

Good Friday - We call this day "Good" because of what God was able to do for us through the life and death of Jesus. He gave us new life with Him forever. In Jerusalem, there is a winding path that Jesus walked on the way to his crucifixion called the Via Dolorosa (Latin for Way of Suffering). The first 9 Stations of the Cross are marked along this route. The last 5 Stations are located inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is interesting to note that there is no such thing in the Gospels that Jesus stumbled three times during His walk along the route. Nor is there any mention in any Gospel of Jesus meeting His mother or Veronica wiping Jesus' face with her veil during the walk. These beliefs are only a part of a long-standing popular tradition. Along our walk, our group carried a Jerusalem cross. We entered Jerusalem through one of the huge gates at 5:45 am to beat the crowds along the route. To read more about my travels, please visit [bonniebradybabin.com](http://bonniebradybabin.com).







The last 5 Stations are located inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Tomb). The Church includes, the Rock of Calvary (Golgotha) where Jesus was crucified and the Tomb where He was buried (THE Holiest Christian Site). The Church was built around the Rock of Calvary (Golgotha). This is where Empress St. Helena discovered the True Cross. The Church's decoration is not what one would imagine for THE Holiest Christian Site. The Church's chaotic history is evident in what you see today mixing elements in an odd style. The Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Armenians Faiths share Custody of the Church today. There is a Muslim Doorkeeper who keeps control of the keys to the Church to prevent disputes between the Christian Faiths over the holy site.

There is a stairway to the right just inside the entrance that leads to the Rock of Calvary, the place where Jesus was crucified.

It is interesting that Jesus was born at night and it became day. Jesus was crucified during the day and it became as dark as night.

The Bible says that at noon, the skies got dark. There was an earthquake. The temple veil was torn from top to bottom to show that man had absolutely "nothing" to do with it. People suddenly realized that when Jesus cried out, "It is finished," and then died, He was no ordinary man.

Directly beneath the Rock of Calvary shows the cracked slab of rock behind glass. This is known as the Chapel of Adam based on the ancient tradition that Jesus was crucified over the place where Adam was buried. The crack in the rock was caused by the earthquake that occurred when Jesus died.

