

Capernaum, the home of Jesus

A project to conserve and restore the Capernaum pilgrimage site.

"This small town – the setting for key events in the public life of Jesus – is of great importance in the history of Christianity. Capernaum is a jewel in the crown of the historic and religious sites in the Holy Land. As such, it deserves to be presented to the public in a way which reveals the hidden message in its remains."

P. Pierbattista Pizzaballa – Custos of the Holy Land

The excavations at Capernaum are on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. According to the Gospels, Jesus settled in Capernaum at the beginning of his public life and made it "his town". Capernaum and the surrounding area were thus the setting for the appointment of the first disciple and numerous miracles and teachings by Jesus.



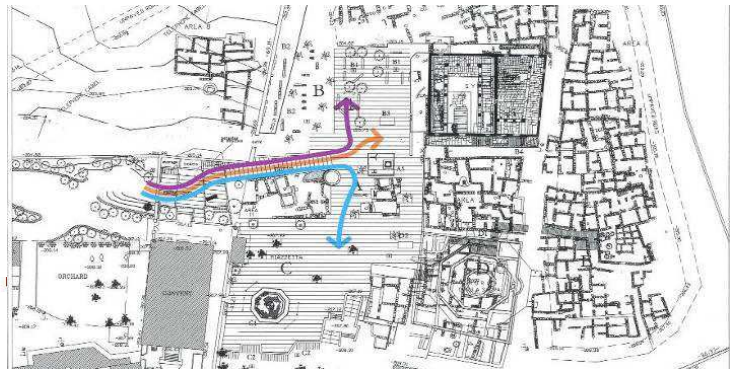
Capernaum was abandoned for unknown reasons in the 11th century. The remains of the site were only rediscovered in the 19th century, and in 1893, the site was acquired by the Franciscans in the Holy Land. Excavations have revealed a great deal about everyday life in the ancient town. In addition to numerous vessels, coins and mosaics, the remains of many buildings were discovered. One particular highlight is a large synagogue from the 5th century, which was built on an older one in which Jesus is thought to have taught himself.

However, the most significant discovery for Christianity is the house of Peter the Apostle, in which Jesus undoubtedly spent a great deal of time or possibly lived. This house was used by the first Christians as a place of worship and was rebuilt as a small octagonal church in the Byzantine era. Capernaum is a place in which the early church took its first steps. Due to both its beauty and its spiritual meaning, Capernaum is one of the most important sites of Christianity in the Holy Land.

Description of the project and its objectives

Over the years the work of the Franciscans has made accessible a large part of the archaeological site. The present project consists of interventions for its

protection and enhancement. The first intervention, carried out in collaboration with the Mosaic Centre Jericho, was characterized by a dual activity: the restoration of the precious mosaic found above the house of Peter, the place used by Jesus as the base for his travels during the period of his preaching in Galilee; and, at the same time, the production of a faithful copy of the original, which has been placed in the square in front of the church, so that pilgrims will be able to touch with their own hands the beauty of this precious relic.



This is not the end of the work, however: we need supporters who wish to collaborate in the protection and enhancement of the site of Capernaum, which is so important for Christian memory and culture. Your assistance will contribute to the beauty, the hope and the peace that the Holy Land has for centuries transmitted to visitors from all over the world.

To find out more: www.proterrasancta.org

Email: info@proterrasancta.org

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Association pro Terra Sancta is the non-governmental charitable organization of the Franciscans in the Holy Land. The mission of the NGO is to serve the Custody of the Holy Land in its proper task of: maintaining and promoting the Holy Places, keeping up the Christian Community in the Middle East, advancing peace and dialogue.

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