



Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Autonomous Grand Priory of the United States of America

Pilgrim's Medal Program Palmer's Medal Sites

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INTRODUCTION



Pilgrim Medal Program

The Pilgrim Medal Program was established by the Grand Priory of the United States of America (GPUSA), Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (SMOTJ) as a charitable project to assist with the preservation of the Holy Places in Jerusalem and promote the pious practice of pilgrimage. Three distinguished medal sets have been created to recognize members of GPUSA, members of the international Order (OSMTH), and Friends of the Order. There are three distinct medals within the Pilgrim Medal Program:

The **Palmer's Medal** (gold) will be awarded to applicants who make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and who contemplate, either by participating in a religious service or by solitary reflection their spiritual heritage in six major sites in the Holy Land.

The **Pilgrim's Medal** (silver) will be awarded to applicants who make a pilgrimage to a major Christian holy place in Europe or the Middle East that is recognized as a pilgrimage site during the time of the Templars and who contemplate, either by participating in a religious service or by solitary reflection, their spiritual heritage.

The **Templar Medal** (bronze) will be awarded to applicants who make a pilgrimage to recognized Templar sites in Europe or the Middle East and who contemplate, either by participating in a religious service or by solitary reflection, their spiritual heritage. The only requirement is that the individual has contemplated their spiritual heritage at that site.

This publication focuses on the sites associated with the Palmer's Medal.

Description: On an escallop proper of gold, the crowned reversed patriarchal cross of the Order, enameled gules (red) pendant from the ribbon of the Order surmounted/centered by a mounted optional engraved bar argent (gold), identifying the place and date of the visit to the Templar site.

Ribbon: 35 mm wide, with 3 mm silver, 3 mm gold and 3 mm silver vertical bands on either side of a 17 mm center band of black. The miniature ribbon will be half the width of the regular size ribbon.

APPROVED SITES

The following is a list of approved GPUSA Palmer's Medal sites.

Church of the Annunciation (Nazareth)
Church of the Nativity (Bethlehem)
Beth-arabah
Cana
Capernaum
Tabgha
Mount of Beatitudes
Mount Tabor
Bethany
Mount of Olives
Chapel of the Ascension
Gethsemane
Via Dolorosa
Church of the Holy Sepulchre



Palmer

Historically a palmer is a pilgrim, especially one who had returned from the Holy Land with a palm frond or leaf as a sign of having undertaken the pilgrimage.

The palm branch is a symbol of victory, triumph, peace, and eternal life originating in the ancient Near East and Mediterranean world. The palm was sacred in Mesopotamian religions, and in ancient Egypt represented immortality. In Judaism, the lulav, a closed frond of the date palm is part of the festival of Sukkot. A palm branch was awarded to victorious athletes in ancient Greece, and a palm frond or the tree itself is one of the most common attributes of Victory personified in ancient Rome.

In Christianity, the palm branch is associated with Jesus' Triumphal Entry on Palm Sunday, when, according to John's gospel, "they took palm branches and went out to meet Him" (12:13 HCSB). Consequently, palms are not mentioned in any of the other three canonical gospel accounts. The palm seems to have been adopted into Christian iconography to represent victory, i.e. that of martyrs, or the victory of the spirit over the flesh.



Annunciation

To annunciate is to announce. The Annunciation, also referred to as the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Annunciation of Our Lady, or the Annunciation of the Lord, is the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox celebration of the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus, the Son of God, marking His Incarnation. In the Bible, the Annunciation is narrated in Luke 1:26–38. A separate, briefer annunciation is given to Joseph in Matthew 1:18–22. The Annunciation is described in the Quran, in Sura 003:045 verses 45–51.

Church of the Annunciation

The Church of the Annunciation, sometimes also referred to as the Basilica of the Annunciation, was established at the site where, according to one tradition, the Annunciation took place. Another tradition, based on the apocryphal Protoevangelium of James, holds that this event commenced while Mary was drawing water from a local spring in Nazareth, and the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation was erected at that alternate site.



Figure 1 Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth

The current Roman Catholic church is a two-story building constructed in 1969 over the site of an earlier Byzantine-era and then Crusader-era church. Inside, the lower level contains the Grotto of the Annunciation, believed by many Christians to be the remains of the original childhood home of Mary. The first shrine was probably built sometime in the middle of the 4th century comprising an altar in the cave in which Mary had lived. Christian tradition has held that a larger structure was commissioned by Emperor Constantine I, whose mother, Saint Helena, helped to found churches commemorating important events in Jesus Christ's life. The Church of the Annunciation was founded around the same time as the Church of the Nativity (the birthplace) and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (the tomb). Some version of it was known to have still been in existence around 570 AD, but it was destroyed in the 7th century after the Muslim conquest of Palestine.

The second church was built over the ruins of the Byzantine era church during the Crusades, following the conquest of Nazareth by Tancred in 1102. The Crusader era church was never fully completed. Five Romanesque capitals carved by artists from northern France, and discovered during excavations in 1909, had not yet been installed in 1187 when news of Saladin's victory in the Battle of Hittin reached the city. Saladin granted permission to Franciscan priests to remain in Nazareth to oversee services at the church.

