

Thames
&Hudson



Provisional

Catholica

Exploring the Visual Culture of Catholicism

Suzanna Ivanic

A clear, concise and detailed analysis of the eclectic and beautiful visual and material culture of Catholicism.

450 illustrations

24 x 17cm

256pp

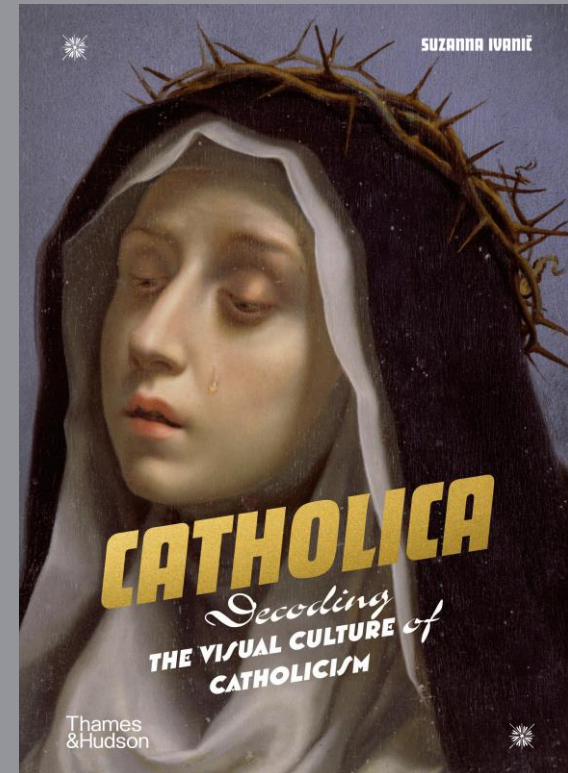
ISBN 9780500252543

BIC Roman Catholicism, Roman Catholic Church

PLC

£25

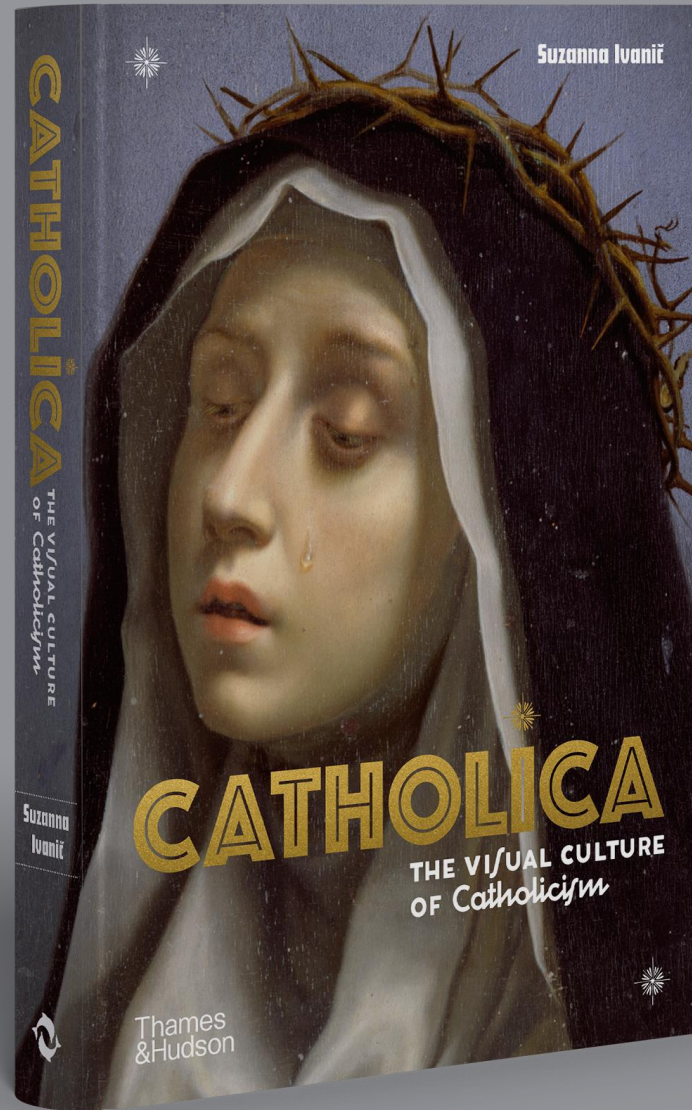
April 2022



A4

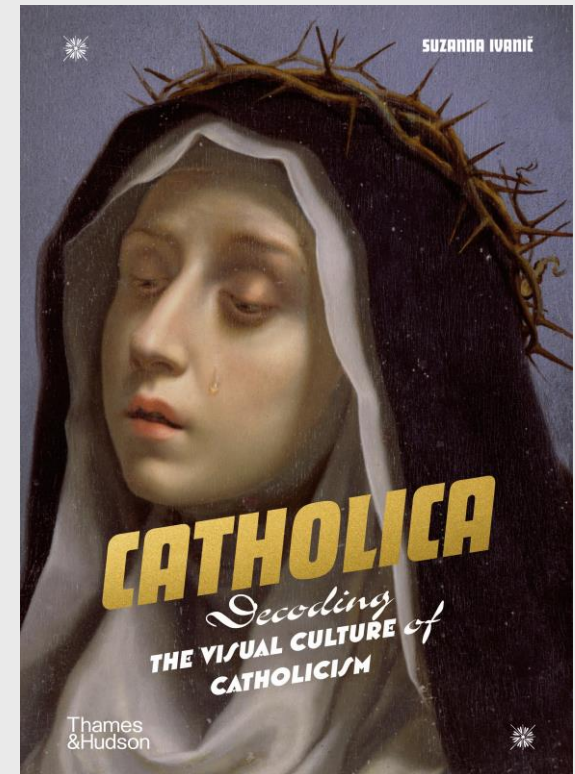
