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The Bones of St. Peter

The Search for the Relics of the Prince of the Apostles, Simon Peter of Galilee

- Summer of 1968: Pope Paul VI announced that the skeletal remains of St. Peter and at last been found.
- Tombs are common in St. Peters – there's an entire crypt under the basilica and for people have been buried in it for nearly 1500 years. Some of these include the 10th century emperor of Germany (Otto II), the only English Pope (Hadrian IV – 12th century), Queen Christiana of Sweden, and James II of England.
- Pius XI died in February of 1939. A place needed to be prepared for his burial. The Grottoes needed to be enlarged to accommodate more tombs and the prayers that accompanied them. The ceilings were too low (irregular, 8' or so).
- First action was to lower the entire floor by some 3'. Had to lift up the heavy marble pavement and underpinning.
- Workers began to uncover a random series of marble and stone sarcophagi. These were to be expected since lots of burials have been done in the flooring over time.
- After three months, a digger's shovel struck the ragged top of a brick wall that was more than a foot thick and descended into the earth. One side had a painted plaster face.
- A Vatican archeologist was summoned. The excavation continued. They realized that this was a small building whose roof had been sheered off and the remaining shell rammed with earth. The brickwork revealed that the building was extremely ancient.
- They unearthed the building and discovered some wall niches with cremation urns; it was a tomb. All the niches had scallop-shelled designs (pagan symbol of salvation, protection), dolphins (led the dead to Hades), and Venus rising from the sea. Obviously it was pagan.
- When all the dirt was removed, the workers discovered the grave of a Christian under an oblong marble slab. It was the body of a woman, Aemelia Gorgonia, who died at 28. The words *dormit in pace* were written on it (an earlier form of *requiescat in pace).* Note that the Christian said the dead "slept" and would awake; a different understanding that the pagans who understood death to be permanent.
- A little later, they found the tomb of high-ranking pagan woman: Ostoria Chelidon, wife of an Imperial officer and daughter of a Roman senator. She was in a very richly carved marble sarcophagus. They looked inside and found her skeleton still wrapped in gold and purple cloth – the colors restricted to the imperial class. Why would someone of such high rank be buried in a rather common area?
- The large tomb had been built sometime around the year 150 and remained in "use" by the Caetennius family, members of Rome's freedman class, for nearly 200 years. Most of the tombs were for cremation but there were some terra cotta coffins as well. Note that around the 3rd century a growing belief had developed in an afterlife even among Rome's pagan population. This discovery was one of the best-preserved ancient tombs in all of Rome.
- As diggers began to "free" the exterior of the tomb, they discovered more tombs on either side. Like this one, they were roofless and packed with dirt.

- The size and splendor of the tombs caused amazement but the finding of them didn't – it had long been believed that pagan burials did exist under St. Peter's. Some old records attest to it where accidental discoveries were made. In fact, one 17th century tale recounts finding the sarcophagus of *Flavius Agricola*. On the lid, there was an inscription that read, "Mix the wine, drink deep, and do not refuse to pretty girls the sweets of love, for when death comes earth and fire devour everything!" So offended were the authorities that they had the lid smashed and thrown into the Tiber!
- Also, in 1574, some workmen accidentally broke through the top of brickwork and found a tomb with a ceiling decorated in gold and a body laid out. The tomb was closed and the work continued.
- All of this evidence indicates that there exists a pagan graveyard under the basilica..
- This area of land is known as "*Vaticanum*." About 330 the land was covered so that Constantine could build his first basilica here over the tomb of Peter. Constantine himself took part in the actual construction by carrying the symbolic 12 baskets of earth fill (one for each apostle); this even though he was preoccupied with his building project of Constantinople.
- The original basilica lasted for nearly 1200 years until the new one was completed.
- When the new basilica was built, digging was allowed *only when absolutely necessary* to set the massive foundations for the pillars and walls. All other ground was scrupulously avoided, especially that around the high altar.
- The new basilica stands about 10' higher than the previous one. This height being used to accommodate the crypt area which was not part of the Constantinian structure.
- Thus, the discoveries made in 1939 unearthed buildings that had been virtually untouched since the time of Constantine!

Street of the Dead...

- With three tombs discovered, more were surely to follow. The work of lowering the floor was abandoned in favor of a HIGHLY secret excavation project. Italy was in the midst of World War II and Hitler had placed the Pope (Pius XII) under virtual house-arrest. Threats were being made to kidnap him. Hitler was highly superstitious and sent his secret agents around the world searching for religious "artifacts" that would bring him power (Raiders of the Lost Ark is not that far from the truth!). There was a legitimate concern that if Hitler knew the Vatican was being excavated for the relics of St. Peter that he may try to steal them. Pius swore all the workers to utter secrecy. They deposed the excavated soil in the Vatican Gardens during their lunch hour and "breaks" when they would go out for a stroll.
- If Peter was buried in this area, then his tomb would be at about the same depth and 80 feet away from the first one discovered. An excavation team was formed. Aside from silence, the team was also restricted in the area of their work: they could not do any digging that would weaken the supporting area of the high altar.
- In early 1941 the new tombs were explored and two more were discovered.; these were in the same condition (roofless and packed). These new tombs revealed interested archeological finds and insights into pagan religious practices (Isis, Hypnos (bat-winged god of sleep), Bacchanalian festivals, leering Satyrs, etc.).

- In one of these tombs (Valerius), there were also two Christian graves. One belonged to Flavius Statilius Olympius whose inscription read, *"He had a joke for everyone and he never quarreled."*
- It was also in this tomb that the workmen found a very significant discovery: the first mention of Peter! Sketched into the plaster was the spontaneous head of Christ (identifiable by the form of a Phoenix) with the word *vibus* (living). There was also the Latin inscription, "Peter pray Christ Jesus for the holy..." The rest was lost.
- Although other inscriptions to Peter existed, this was the only one accompanied by a drawing. Also, why was there a Christian in a pagan burial area? Why so hastily buried there?
- As the workers continued, they found a second row of tombs across a small alley from the first row. These continued in the direction of the high altar.
- The old belief of Peter's body resting in a formal pagan "necropolis" was correct after all! Note: Pagans called their burial places "necropolis" ("City of the Dead") but Christians used the term Cemetery because cemetery implied a temporary resting place.
- The next tomb offered more art: peacocks and other birds representing paradise. There were also depictions of Hercules and a magnificent floor mosaic of the Rape of Persephone (Pluto driving his chariot gripping the fainting female figure – a symbol for the soul ravaged by death on the way to paradise).
- Work stopped for while so that workers could free and clean the newly discovered tombs. They also found a large open area across the "street" and started to clear it. At this point they made a great discovery. When they moved a marble slab (floor of the crypt) they discovered a hole. They lowered a workman with a lamp into the area and saw that it was a small burial vault. On the ceiling he saw a magnificent gold mosaic that lit the room.
- Detail of Art: Johan falling from the side of a ship, Christ the Good Shepherd, and the ceiling: Helios, the Greek sun god, adapted to the Christian tradition. Helios was in his chariot with his cloak flying; he holds a globe in his left hand and rays shine from behind his head in the form of a cross. Note: This is the origin of the Christian use of "Halos" to demarcate a saint! The "Helios" had the sun behind his head! Three Christians were found buried in this chamber. The tomb had been built around the end of the 2nd century to house a child. In 250 the family became Christians (or the tomb passed to new owners). This was the most important artifact to be recovered so far! This was the tomb of 1547 that had been accidentally broken into!
- After ten months, 19 mausoleums had been discovered in a 300' area. The earliest tomb belonged to the Matucius and dated to 125. However, this was not the oldest tomb – evidence exists that previous tombs had been disturbed in that *ossuariums* were built into the outside walls of these newer tombs. The contained the bones of previous graves. Peter had indeed been buried in a pagan cemetery but it was not the elaborate one discovered, rather it was an older and simpler one that had been destroyed.
- The excavators learned two important facts:
- *The Tombs*: this was a burial site until 330 when the basilica was formed. The architects of the original basilica had decided not to destroy the tombs in raising the building but simply had their tops removed and filled them with dirt. This would help strengthen the foundation. However, to do this mean disturbing tombs

– something punishable by death in the Roman laws. Constantine must have used the full weight of his imperial authority to violate these laws. No other emperor ever committed a similar action against Roman citizens. This had to have provoked bitter resentment among Rome's predominantly pagan population.

- *The Basilica*: There were formidable obstacles to be overcome. Three enormous foundation walls ran the entire length of the walls. These walls were no less than 7' thick made of brick-coated concrete; they rose 35' high. It would have required more than 1,000,000 cubic feet of soil (carried by hand) to fill in. The building of the first St. Peter's was the most stupendous construction job of antiquity! With level ground only a few hundred feet away, why go through such expense and trouble. Constantine was convinced that this was the tomb of Peter. He had Sylvester to witness to it as well. Constantine must have had other evidence as well – did he have the grave opened? Some ancient legends say that he had a bronze sarcophagus made for Peter.

- The excavations went forward with intensification. Pius was fascinated with the possibility of discovering St. Peter's grave. The world was still filled with excitement over the discovery of Tutankhamen. For whatever reason, Pius gave permission to now investigate the area directly beneath the high altar.

Beneath the High Altar...

- This is an area 20'x20' and 40' tall.
- Approximately 30 ancient documents mention Peter's tomb but offer little else. Tradition says he died on the Vatican hill and was buried in the immediate vicinity. John 21 offers some insights and Acts mention some of Peter's activities but that's about it in the New Testament. He escaped from Jerusalem in 43, attends the Council of Jerusalem in 49 and dies in Nero's persecution in 64. Sometime before his death he probably provided the material for Mark's Gospel and most likely approved it for reading in the churches.
- Peter did write letters to the early church. Most likely these were while he was in prison.
- Tradition claims that Peter asked to be crucified upside down because he was not worthy to die as his Lord had.
- See what the historian Tacitus says about Nero's persecution: *Their death was turned into a diversion. They were clothed with the skins of wild beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs; they were fastened to crosses, or set up to be burned so as to serve the purpose of lamps when daylight failed. Nero gave up his own gardens (circus) for this spectacle."* The slaughter was so much that many Romans felt pity for the otherwise despised victims.
- The Acts of Peter do contain a reference to Marcellus (Senator) who cared for the body of Peter but this is dubious (claims he placed it in a marble coffin with attic honey!).
- Within 20 years of Peter's death some sort of "memorial shrine" was erected over his grave by Pope Anacletus. A future burial ground for future popes was established nearly.
- Gaius (200) a Roman priest, spoke of the "tropaion" of Peter which he said stood on the Vatican hill. "Trophy" misses the mark but it does show a clearly known structure.
- Some ancient documents (5th century) do mention the bronze sarcophagus in which Constantine supposedly placed the remains of Peter.

- Peter's reburial has been actively discussed. There were strong cultural norms that prohibited ever moving a body. However, during the persecutions there are signs that Peter and Paul were moved to the catacombs (for protection?). It may not only possible but probable that Peter was moved at some point.
- Most likely, the original grave had been a simple trench several feet below the surface with the corpse protected by slanting marble slabs in the manner of the poor of the time (creating a kind of "lean-to" effect over the body).
- What the shrine looked like once Constantine built the first basilica is unknown. It must have had an area for Mass and for pilgrims to visit freely. Beyond that it's speculation.
- One eyewitness writes (as the basilica is under construction): *To this tomb countless crowds come from all parts of the Roman Empire, as to a great sanctuary and temple of God.*
- A 6th century account tells how a visitor should conduct himself (a little superstitious): *The man who desires to pray opens the barriers which enclose this holy place and comes to the tomb. Then he opens the little window, leans his head through it and asks for what he needs. He will not have to wait long for a successful answer if he has prayed properly. If he would like to have a holy relic, he should leave a small cloth there, which he has already had weighted. Then he should pray devoutly, with watching and fasting, that the apostolic power may come to aid his devotion. And then – wonder of wonders – if his faith be strong the cloth he draws up from the tomb will be so rich with divine power that it weights more heavily than before, and so he understands that he has received the grace for which he prayed.*
- The cloth was evidently to make contact with the tomb. The pilgrim is obviously on a higher level than the grave.
- Lots of alterations took place since Constantine built his basilica. In 600, Gregory the Great added an altar. Then 500 years later Callixtus added another. Finally, in the 17th century Clement added the third. The question is: how much did the building of a new altar obliterate the previous one?
- Also, on one occasion foreign invaders desecrated St. Peters. In August of 846, the Saracens (10,000 men) landed from 75 ships and entered Rome. They were haters of Christianity and were the first invaders to specifically vent their wrath on holy places. They looted and destroyed St. Peter's. One source reports that the troops perpetrated "unspeakable iniquities". Did this mean they broke into the space below to the grave itself? No one could tell.
- From the Saracens until 1941, the shrine had remained undisturbed with two exceptions:
- Accident: in 1594 a large piece of masonry broke from the top of a pillar and smashed against a part of the shrine opening a jagged crack. Some workmen looked into the crack and were dazzled by the sight of a golden cross. Pope Clement hastily had the crack closed with cement and further work was forbidden. **NOTE: The shrine did once include a golden cross. When first erected in the 4th century, St. Helena gave kingly crown and an oversize cross made of pure gold. In the early days, the crown was suspended directly above the shrine's center but nothing is said about the cross.
- Purpose: In the 19th century, the Jesuit historian, Hartmann Grisar, was prompted by the electric light to try an experiment. His focus was the cupboard niche sunk

into the east face (Niche of the Pallia). A new archbishop's stole (pallium) rested here overnight to symbolize his particular union with the successor of Peter. There is a small hinged door in the bottom of this niche which opens to a small vertical shaft lined in green porphyry. He lowered the light to depth of 15' but could not make out anything down below. Could this be the shaft through which pilgrims once lowered their pieces of clothe?

Peter's Grave...

- The team set to work to find the grave. However, their restrictions made it very difficult: they could not interfere with any use of the upper basilica, they could not use power tools, they could cause no "irreparable" damage to any part of the monument. They could take apart only as long as they could reassemble!
- They began in a 17th Chapel on the west side of the shrine. The removed full-length mosaics of Peter and Paul to find brickwork that was 17th century at the top and nearly 7th century at the base (Gregory the Great)! One wall witnessed 1,000 years.
- They removed a few bricks and found white marble with a narrow strip of red porphyry running up the side. The rest of the wall was removed.
- The marble covered and area 8'x8' and 10' high. The red porphyry divided it in half. A large altar was found on top of it (Callixtus – 12th century).
- The removed the porphyry stip and found a red wall of plaster covered bricks. They removed the bricks and found a hole. A worker poked his head in it and found himself inside another ancient alter – that of Gregory the Great.
- They then tried removing another part of the chapel on the west side of the shrine. They discovered a 2' passageway that led around a curve to reveal a room the size of a wardrobe closet. There they stood in front of the back side of the marble encased monument. They removed that marble slab because is was medieval in dating and chiseled their way through four brick walls from different periods. On the last wall, the workman used a knife and discovered another piece of white marble. The removed the last wall.
- They found a red wall with a travertine slab jetting straight out from it and supported by a graceful marble column. This wall pre-dated the Constantinian structure
- They exposed the left-hand wall of the chapel and did the same excavation. They found the other side of the red wall. It was covered in graffiti for an area of 3x4 feet. It was a forest of scratches heaped one on top of another.
- The graffiti mentioned names in Latin of people who were already dead. This was visible from the invocation with them, "*vivatis in Christo"*, etc.
- The name of Christ was nowhere but the Chi-Rho symbol was found 30 times. All these symbols must have been scratched into the plaster during a 20 year period from 312-330. This monogram spread after Constantine's military victory at the Milvian bridge in 312. He used the monogram on his shields and helmets.
- The wall obviously pre-dated the graffiti. Estimates put the date of the wall at 250.
- To their frustration, the name "Peter" never once showed up on this wall! (Note: at some other saint's graves in Rome there was also a noted absence of their names.)

- They discovered a man-made cavity in this graffiti wall. It was lined with marble. Originally it had been plastered over but the plaster was now crumbling after so many centuries. This wall was 8' high, 7' wide, and nearly 2' thick.
- This "red wall" had obviously extended much wider but had been cut down to fit inside the marble casing. The excavators remembered another of Constantine's early Christian basilicas: the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. The architects had removed excess rock and encased the remaining stone in a marble housing. This was not controversial in antiquity. Had a similar thing happened at St. Peter's? If so, this red wall with the two niches and travertine table was the object enshrined! Could this be the "trophy" of Gaius?
- Then they entered through the Niche of the Pallia by removing the medieval mosiacs. They saw that this niche was actually cutting "into" the travertine slab (4'x5') so that the niche of the pallia could it in the niche of the red wall.
- Finally, they decided to probe the bottom of the shrine. They would enter under the foundation of the red wall.
- Before probing the bottom, they decided to examine the marble-lined hole one more time. They found a coin from 900 (Limoges, France), some silver threads, pieces of metal, and three or four slivers of bone. This cavity was larger than expected and extended all the way across the graffiti wall from one side to the other (about 3 ½') and was some 10" deep. They moved on.
- As they began to dig near the wall's foundation, they discovered a 4th century grave and then a 1st century grave – they would dig no further! They then began to break through the foundation of the wall.
- When they poked through the wall, they discovered a small chamber. The archeologist made an awkward entrance and found on the narrow ceiling a rectangular slab of marble on which were the words: *Aelius Isidorus*. This was obviously not part of the original grave. There was a small square hole in the middle of it. The archeologist shone his light up into the hole and saw a shaft lined with green porphyry – same discovered 50 years earlier by Grisar..
- He also saw that there were two parallel walls that met the red wall at 10 degrees off plumb. Then he noticed that the Isidorus slab was also tilted 10 degrees off plumb as well. These two walls had been sheered off at the ground level when the red was built. The Isidorus slab was also tilted down and the archeologist discovered that the other marble column was pushing it in. Finally, he saw a shiny object that turned out to be a 2"x3" plate of gold (a votive offering) from the 5th - 6th centuries. Many more coins covered the floor under him including some with the heads of Roman emperors on them.
- He then discovered a small opening in the red wall foundations. There was a bone about 5" long. There were more bones in the same area. He replaced the bones and left the chamber.
- The Pope arrived in ten minutes! The Pope gave permission for the bones to be unearthed. The Pope actually sat down in a chair to watch the progress.
- In all, some 250 pieces had been extracted.
- Despite his enthusiasm Pius did not voice certainty. There were too many questions to be answered.

- All that could be known for certain is that at some point in history the bones had been piled together and pushed beneath the triangular opening in the foundation of the red wall.
- In any case, they were human bones found in Peter's grave and undisturbed for 1,000 years. They were placed in a lead-lined box and taken to the Pope's apartment where his personal physician (Dr. Galeazzi) examined them and ascertained them to be the bone of a man, powerfully built, 65-70 years of age.

The Red Wall Complex...

- Excavation continued for the next 3 years.
- As the soil was sifted, no further bones were retrieved but there were nearly 2,000 coins found! Most of these coins coincided with the building era (4th & 5th) of Constantine's basilica and represented almost every country of Europe with Italy, France, and Germany predominating. More than 40 of these coins were from Imperial Rome and were minted well before Constantine in the 1st - 3rd centuries. Note that more than ½ the coins retrieved were too corroded to be identified. The earliest coin was from the time of Augustus in 14 AD. Circulation for more than 50 years is doubtful. Therefore, this and other coins from the 1st century demonstrate a stead devotion to Peter's memory. It also shows that some way was permitted for contact with the body of Peter.
- They also began to better understand the complex surrounding the tomb of Peter. The red was originally stretched for some 26' (10'+ on either side). This helped form a rectangular enclosed area of 26'x12' with the Trophy in the center. The floor of this open space was covered in paving tiles. On the back side of the wall was an alleyway (and the Flavius Agricola tomb – upset the 16th century officials!). Another courtyard with spaces for six earthen graves was also found. This was the 2nd century burial ground for bishops (2nd century document) – denoted as specifically Christian by the absence of any cremation burials.
- A total of seven graves were found in the courtyard of Peter's burial. These dated from the 1st to the early 2nd centuries and all seven were purposely crowding that of Peter. One of these was dressed in fine garments with golden thread – an early pope. The first of these burials is the closest to Peter and is buried at the same 11 degree misalignment as Peter himself! Note: the first 10 popes all died of martyrdom.
- The challenge came with dating this complex to ensure that it was the trophy of Gaius. The break came when a drainage ditch was discovered under the alleyway behind the red wall. Tiles were recovered that bore the brickworks' stamp: it was from a company owned by the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and his wife Faustina (he was named "Caesar"). Four more tiles with the same inscription confirmed the period of the complex (and ditch) as being built between 147 and 161 AD. This is a period of roughly 80 years from the death of Peter in 64! Thus, <u>the children and grandchildren of the very eyewitnesses to Peter's death and burial would have been the ones who built the red wall and the trophy</u>!
- Also, the *Liber Pontificalis* (6th century) stated that Pope Anacletus who built the memorial shrine to Peter at the end of the 1st century. The description fit the red wall complex although the red wall complex is 50 years later. Possible explanation: from 155-166 a man by the name of Anicetus was pope – very similar to "Anacletus". Very

possibly the *Liber Pontificalis* got the two mixed up when it came to who built the monument.

- The design of the Trophian is still odd – nothing like it exists in Christian antiquity. Also, no explanation for the two niches. No pagan monuments had an open "table" jetting out from them.
- The graffiti wall was not original to the complex; it was built later to support the red wall after the red wall developed a serious vertical crack. Building it meant altering the symmetry of the table and pillars. Some attempts were made to correct this unsymmetric design (Note: one of the columns had to be moved over the accommodate the graffiti wall). This asymmetry can still be seen by the misplacement of the Niche of the Pallia in the confessio.
- The story of Peter's burial was becoming clearer: he has hastily buried without preparation for ceremony in a shallow grave (possibly a coffin but more likely just slabs of tile). The site for his burial may have been donated by the Senator Marcellus who might have owned the ground and thus explained the account in the Acts of Peter. Twice in the following decades low walls were put up to protect the grave from the slumping hillside (caused by the building of tombs nearby). These retaining walls were aligned with Peter's tomb.
- When it came time to build the Tropaion a century after the burial, the orientation of the red wall had to conform to the line of the mausoleums now surrounding the site. The red wall had to cut directly across Peter's grave (almost at its center). The inverted "V" in the red wall was an attempt to protect all possible parts of Peter's grave. As much of the monument as possible maintained alignment with Peter's grave (even the slab on top). Peter's grave did have to be shortened and so the bones did have to be collected at this time. This may explain the gathering of the bones in one area but it didn't explain when this had happened (Saracens?). At the approach of the Saracens, the bones had been removed from the receptacle but had to be preserved in their original resting place.

Stroke of Fate...

- In 1950 Pius wished to announce the discovery as part of the Holy Year celebrations. An inaccurate press release pre-empted the announcement. Had the tomb of Peter been found? YES. Had the bones of Peter been found?..... More difficult to answer. He only stated that human bones had been found "at the side of the tomb".
- In 1950 a discovery had been made: the name "Peter" had been found in connection with the Tropaion. On a chunk of masonry found in the marble repository in the graffiti wall, an excavator had shone his light and found a piece of plaster from the red wall. With the light at the right angle, it revealed the 2" letters: "PETR" and the second word "ENI". The plaster was broken off past these words. Clearly this stated "Peter is within"! This inscription had been written on the red wall prior to the building of the graffiti wall. Note: the use of Greek had disappeared from Roman usage in the late 3rd century.
- But how did this piece of plaster get here from its inaccessible position on the red wall?
- Now a new twist: 9 years earlier, during excavations at the shrine, something happened of which the archeologists were totally unaware. A blunder had been committed which left

the excavations totally flawed. The perpetrator was conscientious Monsignor Kaas himself (the administrator of St. Peter's Basilica)!

- Kaas was responsible for the archeological team but he was not an archeologist. He considered the archeologists to be too blunt and insensitive in their methods (without reverence for the remains of the deceased). After only a few months from the time the excavations began there was a serious breach in communication between Kaas and the team; they seldom met and only for necessary matters – they operated in two different worlds.
- Here's the result: Each evening, after everyone had departed the excavations, Kaas would survey the site with one of the workmen (Giovanni Segoni). As Kaas found skeletons, he made it his personal duty to ensure that no human bones should ever be lost in the mounds of dirt accidentally thrown out. Whenever bones were found he would place them in special boxes and store them away for reburial. The archeologists knew of Kaas' routine and grudgingly accepted it but were never informed of his results.
- One evening in 1942 – a day or so after first exposing the graffiti wall but before a closer look could be made – Kaas came on his rounds with the foreman. Segoni flaked off some plaster from the rim for a better view and inspected the cavity with a light. He reported a number of bones mixed with some debris. Kaas unhesitatingly told him to remove them for safekeeping.
- There were many human bones, each bleached to stark whiteness. Kaas placed them in a box. He also found some shreds of cloth, a few thick threads, and two corroded coins. These were all placed in a box. Then he wrote on the box: *ossa-urna-graf* (bones, graffiti urn).
- Several days later the archeologists returned to the graffiti wall (after their disappointing investigation of the Pallia Niche) and never noticed the opening to the cavity had been slightly enlarged. Then when they made their own investigation, all they found were the bits of debris that Segoni had missed: some threads, bits of metal, the Limoges coin, and the few chips of bone.

The Wooden Box...

- By 1952 the last work was being done on excavating the "Scavi" and preparing it for visitors. By permission of Pius XII, a professor of Greek from the Gregorian Univeristy, Dr. Margherita Guarducci, was allowed in to view the "Peter graffito" in the Valerius tomb. She had a well-trained eye for deciphering ancient and deteriorating markings. The new administrator for St. Peter's (Msgr. Francesco Vacchini) accompanied her. Note: Msgr. Kaas had fallen ill and died some months before.
- Guarducci was disappointed with the Valerius tomb (too faded to study) and so she took a tour of the excavations. When she came to the graffiti wall (presumed to be "obvious" and therefore not previously studied by an "expert"), she noticed something never before seen: a whole series of lines crossing each all over the wall. Never before in any of her extensive work with ancient inscriptions had she ever seen it. Here was a virtual matrix of them!

- Guarducci returned to the Valerius tomb to do what she could with the inscription. This inscription read: PETRU SROGA XSIHS meaning "Peter pray Christ Jesus". The second inscription read: PRO SANCTIS meaning "for the holy...". The next line reads: HOM BUS CRESTIANUS D CO PUSTUUMSEP meaning "Christian men buried near your body." This was the first inscription indicating that Peter's actual remains lay in the vicinity (30' from Peter's tomb). But what's the dating. After study, she concluded it was between 290-310 – before Constantine but after Gaius. However, other scholars doubted her dating because of the open statement of Christian sentiment – they put the dating at 330.
- Guarducci couldn't get the graffiti wall out of her mind. She requested permission to study the entangle and began in September of 1953.
- Her study was going nowhere. Then one morning she met Giovanni Sergoni who was working on a nearby task. They visited near the graffiti wall and she causally asked about the opening. "Was there anything in there that might help?" she asked. The official report said, "No". Segoni then explained how he had emptied it and offered to show her the things he found.
- In a storeroom with dozens of boxes, he found the one marked *ossa-urna-graf*. It was a wooden box. Here was the full collection. Dr. Guarducci found five bones (6-10" in length), spinal column pieces, vertebrae, joints, and a hundred other pieces.
- Segoni confirmed that this box contained only items from this space and that no one had access to it except himself and Msgr. Kaas.
- ****Guarducci presumed that the archeologists had already seen these remains and considered them insignificant.
- Still, she thought that these bones should not be returned to the cold, damp storeroom. She wrapped the box in heavy brown paper with a cord and had them stored in the basilica's main offices where it was locked in a cupboard (with Msgr. Vacchini's permission).

What the Graffiti Hid...

- Guarducci worked for weeks but found little except some names (3rd and 4th century) and some abbreviated prayers with the monogram of Christ. Then she discovered the followed letters above a Christ monogram: HO
  VIN
  These were for the Latin phrase: IN HOC VINCIT, "In this, conquer". The words ended because of a break in the plaster. This is the wording of the miracle at the Milvian bridge. Note that this is an older inscription that the writings of Eusebius (who personally interviewed Constantine) and who it is sometimes suggested invented the story! This was inscribed in one decade after the incident!
- The Alpha and Omega were frequently found symbols. In some cases she began to note that there was a reversal of the letters to read "Omega-Alpha" instead. Instead of "Beginning to End" it would mean "End to Beginning" – a reference to the Christian understanding of death (in Christ) in which the earthly end is really the beginning of eternal life! She found that indeed this same phenomenon had been found in other Roman inscriptions from other places. Since this particular code was imbedded in free-

standing words (ex: MARI-A), she began to look for other "coded" expressions as well. She found the "T", symbol for the cross "tau" in other words as well. She then began to see a coded use of what were before just free-standing letters.

- AAA= Trinity. Often the Chi Rho would be attached to the 2nd "A" (Alpha)
- E= Eden
- F=Son
- N=Victory (Nika)
- R=Resurrection
- S=Health
- V=Life
- M or MA=Mary. Note: <u>often inside the M was a small "A" standing for her Son!</u>

- She discovered a "Spiritual Cryptography! Note that the Romans habitually used abbreviations. <u>Some letters were connected by drawn lines and not in linear sequence.</u> She now had the tools to "decipher" the wall!
- She also found the letters PE worked into a Christ monogram above one of the names (Venerosa). These first two Greek letters of Peter's name were attached to the Rho of a Chi Rho. This symbol appeared 20 times on the wall! It was Peter after all! This monogram had actually been found elsewhere around the Vatican and in Rome but no one ever knew its meaning. It came from his tomb! Note that the symbol had a double meaning as <u>P with an E on the bottom also resembles a "Key" with its handle and teeth</u> – Peter as the one who holds the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven!
- Dr. Guarducci, who had allotted three weeks for the task of the Scavi, finally ended her work five years later with a three volume publication of research!

The Bones Examined...

