

**Bethlehem
University**



جامعة بيت لحم

**Monsignor Archimandrite Robert L Stern, AFSC
Doctor of Humanities, *Honoris Causa***

*And he has given us this command:
Those who love God must also love their brothers and sisters. (1 John 4:21)*

Born on 22 November 1932, one of the two children of Lester Stern and Madelyne Sophie Lawless, you, Robert L. Stern, were educated in the New York public schools. As an 18-year-old college student in 1950, while studying physics in Massachusetts, you decided to take a journey by boat with a thousand fellow students on a Holy Year pilgrimage to Rome. While on this pilgrimage you were profoundly inspired by Pope Pius XII and experienced a call from God that led you to promise to serve the Holy Father.

You were ordained a priest in 1958 by Francis Cardinal Spellman and for more than a quarter of a century you served the people of the Archdiocese of New York. In the midst of a variety of priestly ministries of service to the people of New York, you were called to assume administrative leadership positions in the Archdiocese and to also further your education by completing a Doctorate in Canon Law (J.C.D.) *magna cum laude* at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome.

Monsignor Stern, you are a man of gifted intellect and keen insight, blessed with a generous heart and a faithful spirit that leads you to be a man of deep and all-embracing love for all of God's people. It was during the Second Vatican Council, while you were studying in Rome, that the Holy Spirit continued to call you closer and closer to your God and to even greater service of the people of God in the Archdiocese of New York and beyond those borders.

One series of adventures after another led you in 1985 to be called by Blessed Pope John Paul II to serve the Eastern Churches for the Holy See through the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA). Since 1987, you have served as the Secretary General of CNEWA and as President of the Pontifical Mission for Palestine – the Vatican's humanitarian relief, pastoral support, and development agency serving the churches and peoples of the Middle East, northeast Africa, India, and Eastern Europe. Through this broadening of your sphere of priestly service, you have been significantly instrumental in the growth and development of Bethlehem University, serving as a member of the International Board of Regents since 1994 and its Chair for thirteen years. Concerned about our future, you were a founding member of the Bethlehem University Foundation Board of Directors in 1998, serving as its Chair for nine years. Your leadership, expertise, and dedication have led to significantly enhanced support of Bethlehem University – its students, faculty, and alumni – and the people of Palestine.

Recently you wrote about allegiance, a duty of fidelity, and you reminded us that for people of faith, we are called to be responsible for the whole world – and in our human relationships, yes, we are each other's keeper. For God has given us this command, "those who love God must also love their brothers and sisters (1 John 4:21)."

As a Protonotary Apostolic of Pope Benedict XVI, as a Mitered Grand Archimandrite of the Melkite Greek Catholic Patriarchate of Jerusalem, as a Knight Commander of the Patriarchal Order of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem, and as an Affiliated De La Salle Brother of the Christian Schools, you have lived a daily life of faith and service – always focused on the love of God made manifest in the love of all your brothers and sisters. You have taught us much. You have served us well. In recognition of all of this, together with your personal faithfulness and extraordinary vision and leadership in the service of all God's people, Bethlehem University is honored to hereby award you the degree of Doctor of Humanities, *honoris causa*, on this 10th day of June 2011.

His Excellency Archbishop Antonio Franco
Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine
Chancellor

Brother Peter Bray, FSC, EdD
Vice Chancellor