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# Cultural Activities Begin in Saxum

From November 6-12, the first cultural initiative of the Saxum Foundation was held in the Holy Land, with 450 people from five continents taking part.

11/21/2016

The first *Holy Land Dialogues*, which in future will take place each year, involved conferences, visits to the holy places and round tables to foster knowledge and mutual respect among people of various religions.

Those giving conferences included Yariv Levin (Israeli Minister of Tourism), Andrew Briggs (Oxford University), Eric Cohen (Director of the Tikvah Fund), Gideon Saar (Ex Interior Minister of Israel), Imad Younis (President of Alphaomega), and Nathan Goldschmidt (architect of Saxum).

On the 11<sup>th</sup> a Mass of thanksgiving was celebrated by Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, apostolic administrator of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem.

Below are some statements from these days:

**Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa,  
Apostolic Administrator of the  
Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem**

We should give thanks to God for this day. There will never be enough initiatives to strengthen the Christian character of this land and the small

but fervent Christian community that lives here.

I want to express my thanks to the organizers of Saxum and the workers and donors who have made it a reality.

### **Yariv Levin, Israeli Minister of Tourism**

Visiting Jerusalem, the Holy Land, is an experience that changes one's life, and that makes one a better person and believer. Everyone should have a chance to visit this place. In Israel, we know we have an obligation to ensure that each visitor has the possibility to pray freely and with security.

I think that Saxum is an incredible initiative, a very important contribution by Christians. There is no better place than the Holy Land for these *Dialogues*. For a dialogue to be successful, one needs to know the

truth about the land and attain mutual knowledge and understanding.

### **Eric Cohen, Director of the Tikvah Fund**

Combining visits to places tied to the history of Christianity with explanations about the relationship between the Christian faith and Judaism seems very interesting to me. And therefore I invite anyone who feels called to get to know their spiritual heritage to come to the Holy Land.

### **Nathan Goldschmidt, Architect of Saxum**

Dialogue is a very important part of the project. The meetings for project workers was a veritable tower of Babel: English, Arabic, Hebrew, Spanish.... But despite everything our dialogue was successful, which shows that it is possible to converse

among people of different religions and cultures.

## **Daniel Johnston, Moderator**

This place is the setting for the most marvelous experience one can have. This is the place where Jesus, the disciples and the prophets lived, worked and died. This is Jerusalem. There is no place in the world like it.

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