



Exclusive: A Seat for the Pope at King David's Tomb

Israel seems to have sold Jerusalem to the Vatican.

From Giulio Meotti

An historic agreement has been drafted between Israel and the Vatican. The Israeli authorities have granted the Pope an official seat in the room where the Last Supper is believed to have taken place, on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and where David and Solomon, Jewish kings of Judea, are considered by some researchers, to also be buried.

It is the culmination of a long campaign by the Catholic Church to regain religious stewardship over the place where Jesus is supposed to have broken bread and drunk wine with his disciples on the eve of his crucifixion.

This is an enormous issue pushed through without any public debate.

According to our sources, the agreement, which is expected to be ratified next June, gives the Pope a “special authority” over the second floor of the building, so that Christian pilgrims will be able to celebrate religious functions like Pope John Paul did in 2000.

The agreement constitutes Israel's capitulation to the Vatican's efforts to “Christianize” the holy site, like when a Catholic convent was built in Auschwitz.

The Catholic Church has long wanted control over part of the area on Mt. Zion so as to turn it into an international religious center for Catholics. The blueprint of the agreement reads as follows: “The Vatican hands over this use of the Cenacle to the Custody of the Holy Land which will keep the Cenacle open from 6 AM to 8 AM for the celebration of the Holy Mass”.

In the long term, the gesture will increase tensions between Jews and the large assets of the Vatican. The Church has long been working to reduce Jewish rights in Jerusalem and in the Old City. Now, after the Muslim Waqf authority expelled the Christians from the Temple Mount and turned it into a mosque, it's the turn of the Vatican to lay its hands on the Jewish Jerusalem.

The Custody of the Holy Land, the Franciscan order who, with Vatican approval, is in charge of the holy sites, campaigns with the Arabs against Israel.

As far back as May 2000, Yasser Arafat met Islamic and Christian clergymen at the presidential offices in Ramallah to back Palestinian Arab sovereignty over Jerusalem. Among the clergymen who attended the meeting, Diodoros I, patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church, Torkom II, patriarch of the Armenian Orthodox Church, Catholic Patriarch Michel Sabbah and officials from the Custody of the Holy Land.

"An official meeting took place in Ramallah, Palestine, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine". This is the official note of the Vatican press office about the meeting between the Catholic officials and the PLO representatives which took place this week.

The Vatican is also asking that Israel hand over to the Vatican's control dozens of sites, 19 in Judea and Samaria and 28 in Jerusalem. The Catholic Church want to discuss some properties on Mount of Olives, Har Hazeitim, which is the very history of the Jewish people. If you want to keep Jerusalem united, you have to keep Har Hazeitim. The Vatican knows that.

In 1989 charges were made by the Catholic authorities that Israel desecrated the Cenacle on Mount Zion. The charges, which appeared in the Italian bishops' newspaper *Avvenire*, said that the Israelis put a memorial plaque on the roof of the Cenacle. The plaque was put in place after the 1948 War of Independence in memory of soldiers who fell in the Old City and whose burial place was unknown. Every year, the bereaved families cleaned the plaque.

Why did the Catholic authorities complain? Last year a similar charge was made from the Catholic authorities that Israel wants to "Judaize" Mount Zion.

Should the Vatican gain sovereignty over Mount of Zion, millions of Christian pilgrims will flock to the site, and this will threaten the Israeli presence in the Old City's Jewish Quarter and Jewish access to the Western Wall.

The Vatican wants the Jews out of the Old City and apparently Israel's government is agreeing with them. Turning the Cenacle into an active church is also a way of desecrating the holiness of the site known as the Tomb of David.

The Vatican and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation expressed a common position in the Basic Agreement of 15 February 2000, intended to support the recognition of a special statute for the City of Jerusalem. In the memorandum, signed by Vatican officials and the PLO, an organization dedicated to the mass deportation of Israel's Jews, the Catholic Church wants Israel relinquishing sovereignty at the Western Wall and the Temple Mount. The Vatican-PLO agreement's preamble on Jerusalem shows that the Vatican's attitude on Israel's capital is still stuck in the unforgivable anti-Semitic rhetoric of the 1940s.

Until 1948, Christian access to the Cenacle was severely limited, because it was used as a mosque. Since then, the State of Israel is committed to protecting the holy places of all religions, and guaranteeing the right of worship for all faiths.

But no Israeli government must tolerate any policy of division, "shared control" or "internationalization" that opens the door to a return to the Arab apartheid of Jordanian occupation between 1948 and 1967.

Jerusalem is not for sale. For thousands of years, the Cenacle area was almost always totally closed off to Jews.

Sovereignty over Mount Zion is politics, not only religion. The day after the Pope celebrated a mass on Mt. Zion in 2000, he went to Yasser Arafat headquarter to support the Palestinians' right to return.

A few months later, the Oslo war began. And Jews were sacrificed again on the altar of "peace". It was their last supper.

This week, the Vatican in its official documents began referring to the "State of Palestine".

(For a site on Christian attempts to gain leverage in Israel, click [here](#))

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