The Holy Land

is an area roughly located between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea that also includes the Eastern Bank of the Jordan River. Traditionally, it is synonymous both with the biblical Land of Israel and with the region of Palestine. The term "Holy Land" usually refers to a territory roughly corresponding to the modern State of Israel, the Palestinian territories, western Jordan, and parts of southern Lebanon and of southwestern Syria. Jews, Christians, and Muslims all regard it as holy. Jews do not commonly refer to the Land of Israel as "Holy Land" - The holiness of the Land of Israel is generally implied in the Tanakh by the Land being given to the Israelites by God, that is, it is the "promised land", an integral part of God's covenant. For Christians, the Land of Israel is considered holy because of its association with the birth, ministry, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. In the Qur'an, the land is referred to as being 'Blessed'.

In 1260, Baybars and his Mamluk army destroyed the church during their attack on Nazareth. A small number of Franciscans managed to stay in Nazareth until the fall of Acre in 1291. In the three centuries that followed, the Franciscans were in and out of Nazareth, depending on the local political situation, which was constantly in flux. Franciscan accounts of this period document their expulsion in 1363, their return in 1468 and a massacre of some of their members in 1542. Local Christian families with Franciscan support helped take care of the church as well during this period.

Emir Fakr ad-Din granted the Franciscans permission to return in 1620, at which time they constructed a small structure to enclose the holy grotto that is venerated as the house of Mary. In 1730, Zahir al-Umar permitted construction of a new church, which became a central gathering place for Nazareth Latin community. The church was enlarged in 1877, and then completely demolished in 1954 to allow for the construction of a new basilica, which was completed in 1969.

Church of the Nativity

The Church of the Nativity, also called the Basilica of the Nativity, is located in Bethlehem in the Palestinian West Bank. The grotto is the oldest site continuously used as a place of worship in Christianity, and the basilica is the oldest major church in the Holy Land.

The holy site known as the Nativity Grotto is thought to be the cave in which Jesus of Nazareth was born. In 135, Emperor Hadrian had the site above the Grotto converted into a worship place for Adonis, the Greek god of beauty and desire.

The first basilica on this site was begun by Helena of Constantinople, the mother of Emperor Constantine I. The construction started in 327 and was completed a few years later. It was officially dedicated on May 31, 339. Construction of this early church was carried out as part of a larger project following the First Council of Nicaea during Constantine's reign, aimed to build churches on the supposed sites of the life of Jesus. The structure was burned and destroyed in one of the Samaritan Revolts of 529 or 556.



Figure 2 Grotto of the Nativity



Status Quo

is an understanding among religious communities with respect to nine shared religious sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Other Holy Places in Israel and Palestine were not deemed subject to the Status Quo because the authorities of one religion or of one community within a religion are in recognized or effective possession. The *status quo* stemmed from a *firman* (decree) of Ottoman sultan Osman III in 1757 that preserved the division of ownership and responsibilities of various Christian holy places. Further firmans issued in 1852 and 1853 affirmed that no changes could be made without consensus from all six Christian communities. The actual provisions of the Status Quo were never formally established, but the 1929 summary became the standard text on the subject. A visible symbol of this state of inactivity is the immovable ladder, which has remained in the same place under the window of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre since at least 1757.

The basilica was rebuilt in its present form in 565 by Byzantine Emperor Justinian I. The Church of the Nativity was used as the primary coronation church for Crusader kings, from the second ruler of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1100 and until 1131. The Crusaders undertook extensive decoration and restoration on the basilica and grounds, a process that continued until 1169, from 1165-69 even through a rare cooperation between the Catholic king Amalric I of Jerusalem and the Byzantine emperor Manuel I Komnenos, who was his father-in-law.

Earthquakes inflicted significant damage to the Church of the Nativity between 1834 and 1837. By 1846, the Church of the Nativity and its surrounding site lay in disrepair and vulnerable to looting. Much of the interior marble flooring was looted in the early half of the 19th century, much of which was transferred to use in other buildings around the region. The silver star marking the spot where Christ was born was stolen in 1847.

The Church of the Nativity, while remaining basically unchanged since the Justinian reconstruction, has seen numerous repairs and additions, especially from the Crusader period, such as two bell towers (now gone), wall mosaics and paintings (partially preserved). Over the centuries, the surrounding compound has been expanded comprising three different monasteries: one Greek Orthodox, one Armenian Apostolic, and one Roman Catholic, of which the first two contain bell towers built during the modern era.

A 250-year old understanding among religious communities, the Status Quo, applies to the site.

Beth-arabah

Beth-Arabah (place of the Arabah) One of the 6 cities of Judah "in the wilderness" (Joshua 15:61), on the borders of Benjamin and Judah (Joshua 15:6; Joshua 18:18 Septuagint). "The wilderness of Judah" is the barren land West of the Dead Sea. Beth-arabah is not yet identified. It afterwards included in the towns of Benjamin.

In Biblical times, the Araba was a center of copper production; King Solomon is believed to have had mines here based on copper mines dating to his reign. The Arabah, especially its eastern part, was part of the realm of the Edomites (called "Idumeans" during the Roman times). Later the eastern Arabah became the domain of the Nabateans, the builders of the city of Petra.

The Arabah is 103 mi in length, from the Gulf of Aqaba to the southern shore of the Dead Sea. Arabah is now divided between Israel and Jordan.