Book

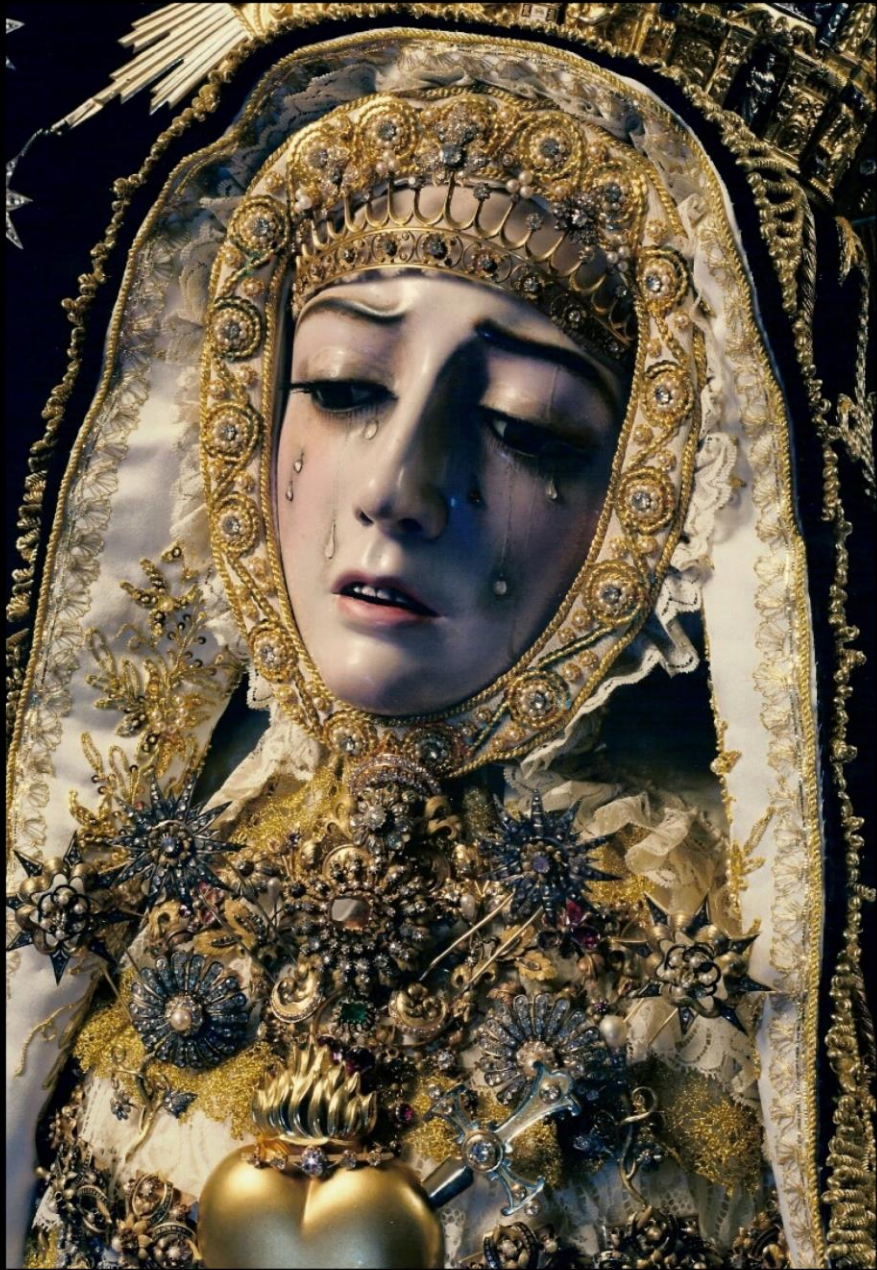
Thames
&Hudson



Key Sales Points

- Provides all the tools to understanding the meaning of the symbolism, iconography, tenets, sites and rituals of the Catholic faith.
- Offers a catalogue of key visual symbols for readers to use to interpret all Catholic visual and material culture.
- Features a rich array of images and artefacts gathered from around the globe, including the variations of Catholicism found in South America, Africa and Asia.
