# Press release

## *Date:*

## 28 JUNE 2013

## *City, Country:*

## Novalesa, Italy

## *Titel:*

## Benedictine monks host a conference on the protection of religious monuments.

## *Subtitel:*

## The Italian Novalesa Abbey celebrated 40 years of its modern history by hosting the European THETRIS Project Conference.

## *Text:*

A conference was held on 21 June 2013 in the Benedictine Novalesa Abbey in the Italian region of Piemonte (Piedmont) with the participation of European experts on the protection of sacred monuments involved in the transnational project THETRIS(THEmatic Transnational church Route development with the Involvement of local Society).

## The conference was organised by the Province of Turin in cooperation with the Development Agency Langhe Monferrato Roero (LAMORO) and was launched by Antonio Saitta, President of the Province of Turin, Umberto Fava, Director of LAMORO Development Agency of Asti; Ezio Rivetti, Mayor of Novalesa and father Paolo Gionta, conventual prior of Novalesa Abbey.

## Zsófia Munnich representing the Association of the Municipalities in the Upper-Tisza Area in Hungary, the lead partner of the project, gave everyone present the basic THETRIS project objectives focused on sustainable preservation of medieval churches and other local religious buildings in 11 partner regions developing common strategies and innovative solutions involving local communities in the protection of these monuments as local tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The project partners are jointly preparing a transnational church route, which will connect at least 50 local rural churches in 11 participating regions.

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## Interesting examples for innovative protection of religious monuments from the partner´s regions were also presented: Gerhard Hofbauer of the Diocese Graz-Seckau in Austria presented ideas involving advanced technologies such as GPS geographic games in connection with the spiritual context as "Spiri-Cashing" and a Mobil guide for churches. Umberto Fava from the LAMORO development agency in Asti introduced the pilot area of Franciscan monastery complexes Cassine, Bosco Marengo, and Sezzadio. Anna Goral from the Association of Cities and Communes of the Malopolska Region in Poland reported on "Project Shield" – a technically demanding method of protection for historic wooden churches against fires by water flows.

## Benedictine monk Father Daniel then showed conference participants the monastery complex, archaeological museum, laboratories for restoration of rare medieval manuscripts and parchments, the monastery library, a church and one of the original Chapel of Saints Eldradus and Nicholas decorated with frescoes from the late 11th century.

## The first mention of the Novalesa Abbey is from the year 906, when it was destroyed by the Saracens. In the early 11th century the complex was rebuilt. During the 18th and 19 century, there were a number of expulsions of the Benedictines. The Province of Turin again built the destroyed complex in 1972. A museum of archaeology was set up in the area with exhibits focusing on medieval manuscripts. Some of the Benedictine monks restore medieval manuscripts and they also produce their own herbal syrups, honey and various kinds of fruit jams, which can be purchased in the monastery shop alongside religious souvenirs.

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## Novalesa_ Abbey guided tour with Father Daniel_restoration of books_FOR PRINTNovalesa_ Abbey __frescos in SNovalesa_Conference of Provincia di Torino in Novalesa Abbey6Novalesa_Conference of Provincia di Torino in Novalesa Abbey

## Novalesa abbay_shopNovalesa_ conference presentation by Gerhard Hofbauer5Novalesa_ Abbey guided tour 4

## Photographer: Klára Mrkusová

## Opening delegation of the THETRIS Project Conference at the Novalesa Abbey.

## Mayor of Novalesa launching the THETRIS Project Conference at the Novalesa Abbey.

## Father Daniel in the Chapel of Saints Eldradus and Nicholas with frescoes from the 11th century.

## Father Daniel shows a restored medieval manuscript.

## THETRIS Project Conference participants view the Novalesa Abbey.

## Presentation by Gerhard Hofbauer from the Diocese of Graz-Seckau (Mobil Guide for Churches).

## THETRIS basic-text-variationShop with products from the Novalesa Abbey.

## THETRIS Project logo

## For more information

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## Notes for editor

Project THETRIS is implemented through the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme co-financed by the ERDF.

[www.central2013.eu](http://www.central2013.eu/)

Project name is: „THEmatic Transnational church Route devolopment with the Involvement of local

Society“ Project acronym is: THETRIS.

[www.thetris.eu](http://www.thetris.eu)