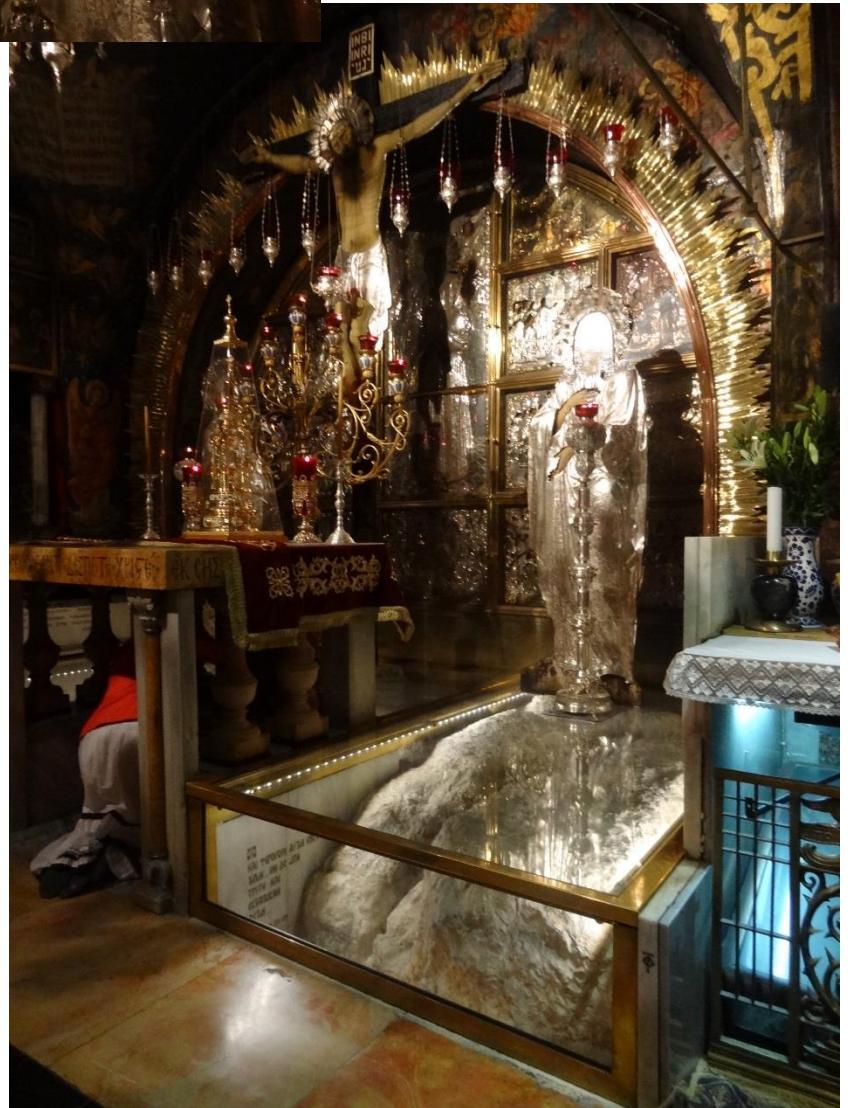


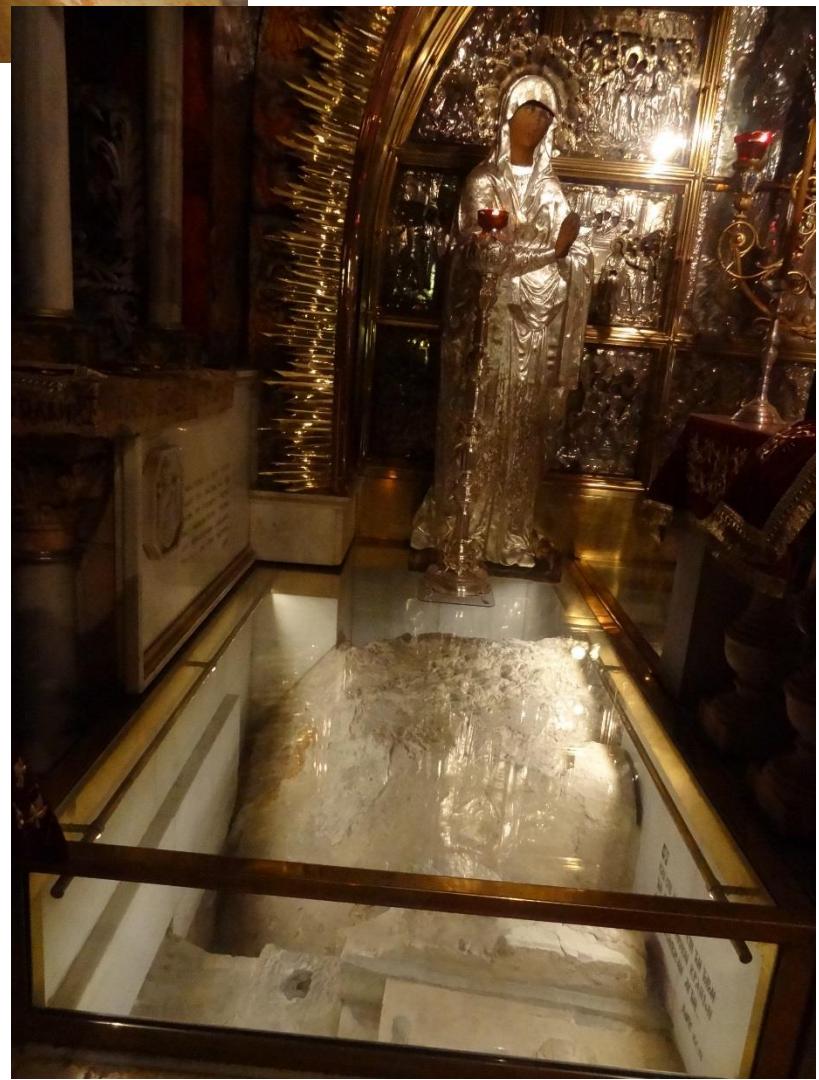


We had mass at the chapel to the right which is the Chapel of the Nailing of the Cross, Station 11 on the Via Dolorosa. This is the Roman Catholic Chapel near the Rock of Calvary.