- By the spring of 1956 there so much speculation that the bones found in the niche under the wall were authentic (some speculation by the actual archeologists who had broken their silence) that the pope called in Professor Correnti of the Palermo University to do a more thorough scientific exam of them. His personal physician's report nearly 15 years earlier was not sufficient. Correnti soon discovered that there were bones from several individuals and from a wide variety of animals (including cows, horses, sheep, goats – perhaps 50 species in all). Pius ordered the results to be published. These collections, kept in lead boxes in the Vatican apartment of the Pope, were clearly not able to be called the bones of St. Peter. His study continued until 1960. Animal bones were easily explained since the circus of Nero had used animals for cruel entertainment.
- It is possible that many of the bones may have come together naturally as the area would have littered with animal remains and common graves would have allowed for several people to be buried in the same area within a relatively short period of time. Some held out hope that at least some of these bones could be those of Peter if not all of them. The general atmosphere was gloomy, however.
- To complete the excavation record, Correnti agreed to investigate some other remains found in the same area. After six months, he concluded that the courtyard graves contained four individuals.

- In October of 1962 Correnti finally turned his attention to the paper-wrapped brown wooden box. He was surprised that unlike other collections, these represented the bones of the same man. He had 135 bones to work from. There were a very few animal bones as well as well as the remains of a field mouse. The presence of the field mouse indicated that two things: the mouse had never been "interred" and the remains had never been transferred by hand (or it would have destroyed the delicate bones).
- He discovered that every part of the skeleton was represented except for the feet. Finally, in 1963 he completed his study: The bones were of a single "elderly" (between 60-70) man about 5' 7" tall, of heavy (robust) build. He also noted that because many of the bones had encrusted soil in hardened patches, it was reasonable that the bones had lain for a considerable period of time in a bare earth grave.

The Peter Theory...

- Within a week of John XXIII's death (June 3, 1963), Correnti and Guarducci were enjoying a casual conversation in the Vatican. They were long-time friends. Correnti told of his conclusions of the findings of the brown box. Guarducci was surprised. Correnti said that the body must have been buried in the earth and then, curiously, at some time enclosed in a wrapping of purple cloth (the bare bones, not the body) .
- Guarducci was preoccupied by this story and pondered it throughout the night. The next morning she remembered seeing the two word inscription: PETROS ENI – "Peter is within." It was the first time in 10 years she had thought of the plaster inscription found by Ferrua inside the repository. She knew the writing preceded the building of the graffiti wall. Finally, she posed the question clearly: <u>Could the graffiti wall bones be those of Peter?! But why in the wall rather than in the grave?</u> And how would the inscription have found its way in the cavity where no one would ever notice it? What about the repository – surely it had been opened in the Middle Ages, who knows how many times it may have been opened before that? The reason it was presumed the repository had been opened was because of the graffiti tablet found inside – presumably having fallen in.
- On the other hand, had the repository been opened? The coins could have entered by accident. The mouse – surely if it was entered by a mouse then coins could enter as well. With 2,000 coins being poured in and cracks in the wall, it is very possible that they made their way to this area.
- But the question persisted: how had that graffiti piece entered. Her conclusion: Through the front opening of the repository! The bones had been placed there just before the niche was walled up and at the last moment someone hastily scratched a message on the plaster piece and placed it inside as a form of identification.
- But why move them from the grave to the wall? Who did it? She spoke with Correnti and he agreed to do some tests to verify her theory. As it would happen, a family friend, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini, was elected to the Chair of Peter on June 21, 1963 – Pope Paul VI. At an audience with the new Pope several months later she presented him copies of her latest work and shared her secret theory with him in a small room near the Pope's library. She even had the door closed for secrecy! She needed to be careful not to "discredit" the reputations of the original archeologists, all men of repute.

- In Jan-Feb of 1964 Correnti explained the four tests needed to resolve the question: chemical analysis of the soil on the bones (same as the tomb?), analysis of the fabric to see content (true gold?), examination of the animals found in the area from the 1st century, and lastly, they would like to examine the head of Peter in the reliquary over the Lateran altar.
- Permission was granted for all four tests.
- The animal bones were all from domesticated animals consistent with farm stock in the country regions surrounding Imperial Rome. The threads of cloth were woven of wool according to Roman techniques; the cloth had been dyed to a shade of purple (turned dark brown over the centuries). The gold threads were indeed made of gold manufactured in two ways: a fine coating of gold laminate applied over wool and a core of linen sheathed with copper acetate and a delicate plating of gold – the high skill and technical knowledge underlying the process (3rd - 4th century) impressed the scientists.
- The soil test was conclusive: It was identical. The soil in the grave is the same soil as that clinging to the bones.
- The examination of the head in the Lateran reliquary proved difficult – there were simply too few bones to be conclusive about much. What the tests did show is that the two sets of relics are compatible with one another without duplicating any bone fragments.
- Simultaneous to this study, Guarducci spoke with the four original excavators to find that they did not even know of the wooden box! They had been victims of the most regrettable blunder in archaeological history!
- All the studies were completed. Absolute proof may never be found but the circumstantial evidence is compelling. In the interest of scientific rigor, all the materials on which the theory is based was submitted separately to five disinterested scholars. Three were respected archaeologists and two were language experts. All five, independently, gave their judgment that the procedures and the conclusions were impeccable.
- There were challenges to her conclusions from the scholarly community. The report generated massive debate. Further tests were done to answer objectionable concerns. The most significant of these test was to determine whether or not the cavity had ever been breached in history. To test this, Paul gave permission for the walls of the repository to be removed and a thoroughly study was done – it was determined that the repository had remained intact since the time of Constantine's workmen in the early 4th century until it was opened in 1942. Absolutely no trace of tampering had been found: no chisel marks, no indications of rebuilding the mortar, etc. The large numbers of medieval coins is explained by the fact that Callixtus built a massive altar over the Constantinian structure. This would have involved jarring the structure and thus causing fissures and cracks through which the coins (12th century) would have fallen.
- On June 27, 1968, Paul VI accompanied by some clergymen, Professors Correnti and Guarducci, went to the area. It was the day after the Pope announced to the world that the Skeletal remains of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, had been identified. Now the bones were being returned to their ancient resting place. There were 19 boxes of heavy plexiglass with white foam rubber. The bones were separated according to the parts of the body. Two of the boxes contained the animal bones, including the mouse. After they

had been replaced, a prayer was recited and a notary read out a description of the proceedings later to be entered in the Vatican's permanent records.

The Ancient Silence...

- One of the great objections to Guarducci's theory is that Constantine went through all that trouble to build a massive basilica over the exact spot of Peter's burial. If he wanted to move the bones (which he considered a taboo culturally and piously), then why not move them a couple hundred yards and not just a few feet to the cavity?! It doesn't make a lot of sense that Constantine would have made this move. Thus, the next question is: who did move the bones and why?!
- What is known: this transfer took place sometime between 250-60 (after the brick alleyway and before the building of the graffiti wall. Rather than looking just at that time, see what happened during the first 250 years to explain who and why the community might do such a thing.
- From the beginning, Peter's grave has been a hidden one. Under Roman Law Peter was an executed criminal. As a result, his body was not entitled to burial. Usually these corpses were flung into the Tiber, incinerated on the city dump, or thrown out for animals to devour. Peter's disciples probably stole or bribed for the body. If the authorities knew the location of his grave, they could despoil it and the corpse. See the evidence in support of the "conspiracy of silence":
    - Julian, nephew of Constantine, writes that in the last decade of the 1st century Peter's grave was already being venerated and then he says, "secretly, it is true.".
    - What about the Tropaion? How do we explain it? The answer lies in "camouflage" for Peter's tomb – it looked like a pagan monument and probably had urns in the niches. No sign of a Christian tomb on purpose.
    - Absence of Peters Name: Again, it would be the wish for concealment.
    - Note the silence regarding Peter's martyrdom and burial. The early ancient witnesses get very blurry when it comes to these details. The only early document that gives even the slightest reference to it is Gaius – but this reference is found in a private letter, not a public document! There was a concerted action to safeguard the location of Peter's tomb. The body of Peter is the greatest relic the church possessed, worth any effort to safeguard.
- Remember what was happening during 250-260: under four different emperors (especially Valerian) successive persecutions raged through the Empire, the fiercest in the city of Rome. In fact, Valerian's persecution began by forbidding Christians access to the places of burial! It may have been a necessity to transfer the bones to a safe place, not a luxury! There was always the chance that aside from discovery someone might "reveal" the location of the tomb in an effort to avoid torture or death. The was full of "Lapsi" at that time who were wishing to be readmitted after denying the faith.
- The bones were in a make-shift location, that's true. Most probably it was a secure holding spot where they could be placed in times of trouble and then returned to the grave when danger passed. It would take a matter of less than an hour to plaster, seal, and paint over the place in the wall. The wall may very well have been built to incorporate this purpose.

- Decades later Diocletian again began widespread and savage persecution.
- Remember: several years passed after Constantine's victory before the reigning pope, Sylvester, revealed to him the location of Peter's grave. Why did Sylvester wait so long? He may have doubted Constantine's intentions. Also, Sylvester knew that imperial decrees could change in a minute. What would Constantine's successor do? Chances are that Sylvester chose to side with the 250 year old code of silence and not tell Constantine more than he needed to know to build the basilica. Remember: if Constantine wanted to demonstrate his "real" desire for conversion he could have been baptized – but he refused it until his deathbed! Good cause for suspicion.
- Remember that other emperors had tried to give Christians freedom before Constantine. 50 years before, the pagan Gallienus had granted toleration even asked Christians to remember him in prayer to their God. After his death the decree was rescinded. In the year 311 still another emperor, Galerius, renewed the promise of freedom by halting the persecutions begun by Diocletian. Pope Sylvester had good reason to be concerned.
- This probably explains why the graffiti wall was allowed to stay in place: Sylvester demanded it. Today the niche of the pallia stands off-center because of this demand! The pope couldn't allow the wall to be removed without revealing the hiding place of the bones. Therefore, Constantine's architects enclosed the entire massive structure!
- Constantine may have opened the grave but the bones he saw were not those of Peter. This may explain the early traditions. Peter's illegal burial was hurried, probably at night, and in secret. In all likelihood he was interred in an existing grave with other Christian martyrs. These martyrs "hid" the body of Peter and it probably their bones that were left when Peter's were removed.
- Why not tell Constantine? Better question: Why didn't he get baptized! Stalemate.
- After Constantine's death in 337, his successors were weak men embracing one heresy after another. In 361 the worst fears were realized as Justin (called "The Apostate") ascended the throne. He hated the Christians "fabrication of the Galileans ... composed of wickedness." He restored pagan worship and disenfranchised the Christians. He also wrote tracts against Christianity; in one he deplores the habit of visiting tombs and venerating the dead, "You fill the whole world with tombs and sepulchers." He even went so far as to desecrate the tomb of a Christian saint! Sylvester had been a prudent man indeed!
- No one in their right mind would remove the bones from their safe keeping and place them in a "known" place. The environment was very unstable. The secret was most likely forgotten by the time Gregory the Great built his first large-scale alteration of the upper shrine and high altar in 595. He shows no knowledge of Peter's relics.
- The purpose of the Tropaion seems to have been for Christian worship – Eucharist. True, it is high (near 6') but would be easily reachable with a platform. This height would also give a good view of trouble approaching. Also, at the time the Tropaion was built (mid-2nd century) there had been great calm since the last persecution of Domitian in 98. The laws were in force but no emperor promoted persecutions. In fact, many were regarded as enlightened and even "pius": Nerva, Trajan, hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius. In fact, Trajan in 112 sent a letter (in response to a request "how to handle Christians") telling his imperial officials "not to go out looking for them" and to give

them every opportunity to quietly resolve the issue; "anonymous information ought not to be received in any sort of prosecution...it is quite foreign to the spirit of our age."

- In this time, many Christian writes wrote to explain their faith the Emperor and other officials. We still have "Justin's Apology" written by St. Justin the Martyr to explain these teachings and practices. In this atmosphere, it not surprising that the Church risked the establishment of a monument to Peter. Still, there was an appropriate caution.
- Really, the Tropaion is more than a monument – it is an altar in the middle of a courtyard with the graves of the popes next door and an interesting "cistern" just around the corner. This is a complex, not just a single tomb! The cistern was actually a rectangular reservoir 4'x7' and could have easily held two people immersed to the waist. This feature had no previous explanation – but as part of a larger Christian complex it does! Baptistry.
- St. Justin write in the 2nd century (approx. 255) and records the early liturgical rites: ***We will not fail to explain how we consecrated ourselves to God when we were regenerated through Christ. Those who are convinced, and believe what we say and teach is the truth, and pledge themselves to be able to live accordingly, are taught in prayer and fasting to ask God to forgive their past sins... Then we lead them to a place where there is water, and they are regenerated. In the name of God, the Father and Lord of all, and of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, they then receive the washing with water.... There is invoked over the one who wishes to be regenerated, and who is repentant of his sins, the name of God, the Father and Lord of all, and he who leads the person to be baptized to the laver calls him by this name only... After thus baptizing the one who has believed and given his assent, we escort him to the place where there are assembled those whom we call brethren, to offer up sincere prayers in common for ourselves and for the baptized persons and for all other persons wherever they may be... At the conclusion of the prayers we greet one another with a kiss. Then bread and a chalice containing wine mixed with water are presented to the one presiding over the brethren. He takes them and offers praise and glory to the Father of all... And when he who presides has celebrated the Eucharist, they whom we call deacons permit each one present to partake of the Eucharistic bread, and wine and water...***
- The courtyard of the Tropaion was the first place of real public worship in Rome!

Catacombs

Catacombs... (lit., "around holes")

Most of these were lost for centuries; the first Holy Year pilgrims didn't have access to them. Only at the end of the 16th century did an archaeologist, Antonio Bosio, rediscover some of them and not until the 19th century did Giovanni Battista de Rossi begin a scientific investigation. Pius IX took an active interest in the mid 19th century and now the Vatican has control over the bulk of the underground structures.

The catacombs were the burial places and centers of worship of Rome's Christians from as early as the 2nd century. Pagans cremated but Christians opposed that practice and burrowed underground for burial places. Many martyrs were buried here and their places of burial became places of veneration. Some of the most ancient Christian paintings appeared on these walls and are still to be seen. Priscilla's has the oldest and most important of this art including Christ the Good Shepherd, the oldest known Madonna, Jonah and the whale, etc.

There are more than 60 Christian catacombs in Rome with the most recent found only 50 years ago. Several Jewish catacombs exist as well (Jewish population totaled 10% of the Roman Empire in the 1st century). The catacombs run hundreds of miles in length. Five of these are easily accessed and have survived centuries of earthquakes, floods, landslides, modern day construction and vandals: San Sebastiano, San Callisto, Santa Domitilla, Priscilla and Sant' Agnese.

Brief History on the Early Christian Artifacts of Rome

Christianity reached Rome quickly

- Acts (Account of Pentecost): Some were from "Rome"
- Paul: found the community well established and organized in 61 when he came. Romans.
- Christians met Paul at Tabernai (50 km) at the Forum Apii.
- Growth of the community forced the leaders to adopt more rational forms of organization.
- Church was divided into groups. Note: Jewish community was already divided so. (10% of Roman empire!
- Note: early Christians were very attuned to their Jewish roots. Cf. Mosaics and other art that extensively reflect Jewish-Christian heritage (esp. Santa Pudenziana with the figures of *ecclesia ex circumcisione* and *ecclesia ex gentibus*.
- Early Christians in ancient Rome used the "domus ecclesia" as their place of meeting. Community size was governed by meeting room size!
- the Christian presence caused trouble; as a result, Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome in 50 AD.

- Christians began welcoming pagan converts, especially while Claudius was alive and the Jews were still expelled.
- Christians generally lived in densely populated neighborhoods in the suburbs, the banks of the Tiber, or in industrial areas. The community was generally poor.
- The army was a fertile ground for Christianity. Many Christians worked in the field of entertainment (circuses, amphitheaters, etc.). Also, there were a large number of Christians among the slaves including those of the imperial palace and the rich publicans.
- Some Christians were rich and powerful figures. By the end of the 1st Century, these include the niece of the Emperor Domitian, Flavia Domitilla and some senators.
- Who could provide the means for organizing the community except the wealthy (worship space, charity, sacramental needs, instruction, etc.)?
- During the 3rd AD, many of these homes because established centers of Christianity like modern parishes today.
- In the 4th AD, there were 25 Christian centers in Rome. Each of these was called a "tituli" and bore the name of the owner who were held juridically responsible for the property and all that went on in it. The Roman community reflected their gratitude to these brave and generous people by cherishing the memory of those benefactors and later naming majestic churches to them in honor of their generosity. Many of these were also hailed as saints in the 5th century: Sabina, Balbina, Cecilia, Anastasia, Grisogonos, Euseius, Pudens, etc.
- Few Christian symbols are found in these early household churches. Several reasons: the new church may not be built on the site of the former Titulus, the Titulus may have been in an upper story apartment, etc.
- Wealthy Christians are also remembered by their donations of land for burial areas (cemeteries): Priscilla, Domitilla, Maximus, Thraso, Commodilla, Agnes, Ottavilla, etc.
- Only one catacomb was owned by the church from the beginning: Callixtus. Nearly all the popes of that century are buried there.
- With the passage of time, nearly all the cemeteries became Church property and were administered by it. The church had "funeral organizations" to provide burial.
- Early ecclesiastical organization dates back to Pope Fabian (236-50) who divided the city into 7 districts and entrusted 7 deacons with supervising the cultural, instructional and charitable activities that went on in the *tituli* of each. Also, funeral organization was part of their task as well. Each district was allotted a burial zone outside the walls. (Interestingly, the Roman Church at this time only had 7 Deacons for each bishop. The belief was that the number 7, the original number in the Acts of the Apostles, was indicative of divine will!)
- Underground burial was not done for safety but practicality. The soft tufa of Latium is famous for its ease of excavation. Land was expensive and the Christian and Jewish beliefs ruled out cremation (preferred by the pagan Romans).
- Excavation was not just for burial but also for recreation: *Cryptoporticus* were underground areas for relaxation in the cool air (58 degrees)
- Tomb could be stacked 5 meters high allowing for thousands of faithful to be buried.
- *Loculi* – rectangular burial chambers. For one or two people wrapped in sheets. Name painted on brick or marble slab along with date of birth and some short inscriptions.
- Lamps would be placed above the tomb or vases for perfume.

- *Arcosolium* – more expensive. Arch with cell for the dead hollowed out of the tufa. Often frescoed. Some families were buried in vaults with several arcosolium. A horizontal slab place on the tomb. Many had openings to the sky for light (originally served for removing dirt and debris).
- Persecutions and plague ensured many corpses for burial. On Persecutions, Cf. 2nd-3d century AD importance for burials of saints and martyrs.: *"How often does a hostile mob, bypass the regular the course, assail us. In their riotous fury, they don't even spare Christians who are dead but plunder their corpses!"* Tertullian, 220 AD
- Early Christians were reluctant to depict Jesus on walls! BUT nearly all catacombs contain images of the "Good Shepherd!" Roman image; acceptable to depict him this way (code).
- Animals appear: Peacocks – symbols of rebirth and eternal life. Also, image of Garden is important. Pagan funerary art contained much garden imagery (garden where all pleasure of this life is possible). Vines, seasons, skies, birds, etc.
- Early Christians adopted roman and greek mythology for their images. Hercules, Apollo, etc.
- Note use of dolphin images: greco-roman symbols; thought they carried souls across the seas into the afterlife!
- Burial ceremony began delivery into afterlife. Bodies carried to resting place, bricks with imperial seal (tax) were used to seal the slot, lime was placed on the body (already wrapped in linen cloth), tomb sealed with tuffa dust and water applied; name was inscribed on tomb with wishes for rest –
- Inscriptions tell us more than names -- gives indication of jobs at that time! Artisans, singers, dentists, barrel makers, etc! Often times there are paintings depicting particular family trades! (Doctors, barrel makers, etc.)
- Remember: Average life span for men was about 20-25 years!
- Myth – did Christians hide in catacombs? Cf. Early popes killed there (feast of Sixtus II, 257, under Valerian in early August)! Belief is challenged, however. Were not good hiding places because only one way in and out; authorities knew of these locations. Also, the smell was terrible! Stench was unbelievable. (Smell is poisonous).
- Also, roman catacombs exist outside of Rome! Cf. Alexandria in Egypt – again, blend of cultures in art and architecture. Built in 1&2AD, dead lowered through shaft and living walked down spiral stairway. Images include serpent (Egyptian), Medusa (Roman) – 2 symbols of protection. One chamber held the bones of both men and horses – died together in battle?
- The days of the catacombs were coming to an end. In 312, Constantine legalized Christianity. Burial on the ground surface became common place. No real reason is known.
- Catacombs were used until the early 5th century. Many developed extensively due to the cult of the martyrs which led people to seek burial close to the saints as a guarantee of salvation.
- The 4th century Pope Damasus (366-84) had a strong devotion for early martyrs and composed verse inscriptions for their tombs. This recognition helped make the martyrs tombs even more accessible and encouraged pilgrimage visits to them.

- Passages were dark; Latin scholar Jerome wrote *"Sunday visit to the crypt of a martyr more resembled a visit to hell!" "I was accustomed to visit on Sunday the tombs of the martyrs and apostles and often did I enter the crypts deep dug in the earth with their walls on either side lined with the bodies of the dead. Everything was so dark; it was almost as if the psalmists words were fulfilled: let them go down alive into hell!"*
- After burials ended, the catacombs were a place of sanctuaries. Immense numbers of pilgrims came to Rome from all over Europe despite the wars with the Goths in the 6th century and the Longobard raids of the 7th. The catacombs were regularly embellished by the popes.
- Itinerary guides for pilgrims in the 7th & 8th centuries show that they were still revered. Pope Hadrian (772-95) restored nearly all of them.
- In the 9th century, relics were removed and transferred to churches within the city walls. This move doomed the catacombs to extinction. Slowly, their entrances caved in and vegetation overtook them
- in the 16th century, Antonio Bosio (1575-1629) began a systematic investigation into *"Sottoterranea Roma"*. He located about 30 catacombs and discoveries continued after him.
- the pillage of marble and previous objects grew as well!
- The *Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra* in 1859 began to preserve these treasures.
- Only 40 miles of Rome's estimated 60 miles have actually been explored.

Catacombs of Priscilla

- Named after Priscilla of the Acilii, a senatorial family.
- developed on the site of an *arenarium* or stone quarry.
- Christians began using it as a cemetery at the beginning of the third century.
- Some structures, like the *capella grecca* were built during the second century. Decorations here include the Adoration of the Magi.
- Oldest known Madonna is found in this cemetery.
- Other art includes the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, Moses bringing forth water from the rock, Healing of the sick of the Palsy, story of Suzanna, and the Phoenix (Egyptian symbol) signifying resurrection of the body.
- Also, the Eucharistic Banquet (which faces the *cryptoporticus)*.
- Chapel of the *Velati* – women with veiled heads (mother's cycle of life: marriage, birth of child, death).
- These catacombs were visited by Antonio Bosio (1575-1629) and he left his famous signature on one of the walls!
- Other art: Sacrifice of Abraham, Good Shepherd (very famous), Jonah and the Whale, etc.
- Several popes (7) were buried here: Marcellinus (296-304), Marcellus I (308-309), and Sylvester (314-335) who built the basilicas of St. Peter and St. John Lateran! Sylvester also build a small basilica over the tomb of Felix and St. Philip. Other Popes include Liberius (352-356), Siricius (384-399), Celestine I (422-432), and Vigilius (537-555).

- The first floor has winding passage ways. The second level has a very orderly set of passages constructed in a strict "fish bone" pattern.
- Other great saints who rest here include Pudenziana and Prassede who were contemporaries of the Apostles, and Aquila and Prisca, the couple who were the titulars of the Church on the Aventine hill and were mentioned by St. Paul.

- *Liber Pontificalis* is an early book of biographies of the Bishops of Rome.

- Via Salaria – origin as road taken by Sabines going to the Tyrrhenian Sea and residents of the Appenines going to collect salt at the sea (hence the name).
- Several liturgical documents of the 4th century mention Priscilla as the resting place of several popes and martyrs. Pope Adrian (772-795) in the *Liber Pontificalis* lists all the paleochristian sanctuaries including Priscilla, "where lies Sylvester".
- Paleochristian cemeteries were named in honor of their founders or donors. Priscilla was of the Acillii family of Senatorial rank. Suetonius, in the *Life of Domition* (Book X) tells that the emperor (81-96) condemned to death "many senators, some of whom had been consuls, among them Civicus Cerealis, during his proconsulship in Asia; also Salvidianus Orfity and Acilius Glabrione, the latter having been exiled. They were accused of wanting to *introduce new things."* This is the sort of charge brought against Christians! (No boundaries based on social condition or national origin.)
- Manius Acilius had been Consul with Trajan (before he became Emperor) in 91 AD. The *Manius Acilius Verus and Priscilla* of an inscription probably came from this family.
- first floor includes a *cryptoportico* area which was part of a villa. Priscilla donated the property and abandoned villa to the Christian community. (Domitilla donated the cemetery to a group of her slaves who were Christian).
- during persecutions of the 3rd century, the remains of several martyrs were buried here including a Pope. Six other popes were buried here after the Peace of the Church.
- Martyrs: Marcellinus (Pope from 296-304, victim of the Diocletian and Galerius persection), Felix and Philip (Diocletian), others (as published in the *Notitia Portarum*, a guide for pilgrims between 625-638) lists Crescentio, Prisca, Fimite, Pudenziana and Praxedes, 365 martyrs, three famous martyrs (Paul, Maurus, Simetrius). Other popes include Marcellus (308-309 – victim of Maxentius), Sylvester (314-335 – he built a basilica over the remains of Felix and Philip), Liberius (352-366), Siricius (384-399), Celestinus (422-432 – in a letter by Adrian I to Charlemagne he says, "*beatus Caelestinus papa suum proprium cimiterium decoravit pinturis"*), and Vigilius (537-555, who died in Siciliy while returning from Constantinople where he had been in exile).
- In all, some 365 other martyrs are also buried in Priscilla but most names have been lost to history.

Cubicle of the Velatio

- *Cubiculum* – room for a whole family to be buried.

- Life of a young woman – note the *Orantes* position which denoted the soul in eternal glory. Also, the *volumen* in her hand is the *tabula nuptialis*, a document listing the marital duties as prescribed by Roman Law and adopted by the Church. The name *Bosius* is inscribed under the painting referring to a visit made by Antonio Basio.
- Three Hebrew youths in the fiery furnace (22x) (Daniel 3:15-24, 43-50). Note dove signifying divine intervention in this scene of salvation.
- Sacrifice of Abraham (23x) – bottom is damaged.
- Good Shepherd – center, ceiling. Note the Roman appearance of the figure and the goat on his shoulders with both goats and sheep in front of him. Birds of paradise rest in the trees of the garden.
- Jonah (60x) is depicted near the entrance of the *cubiculum* along with several peacocks.

Madonna and Balaam (mid 3rd century)

- Note the hole in the ceiling where Basio "punched" his way through in the 17th century! Only a few feet away is one of the most treasured frescoes in history!
- Mary is on throne with a *palla* on her head. Balaam stands in front pointing to the star over her (with child). Text: Numbers 24:15-17. Also, text may be taken from Is 7:14, 60:1 as well in which case the man would be Isaiah, not Balaam.
- Oldest representation of Mary apart from the adoration of the Magi in the Greek Chapel.
- Near the Madonna is a wonderful fresco of the good shepherd done in bas relief and not painting.

Greek Chapel (2nd half of 2nd century)

- Moses striking the rock (73x) is meant to pre-figure baptism, the source of eternal life.
- Three youths in the fiery furnace – this is the oldest known representation of this image.
- Susanna being set upon by the perfidious old men – salvation
- Healing of the paralytic
- Phoenix on the pyre – mythological bird that lived for 500-1000 years after which it died in the flames and was resurrected from the ashes. Note: this scene is always represented on a palm tree (*foinic* in Greek means both "palm" and "this bird"). This representation does NOT include the palm trees showing a real departure from convention. This scene was discovered in 1951 after whitewash was removed.
- Above the phoenix is a head crowned with sheaves of grain – *Summer*. The other seasons have been lost. <u>The succession of seasons was considered a symbol of the resurrection, especially spring</u> (flowering after winter).
- Adoration of the Magi (Mt 2). Madonna on throne holding the infants.
- <u>Resurrection of Lazarus</u> (63x). <u>This is the most-frequently represented New Testament image found in the catacombs!</u>
- Noah and the Ark
- *Fractio Panis* – most famous fresco of this chapel. Shows the Eucharistic banquet.
- Sacrifice of Abraham
- Daniel with the Lions (64x).

Cryptoportico and the Hypogaeum of the Acili

- These were important "cool" areas in which to survive the Roman heat of summer! Note: more popes died in the month of August than in any other month! There's a reason.
- Along this area is where the first burials took place. After this was filled, other tunnels were dug.
- Burials were done in the floor as well. This floor was lowered (visible from steps).
- In this area is an *arcosolium* with peacocks. Near this *acrosolium* is a stone with the inscription: Oh Father of all, you created them and you have received Irene, Zoe and Marcellus. The last line contains the acclamation: Glory to you O Christ" and bears the Christian monogram of the Chi (X) and Rho (P) for the name of Christ as well as the Anchor (Salvation and the Cross).

Basilica

- Built by Pope Sylvester over the tomb of Felix and Philip.
- reconstructed to original design. Roof added; original one was open to the sky.
- Two "odes" by Pope Damasus (366-384) are dedicated to Felix and Philip: *He who believes that God came into the world and then returned to the Father after suffering the Passion, will come again to judge the living and the dead (used to indicate a Christian) knows that when the Holy Martyrs, Felix and Philip, receive Christ's reward, a special place will be awaiting them in the Celestial Kingdom. So they who scorned the wiles of the Devil and, unswerving in their devotion to Christ, left this world, each in a perfect state of grace, and came to eternal glory in the Kingdom of the Blessed, had earned the Crown of Christ by shedding their own blood. Damasus, has humbly wished that his prayers might be equally worthy.*
- Another ode to Pope Marcellus exists as well (written by Damasus). Note: was written during the time of the *lapsi* and controversy of "reconciliation" (some opposed, Popes desired period of penance, some rejected any need for penance). It was required to offer a libation, *libellum – libellatici – lapsi,* to idols. Could buy your way through the process to just get the document if you wanted to! Evidence of this kind was required by imperial authorities beginning in the time of Decius (249-251). Great numbers of *lapsi* wanted to let back in the church. Two popes were exiled over this controversy as it became so bitter that imperial authorities had to be called in (popes Eusebius and Marcellus). Here's the Ode translation: *The Pope, truth-speaking leader, required that the lapsi do penance for their sins. His attitude toward these wretched people was bitter and it provoked much anger and resentment that quarrels, dissension and slaughter cropped up everywhere. It was because of the crime of one who denied Christ in time of peace that the Pope was exiled by the cruel tyrant (Emperor Maxentius). Damasus has wished to report what he learned, so that the people might know the merits of Marcellus.* Note: Pope Marcellus was betrayed by a Christian apostate during a time of peace yet he was still exiled.