- The first in a series of books on the iconography and the mystic power of ritual objects, with titles on Paganism, the Renaissance, Buddhism, the Gothic, Freemasonry and Judaism to follow.





Contents

INTRODUCTION 8

1

Tenet

1 THE WORD	30
2 GOD'S MESSENGERS	52
3 ADMINISTERING THE FAITH	84

2

Locus

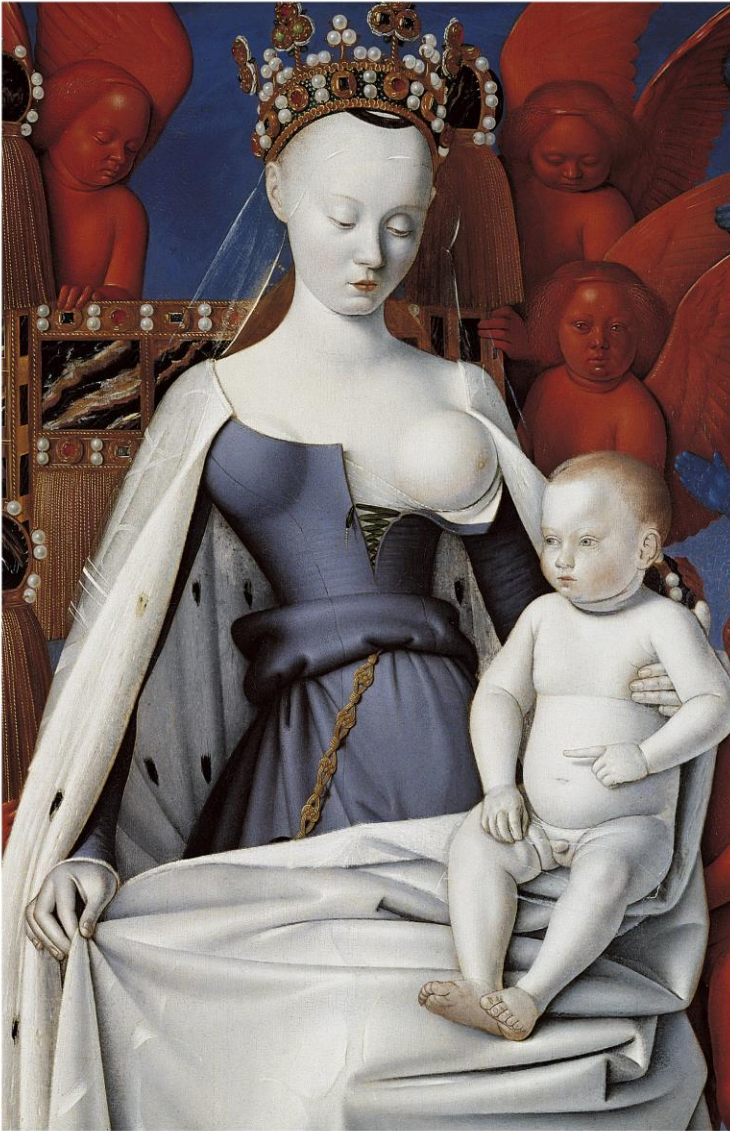
1 THE CATHEDRAL	110
2 THE HOME	138
3 SACRED SITES	154

