

TERRA SANCTA MUSEUM
JERUSALEM, MONASTERY OF THE FLAGELLATION

Opening of the first section

VIA DOLOROSA

A multimedia journey back in time: from the condemnation of Jesus to contemporary pilgrimages
on an extraordinary archaeological site.

Press release – March 8, 2016

DISCOVERING THE VIA DOLOROSA, THE WAY OF THE CROSS IN JERUSALEM

On 17th March 2016, at the Monastery of the Flagellation in Jerusalem, the Custody of the Holy Land (the Franciscan Order of the province of the Holy Land) will open the first section of the new Terra Sancta Museum: the *Via Dolorosa*, the Way of the Cross in Jerusalem.

The project is unique and innovative for the Holy City. It has been in construction for several years now and will be completed in 2018 with two other sections, an historical and an archaeological one.

The *Terra Sancta Museum – Via Dolorosa* is a multimedia installation which combines three different dimensions: historical / archaeological, emotional and spiritual. A journey back in time through the history of Jerusalem, from Jesus' times to our days, in media-enhanced scenography. It will be a very powerful tool for experiencing, with greater understanding, the places along the Way of the Cross and the Holy Sepulchre, which many find difficult to comprehend today, and the urban evolution of the Holy City.

The *Via Dolorosa* is also proposed as an important moment of spirituality in preparation for the Way of the Cross itself. After the multimedia experience pilgrims may then start their Way of the Cross with a greater spirit, as a continuation of what they have just experienced. But all visitors are welcome, regardless of religion, culture, and ethnicity: the media narrative is also an historical documentary of great value and is open to everyone; it will particularly appeal to lovers of the history of Jerusalem.

The *Via Dolorosa* has a duration of 15 minutes and is divided into 3 stages which combine archaeological fragments, multimedia technology (a huge map of Jerusalem will be used as a screen to show time travel), and a moment for prayer to end the show, which resumes the beads of ancient pilgrims: remembrance and symbol of a centuries-old tradition to which the pilgrims of today belong.

The museum is located at the Monastery of the Flagellation (the second Station of the Via Dolorosa). The site is significant for Christians since it is traditionally identified with the place where Jesus was



convicted and handed over to be crucified. For this reason pilgrims usually start their Way of the Cross from here.

The hall housing the Via Dolorosa, called the *Lapidarium* and previously used as a warehouse for stones, has now been completely transformed and restored, revealing the uniqueness of the place. Of particular interest are the *Lithostrotos* (with parts of the famous “King’s Game”) which had been lost; the Herodian stairs leading to the Struthion Pool in ancient times (the pool can be seen today in the nearby Convent of the Sion Sisters); other exceptional architectural fragments from the Herodian and Hadrian ages (amongst them there is an important monumental inscription dedicated to Emperor Hadrian).

The project is promoted by the Custody of the Holy Land, in collaboration with:

- *Studium Biblicum Franciscanum* (Jerusalem) – Eugenio Alliata OFM and Gabriele Allevi – Curatorial concept (content research, screenplay and collaboration in the creative direction)
- *TAMSCHICK MEDIA+SPACE* (Berlin) – Concept, production and realisation of the audiovisual experience
- *Tortelli Frassoni GTRF Architetti Associati* (Brescia) – Architectural and museum design
- *Technical Office of the Custody of the Holy Land* (Jerusalem) – Renovation and construction
- *Association pro Terra Sancta* (Jerusalem) – Managing and fundraising partner

Photos: <http://www.terrasanctamuseum.org/en/photos/>

Coming soon: documentary of the *Via Dolorosa*

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

VISIT: Duration about 15 minutes

LANGUAGES: Currently 8 languages (English, Italian, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, Arabic, Hebrew) to meet the needs of local and international audiences.

BOOKING: The room can hold groups of 50 people at the most. To make reservations, contact info@proterrasancta.org. You can also purchase tickets on site and get into the exhibition if there aren't any reservations.

