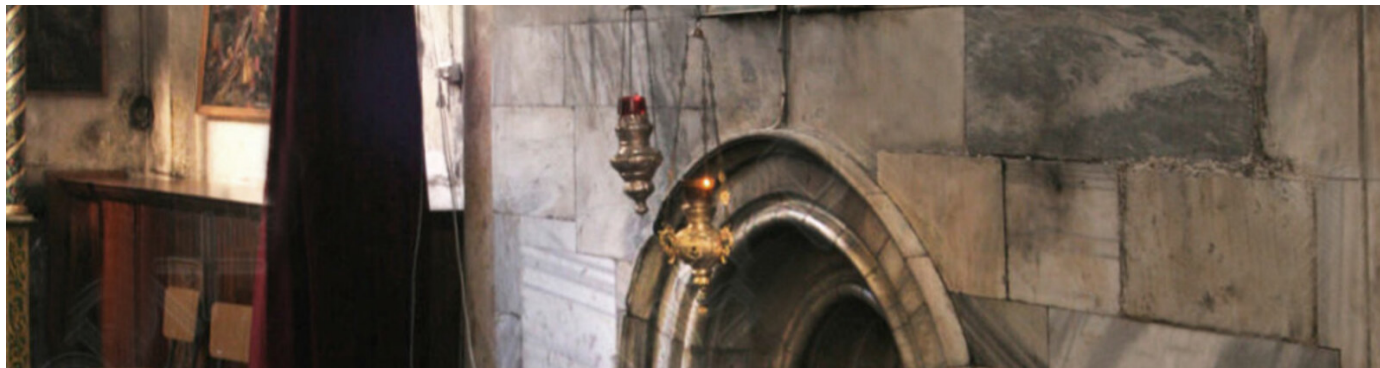




JUNE 2026 Monthly Progress Summary

Advanced vault and mosaic conservation with new archaeological evidence

OVERVIEW

Operations continued throughout June without notable interruption. Conservation work advanced on the vault, staircases, marble and altar mosaic, while archaeological investigations on 12-13 June examined selected floor areas and recorded evidence relevant to the historical development of the Grotto.

KEY PROGRESS

- Documented selected floor openings and the underlying cave surface, generating new hypotheses concerning early staircase geometry, the apsidal block, vault construction and floor chronology.
- Continued vault cleaning and salt extraction, removed or protected metal elements, filled compatible plaster losses, injected detached layers and selected a casein-lime chromatic treatment after trials.
- Selected a compatible NHL 3.5 lime pointing mortar using washed local aggregates and cocchiopesto, and continued evaluation of Nano Estel for superficial stone consolidation.
- Advanced marble cleaning to more than 80% of the wall-cladding area using a controlled acetone and isopropyl-alcohol mixture.
- Cleaned the apse mosaic to reveal the Nativity composition and preparatory drawing, reinforced vulnerable edges and secured loose tesserae; an integration trial awaited approval.

IN BRIEF: Vault cleaning and grouting were substantially complete, marble cleaning exceeded 80%, and mosaic work was advanced. Thermal imaging of the vault was scheduled for 10 July.