Other areas of Priscilla:

- Cubicle of Crescentio – contains a fresco of the Three young Israelites before Nebuchadnezzar refusing to adore the Babylonian god. This scene only appears in paleochristian fresco 2x.
- Cubicle of the "Bottai" (Barrel Makers). Note: many families were buried in the same area and these families were often times involved in "family trades". Thus, it is sometimes found that the art depicted the "work" done by these people. The bottai refers to those who made barrels for the transportation of water. Other cemeteries contain similar industrial paintings: Domitilla has the cubicle of the miners and gravediggers (fossori – named Diogenes); the Via Latina catacomb contains the famous figure of the surgeon in the midst of operating surrounded by his pupils.

Other Catacombs in Rome...

St. Sebastiano

- originally called the "Basilica Apostolorum" because the Apostles Peter and Paul were briefly entombed there.
- Originated in the galleries of an abandoned stone quarry – *ad catacombus.* 1st century is date of first cemetery.
- St. Sebastiano is the *First Christian Catacomb in Rome*. In fact, because the burials were taking place "near an opening", which in Greek is described as *ad catacombus*, San Sebastiano actually gave the name to *all underground Christian burial areas!*
- contained an underground spring that supplied the necessary water for the *refrigeria*.
- The area started as a large pit 9 meters deep where several monuments were built. Then the area was filled in with 6 meters of soil and a pavement was added with a trapezoidal building and a stairway protecting the water spring as well as a *memoria* to Peter and Paul.
- Original basilica was built in the first part of the 4th century on the area of the *memoria*. (C. 310-350). **First basilica may have been begun under Maxentius!
- Was built in a U-shape: central nave with two side aisles joined by an ambulatory in the apse.
- There was no pavement in the original basilica! This was because it was still a burial ground (covered cemetary).
- entrance to the catacomb is through the same medieval room that contains the tomb of the St. Sebastian.
- Pope Damasus (366-384) had the Platonia mausoleum built in honor of the Prince of the Apostles and is decorated with the *platoma* – a marble slab mentioned in the *Liber Pontificalis.*
- Famous people who liked to pray here include: St. Jerome, St. Bridget of Sweden, and St. Philip Neri.

St. Callixtus

- Oldest official cemetery of the Christian community of Rome.

- This area actually dates to the year 150 and served as the private open-air burian ground of the noble Cecili family (cf. Santa Cecilia) whose converted members allowed Christian burial on their land.
- Named after the Deacon Callixtus who was appointed head of the cemetery by Pope Zephyrinus (199-217) and who when he was later pope (217-222) enlarged it greatly. Calixtus was from a family of Christian slaves in 3rd century Rome. His talent for accounting and administration earned him his freedom and a position with a banker. Due to rumors aroused by envy, Calixtus was sent to the Sardinian mines but returned to Rome during a general amnesty where he convinced Pope Zephyrinus to appoint him as head of the cemetery.
- Of interesting note: Calixtus, as pope, established one of the first house-churches (now the Basilica of S. Maria in Trestevere) and was martyred by being thrown into a well on that spot. He was initially buried in the small cemetery of St. Calepodius on the Via Aurelia.
- 9 3rd century Popes are buried in a crypt whose name reflects that fact.
- developed on as many as five levels with more than 10 km of tunnels
- Paintings date to the 2nd century.
- Fell into disrepair and was completely forgotten in history after relics were removed and the *memoria* was moved to San Sebastiano (which continued to be visited)
- Callixtus catacombs were accidentally discovered by de Rossi in 1849 when he visited the Amendola vineyards. He found several pieces of Pope Corenelius' epitath (251-253) and began to read them; from those partial inscriptions he was able to identify the "Lucina District". Pius IX purchased the vineyard immediately! (Actually, De Rossi tripped over a piece of marble in the field that simply read "NELIUS MARTYR" and from that he deduced that it must refer to "Cornelius, Martyr"!)
- in 1854, de Rossi unearthed the "Crypt of the Popes" – tombs of nine popes from 230-283: St. Pontian (230-35), St. Anterus (236), St. Lucius I (253-254), St. Stephen I (254-257), St. Sixtus II (257-258), St. Dionysius (259-268), St. Felix I (269-274) and St. Eutychian (275-283). 3 African bishops are also buried there – they died before their return home. The crypt contains a skylight. On the rear wall, a marble slab bears an ode written by Pope Damasus (366-84) in honor of the martyrs and bishops buried there.
- In 1856, he uncovered Deacon Severus' chamber – and area he had erected for himself and his family by permission of Pope Marcellinus (296-304). There is a marble *transenna*, or screen, that contains the first reference to the Bishop of Rome as "Pope".
- Opposite the Severus' chamber is a series of six saints with names standing in the *orans* position and with "in peace" inscribed.
- The *"Crypt of Lucina"* is one of the oldest areas of the cemetery – this location led de Rossi to find the rest of the catacomb. Pope Cornelius lies here (died in exile in Civitavecchia). A famous version of the "Good Shepherd" decorates his tomb on which is inscribed the title, "Martyr".
- Shrine of St. Cecilia: Next to the Crypt of the Popes is the shrine of St. Cecilia who belonged to the Cecili patrician family. When her grave was opened during St. Clement VIII's pontificate (1592-1605) her body was found to be perfectly intact. The artist Stefano Maderno was there and immediately made a marble statue.

- Also part of the original cemetery is the cubicula of the Sacraments decorated with scenes of Baptism and Eucharist. Also, there are several scenes of Jonah, the Miracle of the Spring in the Desert, the Evangelical Fisherman, the Banquet of the Seven Disciples at Lake Tiberius, the Healing of the Paralytic, the Baptism of Jesus, Abraham's Sacrifice, and a Eucharistic Banquet.
- Library of Christian signs: These catacombs contain many secret Christian signs known only to the faithful: Anchor (hope), palm branch (martyr), fruit & flower baskets (paradise), peacock (immortality), ship (church), etc. Christ appears as the Good Shepherd, in monogram, or as the fish but nowhere is he depicted on the cross.

Other Catacombs:

- Numerous other catacombs exist including Domitilla, Commodilla, Praetextatus, Via Latina, Marcellinus & Peter, Pamphilius, Giordani, Coemeterium Maius, and other anonymous ones.
- Art includes additional scenes: Changing of the seasons, Samaritan woman at the well, various scenes of the life of Christ, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Destruction of Sodom, Jews sent for by Joseph, Jacob's Dream (ladder), Sacrifice of Isaac, Balaam, Samson smiting the Philistines, Noah and the dove, etc.
- Pagan scenes were also used in this art: Hercules in the garden of the Hesperides and Hercules killing the Hydra.
- Marcellinus & Peter – on site of the necropolis for the *Equites Singulares*. Numerous Christians who died under Diocletian were buried here including Marcellinus and Peter. A monumental complex was built above it by Constantine and it contained a large cemeterial basilica connected to a mausoleum that Constantine had built for his own burial. However, he moved to Byzantium and so his mother, St. Helen, was buried there in the sarcophagus built for the emperor! This sarcophagus is now in the Vatican Museums and depicts the Roman victories over the Barbarians. (Before going to the Vatican Museums, it was first moved to the Lateran in 1153 and reused by Pope Anastasius IV. Pius VI had it moved to the Vatican in 1778). The basilica is dated at 320 and the mausoleum between 324 and 326.
- Also, in the Catacomb of the Giordani there rested a very famous person: the body of Daria, converted vestal virgin slain during the Valerian persecution (257-58). Their relics were later transferred to the Basilica of the *Santissimi Apostoli*.

The "Titular" Churches...

St. Clement's is probably one of Rome's most famous "Titular" churches. In certain homes of Roman patrons the early Christians met. These congregations were mostly composed of Jewish tradesmen-converts, immigrant slaves and lower-class freedmen. Roman patrician converts hosted them. Many of these early Christian assemblies may have listened to the Apostle Peter's first-hand descriptions of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. They read scriptures and participated in the Eucharist in the course of a communal meal. Often these congregations were raided by Roman authorities and those refusing to sacrifice to pagan gods were hastened away for detention, torture and death. Such house churches were mentioned in the scriptures. Paul alluded to their existence in 1st century Rome (Rom 16:3-5 – he greets Prisca and Aquila and 'the church which is in their house'). Paul himself led a congregation which met in a rented residence (Acts 28:30). A private house used for early Christian worship came to be known as a *domus ecclesiae*. Since the proprietor's name was generally inscribed on a wooden or marble slab called a *titulus* these house-churches came to be known as *Titular* churches and were named for their donors or owners.

There were 25 such *tituli* – Rome's original parish churches. The *Liber Pontificalis* relates that Pope Cletus (76-88), following St. Peter's instruction, ordained 25 presbyters (priests) and that Pope Evaristus (97-105) assigned these senior priests to 25 titular churches. In the early 4th century the parish churches were confirmed by Pope Marcellus (308-09) as religious community centers and seats of church administration. All 25 were certified by the Church synods of 499 and 595.

Archeological excavations show that a good number of these eventually became official Church property around the same time the Roman Church gained ownership of the Calixtus Catacomb. By the 3rd century it was necessary to remove the dividing walls to enlarge the meeting spaces as well as to provide for charitable distribution centers. In the 4th century, with the legalization of Christianity, large basilicas were built over the earlier house churches to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding Christian population. By the end of the 6th century all the *tituli* were named after saints (sometimes by "sanctifying" the original owner).

The duties of titular priests soon included serving the Christian cemeteries and, later, the major basilicas. Because they were "incardinated" to different churches, the priests were known as *Cardinal* priests. Eventually many Cardinal priests became Papal assistants and the title took on importance and prestige. Even today each Cardinal is assigned a titular church.

Amazingly, the sites of all 25 original titular churches still exist and can be visited by the pilgrim in Rome.

Santa Maria in Trestevere

The first stop on historic pilgrimage to Rome would ideally be this church. S. Maria began as a sanctuary built for Rome's first Christian community. It began in the dark days of persecutions

as a house church used by the first Roman converts from the Jewish faith (note: Trestevere was originally a Jewish area of Rome that housed merchants and craftsmen, mostly foreigners).

According to a census taken during the reign of Augustus (29BC - 14AD), the Trastevere district (Trans Tyberim) was the largest and most populous in the imperial capital. Nearly 50,000 Jews lived here in the 1st century AD. This was the area where the last docks on the Tiber were located before shipments went to Ostia (sea port). This Jewish population was in regular contact with Palestine and certainly heard Christ's teachings. In fact, Acts 2:10 reports that there were "visitors from Rome" on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. They could have very well been the first "evangelists" to Rome!

Historical records show that Christians were becoming a significant presence in the Jewish community here and their presence was causing trouble. The Roman chronicler Seutonius records that the Emperor Claudius (41-54) expelled a large number of Jews in 49 AD for "disputes concerning Chrestus". The Apostles Peter and Paul were able to make their first converts from the Jewish community of Trestevere. Peter came to Rome in 42 AD and first resided in the home of the Senator Pudens and then in the villa of Aquila and Prisca on the Aventine Hill. From the Aventine, Peter descended to preach to the community in Trestevere (just across the river via the Tiber Island bridge!).

St. Paul's evangelization (61-65 AD) also found fertile ground among the lower-class culturally diverse Tresteverini. It was in Trastevere that imperial guards hunted down most of their Christian victims for martyrdom in the Roman arenas. It was also from Trastevere that most Christian families travelled secretly to bury their dead in catacombs along the Appian Way.

Aside from being the oldest place of public worship in Rome, St. Maria is also the oldest church dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In fact, legend associates it with the birth of Christ! Tradition links the dedication to Mary to the miraculous source of a fountain of mineral oil that was later interpreted by Christians as a sign auguring the birth of Christ. The oil flowed 38 years before the birth of Christ and it ran all the way to the Tiber. Modern scientists investigating the case have found that a small volcanic eruption could have caused such a flow. St. Jerome wrote in the 4th century that the Jewish community of that time had interpreted it as a sign that God's grace would soon flow into the world. The first Christians recall the miraculous flowing as a prophecy of Christ's birth and established an early meeting place on the sacred spot. An inscription near the apse marks the spot where the miracle is said to have occurred.

The martyrdom of one of Christianity's most important popes gave the site even greater prestige. Calixtus I was the leader of S. Maria Trestevere (217-22). He was jailed, flogged, and martyred by being thrown from his house into a well near S. Maria (a more recent church and piazza in his name now mark the spot). This occurred during the time of emperors Macrinus and Elgabalus.

Later histories record that in the 3rd century the Emperor Alexander Severus (222-35) gave to Christians as a tolerated place of worship the *taverna meritoria*, a hospice for retired or wounded Roman soldiers, located on the site of the prophetic fountain of oil. Most likely the Christian

community had grown to such an extent that they needed more space than a "house church" thus the expansion next door. The entire edifice was referred to as the *Titulus Calisti*.

By the 4th century we have records for the construction of a large church dedicated to the Virgin Mary by Pope Julius I (337-52) and the building appears in a list of titular churches compiled by the Council of 499.

A stand-in Holy Year church of 1625 and 1700. Pope Innocent II (1130-1143) built the present structure – he came from Trestevere's powerful Papareschi family and is buried in the left aisle of the church. Points of interest include the following:

- Apse mosaics of 1140 showing Christ with his arm around Mary
- a 1290 series of episodes of the life of the Madonna (by Pietro Cavallini)
- The 21 granite columns of the nave were originally in the Baths of Emperor Caracalla (211-217).

It was in the 12th century that Marian devotion really spread throughout Europe and S. Maria's mosaics have a special place in the history of Marian devotion. They are considered the *first example of the "glorification" of the Virgin* in which Mary is shown as a youthful and queenly spouse – rather than as a Madonna with child. Note that she is enthroned on equal footing with Christ the King. On Mary's right are St. Calixtus, St. Lawrence and Pope Innocent II holding a model of the church. To Christ's left are St. Peter, St. Cornelius, Pope Julius I and St. Calepodius.

Domenichino's *Assumption of the Virgin,* painted in 1617, is in the center of the coffered ceiling.

In the 9th century, Gregory IV constructed a crypt to hold the remains of certain martyrs that had been removed from the catacombs threatened by the Saracen's sack of Rome.

The facade is by Carlo Fontana (1702). Over the portal note the 4 baroque statues of S. Maria's favorite saints: Calixtus, Cornelius, Pope Julius and Calepodius (All their relics are beneath the main altar inside!). Sarcophagi under the main portal are 3rd and 4th century. Some other architectural decoration is from the 8th and 9th centuries.

The stone cornices over the front door date from the imperial age, the granite pillars from the Baths of Caracalla. Note: On a close inspection of the columns one can find the heads of several female pagan deities peering from their capitals.

The most venerated image in the church is the monumental icon of the *Madonna of Mercy* in the Altemps Chapel. This 6th - 7th century panel is considered a miraculous image created by a direct emanation of divinity. Gregory III (731-734) had it covered in silver leaf and Leo III (795-816) donated a large purple veil to hang in front of the sacred image. Note that the Altemps Chapel commemorates the Council of Trent which ushered in the Catholic counter-reformation.

The parish continues to be dedicated to the service of the poor even as it was in the 2nd century. It is said that Rome's female patron saint, Frances of Rome (1384-1440) came to the basilica to

pray for strength to assist the needy. Now the community of Sant' Egidio is well known for its charitable activities among the city's hungry and homeless. The community runs a soup kitchen that feeds 1,600 people per day as well as a center for abandoned children. They also offer a weekly communal prayer service. Rome's first Christian congregation would feel at home here even today.

Santa Pudenziana

> Note: The next two churches are serious contenders for the title of "Oldest Church in Rome". Tradition holds that St. Peter lived and taught in the original house congregations of these homes. In fact, the domestic churches were the *tituli* of two of the Apostle's first converts. Around the year 50 the Christian religion was outlawed. In those days Senator Pudens had his residence in Rome's Vicus Patricius (street of patrician residences – now the Via Urbana) on the Equiline Hill. Here Pudens had given shelter to St. Peter himself for 7 years. After Pudens' martyrdom, Christians continued to gather here under the supervision of the daughter. This daughter, with her sister, used to collect the remains of the martyred Christians (especially their blood) and deposit it in wells on Pudens' estate. Legend tells us that Prassede witnessed the slaughter of 23 Christian faithful in her own home and that she and Pudenziana were both martyred soon after. Both sisters were buried in the Catacomb of Priscilla on the Via Salaria. (Cf. Paul's 2nd letter to Timothy for reference to Pudens)

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2 Timothy; speaks of a "Prudens" in Rome – "Get here before winter if you can. Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brothers send greetings. The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you" 4:21-22. The senator had two daughters, Pudenziana and Prassede, both of whom helped Christians during the Nero reign of terror.

Pope St. Pius (140-155) is said to have converted the Pudens home into a church. By the 4th century, Pope Siricius (384-99) coupled his work at San Clemente with construction of a basilica at the Pudens site and Innocent (401-417) continued construction. The church has a 4th century apse mosaic with no sign yet of the approaching Byzantine period of the Middle Ages.

Gregory VII (1073 -85) added the medieval door frame (some claim Hadrian I did it in the 8th century) and Innocent III (1198-1216) added the Romanesque bell tower. Some of the floor is ancient but the structure's present appearance dates from a 1588 renovation – this was a tragic "restoration" as the medieval choir was removed and a late renaissance atmosphere was created. The last touches of remodeling were carried out in 1870 by Cardinal Luciano Bonaparte who is buried in the church.. The current approach is disappointing due to its simplicity and sunken character.

- first basilica was begun around 387-390 and completed in 398. It was composed of two pre-existing Roman buildings (a mid-2nd century house and a thermal basilica).
- It is the only example in Rome of a civil basilica being put to religious use!
- Some argue that it is built on baths, not the senator's home. However, the baths are later and most probably a deliberate attempt by the Romans to obliterate what was becoming a Christian place of worship – like an act of sacrilege.
- House may have been the *titulus* of Pudens; this would explain the writing in the book held by Christ in the Apse. Pudens was a Roman Senator and a friend to the Apostles who made his home into a church.
- There is a chapel to St. Peter at the end of the left nave with a marble inscription which informs us, "*This house was the first to give hospitality to St. Peter*"
- Part of a wooden altar, where St. Peter allegedly celebrated Eucharist under Pudens' roof, is now enclosed in the chapel's marble altar. A long tradition links this chapel to an oratory built in the 5th century in Peter's memory.
- A side door from St. Peter's chapel leads to a Marian Oratory with frescoes of St. Paul preaching and the baptism of Pudenziana's brothers Novatus and Timothy.
- On the back walls unknown 16th century artists have portrayed St. Peter baptizing Pudens and Pudens welcoming Sts. Peter and Paul.
- The apse mosaic is the only remaining piece of the original church and dates to Pope Innocent I (401-417). This is a scene out of pagan Imperial Rome!
- Mosaic: Christ (gold robes) enthroned in majesty with apostles (less two – restoration) surrounding him. This iconography is a derivation of the imperial theme of "Christ the King" (very common in the 5th century is that of Christ teaching). Peter and Paul are on either side of him dressed in togas of Roman senators. Two female figures (Pudenziana and Prassesde?) represent the *ecclesia ex circumcisione* and the *ecclesia ex gentibus* – these place crowns (hellenestic laurel wreathes) on the heads of Peter and Paul.
- A "mystical lamb" was once at the Savior's feet but has been lost to restoration. The buildings in the background represent Jerusalem with Calvary in the center and the jeweled cross prominently mounted (buildings represented may include the *Anastatian* church in Jerusalem and the Basilica on Golgotha [Holy Sepulcher]). The symbols of the four evangelists float in the "heavens".
- Mosaic has suffered much damage – note that only Peter's face is original on the right hand side; the rest has been replaced.
- Note: this is the last gasp of naturalistic roman art – nothing will be seen in Rome like it until the early Renaissance (which took its inspiration from classical art!).
- Towards the front on the left aisle is the well into which, tradition claims, Sts. Pudenziana and Prassede placed the remains of the Christian martyrs. A painting in a chapel near the back of the church depicts their charitable act of conservation (Pudenziana holds a severed head).

Santa Prassede *– Paschal's Haven for the Dead*

Dedicated to the second daughter of Pudens, Praxedes. According to tradition, the daughters preserved the blood of the martyrs in a well under a large porphyry disk just inside the main door of the present church (in the center of the nave). The sisters relics along with one of the famous

sponges are preserved in an early Christian sarcophagus in the crypt below the high altar. To the right of the entrance is a slab of marble fixed into the wall upon which St. Prassede allegedly slept.

Evidence exists that a private home on the site was used for Christian worship in the 1st century and that a church existed before 489.

As in the case of S. Pudenziana, it was Pope Siricius (384-99) who commissioned a Christian basilica to be constructed. The structure was renovated by Pope Hadrian I (772-95) and Pope Paschal I (817-24). It was Paschal who rebuilt the church, orienting it in a different direction with its three naves separated by ancient columns.

The present structure dates in great part to Paschal I of 817-824, who is depicted in an apse mosaic wearing a square halo (showing that he was still alive). The occasion for the restoration project of Paschal was the transfer of the relics of 2,300 martyrs from the catacombs of St. Alessandro. (Note the stone tablet on one of the right-nave piers which commemorates this transfer. These relics were reposed in four sarcophagi in the crypt.) Some of these relics include the 1st century martyr popes Miltiades, Pontianus, Celestine, Zoticus, and Felix. The frescoes on the wall depict the various moments in lives of the martyrs whose relics now rest in the crypt

Of interesting note is that Paschal had the crypt area specifically built to resemble the atmosphere of the catacombs from whence the relics came. By this time the catacombs were being regularly raided by barbarians and Christians looking for relics. The entrance to the crypt is marked with a piece (*spolia*) of an early Christian sarcophagus (belonging to the Christian woman 'Ulpia') with a sculpted scene of Jonah and the whale.

Although the facade of the church looks very plain, it must be remembered that this austere brick face was once entirely covered in brightly colored mosaics (some of which can still be seen in the arches of the upper windows). The brick substrate did not prove to be a good base for such mosaics and so they regrettably did not survive the centuries.

The church has a very famous apse mosaic:

- The mosaic shows Christ offering a benediction surrounded by St. Peter with an arm around Pudenziana and St. Paul with Praxedes – the two Apostles presenting the heroic sisters to Christ (note that they appear as Byzantine princesses in jeweled robes).
- This is almost a direct copy of the apse mosaic in Ss. Cosmas and Damian. Paschal obviously wanted to establish a 'continuity' of tradition by using ancient imagery. This served a theological purpose of uniting the Roman church of the 9th century with the Roman church of the 5th century.
- Christ floats on a bank of clouds with the Hand of God bearing a crown signaling his glory.
- Standing on the river Jordan, Paul and Peter conduct Praxedes and Pudentiana, each proffering a crown, into Christ's presence. Pope Paschal, a model of the church in his covered hands, stands at Praxedes' side. The tonsured saint eludes us.

- Symmetrical queues of lambs emerge from Jerusalem and Bethlehem to meet the Lamb of God above the 4 rivers.
- Here, too, there is an inscription to interpret the imagery: EMICAT AULA PIAE VARIIS DECORATA METALLIS PRAXEDIS D[OMI]NO SUPER AITHRA PLACENTIS HONORE PONTIFICIS SUMMI STUDIO PASCHALIS ALUMNI SEDIS APOSTOLICAE PASSIM QUI CORPORA CONDENS PLURIMA S[AN]C[T]ORUM SUBTER HAEC MOENIA PONIT FRETUS UT HIS LIMEN MEREATUR ADIRE POLORUM which means ***The hall beams, decorated with gold and silver, in honor of the saintly Praxedes, who has found pleasure with God in heaven above, through the zeal of the Pontifex Paschal, raised to the apostolic throne, who collected the bones of many saints and buried them under these walls, trusting that he has secured a place in thine house by this service.***
- Above the apse the Lamb of God is enthroned and worshiped by angels which also recalls Felix's church in the Forum as do the 7 candle sticks, four living creatures, 24 elders, etc.
- S. Prassede is referred to as the most important Byzantine monument in Rome.

Now see the ***Triumphal Arch***. This architectural feature is very important because it's name ('triumphal arch') was probably coined *for this very church* when Paschal's biographer referred to the *arcus triumphalis* in his description of the church! This was the first time the term was applied to a church; before then it had only been used to describe imperial victory monuments such as the Arch of Constantine. **This in itself was a theological statement: the Church is the true one who triumphs in Christ conquering sin and death and bringing all people into the one Kingdom of God. The imagery of the triumphal arch is entirely original and includes the following:

- at the center of the arch is a depiction of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Its walls and gates, like the Bethlehem and Jerusalem in the apse mosaic, are of gold and gems as Revelation 21:10 describes.
- Christ appears at the center, his right foot forward and his hand raised in blessing. Floating above the sacred city and flanked by angels he represents the archetype of heaven.
- Mary and S. Praxedes raise their hands toward Christ in prayer. On either side of the women are Peter and Paul, then other 10 apostles and John the Baptist. All the men proffer crowns thus paraphrasing the 24 elders depicted not here on the triumphal arch but beyond, on the apsidal arch. The effect is to join the two groups on the two, separate consecutive surfaces.
- At the left corner of the triumphal arch's walled city a young man holds a sheet of vellum inscribed with the word LEGE (read). Opposite at the right an angel appears with a bearded man (John the evangelist and prophet whose vision is recorded in Revelation and realized in this mosaic). The angels poised at the city gates are ready to greet the martyred saints who all stand bearing crowns of martyrdom on the right and left of the triumphal arch. Two women, probably Ss. Pudentiana and St. Agnes, lead the group at the left. Peter and Paul sponsor the group at the right which follows an angel bearing a great staff. These uncountable men and women represent the 2,300 martyrs whose relics were interred in S. Prassede. They themselves are the "living stones" from which the

new Jerusalem is constructed. Depicted here in mosaic, alive in heaven, they reunite the terrestrial church that shelters their physical remains with the Celestial City.

- The Heavenly Jerusalem, then, is Rome, where the martyred saints are honored. This church is the image of the city. A hymn to Rome, the *Urbs Beata Hierusalem*, when sung during the Mass, reminds the faithful of this relationship: *Blessed city, you holy Salem, named the place of peace, which is erected of living stones in heaven... your walls are built of the purest gold. Pearls shine on your doors.*
- Still other figures appear in the spandrels of the triumphal arch. All are alike in white garb but are beyond counting. The mosaicist merely alternated red and yellow crescents in row upon row. These are the 144,000 martyrs – 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel (Rev. 7:9-10). Cf. The *Te Deum*: *the army of martyrs dressed in white worships Christ whose death opened up the kingdom of heaven to those who believe."*
- ****Now the theology is complete; this is why Paschal's architect referred to this wall as an "arcus triumphalis": it's theme is Christ's triumph over death on behalf of all humanity; through the multitude of palm-bearers, it connects with the humanity below whose numbers have come to Rome to seek redemption near the tombs of the martrys.
- Off to the sides of these "armies" are two balconies with doors. These were installed by Charles Borromeo, titular Cardinal of the church, in which are kept relics and are opened for periodic display.

Pope Paschal I also built the Chapel of Zeno (called the "Garden of Paradise") as a mausoleum for his mother, Theodora. (The chapel was named after an early Roman Priest Martyr whose relics were moved there from the Praetextatus catacomb along with all the other saints' bodies given sanctuary by Pope Paschal). It is covered with mosaics which portray a rich collection of art and theology.

- The entrance to the Zeno is one of the finest in the city of Rome – only the entrance to the Lateran Baptistry can claim finer *spolia*.
- Because Christians believed in bodily resurrection and they were confident that the Martyrs would rise, they wanted to be "swept up along in this reunion of body and spirit on Judgement Day". Thus, began the practice, from earliest times, of Christians wanting to be buried *ad sanctos* (near saints).
- The entire Zeno chapel continues the *catacomb* theme of the crypt – it is build as an above-ground *cubiculum*, a cross shaped structure with a domical vault.
- Over the entrance to the chapel is a mosaic facade that prepares the visitor for the wonders fo the interior. Each of two concentric arcs displays a series of circular portraits. The outer arc, in which Christ occupies the key stone position, presents the 12 apostles with Peter and Paul on either side of the Savior. In the inner arc, capped by the Virgin and child, 8 revered women appear (unidentified). Sts. Praxedes and Pudentiana, were surely two of them. At the upper corners appear two bearded Old Testament prophets – perhaps Elijah and Enoch (who both ascended to heaven and therefore symbolize hope of Resurrection).
- The promise of eternal life is an appropriate theme for a funeral chapel. At the visitor's own level, the lowest tier, is the physical world in which the moving move. It is constructed of fine but unadorned materials. Here is where Theodora's mortal remains lie. In a mosaic above the sarcophagus, Pope Paschal's mother is pictured with SS.

Praxades and Pudentiana and the Virgin Mary. A square halo frames Theodora's head (as in the apse mosaic of Paschal) which attests to the "actuality" of the depiction. Unusually, the portrait of Theodora is labeled *Episcopa*, apparently Paschal's expression of reverence for his mother and her own devoutness. Theodora *ad sanctos* figures in the fact that she is actually physically buried next to Pudentiana and Praxedes who are spiritually enjoying the presence of the Virgin in heaven.