The Israelites crossed into the Promised Land through the Arabah, without

Moses. Under the leadership of Joshua, the Israelites crossed the Arabah just north of the Dead Sea, which in that instance was referred to as the "Sea of the Arabah": And, when the Kingdom of Judah fell to the Babylonians, the last king of Judah, Zedekiah, attempted to flee from Jerusalem to the Arabah.

Cana

Among Christians and other students of the New Testament, Cana (reed) is best known as the place where, according to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus performed "the first of his signs", his first public miracle, the turning of a large quantity of water into wine at a wedding feast (John 2:1–11) when the wine provided by the bridegroom had run out. Although none of the synoptic gospels record the event, mainstream Christian tradition holds that this is the first public miracle of Jesus.

The other biblical references to Cana are also in John: John 4:46, which mentions that Jesus is visiting Cana when he is asked to heal the son of a royal official at Capernaum; and John 21:2, where it is mentioned that Nathanael (sometimes identified with the Bartholomew included in the synoptic gospels' lists of apostles) comes from Cana.

There are at least five locations which have been under consideration as the New Testament Cana.

- The village of **Qana**, about 18 miles from Tyre, Lebanon, is traditionally held to be the correct site by many Lebanese Christians. In times of peace, it is a popular tourist site commemorating the miracle.
- **Kafr Kanna, Israel.** The first time this site is associated with New Testament Cana is in a mid-17th century report to the Pope by Francesco Quaresimo, the papal emissary to Palestine, where he noted there were two possible candidates: Khirbet Qana and Kafr Kanna.
- The ruined village of **Khirbet Qana, Israel** meaning "the ruins of Cana", is also a possible candidate. It overlooks the Beit Netofa Valley from the north, and is about 5.6 mi north of Kafr Kanna, and has also been noticed by pilgrims since the 12th century or earlier.
- **Karm er-Rasm, Israel.** Located just north of Kafr Kanna, this site was recently excavated by Israeli archaeologists. The excavation revealed evidence of a substantial Roman village with a Jewish population which declined considerably in the Late Roman period, and which was finally abandoned in the Byzantine Period, explaining why the pilgrim route was shifted to Kafr Kanna.

continued

Synagogue

Synagogues are consecrated spaces used for the purpose of prayer, Tanakh (the entire Hebrew Bible, including the Torah) reading, study and assembly. Israelis use the Hebrew term *beyt kneset* "house of assembly".

Ashkenazi Jews have traditionally used the Yiddish term *shul* in everyday speech. Sephardi Jews and Romaniote Jews generally use the term *kal*. Spanish Jews call the synagogue a *sinagoga* and Portuguese Jews call it an *esnoga*. Persian Jews and some Karaite Jews also use the term *kenesa*, which is derived from Aramaic, and some Mizrahi Jews use *kenis*. Some Reform, Reconstructionist, and Conservative Jews use the word "temple". The Greek word *synagogue* is used in English to cover the preceding possibilities.

- **Ain Qana, Israel.** This site, whose name means "the spring of Cana" is located about a mile north of Nazareth. Some early Christian pilgrim reports mention a spring in association with the Cana of Galilee, but no excavations have been conducted there yet. Ain Qana is considered by some to be a better candidate based on etymological grounds .

Capernaum

Capernaum was a fishing village established during the time of the Hasmoneans, located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The village was inhabited continuously from the 2nd century BC to the 11th century AD, when it was abandoned sometime before the Crusader conquest. *Kfar Nahūm*, the original name of the small town, means "Nahum's village" in Hebrew, but apparently there is no connection with the prophet named Nahum.

The town is cited in all four gospels (Matthew 4:13, 8:5, 11:23, 17:24, Mark 1:21, 2:1, 9:33, Luke 4:23, 31,7:1, 10:15, John 2:12, 4:46, 6:17, 24, 59) where it was reported to have been the hometown of the tax collector Matthew, and located not far from Bethsaida, the hometown of the apostles Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John.



Figure 3 Capernaum synagogue

It was in the Capernaum synagogue that Jesus gave the Sermon on the Bread of Life (John 6:35-59) "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day". Although dating the synagogue has been problematic it is thought that the synagogue Jesus knew was built of black basalt rock and now lies beneath a more recent construction. In this synagogue Jesus would regularly preach (John 6:59, Luke 4:33). Christ expelled a demon from a possessed man here (Mark 1:21-27) and cured a Roman officer's servant of palsy, the centurion is thought to have had the synagogue built (Luke 7:3). Here Jesus is also credited with raising the daughter of Jairus from the dead (Luke 8:41-53).

The original synagogue was destroyed and later replaced in approximately 200AD. The remains of the synagogue include one complete wall, the ruins of the other walls and several columns. It was constructed in white stone unlike the characteristic black basalt rock used for other Capernaum buildings. You can still see some of the stucco work, frescos and motif carvings on the walls as well as inscriptions in Greek and Aramaic commemorating the synagogue benefactors.

