

Digital disk focuses on Turkish-looted Church of the Panaghia Kanakaria, in occupied Cyprus



The Archbishop Makarios III Foundation's Byzantine Museum, in cooperation with the Cyprus Institute, will release a digital disk focusing on the Church of the Panaghia Kanakaria, which, unfortunately, is located in the currently Turkish-occupied parts of the eastern Mediterranean island republic.

The digital work aims to highlight the destruction of religious legacy and monuments in the Turkish-occupied one-third of Cyprus, as well as the scourge of antiquities smuggling and the looting of relics in the occupied areas.

The Panaghia Kanakaria is internationally known for its 6th century Byzantine mosaics.

The mosaics were stolen and sold on the black market after the Turkish invasion in 1974 by notorious Turkish art dealer Aydin Dikmen.

Between 1983 and 2015, most of the mosaics were traced and repatriated, some after lengthy legal battles, except for two. One of the former pieces of mosaic is

the invaluable mosaic depicting the Apostle Andrew. It is regarded as one of the most important Byzantine works in existence and was located in the apse of the church sanctuary.

The mosaic was found in 2014 by the art historian Maria Paphiti. The last buyer of the mosaic acquired it as part of a larger collection of artworks in 2010.

The repatriated mosaics will be displayed at the Byzantine Museum of Nicosia.