- To the right, one sees the *Anastasia* scene (a.k.a., the *Harrowing of Hell*). It is a famous medieval Byzantine icon of Christ, radiating divine light, breaking down the doors of hell to rescue Adam and Eve and the other "saints" who await him. Death is only the beginning of new life. In the lunette above, the lamb atop a hillock that sprouts streams repeats the theme in the main apse. The deer that drink from the streams symbolize the faithful.
- Above these depictions, at the level of the little chapel's windows, the visitor sees Paradise represented. Ss. Agnes, Pudentiana, and Praxedes, carry crowns. Directly across there are three male saints: John, Andrew, and James who 'balance' their three women counterparts. Like the women, the men walk with covered hands but bear books, not crowns (John holds a codex, the other two hold rolls).
- Above the entrance one sees Peter and Paul. Peter holds the keys to heaven and Paul holds a roll. Each raises a hand toward the "Prepared Throne" that awaits Christ at the 2nd Coming – another reference to the promise of resurrection. The same theme is taken up again on the opposite wall above the chapel's altar where a vine-scroll adorns the arch over the altar. Alive with animals, it recalls the food of Paradise which is now superceded by the Eucharist.
- In the lunette behind is Christ's Transfiguration on Tabor. The Transfiguration was understood by theologians to prefigure Christ's 2nd Coming and the judgment he will mete out to mankind.
- This is precisely the picture above: John the Baptist (who holds a cross adorned with the Lamb of God) and Mary – who will intercede on behalf of humanity at the Last Judgment – appear. However, <u>the judging Christ is missing! In his place is the window that lets light into the chapel. The message is clear: in the temporal realm, the closest we can come to seeing God is through the light that emanates from heaven.</u> Only at the end of time, the blessed are promised, will they see God face to face.
- In the middle of the 13th century an icon mosaic of the Madonna and Child was added in a small niche. It fits this theme as well. The two intercessors appear to be Ss. Praxedes and Pudentiana. Note that the Christ child's garments and halo are particularly radiant. He holds a scroll bearing words from John's Gospel, EGO SUM LUX which means *I am the light [of the world]* (Jn 8:12).
- The chapel is literally structured to establish a gradual elevation from the physical realm (where we and Theodora's body are) to the sanctified realm (sheltering the altar from which the sacraments are dispensed) to the paradise of the saints and finally to pure light. The Zeno chapel culminates in a glimpse of heaven itself – the golden ceiling vault displays four white-clad angels standing on cosmic globes and supporting a wreath (the emblem of triumph) in which appears Christ. The angels symbolize the transition between this world and that world. Christ is on a deep blue background – God's Son who

conquered death and returned to heaven where he awaits the final days. The pilgrim catches a glimpse of what he hopes to be worthy of on Judgment Day!

- Exiting the chapel one finds a small colonette of marble. This is reputed to a portion of the column to which Jesus was lashed to be flagellated (the 'Scourging at the Pillar'). The Pillar was brought here from Jerusalem in 1223 by Giovanni Colonna, Papal legate to Constantinople and titular Cardinal of the Church. A reliquary contains three thorns, said to be from Christ's crown.

This space was substantially renovated by its titular Cardinals St. Charles Borromeo (1564-84) and Ludovico Pico della Mirandola (1728-31). It contains many treasures including a sculpture by Bernini (1598-1680) and a funerary monument by Arnolfo di Cambio (1245-1303) for Cardinal Anchier de Troyes, a titular Cardinal of S. Prassede assassinated inside the church in 1286 during a popular uprising.

San Clemente

Some 18th century frescoes in the nave depict scenes from the life of St. Clement. In short, Clement was a Jewish slave of a Roman family who became Bishop of Rome and was condemned to exile and forced labor in the famous marble quarries of Chersoneso, in the Crimea, where he continued his missionary work. There was no water in the quarries, and prisoners risked dying of thirst. Clement, having seen a lamb scraping the earth with its hooves, began to dig at that spot, from which a spring burst forth. Trajan had Clement thrown into the Black Sea with an anchor around his neck. . Another miracle immortalized here (e.g., frescoes of the lower church) has always attracted popular devotion – it recalls how the sea waters opened up once a year to allow the faithful to pray at the Martyr's watery grave. According to legend, one year a widow lost her only son, and returning in the procession a year later, she found the child unharmed.

St. Clement's remains were returned to Rome in 868 by St. Cyril when he was with Methodius in the eastern regions evangelizing the Slavic people (he discovered the remains). Also buried in the tomb with St. Clement is another very important early Church Father: St. Ignatius of Antioch who was martyred in Rome and, along with Clement, was one of the "Apostolic Fathers" – the very few who had first-hand knowledge and experience of the Apostles themselves. In honor his "kindness", Cyril was buried in an altar of the lower church (he died in Rome shortly after returning Clement's remains).

The famous "Letter to the Corinthians" by St. Clement is the earliest Christian writing outside of Scripture.

Because Clement was a slave he most probably was not the owner of the house. Instead, it is believed that the most ancient home was a *titulus* belonging to the consul-martyr Titus Flavius Clemens who had a palace on this site. Clenent would have taken the owner's name. Remains of this palace have been discovered. According to Roman historians Seutonius and Dio Cassius, Clemens was executed by Domitian in ad 95 for "godlessness" and "following Jewish practices". It was Clemen's wife, Flavia Domitilla, or her niece of the same name, who started the Catacomb of Domitilla. The open interior courtyard of the Flavian villa would have been ideal for Christian gatherings.

A truly extraordinary place of worship. Dedicated to Peter's 3rd successor, Clement held office from 88-97 AD, a time during which the last Gospels were being written. Until the 19th century, all that was known was Pope Paschal II (1099-1118) erected the current church over the house where Clement was born; that it had 15th century frescoes and a gothic chapel to St. Catherine of Alexandria; that there was a *schola cantorum* dating to the time of Pope John II (533-535). In 1857, archeologists broke through the floor to discover an incredible history. Visitors can now stroll on the same pavements that imperial Romans used at the time of Nero's infamous 1st century assault on the newborn Christian community.
Just below the present church the excavators found almost intact one of the earliest Christian basilicas – the work of Pope Siricius (384-399), built less than a century after the legalization of the faith. Below that, they uncovered residences of the 1st century AD with damage from the fire of 64 AD that destroyed a section of Rome between the Coelian and Oppian Hills. A new structure was built during the Flavian dynasty in an attempt to gain the people's goodwill after Nero's misdeeds, who acquired the land here and began an ambitious building program including the Colosseum (or Flavian Amphitheatre) about 300 meters away.

Along the rebuilt structures of the fire is a perfectly preserved 3rd century AD shrine to Mithra (a threatening religion from the east) complete with a statue of the god performing the cult's bloody sacrifice, the slashing of a bull's throat to release life-giving forces. Also present are the cult's symbols of evil, a dog, a snake and a scorpion. Remember, the Mithraic cult was a large force in ancient Rome having been introduced to the Romans in 67 BC under Pompey and reaching its high point in the late 2nd century when even the Emperor Commodus (180-92) converted. It was outlawed in the late 4th century (Christian era).

When Siricius built his church, he did so over the existing structures thus preserving them for today. St. Jerome mentions this church as early as 392 and indicates that it was dedicated to Pope St. Clement who was a contemporary of the Roman Consul Clemens.

This was one of the most beloved churches of Rome. In the 6th century, Justinian's wife, the Byzantine Empress Theodora (d. 548) had her portrait painted in a niche in the north aisle (in the 9th century a throne and infant were added which converted the portrait into a Madonna and Child)!. This is now the famous "Byzantine Madonna" of St. Clemente.

The 4th century basilica was in service for 8 centuries and from this time there are frescoes of the 9th to the 12th centuries including a series about a Roman prefect, Sisinius, called the first comic strip (the prefect suspected his wife attended Clement's secret masses and had her tailed; they

were struck blind arresting a pillar in place of the wife. The prefect exclaims "*Come on you sons of whores, pull! Gosmari, Albertello, pull! You Carvoncello, lever it up with the pole!"* To which Clement observes, "Because of the hardness of your hearts it is right that you have to carry stones". These are writings in a degenerating Latin (the beginning of Italian).

Other important art work of the lower basilica include 9th century frescoes of scenes from the New Testament (Ascension, Crucifixion, Holy Women at the Tomb, Marriage at Cana, Descent into Limbo)

There are also 11th century frescoes of the life of St. Alexis – as a young man he ran away from home on his marriage day and upon his return his father welcomed him (unknowingly) as a servant and let him live under his stairs for 17 years during which time he wrote to pope telling his story and the pope relates the story to Alexis' father.

Of important note is that St. Cyril is buried here. St. Cyril and Methodius took the Gospel to Eastern Europe and devised the Cyrillic alphabet still used in Russia. Note the tribute paid by Soviet peoples to this site!

The Normans, under Robert Guiscard, heavily damaged it in 1084 and Pope Paschal II (1100) decided to rebuild from scratch. (Note: Robert Guiscard was the Norman leader and the scourge of southern Italy. When he invaded Rome to "save" the pope he, and his troops, sacked the city and burned several churches including St. Clemente. Gregory VII was incarcerated by Emperor Henry IV in Castel Sant'Angelo following Gregory's humiliation of Henry at Cassova, Tuscany.)
Note the white marble choir donated by Pope John II (533-5) to the earlier basilica and transferred here in the 12th century by Pope Paschal II. This choir contains the two high marble pulpits (one for the Epistles and one for the Gospels) and a mosaic-encrusted Paschal candlestick. St. Gregory the Great preached a funeral homily from this pulpit! Also, the martyr's tomb is below the altar containing the relics of Clement and Ignatius.

Also, note the bishop's throne along the back wall and flanked by an apse bench (presbytry). The back of the throne, carved to form a kind of halo behind the sitter, is a reused slab from the buried lower church. It bears a single word of the old inscription: MARTYR. It also carries a new inscription written around the edge recording the patronage of Anastasius, S. Clemente's cardinal presbyter between 1102 and 1125.

The actual rebuilding of the church took place under three popes: Victor III (1086-87), Urban II (1088-99) and Paschal II (1099-1118). All of them desired to rebuild the church according to Early Christian models in accord with their plans for the spiritual renewal of the Church. Many of the churches of Rome reflect their initiatives including parts of nearby SS. Quattro Coronati (dedicated in 1116) as well as S. Maria in Trestevere.

The most famous work within the church is the great apse mosaic and fresco. This scene requires much study and reflection. Luckily, there are inscriptions to help us understand its theology:

- Start with the fresco: This is where the "earthly hierarchy intersects with the celestial." Mary and 12 apostles appear on either side of Christ who is holding a book in one hand and blessing with the other. Standing on the banks of a river that is alive with fish and planted with flowers and palm trees, the saintly founders of God's Church inhabit paradise (palm trees) setting the pattern for the earthly Church governed by their ordained successors (who are seated directly beneath them!).
- The cornice separates the world of 'fresco' from the world of 'mosaic'. This is a theological shift and not just a shift in medium. It is the shift from the earthly to the heavenly realms.
- The use of gold mosaics was used to create a spiritual atmosphere where the "light" shined from the mosaic (Light = God). The work was completed in 1118-1119 and the artists revived a technique that had not been used in Rome for 2 centuries.
- At the extreme corners of the vault 12 lambs process out of the cities of Bethlehem and Jerusalem. They converge on the Mystical Lamb in the center. They are clearly the Apostles with Christ (figured in fresco directly below). At the same time, the translate the imagery into a more symbolic and, hence, higher mode of representation. Above the lambs is an inscription which declares the intent of the main field: ECCLESIAM CRISTI VITI SIMILABIMUS ISTI / DE LIGNO DRUCIS JACOBI DENS IGNATIIQ[UE] / IN SUPRASCRIPTI REQUIESCUNT CORPORE CRISTI QUAM LEX ARENTEM SET CRUS FACIT E[SS]E VIRENTE[M] which means "*The remains of the Cross of wood and of James and Ignatius rest above this inscription in the body of Christ; this vine shall be symbol to the Church of Christ which the Law makes wither but which the cross brings to life."*
- ***It must be remembered that imbedded in the mosaic of the apse (in the actual representation of the 'body of Jesus') was a fragment of the True Cross and the teeth of St. James the Apostle and St. Ignatius.
- Thus, the Apse mosaic introduces the central mystery of Christianity: ***Christ's death on the cross redeemed humanity's sin providing eternal life to those who enter his Church.***
- The figures in the tier above this inscription made the message explicit: Stags, birds, a snail, a lizard and two peacocks (traditional birds of paradise) advance toward a river which issues forth in 4 streams (cf. Gn 2:9-10 [garden of Eden] and Rev 22:1-2 [new Jerusalem]; a further reference to Ps 41 may be intended as well).
- Above the stags two pairs of tendrils sprout from an enormous acanthus making explicit the belief that the wood on which Christ died came from the tree of life in Eden. The lower and heavier tendrils of the vine divide, twisting and spiraling to form 50 circular compartments. All frame images of flora of many kinds and creatures of the land, air and sea – the profusion of all life.
- Mary and John mourn the Crucified Christ. The sin of Adam and Eve is redeemed.
- The stag and the serpent within the acanthus symbolize this triumph over sin and death. The serpent recalls the tempter in Eden; the stag according to the widely read collection of anecdotes known as the *Physiologus,* is Christ. The *Physiologus* notes that the stag,

the serpent's natural enemy, *"spits water into the cracks [where the serpent has slithered], draws him out and stamps on him and kills him. Thus did our Lord kill the devil with heavenly waters of indescribable wisdom. The serpent cannot bear water, and the devil cannot bear heavenly words."*

- In this way, the cross not only recalls the tree of life but is also a trophy, a sign of Christ's victory over sin.
- The fact that the mosaic contained a relic of the True Cross means that it was quite literally realized: The mosaic cross itself is explicitly understood as a decorated container for sacred remains, a reliquary! Further, it is no coincidence that S. Clemente's present mosaic crucifix replaces the gemmed cross donated by Pope Leo IV (847-55) that once hung above the altar in the lower church. The cross is purposefully mechanical and inanimate; it 'recalls' the previous reliquary of Leo. Thus, the mosaic of the apse is an intentional connection with the altar down below where the Sacrifice of Christ is offered during Mass. The image does more than mark the theological import of Christ's death; it also makes real the inscription's allusion to the Church of Christ, the source of redemption in the here and now. (Note: the previous reliquary of Leo IV was also painted a blue enamel meaning that the mosaic of the upper apse even copied the color of the previous reliquary as well.)
- The mosaic is actually rife with references to the Church. The 12 doves in the cross stand for the prophets or apostles (or both). The farm figures along the lower edge feeding fowl and tending goats and sheep stand for the community of the faithful within the Church. The four churchmen in spaces above the 1st tier of acanthus spirals are the Church Fathers: Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, and Gregory. Higher still, the winged, naked figures blowing on horns and riding sea and land creatures help to propel the ascent from the earthly to the heavenly realm. These, and the birds above them, symbolize souls soaring toward heaven (as opposed to the 'earthbound' chickens which still need tending by the Church). The great swags that frame the arch are the abundance of life the Church nourishes.
- ***The very decoration of the space in which the faithful stand, then, with its profusion of grapes and figs and flowers, asserts that S. Clemente is part of the Christian paradise!
- There are other symbolic parallels as well. The acanthus scroll is a nearly perfect copy of a 4th century mosaic in the Lateran chapel (even to the inclusion of the shepherds and a woman feeding fowl). This means that the mosaic of S. Clement intentionally replicates the ancient Christian presence so as to show continuity with the 'eternal ecclesiastical polity: the Church of Rome'. However, no previous mosaic in Rome depicted such complex overlays of theology as that of S. Clemente.
- Another replication from St. John Lateran is the image of the "great canopy" of heaven at the crest of the apse. Again, St. Clemente demonstrates a more complex theology. Here a broad blue band marks the boundary separating earth perceptible by the senses from heaven. Only the Hand of God proffering a crown of victory to his crucified Son penetrates the fiery clouds which, like the lambs on either side, symbolize the Incarnation which bridged the two worlds. Above is the fan like tent or veil – the firmament which no human eye can penetrate.
- Above the apse is the mosaic of the arch which does give the worshiper a view into heaven. A medallion with the XP (Chi Rho) makes the transition with its suspended

Alpha and Omega. At the apex of the arch is an enormous static bust-length portrait of Christ framed by a blue star-filled ring attesting that God is alive in heaven (note there are 10 stars – the biblical number for divine perfection). Holding the Gospel book, he is the *Logos*, the source of Scripture read in the church below. At Christ's side are the four living creatures of the Apocalypse (and Ezekiel). These also connect with the liturgy below because Isaiah and John (Apocalypse) both tell us that they surround the throne constantly singing, "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus...." Which is exactly what the faithful sing in the liturgy of the Mass taking place just beneath this mosaic! The palm trees symbolize resurrection and paradise.

- This connection with the liturgy is further sealed by seeing the Prophet Isaiah, depicted to the left and above Bethlehem (Isaiah prophesied the birth from the Virgin of the anointed one). Isaiah gazes toward Christ and holds a scroll that ready: VIDI DOMINUM SEDENTEM SUPER SOLIUM ("I saw the Lord seated on a throne..."). This verse continues to say, "around him were attendant seraphim...calling ceaselessly to one another Holy, Holy, Holy..." The concept is perfect: Isaiah introduces the appropriate scripture, the mosaic visualizes it, the congregation completes it when reciting the prayer!
- On the opposite side of the arch from Isaiah is Jeremiah who affirms that Christ is the fulfilment of the Jewish prophecy. He bears a quotation from the book of his successor, Baruch which says "This is our God; there is none to compare with him."
- Joining the Old Testament visionaries to the image of Christ's heavenly court are 4 enthroned saints of special importance to Rome. Paul is portrayed instructing the Deacon Lawrence in the doctrine of the cross ***("The servant Lawrence being taught by Paul about the cross"***). Lawrence holds a cross staff in his hand and stands on the grill of his martyrdom. At right, Peter is with Clement (his successor to be). Like Jeremiah, Peter simply declares Christ's presence***: "Clement, behold Christ as he was promised to you by me."*** Clement holds the anchor in his left hand (instrument of martyrdom) and rests his feet on a boat. This completes the hierarchy: those venerating the image in Clement's church acknowledge his succession from Peter and, in turn, from Christ.
- Running along the rim of the arch, the largest and best known of the inscriptions ties the imagery together: GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO SEDENTI SUPER THRONUM ET IN TERRA PAX HOMINIBUS BONAE VOLUNTATIS (*Glory to God, seated upon the throne, in the highest heaven, and on earth his peace for men on whom is favor rests*). This line is already part of the liturgy of the medieval church once again, like the Sanctus, tying the heavenly liturgy to the earthly liturgy.
- ***The pilgrim at Mass is overwhelmed by the pure harmony underlying Christian doctrine. Christ instituted the Church and its sacraments when he died on the Cross, offering salvation to those who believe in him. Alive in heaven, where he is adored in an eternal liturgy, he awaits the end fo time, when he will gather the blessed to his actual presence. Although the pilgrim understands that what he sees and hears are but a foreshadowing of that reality, the mosaic is intellectually so harmonious and, with the celebration of the sacred service, so emotionally uplifting, that every Christian feels privy to a bit of that eschatological event!***

The frescoes in the Chapel of St. Catherine of Alexander were painted by Masolino da Panicala with Masaccio (1428-1431). (Note: St. Catherine is attributed with converting Maxentius' wife.)

The scenes depicted are her miraculous escape from torture, eventual decapitation, and the angels' transfer of her body to Mt. Sinai.

To the right of the apse is a small marble tabernacle set into the wall nearly six feet above the presbytery floor where it is in full view of all who come to pray in S. Clemente.

- This is where the sacrament reposes "out of reach of profane hands" (as a church council convened at the Lateran in 1215 has proclaimed they must be.)
- ****This is one of the only surviving "original" tabernacles from history! (The practice of reserving hosts before this was done by means of a canopy that encased the main altar where the Eucharist was left for reserve.)
- Commissioned in 1299 by the cardinal of S. Clemente, Giacomo Tommasini (a nephew of Pope Boniface VIII), the new tabernacle reflects 13th century's growing devotion to the Eucharist.
- At the start of the century, the Synod of Paris decreed that during the Mass the priest should "elevate the Host to demonstrate the real presence."
- Then in 1263 the 'Miracle of Bolsena' confirmed the veracity of the doctrine of Transubstantiation as a Host began to bleed at the moment of Consecration. (A year later the Feast of Corpus Christi was instituted.)
- This tabernacle was made by Arnolfo di Cambio (1245-1310). Take a closer look at it – Angels flank the canopy as the Mystical Lamb (Lamb of God, you take away.... Use of this image connected with the liturgy celebrated in this space.) And Christ appears in the arms of his Mother (God made flesh so that he could expiate humanity's sin). The tabernacle's patron, Cardinal Tommasini, had himself depicted here kneeling before the Virgin and Child. The Apostle James (the namesake of Cardinal Tommasini) is depicted directing the Cardinal's attention toward the Divine Presence. St. Clement is present as well and he is 'sponsoring' the cardinal. Note that the representation of 'Clement' looks amazingly like current popes in their papal regalia and thus establishes the contemporary pope's lineage.

St. Clement's is one of the "titular" churches of Rome (given to Cardinals as their own special charge). It reflects earlier practices when Rome's pastors clustered around the city's bishop. The Cardinal often serves as financier of projects. Thus, when seepage inundated the Mithraeum in 6 feet of water, William O'Connell of Boston installed the pumping system. An earlier "titular" is buried above: Cardinal Cicognani, the Vatican's representative in Washington during World War II (he kept a baseball on his desk back at the Vatican while Secretary of State as an American memory!).

The Irish Dominicans have cared for San Clemente since 1677 when the English outlawed the Irish Catholic Church and expelled the entire clergy.

The Martyr's Shrines: The beginnings of Popular Devotion...

On a summer evening in 64 AD a great conflagration spread through Rome destroying most of the city. Many, including the historian Tacitus, hinted that the Emperor Nero was himself to blame. However, scapegoats were needed and for these Nero (54-68) turned to the Christians. A great spectacle was made of their suffering and death. Some Christians were dipped in pitch and burned as human lanterns to illuminate the imperial gardens, others were thrown to wild beasts in the arenas for the sport of Roman Crowds.

Other Emperors followed Nero in persecuting Christians. Domitian (81-96), Marcus Aurelius (161-80), Decius (249-51) and Valerian (253-60). These Christian deaths became the most exciting entertainments for the Roman populace. Christians were thrown to the lions, tossed to wild dogs, boiled in pots of oil, dismembered by wild-running horses, skinned, hacked, and roasted. The most fiercest persecution was under Diocletian (284-305) c. 303-5 when 3,000 - 4,000 Christian martyrs died. Approximately 100,000 martyrs are thought to have died by the time of Constantine. However, each martyr produced another convert!

By the early 4th century, Christianity is thought to have grown to around 5 or 6 million. Indeed, Tertullian was right – *The blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church.* Martyrs' shrines soon became stations of worship for the persecuted Christian community. The martyr's example gave others the strength to face death (cf. inscriptions in the catacombs).

After Christianity's legalization, churches and magnificent basilicas were built over the tombs of the martyrs and pilgrims came from far and wide to pray at their tombs or places of important relics. However, invasion, pillage and abandonment of the Roman countryside led to the "Translation" of saints' and martyrs' relics from the catacombs into more secure city sanctuaries. Starting in the 7th century and especially in the 8th and 9th, many churches hosted martyrs' relics and changed their names and dedications in honor of these early Christian witnesses.

In early Christianity, a church built over a martyr's shrine was called a *martyrium*; if the sanctuary contained the saint's actual body, it was referred to as *ad corpus martyrium*. Of course, the most important *martyria* were the shrines of the apostles, Peter and Paul, executed according to tradition in Nero's persecution and that of the Roman deacon Lawrence, martyred under Valerian.

San Lorenzo **– Prince of Deacons**

St. Lawrence was a deacon of Rome burned to death on a grill during the persecutions launched by Emperor Valerian (253-260). A shrine was erected over his grave followed by a Constantinian basilica (303) with a series of alternations being made by Pelagius II (578-590) who built his church next to Constantine's basilica, Honorius III (1216-1227) and Pius IX (1846-1878). Note: it was Pelagius II's church that was built over the tomb of St. Lawrence which also contained the remains of St. Stephen brought from Byzantium.

Except for Peter and Paul, no saint inspired as much devotion in the Early Church as St. Lawrence, arch-deacon of Rome and martyr of the 3rd century.

In the 3rd century, despite persecution, Christianity had already made many converts and was spreading rapidly through the Roman population. By the year 250 more than 20 popes had organized and guided the primitive community. Early bishops were assisted by deacons who were elected to help with worship, collect alms, and minister to the poor. Lawrence was the most beloved of these and considered the patron saint of all Church deacons.

Lawrence served under Pope Sixtus II (257-8) just as the Emperor Valerian (253-260) was abandoning his earlier tolerant attitude and beginning a severe persecution of Christians. The imperial edict of 257 ordered summary executions of all bishops, deacons, and priests found worshiping, assembling the faithful, or visiting Christian cemeteries. On August 6, 258, Sixtus was surprised by Valerian's guards while celebrating Mass in the catacombs and beheaded on the spot along with six of his deacons. Several days later Sixtus' seventh and chief deacon Lawrence was tortured and martyred. St. Ambrose (339-97) records that when Lawrence was ordered by the authorities to hand over the Church treasure entrusted to his charge, he gathered together and presented a multitude of the poor declaring, "Here is the Church's wealth." The martyr was buried by the Roman matron Cyriaca in her own private cemetery in an area called the *Ager Veranus* by the Via Tiburtina. His tomb immediately began to attract pilgrims.

Constantine built the first Christian Basilicas including S. Lorenzo which he is reputed to considered dearest of all. Constantine is historically known to have been very devoted to Lawrence (for reasons unknown). He isolated the martyr's grave, surrounding it with silver grating and dug out an adjacent oratory. In 330, wishing to create the most splendid martyr's shrine in all of Rome, Constantine raised over the sanctuary a *Basilica Maior* to accommodate the increasing number of pilgrims. This basilica was embellished with chapels and rich decoration. Several popes chose to be buried in the complex (Zosimus, Sixtus III, and Hilarius in the 5th century).

The Constantinian basilica fell into ruins over the course of time. In the 6th century Pope Pelagius II (579-90) found the building invaded by dampness and water and decided to preserve the sacred spot. Leaving Constantine's church to moulder next door, Pelagius built another church facing in exactly the opposite direction, its apse contiguous to that of the earlier basilica. Pelagius' church was praised as spacious and luminous. To this site Pelagius transferred the relics of two other revered martyrs: Stephen and St. Justin. Stephen was stoned to death in Jerusalem in 35 AD (Deacon) and is considered the Church's 1st Martyr. His remains were brought from Constantinople to Rome in 415 and in 578 placed beside those of Lawrence. Justin, known as the first Christian Philosopher, was martyred in 165 in the reign of another philosopher, Emperor Marcus Aurelius (160-80).

The church of Pelagius II continued to grow through successive renovations in the Middle Ages and became a veritable fortress – this growth gave rise to a complex of buildings called the *Laurentipoli* which included two monasteries, libraries, baths, and all the welfare structures necessary for aiding the poor and pilgrims.

Honorius III (1216-17) is the one primarily responsible for the current appearance of basilica which incorporated the Pelagian church into its prebytery. He decided to create one large basilica by demolishing the walls of the Pelagian apse (Pelagian's *Basilica Maior* became the presbytery of the enlarged 13th century church). The floor and the two pulpits of the central nave are previous examples from the time of Honorius. At the end of the nave is the dramatic presbytery, delimited by imposing columns taken from the underlying Pelagian basilica and which support the women's gallery. The episcopal throne (1254) and altar canopy (1148) are fine examples of Romanesque marble work. The interior face of the Triumphal Arch contains a mosaic of Christ enthroned between saints that comes from the church of Pelagius II. Also, it is from this period that we receive the portico's frescoes that cover all three walls with lively scenes from the lives and miracles of Lawrence and Stephen. The Cosmetesque pavement also comes from this period.

The church is most recently known for it's involvement in World War II when it was hit by allied bombs in 1943. Pius XII drove to the spot the next day to visit and console the people. The city was since declared an "open city" and all other sites were spared. The sedan in which the pope rode is now in the Vatican museum. The bombs shattered the facade of the old church and much of the name but by 1949 the basilica was reopened with some frescoes lost and other damaged areas rebuilt. A monument to this moment can be found in front of the church in a small square. Pius was viewed as the living spirit of Lawrence because of his concern for the people. He also dispersed financial assistance to the suffering neighborhood.

Of note are the following:

- 6th century Byzantine mosaics
- pavement from the 9th century (and 13th)
- altar bearing a date inscribed by its builder: 1148
- relics of St. Lawrence in a sarcophagus under the altar
- Pius IX was interred there in a chapel decorated by mosaics acclaiming the two dogmas of his pontificate: the Immaculate Conception and papal infallibility.
- Also buried here is Alcide de Gasperi, the prime minister who led Italy out of the wreckage of fascism into a flourishing Western-oriented democracy
- The Byzantine mosaic arch depicts the Savior imparting his blessing from a blue globe. To either side are Stylized saints standing in attendance: on the left , Pope Pelagius presents a model of his church, flanked by St. Lawrence and St. Peter; on the right, St. Hippolytus (St. Lawrence's *goaler* who was converted, martyred, and buried in a nearby Tibertine cemetery), St. Stephen and St. Paul.
- In the Confessio is an inscription that reads, "*Here lie the bodies of Blessed Stephen, proto-martyr, Blessed Lawrence, deacon, and Justin, presbyter and martyr."* Their sarcophagus is enclosed by a thick grating. On this level are the St. Cyriaca Chapel and the Funerary sanctuary of Pope Pius IX (1846-78). Pius restored the basilica by removing all unsuitable Baroque decorations and then commissioned this Gothic revival chapel which is almost overwhelming in its display. It displays all the emblems of the dioceses which financed the project.

San Sebastiano... (on the Via Appia – 312 BC)

A procession of Christians on the Appian Way, around AD 61, greeted the Apostle Paul upon his entrance into Rome (Acts 28:14-15).