Archaeologists uncovered an early Christian home in Capernaum thought to have been the home of Peter. Jesus cured Peter's mother-in-law here (Matthew 8:14-16) and is thought to have lived in this house while in Capernaum. This is the site where Christ cured a paralytic who was lowered in through the roof (Mark 2:1-12). After Jesus' death the home became a place of worship and several architectural changes were made which distinguished it from other homes. In the 5th century an octagonal church was built here to preserve the remains of the Insula Sacra or holy site. Many inscriptions in Greek, Armenian, Estrangelo and Latin were found on the ancient stones. There now stands a modern hexagonal Franciscan church over the spot thought to have been Peter's house. There is a glass floor so that you can still see the ancient original church below.

Tabgha

Tabgha is an area situated on the north-western shore of the Sea of Galilee in Israel. It is traditionally accepted as the place of the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes (Mark 6:30-46) and the fourth resurrection appearance of Jesus (John 21:1-24) after his Crucifixion.

The site's name is derived from the Greek name *Heptapegon* ("seven springs"). Its pronunciation gradually changed to "Tabego", and was eventually changed to "Tabgha" by the Arabic speakers.

The earliest building at Tabgha was a small chapel built in the 4th century A.D. (around 350) by the



Figure 4 Mosaic of fish and bread on the church floor.

Jewish convert to Christianity, Joseph of Tiberias. The 4th century small shrine was dismantled in 480 and a bigger chapel was built by Martyrius of Jerusalem, Patriarch of Jerusalem from 478 to 486. Martyrius was Egyptian by origin, and this may be the reason why the floor of his chapel was covered with a beautiful Nile mosaic. The mosaic of the fish and loaves is laid next to a large rock, which has caused some New Testament scholars to speculate that the builders of the original church believed that Jesus stood on this rock when he blessed the fish and loaves just before the feeding of the crowd who had come to hear him.

The large monastery and a church were built in the 5th century and most likely destroyed in 614 during the Persian invasion. By the Crusader conquests the Byzantine site was forgotten, and rediscovered only in the 20th century.

Today, the Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fish, shortened to the Church of the Multiplication, rests on the site of the two earlier churches.



Figure 5 Church of the Multiplication

The Beatitudes

“Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake” (Matt 5:3-11 KJV).

Mount of Beatitudes

The Mount of Beatitudes is a hill in northern Israel, in the Korazim Plateau where Jesus is believed to have delivered the Sermon on the Mount. The traditional location for the Mount of Beatitudes is on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, between Capernaum and Gennesaret, on the southern slopes of the Korazim Plateau. The actual location of the Sermon on the Mount is not certain, but the present site (also known as Mount Eremos) has been commemorated for more than 1600 years; the site is very near Tabgha.



Figure 6 Roman Catholic chapel at Mount of Beatitudes

A Byzantine church was erected lower down the slope from the current site in the 4th century, and it was used until the 7th century. Remains of a cistern and a monastery are still visible.

The mount is topped by a Catholic chapel built in 1939 by the

Franciscan Sisters with the support of the Italian ruler Mussolini. In front of the church, the symbols on the pavement represent Justice, Prudence, Fortitude, Charity, Faith and Temperance. Inside the church hangs the cloak from Pope Paul VI's visit in 1964.

Mount Tabor

Mount Tabor is located in Lower Galilee, Israel, at the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley, 11 miles west of the Sea of Galilee. In the Hebrew Bible, Mount Tabor is the site of the Battle of Mount Tabor between the Israelite army under the leadership of Barak and the army of the Canaanite king of Hazor, Jabin, commanded by Sisera. In Christian tradition, Mount Tabor is the site of the Transfiguration of Jesus.



Figure 7 Mount Tabor

Mount Tabor is shaped almost like half a sphere. The mountain is a monadnock: an isolated hill or small mountain rising abruptly from gently sloping or level surrounding land, and is not volcanic.

At the top of the mountain are two Christian monasteries, one Greek Orthodox on the northeast side and one Roman Catholic on the southeast side.



Figure 8 St. Elias

Greek Orthodox Monastery

The main church of the Greek Orthodox monastery is dedicated to the Transfiguration and lends its name to the entire monastery. The construction of the current church was started by a Romanian monk, Irinarh Rosetti, in 1859, the year of his death, and was finished by his disciple, Nectarie Banul, in 1862, making it the first religious structure built by Romanian Orthodox Christians in the Holy Land.

Northeast of the Church of the Transfiguration, there is the more modest Church of the Prophet Elijah. Northwest of the main church there is a small cave-church named after Melchizedek, the King of Salem. According to the Christian tradition, this cave was the place where Abraham met the king of Salem. The cave was known to pilgrims and local Christians during the Middle Ages.



The Transfiguration of Jesus

The transfiguration of Jesus is an event reported in the New Testament when Jesus is transfigured and becomes radiant in glory upon a mountain. The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 17:1–8, Mark 9:2–8, Luke 9:28–36) describe it, and the Second Epistle of Peter also refers to it (2 Peter 1:16–18). It has also been hypothesized that the first chapter of the Gospel of John alludes to it (John 1:14). In these accounts, Jesus and three of his apostles, Peter, James, John, go to a mountain (the Mount of Transfiguration) to pray. On the mountain, Jesus begins to shine with bright rays of light. Then the prophets Moses and Elijah appear next to him and he speaks with them. Jesus is then called "Son" by a voice in the sky, assumed to be God the Father, as in the Baptism of Jesus.