3

Spiritus

1 COMMUNITIES	180
2 THE INDIVIDUAL	206
3 SENSES	230

FURTHER READING	250
SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATION	252
INDEX	254
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	256

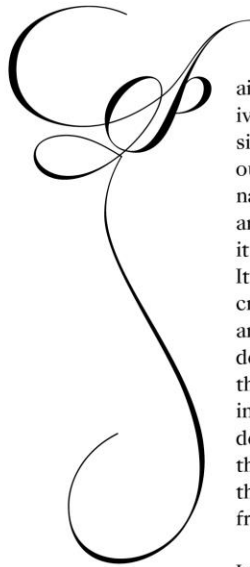


INTRODUCTION

FOR CENTURIES PAINTERS HAVE DIPPED
THEIR BRUSH IN THAT COLOURED
ALPHABET THAT IS THE BIBLE.

MARC CHAGALL, QUOTED BY
POPE BENEDICT XVI, AUDIENCE, 2009

Ruled against in the Bible, images and objects have been used for devotion since the beginning of Christianity. It is in this forever tantalizing and subversive condition that the most glorious, inspiring and uplifting masterpieces of humanity have been created.



aintings, architecture, metalwork, gemstones, ivories and textiles have been used to glorify God since the beginning of Christianity. Some of the most outstanding works of art have been created in God's name. This Catholic art is deeply rooted in cultures around the world and, even for the most agnostic, it continues to shape everyday visual environments. Its dazzling golds, blues, purples and reds, its luxurious craftsmanship in embroidery, metalwork and painting and its starkly powerful symbols inspire fashion designers from Versace to Vivienne Westwood, and the diamond-encrusted bling of today's most-followed influencers. From the faith's earliest origins in the deserts of the Middle East, this book showcases the diversity of Catholic culture on a journey through the ages, revealing its immense influence on societies from Rome to Manila and Cuzco to Copacabana.

Catholic art is not just a by-product of religion. It is religion – just as much as the words of the Bible or the ritual of Mass. Its visual and material forms are closely intertwined with Catholic beliefs, practices and identities. It ranges from the gargantuan edifices of cathedrals to tiny, personal devotional objects worn as accessories or used in the home, and from objects cast from the most expensive materials on the planet to the most mundane. Devotees across the centuries and from all over the world have commissioned art from the most highly skilled artists to attain grace from God. The materials as well as the composition were often the subject of dialogue between artist and commissioner to create the most brilliant objects. The result is a stunning, and often surprising, range of works that speak to both the wonder of Mass and to more intimate and sensual forms of devotion. The central tenets of the faith and its symbols (with which we begin) are essential for an understanding of the religion, but so too are the awe-inspiring manipulations of light, colour, smell and sound achieved in the name of God (with which this book ends).

The story of Christianity begins in the Middle East, influenced by tribes from the deserts of Israel and northern Africa. In the 4th century, the heart of



EVENING DRESS,
VALENTINO, SPRING/
SUMMER 2014

Echoing the finely detailed embroidery of the medieval period, this dress shows Adam and Eve in Paradise among bountiful flora and fauna.



1.



2.



3.



4.

☆ **DECODING**
THE LAST
JUDGEMENT

The Last Judgement marks God's final decision on which souls will be saved at the end of time. This triptych (c. 1466–73) by Hans Memling depicts the moment of judgement in the centre, with the two wing panels showing the saved being guided to heaven and the damned descending to hell.

CENTRE PANEL (OPPOSITE)

1. Christ as judge, with the Lily of Mercy and Sword of Justice
2. The Virgin Mary as intercessor
3. The Archangel Michael holding the weighing scales
4. A pious soul being weighed

LEFT & RIGHT PANELS (BELOW)

5. Heavenly angels making blissful music
6. Saint Peter with the keys to heaven
7. An angel signalling dissonance
8. Demons torturing damned souls with flames and weapons



5.



