



**Address by Rev. Fr. Hady Mahfouz, President of the Holy Spirit University of
Kaslik (USEK)**

Inauguration of the Silver Jubilee of the Faculty of Law

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Contribution, harmony, right, exaltation and gratitude. These are the concepts inspired by a reflection of the past 25 years of the Faculty of Law at USEK. In fact, if we look back to the year 1988, the dawn of the Faculty, a tranquil space elucidates for the thought; the latter enters this space and meets many people who interacted with the faculty and identifies unique points of reference within this beautiful space, the space of the silver jubilee of the Faculty of Law.

The thought sees in the Faculty the principle of contribution because it can see the efforts exerted by all those who entered and worked for it. It is a noble contribution because it is the call of humans in their existence. Indeed, the joy and perfection of the human being are fulfilled when the persons contribute to making history through what they are given and through the dynamism of thinking and managing, according to the spirit of goodness, love and righteousness, and according to the will of the Master of history.

Through contribution, the principle of harmony emerges. The more human beings serve good causes, the more they become in harmony with themselves, with the others and with God. As a result, a breathtaking symphony arises every time. The Faculty of Law is one of these symphonies. Truthfully, it is a Faculty built on steady pillars and a great tradition, following a

certain system, and we can see its courage in switching its reality and system and its openness to the world, to modalities of governance, to technology and to a different logic related to the position of the professor and the position of the student. The history of this Faculty is in harmony with the path of the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik which is relentlessly trying to position itself in the global academic world and to really contribute to building it.

Within this path, the thought is well aware that a thirst for the law and to human rights is the aim of this Faculty, which can only be completed through the love of all human beings without any discrimination; the respect of all human beings in all their dimensions, among which is the spiritual dimension. The systems of justice and rights are built in all societies; however, there is no perfect system, yet there is a system tinged with perfection only if it puts the human being at its center following the will of God in the creation.

This makes us aware that the exaltation of the Faculty and the exaltation of the human being are the result of the principles of contribution, harmony and right. The Faculty grew because some people believed in it: deans, officials, professors, administrators, students, alumni, friends and partners.

Many have contributed, with harmony, in upholding the right, upholding the human being and upholding the Faculty and the University. From Jbeil to Kaslik, an illuminated path reflects bright concepts drawing their essence from the principles of the Lebanese Maronite Order (LMO), to which the University is affiliated.

Thought reaches the end of its journey in the 25th anniversary space and sees the necessity of gratitude. Thought hands the people it encountered and the history of the faculty to the realm of gratitude. This is the very emotion that I convey, on behalf of the University, to all those who worked in the Faculty of Law or for the Faculty of Law, especially its deans assisted by professors and students. Each and every one of them contributed to making a history and did their part of the good that prevailed within the Faculty. I especially mention those who were in charge of the Faculty, throughout the years, including all those who worked with them from administrators, professors, employees, students, alumni, friends and partners. I would like to extend my thanks, first and foremost, to the President of the University at that

time, the Late Rev. Fr. Louis Hajj. I mention him as I also remember that, a few months ago, we celebrated the silver jubilee of the Faculty of Food and Agricultural Sciences, which is also the fruit of his presidency and intellectualism. He is the one who asked Rev. Fr. Abbot Antoine Khalife to launch the faculty of Law and to prepare all what is necessary for it. Thus, I extend my deepest gratitude to Rev. Fr. Abbot Antoine Khalife, the founder and first Dean of the Faculty of Law. He endeavored, exerted relentless efforts and built relationships to make the birth of the faculty a special period characterized by the spirit of the family and the bringing of prominent justice figures: judges, lawyers and researchers; moreover, he initiated international relations from the dawn of the Faculty. Then, Rev. Fr. Joseph Obeid took over, and I also thank him for the good he did for the Faculty and for his noble conduct and rectitude. I would like to thank, as well, Rev. Fr. Bassil Bassil who led the Faculty along the same path for three years. My thanks also go to Rev. Fr. Louis El Ferkh who added his own touch on the Faculty by introducing the American credit system; to His Excellency Minister and President Joseph Chaoul who strengthened the pillars of the Faculty with his rigorousness, rectitude and integrity, whereas he made the Faculty a strong fortress for law and for teaching law. For the last three years, Rev. Fr. Talal Hachem, the Associate Dean, has been leading the Faculty of Law and adding his personal touch with his good, beloved, open and resolute personality, and along with his academic culture that joins the American and the European worlds, embracing both the French and English languages. In fact, the Faculty relies on the pillars that have been set and is making huge steps forward, changing wisely and daringly, open to the global society in Europe and America. Its staff and friends are contributing, working in harmony and upholding the law; thus, they deserve our gratitude. The dialogue of the judges, today, is a good example for this spirituality founded on solid grounds and constantly moving forward towards the whole world. Our thanks also go to the high judicial figures in our beloved country Lebanon, and the international judicial figures here with us tonight, who have all participated in the high-level judicial dialogue.

While doing this reflective tour of the past twenty five years, the thought cannot but ponder on one of the great contributors in harmony, who upheld, not only the history of the Faculty, but also the history of the causes of rights, justice and life. He is the Shepherd and the

teacher proclaiming the word of the Lord. He who sat on the professorship chair at the said Faculty and is currently sitting on the Patriarchal See of Antioch and all the East, His Beatitude and Eminence, Patriarch and Cardinal, Mar Bechara Boutros Al Rai. We extend to you, Your Beatitude, our deepest thanks and our love on behalf of an institution that rejoices every time you visit it, bless it and declare from it words illuminating the mind, the brain and the soul.

I thank you all, dear attendees and friends, for your presence here at this unique evening. I wish that the Faculty of Law would achieve the call of Pope Francis who, in his Apostolic Exhortation, nine days ago, entitled “The Joy of the Gospel” considered that we are all “... called to show concern for the building of a better world” (paragraph 183). I kindly ask the Apostolic Nuncio in Lebanon, Bishop Gabriel Caccia, to convey to Pope Francis our love and full obedience.

Before concluding, I would like to address Rev. Fr. Abbot Tannous Nehme with all my love and appreciation, knowing the joy he feels when he sees the path of the LMO through remembering personalities who have passed away and other personalities who are still working within the Order; those people are showing us the work of the Order in society, reflecting the will and the mission of the Church, serving each human being in truth.

In the environment of joy, jubilee and lessons learned, the thought ends its reflection knowing that it cannot stay in the space of the 25 years since time goes on inexorably. Therefore, in order to guarantee its descendants the feeling of joy when they will celebrate later on the golden jubilee, God willing, the thought will take its inspiration from the silver jubilee and will offer future generations, working in and with the Faculty of Law, a road map guaranteeing joy and including five core principles: contribution, harmony, right, exaltation and gratitude.