Church of the Transfiguration

Between 1919 until 1924 an impressive Roman Catholic church of the Franciscan order named "Church of the Transfiguration" was built on the peak of Mount Tabor. The church was built upon the ruins of a Byzantine church from the 5th or 6th century and a Crusader church from the 12th century. The friars of the church live next to the church in a monastery established in 1873.

The church consists of three naves which are separated by two rows of columns supporting arches. In the two bell towers on either side of the entrance, there are two chapels. The northern chapel is dedicated to Moses and it contains an image of him receiving the Tables of the Law on Mount Sinai, and the southern chapel is dedicated to Elijah the prophet and it contains an image of him invoking God during his confrontation with the Ba'al prophets on Mount Carmel. In the upper part of the church, above the altar, there is a mosaic which depicts the Transfiguration.



Figure 9 Church of the Transfiguration

Bethany

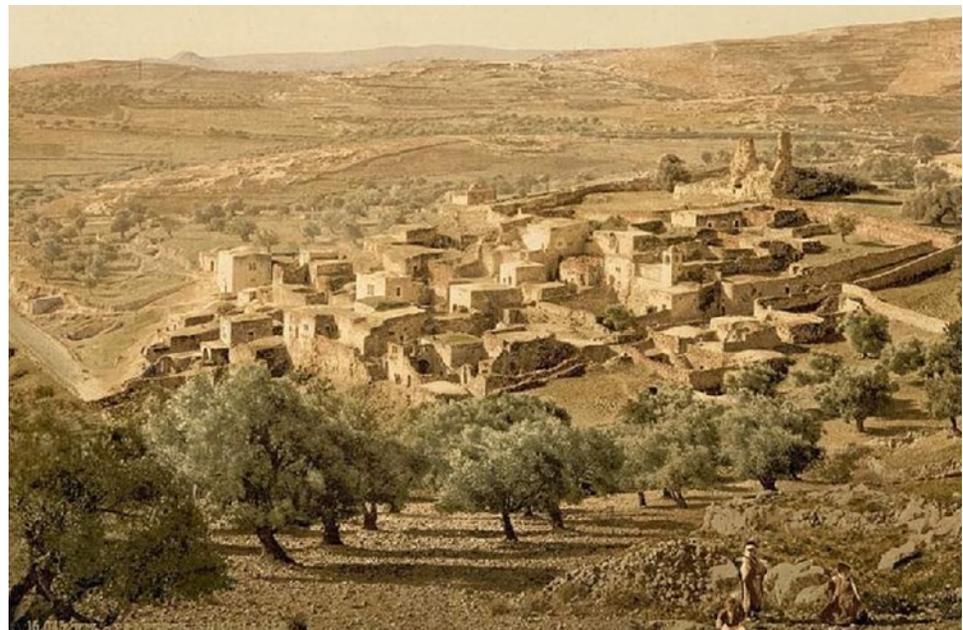


Figure 10 Ancient view of Bethany

Pilgrim of Bordeaux

The Pilgrim of Bordeaux was an anonymous pilgrim from Burdigala (present-day Bordeaux, France) who recounts his journey to the Holy Land in the years 333 and 334 as he traveled by land through northern Italy and the Danube valley to Constantinople, then through Asia Minor and Syria to Jerusalem, and then back by way of Macedonia, Otranto, Rome, and Milan. His *Itinerarium* survives in four manuscripts, all written between the 8th and 10th centuries. Two give only the Judean portion of the trip, which is fullest in topographical glosses on the sites, in a range of landscape detail missing from the other sections, and Christian legend.

Bethany is recorded in the New Testament as the home of the siblings Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, as well as that of Simon the Leper. Jesus is reported to have lodged there after his entry into Jerusalem, and it could be from Bethany that he parted from his disciples at the Ascension.

Bethany has traditionally been identified with the present-day West Bank city of al-Eizariya, site of the reputed Tomb of Lazarus, about 1.5 miles to the east of Jerusalem on the south-eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.

Ancient Bethany was the site of an almshouse for the poor and a place of care for the sick. There is a hint of association between Bethany and care for the unwell in the Gospels: Mark tells of Simon the Leper's house there (Mark 14:3–10); Jesus receives urgent word of Lazarus' illness from Bethany (John 11:1–12:11). Based on the names found carved on thousands of ossuaries at the site, that Bethany in the time of Jesus was settled by people from Galilee who had come to live by Jerusalem. This would explain why Jesus and the disciples, as Galileans, would find it convenient to stay here when visiting Jerusalem.

Christian churches have been built here since the early centuries. In AD 333, the Anonymous Pilgrim of Bordeaux reported seeing “the **crypt** where Lazarus had been laid to rest”. By the 14th century the churches were in ruins and the original entrance to the tomb had been turned into a **mosque**. In the 16th century the Franciscans cut through the soft rock to create the present entrance.

Today's pilgrims enter from the street down a flight of 24 well-worn and uneven steps to a vestibule. Three more steps lead to the burial chamber. Tradition says Jesus stood in the vestibule to call Lazarus from the grave. The present Catholic church, with mosaics depicting the events that occurred, was built in 1954.

