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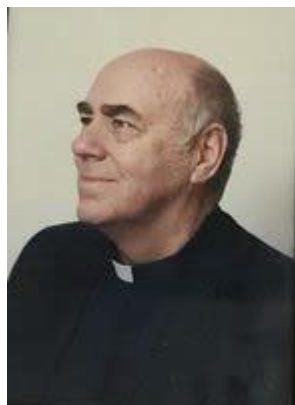
Dear friends of the CFEB,

Warm greetings to you from the Canadian Friends of the École Biblique!

We are pleased to offer you our Spring 2024 newsletter of the Canadian Friends. You can find the full colour Easter issue of *Nouvelles de Jérusalem* published by the École Biblique at the following website:

<https://www.yumpu.com/fr/document/view/68663796/nouvelles-de-jerusalem-107-paques-2024>

1. CFEB announces Jackman Postdoctoral Fellowship



The Canadian Friends of the École Biblique is pleased to announce the establishment of the Edward Jackman Postdoctoral Fellowship offering a scholarship of up to \$25,000 to spend one or preferably two full terms during the regular academic year at the École Biblique in Jerusalem.

The fellowship will be available to Canadian citizens or permanent residents. International students who have received a Ph.D. (or equivalent degree) in a relevant graduate program in a Canadian institution are also eligible to apply. To be eligible, candidates must have completed their Ph.D. (or equivalent) requirements not more than five years before the beginning of the proposed stay at the École, and not occupy a tenure or tenure-track position in a university of similar institution.

Notice of the launch of the fellowship will be made at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies June 10 to 12 in Montreal. An announcement will also be sent to the *Catholic Register*.

Applications will be accepted this fall, with a deadline of January 31, 2025

for the academic year beginning in October, 2025. Details are available on the CFEB website, www.cfebweb.ca.

The fellowship was established to honour the memory of Father Edward J.R. Jackman, a founding member of the CFEB who served for 25 years as its secretary-treasurer. His contributions played a major role in allowing the Canadian Friends to provide scholarships enabling Canadian university students and academics to live, study and do research at the École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem.

Through the Jackman Foundation of his family, Father Ed supported a wide range of historical, educational and artistic societies, conferences and other initiatives. His generosity also extended to numerous cultural organizations and agencies that supported those who were poor or marginalized.

Raised in the United Church, he converted to Catholicism after his university studies, and was ordained as a priest of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans) in 1971. He died on June 18, 2021.

“We appreciate the generosity which Father Ed and the Jackman Foundation showed toward our work over the years,” said Fr. Hervé Tremblay, President of the CFEB. “We miss him very much, and we wanted to ensure that his commitment would continue to live on by providing a new avenue for recent doctoral graduates to pursue further studies at the École Biblique.”

2. Interview with Fr. Olivier Poquillon, o.p., Director of the École Biblique



1. How is the current Israel-Hamas war affecting the life and work of the École Biblique?

Since October 07, everyone has been deeply affected by the ongoing violence. Nevertheless, following the first moments of shock, most of society has adopted a resilient attitude. Since the initial massacres in the south the tension was high between communities but being located in Jerusalem, the École Biblique enjoys a relatively privileged situation from the security point of view; the city is not a target because it contains places considered to be holy by all the parties involved.

Some of our researchers and volunteers decided to leave, but many of them expressed their wish to stay or to come back when the international airlines resume their flights. Nevertheless, travel restrictions ordered by various governments deprived us of the presence of many scholars linked to public institutions, and especially during the second semester this had a significant impact on our financial resources.

Following the high psychological tension of the first days, the Ecole resumed its activities. We decided to also give some lectures online to allow students to participate from abroad. In parallel, we had to deal with the closing of many checkpoints which prevented our employees from Christian villages in the Palestinian Territories from reaching Jerusalem. An unexpected consequence of the conflict happened to be the incapacity of editors and companies to ship books and many other imported items to Israel because of the quasi-suspension of maritime transit via the Red Sea.

