



Taybeh info

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Newsletter #4 - Jul-Aug 2006

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I. Introduction

This fourth edition of Taybeh's newsletter describes the major events that happened in Taybeh during the last few months, illustrated with many pictures.

You will find news from the French sessions organized by the French sisters of "la Sainte Croix de Jérusalem", as well as other events such as the Taybeh Festival.

The conclusion of this edition is the message written by Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Michel Sabbah on August 1st 2006 during the war in Lebanon. Although the combats have now ended, his message is still very relevant.

Enjoy Reading !

Guillaume Piganeau
Volunteer in Taybeh

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II. French sessions in Taybeh

Why organize French sessions?

Many volunteers -mostly French- offered every year their services to do some animation with Taybeh's youth. During the long summer holidays, the youngsters are indeed left idle. This good idea faced a major problem on the field as most of the volunteers did not speak Arabic. They could therefore not act independently from the sisters as they needed translation.

To solve the problem, the sisters of "La Sainte Croix de Jérusalem" responsible for the teaching of French at the Latin school in Taybeh, decided to launch the summer French sessions six years ago.

Thus, all the activities are now organized in French. This allows the children to continue practicing their French during the holidays, in a fun atmosphere, as well as providing an answer to the language barrier problem for the French volunteers.

Learn French with a different approach

Two weeks of "intensive" French classes for the preparation of the DELF (Diploma given by the French General Consulate) started the summer French sessions. These two weeks are called the "DELF session" and are aimed at pupils interested and motivated by learning French. Therefore, only the best students in French are invited to come. They are then split into three classes corresponding to the first three levels of the DELF: A1, A2 and B1.



Studious morning for the 5th grade

Then comes the "session for all", which is based more on games and activities and lasts a whole week. Anyone can attend this week "for all" as long as they study French at the school. There is no need however to have a great level of French to join in. This year's theme was Paris. All the activities had a link with the city in order to make the week of activities be like a one-week trip to Paris.

Activities took place in famous places or streets of Paris such as "Place de l'étoile", "Boulevard Saint Michel" or "Gare Montparnasse", and the city's districts were used to replace the grades. For example, 6th graders became inhabitants of the 6th district and had to do what the mayor of their district (played by a French Volunteer) told them to do. 85 children took part in the "session for all". All their activities have been related by our three home journalists (Kassam, Jiries and Thae) in a daily newspaper launched for the occasion. You can find out all about the activities of the week in the 5 editions of their *AL PARIS* newspaper available on the [first page](#) of our website.

A week of activities coordinated by the French volunteers ended the session. These activities are done in French but have no particular goals linked to the teaching of French. The goal is more to take care of the children with activities such as sports events, drawing, theater etc. 15 French volunteers in total came to Taybeh for the summer sessions to be a success.



Team activity

Typical Day-Program

9:00am: Beginning of the day: 30 minutes of singing
9:30am: Reading workshops and French exercises in level-groups
10:30am: Activities in multi-age teams
1:00pm: End of the morning
6:00pm: Mass, for those who wish
6:30pm: Beginning of the evening period
8:30pm: End of the day

A few pictures: Team game - Find Mona Lisa



A few pictures: Cooking Day



A few pictures: Playing Bingo





A few pictures: The final evening



The 7th district, with its show "Le Petit Chaperon Rouge" won the best sketch prize.





Prize ceremony



At the end of the session, all the children who proved motivation and good spirit were given prizes by the mayor of their district. The best multi-age teams were also rewarded.

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III. May: the month of Mary

May is traditionally a month dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In Taybeh this tradition is still very living. Numerous people come to church everyday during the month to say the Rosary and then attend Mass.

On the last day of the month, mass ends with a procession to El Khader, Taybeh's old Byzantine church. Although in ruins, the Khader is a very symbolical place. It is a symbolical place for ecumenism in the village since it was first built years before the separation between Catholics and Orthodox. All the Christian communities in Taybeh can thus recognize the Khader as the place where their ancestor in faith prayed.