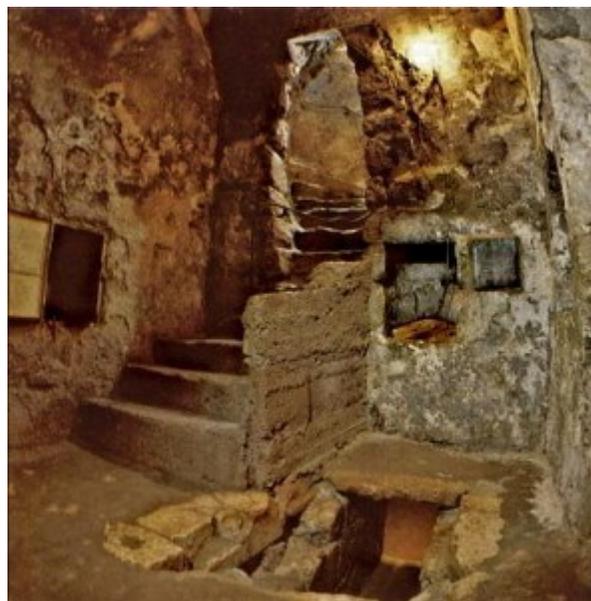


Figure 11 Inside the Tomb of Lazarus, with the burial chamber at lower right

Mount of Olives



Church of the Pater Noster



Tomb of the Prophets



Church of Dominus Flevit



Tomb of the Virgin Mary



Church of All Nations

The Mount of Olives or Mount Olivet is a mountain ridge east of and adjacent to Jerusalem's Old City. It is named for the olive groves that once covered its slopes.

From Biblical times until the present, Jews have been buried on the Mount of Olives (approximately 150,000 graves). The necropolis on the southern ridge, the location of the modern village of Silwan, was the burial place of Jerusalem's most important citizens in the period of the Biblical kings. The religious ceremony marking the start of a new month was held on the Mount of Olives in the days of the Second Temple. Roman soldiers from the 10th Legion camped on the mount during the Siege of Jerusalem in the year 70 AD. After the destruction of the Second Temple, Jews celebrated the festival of Sukkot on the Mount of Olives. They made pilgrimages to the Mount of Olives because it was higher than the Temple Mount and offered a panoramic view of the Temple site. It became a traditional place for lamenting the Temple's destruction.

The Mount of Olives is first mentioned in connection with David's flight from Absalom (II Samuel 15:30): "And David went up by the ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went up." The ascent was probably east of the City of David, near the village of Silwan. The sacred character of the mount is alluded to in the Book of Ezekiel (11:23): "And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city."

Jesus is said to have spent time on the mount, teaching and prophesying to his disciples (Matthew 24–25), including the Olivet discourse, returning after each day to rest (Luke 21:37, and John 8:1) and also coming there on the night of his betrayal. At the foot of the Mount of Olives lies the Garden of Gethsemane. The New Testament tells how Jesus and his disciples sang together – "When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives" Gospel of Matthew 26:30. Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives according to Acts 1:9–12.

Landmarks on the top of the Mount of Olives include the Augusta Victoria Hospital with the Lutheran Church of the Ascension, the Mosque or Chapel of the Ascension, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Ascension, and the Church of the Pater Noster. On the western slope there are the historic Jewish cemetery, the so-called Tomb of the Prophets, the Catholic Church of Dominus Flevit, and the Russian Orthodox Church of Mary Magdalene. At the foot of the mount, where it meets the Kidron Valley, there is the Garden of Gethsemane with the Church of all Nations. Within the Kidron Valley itself are the Tomb of the Virgin Mary and the Grotto of Gethsemane.

Chapel of the Ascension

Shortly after the death and resurrection of Jesus, early Christians began gathering in secret to commemorate his Ascension at a small cave on the Mount of Olives. The issuance of the Edict of Milan by the Roman Emperor Constantine I in 313 made it possible for Christians to worship overtly without fear of government persecution. By the time of the pilgrim Egeria's travels to Jerusalem in 384, the spot of veneration had been moved to the present location, uphill from the cave, which had been integrated into the Constantinian Church of Eleona, dedicated by then just to Jesus' teachings about good and evil (Matthew 24:1-26:2).

The first complex constructed on the site of the present chapel was known as *Imbomon*. It was a rotunda, open to the sky, surrounded by circular porticoes and arches. Sometime between AD 384 and 390, Poimenia, a wealthy and pious Roman aristocratic woman of the imperial family, financed the building of a Byzantine-style church "around Christ's last footprints. It was subsequently rebuilt in the late 7th century.

The reconstructed church was eventually destroyed, and rebuilt a second time by the Crusaders in the 12th century. This final church was eventually destroyed by the armies of Salah ad-Din. This structure still stands today, in a form partially altered in the time after Saladin's 1187 conquest of Jerusalem.



