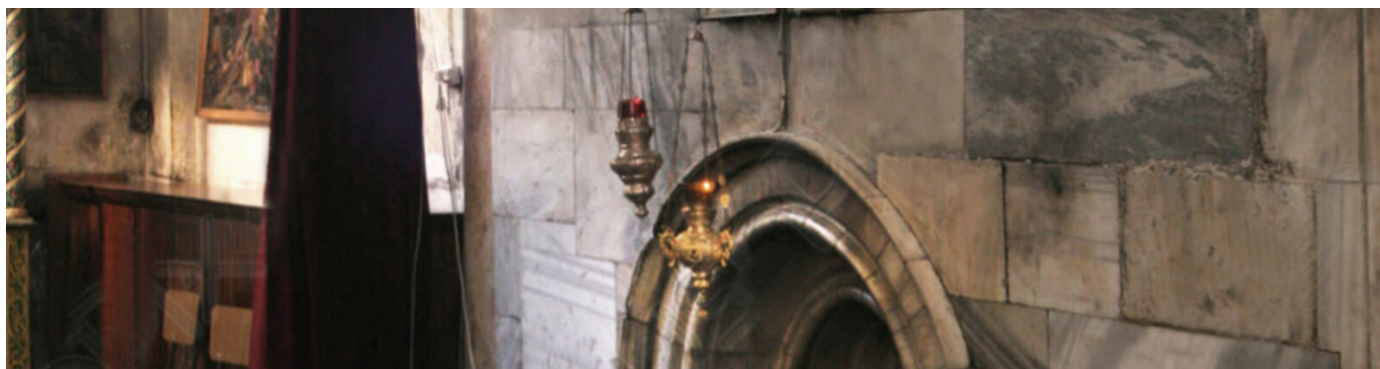




MARCH 2026 Monthly Progress Summary

Expanded investigation campaign followed by security-related suspension

OVERVIEW

Work continued during the first part of March and broadened to untreated parts of the main vault, access areas, altar and portals. Documentation, cleaning and a major structural investigation campaign advanced before the international team left the site on 8 March because of regional security conditions.

KEY PROGRESS

- Extended photographic and thematic mapping to the altar and portals, completed geometric surveys of the Grotto and St. Jerome's Grotto, and supported laser scanning through temporary dismantling and reinstatement.
- Sampled altar mosaic bedding mortar, south-portal plaster and finishes, and red and dark paint films for laboratory characterisation.
- Performed sonic tests on the main vault, Manger column and Armenian and Greek Orthodox corners, together with core drilling in the north wall and vault.
- The north-wall cores identified squared stone facing approximately 15 cm thick; representative samples were transferred for specialist testing in Italy.
- Carried out single and double flat-jack tests at the transept corners and continued controlled cleaning of staircases, marble, altar and Manger surfaces.

IN BRIEF: On-site work was suspended from 8 March. Laboratory analysis and diagnostic review continued off site, while remobilisation and a recovery plan became immediate priorities.