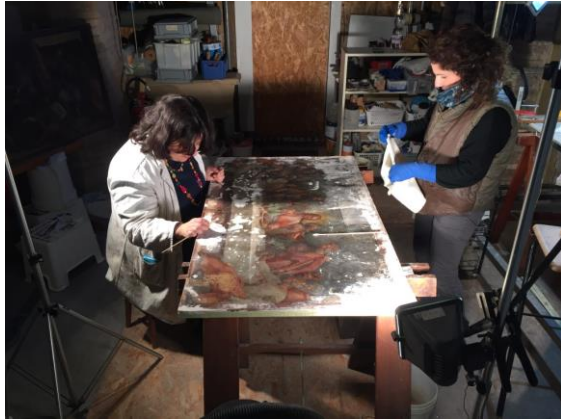


Renovation of the Swiss Chapel



A document dated 16 May 1520 testifies that the Pontifical Swiss Guard were granted rights of use to the front left side chapel of the Church of Santa Maria della Pietà at Campo Santo Teutonico.

The prayer room is thus considered to be the first chapel for the guards and was used as a place of worship as well as a burial ground. For example, Kaspar Röst, who as Commander sacrificed his life for the Pope while faithfully performing his duties during the Sack of Rome on 6 May 1527, found his final resting place here. The chapel with its wall paintings is seen to be a building of great historical value and a jewel worthy of preservation. The painting of the chapel has been financed by the Guard over the years; the frescoes also show the first depictions of the guards.

However, the stonework and plastering as well as the furnishings are showing considerable damage caused by humidity. Not only does this damage adversely affect the chapel's visual appearance but most important of all, it has attacked the fabric of the building.



To maintain the chapel, there are a number of challenges that have to be overcome: The costs for the first phase, the removal and restoration of the frescoes stand at around CHF 400,000. We expect to pay around CHF 30,000 p.a. for the ongoing renovation work.

Further phases of the project will be launched according to the progress of the project to drain and restore the chapel. The Swiss Guard is keen to contribute to the preservation of this historical cultural property.