COST: With reservation: 10 NIS (2.50\$; 2.30€); on site: 15 NIS (4\$; 3.5€)

OPENING HOURS: Every day from 8 AM to 5 PM (6 PM during the Summer)

PROJECT'S HISTORY

The museum will cover 2,573 square metres and will comprise of three main exhibitions: Multimedia, Archaeology and History. The exhibitions will be located in two different sites (Monastery of the Flagellation and the St. Saviour Monastery), which are close to one another and very near to the main pilgrimage and tourist destinations in Jerusalem (Esplanade of the Mosques, the Western Wall, the Via Dolorosa and the Holy Sepulchre).



With this project, the Custody intends to draw the attention of the Western world to this Land, with a permanent exhibition of the treasures received as donations through the centuries. The aim of the museum is to help both pilgrims and visitors from around the world and at the same time help local communities of other religions to understand the history of Christianity and the places from which it originated.

The Terra Sancta Museum has a strong educational vocation and will illustrate, through the continuous interweaving of artistic and interpretative tools, the history of the Franciscan presence in the Holy Land, as well as the authenticity of the Christian shrines uncovered by ongoing archaeological research. The exhibition will then help visitors to understand the strong connection existing between the Christians and this land, showing the reason of their presence here.

Geographical and Biblical criteria have been chosen as guidelines for the Archaeology section, which will host extraordinary finds and remains from archaeological excavations at places connected with Jesus. This section takes into account the public interest mostly to be found among pilgrims. The History section will follow thematic criteria to show the importance of the Franciscan presence in the Holy Land, the history of the Custody of the Holy Land and its relations with the European countries and the Middle East.

The Custody of the Holy Land wishes to re-establish the ancient existing bonds with the European States and their citizens, hoping to receive from them the same support as in ancient times. The Association pro Terra Sancta has already received a great support from both the Christian and non-Christian world. Much more is needed though, to complete the museum.

LINK YOUR NAME TO THE HOLY LAND

Supporters can get involved with the project and link their name (family, company, organisation) to the Holy City of Jerusalem. The donor programme of the Terra Sancta Museum offers various options for contributing to the building of this unique museum. Founders will be able to choose either to support one of the three sections, the main rooms of the Museum or just one room. The donor's name will be carved in the typical local (Jerusalem) stone, which will be placed on the museum's floor. A stone copy will be delivered to the donor.

The Association pro Terra Sancta offers a 3 - 4 days' tour as alternative way to support the project. The tour includes cultural and archaeological visits and special meetings which are not included in standard pilgrimages. A tour of the Holy City offers exclusive access to the buildings that will host the museum, enabling visitors to follow the renovation works personally and have a unique experience of the wonders of Jerusalem. The exclusive tours are scheduled to visit the halls where Godfrey of Bouillon's sword and mounting brackets are preserved, together with a most precious treasure from Bethlehem. Four days packed with interest will guide the tourist through the main sites of ancient Palestine.



To support the project:

Terra Sancta Museum - IBAN IT35X 05018 01600 000000144474

Online donations: <http://www.terrasantamuseum.org/it/dona/>

PROMOTERS

The Custody of the Holy Land is the founding entity of the project. It consists of a religious fraternity (the Order of Friars Minors) which safeguards the Places of the Redemption, namely: the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, the Faculty of Biblical Science and Archaeology of the Roman Pontificia Universitas Antonianum in Jerusalem. The Custody aims to enhance the historical, archaeological and artistic heritage, giving everyone access to it, and caring for its preservation.

The Association pro Terra Sancta is a non-profit organisation, whose mission is to support the Custody of the Holy Land. The association has operated in the Holy Land since 2002 and it carries out international activities related to fund raising, coordination and management of humanitarian, social and cultural projects.

CONTACT

Manuela Pegoraro – mail: m.pegoraro@proterrasancta.org or info@terrasantamuseum.org

Follow the project at: www.terrasantamuseum.org

