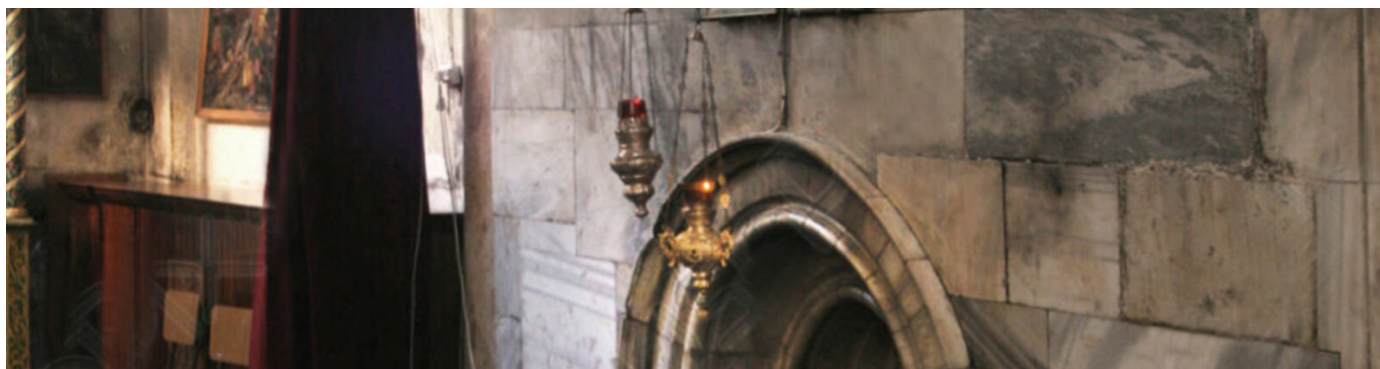




JANUARY 2026

Monthly Progress Summary

Preparatory works, protection and baseline documentation

OVERVIEW

January established the conservation baseline and prepared the Grotto for safe intervention. Work concentrated on protecting sacred and historic objects, organising the restricted worksite, and recording the condition and construction of the vault, walls and floor. These preparatory steps allowed investigations to proceed while maintaining controlled access for visitors.

KEY PROGRESS

- Removed icons, lamps, paintings and other sacred objects from the intervention area and placed them under appropriate protection.
- Built temporary supports for the Franciscan canvas and established controlled storage areas for scaffolding, equipment and dismantled items.
- Installed mobile internal scaffolding to provide safe access to the vault and walls while limiting interference with visitors.
- Opened targeted stratigraphic investigation points in the marble wall and floor to examine concealed layers and later infill.
- Collected mortar, plaster and stone samples and completed photographic and photogrammetric surveys for orthophotos and condition mapping.

IN BRIEF: The preparatory phase was substantially in place. The next stage was detailed deterioration mapping, cleaning trials and confirmation of suitable conservation methods.