

Salvaging medieval wall paintings

Many wall paintings adorning small chapels and churches have survived in northern Lebanon. Most of them date from the 12th and 13th centuries, when the Crusaders were present in these territories. Regardless of the religious denomination with which individual paintings are associated, they all attest the rich, multifaceted culture of the time, incorporating Byzantine, local and Western influences. Unfortunately, these works of art are now usually badly damaged and many are in danger of complete destruction. Polish conservators have been actively involved in salvaging these paintings since 2004, when they were asked to come to the monastery at Kaftoun. The conservation work which they carry out would not be possible without the support of the Greek Orthodox Church in Lebanon, the General Directorate of Antiquities and the foundation established in recent years (Association REFML) specifically for the purpose of saving this valuable heritage.



▲ The Church of SS Sergius and Bacchus set in the picturesque Kaftoun valley.

Kaftoun, the Communion of the Apostles – painting seen during conservation treatment. ►