6.



7.



8.



☆ **DECODING**
*EARLY
 CHRISTIAN
 SAINTS AND
 MARTYRS*

The Bible, a lily, a martyr's palm, a papal tiara, a wheel – these are just some of the attributes that signal which of the thousands of saints we are looking at. They include Christ's disciples, the early Christian martyrs in the first centuries AD, the 16th-century Counter Reformation saints and the way to saints canonized in modern times. A system of 'attributes', or symbols, has evolved to help us distinguish individual saints. Attributes often relate to the saint's life and the reason for their holiness. In many cases those who lived during Christ's life and in the first centuries AD under the Roman Empire were canonized (made saints) because they died for the Christian faith and became martyrs. They often hold an attribute that relates to the way in which they were tortured or died, or in ways that relate to their special intercessory powers, such as Saint Christopher who is often depicted protecting travellers.



SAINTE CATHERINE (c. 287–305)
 Saint Catherine of Alexandria is commonly depicted with the spiked wheel on which she was to be martyred.

SAINTE AGATHA (c. 231–51)
 Saint Agatha of Sicily, imprisoned for upholding her chastity, was tortured by having her breasts cut off.

SAINTE CECILIA (d. 230)
 Patron saint of musicians, Cecilia is often depicted playing music or being struck on the neck by a sword in martyrdom.



SAINTE MARGARET (c. 289–304)
 Saint Margaret of Antioch is often depicted with the dragon from whom she was said to have escaped.

SAINTE LUCY (c. 283–304)
 Saint Lucy holds a martyr's palm, symbolizing faith's victory, and her eyes, which were removed during torture.

SAINTE GEORGE (d. 303)
 Known for miraculously slaying a dragon and saving a princess, Saint George is often depicted with his spear and dragon.



SAINTE PATRICK (c. 385–461)
 Patron saint of Ireland, Saint Patrick is often depicted banishing snakes from the island, as he did in his legend.

SAINTE SEBASTIAN (c. 256–88)
 Saint Sebastian was tortured by being shot with arrows whilst tied naked to a tree, though this did not kill him.

SAINTE CHRISTOPHER (d. 251)
 According to legend, Saint Christopher helped the child Christ across a river, becoming patron saint of travellers.

☆ **PROFILE**
RELIGIOUS
ORDERS

Whether inside a monastery or outside in the community, monks, friars, nuns and clerics regular are recognizable by the distinctive details of their habit, including the tunic (ankle-length base garment with sleeves), scapular (length of material resting on the shoulders), capuce (pointed hood attached to circular shoulder cape) and cincture (belt). These late 19th-century French models made from tow (hemp) and wax show the variations in dress.

BENEDICTINE

Benedictine nuns wear a black scapular and veil that falls over their tunic and belts. A white, tight-fitting coif covers the head apart from the face.

DOMINICAN

The Dominican habit comprises a white tunic, scapular and capuce, together with a black cappa (cape) a detachable black capuce, a leather belt and a rosary.

AUGUSTINIAN

The all-black habit of Augustinians, with long, wide sleeves, a large shoulder cape and a long pointed hood historically distinguishes them from Dominicans.

CARTHUSIAN

The white habit distinguishes Carthusian monks and their austere form of devotion. The tunic and hooded scapular was worn over hair shirts as an act of penance.

CAPUCHIN

The brown of the Capuchin Franciscans represents eschewal of the world. The three knots on their cincture represent the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

URSULINE

Ursulines live under the Rule of Saint Augustine. Their black habit reflects that of the Augustinians, with the addition of a black veil and white guimpe (high-necked blouse).

TRAPPIST

An austere Cistercian order, Trappists wear a white tunic – the base of all habits – with a black scapular under the belt and a black cloak.

DISCALCED CARMELITE

Discalced Carmelite nuns, unlike Carmelite monks, are dedicated to prayer. They wear rough, brown wool tunics, fastened with a belt symbolizing chastity.

JESUIT

An order of the Clerics Regular without an official habit, Jesuits tended to wear a black cassock (like a priest) with a cincture and a biretta (square cap).



