



DIOCESE OF PITIGLIANO-SOVANA-ORBETELLO  
ASSOCIATION "LA PICCOLA GERUSALEMME"



## CULTURAL PROJECT PITIGLIANO-JERUSALEM

### GENERAL PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup>

**Prot. n. BC/5/2015**

1. The Pitigliano-Jerusalem Cultural Programme has been organised and promoted by the Diocese of Pitigliano-Sovana-Orbetello<sup>2</sup>, based in Pitigliano (Grosseto), Piazza Fortezza Orsini, n. 25, by the Bishop His Excellence Monsignor Guglielmo Borghetti and entrusted for its realisation – as regards competency – to the Director of the Cultural Heritage of the Diocese, Marco Monari, who will choose the necessary collaborative figures following their approval by the Diocesan Order. The collaboration of the Office for Pastoral Culture is particularly hoped for, along with that of the Office for Instruments of Social Communication and the Office for Schools and Pastoral Scholastic affairs.

The project has been planned in cooperation with the Association «La Piccola Gerusalemme» based in Pitigliano, Via Firenze n.116, as regards some of the specified proposals.

2. The Pitigliano-Jerusalem Cultural Project envisages the realisation of initiatives which will cover a period of three years from the date of its introduction, which can, however, be lengthened to a maximum of five years if the initiatives involve longer periods of implementation.

The project intends to develop certain aspects of Pitigliano – world-famous under the name of «The Little Jerusalem» – and its surrounding area, along with its social network; to promote local culture and history together with the diocesan territory; to establish a contact, hopefully permanent, between Pitigliano and Jerusalem, based on age-old relations, fruit of the coexistence and cooperation between the members of the lay community and the Christian Catholic and Jewish religious communities<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Translation from Italian was curated by Yvonne Coll.

<sup>2</sup> The Diocese is a part of the faithful belonging to the Catholic Church, organised in a district and entrusted to the pastoral care of the Bishop, with his presbyters as coadjutors (cf. Code of Canonical Laws, cann. 368-374). More specifically, the presence and the activities of the Catholic Church in Italy are regulated by a specific state agreement (Concordat and Revision of the Concordat – Lateran Treaty, modified by the Agreement of 18<sup>th</sup> February 1984, rendered operative with the Law of 25<sup>th</sup> March, number 121, official Gazette, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1985, number 85, suppl.-, and by the same National Constitution: cf. articles 7 and 8); the Dioceses are bodies recognised by the state and regulated according to certain laws. The Diocese of Pitigliano- Sovana-Orbetello is a territory of the Catholic Church, located in the southern part of the Province of Grosseto, bordering Lazio to the south and the Provinces of Siena and Viterbo to the east.

<sup>3</sup> In the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The Etruscan settlement reached its height, substituting the nearby centre of Poggio Buco. The Roman presence (1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. -2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.), with farms and villages situated along the main roads, is identifiable by the various constructions which were built. The place name Pitigliano appears for the first time around the year 1060 in a Papal Bull drawn up by Pope Nicola II, while in another document dating to a century later, Pitigliano appears as a «castrum» (fortified town) owned by the noble Aldobrandeschi family, lords of the whole of the Maremma. In 1313, through marriage, the Orsini family take the place of the Aldobrandeschi family in the District of Sovana and in 1410 the Orsini family name Pitigliano as capital of the county. In 1466 the county is strengthened by the rise to power of Niccolò III, captain of fortune of the most important Italian states, including Venice; under his influence Pitigliano acquires wealth with Renaissance monuments and the work of artists such as Antonio da Sangallo, Baldassare Peruzzi and Anton

In Pitigliano, a true «city of refuge» for the Jews (*aré miqlat*), profound and genuine conditions of respect, peaceful coexistence and reciprocal tolerance between the Jewish and the Christian population already existed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, one of the reasons why the town came to be known as «Little Jerusalem» from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The Jewish community contributed greatly to the development and growth of the town and local district, and was profoundly integrated with the Christian community.

The first episode historically significant integration, occurred at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. After several anti-Jewish episodes, with a victim in 1799, is remembered by the press that «the population, led by a group of Catholic priests, carried out summary justice on a group of soldiers belonging to the organisation “Viva Maria”, whose intentions were to carry out a raid on the ghetto»<sup>4</sup>, thus preventing retaliation against and abuse of citizens of Jewish religion.