Figure 11 Chapel of the Ascension

After the fall of Jerusalem in 1187 the ruined church and monastery were abandoned by the Christians, who resettled in Acre. During this time Salah ad-Din established the Mount of Olives as a waqf entrusted to two sheikhs, al-Salih Wali al-Din and Abu Hasan al-Hakari. This donation was registered in a document dated October 20, 1188. The chapel was converted to a mosque, and a mihrab installed in it. Because the vast majority of pilgrims to the site were Christian, as a gesture of compromise and goodwill Salah ad-Din ordered the construction, two years later, of a second mosque nearby for Muslim worship while Christians continued to visit the main chapel. Also around this time the complex was fortified with towers, walls, and guarded by watchman. The shrine and surrounding structures saw periods of non-use and disrepair over the next 300 years. By the 15th century the destroyed eastern section of the octagonal outer wall was separated from the rest by a dividing wall and was occupied by peasant houses and animal stables. Though still under the authority of the Islamic Waqf of Jerusalem, the edicule-turned-mosque is currently opened to visitors of all faiths, for a nominal fee.

Gethsemane



Figure 12 Garden of Gethsemane

Gethsemane is an urban garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. In Christianity, it is the place where Jesus underwent the agony in the garden and was arrested the night before his crucifixion.

The name is derived from the Aramaic meaning "oil press". Matthew 26:36 and Mark 14:32 call it *chōrion*, meaning a place or estate. The Gospel of John says Jesus entered a garden with his disciples. The Garden of Gethsemane became a focal site for early Christian pilgrims. It was visited in 333 by the anonymous "Pilgrim of Bordeaux" (see above). Eight ancient olive trees growing in the Latin site of the garden may be 900 years old.

In 1681 Croatian knights of the Holy Order of Jerusalem, Paul, Antun and James bought the Gethsemane Garden and donated it to the Franciscan community, who owns it until this day. A three-dimensional plate on the right side next to the entrance to the garden describes the aforementioned gift to the community.

Via Dolorosa

The Via Dolorosa (Latin for "Sorrowful Way") is a processional route in the Old City of Jerusalem, believed to be the path that Jesus walked on the way to his crucifixion. The winding route from the Antonia Fortress west to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—a distance of about 2,000 feet—is a celebrated place of Christian pilgrimage.

The Via Dolorosa is the modern remnant of one of the two main east-west routes through Aelia Capitolina (a Roman colony), as built by Hadrian. Standard Roman city design places the main east-west road through the middle of the city, but the presence of the Temple Mount in the middle of this position required Hadrian's planners to add an extra east-west road at its north.



Stations of the Cross at Via Dolorosa

1. Jesus is condemned to death
2. Jesus carries his cross
3. Jesus falls for the first time
4. Jesus meets his mother
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the cross
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus
7. Jesus falls for the second time
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem
9. Jesus falls for the third time
10. Jesus is stripped of his garments
11. Crucifixion: Jesus is nailed to the cross
12. Jesus dies on the cross
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb

The first reports of a pilgrimage route corresponding to the Biblical events dates from the Byzantine era; during that time, a Holy Thursday procession started from the top of the Mount of Olives, stopped in Gethsemane, entered the Old City at the Lions' Gate, and followed approximately the current route to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; however, there were no actual stops during the route along the Via Dolorosa itself. By the 8th century, however, the route went via the western hill instead; starting at Gethsemane, it continued to the alleged *House of Caiaphas* on Mount Zion, then to Hagia Sophia, and finally to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

During the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholics of Jerusalem split into two factions, one controlling the churches on the western hill, the other the churches on the eastern hill; they each supported the route which took pilgrims past the churches the faction in question controlled.

In the 14th century, Pope Clement VI achieved some consistency in route with the Bull, "Nuper Carissimae," establishing the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, and charging the friars with "the guidance, instruction, and care of Latin pilgrims as well as with the guardianship, maintenance, defense and rituals of the Catholic shrines of the Holy Land." Beginning around 1350, Franciscan friars conducted official tours of the Via Dolorosa, from the Holy Sepulchre to the House of Pilate—opposite the direction traveled by Christ in Bible. The route was not reversed until c. 1517 when the Franciscans began to follow the events of Christ's Passion chronologically—setting out from the House of Pilate and ending with the crucifixion at Golgotha.

The first stations to appear in pilgrimage accounts were the Encounter with Simon of Cyrene and the Daughters of Jerusalem. These were followed by a host of other, more or less ephemeral, stations. This negotiation of stations, between the European imagination and the physical site would continue for the next six centuries. Only in the 19th century was there general accord on the position of the first, fourth, fifth, and eighth stations. Ironically, archaeological discoveries in the 20th century now indicate that the early route of the Via Dolorosa on the Western hill was actually a more realistic path.

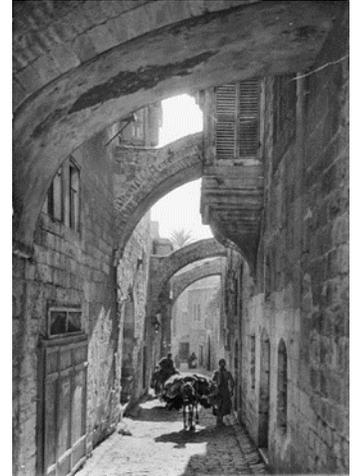


Figure 13 Via Dolorosa

Church of the Holy Sepulchre



Figure 14 Church of the Holy Sepulchre

Old City of Jerusalem

Traditionally, the Old City has been divided into four uneven quarters, although the current designations were introduced only in the 19th century. Today, the Old City is roughly divided (going counterclockwise from the northeastern corner) into the Muslim Quarter, Christian Quarter, Armenian Quarter and Jewish Quarter. The Old City's monumental defensive walls and city gates were built in the years 1535–1542 by the Turkish sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. The Old City is home to several sites of key religious importance: the Temple Mount and Western Wall for Jews, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for Christians and the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque.