BENEDICTINE



CARTHUSIAN



TRAPPIST



DOMINICAN



CAPUCHIN



DISCALCED CARMELITE



AUGUSTINIAN



URSULINE



JESUIT



1 THE CATHEDRAL

THE DULL MIND RISES TO THE TRUTH THROUGH
MATERIAL THINGS, AND IS RESURRECTED
FROM ITS FORMER SUBMERSION WHEN
THE LIGHT IS SEEN.

ABBOT SUGER, ABBEY AT SAINT-DENIS, c. 1144–48

With their cavernous interiors, shafts of coloured light and reverberating acoustics, cathedrals across the world set the imagination on fire. From Rome to Krakow, Cuzco and Goa, the cathedral is designed to astonish the viewer and glorify God, as well as help visitors to meditate and pray in exalted devotion. Above all it is the space performed – filled with the comings and goings of the ritual year – that brings the cathedral to life.

☆ **DECODING**
ELEMENTS OF
A GOTHIC
CATHEDRAL

1. LADY CHAPEL

A chapel dedicated to the Virgin, often projecting eastwards behind the altar.

4. APSE

The semicircular end to the east end of the cathedral, usually reserved for clergy.

7. CHANCEL

The location of the rows of benches used by the traditionally all-male choir.

10. LECTERN

A stand for sacred books, usually ornately carved, often featuring an eagle.

13. SIDE CHAPEL

Chapels around the main building dedicated to saints, and commissioned by patrons.

16. AISLE

Running the length of the nave, the aisle is key to holy processions and ceremonies.

19. NARTHEX

A space before the nave, traditionally for non-members of the church to listen from.

2. RADIATING CHAPEL

Chapels dedicated to saints or patrons extending out from the ambulatory.

5. HIGH ALTAR

The sacred table used for Mass, often decorated with sculptures or paintings.

8. CHOIRSCREEN

Also known as a chancel screen or rood screen, this separates the laity from the sacred altar.

11. CROSSING

The centre of the cathedral, crowned by a high tower or dome.

14. TRANSEPT PORCH

A common entrance point to the cathedral, often featuring ornate stonework above.

17. BUTTRESSES

Immense architectural structures protruding from the exterior to support the high walls.

20. WEST PORTAL

Often the most magnificent entry point, with lavish stonework and heavy doors.

3. AMBULATORY

A walkway around the back of the altar, often decorated with narrative scenes.

6. ROSE WINDOW

A large, circular stained glass window with detailed stone tracery, found on any wall.

9. PULPIT

The raised, carved stand from which the priest delivers sermons, made of either wood or stone.

12. TRANSEPT

The transverse part of the building, at right angles to the nave and chancel.

15. NAVE

The large space reserved for the laity, where they may sit and listen to services.

