

Large Bible Collection Makes Debut

One of the largest private collections of biblical manuscripts and artifacts in the world, gathered by the family behind a Christian retail chain, debuted at an exclusive reception on Thursday night.

Some of the 30,000-plus pieces in The Green Collection are to be on show at the Vatican Embassy in Washington, D.C., in an event to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible.

The preview was hosted by Steve Green—president of family-run craft company Hobby Lobby, whose brother, Mart, is founder and CEO of affiliate business Mardel Christian & Education—and the American Bible Society.

Among the 100-plus items on display at the event were the earliest surviving New Testament in Jesus' everyday language, a rare portion of the Gutenberg Bible, a previously unseen copy of Wycliffe's New Testament in Middle English and historic items relating to the Bible's impact in Colonial America.

Guests at the Apostolic Nunciature included Dr. Scott Carroll, one of the world's leading scholars on ancient biblical texts, who is director of The Green Collection. "In what can only be described as 'meteoric' speed, we have assembled one of the largest private collections of biblical manuscripts and artifacts in the world," he says.

The Green Collection is to form the core of a new museum of the Bible, whose site is expected to be announced at tonight's event. Mardel was founded in 1981 by Mart Green, who also started EthnoGraphic Media, whose film projects include End of the Spear. Mardel's president is Jason Green, no relation.