Also called the Church of the Resurrection or Church of the Anastasis, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is in the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. The church contains, according to traditions dating back to at least the 4th century, the two holiest sites in Christianity: the site where Jesus of Nazareth was crucified, at a place known as Calvary or Golgotha, and Jesus's empty tomb.

Within the church proper are the last four (or, by some definitions, five) stations of the Via Dolorosa, representing the final episodes of the Passion of Jesus. The church has been a major Christian pilgrimage destination since its creation in the 4th century, as the traditional site of the resurrection of Christ, thus its original Greek name, Church of the Anastasis ('Resurrection').

In 70 AD, the siege of Jerusalem by Emperor Titus saw the destruction of the Second Temple. Sixty years later, in 130 AD, the Roman emperor Hadrian started a Roman colony in Jerusalem, and c. 135, ordered that a cave containing a rock-cut tomb be filled in to create a flat foundation for a temple dedicated to Jupiter or Venus. The temple remained until the early 4th century.

After seeing a vision of a cross in the sky in 312, Constantine the Great converted to Christianity, signed the Edict of Milan legalizing the religion, and sent his mother Helena to Jerusalem to look for Christ's tomb. With the help of Bishop of Caesarea Eusebius and Bishop of Jerusalem Macarius, three crosses were found near a tomb, leading the Romans to believe that they had found Calvary. Constantine ordered in about 326 that *Jupiter Capitolinus* be replaced by a church. After the temple was torn down and its ruins removed, the soil was removed from the cave, revealing a rock-cut tomb that Helena and Macarius identified as the burial site of Jesus, which a shrine was

constructed around. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was built as separate constructs over the two holy sites: the great basilica, an enclosed colonnaded atrium with the traditional site of Calvary in one corner, and across a courtyard, a rotunda called the *Anastasis* ("Resurrection"), where Helena and Macarius believed Jesus to have been buried. The church was consecrated on September 13, 335.

The building was destroyed by a fire in May of 614 A.D when the Sassanid Empire, under Khosrau II, invaded Jerusalem and captured the True Cross. In 630, the Emperor Heraclius rebuilt the church after recapturing the city. The building suffered severe damage due to an earthquake in 746. Early in the 9th century, another earthquake damaged the dome of the Anastasis. The damage was repaired in 810. In the year 841, the church suffered yet another fire. In 966, due to a defeat of Muslim armies in the region of Syria, a riot broke out, which was followed by reprisals. The basilica was burned again. The doors and roof were burnt, and the Patriarch John VII was murdered.

On October 18, 1009, Fatimid caliph Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah ordered the complete destruction of the church as part of a more general campaign against Christian places of worship in Palestine and Egypt. The damage was extensive, with few parts of the early church remaining, and the roof of the rock-cut tomb damaged; the original shrine was destroyed.

Fires, destruction – natural and man-made – and reconstruction continued through the 21st century.

In 2016, restoration works were performed in the Aedicule. For the first time since at least 1555, marble cladding which protected the estimated burial bed of Jesus from vandalism and

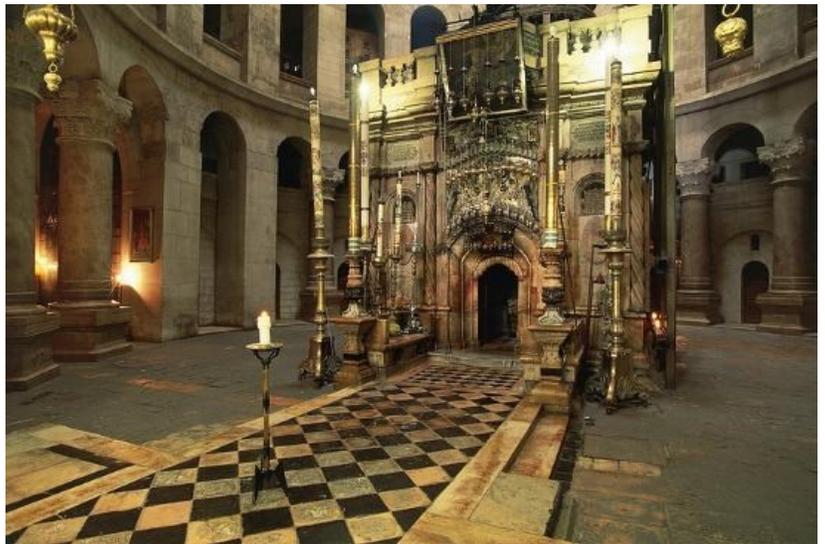


Figure 15 Aedicule of the Holy Sepulchre

souvenir takers was removed. When the cladding was first removed on October 26, an initial inspection showed only a layer of fill material underneath. By the night of October 28, the original limestone burial bed was revealed intact. This suggested that the tomb location has not changed through time and confirmed the existence of the original limestone cave walls within the Aedicule. The tomb was resealed shortly thereafter.



Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Autonomous Grand Priory of the United States of America

Non Nobis, Domine, Non Nobis, Sed Nomini Tuo Da Glorium