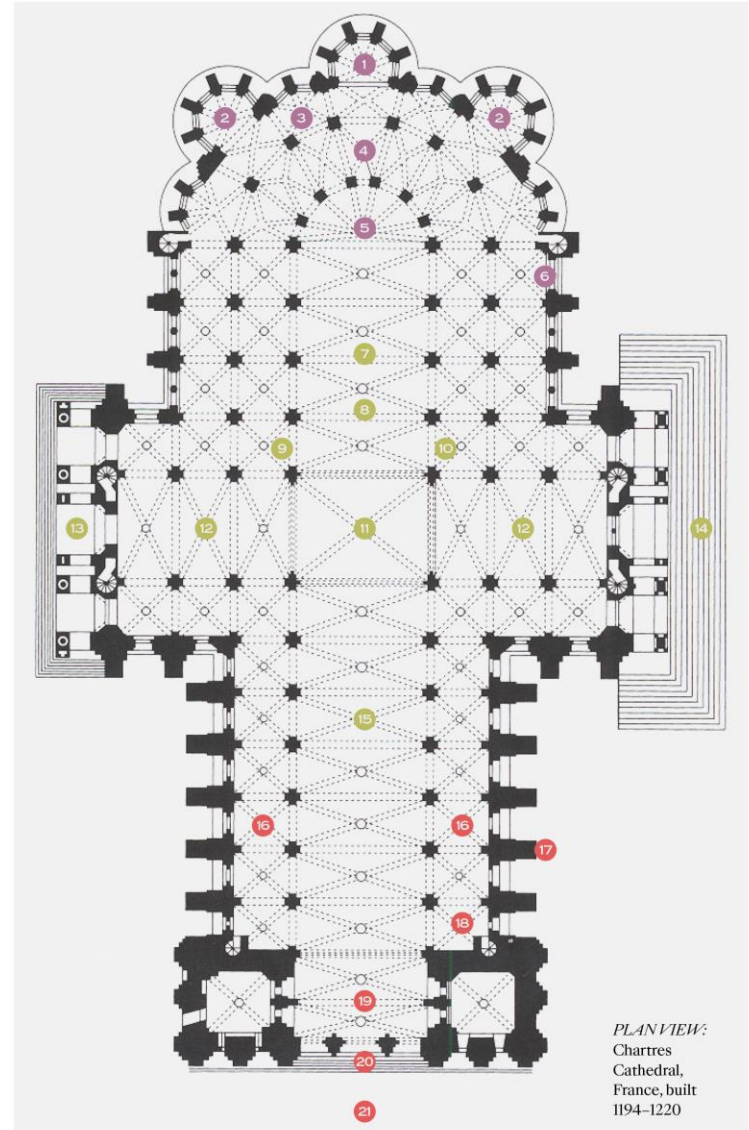
18. FONT

Used in baptisms to hold the holy water that is poured over the infant during the ritual.

21. FACADE

The most important view of the building, designed for impressive visual impact.

Catholic cathedrals and basilicas (those raised to special status by the Pope) are built in many styles, but they often incorporate – in some way – various common features. The plan of a standard Gothic cathedral offers a guide to their architecture.



PLAN VIEW:
Chartres
Cathedral,
France, built
1194–1220



RENAISSANCE
Renaissance cathedrals, from the 15th-16th centuries, use classical proportions and feature repetitive cylindrical columns, domes and frescoes.

- < BASILICA OF SANTA MARIA DEL FIORE, FLORENCE, ITALY
- > SISTINE CHAPEL, ROME, ITALY



BAROQUE
In this style a sense of movement is achieved through curls and arches. It was fused with native styles outside Europe, and dates from the 17th-18th centuries.

- < BASILICA OF SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE, VENICE, ITALY
- > KARLSKIRCHE, VIENNA, AUSTRIA

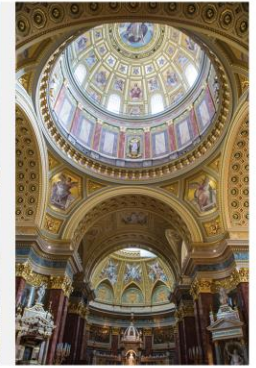


ROCOCO
Rococo is an evolution of Baroque, though lighter and often using natural features, such as clouds, for decoration. Cathedrals regularly have cupolas and date from the 18th century.

- < BASILICA OF BIRNAU, UPPER SWABIA, GERMANY
- > SAINT ANNE'S, KRAKOW, POLAND

NEOCLASSICAL
A revival of Classical pattern, featuring repeated columns on a grand scale and smooth lines. Cathedrals in this style were built in the 18th-19th centuries.

- < LA MADELEINE, PARIS, FRANCE
- > SAINT STEPHEN'S BASILICA, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY



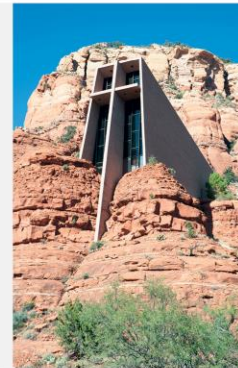
GOTHIC REVIVAL
Related to Catholic revival, a renewed interest in the decorative style and skill of Gothic cathedrals occurred during the 18th-19th centuries.

- < BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF LUJAN, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA
- > CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST, GEORGIA, USA



MODERN
In the 20th-21st centuries cathedrals have often been built using functional and experimental styles, featuring new materials such as concrete and steel.

- < CHAPEL OF THE HOLY CROSS, ARIZONA, USA
- > BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF APARECIDA, BRASÍLIA, BRAZIL





◀ HOLY CARD OF THE SHRINE AT FÁTIMA, PORTUGAL, 21st CENTURY Modern pilgrimage souvenirs can be bought online without visiting the shrine. This prayer card incorporates a medal.

