

St. Anne's Basilica & pool of Bethesda

Located just 60 meters inside Lions Gate in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City, is a wooden doorway that leads into the tranquil garden compound housing the Crusader Era Church of Saint Anne and the Pools of Bethesda archaeological site. The compound is owned by the French government and is administered by the Catholic order of the White Fathers, named for the white robes they wear. Believed to be the birthplace of the Virgin Mary as well as the site of one of Jesus's miracles, it is an important pilgrimage site for Christian visitors. The Church of Saint Anne is believed to be built on the spot where Anne and Joachim, the parents of Mary mother of Jesus lived and where the Virgin Mary was born. The Church was built in 1130CE by the Crusaders on the ruins of a 5th century Byzantine Basilica. After the conquest of Salah Ad-Din in 1187CE, the church was converted into a Madrasa - Islamic religious school, and still bears an inscription in Arabic at its entrance noting this change. During the Ottoman period the structure was abandoned and fell into disrepair, until 1856, when it was gifted to Napoleon III by Ottoman Sultan Abdulmecid I in recognition of their support during the Crimean War. France carried out extensive restoration efforts to restore the Crusader church. Today it is open to visitors, who can descend a staircase into the crypt which is believed to have been the home of Anne and Joachim and the birthplace of Mary. One of the most notable features of the Church is its extraordinary acoustics, perfectly suited to Gregorian chants. Visitors are welcome sing within the Church, as long as the songs are religious (of any religion), and many can be heard doing so throughout the day. Just steps away, within the same compound, is the Pools of Bethesda archaeological site that can be visited for a fee. During excavations in the 1900s, two large water reservoirs were uncovered, dating back to the First and Second Temple Periods as well as the remnants of Roman bath houses and a Roman temple dedicated to Asclepius, the medicine god. The site also holds significance to Christian pilgrims because it is believed that it was in these pools that Jesus healed the paralytic. Commemorating this miracle and because of its proximity to the birthplace of Mary, the Byzantine Basilica of Saint Mary of the Probatric was built over the pools. Although it was damaged in 614CE by the

Site Religion & Type

- [Christian Site](#)
- [Tomb](#)

Target Group

- [Free Independent Travelers \(FITs\)](#)
- [general interest](#)
- [Organized Groups](#)
 - [Christian Groups](#)
 - [Secular Groups](#)
 - [Other Secular Groups](#)

Denomination with high relevance

Benedictine
Brothers
, Catholic -
Armenian
, Catholic - Greek
, Catholic - Roman , Coptic
, Mennonite , Mormon
, Orthodox -
Armenian
, Orthodox - Assyrian
, Orthodox - Ethiopian
, Orthodox - Greek
, Orthodox - Russian
, Protestant - Anglican
, Protestant - Baptist
, Protestant - Methodist
, Protestant - Pentecost
, Protestant -Lutheran
, Salesian
Brothers , Zion sisters

Telephone

[009722 6283285](tel:009722 6283285)

Fax

[009722 6281992](tel:009722 6281992)

Address

19 Lion's Gate Street
9119002Jerusalem
Jerusalem
PS-JEM
Palestinian Territories

Closed on

Church closes noon times between 1200-1400 . No visits on Palm Sunday. Closed mornings of 8 Sep. And 8 Dec.

Best time of day to visit

AM

Best Time of Year to Visit

Year round

Estimated time of visit

1-2 hours

Weather Consideration

Recommend on sunny days

Dress Code

Modest Clothes , Trousers Allowed For Female Visitors

Summer Times

Sunday: 8:00-17:00
Monday: 8:00-18:00
Tuesday: 8:00-18:00
Wednesday: 8:00-18:00
Thursday: 8:00-18:00
Friday: 8:00-18:00
Saturday: 8:00-18:00

Winter Times

Sunday: 8:00-17:00
Monday: 8:00-17:00
1200-1400
Tuesday: 8:00-17:00
1200-1400
Wednesday: 8:00-17:00
Thursday: 8:00-17:00
Friday: 8:00-17:00
Saturday: 8:00-17:00

Booking On Site

Yes

Booking Online

No

Booking via Phone

No

Advance booking required

No

Free For

Free for everyone

Bathrooms

Free

Handicap bathroom

No

Parking

No parking available

Stairs

No

Wheelchair Friendly

Yes

Stroller Friendly

Yes