

Missing bones found in Vatican investigation of teen's disappearance

The Vatican has found two ossuaries believed to maybe belong to the German noblewomen whose tombs were found empty earlier this week.

According to Vatican spokesman Alessandro Gisotti, the ossuaries will be opened for testing July 20, in order to determine if they belong to Princess Sophie von Hohenlohe and Duchess Charlotte Frederica, who both died in the 19th century.

The women's tombs and monuments, located in the Teutonic cemetery on Vatican extra-territorial property adjacent to Vatican City State, were opened July 11 in an attempt to find a clue to the 1983 disappearance of an Italian teen, Emanuela Orlandi.

That the tombs were found empty of any human remains, including the women supposedly buried there, was considered an unseen twist in the mystery of the missing Orlandi.

Gisotti said July 13 documents had been found confirming that in the 1960s and 1970s an extensive renovation of the Teutonic College and the cemetery was carried out.

Staff examined the rooms of the college adjacent to the empty tombs, finding two ossuaries placed under the pavement via hatches in the floor.

"These were immediately sealed for subsequent examination and detection of the bone materials lying therein," Gisotti stated. The ossuaries are scheduled to be opened on the morning of July 20, in the presence of scientific experts.

Emanuela Orlandi was the daughter of an envoy of the Prefecture of the Pontifical House and a citizen of Vatican City State. Her disappearance at age 15 has been one of Italy's biggest unsolved mysteries and the subject of international intrigue, including suspicion about the Vatican's role, since it occurred.