San Sebastiano contains 1st century pagan mausoleum with etched outline of fish ("*icthys*" = "Jesus Christ Son of God Savior) with many inscriptions starting from 258 ad for spiritual help from Sts. Peter and Paul, one indication that during the persecution of Valerian (253-260) the remains of the apostles may have been hidden there temporarily. (See Below)

St. Sebastian, a Roman Soldier of the Praetorian Guard martyred during the fierce Diocletian (284-305) persecution, was buried here. Sebastian was first sentenced to death and shot by archers of his own company. He was nursed back to health by the pious matron Irene and recovered only to be clubbed to death and was buried by another lady, Lucina, on the Appian Way. Burials and tunnels for additional burial places quickly accumulated around the soldier's grave. Paintings are present: infant Jesus with ox and ass. The underground chapel also contains a bust of St. Sebastian by Bernini.

Passages of the Catacombs were dark; Latin scholar St. Jerome wrote, ***"I was accustomed to visit on Sunday the tombs of the martyrs and apostles and often did I enter the crypts deep dug in the earth with their walls on either side lined with the bodies of the dead. Everything was so dark; it was almost as if the psalmists words were fulfilled: let them go down alive into hell!"*** This passage was written about the Catacombs of San Sebastiano!

In 257 Valerian (Emperor 253-9) began a rigorous persecution of Christians, forbidding them to celebrate the sacraments or assemble for burying their dead. Since the Apostles tombs were secretly transferred their remains to this less-known cemetery (c. 258). Pope Damasus left the following plaque: ***"You, whomever you may be, who seek the names of Peter and Paul, should know that the bodies of those two saints, were here at one time. They were sent from the East as disciples . . . by the shedding of their blood, following Christ through the stars, they attained the gates of Heaven and the reign of the just. Rome more than other cities has the right to hail them as fellow citizens. Damasus here raises their praises."*** Soon after Constantine legalized Christianity, it seems that the Apostles' remains were returned to their proper burial places.

This site was known from the mid 3rd century as the *Memoria Apostolorum.* A Basilica was built by Constantine and called the *Basilica Apostolorum*. The relics of St. Sebastian are preserved in an altar to the left inside the nave. The saint became highly venerated after being invoked in the Rome plague of 680. By the 9th century his name replaced the original of the structure. The church was reconstructed in the 13th and 16th centuries preserving it's facade of six granite columns of the 1200 edifice. The Chapel of the Relics contains what tradition holds is one of the arrows that pierced the saint and the column of his martyrdom.

The treasure of these catacombs is a porticoed courtyard where rites and funeral banquets in honor of Peter and Paul were held. The walls were covered with more than 600 examples of Latin and Greek graffiti from the 3rd and 4th centuries, with invocations to the two apostles.

- Originated in the galleries of an abandoned stone quarry – *ad catacombus.* 1st century is date of first cemetery.
- contained an underground spring that supplied the necessary water for the *refrigeria*.
- The area started as a large pit 9 meters deep where several monuments were built. Then the area was filled in with 6 meters of soil and a pavement was added with a trapezoidal building and a stairway protecting the water spring as well as a *memoria* to Peter and Paul.
- Original basilica was built in the first part of the 4th century on the area of the *memoria*. (C. 310-350). **First basilica may have been begun under Maxentius!
- Was built in a U-shape: central nave with two side aisles joined by an ambulatory in the apse.
- There was no pavement in the original basilica! This was because it was still a burial ground (covered cemetary).
- entrance to the catacomb is through the same medieval room that contains the tomb of the St. Sebastian.
- Pope Damasus (366-384) had the Platonia mausoleum built in honor of the Prince of the Apostles and is decorated with the *platoma* – a marble slab mentioned in the *Liber Pontificalis.*

Ss. Giovanni e Paolo –

like San Clemente, this church too has excavations dating back to imperial Rome including an actual "Domus Ecclesiae". The church has its origin in a "titular" church (*Titulus Byzantiis)* established in the house of the martyr brothers, John and Paul (two Christian officials put to death during the reign of Julian the Apostate in 361-363). They were discovered donating their wealth to poor Christians. The brothers were beheaded in their home and were secretly buried by other Christians. Other Christians were later found at the martyrs' tomb and were beheaded and buried on the same spot (Crispus, Crispinianus, and Benedicta).

The building has a rocky history. It was sacked by Alaric and the Visigoths in 410 and damaged by an earthquake in 442. It was reconstructed by Pope Leo I (440-61) but again sacked in 1084 by the Normans (Robert Giuscard). Paschal II (1099-1118) began renovations and constructed the monastery and bell tower (erected on the base of a Roman temple).

The building was finished by Cardinal Giovanni Conti of Sutri (c. 1150) who honored himself with an inscription on the portico architrave. In 1952, the early Christian facade was restored.

Excavations in the 20th century uncovered a complex from the 1st - 5th centuries, a noteworthy testament to early Christianity's existence within the pagan world. Frescoes include Christian images as well as pagan mythology. Christian images include the execution of three people who were probably Crispus, Crispinianus, and Benedicta, companions of the titular saints. Note: the fact that these brothers were buried, as martyrs, inside the city walls at a time when this was illegal testifies to the incredible devotion being paid to them.

The church is located on the Coelian Hill. Cardinal Francis Spellman (titular of the church from 1946-67) restored the facade to its medieval state with the help of American millionaire Joseph Kennedy.

Virgin Martyrs: Rome's Most Beloved Saints

It was the sacrifice of martyrs that conquered Rome. The martyrdom of several young girls especially touched the hearts of the Christian community. These Roman virgins impressed members of the pagan community as well. Their stories and faith are credited with playing an important role in the final conversion of Rome.

Part of the reason why Christian martyrs appealed to the Roman populace is that the religions of Rome had lost their soul. Romans were searching for deeper answers to the questions of life and death. This is why the cult of Mithras thrived in these years.

Christianity had an appealing teaching and dedicated martyrs. Almost immediately after the martyr's death the early Christians began to pray at the site of their martyrdom. The virgins' cult, especially, achieved great popularity. After the legalization of Christianity large basilicas were built over the original house churches and in later centuries popes and cardinals vied with one another to rebuild and embellish these sanctuaries.

Santa Cecilia in Trestevere

In the heart of Trestevere, this church has been known as one of the cities most important shrines since at least 499. Santa Cecilia is remembered as a married woman (of the Cecilii lineage) who was martyred in the first half of the 3rd century with her husband, Valerian; her brother-in-law Tiburius; and an instantly converted onlooker, Maximus. A place of worship was set up by the 5th century and a basilica erected by Paschal (817-824) (Pope Paschal I rebuilt the edifice as a basilica in 821 to safeguard the saint's body which was recovered intact in the catacombs of S. Callisto.). The present structure dates to 1599.

Cecilia was sentenced to die by asphyxiation inside her own family *caldarium*, a steamroom. After surviving for three days in the steam, she was stabbed to death and beheaded. In 1599 her sarcophagus was opened for inspection with the sculptor Carlo Maderno (1556-1629) as an onlooker. He carved what he saw – now located beneath the main altar (turned on one side, the face turned down, and three of the fingers extended which was taken to allude to the Trinity). The *caldarium* is used as a chapel. Still to be seen are the vents through which heated air came.

On view in the crypt are sarcophagi containing the remains of Cecilia and her three fellow martyrs. Beside them are the tombs of two early popes: Sts. Urban (222-239) and Lucius (253-254).

St. Cecilia is the patroness of music and musicians since the 5th century. Accounts of her martyrdom speak of how she "sang within heart to God alone" during her wedding ceremony seemingly oblivious to the *cantantibus organis*, the "singing" of the musical instruments. A curious misreading of the Latin caused a widespread belief in the 15th century that she played the organ! (See the ceiling painting).

Of very special interest in the apse is a 9th century Byzantine mosaic of Christ, Cecilia, Valerian (her chaste spouse), and others, including Pope Paschal, who is shown with a square halo (living at the time of the art). In the nun's choir in the adjoining convent is a Last Judgment by Pietro Cavallini, a masterpiece of 1293.

The altar canopy is a work of Arnolfo di Cambio (1293).

Sant' Agnese Fuori le Mura and S. Costanza

- Current building site on vast ancient cemetery.
- Agnes was girl of only 12 or 13 at her martyrdom under Diocletian. She refused marriage and spontaneously presented herself to authorities as a Christian. She announce her preference for death over any violation of her consecrated virginity. She was consigned to a brothel near Domitian's Stadium and when her nakedness was exposed to the crowd she miraculously grew hair to cover her body. She was then set on fire but the fire left her and engulfed her persecutors. Finally she was beheaded. At a vigil near her grave, her parents saw her in a vision accompanied by a procession of gold-robed virgins and a snow-white lamb at her side. (Interestingly enough, the legend of the hair growing to cover her body was rediscovered in 1728 when a stone in the floor of the basilica of S. Agnese that had been upside down for more than 1,000 years was overturned to record the inscription of Damasus telling the story)
- Constantine built the original basilica which is now in ruins: *Coemeterium Agnetis* (circus-shaped building 98 meters long, 40 meters wide and 17 meters high).
- The *Dopositio Martyrum*, an early Church calendar, records that by 366 the Pope and the Christian community were celebrating St. Agnes' martyrdom every year on January 21.
- St. Ambrose (334-97) and the Christian poet Prudentius (348-405) wrote her praises.
- After Agnes' death, one shrine, containing the martyr's head, was erected over the site of her martyrdom (now the church of S. Agnese in Agone – the Latin word for "place of public games") which was in the Stadium of Domitian or present day Piazza Navona. Another sanctuary was erected on the site of her grave and less than 50 years later transformed into an imposing basilica (the Constantinian structure).
- The apse mosaic is from the 7th century and portrays Agnes as a Byzantine princess in robes and jewels. The symbols of her martyrdom, the flames and sword, are placed

beneath her feet. Standing to either side of her in the apse are Popes Symmachus (498-514) and Honorius (625-38) who were responsible for building and restoring her church.

- The fresco over the triumphal arch is a 19th century work depicting her about to be beheaded. Her symbol, the lamb (*agnus* in Latin) occurs throughout the church and is a reference both to her name and her sacrifice.
- Constantia, the daughter of Constantine, spent her "widow years" in Rome (338-350) and ordered the building of these buildings. She then dedicated them to Saint Agnes.
- The ground of the original basilica was covered with graves (sheltered cemeteries) in the style of San Lorenzo, Saints Marcello & Peter, and San Sebastiano.
- This basilica was supplied with a baptistry (attached to the main basilica); others were not.
- Honorius I also built a basilica in the same area (625-638) to replace the crumbling Constantinian edifice. This was a Greek-Byzantine replacement (compare with the Roman style of S. Costanza). Ancient Roman columns support the "upper gallery" which served as the "Women's Section" (*matronea).*
- Her present statue on the main altar, adapted from the Roman statue of Isis, was made in 1600 with the addition of gilded head and hands (another symbolic example of Christianity's victory over Roman paganism).
- In the 17th century the popes began to insist on "confirmation" of martyr's relics in Rome's major churches. Accordingly Agnes' body was exhumed and her remains were found with those of another female martyr. This was St. Emerenziana, St. Agnes' sister. According to tradition, Emerenziana helped bury her sister and was stoned to death when she was found praying at her sister's tomb. She was buried near Agnes in the Nomentana catacombs. Her feast day is celebrated two days after that of Agnes (January 23rd). St. Emerenziana has her own chapel in the basilica of Agnes – it is across from the altar off the right aisle. She is depicted holding the palm of martyrdom and a large stone. Her relics rest with those of St. Agnes in a silver urn under the main altar.
- The altar also has a beautiful altarpiece by Andrea Bregno (1418-1503) depicting two other beloved Christian martyrs, the deacons Lawrence and Stephen.
- Of interesting note: each year here on January 21st lambs are blessed before the main altar and taken to S. Cecilia's convent in Trestevere. See the link between Cecilia and Agnes – both appear with the Virgin on the basilica's gilded ceiling! These lambs then surrender their wool to become the palia given to archbishops on the feast of Peter and Paul (June 29th).

S. Costanza...

- The Mausoleum of St. Costantia was located here and attached to the larger basilica. It was erected in 350 for Costantia and her sister Helen.
- Legend has it that Costantia came to Agnes' tomb with a skin ailment. That night the princess was cured and saw Agnes in a dream. The next morning Costanza ordered a great basilica build over Agnes' burial site. She built her own mausoleum next to it.
- Knowledge of Costanza is very sketchy. She seems to have been married to two members of the imperial family (Annibalianus, 335 and upon his death to Gallus, 350). By all accounts Costanza actually died in Antioch and, in keeping with her wishes, her body was returned to Rome for burial.

- For centuries her mausoleum was used as a baptistry for the S. Agnese basilica.
- It was first referred to as the "Church of S. Costanza" in 865 during Pope Nicholas I's reinstatement of the unjustly deposed Bishop Rotardus.
- In 1265 Pope Alexander IV added two more virgin saints, Attica and Artemia, to the church dedication.
- Magnificent circular building with a double row of supporting pillars.
- The barrel vaulted ceiling contains 4th century mosaic decorations of pagan/Christian content (these are among the oldest in Rome). One of these scenes is the oldest depiction of wine-making from the Roman empire – youths picking grapes, carting them, and squashing them. The intricate vine work is a Christian motif of "Vine and the branches". The young figure in the center of the mosaic may be Constantia or the god Bacchus.
- The sarcophagus of Costantia is now in the Vatican Museums – it is very similar to that of her mother, Helen. This one depicts wine-making – a theme that fits with the mosaics. A copy has been left in the mausoleum.
- Two side niches are decorated with mosaics showing the *tradition legis* and the *traditio clavium*. These are depictions of Peter and Paul with the appearance of Roman Senators in their traditional togas! In early 4th century iconography had barely developed and the early Christians had to use what was familiar to them.
- The building has been a church since 1254. Note the mosaics portraying wine-making; this fact gives rise to speculation that Constantine meant it to be a temple to Bacchus at some point.
- The now-barren cupola was covered with mosaics in the 4th century.

Victory of the Cross: The Church as Heir to Imperial Rome

Christianity's swift advance – from a small forbidden sect to the recognized religion of the vast Roman Empire – was astounding. In fact, the Emperor Constantine's legalization of the Christian faith in 313 ad came less than one decade after Diocletian's bloody persecutions (303-5), which had sent so many martyrs to their deaths. Today's visitors can trace signs of this amazing progress in the multiple layers of some of Rome's oldest churches.

Constantine(303-37) was the son of an army ruler of Gaul and a saintly mother (Helena). He became the sole emperor of the West in a battle he won near Rome under the insignia of the Cross. He favored Christianity in both the East and the West. The churches he built are some of the most important Christian shrines in the world.

Christianity developed rapidly. In 394 the Emperor Theodosius I (d. 395) declared Christianity the empire's official religion and a few years later the senate abolished paganism in all its forms. To signal this great success, the Roman Church began a flurry of building throughout the city. Because they were no longer hidden by their location beyond the city walls, the new churches were raised as conspicuous and impressive witnesses to the advance of the faith. However, as the Roman Church asserted itself the empire was sliding into decline.

Barbarian hordes were knocking on Rome's doors; in future years they would ravage the Italian countryside and the city itself. To protect the eastern boarders, Constantine founded a new capital in Byzantium, called Constantinople, and the court and army followed in his wake.

The Popes were left behind to protect the Western capital. Thus, the popes began to consider themselves as the Emperor's spiritual and temporal successors. They treasured their classical heritage and identified with Rome's historical past. The religious buildings that were established during this period were developed in the framework of classical Roman civilization.

Churches were first built according to the layout of the Roman home where for centuries the faithful had secretly gathered in inner courtyards or private rooms. However, larger rooms were soon needed for the mushrooming Christianity community. Proudly, the Church began building near and over the sites of pagan temples. However, Christianity soon required a new architectural style for worship. Pagan temples were designed to contain only the god's statues or symbols and a very few priests to offer sacrifice – those temples could not accommodate large and growing Christian congregations who participated in the act of worship.

It seems to have been Constantine who conceived of using the secular Roman "basilica", which was really a great hall of justice and a public meeting place, as an ideal structure for Christian worship. The basilica was grand, public in nature, impressive in size and form. The building, adapted for Christian use, was a long oblong hall (a nave flanked by aisles) terminating in a semi-circular apse. Classical columns (often recycled from pagan religious or secular buildings), pediments, reliefs and mosaics were important features of the basilica's decor.

Santa Sabina –

- Viewed from the Tiber banks it looks like a fortress on one of Rome's seven hills: the Aventine. It is no accident that the various Aventine churches all display a certain "militaristic" appearance. It was here, after the devastation and trauma of Rome's 5th century that Roman Christianity took its first confident new stand!
- In the 4th century, the Aventine was a place of wealthy merchants' homes and patrician villas. Both pagan and Christian shrines existed on the wooded hills among these rich estates.
- After the legalization of Christianity, churches such as S. Clemente and S. Prassede were built upon the *tituli* of early martyrs. Following the banning of paganism in 394, Christianity also began to intentionally spread out over former pagan properties. Thus the origins of S. Sabina.
- 20th century excavations have revealed the foundations of a 3rd or 4th century villa under the basilica (one of the columns can be seen in the right nave). Of interesting note was a room discovered in the excavations that was used for religious purposes – it resembles an anchorite cell modeled on those of the Eastern desert monks.
- Here, according to tradition, the faithful Marcella welcomed Sts. Anthanasius and Jerome in the 4th century. Also, in this space Marcella and a pious group of faithful venerated the relics of the original S. Sabina.
- A prayer card in the basilica says, "St. Sabina was a noble pagan, wife of Senator Valentine; she was converted by her Greek serving maid Seraphia and suffered martyrdom on 29 August 125, under the Emperor Hadrian."
- Note: the *Acta* states that Sabina and Seraphia were martyred and buried in Vindena, Umbria. Their remains were later moved to the Aventine in the 4th century because of the threat of Barbarian invasions. They became a focus of Christian veneration. Also, the remains of a Roman bath and several pagan sanctuaries under the present basilica suggest a Christian expansion similar to that in S. Clement and S. Pudenziana.
- On the night of August 24, 410 Aleric's Visigoths broke their long siege and poured into Rome amid a lightening storm. The Aventine's luxury and wealth made it vulnerable to the most complete destruction. After 3 days of pillage and a devastating fire almost nothing remained of the imperial quarter.
- Pagan temples were destroyed (definitively) but the Christians began building churches. Like phoenixes from the ashes of smaller churches, extensive convents and monasteries presented their thick walls against further invasions.
- It was during this period that S. Sabina was built. All basilicas built after the Sack of Rome were massive and classical. They were intended not only as bastions against the northern threat but as claiming to be the legitimate descendants of the imperial world.
- There's a large mosaic fascia inscribed with the church dedication: *When Celestine [422-32] had the supreme apostolic dignity / and shone through all the world as the first of Bishops / This marvel was created by a priest of Rome, a native of Illyria / Peter, a man worthy of this name for his nourishment from birth was in the wake of Christ / Rich for the poor, poor for himself / Having shunned the good things of the present life / He well deserved to hope for the gift of the future life."* (Note: Peter may have chosen this site because of the devotion being paid to his fellow Illyrian – St. Jerome.)

- An excellent example of a 5th century basilica that has been fully restored. It was begun during the reign of Pope Celestine I (422-432) and was consecrated in 432 during the reign of Sixtus III (432-40).
- Note the 24 white marble columns that parade their Corinthian capitals along the nave. Early historians claimed these were taken from a nearby temple to Juno; however, it seems more likely that they were designed for the basilica.
- This was the 1st example of Roman columns supporting arches without an architrave (this design was imported from Illyria).
- Interesting: a recent theory explains the colored marbles above the arcades as insignia of the Illyrian cavalry companies – a reference to Peter's wealth (his father sold horses to the Roman legions).
- One of the basilica's most famous treasures is the set of Wooden Doors at the entrance is from the same period as the basilica and is made of cedar or cypress. The front has 18 rectangular panels. These depict scenes from the life of Moses, Elijah, and Christ (Correspondence between the Law& Prophets and the Gospel). These were probably made in Syria.
- Of great interest are the doors which portray scenes from the Old and New Testaments giving correspondence between the law of Moses and the law of Christ. The doors are carved in Cyprus and are from the 5th century. Note: The scene of the crucifixion carved in the doors is the oldest sculptural representation of this theme! Note that the figures are **not** clearly shown on crosses – still an embarrassing thing to Christians of the early 5th century. (Christ between two thieves.)
- Floral motifs decorate the back of the door. These are taken from a botanical treatise by Dioscorides, an Alexandrian physician of the first century.
- S. Sabina was restored in the 8th and 9th centuries by Eugenius II (824-7) who added the *schola cantorum* and *ambones*. He also transported the relics of three other saints (Popes Alexander I, St. Theodulus, and St. Eventius who were all contemporaries of S. Sabina) and interred them in the same sarcophagus under the high altar.
- The apse fresco is a 1560 copy of an original 5th century painting of Christ enthroned with the Apostles. The current painting adds Sts. Dominic, Sabina, Seraphia, Alexander, Theodulus, and Eventius.
- The church was given by Honorius III to St. Dominic de Guzman when he founded the Dominican order in 1216.
- It has been recently restored to its early Christian appearance as it was built.
- Most of the original decoration has been lost. However, a marble frieze survives in the central nave.
- Note that military insignia (symbol of the triumph of Christ and Christianity in the empire) are aligned with each column. The columns are a treasure of Greek marble in themselves.
- to the side are two female figures symbolizing the Church's origins in the east and west: the Synagogue with the book of the Old Testament and the Church with that of the New (*Ecclesia ex gentibus* and the *Ecclesia ex circumcisione*).
- Of other interesting note are the funerary monuments – especially that of a medieval patron who was so hospitable to the wondering Dominicans that she was given the title, "Hostess General of the Dominican Order" and was buried in S. Sabina in 1300. The

other important one is Cardinal Vincent Maculano, a Dominica theologian-astrologer who defended Galileo's astronomical theories and was buried with full honors in the basilica in 1667.

- The Basilica of S. Sabina is agreed to be the most perfect example of an early Christian basilica.

- Adjoining the basilica is the monastery founded by S. Dominic (1170-1221) himself in 1220. It has housed the Dominican Order of Preachers for more than 700 years. It was a gift of Honorius III (1216-27). Since 1936 the priory has served as the Dominican world headquarters. Both St. Dominic and St. Thomas Aquinas lived and studied here. Francis of Assisi most likely visited Dominic in this very spot.
- To visit the courtyard where Dominic visited with Francis, the pilgrim must ring the monastery bell and ask to see the Romanesque cloister.

Ss. Cosma e Damiano

One of Rome's most important churches dating from the mid 4th century. The church was the unification of two imperial pagan buildings expropriated by Pope Felix IV (526-30) (with permission from the Byzantine Queen Amalasunta [d. 535]) the ***Library in Vespasian's Forum of Peace*** (73-4) and ***Emperor Maxentius' Temple of Romulus*** (309) (NB: the Temple of Romulus was built for Maxentius' son, Romulus). The pope dedicated the building to Cosmas and Damian, two 4th century eastern Martyrs.

Why this site and why these brothers??? Cosmas and Damian who were physicians and brothers who worked in Cicilia (now Syria) until martyrdom in 303 during one of Diocletian's last persecutions. They were famous for working *miracle cures* and for offering their services free of charge. By the 5th century their cult had spread from Syria to Rome and found a devotee in Pope Felix himself.

Felix remembered that in imperial times Vespasian's Library had been used for lectures on medicine and science and most physicians' offices were still located in that area. Furthermore, the temple of the twin-brother gods, Castor and Pollux, stood nearby and had been particularly venerated by ancient Romans. The pope thus found it appropriate to substitute two Christian doctor-brothers for the pagan twins and at the same time "convert" the practice of medicine.

To get a real feel for the ancient import of this church, the pilgrim should see it from the view of the Roman Forum where part of Romulus' temple (heavy bronze doors) can still be been. In imperial times the edifice was located on Rome's *Via Sacra* – the sacred processional route.

- A renovation by Urban VIII (1632) saved the original mosaics in the apse. However, it substantially altered the original atmosphere of the building. (Note: Urban did have his tell-tale Barberini bees painted on the flowers [lower left] of the apse mosaic!)
- Pope Felix IV (526-530) decorated the apse with a mosaic – still in its place today. **This mosaic still grabs the attention of every visitor!

- There is an inscription to explain the imagery: AULA DEI CLARIS RADIAT SPECIOSA METALLIS IN QUA PLUS FIDEI LUX PRETIOSA MICAT MARTYRIBUS MEDICIS POPULO SPES CERTA SALUTIS VENIS ET EX SACRO CREVIT HONORE LOCUS OBTULIT HOC DOMINO FELIX ANTISTITE DIGNUM MINUS UT AETHERIA VIVAT IN ARCE POLI which means ***God's residence radiates brilliantly in shining materials; the precious light of the faith in it glows even more. The secure hope of salvation comes to the people from the martyred doctors, and from the sanctity this place derives honor. Felix offers this worthy gift to God, so that he might live in the heavenly abode.*** (E.g., the mosaic established the once-pagan structure as God's dwelling. By doing so, Felix hoped he would deserve a place in the true paradise)
- Christ, on a staircase of fiery clouds in golden robes, holds the scroll of the Law in his hands. On the Jordan river (below) stand St. Peter and St.. Paul (dressed as ancient Romans in white togas) who present to the Savior the martyrs Cosmas and Damian who hold their crowns. The background figures are of the donor (Felix IV) and St. Theodore (who holds the martyr's crown). Note: some scholars think that the Emperor Theodoric (d. 526) is represented instead of Theodore. Theodoric ruled from Constantinople through his Ravenna exarch and nudged along Felix's election to the Papal throne. The two palms symbolize resurrection. Note the river (prominently labeled 'IORDANES') which separates the realm of the saints from the realm of God; Jesus floats in the clouds which the saints stand on the 'ground'. Nonetheless, the saints do stand in paradise filled with flora. **A phoenix** perched in the palm at the left confirms the identification; according to legend, the phoenix was the only animal in Eden that refused to eat of the forbidden fruit and was, therefore, allowed a form of immortality (after death it rose from its ashes and lived again).
- Beyond the river Christ appears against a bank of fiery clouds while the saints direct the pilgrim's attention to him. Christ is dressed in the toga of an ancient philosopher (cf. library origins) with his right hand raised in a gesture of 'teaching'. Christ is made divine by the light that radiates from his gold robes.
- Message: If only the faithful will emulate the virtuous ways of his saints will they be admitted into his presence when he returns to earth at the end of time. While the saints offer diadems to him from below the hand of God the Father descends with a corona to signify Christ's divinity.
- In the fascia below, Christ appears again as the Mystical Lamb shown beside twelve sheep (Apostles). Note that there are four streams that flow from the lamb (the rivers of Genesis, Revelation, AND the baptismal water flowing from the Gospels). Overall theme is of Christ as judge on Judgment Day. *The region of Latium prefers a certain scriptural text in art: "And then ... they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Mt 24:30).* The two rows of lambs, a familiar iconographic element, represent the church from the Jews and the Gentiles.
- The mosaic has been extensively restored over the centuries. In fact, the entire left-hand portion has been reproduced. The image of Felix IV had to be restored in the 17th century after Gregory XIII had it painted over with a figure of Gregory the Great!
- The Mosaic on the Triumphal Arch was completed during the Pontificate of Sergius I (692 - 701). Themes represented are from the Apocalypse (chapters 4&5). At the center

is a shield (*clipeus*) with a jeweled throne and upon it sits the Mystical Lamb with the cross. The seven seals lie on the footrest *still intact*! To the side are the seven jeweled lamps of fire, four angels, and the symbols of the evangelists; below, the 24 elders dressed in white gowns raise the crowns in their veiled hands. Note that only two symbols of the evangelists are depicted (those of John and Matthew) – the other two were covered up in later restorations.

- Once again, the Triumphal arch mosaic makes visible the perpetual heavenly divine liturgy that serves as the model for the one in which they participate here below with its altar, book, candlesticks, and sacrifice.
- In the 1500's the basilica's titular Cardinal, Alessandro Farnese, later to be Paul III (1534-49) gave the church to the Franciscans of the Third Order Regular and has remained in their care till this day. 17th century portraits of Franciscan saints are painted in a row of medallions below the apse mosaic.
- The vault painting depicts scenes from the lives of Sts. Cosmas and Damian.
- Franciscans have a special devotion to the Nativity of Jesus. Accordingly, there is a very famous early 18th century Neopolitan crib scene (16 meters long, 9 meters high, 7 meters deep) to the right of the entrance. This was originally made for Charles III, Bourbon King of Naples, and given to the church in 1939.

The Pantheon becomes a Christian Church...

- A significant moment in the "victory of the cross" came when the most illustrious pagan shrine in ancient Rome was transformed into a Christian church.
- In the year 608 the Pantheon was ceded to Boniface IV (608-15) as a church. The transfer was granted by Phocas, Emperor of Byzantium and overlord of Rome. Note that by this time there were no more "Roman" emperors.
- Boniface re-dedicated the building to "St. Mary and all the Saints and Martyrs".
- On the day of its consecration, 28 wagons of martyrs' were transported here, taken from various cemeteries. This event is the origin of All Saints Day, instituted by Gregory IV in the 9th century. (Note: The day of its consecration was in 609.)
- This act of consecration was an impressive statement of Christianity's definitive triumph over pagan Rome.
- With the Christianization of the building the purpose of the *oculus* changed. It now was understood as that the light and grace spreading through the world eminates from one eternal and omniscient source.
- Other historical moments: In 663 the Byzantine Emperor Constans II stripped the roof of its gilded bronze tiles. Pope Gregory III (731-41) replaced these with lead sheeting. The Barbarini Pope Urban VIII (1623-44) took the bronze from the beams in the portico to use for the Baldacchino in St. Peter's and for the canons in Castel Sant'Angelo.
- The Barberini Popes did commission two bell towers from Bernini (1598-1680) which lasted for nearly 100 years and were dubbed "The Donkey's Ears" (polite translation!). They were removed and the building was returned to it's former status.
- The building was periodically used as a fortress in the Middle Ages.
- Note the holes in the pillars – these were used for wooden poles to support the stands of fish-sellers at a market in front of the Pantheon. It was smelly! Pope Eugene IV (1431-

47) made it his priority to clean out added canopy hoping to drive the fish-sellers away. However, the market continued to operate in the piazza until 1847! The porch itself served as an exhibition fall for artists during the 16th and 17th centuries giving rise to an artists gild called the *Pantheon Virtuosi* which still exists today.