Facing those difficulties, our priority became to mobilize all available resources to allow the friars, students, scholars and researchers to accomplish their projects. In close contact with various authorities, we decided to resume the topography course onsite, always checking in real time the local situation and taking necessary precautions. Ironically, since the beginning of the war, the absence of tourists and pilgrims gives the participants the opportunity to visit usually crowded sites in very privileged conditions. On the other hand, the departure of our volunteers recalled by their governments drove us to find alternative (and more costly) solutions to continue the huge cataloging work that makes our Library so special.

In Gaza, we had to evacuate our archeologist and to suspend our activities. Thank God we found that our local staff is mainly safe even if suffering from anger and lack of basic facilities. Our archeological deposit has been "visited" by uninvited armed personnel. We are waiting for the end of the fighting to put in place a lasting solution in this area.

We can say that despite the obvious stress in society for 7 months now, the recent bombing by Iran, the tension in the Palestinian Territories and the absence of a political solution, from the middle of its garden the École Biblique appears to be a sort of island of calm where people from very diverse backgrounds continue to pray and study with assiduity.

2. How can we as the Canadian Friends of the École Biblique help and support the École during this time?

The support of the Canadian Friends of the École Biblique is more necessary today than ever. Pursuing our academic mission in the middle of war is a sign of hope despite the ongoing violence in the region. For people studying the Bible, and exploring the archeological traces of ancient civilizations, violence shouldn't be a surprise. Nevertheless, our economic model, conceived for times of peace, is extremely dependent on the fees paid by our guests. By supporting the École Biblique, the Canadian Friends not only allow young academics to develop high-level academic skills in Bible and archaeology in a unique environment, but also help to preserve some jobs for local inhabitants working at the École whose resources have been drastically weakened by the ongoing conflict.

By your support, you are allowing us to continue to fulfill our mission of dialogue between faith and sciences, and also, especially in this tense period, to maintain open at the École a quite unique place of dialogue between persons of good will coming from many different backgrounds. The war has led to a substantial monetary inflation in the country. Every donation counts and helps us to persevere in serving the common good in this challenging environment. Sooner or later, the war will end and we hope that as participants in the Church and the Academy, with your help we will be able to play our role in the reconstruction of society.

3. The École has gone through many changes in recent years. As the new director, what changes do you anticipate in future at the École?

In nature, change is the sign of a healthy situation. Similarly, at the École change is a sign of renewal, of transmission of what has been accomplished to the next generation. Answering the call launched by the last General Chapter of the Dominican Order, we have to take care of our heritage by inviting newcomers to join our academic dynamic, especially in the fields of archeology and Biblical theology.

At the end of the first year of my mandate, one of my priorities is to strengthen teamwork and interdisciplinary research. In fact, an inter-disciplinary approach has been one of the main characteristics of the École Biblique since the beginning. Fertilizing one discipline by confronting it with another one, bringing together biblical theories with archeology, epigraphy, linguistics, etc., is probably one of the best ways to go ahead in a very specialized context. Faithful to our roots, this is what we are trying to do.

3. Passing of Father Étienne Nodet

Father Étienne Nodet, professor at the l'École biblique, passed away on Sunday, February 4, 2024, at the age of 79.

He was born at Bourg-en-Bresse (Ain) on November 30, 1944. From 1964 to 1966, he studied at the École polytechnique before joining the Dominican order in the province of Lyon in 1967. In 1971, he received his Master's degree in philosophy from the University of Lyon-II, and his Master's in theology from the Catholic University of Lyon in 1974. In 1979, he pursued a BA degree in Talmud at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He was ordained to the priesthood on October 15, 1982.

In 1977, Father Nodet joined the École Biblique where he taught until 2004. He was especially interested in the history of Judaism, specializing in the period from the second century BCE to the second century CE. He produced a first rate translation of the historian Flavius Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities* and studied the Samaritan and Essene movements. He participated in the excavation of the Phoenician village of Tell Keisan from 1971 to 1980. His exegetical research led him to develop a "revolutionary" hypothesis concerning a late date for the final redaction of the Hebrew Pentateuch, which he claimed was an authoritative compilation put together in the second half of the third century BCE, when it is usually dated between the beginning and the middle of the preceding century. As well, he also showed that the institution of the weekly Sabbath did not belong to the heart of the Torah but was added during the Second Temple period.