Procession of the congregation and the Statue of the Virgin Mary from the Latin Church to the old Byzantine church El Khader



Prayer at the Khader

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IV. Excavations and work at the Khader during the summer

For now several years, archeologist and restorers from the "Atelier Saint Jean des Quatre Couronnés - Anjou" have come to Taybeh every summer in order to carry out excavations and restoration of the Byzantine church of the village: El Khader. This year, the group of around ten people led by Mr. Vincent Michel, archeologist and Mr. Jean-Loup Hanquart, stone cutter and sculptor, stayed in Taybeh for around a month. Young people from Taybeh were also hired to help out during the excavations and restoration works on the site.



Excavation and restoration works at the Khader

In Taybeh, their work in preserving and highlighting local architectural patrimony (and particularly the Khader) is absolutely priceless. But that's not all. The creation of a building school training local Palestinians to become stone cutters is planned. The goal is to offer young Palestinians the means to acquire the competence, skills and knowledge in the stone cutting techniques and the restoration of ancient buildings techniques. The restoration of architectural patrimony indeed requires the training of a high qualified work force in the building sector. Based in Taybeh, the school could be influential all over Palestine and beyond, in the other countries of the Middle East.



**Vincent Michel in front of the Khader (left)
Jean-Loup Hanquart and his assistant, Pierre (right)**

Starting next year, the team wishes to rebuild the southern part of the Khader, namely the Byzantine chapel. For this purpose, a model of the project was made (photo). The rebuilding will mainly be used as training for students in Taybeh's future building school.

For more information about this school: www.taybeh.info/en/pierre.php.

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V. Taybeh October Fest 2006



On September 16th and 17th Taybeh Municipality hosted the second edition of Taybeh's festival: "Taybeh October". The success of the first edition in 2005 convinced the municipality to repeat the experience, and it was at least as successful!

The goal of this fest is to promote local Palestinian products such as olive oil, honey, maftoul (couscous), embroidery, local olive wood and ceramic (particularly the peace lamps) handicrafts etc. as well as the local beer: the Taybeh Beer. Stands were displayed inside the Municipality Hall for the sale of those products. A photo exhibition showing traditional Palestinian architecture was also exposed inside the municipality building.



Outside, on the stage, shows followed one another all day long. Dancing, singing, instrumental music featuring children and young people from Taybeh as well as talented artists from outside, fascinated the very numerous viewers in a truly friendly environment.



Just like last year free guided tours of Taybeh were offered in French, English and Spanish by young boys from Taybeh. Jiries Kort, Kassam Maadi and Thaer Zayed, who often offer these visits to pilgrims coming to Taybeh, were joined for the occasion by their little brothers Johnny Kort and Fouad Maadi.

Even though it wasn't the sole attraction of the festival, Taybeh Beer contributed in making the festival a success. We hope the festival will be able to carry on in the coming years and attract more and more people, for a better promotion of all local products.



The lottery prizes ended the festival after two days very much appreciated by locals and foreigners.

This festival was made possible thanks to the cooperation of Taybeh Municipality, Taybeh Brewing Company, Olive Branch Foundation, Local Clergy, Taybeh Women's Benevolent Society, Ladies Organization of Taybeh, Taybeh Cooperation for Country Development, Taybeh Scouts and the Society of Christian Heritage in the Holy Land.

The sponsors:

- Royal Danish Representative - Ramallah
- British Consulate General - Jerusalem
- Belgian Consulate General - Jerusalem
- Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany - Ramallah
- Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- Paltel Group
- Spafford Children's Center
- National Beverage Company Coca Cola/Marawi

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VI. Marriage of two Italian volunteers in Taybeh

Marzia and Alessandro, two former Italian volunteers in the "Home Notre Dame des Douleurs" in Jerusalem, celebrated their marriage in Taybeh on Sunday September 17th. They wished to get married in the Holy Land but did not really know Taybeh before coming. The place was in fact suggested to them by Sister Marie-Dominique, superior of the Home in Jérusalem as well as Beit Afram, Taybeh's home for seniors.