- In 1878 it became the chosen site for the tombs of the kings of Italy.
- The fountain in the plaza in front was designed by Giacomo della Porta. And constructed by Pope Clement XI (1700-21).
- The Obelisk dates from the dynasty of Ramses II (1292-1167 BC). This dating of this obelisk, one of the oldest in Rome, gives this piazza a perspective that spans 4 millenia!

Additional Churches from this Period...

S. Pietro in Vincoli – Pope Sixtus III ordered the original church dating from the 5th century and built to house the relic of the chains "*vincula*" of St. Peter. The chains were reportedly found next to the saint's place of imprisonment and were "miraculously" joined together forming a single chain (cf. The fresco on the ceiling). These relics are kept beneath the high altar. The church is now mostly known for the statue of Moses done by Michelangelo for the tomb of Julius II who is buried on the right hand side of the nave (originally to have been placed in the middle of St. Peters and above the tomb of the apostle). Note: Julius made substantial changes to the church during his pontificate and popes were often buried in their "favorite places". It also contains a 7th century mosaic of St. Sebastian with a beard on the left hand side of the central nave.

SS. Apostoli – founded in the 4th century (basilica consecrated to Ss. Philip and James), it was completely renovated in the 18th century and given a great facade by Carlo and Francesco Fontana. The original facade, contained within the portico, is from the 15th century Of note is that this is the parish church of Michelangelo and the place of his original burial. Also, St. Maximillian Kolbe lived in the Franciscan friary next door while he was in Rome. The pope who suppressed the Jesuits is buried here – Clement XIV by Antonio Canova (1732-1787 – his first work in Rome). It was also the church of the "Great Pretender" of the Stuart family who unsuccessfully claimed to be the rightful king of England.

San Marco – The church's origins date to the 4th century and Pope Mark in honor of the great evangelist whose relics rested here briefly. The current church was built with stone quarried from the Coliseum. Most of it was rebuild in the 9th century under Gregory IV – the mosaics in the apse are from this period and show Christ flanked by various saints such as St. Mark, Pope Mark and Pope Gregory IV holding a model of the church. The ceiling is one of only two 15th century coffered ceilings in Rome (the other is St. Mary Major). The church was completely renovated by Paul II in the second half of the 15th century and became the private chapel for the pope's newly built Palazzo di Venezia. The facade of the church was constructed with materials from the Colosseum and the Theater of Marcellus.

Between Two Empires: Popes Take on Imperial Functions and Art

As the Papacy was consolidating its authority and building churches in Rome, beyond the city walls the Western Empire was rapidly expiring. During the 5th century, successive waves of barbarians – Goths, Huns, Vandals, Ostrogoths – swept down upon Italy and Rome. In 476 the last Roman Emperor, young Romulus Augustulus, lost his throne to the German warrior Odoacer, and the Empire of the West disappeared off the historical screen.

But Rome did not die. The city was in deep emotional shock and the Roman people turned to the Papacy for political leadership. With the empire's desertion of Rome the Papacy was poised to assume the tasks of civic administration, law and order, food distribution, and social services for the poor. The Church, which proclaimed a 'kingdom not of this world' suddenly occupied the place abdicated by the Emperor of the West. In the words of one of early Christianity's greatest popes, Leo the Great (440-61): 'Rome remains the head of the world through the See of Peter.'

Two popes from this period were given the posthumous title ***Great*** (Leo and Gregory). They were responsible for the tremendous growth of Papal authority and prestige in the early church. In 452 Leo I travelled north to deter Attilia's Huns from sacking Rome. In 455 he restrained the Vandals under Gaiseric from razing the city to its foundations. (Note: the Vandals did do enough damage, however, to give us their name as an English word for destruction.)

A century and a half later, Gregory I (590-604) restored and reorganized Rome after other invaders, the Lombards this time, had wreaked devastation on the city and its countryside.

After the fall of the Western Empire, the Byzantine Empire continued to exist and flourish. Byzantium was technically Rome's 'overlord' with its 'exarch', or governor, stationed in Ravenna. In fact, however, the Papacy increasingly asserted its spiritual and political independence. Eventually the two realms went their separate ways.

In the 8th and 9th centuries, as a result of Arab conquests an conflicts in Byzantium, skilled craftsmen and artists fled to Rome from the East. For a while the Western capital even became and important center of Byzantine art and culture. The reason for this great influx of artists and craftsmen from Byzantium was two fold. On the one hand the constant Arab invasions made it very difficult for them to engage in any "luxury" building projects as the city was under regular siege. On the other hand, the Byzantine Emperor thought that the Arab success must be a divine judgment against Byzantium for certain 'infidelities' which he concluded must be idolatry and thus he began the "Iconoclast Persecution" which destroyed all religious images and even put to death the artists who made them and the people who sheltered them. Many great and historic Byzantine icons were brought to Rome along with the craftsmen who continued their perfected trades in the west.

Finally, when the scion of a former barbarian dynasty, the Frankish king Charlemagne, became Holy Roman Emperor in St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas eve of 800, he accepted his crown

from Leo III (795-816). Thus restoring the Western Empire and at the same time formally breaking with the East (politically) as the authority of the Papacy reached new heights.

San Gregorio Magno–

Pope Gregory I restored Rome after the barbarian invasions and established the Papacy as a spiritual and temporal power on the world stage. His epitaph in St. Peter's Basilica acclaims him as a "Consul of God". A consul in ancient Rome was elected to look after the people's interest and the title is a fitting tribute to Gregory's services to the Roman populace as well as his link to the classical past.

At the 6th century drew to a close. Rome, like most of Italy, was in a state of degradation and decay. The 5th century say successive invasions and imperial disintegration. During the next century battles raged between Byzantine forces and Rome's Germanic conquerors throughout the peninsula and even within the city walls. Further invasions followed. Fires, floods, famine, and disease took over where siege and warfare left off.

Against this desolate background there came to the Papacy in the year 590 one of the greatest occupants the throne of St. Peter has even known: Pope Gregory I (590-604) later known as "Gregory the Great". Gregory found the city of Rome crumbling and corrupt, the countryside abandoned and the people suffering from outbreaks of famine and plague. By the end of his pontificate he had relieved social distress and confirmed the papacy as a spiritual and temporal power. He is viewed by historians as a noble (and much more saintly) successor to Roman Emperors and as the creator of what would become the powerful medieval Papacy.

Gregory was born in 540 to an ancient Patrician family. He enjoyed the advantage of wealth and education. His family had already provided two popes: Felix III and Agapitus I). His father, Senator Gordianus, owned a large estate on the Coelian Hill. His mother, Silvia, retired in her later years to a nun-like existence of prayer and meditation on the Aventine. Gregory rapidly advanced to one of Rome's highest civil positions: Prefect of the City. He then renounced everything for the monastic life in 574. He converted his luxurious family villa into the Monastery of St. Andrew and embarked on what he thought would be a life of prayer and austerity in peaceful monasticism.

That was not to be. He was called into service as a Papal Nuncio to Constantinople in 579. Pelagius II called him back to Rome to be his advisor and upon Pelagius' death in 590 Gregory was elected Pope. His personal correspondence proves that he was sincerely unhappy to be taken away from monastic life. Eventually he accepted his promotion as the will of God and undertook the many tasks necessary to improve the life of his flock, his city, territories and his office.

He was canonized soon after his death. He left a huge collection of important writings. He was acclaimed one of the four great 'Doctors of the Church' along with Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome). He also contributed to liturgical reform and is credited with introducing the type of Church music we now call *Gregorian Chant* (said to have been composed in the Baptistry of St.

John Lateran). He was also one of the foremost evangelizing popes and dispatched missionaries to both Germany and Pagan England.

Gregory devoted himself to the needs of the poor, the sick and increasing hordes of pilgrims. There was no longer a central government in Rome and so Gregory reorganized municipal food distribution and established new hospices and relief centers known as *diaconiae*. Finally, he insisted on Papal primacy over both the Western and Eastern Churches. He became the de facto ruler of Italy. In this way Gregory launched the Papacy as the predominant spiritual, cultural and even political force in the West – a position which it inherited from the Roman Empire and which it later exerted throughout most of the Middle Ages.

- The church of S. Gregorio Magno is located on the Coelian Hill across the street from the Palatine Hill. The current facade is a modern addition that hides the ancient origins.
- Along with his monastery (574) he also incorporated the famous library of his great-great-grandfather, Pope Agapitus (535-6) into a study for monks.
- Pope Gregory II (715-31) built a church for Gregory I on the monastery site. This church was completely transformed in the 17th & 18th centuries.
- Today, Mother Theresa's Missionaries of Charity sisters run a center for the young homeless in the gardens beside S. Gregorio.
- Upon entering, head straight to the front of the church to a little room on the far right of the main altar. This is the chapel that was Gregory's own cell! It preserves the stone upon which he slept and, most importantly, his white marble episcopal throne (note the oriental motifs in the seat – a reminder of Gregory's days in Constantinople).
- The larger chapel to the left of the cell was part of Gregory's original monastery. There are carved scenes from Gregory's life on the altar. The altar piece above was done by either Signorelli or Pinturicchio.
- Through a door on the left of the church is the Salviati Chapel with an ancient image of the Virgin. This image is said to have spoken to Gregory and inspired him.
- The mosaic pavement and 16 columns are from an earlier church. Most all else is 18th century.
- There are three oratories located among the cypress trees behind a grilled gate to the left of the church. They represent another (later) moment in history when attempts were made to 'revitalize' the Roman Church and evoke early spirituality in response to Protestantism. In one of these chapels, that of S. Barbara (far left) is an apse statue of Gregory (by N. Cordier, 1562–1612) and in the middle of the room is a stone table to which Gregory brought 12 poor men to feed every day. The table had been in the Lateran Palace where Gregory lived and worked as Pope. He also distributed food to the poor from this very table. In the surrounding art work there is an angel who sits in attendance as Gregory celebrates his daily feast with the poor.
- The middle chapel (oratory) of St. Andrew marks the probable spot of the original Oratory of St. Andrew in Gregory's monastery. It contains frescoes of Domenichino (1581-1641) and Guido Reni.(1575-1642). These are important works for art historians as they show the transitional period from the Counter-Reformation 'edification' style into the Baroque 'emotional' style.

Santa Maria in Cosmedin *– Rome's Byzantine Center*

This church generated two important tasks for the Roman Church after the fall of the Western Empire: services of charity and patronage of the arts.

The traces of S. Maria Cosmedin date to the early days of the Roman Empire. In those times, this area of the Tiber River was known as the *Forum Boarium*, the place of the city livestock and grain market. Archeologists have identified the foundations of the ancient temples dedicated to *Herecules* and *Ceres* (3rd century BC) next to the present site of the church. During the 4th century, the imperial authorities deconsecrated *Ceres* ' sanctuary and turned the loggia into the *Statio Annonai* or headquarters of Rome's food supply organization. During the Empire, the *annonia* had supervised imports of grain and other products and organized distribution to the people (free or at subsidized prices).

In the 6th century, the *Statio* was converted into a *Diaconia*, or Church Relief Center with an oratory within. Quite a few of the ancient columns from the loggia are still to be seen in the present church: four stand in their original position in the left-hand colonnade; others were incorporated into the left wall and both sides of the entrance. We have already described how Pope Gregory I revived imperial food distribution outlets and incorporated them into the *diaconiae*. There were 18 of these deaconates in Rome and S. Maria was the most famous and the most important. Here the poor were fed, the sick cared for, and services provided to the ever-increasing numbers of pilgrims from throughout the Christian world.

Historians tell us that from the earliest ancient times the zone below the Aventine, between the Circus Maximus and the Tiber was inhabited by a large and active Greek community. In the nearby 'sacred area' of the *Forum Boarium*, crowded with temples and altars – the Republican temples of Hercules and Portunus (sometimes described as the temples of Vesta and Fortuna Virilis) can still be seen. Numerous rituals were celebrated there according to Greek cults. (Hercules was a Greek god; Apollo was the Roman god equivalent).

S. Maria in Cosmedin's first name – S. Maria in Schola Graeca – reveals its origin. *Schola*, in fact, originally referred to an association or organization which could be a build for artisans or a community center for a foreign colony. As early as the late 6th century, tradition tells us, the neighborhood's enterprising Greeks had persuaded the authorities to grant them, for their own Chrisitan cult, the oratory in the former *annona*. The site, as mentioned above, also hosted an important Church relief center.

Soon the Greek community began to swell as thousands of refugees, fleeing from Arab invaders and then from the Byzantine iconoclasts, came to settle in Rome. Under Pope Hadrian I (772-95) S. Maria in Schola Graeca was completely rebuilt and enlarged to meet the needs of is expanding congregation who dedicated it to the Virgin "in cosmedin" (variously interpreted as referring to a district in Constantinople, or as a Greek term for decoration or ornament). Many of

the newcomers who fled Asia Minor and Constantinople and settled around S. Maria in Cosmedin were persecuted Greek artists and artisans.

These artists gave Rome magnificent masterpieces: the animals and flowers in S. Prassede's chapel of Zeno, the 'tree of life' in St. Clement's, the Virgin Maria as an Oriental princess in the apse of St. Maria in Trestevere. This is reason to believe that much of this 'Byzantine' splendor had its cradle in this dusky little church of S. Maria in Cosmedin.

The term "Byzantine" comes from "Byzantium", the ancient Greek city on the Bosphorus which the Roman Emperor Constantine rebuilt and renamed as Constantinople in AD 300. Byzantine art was very different from the classical art of the West. Roman classical style strove for naturalism, worldliness, and harmonious simplicity. Oriental art was formalized, transcendental and ornately decorative. Byzantine frescoes and mosaics were characterized by a strict iconography, highly formal structure, shallow pictorial space, immobile figures, and an opulence of gold and rich color.

The 7th century Muslim Arabs who invaded Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and North Africa were desert warriors with an aversion to luxury and, especially, religious imagery (forbidden by Islam). Gifted artisans of the conquered territories – predominantly Greek – made up the first wave of refugees to flow into Rome and pray in the shadows of S. Maria in Cosmedin.

A 2nd exodus surged into the West throughout the 8th and 9th centuries as Byzantine Emperors pursued a ruthless *iconoclast* (the word means breaker of icons) policy and forbid the representation of human iconography in works of art. Previously famous artists of the Byzantine Empire found themselves subject to persecution, torture, and death or exile. The iconoclast wars lasted from 726-843. These masters found comfort with their fellow expatriates in the community of S. Maria in Cosmedin. As this rich art was banned in the East, it flourished in the West.

As the Emperor's successors, Roman Popes now became major patrons of the arts from the 4th century on and Christian art, inspired by spiritual fervor, expanded and diversified. The Church expressed its faith in classical and oriental forms. Under Pope Paschal I (817-824), a remarkable artistic revival – known as the 'Carolingian Renaissance' (because of the generous support received from Charlemagne and his successors) attempted to reflect both the early Roman Church and the magnificence of Byzantium. The dazzling mosaics Paschal commissioned for the churches of S. Cecilia and S. Prassede (especially the chapel of Zeno) could have been the work of refugee-artists who found asylum in S. Maria Cosmedin.

- Unfortunately the passage of time has eroded most of the historical witnesses to the church's ancient history.
- However, the church does have an incomparable atmosphere of peace and simplicity that transports the pilgrim back in time. You can get a very real feel for how the Greek worshippers of 1000+ years ago felt and experienced this space.

- After Hadrian I, the church was further remodeled by Popes Gelasius II and Calixtus II in the 12th century. Restorations in the 19th century, carried out from 1892-99, removed the later baroque facade and neo-classical architectural elements and decor.
- The two worn, fluted columns on the side of the entrance door were taken from the loggia of the *Statio Annonae* and next to these in niches are two black marble stones have been identified as Roman weights used in that ancient inspection station.
- The 12th century marble choir, *pergola* (columns separating the choir from the presbytery), and bishop's throne behind the altar are worth seeing as are the 13th century Gothic altar canopy and the mosaic candlestick (guarded by a very angry lion).
- According to historians, S. Maria in Cosmedin has the earliest 'cosmatesque' pavement to be found in Rome. This type of floor (mosaic) first made its appearance in the work of a group of 12th century medieval artisans from the neighborhood. A disproportionate number of these workers had the name "Cosma" and thus the work came to be known as "Cosmatesque". It was a very popular art form in the 12th and 13th centuries and was the favorite of projects sponsored by the Pope or wealthy cardinals. These floors represent the intricate nature of Islamic art.
- The graceful altar canopy is the work of Deodatus Cosma and dates to 1294.
- In a chapel off to the right aisle is a much venerated 13th century *Theotokos* image of the Virgin.
- In the sacristy is an 8th century mosaic of the Epiphany originally commissioned by John VII in 706 for the first St. Peter's and donated to S. Maria in Cosmedin by Urban VIII when the new basilica was constructed (successfully removed during demolition).
- Beneath the church is the crypt built by Hadrian I into the foundations of the Roman Temple of Ceres.
- Of other interest is the ancient Roman drain-cover with the face of a river god, located beneath the portico and called the *Bocca della Verita* (according to legend it will bite off the hand of a liar!).
- The high bell tower in the Romanesque style dates to the 12th AD.

San Giorgio Velabro – *Ministering to Rome's Poor*

This mysterious church was seriously damaged in a 1993 bomb attack (synchronized with an attack at the Lateran Baptistry) has been restored to its early medieval state. It's origins and functions are similar to those of S. Maria in Cosmedin.

The origins of the church are veiled in ancient legends. One myth holds that it was on this very spot that Rome was born. In ancient times, it is said, the twins Romulus and Remus were washed ashore in a basket to *this marshy lowlands* between the Tiber River and the Palatine Hill, were discovered and nursed by a she-wolf and went on to found the city of Rome. Historians explain the term 'Velabro' as a combination of the Etruscan word *velum*, meaning marsh, and the Latin *aurum* meaning golden. Classical writers such as Horace described the area as swampy, with yellow-colored sand. The hollow was constantly flooded and was indeed a site of fog and mists.

In Republican and Imperial Rome, the Velabrum, just a few steps from the Forum Boarium, was drained and became one of the city's liveliest commercial districts. The area hosted many temples catering to merchants and traders, as well as the residences of the industrious Greek community.

Early Christianity's popular soldier-martyr St. Sebastian was allegedly martyred here in the late 3rd century. A captain of the Praetorian Guard of Diocletian (284-305), Sebastian was shot with arrows and clubbed to death by his fellow officers. His body was thrown into the *Cloaca Maxima* (Rome's main drain) in the Velabrum market, and was recovered by pious Christians of the neighborhood.
Today, a visitor approaching S. Giorgio in Velabro can still find reminders of the Church's shadowy past. The building is surrounded by a broad paved hollow – the earlier Velabrum swamp, sloping from the Palatine down to the Tiber. Nearby, the massive Arch of Janus Quadrifons was used as a covered meeting place by 4th century Roman merchants and shoppers. Adjoining the church, the Arch of the Money-Changers was built in 204 by Velabrum bankers and cattle traders in honor of the Emperor Septimius Severus (193-211).

S. Giorgio in Velabro, like S. Maria in Cosmedin, was one of Rome's 18 *diaconiae* established during and after the 6th century. Most of these have vanished from sight but some, like the church of SS. Nereo e Achilleo and SS. Cosma e Damiano, have merely changed their form and function.

Regarding the origin of the *Diaconiae*, the Apostles, (Acts 6:1-7) had chosen 7 deacons (from the Greek word meaning 'to serve') to help them distribute alms to the poor. Later, the first official deaconates, which were originally monasteries with the specific apostolate of charity and relief, were founded in Egypt in the 4th century and rapidly expanded throughout the East. Byzantine monks who came to Rome probably helped the Church organize its first similar institutions.

According to tradition, S. Giorgio in Velabro had been serving Rome's poor from paleo-Christian times. Excavations carried out in the 18th century revealed a 5th - 6th century monastery (itself built on the foundations of an imperial-era home) with a typical *diaconia* layout: oratory, storage and distribution rooms, and a dormitory. Upon that structure, in 683, Pope Leo II (682-3) built the church that can be seen today. This *diaconia* was officially recognized in the time of Pope Zacharias (741-52) and functioned until around the year 900. In fact, Roman Church records indicate that by the 10th century the monastic *diaconia* had already become diocesan parishes.

Pope Leo II's church was dedicated to San Sebastian, in deference to the site of his martyrdom. The *Cloaca Maxima* is still visible through a grille across from the church portico. In the year 749, Church chronicles relate that Pope Zacharias led a solemn procession from the Lateran Patriarchate (St. John Lateran) to the Velabrum church followed by almost the entire Roman population, all chanting and singing hymns. The occasion was the transfer of a precious relic: part of the skull of St. George. On that occasion the pope changed the dedication of the Church.

St. George was a Christian soldier believed to have been martyred at Lydda (now Lod, site of the Jerusalem airport) during Diocletian's persecutions around 303. His cult was immensely popular in the East where he was called *megalomartyros*, 'the greatest of martyrs'. By the 8th century the Velabrum's prosperous colony of Greek merchants had been flooded by even more Easterners fleeing the Arabs and Byzantine iconoclasts. It was fitting that Pope Zacharias, who came from a Greek family, should give the quarter its own Oriental saint. Furthermore, St. George was the patron of the Byzantine troops stationed nearly (the legend of St. George and the Dragon arose in the later Middle Ages when, especially during the Crusades, the saint personified the ideals of Christian chivalry).

- The church was restored both inside and out by Pope Gregory IV (827-44).
- The bell tower was added in the 13th century with the portico.
- In 1295 the titular Cardinal Jacopo Stefaneschi commissioned the apse mosaic and other decorations.
- The church has such character that it was used in the filming of the movie *Shoes of the Fisherman* since it so closely resembles Rome's early Christian churches.
- The church is irregular, particularly in the right nave (see the wood ceiling). This unusual shape is probably because the church had to be squeezed in between a crowded area of shops, warehouses, and private homes.
- There are some surprising treasures in this church: The apse fresco is by Pietro Cavallini (1273-1321). Christ is surrounded by St. Peter and Mary with the Church's co-patrons St. Sebastian and St. George (with white horse and banner).
- Also, see the little marble relief on the left wall at the back of the church. This Annunciation scene has the usual angel but the recipient of the message has a beard! The figure is believed to be Mary's father, Joachim. In the background the modest Mary peeps from a balcony. In fact, that inconographic scene was used in the Orient, especially in St. George's homeland of Palestine.
- The 12th century marble altar and canopy have 'cosmatesque decorations'.
- Beneath the altar, the confessional contains St. George's cranial bones placed here in the 8th century.
- On the night of July 27, 1993 the Italian mafia set off a powerful bomb which almost completely destroyed the portico and opened a hole to the right of the facade. This was a 'warning' in response to an Italian police roundup and to stern anti-mafia statements made by John Paul II.
- Some famous past titular cardinals of S. Giorgio include Martin V and the 19th century Cardinal Newman!
- St. Giorgio Velabro is the patron church of the Boy Scouts.

Other Churches from this Period...

Santa Maria della Concezione in Campo Marzio – This is an Eastern Antiochene rite Catholic Church founded around 750 by Pope Zacharias for a group of nuns from the Convent of St. Anastasia in Constantinople. The nuns had been forced to flee the persecutions of Emperor Leo III (717-741) who forbade the making of holy images (Iconoclast controversy). The church housed a great number of Byzantine icons, one of which – the 12th to 13th century *Madonna Advocata* – still adorns the high altar. The current building was the result of renovations carried out between 1668 and 1685.

Santa Maria degli Angeli – In answer to the appeals of a Sicilian priest who had a vision of angels in the Baths of Diocletian, Pius IV decided to construct a church dedicated to the angels and Christian martyrs who, according to legend, had built the baths. Michelangelo was entrusted with the project of the basilica which occupies the most monumental spaces in the center of the baths. The building has preserved its antique appearance and it contains many altarpieces which came from the old St. Peter's. Note: The Baths of Diocletian were the largest bath complexes in Rome and could hold 3,000 people. They were erected between 298 and 306 AD. Beginning in the 6th century it was used as a storehouse for grain, wine, oil and religious purposes.

The Middle Age: Papal Politics and Monastic Memories

Violence and Spirituality were the two dominant themes of medieval life and society. Fortress towers raised by warring medieval families stand among the gentle bell towers of churches and monasteries.

The Middle Ages stretched across 1,000 years from the late 5th to the early 15th centuries. Rome was a battlefield where Popes contested anti-popes, Roman barons fought among themselves with the Papacy, and lines were drawn between supporters of the Pope and those of the German Emperors. Popes were kidnapped, exiled, elected and deposed at the will of powerful Roman families. Papal prestige suffered from a string of corrupt and mercenary Pontiffs; at one point in the early 10th century there had been 8 popes in 8 years and most of these were murdered.

The Middle Ages were also a time of profound spirituality. Monasteries and convents kept alive culture and learning throughout centuries of warfare. In the 13th century, new monastic orders brought about a true spiritual regeneration for the faithful of the Church. The Franciscan order, founded by Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) gave the world a shining example of Christian poverty and Christian charity. The Dominicans founded by St. Dominic (1170-1221) defended Catholic orthodoxy throughout Europe. Other religious orders, such as the Augustinians and Carmelites appeared on the scene as well. Rome hosted several important monastic centers in the High Middle Ages (13th - 15th centuries).

Medieval Europe, and the Roman Church, was characterized by the struggle between medieval popes and emperors. According to the Papal theory of Christian society, eternal salvation was more important than worldly possessions, spiritual authority took precedence over temporal power, and secular rulers were thus subservient to the Pope as God's representative on earth.

When Charlemagne (742-814) revived the Roman Empire of the West on Christmas Day in 800 in St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Leo III (795-816) asserted spiritual over temporal authority by placing the imperial crown on his head. Later, Pope Gregory VII (1073-85) in one of the most dramatic events of the Middle Ages, compelled Emperor Henry IV (1050-1106) to do public penitence by kneeling barefoot in the snow before the pope at Canossa, Tuscany, in January 1077. This image was recalled for centuries as a symbol of imperial submission to spiritual sovereignty. (Note: Henry did get his revenge and imprisoned Gregory VII in Castel Sant'Angelo. Robert Guisard was called in to 'free' the pope and in the process plundered Rome destroying several ancient churches.)

During the period of the Crusades (late 11th through the 13th centuries) the Popes were able (intermittently) to lead Western Christendom in a vast effort to reconquer the Holy Land. For a while the Roman Church was a unifying influence in a cohesive Christian society and this was a powerful stimulus for art and culture of every type.

Papal supremacy is said to have reached its height in the 13th century under Innocent III (1198-1216). Innocent made the Papacy a force to be reckoned with in international affairs (he decided

the succession of kings and emperors and intervened with European monarchs in matters of marriage and morals). Yet the diversion of the 4th Crusade to the capture of Constantinople and Innocent's annihilation of Protestant Cathars in southern France were black marks against Innocent's pontificate. After the 13th century the Papacy began to decline.

In the early 14th century a series of French popes moved the Papal court to Avignon, France. There, the pontiffs took up residence for almost 7 decades (1305-78) while the Holy City of Rome sank into a period of anarchy and decay.

During the Middle Ages in Rome, craftsmen and artists created sparkling mosaics on church apses, walls and pavements. Marble canopies with pointed arches and delicate spires were raised over altars and tombs. Not many of these medieval marvels survive to today but what is left is truly wonderful.

SS. Quattro Coronati (Four Crowned Saints) – *Popes vs. Emperors*

The secret treasure of SS. Quattro Cornonati is its cloister – one of the most peaceful and beautiful in Rome. Approached from Via dei Querceti ('street of the oaks', a reminder that in medieval times this was a countryside), the church presents an imposing edifice of high walls and battlement towers. The truncated belfry is 9th - 12th century and is more suited for defensive purposes than for ringing bells.

This is *Rome's only surviving fortified abbey*. In the late Middle Ages, the abbey was sometimes used as a refuge for Popes fleeing conspiracies and conflicts in the nearby Lateran Palace. It was also a protected hospice for important visitors to the Papal court. (In both art and architecture, SS. Quattro Coronati speaks of a troubled and dangerous phase of Church history.

This church figures prominently in the legend of *Pope Joan*. For a scholarly and rather decisive discussion of this medieval legend, see the August/September issue of *U.S. News and World Report* from 2000.

Upon entry, the visitor is immediately immersed in medieval ambiance. In a small vestibule to the right of the church is the amazing little chapel of S. Sylvester. The visitor must ring a bell to accept a key from a wooden turntable which opens from within the wall. A heavy door will grind open, lights go on, and a series of Byzantine frescoes become visible around the top of the chapel. These frescoes illustrate the legend of how Constantine (306-37) was cured of leprosy by Pope St. Sylvester (314-35) and other miraculous events during the Popes reign. The significance of these frescoes lies in their thematic content and the date of their execution.

The paintings were completed and consecrated in the year 1246. They make a clear statement on the Church and its political situation. This is immediately after the time of Innocent III who had Frederick II elected Emperor (the Pope's successors then had him excommunicated for threatening actions towards the Church). By 1246, when the Sylvester Chapel was consecrated, the power struggle between the Papacy and the Emperor was once more in full swing. In 1244 Innocent IV, pressed by imperial forces, fled to Lyon where in 1245 he also attempted to depose

and excommunicate Frederick. Times had changed. Papal prestige had suffered. *The Church needed a mythical account to justify Papal supremacy over imperial ambitions and that is what we find in this small chapel – the 'Donation of Constantine.'*

The relationship between the Christian Emperor the Pope exalts spiritual power over temporal power in no uncertain terms. The cycle relates Constantine's recovery from leprosy through Sylvester's intervention, the Emperor's Baptism, and various miracles by which the Pope astounds the population. *In one panel, the Emperor relinquishes his throne to Pope Sylvester and is in the process of offering the pope a new type of crown.* In the next, the Emperor (on foot) humbly leads the Pope (on horseback) in triumph through the city. The political message is clear: The Papacy has ultimate authority over Church and Empire.

