

October 6, 2017

Dear Brothers and Friends in the Lord,

The Peace of Christ!

On October 6, 2017 the jurisdiction for the Jesuit community and its associated works in Amman, Jordan will pass from the USA Northeast Province (UNE) to the Near East Province (PRO). Fr. Dany Younès, Provincial of PRO, initially requested this change. Fr. Younès and I jointly sought Fr. General's approval of this change in governance; and he concurred that this change would best serve the work of the Society of Jesus in the Middle East.

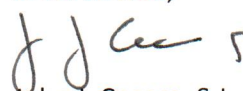
This is the latest development in the 85 years of labor and love of American Jesuits in the Middle East since the Mission in Iraq was entrusted to the New England Province in 1932. Jesuits of the New England Province worked for thirty-seven years in Iraq, with a significant commitment in Baghdad, staffing Baghdad College and Al Hikma University. When the Jesuits were forced by the Iraqi government to leave the country in 1969, ninety-seven New England Jesuits were attached to the Mission. With most of these men returning to the United States by 1970, sixteen New England Jesuits, each with significant experience and familiarity with the languages and cultures of the region, remained in the Near East missioned to works of the Near East Province, primarily in Egypt and Lebanon. The New England Province subsequently undertook pastoral and other work in Jordan and continued to mission men to the work. Upon the creation of the USA Northeast Province in December 2014 this commitment of men and resources continued.

As agreed in a revised *Convenio* between our Province and PRO, we will continue to financially support the community and work, which includes the Jesuit Center and Sacred Heart (English) parish, through 2022, and UNE will also continue to make men available for work in Amman.

The Middle East now will be served by a single entity of the Society, the Near East Province, and will be under the jurisdiction of a single major superior, currently Fr. Younès. Both Fr. Younès and I agree that this governance change will assist the Near East Province in its ministry to Arab Christians and over time will create opportunities for a more expansive apostolic presence in Jordan.

Before closing I want to express my deep gratitude to Fr. Michael Linden, who will continue as superior of the Jesuit Community for the foreseeable future. His commitment and generosity, along with that of our brothers currently missioned to Amman, is a continued witness to the cooperative, historical, and friendly ties between our Province and PRO. Let us also deepen our prayer for our brothers in the Near East Province who labor each day in a very complex and challenging region of the world.

In Corde Jesu,



John J. Cecero, S.J.
Provincial

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