After a lunch at Beit Afram, the wedding took place in the afternoon in Taybeh's Latin Church. Father Raed had invited anyone from the village who wished to come to join the celebration and around twenty children from the Choir directed by Sister Victoire also came.



After the celebration and the congratulations, an improvised dance started in front of the church in the Latin Convent's courtyard. Everyone then went up the big staircase that leads to the Charles de Foucauld Pilgrim's hostel where the sisters of "La Sainte Croix de Jérusalem" had prepared a small reception.



The bride and the groom then headed back to Jerusalem and the "Home Notre Dame des Douleurs" where the party took place in the presence of all the seniors of the house, the staff and other guests. A total of around 70 to 80 people gathered to celebrate the newly wed couple.

The food, the music, the dance, everything had been taken care of for Alessandro and Marzia. The wedding was such a great moment that the residents of the home now wish to have more of them!!

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VII. Thanks to the Knights of the Order of Saint John

The Knights of the Order of Saint John in San Francisco sent a container full with medical equipment (particularly aimed at care for old people) to Taybeh. Electrical beds, wheel chairs and walkers were part of the equipments that reached *Beit Afram* this summer.

Part of the equipment will be used in Taybeh's home for seniors, and the rest will be gradually given to congregations and associations of the Holy Land who could need some. Several wheel chairs were for example already given to the E.S.C.S association (Elderly Supportive Community Services) in Jerusalem. This association offers various services to dependent old people living in the Old City: wheel chair service to move around in the narrow and steep streets of the Old City, home cleaning service, house renovations, distributions of warm meals etc.



The medical equipment was transferred from the container to *Beit Afram*, Taybeh's home for seniors, for storage.



Part of *Beit Afram's* beds were replaced by the new electrical beds arrived in the container in order to help the sisters of "Notre Dame des Douleurs" (Our Lady of Sorrow) in their daily work with the residents of the house.



The sisters of Mother Theresa who are responsible for a home for seniors in Nablus came to Taybeh to take equipments such as wheel chairs, walkers and electrical beds.

We would like through this article to thank the Knights of the Order of Saint John for sending this container to the West Bank, thus showing their continuous support to the Christians of the Holy Land.

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VIII. Open day at Taybeh's Latin school

The end of the school year in May was the opportunity for an Open Day at the Latin School in Taybeh. For the occasion, all grades had prepared one or more shows to present to the other pupils and parents. We have selected some pictures for you to appreciate the dancing, singing, playing, sports activities etc. that the children had prepared.

Singing...



Playing...



Sports...



Dancing...



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IX. Girl-scouts from Saint Joseph school in Bethlehem camp at *Beit Afram*

A girl-scout camp in Taybeh

Although it is never easy to go out camping for scouts with the current situation in the occupied territories, it did not deter the girl-scouts from Saint Joseph school in Bethlehem who wanted to do their summer camp in Taybeh.



During 5 days, the girls of Saint Joseph school settled down around *Beit Afram*. Taybeh's home for seniors, located a little outside the village is an outstanding spot for camping since it has lawns - rare in the region but very much appreciated when it comes to camping - around it.



The girl-scouts heading back to *Beit Afram* and their tents.

Some younger girl-scouts from Taybeh joined in with soeur Claudine during the activities and some even

insisted to camp at night, with the girls from Bethlehem.

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X. Exhibition "Desire of Jerusalem" in Fourvière-Lyon museum

The museum of sacred art of Fourvière-Lyon (France) will hold an exhibition about pilgrimage in the Holy Land, called "Désir de Jérusalem, Pèlerinage en Terre sainte" (Desire of Jerusalem, Pilgrimage to the Holy Land) that will take place from September 28th 2006 to January 7th 2007.



