

THE ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC ORDINARIES OF THE HOLY LAND  
*Latins, Melkites, Maronites, Syrians, Armenians, Chaldeans, Custody of the Holy Land*

Protocol (1) 26/2025

To our beloved students,  
To the esteemed parents,  
To the priests and religious who serve in our Church schools,  
To the principals, teachers, and educators,  
To the General Secretariates of Christian Schools in the Holy Land,

The Lord May give you Peace!

We stand at the threshold of a new scholastic year. Once again, our schools throughout the Holy Land open their doors to welcome tens of thousands of students—Christian and non-Christian alike—who sit side by side at the same desks, united by a love for learning and animated by hope in the future. Each one of them is a precious gift from God, a sacred trust placed in our care.

Yet, with deep sorrow, this joy does not extend to our children in Gaza, who for the third consecutive year are deprived of their right to education because of the war. Their schools have been destroyed, their classrooms have closed. We carry them in our prayers, imploring that peace may soon prevail so that they may return to their desks and reclaim their childhood.

The opening of the scholastic year is not a fleeting moment but a time of grace, a renewal of our educational mission. In our vision, the school is not merely walls and books, but a home where knowledge and faith dwell together to lead us to the truth: where the mind is enlightened by the radiance of truth, the heart grows in love of God and the other, and the soul is anchored in hope. In such an environment, the character of the student is shaped by values and virtues and prepared to serve society in the spirit of faith, hope, and love.

Our first-grade pupils are embarking on their journey of learning for the very first time; may their year be crowned with joy, rich in discovery, and fruitful in friendship and growth. Our twelfth-grade students stand at the threshold of concluding their school years, preparing to enter a new chapter of life—called to perseverance, maturity, and serious readiness. Between these beginnings and endings lies the school journey of every student, measured not only by grades but by the values forged in character, the resilience and diligence cultivated, and the hope and openness nurtured in the heart.

Our schools are called to remain houses of learning, encounter, and dialogue—fields that sow peace, safeguard dignity, and open before every student the doors of the future, regardless of

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background. The splendid achievements of our students across various fields, the genuine values they embody, and the creative personalities they reveal, are living testimony to the fruitfulness of this educational mission and a source of pride and gratitude for us all.

On behalf of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land, I express the Church's profound gratitude to all who serve in our schools: to the consecrated who accompany the mission with a spirit of care; to the teachers who plant the seeds of knowledge and virtue in the minds and hearts of our children; to the principals who lead with discernment and fidelity; and to all staff who work to ensure that our schools remain vibrant with life. Your daily dedication, silent sacrifices, and steadfast commitment to this mission are a living witness that education in Church schools is not merely a profession, but a sacred ministry carried out with love, patience, and hope.

I also extend blessings and encouragement to the families of our students, who are the first foundation of education—the primary school where faith is formed, values are nurtured, and children learn the meaning of responsibility and respect. The role of parents goes beyond following lessons or monitoring academic success; it extends to planting love in the heart, giving a living example of patience and generosity, and accompanying their children's journey with awareness and tenderness. Education is a shared responsibility between home and school, founded on mutual trust and ongoing collaboration.

To all our students, I say: make of this year an opportunity for growth in knowledge and in faith, for the shaping of your character in perseverance and commitment.

May the Holy Spirit enlighten your minds and hearts, and may the Blessed Virgin Mary, Seat of Wisdom, protect you throughout this year.

With paternal blessing to you all, and with best wishes for a blessed new scholastic year.

*Jerusalem, 28 August 2025, Feast of Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church.*



+ Pierbattista Card. Pizzaballa  
Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem  
President of the ACOHL