Memories of Fr. Nodet from Isabelle Lemelin, a CFEB scholarship recipient who studied under him:

On January 18th, 2022, Etienne Nodet, O.P. (1944-2024) offered me an invitation to "a serious work coffee", and signed it "Seriously, E". The next day, I saw for the first time this soft giant with a mysterious eye, a brilliant rebel in Biblical exegesis and the history of the Second Temple period. We discussed the Maccabees at length since I had come to the École Biblique to work on the books of the same name under his supervision. After our conversation, the learned teacher decided not to continue what he had started in the first semester and titled his last seminar "The Maccabean Crisis and its Sequels" and the young researcher also reoriented her research. Friday morning, we were walking SO slowly – like Auvergne cattle "slow to start and difficult to stop" (like the latter, who got out of bed around noon and returned early in the morning) – in and between texts such as the Apocrypha, Flavius Josephus, and the Gospels. In our minds we were going everywhere in the Holy Land – as he did when he was responsible for training in topography when he arrived at the École in 1977 – rethinking Egyptian influences, unabashedly suggesting that the Torah was written there. Nodet tirelessly loved controversy (since it allows ideas to be joyfully juxtaposed), he sowed countless ghosts (like a board that replaces a volume removed from the shelves) at night in the library and wrote just as much as he read (I am referring to ten books, more than 200 articles, and countless book reviews published in the *Revue Biblique*). A great historian with insatiable curiosity and vast culture, he never did anything as a dilettante. To share a meal with him stimulated me for the whole day, thanks to the laughter he provoked or his unsettling ideas. This big child, formerly a soldier, born during the Second War, who signed his e-mails with a picture of the Little Prince with his rose, joined Father Lagrange, St-Dominique and so many others five months after the start of the last war in this country that he cherished. On February 8, he was buried in the crypt of the Saint Stephen Dominican monastery in Jerusalem where he lived for almost half a century (most of his life).

Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters, a polytechnician, comparativist, person of the avant-garde, as his Brothers of the EBAF have written: “His sudden death leaves an immense void in the world of research”.

4. CFEB Board member Murray Watson publishes *Restoring the Gospels’ Jewish Voice*

The Algerian-French-Israeli politician and scholar André Chouraqui (1917-2007) lived a remarkable and rich life, which intersected with many defining religious and political events of the twentieth century. He was an interfaith pioneer who helped to launch some of the earliest Jewish-Christian organizations in the wake of World War II, and he was a prominent political figure in the early decades of the modern State of Israel. But he is best known today for his unique and influential French translation of the Bible, which he undertook in the 1970s. In his translation, Chouraqui sought to produce a version that would underscore common theological and linguistic threads uniting both testaments, while also exploring layers of possible meaning that he felt had been underplayed in many other French Bibles. His New Testament translation, rooted in the renewed awareness of Jesus’ Jewishness, attempted to hypothesize about Semitic sources behind the Greek text and to firmly insert Jesus into his first-century religious and cultural setting. In his recent book, [*Restoring the Gospels’ Jewish Voice: André Chouraqui and the Intersection of Biblical Translation and Interfaith Dialogue*](#) (Paulist Press, 2023), Murray Watson seeks to introduce Chouraqui, his life, and his unconventional translational methodology to an English-speaking readership. He explores how Chouraqui’s decades of interreligious involvement provide the context for appreciating his translation, and he unpacks examples of how Chouraqui seeks to stress the Jewishness of Jesus, as a basis for richer Jewish-Christian dialogue—a goal he pursued passionately until his death in 2017.

5. Passing of Father Marcel Sigrist

Father Marcel Sigrist, op, former director of the École Biblique and renowned professor of Assyriology, passed away on May 3 in Strasbourg.

The Dominican brothers and members of the École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem salute the memory of brother Marcel Sigrist, o.p., former Director and professor of Assyriology, who died May 3 in Strasbourg. They entrust him to your prayers.

It seems that languages beyond the horizon of Indo-European shaped the destiny of Fr. Marcel Sigrist. The first call of his superiors wasn’t Akkadian or Sumerian but Finnish, since he was expected to join the Dominican community in Helsinki to establish ecumenical relations. In this perspective, preparatory studies in Holy Scripture led him to the École Biblique in Jerusalem where those in charge (P. Benoit, F. Langlamet, R. Tournay) were soon inclined to train him as a teacher of the Old Testament.

