



Notre Dame de Sion

“SAINT JOHN IN MONTANA”

Congregational Novitiate Jerusalem

Ein Karem, Sunday, 30 June 2019

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The months of May and June have been filled with many different activities. Sr. Maureen continued with the course on Human and Faith development and also guided us in a four day retreat,

Sr. Patricia Watson came to visit us in the novitiate and shared with us her knowledge on dialogue and encounter with the other.

The CNF Team came for the meeting and following this, we went as a community for five days to Galilee walking in the footsteps of Jesus. The novices had prepared excellent information booklets on the various places we visited from the crusader stronghold of Acco to Nazareth which is the largest Arab speaking city in Israel. Being the place where Jesus lived his childhood, adolescence and adulthood it attracts many pilgrims and tourists. Only some years ago there were found houses, baths and tombs dating from Roman times. In 2009, the Israeli archaeologist, Yardenna Alexandre excavated remains in Nazareth which date from the time of Jesus in the early Roman period. He told reporters, "The discovery is of the utmost importance since it reveals for the very first time a house from the Jewish village of Nazareth."

During our week of pilgrimage, we stayed at Tabgah with the Benedictine monks and lived a very simple way of community and prayer life. Another highlight was the Golan Heights with its beauty and splendor of vegetation. It is wonderful to see it in the springtime.

Ann Brittain and Mary Luc shared with the novices the Vows of Celibacy, Poverty and Obedience. We celebrated the feast of Shavuot and Pentecost at the beginning of June with Anne Catherine sharing her knowledge with us of the historical and spiritual aspects of these two feasts. Rabbi Levi helped us to realize that the breath of God, is not only the source of life but also the sustainer of life.

Our next event was the feast of John the Baptist he wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather loin-cloth round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Today in Israel some special restaurants serve honey-spiced locusts and if you question the Kosher regulation read: Leviticus 11:22 which says that locusts are a kosher food. Of all these winged insects you may eat only the following: those with the sort of legs above their feet which enable them to leap over the ground. These are the ones that you may eat: the various kinds of migratory locust, the various kinds of solham locust, hargol locust and hagab locust.

After so many events and ups and downs with Hellen also leaving the Novitiate community, we are back on our regular schedule of encountering God, ourselves and others in our daily duties and activities. We wish you all a summer full of happy days and a wonderful time of holidays where you can live deeply by slowing down and noticing the other in a creative way.

Greetings and blessings from Juliana, for the Novitiate Community