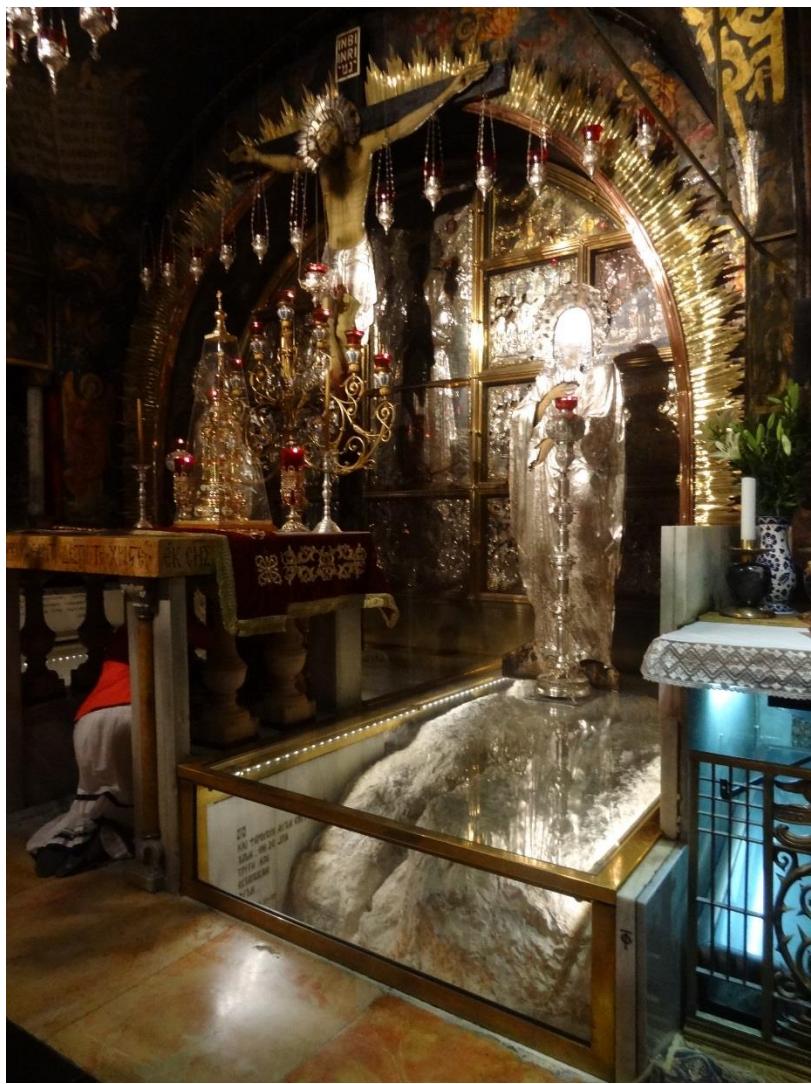


There is a window on either side of the Altar, which contains the actual Rock of Calvary, Station 12. The Church was built around this Rock. Beneath the altar, there is a hole that allows you to touch the rock itself where there is a slot cut for the cross.





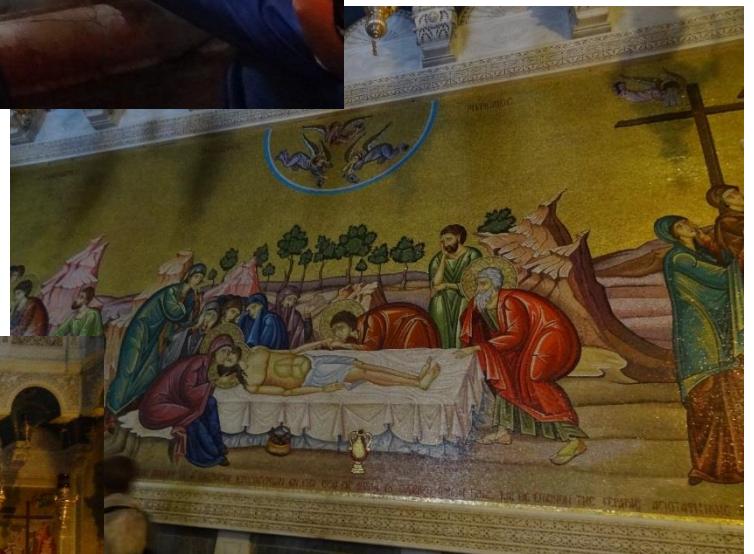




Jesus was taken down from the cross, prepared for burial, and placed in a borrowed tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathaea (Luke 23:50-53).

Immediately inside the entrance to the church is the Stone of Unction. This limestone slab commemorates the preparation of Jesus's body for burial. Notice the opulent lamps that hang over the stone slab.

The Mosaic behind the Stone depicts Christ's anointing for burial.



The round area of the church is the location of Jesus' tomb. The Rotunda is covered by a large dome decorated with a 12-pointed star symbolizing the 12 apostles.

Because of the large crowd on the day we visited, I was not able to enter the Tomb of Jesus. The pics with me holding the candle and touching the wall are on the outside of the Tomb of Jesus. I did NOT go in the Tomb. The description below is what I have read, but not yet seen. This means, I MUST return someday!

Underneath the dome, is the Tomb of Jesus enshrined in a large, not terribly attractive, boxy shrine. Inside the shrine contains two small rooms. The first is the Greek Orthodox Chapel of the Angel which features an altar containing a piece of the stone rolled away by the angels at the Resurrection.

A low door on the side leads to the tiny Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, which contains the tomb of Jesus. This is the 14<sup>th</sup> station of the cross and THE Holiest Christian Site.