Once again his training took a turning point: a noted student at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the great Assyriologist Hayim Tadmor advised him to go to Yale University in the United States where he specialized in Assyriology and Sumerology. In 1976, his doctoral thesis was published, entitled *Ninurta to Nippur: The economy of the cult during the period of Isin and Larsa*. Marcel Sigrist remained faithful to the period of Ur III (2000–1600 BC) with numerous publications: *Neo-Sumerian Economic Texts of Syracuse University* (1983); *Neo-Sumerian Account Texts in the Horn Archaeological Museum* (with L. T. Geraty, 1984); *Ur III-Text: Verstreute Publikationen aus Zeitschriften* (six volumes, 1986); *Tablets of Princeton Theological Seminary: the age of Ur III* (1990, second part in 2005); *Drehem* (1992); *Neo-Sumerian Texts from the Royal Ontario Museum. The Administration at Drehem* (1995); *Neo-Sumerian Archival Texts in the Nies Babylonian Collection* (with U. Kasten, 2001); *Ur III*

Administrative Tablets from the British Museum (with T. Ozaki, 2006 and 2015) to only mention some books reflecting his research activity in this area. All of this without speaking of his Babylonian studies such as *Old Babylonian Account Texts in the Horn*, as well as his scientific articles.

In the past at the École biblique, each year Father Marcel gave a course in Akkadian and seminars discussing specialized subjects on Mesopotamia. After he became professor emeritus, Father Marcel spent summers at Yale in order to read, as a premier modern expert, numerous examples of the 40,000 cuneiform inscriptions found in that unique collection. His ability to “read on the fly” and correctly interpret Sumerian cuneiform letters enjoyed a world-wide reputation. For fifteen years, he was also the École librarian and so he directed an exceptional institution in the scientific world of the Bible and its neighbouring cultures. Aside from his teaching functions, Father Marcel completed three terms as Director of the École Biblique (1991, re-elected in 1994 and “Acting Director” from 2011 to 2015).

At the end of his life, we wish to express our gratitude and that of many researchers for this life that was so full of service to knowledge and to its transmission. His was the mission of a Dominican friar at the École Biblique et Archéologique de Jérusalem – and well beyond.

A farewell mass for Fr Marcel Sigrist was held on May 7, 2024.

--Father Jean-Michel Poffet op, former Director of the École Biblique de Jérusalem

6. **Scholarships**

In spite of the difficult situation in Israel and in the area, the Canadian Friends of the École Biblique continue to provide scholarships for study or research at the École Biblique in Jerusalem. But we recognize the difficulty of making long-range plans for studying or conducting research in Jerusalem.

To facilitate the awarding of the CFEB scholarships for 2024-2025, applications will be welcome at any time up to August 31, 2024, without regard to the usual deadline. A decision will be made within approximately one month of receipt.

In addition to our regular scholarships, we now offer two named scholarships – one in honour of Father Philippe LeBlanc, a Dominican priest who was a founding member and long-time Vice President of the CFEB, and the other in honour of Father Guy Couturier, CSC, founder of Les Anciens et Amis de l'École Biblique in Montreal and former president of the CFEB. Fr. LeBlanc passed away on December 30, 2017, and Fr. Couturier on May 9, 2017.

Applications and inquiries are to be sent to Dr. Tim Hegedus, CFEB Administrator, at cfeb.aceb@gmail.com.

7. **Your Support:**

We are thankful to all who contribute to the Canadian Friends of the École Biblique.

We support graduate students and academics to study and do research at the École Biblique in Jerusalem. In addition, we provide funding to the École for library acquisitions and IT upgrades.

It is your support that enables us to maintain and expand these important opportunities.

How you may contribute:

You may fill in the enclosed donation form and send us a cheque by mail. Or, you may donate online at: <https://www.cfebweb.ca> (in English) and <https://www.acebweb.ca> (in French). Just fill in the form 'To Make a Donation' on the "Donations" page of our website.

Our website also has a direct link to CanadaHelps. Simply click on the CanadaHelps link on the CFEB Home Page.

Thank you for your continuing interest and support.

With appreciation and best wishes,

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