▶ OUR LADY OF FÁTIMA ROSARY, 21st CENTURY Each glass bead depicts Our Lady of Fátima on one side and a rose on the other. A crucifix and medal are also attached.



Praying for divine help is also part of pilgrimage. Pilgrimage sites are the locus of miraculous interventions and enable devotees to petition particular saints. The hope of cures for illness encourage millions of pilgrims to make their journeys each year. At the grotto at Lourdes in France, hundreds of abandoned crutches attest to the miraculous healing granted by the Virgin to pilgrims there since her first appearance to a girl in 1858. Ex-votos – often in the shape of a body part symbolizing an ailment – are left at the shrines as a testament to miracles granted.

The most holy objects at a shrine are usually the relics of body parts of saints, or contact relics (materials that have touched those saintly bones) such as pieces of cloth, or cloth soaked in blood. In 1563, the Council of Trent reasserted Catholicism's dedication to these objects in the face of Protestant denial of their power: 'The holy bodies of holy martyrs...are to be venerated by the faithful; through which bodies many benefits are bestowed by God on men.' God's miraculous power was understood to work through these saintly remnants.

SOUTH AMERICAN EX-VOTO PAINTINGS These retablos from Mexico and beyond are colourful, modern reflections of Italian ex-voto paintings from the Renaissance.

During the Counter Reformation, the role of relics in religious life was expanded. Their circulation in Catholic territories was rejuvenated following the discovery of early Christian martyrs lying within the Roman catacombs in 1578. Their bodies and bones were traded across Europe. In the small town of Piacenza in northern Italy, twenty whole saints' bodies plus relics from a further eighty-eight bodies arrived between 1643 and 1647.

Relics are kept in the inner sanctum of a cathedral, church or chapel, often only taken out on special occasions. Such is the case for the miraculous liquefying blood of Saint Januarius in Naples, Italy, which is displayed in front of great crowds three times a year, when the miracle of liquefaction occurs. On pilgrimage, saint's relics are the focal point for devotion and the locus of the miraculous. It is thought that the body parts, or the contact relics that have touched them, are the medium through which God produces miracles.



☆ **PROFILE**
RELIQUARIES

Fragments of saints' bones, the cross or the blood-soaked cloth of martyrs are contained within precious reliquaries across the world. These remains locate the sacred and have the potential to produce miracles. As holy objects, it is befitting that they are encased in the most exquisite containers. Many are outstanding pieces of artwork in the finest materials, ingeniously conceived to further glorify the objects inside.



LITURGICAL
Adapted monstrances allow relics to be displayed in the central vessel. Crosses or mini altars are used to display small relics.

< ROCK CRYSTAL RELIQUARY OF SAINT SEBASTIAN, 15th CENTURY, GERMAN
> GÖTZ WORKSHOP, MINIATURE ALTAR, 18th CENTURY



CASKET
Casket, chasse or box reliquaries often resemble a church or tomb. Popular in the medieval period, some of the best examples are French, with gold, enamelwork and gems.

< RELIQUARY CASKET, c. 1173–80, BRITISH
> RELIQUARY CASKET, c. 1200–20, FRENCH

BODY PART
Reliquaries that were made in the shape of a body part allowed the devotee to know immediately what relic was inside. Bust and arm reliquaries were popular.



< BUST RELIQUARY, 14th CENTURY, GERMAN
> ARM RELIQUARY, 13th CENTURY, DUTCH

AMPULLAE
Ampullae, tiny containers filled with holy water or oil that had been in contact with the bodily fluids of saints, were sold at shrines.



< PILGRIM FLASK WITH SAINT MENAS, 4–7th CENTURY, EGYPTIAN
> TIN AMPULE, 13–14th CENTURY, ENGLISH

JEWELRY
Wealthy, devout Catholics could afford to buy tiny fragments of relics. These were often encased in small pendants or locket and worn as jewelry.



< LOCKET, ITALIAN
> PENDANT, 17th CENTURY, SPANISH



Part Three
Spiritus

- 1
COMMUNITIES
- 2
THE INDIVIDUAL
- 3
SENSES

/ˈspɪrɪtʊs/ noun
A particular spirit or quality.