DESIR DE JERUSALEM, Pèlerinage en Terre sainte:

A look back at pilgrimages to Jerusalem in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Objects of devotion, relics, pilgrims' quests to the tomb of Christ, the exhibition treats all the aspects of this "desire of Jerusalem".

During this exhibition the museum will sell Olive Oil bottles from the village (via Alter Eco). With this article, we wish to encourage and promote this exhibition.

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XI. Economy: VITALITE Dead Sea Cosmetic products available on www.taybeh.info

Since end of August 2006, the cosmetic products from the Dead Sea produced by the Palestinian brand VITALITE are available for sale on our website. An agreement between Arab Industrial Co, which produces the range of VITALITE products, and the Olive Branch Foundation resulted in this. Arab Industrial Co will indeed help the Olive Branch Foundation to produce its own olive oil cosmetic products. In return the Taybeh.info website will help promoting the VITALITE products, sadly less known than their Israeli and Jordanian competitors such as AHAVA for example.



Arab Industrial Co's long experience in manufacturing cosmetic products is a very precious asset for the new range of olive oil cosmetic products the Olive Branch Foundation wants to launch. We would like to thank Arab Industrial Co for agreeing to work with us.



All the profits made by the Olive Branch Foundation whilst selling these products will be used to finance the parish's social work such as *Beit Afram* Taybeh's home for seniors.

Discover the 13 VITALITE products available at very competitive prices on our [products online](#) page.

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XII. Document: Message of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem - 01.08.2006

Pray for Peace and Justice

"In his own person he killed the hostility. He came to bring the good news of peace to those who are far and to those who are near" (cf Eph 2.17).

We begin today the traditional period of fast and prayer preceding the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven. This year, we will fast and pray for peace, for the end of hostilities in Gaza and South Lebanon. We pray for all the parties involved, Palestinians, Israelis and Lebanese. To all of them we wish peace and security.

What is happening now in Gaza and South Lebanon is simply inhuman, whatever be the causes alleged for its justification. The international community should interfere with greater efficiency in order to put an end to it.

We condemn the abducting of an Israeli soldier as prisoner in Gaza, and of the two others in South Lebanon. We wish that the three of them return safely home to their parents and beloved ones. But we condemn at the same time, and as much, the taking of Palestinian prisoners by the Israelis, as well as the keeping, since years, of the 10 thousand Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli prisons. These too have parents and beloved ones waiting for their return. Indeed every human person has an equal human dignity, whether Palestinian or Israeli.

Violence is a death cycle that must be broken, and only the strong can break it. Experience in this conflict has proved that violence has only generated and even increased violence, did not give the required security and it is useless to found a new order or to hope for security as long as the oppression imposed upon the other continues.

Violence cannot and should not be a way of legitimate defense. Military power alone cannot protect. Military reprisals only increase the refusal that encircles Israel in the region. Indeed the result is the deepening of hatred and refusal.

The only action to use for legitimate defense, that can really protect and will have as result the required security, consists simply in putting an end to the initial injustice which is the heart of this long conflict, that is the Palestinian question. It consists in putting an end to the Israeli military occupation imposed for years upon the Palestinians, and giving them back their freedom and their independence. To wait for all manifestation of Palestinian violence to stop in order to take this step is unrealistic and illogical, because as long as the oppression lasts, the oppression will give birth to violence.

Brothers and sisters, pray so that reason prevails upon the spirit of vengeance. Pray so that men and women may know that they are capable of living together in peace. Pray for the ceasing of military actions that impede leaders and soldiers to be human persons and make them agents of killing and demolition. Pray so that God be more present among us and that His presence renders men more human to their brothers and sisters beyond all differences of religion and nationality. Ask the powerful intercession of Our Lady. Ask her to intercede for the sons and daughters of this Land, that is her Land, and that God wanted to be the Land of Redemption and Reconciliation for all.

+ Michel Sabbah, Patriarch
Jérusalem, 01.08.2006

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XI. Contacts

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