembly and we are happy to have her back.

Sr. Colette went on her home visit during the month of October, which is a challenging visit as her sister had to move to an older persons' home after the sudden death of her husband.

The Novices are engaged in many classes with Sr. Anne Catharine on the High Holidays and they have had some excursions around the City of Jerusalem, the Western Wall, a short visit to Mount Sion and to the Holy Sepulchre.

In Ein Karem we have had the opportunity to meet many different and interesting people and we felt blessed these last days with the Israeli author, David Grossman. His books have been translated into more than 30 languages and he has won numerous prizes. He shared with us some of his experiences of being a writer. The Brazilian community in and around Jerusalem came to Ein Kerem on October 12th to celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Aparecida. It was a beautiful liturgy following by many delicious dishes brought by the Brothers and friends followed with lively dancing, Brazilian style!

Juliana for the Novitiate Community