The name of the basilica has been a source of controversy. The four Roman soldiers (according to tradition: Severus, Severinus, Victorinus and Carpophorus) received the crown of martyrdom under Diocletian (284-305) for refusing to sacrifice to the pagan god Aesculapius. Five centuries later the martyrs' relics were brought from a cemetery outside Rome and interred in the basilica along with five other martyrs from the same period (Claudius, Nicostratus, Castor, Sempranianus and Simplicius) from Pannonia (modern Hungary), who were martyred for refusing to sculpt a statue of the same god, Aesculapius.

The basilica triumphantly continues to honor all nine of its supposed patrons. Behind the apse, seven panels tell the story of the sculptor-saints; four frescoes narrate the *Glory of All the Saints in Heaven* across the apsidal dome (early 17th century). The martyr's relics are contained in four urns in a 9th century crypt below the altar.

Different versions of the martyr's legends are found throughout the basilica complex. For centuries, most Roman stone carvers preferred to have their shops near the basilica. Important sculptors such as Maderno, Bernini and Algardi belonged to the SS. Quattro Coronati guild. Even today, the *marmorari* (marble workers) meet every year on November 8 to celebrate the feast of their patron saints in the S. Sylvester Chapel.

- There was a church on this site by the end of the 5th century dedicated to the 4 martyred soldiers (probably built in the time of Pope Melchiades, 311-14). For several centuries the basilica was referred to as the *Titulus Aemilianae* referring to the early Christian family who owned the property and allowed its use for worship.
- In the 9th century Pope Leo IV (847-55) collected the relics of all nine saints here and had the church extensively restored and embellished.
- In the 11th century the basilica became the victim of imperial-Papal struggle. In 1084 Gregory VII (1073-85), threatened by besieging armies sent by Emperor Henry IV (1073-85, whom the pope forced into humiliation) called to his aid Robert Guiscard and his Norman soldiers. After routing the imperial forces the Southern marauders laid sack to the city, burning Leo's basilica almost to the ground.
- The basilica was rebuilt (as was the nearby S. Clemente) by Pope Paschal II (1099-1118) in the early 12th century but on a much smaller scale. In fact, the present basilica is just

about ½ the size of the Leo IV's. Leo's nave became the entire church; the left aisle was made into a cloister while the right aisle was used for construction of the convent refectory. Paschal's construction left the original presbytery intact, however, which renders it out of proportion with the rest of the church.

- 5 columns embedded in the outside right wall of the present courtyard are a testament to the church's shrinking structure (and dwindling papal funds).
- Paschal also constructed the upper *matronea*, or 'enclosed women's galleries' above the nave of the church.
- The church was restored again under Martin V (1417-31) and given a carved wooden roof in 1580 by King Henry of Portugal who had earlier been the basilica's titular cardinal.
- The last restorations were done by Prof. Munoz who was Rome's superintendent of monuments in the 1930's and tried to return many Roman churches (including S. Sabina) to their original state.
- Access to the medieval cloister is gained by ringing a small bell in the basilica's left aisle. This opens onto a world of unexpected beauty and peace. The cloister was built by renowned medieval (12th & 13th century) marble craftsmen who worked in S. Maria in Cosmedin in honor of their martyred patrons.

S. Maria in Aracoeli –

S. Maria in Aracoeli was erected over the site of the ancient Roman Capitol and rises above the ruins of the temple to the god Juno Moneta (home of the early Roman mint and hence our word for 'money'). The transformation of this site from a pagan temple to a Christian church was legitimized by an ancient legend.

According to legend, the Emperor Augustus, disturbed by rumors that the Senate was about to honor him as a god, consulted the Tiburtine sibyl who prophesied the descent from the skies of 'the King of the Ages'. As she spoke, the Emperor saw a vision of the Virgin standing on an altar in dazzling white and holding the baby Jesus in her arms (according to a later interpretation). He heard a voice which said: 'This is the altar of the Son of God.' The Emperor immediately raised an altar on that spot, the Ara Coeli, or 'altar of the heavens.'

This legend comes from Rome's first guidebook, the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae* written in the 12th century. Although the guidebook is full of popular inventions, the church itself does offer a photograph of John Malalas' 8th century chronicle which recites the same story citing an even earlier (5th century) Byzantine historian. (The event is represented in a 12th century altar in the left transept.) Furthermore, one of the classical columns in the central nave bears the inscription '*a cubiculo Augustorum'* (from Augustus' bedchamber) and seems to have come from the Emperor's private residence. A 13th century altar, long believed to be Augustus' original construction, recounts the story on its stone slabs and displays in a porphyry urn above what are said to be the remains of St. Helena, mother of Constantine. In 16th century frescoes, the Emperor and his prophesying sibyl take their place among the angels and saints.

- A church rapidly grew up around the Ara Coeli.
- In 574 the site housed a monastery of Eastern-rite monks (in the late 6th century Rome was governed by Byzantine exarchs).
- From the 9th - 13th centuries the church and monastery belonged to the Benedictines. Throughout the early Middle Ages Rome's patrician families fought each other and Pope's followers in city streets. Emperors intermittently besieged the city walls; the Aracoeli monastery was a haven of scholarship and prayer.
- In the 13th century Innocent IV (1243-54) ceded to complex to the Franciscan Order which had been recognized by his predecessor, Innocent III (1198-1216). The Franciscans were already bringing about a spiritual renewal among Christians in cities and countryside. In Rome, they rebuilt the Aracoeli complex and made it a center of medieval culture and politics.
- The Monastery was strategically located next door to the medieval headquarters of the 'restored' Roman Republic, or Commune, which the city's citizens had proclaimed in 1143. As in ancient times senators had met in the Temple of Jupiter (immediately adjoining the Temple of Juno Moneta) so throughout the Middle Ages medieval 'Senators and Prefects' met to discuss politics and decide municipal affairs in the now-vanquished Franciscan cloister.
- It was Cola di Rienzo, the self-proclaimed Tribune of the Roman People, aspiring to restore Rome to its imperial glory, who first ascended the Aracoeli staircase after it had been built in 1348 by a vote of the people (in thanks for deliverance from the Black Death).
- Cola di Rienzo was later lynched as a demagogue in the place where his statue now stands toward the base of the Aracoeli ramp!
- Petrarch, the 14th century poet who helped revive interest in the ancient world, received the laurel wreath on the Capitoline Square.
- S. Maria in Aracoeli is still designated as the church of the Senate and the Roman people. Directly across from it, to one side, is the Capitol, or Campidogloio, the seat of the Roman city government. A pair of contrasting staircases leads to the church on the one side and the Capitol piazza on the other (contrasting spiritual and temporal powers).
- It is a typical early Christian basilica of a nave with two side aisles. The columns were all taken from previous ruins, each one different from the next.
- The ceiling painting (1572-1586) commemorates the victory of Lepanto when the papal fleet helped defeat the Turks checking Turkish (Islamic) expansion in the Mediterranean.
- The collection of art and architectural treasures include a Middle Age sad-faced Byzantine Madonna in the main altar which legend claims was carried by Pope St. Gregory the Great in the year 594 through the streets of Rome and brought about the city's deliverance from a terrible plague.
- Arnolfo di Cambio (1254-1303) executed a Madonna and a sepulchral monument in the right transverse nave. In the left transept another gothic style tomb by Giovanni di Cosma honors a scholarly Franciscan Superior (Cardinal Matteo d'Acquasparta, d. 1302), mentioned in Dante's *Paradisio* (canto 12, verse 124).
- The cosmatesque pavement is not particularly beautiful but it is all authentic 13th century!
- There are numerous tributes to Francis and Franciscan saints (12 female and 12 male above the columns).

- The relics of St. Helena are dominated by a 1972 bronze statue by a Franciscan artist.
- Other words include a tombstone signed by Donatello (c. 1386-1466) and other works by Pietro Cavallini (c. 1250-1330).
- The church's greatest treasure is a series of frescoes on the life of St. Bernardine of Siena painted by Pinturicchio (1453-1513) in the first chapel on the right. These are some of the most beautiful in Rome.
- On February 1, 1994 a tragedy struck when the church's treasured icon of the *Bambino Gesu* was stolen. Through the ages, this Santo Bambino was an attraction to the church (carry-over from the vision of Augustus?). Today visitors pray for the return of the ancient image. The original was carved by a Franciscan monk in 15th century Jerusalem and transported to Rome upon the orders of the Franciscan curia whose headquarters were then located in this church. According to legend the statue was carved from the wood of a Gethsemane olive tree and was miraculously painted by an angel as its Franciscan creator slept. The statue was thrown overboard during its voyage to Europe and finally landed at the feet of the Franciscan monk who had been waiting anxiously on the shores of Livorno! In Rome, until its theft, the Santo Bambino was credited with miracles through the centuries. It was taken to hospitals, etc. Because of the Bambino's 'services' to the people of Rome, Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) ordered his coronation which took place on May 2, 1897. Every year the Bambino is a the center of Rome's favorite Christmas ritual: During Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve he is unveiled and paraded to the Nativity crib in the left side nave where he receives tributes from the children of Rome (letters, poems, etc.).

Santa Maria Sopra Minerva *– Rome's only Gothic Church*

This is Rome's *only* truly Gothic church! Romans tended to avoid the style since it was considered 'out of character' with their ancient heritage. The current facade of the church was built in 1453 and welcomes the pilgrim to a very different interior!

Out front of this church, across the street from the Pantheon, is a renaissance oddity that catches the eye, an obelisk rising from the saddle of an elephant. The obelisk was carved in Egypt in the 6th century BC, found in Roman excavations in 1665 and mounted on a carved marble elephant two years later by suggestion of Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

Known as the church of *Holy Mary above Minerva*, the edifice gets its name from the belief that the ruins beneath it are those of a temple to Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, arts, and war. Pompey the Great (106-48 BC) constructed the temple (50 BC) in thanks for victories in Asia. Nearby, in ancient times, there were other temples dedicated to other pagan goddesses, including a shrine to the popular Oriental nature deity, Isis.

It was above the ruins of Minerva's temple that Pope Zacharias (741-52) built the first church here which he dedicated to Mary. Zacharias' structure has completely disappeared however.

The current church was erected by Dominicans in 1280 after receiving the property from Pope Alexander IV (1254-61); this is the oldest Gothic church in Rome. Much history of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is associated with it. The church assumed particular prestige in the Counter-Reformation when the Dominicans were entrusted with the work of the Inquisition. Their world-headquarters were located next door. Note the medallions in the nave's upper portion which depict Dominican saints. Also, there is a richly decorated chapel of St. Dominic. Many of the interior frescoes depict the adventures of Dominican missionaries.

It seems that two gifted Dominican monks, Sisto and Ristoro, who had worked on the Gothic church of S. Maria Novella in Florence, began the present structure (1280) during the pontificate of Nicholas III (1277-80). It was completed in 1370 and transformed in later periods. Finally it was 'restored' in the 19th century. Unfortunately the restorers covered the pillars and dolumns with fake marble and the walls and vaults with neo-gothic painting (making it impossible to know what it looked like in the days of Sisto and Ristoro).

Another reason why this is the only Gothic church in Rome is because the papacy was experiencing an all-time low point during the 'peak' period of Gothic architecture. The pope, of course, was the city's principal patron. In fact, violent factionalism and empty coffers had forced a series of French-nationality popes to flee to Avignon where they remained for 7 decades (while this church was being built!). In Rome, anti-popes, false popes, and rival Roman families fought fiercely among themselves. Roman architects, whose main benefactors had deserted them, ceased construction and the city became a veritable slum. At its low point, Rome's population dropped to a mere 15,000 people. It is only because of the powerful and well-financed Dominican patronage that Rome did get this one Gothic church.

Interred under the main altar is the Dominican nun St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380), who pleaded successfully for the return of the papacy from Avignon to Rome. She was one of the most influential women in the history of the Catholic Church. She was named a Patron of Italy in 1939 (along with Francis of Assisi) and a Doctor of the Church in 1970. The saint died at the age of 33 on April 29, 1380 in a house at the nearby 14 Via Santa Chiara. She was canonized by the Sienese Pope Pius II in 1461. Popes have honored her memory by making a commemorative procession to her tomb each year on the feast of the Annunciation. Her sepulchre is below the main altar. The reposing statue of the saint was sculpted in 1430 by Isaia of Pisa and is visible inside a golden casket. In 1630 Cardinal Antonio Barberini had the room where St. Catherine died transported piece by piece (walls only, the ceiling remained) to S. Maria Sopra Minerva and installed as a memorial chapel at the back of the church.

Also entombed here in the Frangipane Chapel, to the left of St. Catherine's altar shrine, is the eminent Dominican painter Fra Angelico (1387-1455). Nicholas V (1447-55), one of the first popes to actually reside in the Vatican, invited Fra Angelico from Florence to Rome to decorate his private Vatican chapels. While in Rome, Fra Angelico resided at the neighboring Dominican convent where he died a peaceful death.

Magnificent frescoes by Filippino Lippi (1488-1493) adorn a side chapel known as the *Carafa Chapel*. This is S. Maria Sopra Minerva's most famous work of art. On the right wall is a

depiction of the 'triumph' of St. Thomas Aquinas over paganism and heresy. On the altar is Lippi's *Annunciation* while his *Assumption* and *Saints in Glory* fill the wall above. It is impossible to describe the beauty of these paintings – they must be seen. The funerary monument of Paul IV (1555-9) stands on left hand chapel wall. The Carafa Pope was the Great Inquisitor of Rome's Counter Reformation; he was responsible for instituting the *Index of Forbidden Books* and for confining Jews to the ghettos in Rome and other Italian cities.

Other funerary monuments include the two Medici popes, Clement VII (1523-34) of the 1425 Holy Year and Leo X (1513-1521) who are buried in the choir area behind the altar. Two other popes were elected in conclaves held in the church, Eugenius III (1431-1447) and the pope of the 1450 Holy Year, Nicholas V. (The funerary monuments of Clement VII and Leo X by Antonio da Sangallo the Younger (1536-1541) are in the Carafa Chapel (with the Lippi frescoes)).

Of peripheral interest is the statue of the Risen Christ by Michelangelo (1519-1520). The original was unclothed and Romans historically touched the statue for virility which eventually required replacement of the relevant parts. Now clothed, such a concern passes (either that or virtue has increased.....).

Signs of Papal Power and Prestige: (St. John Lateran)

The Imperial Pope

A bit of history is in order here: When Constantine founded this church he was already moving the capital of the Roman Empire to Constantinople. This move left a vacuum of power in the city of Rome itself. This vacuum was eventually filled by the Pope. By the 6th century, the popes had begun to act as chief city administrators. During the 8th century they were completely freed from Byzantine control and in 800 Leo III secured Frankish protection for Italy (Rome) under the tribal warlord Pepin and his son Charlemagne ('Pepin' was also the name of Charlemagne's son).

The famous ***Donation of Constantine*** was written at this time (a fictitious report claiming to be from the 4th century and granting the Popes sovereignty over Rome, all Italy, several Eastern Patriarchates and the empire's western regions to Sylvester who had effected Constantine's death-bed baptism). During the 8th century, the Pope's began to re-shape the Lateran in imitation of imperial palaces (the Byzantines were no longer able to help Rome). These imperial remnants were everywhere. For example, the bishop's throne is installed where, in earlier civil structures, the seat of the emperor existed.

Other implications of an 'imperial' presence include the following:

- The pope used a ***'white horse'***
- When the pope returned from a voyage, the cardinals sang the ***Laudes*** (Praises) until he paused on an enormous porphyry disk at the foot of the main portal of the palace and ascended the grand staircase (an imperial rite).
- Beginning with Pope Hadrian I (772-95), popes have assembled an eclectic collection of ancient artifacts in bronze and stone. This gives the impression of "***trophies***". These objects also imply some connection to ancient Rome
- The bronze 'She Wolf' (5th century BC Etruscan), ***Lupa*** is present as such a trophy. She nurtured Rome's legendary founders, Romulus and Remus. The *Lupa* was made into a fountain when it was brought to the Lateran in the 8th century; the water symbolized the judge 'washing his hands'.
- The stairs just beyond the *Lupa* were called the ***'Stairs of Pilate'***, an allusion to the stairs that Jesus ascended to his trial.
- Bonafice VIII had another bronze brought in from the portico and had it imbedded in an altar: the *Lex Vespasiani* (Law of the Emperor Vespasian [69-79]). This document may have offended the pope because it verified the secular ruler's entitlement to imperial power in 69 AD.
- The most obvious antique work that stood here in antiquity was the great statue in gilt bronze of ***Marcus Aurelius*** (mistakenly believed to be Constantine) who stood in the middle of the courtyard. His hand is raised in either pacification or admonition.

- Stone lions from Egypt (taken by Roman soldiers) support this great statue. Many statues like this may have adorned the city of Rome and other imperial cities. For example: Charlemagne took from Ravenna the statue of Theodoric (475-526, Ostrogoth King) and had it installed in his new capital of Aachen. Note: It is <u>because of the ancient lions that once supported the statue of Marcus Aurelius in the Campo Lateranese that there are now lion statues at the base of the stairs of the Campodoglio</u>!
- It is important to remember that a similar imperial palace was being constructed in Constantinople and it was adorned with a similar monument of the Emperor Justinian. Setting the ancient bronze in front of the Patriarchum was the archaeological counterpart to writing the ***Donation of Constantine!***: it established the ancient, imperial roots of the pope's sovereignty over the Western empire.
- The statue was understood as a symbol of justice since the 'raised hoof' was understood to triumph over evil. Thus, the Roman prefect named Peter, who had plotted against Pope John XIII (965-72) was executed by being hanged by his hair from 'Constantine's Horse'.

- Also, the ***Spinario*** ('Thorn Puller') was established in this space since the time of Gregory II (715-31). It is an ancient Greek statue of a youth pulling a thorn from his foot. The interpretation is this: in depictions of Christ riding into Jerusalem at the start of his Passion a boy picking a thorn is often included to evoke the Lord's pain that will follow his entry. The statue was placed amid other emblems of papal power in the palace where the pope, riding his white horse, enters his palace upon his returns from journeys – especially during Holy Week.
- Other signs of papal claims of imperial authority include Innocent II (1130-43) burying himself in ***Hadrian's sarcophagus*** which was carried all the way from Castel Sant' Angelo.
- Also, the two '***Papal Thrones'***. These were actually given to the pope by the emperor! They are actual 'Imperial Thrones'.
- The ***Benedictional Loggia*** of the north entrance: (from a 17th century watercolor)
- Erected by Boniface VIII for his elevation to the papacy.
- Flanked by statues of Peter and Paul (Constantine donated the palace to thier successor, Sylvester).
- <u>Note the fresco of Boniface on the pillar of the Lateran. Very accurate except: the papal canopy is rendered as a flat awning supported by two porphyry and two green serpentine marble columns. This form was taken NOT from the actual cusped structure in which the pope appears but from ancient images of the emperor appearing in public! It is a sign of Boniface's earthly sovereignty.</u>
- Also, note that Boniface is in the company of his immediate predecessor, Pope Celestine V (1294), the saintly hermit who had ruled for a mere 6 months before retiring! The Pope appears quite the opposite of the 'servile figure' proclaimed in the text the deacon holds to his side: *Bonifacius, Episcopus servus servorum dei* (Bishop Boniface, Servant of the Servants of God).
- The ***<u>Triclinium of Leo III</u>***. <u>As you look across the street to the north east of the basilica, you will notice a large mosaic apse facing the basilica. This was originally part of the patriarchate (now destroyed to make way for the street)</u>. In fact, it represents one of the

'imperial artifacts' of the popes. It was built by Leo III to serve as a large audience hall and banquet hall.

The current apse shows the mission to the apostles in the center (note that Peter alone turns to lead the mission in the world [carrying the *standard* of the cross]). Also, Peter invests Leo III and Charlemagne on the apsidal arch! (Note Leo's & Charlemagne's square halo – Leo receives the *palia* and Charlemagne receives the *vexillum [military commander]*). The other side of the apsidal arch depicts Christ flanked by Peter and Paul. See the symbolism: While the Pope dines below at a great marble table, in the presence of cardinals and other officials, it is statement that Rome is heir to the legacy of the chief apostles and its bishop, the pope, is superior to all others.

Note: this was one of the first structures built after the breech with the Byzantine emperors of Constantinople in the 8th century. The hall built by Leo III mirrored the *decanneacubita* (Hall of the Nineteen Niches) in the imperial palace of Constantinople! Another was built at the Vatican palace across the Tiber. To build this structure was a statement of the status of the 'new papacy'. During the century before 752, many popes were Greeks who were very loyal to the Byzantine emperor. After that time, the papacy shifted allegiance from the Eastern empire and allied itself, instead, with Western rulers. Leo III's coronation of Charlemagne in 800 marked the definitive break.

The Sancta Sanctorum – The New Tabernacle

The is probably one of the most 'unimpressive' buildings in Rome and yet one of the most important! This building was built to be the 'New Tabernacle' of Christianity. The history of *Sancta Sanctorum* is immersed with a theology of Rome as the 'new Jerusalem.' In fact, Rome itself had 12 gates installed in its walls to mirror the 12 gates (portals) of Jerusalem itself!

This building was originally part of the Lateran palace that extended all the way to the basilica but was substantially destroyed in the fire of 1308.

Originally built by Nicholas III (1277-80) (after an earthquake destroyed the previous chapel honoring St. Lawrence), it emulates some very important predecessors like the Desert Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. In fact, the dimensions of the chapel itself seem to be determined by the size of the ***"Tabernacle Tent"*** which covered the ***Ark of the Covenant***. This size may have been influenced by the fact that the *Sancta Sanctorum* originally housed not only the relics of Christ and the saints but also the Temple implements captured by Vespasian and Titus in 70 AD: Aaron's rod, the 7 branched candlestick (***menorah***), the altar of incense, the jar of mannah, and the shew-bread table.

The pope has replaced the Levites, however, in that he alone enters the holiest precinct where he mediates with God on behalf of a new Chosen People.

The physical inspiration of the building may be more immediate. The *frankish* influence (evident in the windows) betrays a certain French style (pointed windows). This building may be the first evidence of this architecture in Rome. ***The ultimate inspiration for this building may have been the Ste. Chapelle in Paris, the palatine chapel of King Louis IX ('St. Louis', 1214-70) which was completed in 1248.*** Thirty years before dedicating the *Sancta Sanctorum*, when Pope Nicholas was still Giovanni Gaetani Orsini, the young cardinal had resided in France at the very time when the Ste. Chapelle was dedicated. King Louis' chapel was also a *Sancta Sanctorum* in that it housed relics of Christ's thorns, part of the cross on which Christ died, one of the nails that fixed him to the cross, a piece of the lance that pierced hi sside, and the image of his face miraculously transferred to cloth.

Another source for Nicholas' chapel may have been the ***Pharos Chapel*** of Constantinople, the palatine chapel of the Byzantine emperors. It, too, was considered a *Sancta Sanctorum* and it derived its special sanctity from housing the most precious of all relics: the tablets of the law handed by God to Moses and the *Mandylion* and *Keramion*, cloth and clay 'tablets' bearing Christ's miraculously imprinted likeness.

***Clearly, Nicholas III wanted a chapel for the most precious papal treasures that was on a plane with those of his two rival counterparts in France and Byzantium.

Interior:

- On the wall within the low entryway is an inscription that lists the great relics of this holy place:
- Pieces of the True Cross
- Bread from the Last Supper
- John the Baptist's coat
- St. Matthew's shoulder
- Bartholomew's chin
- **The heads of Sts. Peter and Paul, Agnes and Euphemia.
- Other items
- The greatest focus of the interior is the ***Archeropita***. The old papal chapel once housed the *archeiropoieta* – an image of the Savior "*not made by human hand*", and the most important collection of relics of the Roman martyrs. (Note: The famed *archeiropoieta* image is now in the Vatican Museums.) That is what gives this private chapel its historical sacredness. Two porphyry columns support the architrave of the choir which bears the inscription ***Non est in toto sanctior orbe locus*** *"There is no holier place in the whole world".* The *archeiropoieta* is said to have been started by St. Luke and completed by an angel.

  Every year on August 15th and in times of great calamity, the Popes would carry it in procession to Santa Maria Maggiore to "visit" image of the Virgin, the *Salus populi Romani*. The reason this procession takes place on August 15th is because the Feast of

the Assumption is the time when Jesus 'meets' Mary and welcomes her into heaven. Thus, the two icons 'meet' in a solemn procession on that feast day!

- This chapel is called the "holiest place in Rome" for the relics it contained. This series of buildings was called the patriarchate.
- An inscription inside the chapel credits the craftsman: MAGISTER COSMATUS FECIT HOC OPUS, *Master Cosmatus made this work* – the precedent of 'crediting' the authorship was cone in the Jewish Tabernacle where the great artist Bazelel was mentioned (Ex 31:1-6).
- The Popes were the primary patrons of the Cosmatesque artisans who are known for their intricate inlays of marble.
- Note that many of the materials used in the floor were intentionally taken from pagan Roman imperial buildings – another demonstration of the usurpation of its power. The round disks in the floor are cross-cuts of porphyry and serpentine columns!
- The style of the windows, *Opus Frangicenum*, seems to have been borrowed from the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi which was a place of international pilgrimage by now. Remember the Nicholas III had been 'protector' of the Franciscan order before becoming pope.
- The four columns in the corners of the room reaffirm the 'tent' atmosphere of the space. The canopy, painted in a deep blue sky and filled with stars, symbolizes the firmament which marks the boundary between earth and heaven.
- Hovering in this celestial space are the ox, eagle, lion, and man envisioned by Ezekiel and John and understood as the symbols of the 4 Evangelists. Each of these symbols holds a book with a representative quotation.
- The corners of the upper story contain a series of birds. Some are black birds (representing earth-bound souls), white birds (representing human spirits freed from earthly confinement) and plants (eternal life offered by Christ and his church of saints).
- See the 4 windows and the figural representations on either side of three of them – five scenes within the lunettes below the ceiling vault recount the martyrdoms of the saints whose relics are preserved here: Peter, Paul, Agnes, Stephen and Lawrence. The instruments of their martyrdom are clearly visible. Their sacrifice is rewarded with spiritual ascent.
- In two of the scenes, the ones relating to Peter and Paul, the martyrdoms are explicitly taking place in Rome. For that very reason, Rome is made sacred by the martyrdoms of the chief apostles. (In the background of Peter's crucifixion can be seen the 'Pyramid of Romulus' and Castel Sant'Angelo; Behind Paul is the basilica of S. Paolo.)
- To the right of S. Agnes is a depiction of St. Nicholas – a special and personal reason has motivated this choice of subject! The papacy long venerated Nicholas of Bari but the saint is depicted here because he was the namesake of the pope who commissioned the chapel's paintings. For that reason, what is depicted here is not St. Nicholas' death but rather the best known episode of his life: helping a nobleman's daughters avoid having to enter prostitution.
- On the east wall is a new Nicholas: Pope Nicholas who like his namesake proffers a dowry but of another sort – the Sancta Sanctorum (this very chapel). Paul ushers the Pope forward and Peter helps to support the Sancta Sanctorum. On the other side of the

window (separation between heaven and earth) Christ is seated on his throne and extends his right hand toward Nicholas and his offering. Nicholas hopes that by building this chapel he might bridge that gap!

- There was a curtain which originally separated the rest of the chapel from its most holy place: the shallow rectangular apse of the Sancta Sanctorum.
- This is the area which houses many of the relics figured in the outer chamber and other sacred remnants as well.
- This is the 'Holy of Holies' proper where the High Priest should enter alone. It is here that the pope celebrates Mass. Heavy bronze doors locked with a sturdy bolt and decorated with portraits in relief of Paul and Peter close off the space between the piers.
- Behind these doors is the 'Ark of the Covenant', a cypress chest made in the 8th century. The chest itself was considered the sancta sanctorum and remains the heart of Nicholas' new building.
- Inside are objects brought from Palestine. Their relocation to the cypress chest inside the altar of the Sancta Sanctorum effects a transferal from the Holy Land of the Jews to the new Christian land of Rome!
- In one reliquary are actual bits of the Holy Land itself piously gathered by a 6th century pilgrim at the important sites: stones from Bethlehem, the Jordan River, Golgotha, the Mount of Olives, Zion and elsewhere. Each is carefully labelled as to place of origin.
- The outside of the box contains symbols of Christ and the inside contains scenes which narrate the significance of the places which give the stones their meaning: Nativity, Baptism, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension.
- This chapel is particularly rich in relics of the True Cross – not surprising since the Sancta Sanctorum is a station for the Good Friday Liturgy.

On the ceiling directly above the altar four angels carry a wreathed portrait of Christ to heaven, demonstrating in imagery itself the transition from this world to the next. It is an old convention used to represent Christ's ascent. Here the two angels at the back stand almost on the cornice while the other two are already in flight. Thus, from the perspective of the pope celebrating Mass, the disk bearing Christ seems to float away.

As mentioned earlier, the most important relic of the chapel is the *Acheropita* which was reputedly began by St. Luke and finished by an angel. The Emperor Titus (79-81), it is said, brought the *Acheropita* along with other spoils out of Jerusalem when he conquered the sacred city. In fact, Titus' father, Vespasian, is reputed to have been cured by this icon!

Thus, like the other treasures, the *Acheropita* was meant to 'transfer' to Rome the sanctity of the Holy Land. It is venerated, locked in a cupboard in the back wall, framed by porphyry slabs, and secured behind heavy iron gates. In this arrangement, Christ rests his feet in the physical world, specifically in the Holy Land, where he had lived his earthly life (made present through the box of stones and soil) bu this head, repeated in mosaic overhead, penetrates the material heaven and enters the spiritual world above. For liturgical reasons, the *Acheropita* was 'washed' by the pope during various ceremonies. This repeated washing has in fact removed most of the original

image. It is probably datable to the 7th century. And has been encased in a silver covering which reveals only the face.

Entering the apse of the Sancta Sanctorum, the pope thus fulfills the duties of the Old Testament high priest, offering prayers of expiation on behalf of the Chosen People to God enthroned on the mercy seat.

The Renaissance *– Power and Patronage*

By 1420 both the Avignon Papacy and the Great Schism were over. The papacy had returned to a rejuvenated Rome and greeted the new era with open arms – and pocketbooks! A series of Roman Pontiffs set about securing and extending Papal territories and replenishing the Papal coffers. By dint of several decisive political (and even military) victories, and copious revenues from pilgrims streaming back into Rome, the Popes became more powerful and wealthier than ever before.

