



TERRA SANCTA MUSEUM

MONASTERY OF THE FLAGELLATION

Archaeological Museum. Gospel sites in Palestine

Multimedia Museum. Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre: from Herod to our days

ST. SAVIOUR'S MONASTERY

History Museum. The Franciscan Custody in the Holy Land

Milan 21 May 2013

On Tuesday 21 May 2013, Fra Renato Beretta, General Visitor of the Custody of the Holy Land, will make a presentation in Milan on the project for the **TERRA SANCTA MUSEUM**, scheduled to open in 2015 in Jerusalem.

Participants will include the organizers, museum specialists, architects and all the collaborators who for more than two years have worked on the project to create the only museum in the world devoted to the roots of Christianity and the preservation of the Holy Places.

Over the coming months presentations will continue in numerous Italian and foreign cities. We wish to express our thanks to Intesa Sanpaolo for having hosted this first encounter in their prestigious headquarters in Milan.

In this special, delicate historical moment it is of fundamental importance to inform the whole world of the history of the Christian presence in the Holy Land in order to encourage a greater familiarity with our roots, to contribute to the unity of the human family, and to send a message of peace throughout the world.

The planned meetings will be aimed at explaining the numerous and profound reasons that have spurred the friars of the Custody to support and promote the project to create a major Museum of Christianity. Motivations that on 10 March were expressed for the first time in the interview granted by Fra Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Custos of the Holy Land, to the Franciscan Media Center.

“The Terra Santa Museum will retrace the roots of Christianity and of this land, because this country has a history in which the Christian presence is evident, like that of Judaism and Islam, but needs to be demonstrated and made better known in an organic manner. Christians, although a tiny minority, have always been and still are today a living, rich cultural presence that has made an enormous contribution to building relationships, not only with the local population, but also with so many societies around the world. This reality is only now becoming known and being shared.

The project was born of a more general desire to invest in culture and history, but also of a deeper desire to know our past, to have a better sense of belonging, a more defined identity. In Jerusalem, this need is more clearly perceived. We need to reread and study our history so as to live in the present more serenely. If we consider that a large part of present-day phenomena – social, political, religious – has already been experienced by our parents and grandparents, we can resize the problems, put them into proper perspective, take a step back from them, so as to find the strength to build and invest in the future.

The museum will also be a source of social and economic development for the local population. Museums, archives, libraries – these are not only depositories of materials; they are also cultural institutions that have an economic consequence and create employment opportunities for the resident community, not only the Christians. But then, this is one of the tasks that the Custody has undertaken for centuries in this area. The spaces that will house the museum at one time were the cobbler shop, the wood shop, the metal shop, etc. That reality no longer exists because times have changed, but the idea is to continue to create, to develop this link, this relationship –economically, as well – with this land.” ([Interview continues on: www.fmc-terrasanta.org](http://www.fmc-terrasanta.org)).

The **TERRA SANCTA MUSEUM** will be devoted to the theme of Christian and Franciscan history in the Holy Land. The countless pilgrims and visitors from all over the world will be offered a cultural excursion which is flexible, but at the same time methodologically rigorous, divided among three separate thematic areas located in the Old City of Jerusalem and, in the future, extended to other sites in the Holy Land. A permanent exhibition for discovering the history of this extraordinary land, in which the fates of many peoples living together in the holy places of the three great monotheistic religions have been intertwined, often in mysterious ways. A **single exhibition complex** of 2,573 m² composed of three museums (Archaeological, Multimedia and History) each having its own educational objective, **located on two existing sites** (Monastery of the Flagellation and St. Saviour's Monastery), about 1,500 meters apart and near the principal pilgrimage and tourist destinations in Jerusalem (the Temple Mount, the Wailing Wall and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre).

The aim of the project promoters is to enhance the priceless historical, archaeological and artistic heritage and to make it accessible to everyone while at the same time **avoiding** its dispersion, encouraging restoration and preservation.

The **archaeological excavations carried out in the Holy Places over the past 150 years** and the very large number of **donations received over the course of the centuries** have helped to create extraordinary and rare collections of sculptures, paintings, goldsmith's work, illuminated manuscripts, liturgical vestments and precious archival documents, ranging chronologically from the Canaanite period (2nd millennium BC) to the medieval Crusaders (11th - 12th centuries AD).