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War the Jewish citizens scattered throughout the countryside, where, despite unending searches for them, they were able to depend on a widespread network of solidarity and also distinguished themselves for their support and assistance of the Christian citizens of Pitigliano, including the Bishop and the churches. In 2002 the State of Israel conferred the highest honour of the title «The Just Among Nations» to several of Pitigliano’s citizens.

**3.** Each proposal linked to the Pitigliano-Jerusalem Cultural Project, part of this introductory programme, or others which may emerge, in specific relation to this document, will be approved by the Diocesan order and rendered operative through a relative project. In the case of a cultural proposal planned and organised together with the the Association «The Little Jerusalem» and /or the Pitigliano Town Council, the project should clearly indicate the type of cooperation intended. In this case, participation in the project will be requested by one of the parties through joint adhesion to the proposed project, accompanied by the indication of the title page of the project of the subscribing and operative parties.

**4.** The Cultural Project Pitigliano-Jerusalem, along with all related initiatives specifically declared, has solely a cultural, social and promotional purpose, as well as professional and human. The project, as a whole, as in each of its parts, excludes any political or reference purpose.

**5.** In order to verify the feasibility of the Pitigliano-Jerusalem Cultural Project the Bishop, Monsignor

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Maria Lari. In this period and some decades later Pitigliano becomes home to a sizeable Jewish community, which moved there mainly from the pontificate state. In 1643 the Medici family from Florence resist an attempt of occupation by pontificate troops, until 1843 when Pitigliano is given the title of city, following the transfer of the Diocese from Sovana and thanks also to the economic growth which ensued (source: Pitigliano Town Council Internet website).

<sup>4</sup> It was anti-Napoleonic rebellions, with *sanfedista* characteristics (a movement of reactionary clericalism against the Jacobins), composed of bands of rebels, largely from Arezzo, who were fighting against the French and who perpetrated serious anti-Semitic initiatives. Cf Santino Gallorini, *La primavera del Viva Maria*, Calosci, Cortona, 1999; id., *Viva Maria e Nazione Ebraica*, Calosci, Cortona 2009; Roberto Salvadori, *Bibliografia aretina 1790-1815 e rassegna bibliografica del “Viva Maria” 1799*, Centro Stampa dell’Università, Siena 1989; Augusto Antoniella, *Occupazione francese e insorgenza antifrancesa nelle carte dell’Archivio di Stato. 1799-1801*, Provincia di Arezzo, Arezzo 1991.

Guglielmo Borghetti, sent Marco Monari to Jerusalem to meet with two important representatives of the Jewish community: Doctor Sandro Servi and the Architect Professor David Cassuto. The meeting took place on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2014 at the home of Doctor Sandro Servi and in the presence of Professor David Cassuto, Don Marco Monari, Architect Barbara Fiorini and Mrs. Valeria Elmi<sup>5</sup>. It is hoped that this meeting will be followed by further similar meetings, possibly in Jerusalem.

**6. Eight proposals emerged from the meeting :**

I) The twinning of the towns of Pitigliano and Mevasseret Zion (or Jerushalaim), situated near Jerusalem<sup>6</sup>. Professors David Cassuto and Dan Bahat offered to contact and present the idea to the mayor of Mevasseret Zion who, however, did not seem favourable to the initiative. He did, however, agree to verify the project before expressing his decision.

II) Schools. Teacher exchanges ( who could attend a Shoà course in Jerusalem) and student exchanges among pupils attending middle school.

III) Conferences on historic and cultural topics. For example, a conference on Pitigliano and its community to be held in Jerusalem and vice versa.

IV) Archaeology: A series of presentations on the Tuscan Maremma, the Etruscans and the Herodian-Roman period (e.g. Jericho). This proposal could be expanded to include the recuperation and promotion of the architecture of the period.

V) Wine-making: A presentation in Jerusalem, or in other districts of Israel, of kosher wine from Pitigliano; in Pitigliano the presentation of other Jewish products.

VI) Education /Voluntary services . Presentation and exchange of educational initiatives for children (e.g. children with physical handicaps or learning difficulties).

VII) Group visits to the two countries, including a visit to the Italian-Jewish community of Rehov Hillel in Jerusalem where a museum of Italian-Jewish art is located. Organisation of meetings and conferences.