The selection criterion chosen by the Scientific Committee has been of the geographic-evangelical type for the Archaeological Museum, determined in part by the history and nature of the archaeological excavations themselves that will be documented there, as well as the interests of the public for whom the museum is intended. For the History Museum a historical-thematic criterion has been employed, highlighting the historic missions of the Custody of the Holy Land and its relations with the European States.

The founding institution is the **Custody of the Holy Land**, a brotherhood of religious (the Friars Minor), who for more than 800 years have safeguarded the places of the Redemption, in conjunction with the **Studium Biblicum Franciscanum**, an academic institution for research and teaching of the Holy Scriptures and the archaeology of the Bible Lands, based in Jerusalem. This latter institution has provided technical and scientific consultancy to the project through the support of a Committee directed by Eugenio Alliata, Director of the Archaeological Museum of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum and composed of the Father-Professors of the SBF Biblical Institute, Massimo Pazzini, Ibrahim Najib, Tomislav Vuk and Stéphane Milovitch.

ATS Pro Terra Sancta, the nonprofit NGO recognized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an association serving the Custody of the Holy Land, has been given the responsibility of carrying out the project and coordinating fundraising activities, which have been launched at an international level.

The stage of analysis and study of the collections and design was concluded at the end of 2012. In the coming months the works of architectural restructuring and fitting out the areas involved will be undertaken, terminating in 2015.

The director of the museological project is **Gabriele Allevi**, who is in charge of overall organization taking into account the various conditions: the cultural objectives set forth by the client, the heritage available for display and the different publics to whom the museum will be addressed. Architectural and museum design, as well as the supervision of the works of fitting out, will be the responsibility of **Studio GTRF Tortelli Frassoni Architetti Associati**, which has chosen the methodology of the expositions and selected a rigorous language style, bringing to this task its wealth of experience in the field of museum design and reorganization of archaeological sites in Italy.

Deloitte Financial Advisory Services, one of the largest professional service firms in Italy and the world, has provided a feasibility study for the project, with the aim of providing guidance regarding the economic-financial evolution of the initiatives related to the project. The conclusion emerging from the careful and thorough analysis is that the project for the Terra Sancta Museum will be self-sustaining in economic and financial terms.

On 16 April a major exhibition opened at Versailles entitled The Treasure of the Holy Sepulchre (until 14 July 2013, Maison de Chateaubriand and Château de Versailles). Most of the objects presented by the Custody of the Holy Land will return to Jerusalem for permanent exhibition in the new museum. Among the objects selected from the Museum of the Custody, highlights include nineteen jars from the vast collection of the ancient Pharmacy at St. Saviour's, finds from the Treasure of Bethlehem, liturgical vestments, large paintings and a model of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The progress of the works on the Terra Sancta Museum can be followed on the site www.terrasantamuseum.org. Other useful sites: www.custodia.org, www.proterrasancta.org, www.fmc-terrasanta.org

YOUR NAME IN HISTORY The commitment of supporters.

Your name (family or institution) can be linked to one of the sections or to an individual room in the Museum. For further information please contact: info@proterrasancta.org, Associazione pro Terra Sancta – Custody of the Holy Land Santa. Bank Transfer: Banca Etica Intestazione; Account: Terra Sancta Museum; IBAN: IT35X 05018 01600 000000144474; BIC: CCRTIT2T84A

Coordination of Strategic Communication

Doni Ferrari, Secretariat, Custody of the Holy Land, Jerusalem, Tel +972 542839102, dferrari@custodia.org

Press Office

- ETS Edizioni Terra Santa - Giuseppe Caffulli, Director, www.terrasanta.net

Carlo Giorgi, press office - Tel +39 02 34592679, +39 3478101823, giorgi@terrasanta.net,

- Studio Pozzi Alessandra Pozzi, Tel +39 02 76003912 +39 338 5965789, pozzi@comunicazione@gmail.com

Images and video services - Franciscan Media Center (multimedia center of the Custody of the Holy Land), www.fmc-terrasanta.org - Stefania Sboarina, Serena Picariello, serena.picariello@fmc-terrasanta.org