VIII) Involvement of other organisations or associations. The cooperation of the Rotary club would be opportune and The Association Italia-Israele of Maremma.

**6.1 Developments 1<sup>st</sup>**

Don Marco outlined the project to the Mayor of Pitigliano, Pierluigi Camilli. After having confirmed its feasibility and the various difficulties on the Town Council's part, the Mayor confirmed the town council's positive acceptance and his personal adhesion to the project, taking it upon himself to contact the President of the bank «Banca di Credito Cooperativa» in Pitigliano, as a potential sponsor, and the President of the Pitigliano Winery in order to obtain its involvement in the part of the programme

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<sup>5</sup> These two people operate in collaboration with Marco Monari.

<sup>6</sup> His Excellence Monsignor Bishop had expressed his desire to see a twinning initiative between the cities of Pitigliano and Jerusalem. As this was not possible, since Jerusalem does not accept twinning programmes with other cities, the choice (following the proposal of Professor Dan Bahat) fell on Mevasseret Zion.

concerning wine-making.

As for the cultural exchanges at a scholastic level, the Mayor expressed his concerns regarding the high costs which may be required and which the school budget cannot sustain. Don Marco suggested restricting the proposal to certain categories of students, such as the most deserving, granting a study bursary, either partial or whole, to be sponsored if possible.

Mrs. Elena Servi, president of the Association «La Piccola Gerusalemme» has also been involved and has shown great interest in it and expressed her desire for future cooperation.

Don Marco has also contacted the Rotary Club in Pitigliano, in the person of Mr. Antonio Sovani, and is currently awaiting a definitive response concerning further contacts with the committee.

Other potential areas of the programme could include a series of conferences on medical and hospital concerns or medical research.

## **6.2 Developments 2<sup>nd</sup>**

The proposal prioritises the organisation, planned by Don Marco and Barbara Fiorini, of a summer Masters or training course, for architects or architecture undergraduates, whose aim would be the specific training of professional figures in the recuperation, restoration and promotion of the architecture uncovered during archaeological excavations dating to the Etruscan-Roman period. The idea is to organise the course in two distinct locations, in Pitigliano and in Jerusalem, for a total duration of twenty days. This proposal has also been illustrated to the Mayor of Pitigliano who immediately showed interest in it.

A subsequent encounter between Don Marco and the architect Barbara Fiorini has brought to light the need to find specialised and prestigious teaching staff and, in addition, the need to organise a scientific committee for technical and logistic planning. Besides those in Italy, it is essential to identify available lecturers and technical assistants in Israel; in this case, Professor David Cassuto could take charge of this aspect, or another person whom he considers capable.

The cost of the training courses will be wholly sustained by the participants themselves. However, a search for public or private contributions is not to be excluded, such as, for example the Israeli Embassy in Rome, other associations or banks.

In the future this kind of specialization can be extended to other areas, such as Sovana and Petra (Jordan).

## **6.3 Developments 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Two initiatives are directly connected to the Pitigliano-Jerusalem Cultural Project:

I) A Hebrew language course proposed by the Diocese of Pitigliano-Sovana-Orbetello and entrusted to the state High School «Liceo Statale “A.Rosmini” of Grosseto», organised with the cooperation of the association «La Piccola Gerusalemme» and the town Council of Pitigliano. If considered feasible, the

course should commence at the beginning of December held by Professor Dror Briskin, a lecturer in Hebrew at the University of Florence. It will include 42 hours of lessons to be held at the synagogue in Pitigliano, with the concession of the association «La Piccola Gerusalemme» and the Pitigliano Town Council. The course is part of the range of courses organised and offered by the Training Agency of the «Liceo Rosmini» ([www.rosminigr.it](http://www.rosminigr.it)).

Participants will sustain the cost of the course, with a possible contribution from the Diocese and the association «La Piccola Gerusalemme».

II) A conference on the Temple of Jerusalem and the archaeological excavations, proposed by the the association «La Piccola Gerusalemme». Mrs Elena Servi has expressed her wish to have the archaeologist Professor Don Bahat from Jerusalem as speaker/lecturer and that the conference take place in the synagogue in Pitigliano.

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Pitigliano, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2015



**The Bishop**

Guglielmo Borghetti

*+ Guglielmo Borghetti*

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