The new era was called the *Renaissance*, which literally means 'rebirth'. After medieval warfare, plagues, famines, etc. the Western world was coming back to life. The Renaissance first emerged in the prosperous Italian city states. Florence became the capital of art thanks to the Medici patronage. Finally, the powerful popes attracted artists back to Rome.

The steady growth of urban society and a revived interest in the classics of ancient Greece and Rome were two important stimuli for this vibrant cultural renewal. Cities were more secure and open to new ideas than the lonely castles of feudal countrysides. Humanism, a movement resulting from the study of classical 'humanities' stressed the dignity of man – his ability to master fate and live happily in the world.

From the mid 15th century the pope's enthusiastically supported humanist scholarship and the fine arts in order to enhance the prestige of the Papacy and the city of Rome. They lured the finest painters and sculptors and architects of the day from Florence and other Italian cities and soon made Rome the unrivalled artistic capital of Europe. Most artists didn't need much 'luring' due to the prestige Rome had for its classical works. Rome became the cherished place for artists to receive a commission. To have a job working for the pope meant that an artist had achieved instant notoriety.

The Renaissance Popes devoted themselves wholeheartedly to reconstruction of the city of Rome and to the propagation of Church doctrine. Their pontificates were full of activity on every level.

- Nicholas V (1447-55) made the Vatican the Papal residence, embellishing chapels with the works of Fra Angelico and establishing the first Vatican Library.
- Pius II (1454-64), a humanist scholar in his own right, attempted to organize a Crusade to retake Constantinople from the Turks.
- Paul II (Venetian, 1464-71) delighted the Roman populace with generous entertainments.
- Sixtus IV (1471-84) rebuilt bridges, widened roads, and filled the city with hospitals and public monuments.
- Alexander VI (1492-1503) extended and consolidated the Papal States.
- Julius II (1503-13) continued these military campaigns and commissioned Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling.
- Leo X (Medici, 1513-21) obtained the services of Raphael and other artists

In a speech from his deathbed in 1455, Nicholas V advised his cardinals, "*...If the authority of the Holy See be visibly displayed in majestic buildings, imperishable memorials and witnesses seemingly planted by the hand of God himself, belief will grow and strengthen like a tradition from one generation to another, and all the world will accept and revere it."* Although the Renaissance Popes could have provided their flock with a more saintly example, we are grateful to them for bequeathing to us some of the greatest works of art the world will ever know. Our inheritance would have been greater but for a catastrophic event: The Sack of Rome.

In 1527 marauding troops of the Emperor Charles V (Charles was Spanish but the troops were German) swept down into Rome, putting the entire city to the torch, pillaging, raping and carrying off innumerable treasures. Many interpreted the devastation as a sign of divine retribution for Papal decadence and greed. The Protestant Reformation had already been launched by this time in the North. It was time for the Church to embark on an examination of conscience and genuine spiritual renewal.

Santa Maria del Popolo – A Renaissance Treasure Chest

This church of Holy Mary of the People is one of three on the Piazza del Popolo, the dramatic entranceway to Rome for pilgrims descending from the north through the Via Flaminia.

Both the church and the piazza are sites of rich history: Nero was buried here after committing suicide in the 1st century. The shrine has seen early Christian martyrs, medieval monks, Renaissance princes, imperial invaders, the premier Baroque artists, Napoleonic city planners, and the invasions of 20th century tourism!

More recently, 20th century communist leaders used it for their rallies attempting to bring Italy into the Soviet block. The plaza took on a more ominous fame during Napoleon's occupation of Rome (1813) when it was the site of public executions by guillotine – often for nothing more than street disorders. Other interesting notes regarding Piazza del Popolo include:

- Sixtus V erected the Egyptian Obelisk of Ramses II and his son Mineptah (13th century BC) in 1589 to punctuate the trident of streets (Via di Ripetta, Via del Corso, and the Via del Babuino). This obelisk was brought from Heliopolis to Rome by the Emperor Augustus (27-14 BC) for display in the Circus Maximus.
- The Porta del Popolo (ancient Porta Flaminia) in the Aurelian Walls has a majestic interior facade by Bernini created on the occasion of the arrival of Queen Cristina of Sweden (1655). When she converted to Catholicism, Pope Alexander VII gave her a *triumphal* welcome to the city because she represented a Catholic victory after the humiliation of the church in the Peace of Westphalia (which left most of northern Europe in protestant hands).

It is to several Renaissance popes and their wealthy families that this church owes its greatest glories. Sixtus IV (1471-84) completely rebuilt the sanctuary between 1472 and 1478. Sixtus'

nephew, Julius II (1503-13) spend enormous sums on the church and commissioned some of the most renowned artists of his day.

Rising over the piazza the sober exterior clearly announces its early Renaissance origin. The two side entrances bear Sixtus' name and the date of the facade's completion (1477) while the middle door has the della Rovere family coat-of-arms. This emblem, the oak tree, can be seen throughout the church ('della Rovere' means 'of the Oak'). Later, Alexander VII (1655-67) placed his own family insignia, the Chigi mounds, atop the entire structure.

As mentioned earlier, the church stands over the site of what was originally the tomb of the Emperor Nero (37-68). This notoriously evil ruler (who martyred thousands of Christians) committed suicide and was buried at the foot of the Pincian Hill. Medieval Romans were convinced that Nero's vicious spirit haunted the area and that crows inhabiting a huge walnut tree nearby were his demon servants.

By the time of Paschal II (1099-1118), superstition was so strong that the ghost of Nero was haunting the location that the pope decided to erect an oratory on the spot. The pope received guidance for the building in the form of a vision of the Virgin. He chopped down the Walnut tree, exhumed the grave of Nero (throwing his remains in the Tiber) and built the oratory! These events are depicted in five gilded stucco panels inside each arch over the main altar.

Construction began in 1099 at the end of the First Crusade. The name "del Popolo" probably reflects that the people paid for the construction of the church. It was Pope Gregory IX (1227-41) who dedicated the shrine to the Virgin Mary by rebuilding and expanding the oratory around 1230. From that time on the church as been known as "Santa Maria del Popolo". Gregory also built an important monastery for the church and brought from St. John Lateran a much-venerated 13th century icon of the Virgin and Child which is now over the main altar.

From its position at the foot of the Pincio, S. Maria del Popolo witnesses an earlier period of history. The obelisk, (like the one in front of the Pantheon) has witnessed four millennia of history! The obelisk soars 118 feet high, second in height only to the one at St. John Lateran. By placing this obelisk here, Sixtus V was once more reasserting Christianity's pre-eminence over the ancient world. Sixtus V also transformed Rome's tribute to Mary of the People into one of Rome's most famous basilicas.

The present church, dating from 1472-1477, was remodeled by Julius II (especially the apse, choir and side chapels and filled the church with works from his famous artists.

- ***Bramante*** extended the apse (choir) and
- ***Gian Lorenzo Bernini*** provided baroque decorations for the interior with carved statues of Daniel and Habakkuk.
- ***Pinturicchio*** (1454-1513) did a fresco of the Madonna and Child in the first chapel on the right and the Coronation of the Virgin for the vault of the choir area. He also did a Nativity over the altar and scenes from the life of St. Jerome in the lunettes. The Pinturicchio schools is credited with the lunettes with scenes from the *Life of the Virgin)*. Pinturicchio also did the famous frescoes on the vault.

- ***Raphael*** provided the sketches for the dome mosaic and also did all of the art for the Chigi chapel.
- ***Carravaggio's*** masterful contribution was frescoes of Peter's crucifixion and Paul's conversion (1601-1602). They are in the chapel immediately to the left of the choir.
- ***Andrea Bregno*** (1418-1503) and ***Mino da Fiesole*** (1430-84) sculpted the tombs of the famous Della Rovere Cardinals (both nephews of Sixtus IV). Note: Bregno also did the marble altar in the sacristy.

Of interesting note: another memory of the powerful Renaissance family lingers in this church. To the right of the altar, in the chapel now dedicated to St. Rita of Cascia are buried Duke Juan of Gandia and his mother Vanozza Cattenei. Nothing marks the spot; mysteriously, their funerary inscription was discovered in the 20th century under the portico of St. Mark's church at Piazza Venezia. Venozza was the mistress of the Borgia Pope Alexander VI (1492-1503) and the mother of his children: notorious Lucrezia, ruthless Cesare, and tragic Juan (assassinated by his own brother). In later years Vanozza spent her time and money in good works and pious endowments (generously remembering S. Maria del Popolo). Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia commissioned Bregno to do the altar in the Sacristy before he became Pope Alexander VI.

Sixtus' reconstruction of S. Maria del Popolo was probably carried out by Bregno. When Julius II decided to extend the apse and choir, he called in Bramante who was also working on the new St. Peter's. In the choir, Julius commissioned almost identical tombs by Andrea Sansovino (1460-1529), one for a relative, Cardinal Gironamo Basso Della Rovere (d. 1507) the other for a former enemy, Cardinal Ascanio Sforza (d. 1505).

The Chigi Chapel needs more attention. Raphael was sponsored by his favorite patron, the banker Agostino Chigi (1465-1520), for this task. The chapel and dome mosaics were designed by Raphael (1483-1520) and then executed by others. Sebastiano del Piombo (1485-1547) did his last painting, *Nativity of the Virgin* for the altarpiece and is supposedly buried in the church.

St. Maria participated in another event which hastened the end of the Renaissance! An Augustinian monastery next door, destroyed in the 1527 sack of Rome, had as one of its final guests in 1511 a German monk of that order, Martin Luther! Shocked by what he saw, he was convinced that the Church needed a thorough reform. His disgust with the worldly life of the Renaissance popes and clergy was one incentive for his Wittenberg Thesis (1517) and the Protestant Revolt which followed. After the monastery was burned (1527) only the bell tower survived (still exists today).

Bernini (1598-1680) had a great amount of influence in this church. The Master added some curved half-volutes over the austere early renaissance facade. Then he scattered his typical angels throughout the church (they recline or flutter their wings and draperies above the nave arches and beneath the organ lofts). Even the pyramidal tombs in Raphael's Chigi Chapel are said to be Bernini's (he definitely sculpted the funerary busts of the Chigi brothers Agostino [d. 1520] and Sigismondo [d. 1526]) Two other Bernini works adorn the Chigi Chapel as well: the statues of the Prophets Daniel and Habakkuk. (Note how an angel tweak's Habakkuk by the hairs on his head – this is from Daniel 14:33-9 which tells of Habakkuk on his wat with a basket

of food who was commissioned by a heavenly apparition to rush instead to the aid of Daniel who was expiring in the lion's den in Babylon).

S. Maria del Popolo is also famous for the works of another great artist of the 17th century: Michelangelo Merisi da Varavaggio (1573-1610). His *Conversion of St. Paul* and *Crucifixion of St. Peter*, commissioned by Tiberio Cerasi (1544-1601) and painted in 1601 have been photographed more than any other canvas in Rome! In the same chapel, to the left of the altar in the transept, is the brightly colored, slightly worldly, *Assumption* (1601) of Annibale Carracci (1560-1609).

The Porta del Popolo, the ancient Porta Flaminia in the Aurelian Wall, has a majested interior facade by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, created on the occasion of the arrival of Queen Christina of Sweden (1655). When she converted to Catholicism, Pope Alexander VII gave her a triumphal welcome to the city, in part because the event represented a Catholic victory after the humiliation the church suffered in the Peace of Westphalia.

In 1809 Guiseppe Valadier (1762-1839) and Napoleon's Prefect Count de Tounon began the transformation of the Piazza del Popolo into a Neo-Classical shell on S. Maria.

Other Churches worth visiting from this period include:

Santa Maria della Pace –

This is referred to as the 'Quintessential Renaissance' church of Rome! It is located in a small piazza just off Piazza Navona. The facade is by Pietro da Cortona (commissioned by Alexander VII in 1656). The church was originally built by Sixtus IV between 1480 and 1483 on the site of an earlier shrine in fulfillment of a vow of thanks for the restoration of Peace to Italy. To understand the significance of this church, you have to understand the importance of Sixtus IV.

Sixtus IV (1471-84) was an interesting man. As a child his mother would dress him in a Franciscan robe and call him 'Francis'!

- He eventually joined the ***Franciscans*** and studied at the universities of Padua and Bologna.
- In his subsequent work as preacher, ***Franciscan Superior*** and ***Roman Cardinal*** he was admired as an outstanding scholar and acute theologian.
- He studied the great philosophers.
- Elected Pope in 1471, Sixtus IV became a 'typical' Renaissance pope.
- His nepotism and political maneuvering were criticized at the time.
- On the other hand, Sixtus was a generous ***benefactor of scholarship and learning.*** He collected books and manuscripts; he even ***built a new library in the Vatican*** to house his collection!
- He founded the ***Sistine Choir***, established the ***Vatican Archives***, and returned many classical works to the ***Capitoline Museum***.
- Sixtus also ***paved and widened the streets***, laid a foundation for a new bridge across the Tiber (***Ponte Sisto***), and reactivated an important hospital (***S. Spirito in Sassia***).
- He also built the ***Sistine Chapel***.

- For all these works, Sixtus was known in his own times as **Renovator Urbis** ('Renewer of the City').
- It was Sixtus who filled Rome with beautiful and renewed churches: *S. Agostino, S. Maria del Popolo, S. Pietro in Montorio and S. Pietro in Vincoli*. S. Maria della Pace was probably his finest and most representative construction!

This church was built in gratitude for the conclusion of a war with Florence by truce in 1480 (a rather disreputable affair for the Sistine Papacy!). Hostilities began after the Pazzi Conspiracy (1478) in which the great Lorenzo de'Medice and his brother Guiliano were brutally attacked (Guiliano killed) during Mass in Florence Cathedral. The action was taken to advance Della Rovere politics and was evidently known, and approved, by the pope in advance. The pontiff had a few other victories to celebrate as well: the success of his campaign against the Turks in the Aegean Sea, the end of warfare with Venice and the Kingdom of Naples, etc. To declare the ***Pacification of Italy***, Sixtus commissioned this "temple to peace".

The most noteworthy aspect of this church is the way in which Sixtus incorporated *numerology* into the architecture (based on philosophical principles). For example, Augustine used the number 7 to refer to the Old Testament and the number 8 to refer to the New testament. S. Maria della Pace's nave equals 7/8 of apsidal space: i.e., representing the Old Testament leading to its final fulfillment in the Eucharist. The presbyteries 4 chapels symbolized the Gospel's diffusion to the cardinal points of the globe.

Artists who worked on this church include Bramante and Raphael. Bramante's first Roman construction was the cloister to the left of the church built between 1500 and 1504. Bramante's was actually called 'Il Ruinante' ('the ruinator') because of his willingness to tear down ancient monuments to construct new ones – he is the one responsible for tearing down the old St. Peter's Basilica!

Raphael painted the frescoes commissioned by the wealthy banker Agostino Chigo. These frescoes of sibyls and prophets are above the first chapel on the right. The symbolism is obvious: they foretell what is fulfilled in Christ (same symbolism as Michelangelo used in the Sistine Chapel ceiling).

San Agostino – burial place of St. Monica after her body was removed from the Ostia basilica due to barbarian invasions. Great artistic treasures including a high altar by Bernini with a byzantine icon of the Madonna from Constantinople (brought to Rome after the Turkish conquest in 1453), Raphael's *Prophet Isaiah (1512)*, and Caravaggio's *Madonna dei Pellegrini (1605)*. The church was built in 1420 and is one of the first Renaissance churches in Rome. The *Biblioteca Angelica* is next door to the church and is Rome's first public library which was established in 1614 by the Augustinian Angelo Rocca. It contains more than 1,000 books, manuscripts, and prints as well as two globes (celestial and terrestrial) from 1599-1603.

San Luigi dei Francesi – French national church. Principle attraction is the Caravaggio chapel with contains the three canvases of St. Matthew's life (1599-1602) – *Martyrdom*

of St. Matthew, the Calling of St. Matthew, and St. Matthew with the Angel. Another chapel does have Domenichino's *Scenes from the life of St. Cecilia.* In the late 15th century, the French colony acquired a small church and made it the center of their public assistance services. The renovation was carried out in 1589. Note that all the figures on the front are French: Charlemagne and Louis IX (died in the 9th Crusade in 1270), St. Clotilde and St. Joan of Valois. The fresco in the center of the vault (1756) honors King St. Louis.

Santa Maria della Vittoria – contains the famous sculpture of Bernini depicting the Ecstasy of St. Theresa.

Frescoes of the Sistine Chapel

History...

- Built by Sixtus IV della Rovere (1471-1484). Functioned as "Palatine" chapel. Construction began in 1477 and was completed in 1480. In 1481 the painting of the side walls began.
- Was also a fortress for defensive purposes – see "crenellations" for shooting arrows!
- replaces previous chapel of Nicholas III (1277-1280) after it fell into disrepair. The previous chapel was called the "Capella Magna" and was used as the pope's chapel until 1477.
- Originally divide in two sections (Presbytery and laity) by a screen with trellises – a free rendering of the Byzantine "iconostasis". This screen was moved back by Gregory XIII to enlarge the presbytery. It originally had seven lamps on top and one more was added for symmetry when it was relocated.
- The "cantoria" was popular in Florentine churches and replaced the "schola cantorum."
- 1481: Perugino, Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, and Cosimo Rosselli sign a contract to paint ten "stories". Some of these were already completed.
- Note that the chapel was built at a time when Jerusalem was no longer accessible as a place of pilgrimage. The chapel is exactly the same size as Solomon's temple! New Jerusalem. It also contains many of the "appointments" of Solomon's temple including the seven lamp stands, the "Holy of Holies", etc.
- Dimensions are: 40.93 meters long by 13.41 meters wide. It is 20.70 meters high.
- Note the floor: it is colored marble inlay from the 15th century showing this practice was alive and well at that time. Also note that the floor changes designs mid-way into the chapel. This originally coincided with the placing of the altar screen which separated the presbytery from the congregational space. This division of space matched the division of space in Solomon's temple where there was the "Court of the Priests" the "Court of the Hebrews".
- The marble screen originally separated the part of the "Clergy" from that of the laity. It is a free rendering of the Byzantine iconostasis which was moved under Gregory XIII to

enlarge the presbytery. Originally it was attached to the "Cantoria" which, as in Florentine churches, replaced the "schola cantorum". The marble screen originally had seven lamps on top of it. These corresponded to the seven lampstands in the Temple of Jerusalem. Now there are eight (one was added for symmetry when the screen was moved from the Cantoria.

- The clear intention of Sixtus IV was to translate into Renaissance terms the composition and structure of the great Paleo-Christian and Medieval basilicas. (E.g., it 'reinterpreted' the ancient sites of Rome!). The Church's power was founded on this ancient presence and Sixtus wanted to connect back to that presence.
- Tapestries of Raphael originally lined the side walls. Now they can be seen in the Pinacoteca.

Original Decoration...

- When chapel was first consecrated (1483), the ceiling was painted with stars on a dark blue background. This original decoration was done by Pier Matteo d'Amelia.
- the original chapel was dedicated to the Immaculate Conception and had a high altar with a painting of the Immaculate Conception on the front wall. Note: many resources claim that this dedication was to the Assumption of Mary. No ancient sources confirm or deny either one. It was definitely "Marian", however, as early depictions represent. However, lending credence to the "Assumption" dedication is the fact that the chapel was dedicated on August 15, 1483 by Sixtus IV della Rovere.
- Also on the front wall were two large frescoes of the *Nativity* and the *Finding of Moses* which began the "life series" of these two figures.
- There were also frescoes on the back wall that were damaged by a collapse of the "architrave" over the main door in 1560.
- The artists worked together according to a "program" that was given them. Note that all the panels use the same uniform size of figures and the horizon line is the same.
- The artists were helped by a "workshop" that included Pinturicchio, Piero di Cosimo, and Bartolomeo della Gatta.
- Chances are that Perugino was responsible for directing the others to ensure the scenes transcended their stylistic differences.
- In 1482, Luca Signorelli was commissioned to paint the last two frescoes (The Testament of Moses and the Fight over the Body of Moses).
- Stories of Moses originally progressed as follows:
- ***the Birth and Finding of Moses***, (now lost)
- ***Journey of Moses, Temptation of Moses*** (Perugino and Pinturicchio) (ordering him to walk to the burning bush),
- ***Scenes from the Life of Moses*** (Botticelli)
- ***Crossing of the Red Sea***, (Rosselli)
- ***Handing over the tablets of the Law*** (Rosselli assisted by Pietro di Cosimo) (note: Moses now becomes a Law-giver and not just a prophet! He is now the mediator between God and the Jews),
- ***The Punishment of Corah, Datan, and Abiron*** (Botticelli) (cf. The Arch of Constantine! –NEMO SIBI ASSUMAT HONOREM NISI VOCATUS A DEO

TANQUAM ARON --Let no one assume (take to himself) an honor (office, title, etc.) unless called by God, like Aaron was.

- ***Testament of Moses*** (Signorelli) (He reads the Law and hands over the rod of command to Joshua – his Priestly character!).
- Lost: last scene, the ***Fight over the Body of Moses***.
- Stories of Christ originally progressed as follows:
- ***Nativity (lost)***
- ***Baptism of Christ*** (Perugino and Pinturicchio) (new regeneration in Christ instead of circumcision!),
- ***Temptations of Christ*** (Botticelli) (note the "Franciscan depiction of the devil and the hospitalof Santo Spirito – see the "healing" of the leper in the foreground! 2nd interpretation: Moses is High Priest (old law) and Christ is the Acolyte (new law) who will fulfill the sacrifices by the shedding of his blood),
- ***Call of the First Apostles*** (Ghirlandaio) (Peter and Andrew, then James & John; Jesus stands out as leader like Moses in opposite painting), Peter stands out so as to emphasize his role as Christ's successor.
- ***Sermon on the Mount*** (Rosselli and Piero di Cosimo) (Christ = legislator, healing of the Leper on the side; note the duck swooping in flight), Old law contrasted with New Law.
- ***Handing over of the Keys*** (Perugino) (building is the Baptistry of Florence; note the Arch of Constantine twice – (both arches together):IMENSU[M] SALOMO TEMPLUM TU HOC QUARTE SACRASTI SIXTE OPIBUS DISPAR RELIGIONE PRIOR – Solomon [consecrated] a huge temple: this one you have consecrated, Sextus IV, unequal [to Solomon] in wealth, superior in religion.). This is the most important painting in terms of symbolic content (Perugino). Note the two faithful reproductions of Constantine's arch. This includes the "Payment of the Tribute Money" and the "Attempted Stoning of Christ." Perugino's self-portrait is in the lower right foreground.
- ***Last Supper*** (Rosselli) (scenes of garden, arrest and crucifixion in background). Christ assumes the role of "Priest" here – in parallel with Moses in the opposite painting.
- Now lost ***"Resurrection of Christ***"(Current fresco is not worth looking at!)
- Must have a "parallel reading" of the scenes! They are designed to be commentaries on one another AND on the Papacy! Remember, this is the Chapel of the Popes! (Cf. <u>Figures of popes on top of walls – these are the "foundational" popes from St. Peter on. They are there to "legitimize" the claims of the papacy as successors of St. Peter and Vicars of Christ on earth).</u>
- See the Iconographic program at work:
- Moses is best precursor of Christ;
- Moses is presented successively as ***leader***, ***legislator***, and ***priest*** as is Christ – the titles stress the power to establish Laws.
- These qualities were handed down to Peter as the founder of the papacy. **This fresco interprets the whole wall scene! In the background is the "payment of tribute" alluding to the superiority of spiritual over temporal power and the Arch of Constantine occurs twice – Constantine was the one who traditionally officially sanctioned this power by his "donation".

- Now add the painting directly opposite this one to find deeper meaning: the Punishment of Corah – severe warning to all (even within the Church) who wish to doubt the authority of the papacy! A warning that becomes more evident if we include the inscription on the triumphal arch (yet another reproduction of that of Constantine!)
- Similar concepts emerge in the writings of Sixtus IV who was fighting the threat of the Council of Basle (maneuvered by kings and bishops) to weaken the powers of the papacy. This background explains the portraits of the first 30 popes which originally began with the images of Christ and Peter. The paintings, like the stories under them, documented the foundation of papal authority.
- This programme is also the basis for the choice of the very structure and decorative pattern of the chapel based on the ancient proto-Christian basilicas of St. Peter's and St. Paul's (foundation of the Church's power).

The Ceiling...

- Innocent VIII has the ceiling covered with a painted wooden surface. Alexander VI carried out the original (now lost) decorations on the walls.
- The chains that you see today in the ceiling were installed by Bramante in an attempt to stabalize the building after it developed a crack in 1504 (as a result of excavations to the north and the south of the building for the Borgia Tower).
- It was this cracking and structural repair that so damaged the original fresco it had to be replaced.
- Julius della Rovere becomes pope in 1503. 1508 – commissions Michelangelo for the ceiling.
- Originally, he was commissioned to paint an ornamental decoration with the 12 Apostles.
- In 1505 the Pope planned a huge tomb with Michelangelo that was to be surrounded by forty life-size statues (representing an allegory of the state of the world at the time. In searching for a "suitable" location for his burial, Julius conceived the idea of building anew the First Church of the Christian world. The new St. Peter's was begun in April of 1506. Michelangelo had to stop his work on the tomb as resources were dedicated toward work on the new church.
- Michelangelo insisted that he was a sculptor, not a painter. His letters of 1508-12 show that he was reserved, bitter and violent!
- The work was begun with the Deluge, not the Creation of Light. These were "practice" areas where he could do the least harm and required the least skill. He had "on the job" training!
- He left the background "open" to the sky to give the appearance of an church open to the "heavens".
- Must understand Michelangelo's personal life and situation. He was a Florentine, not a Roman. He mistrusted Romans intensely. His only real human contact for friendship is with a Florentine man-servant who looks after his household. He has helpful or relaxing encounters with equals (artists) and no hobbies (reading, etc.). He did not "consult" other for opinions on his work (as did Bramante who gathered impressions from every possible direction).

Old Testament Scenes...

- The scenes telling the story of Noah were the 1st to be painted but the last in chronological order. Michelangelo actually became more and more rushed to complete the ceiling. Thus, the first scenes are the most intricate (more figures) and the last scenes more broad and less-defined.
- Paintings often conveyed doctrinal messages and the better-educated 16th century spectators were able to interpret the symbolism of these images. Some typology is known today; most of it, regrettably, has been lost by 400 years of non-typological thinking or art!
- ***Noah's Drunkenness***: Even after the flood, sin continues and manifests itself in Noah and his sons. Notice that the condition of sin also prevails: Noah must "work by the sweat of his brow" shoveling the earth (God's penalty for sin). Also, in a "typological" sense, the drunkenness of Noah is understood as his "humiliation"; a prefigurement of the "humiliation" experienced by Jesus when he assumed humanity and became "like us in all things but sin." **Incarnation. St. Augustine taught that Noah's ridicule by his sons was a prefigurement of the mocking of Christ. Either way, we get a sense that the Word makes himself humble and continues God's presence with his people. This continuous presence is exemplified by the image of the "grapevine" of Israel that is ravaged, attacked, burned, but NEVER destroyed.
- ***Deluge***: top right corner damaged in 1797 when gun-powder exploded in Castel Sant'Angelo (lost a large leafy tree that once balanced the scene). Notice how people clamor to temporary survival. We know the rest of the story – they only think they are safe! Commentary on human character. Also, see with what difficulty the people are struggling to ascent the land – burdened by their "materialism". Even so, they are caring for one another, showing tender compassion for the weak – humanity is not all bad...nor all good. Noah will continue to sin and the doomed will continue to show love. The human condition is not "black and white"; we all live in shades of grey. Lastly, the only place where salvation is assured is in the Ark – as symbol for the Church as the Barc of Peter. The typological interpretation connected this image with the gift of Baptism which brings one into the safety of the Church – the waters of the flood are an image of the waters of Baptism that make an end of sin and new beginning of life. Also note that there are many people on the ark and not just a few – the Church welcomes all who will come to her. However, only those on the designated Ark are safe and at peace – those who try to survive in "other boats" (e.g., Protestant commentary?) Are doomed to fighting and destruction – see the strife they experience.
- ***Sacrifice of Noah***: Is either a Thanksgiving offering or some other sacrifice. Difficult scene because the Sacrifice of Noah was actually offered after the flood, not before it. However, the typological interpretation explains this positioning – it refers to the Sacrifice of Christ. Thus we have a series of interpretations: Incarnation, Baptism, Sacrifice of the Word. Note the movement in Noah's hand as he "directs" the scene.
- ***Fall and Expulsion from Paradise***: Note that Eve is the most beautiful person in the entire chapel prior to the Fall; after the fall, sin has caused her to become exceedingly ugly. Also, notice the snake is female! See Adam who is aggressively "reaching" for the

fruit – It's not all Eve's fault! Michelangelo knew that mankind has free will and that Adam was not "led" someplace he did not want to go! After the Fall, Eve must be "protected" by Adam from the world. She is vulnerable; she is also very ugly – see the effect of sin on the "beautiful" world God created?! (Physical beauty was an outward sign of spiritual perfection.) The Tree of Life is a typological symbol of the Cross as the real "Tree of Life" (cf. John's Gospel). Also, note that the tree and fruit is not an "apple" but rather a Fig! Paradise is characterized by foliage and rocky landscape; expulsion is only barren and desolate.

- ***Creation of Eve***: a very strong typological interpreation of this event is that it represents the Church born from the blood that flowed from the side of Christ. Note how Eve is actually in a position of prayer (thanksgiving?) To God. God is "drawing" her out of Adam yet she is rather undefined at this point in the scenario. God's hand is raised in a position of blessing Eve.
- ***Creation of Adam:*** According to the Old Testament, the Creation of Adam consists of two acts: his body is formed of dust and God breathes a soul into him. This scene only represented the second scene; man's body is already "created" (evolution?). The background of God is the shape of the human brain – the soul is the "intellect, the will, the human character". See the woman beside God – Eve or Mary! Remember: the chapel was originally dedicated to Mary. The typological interpretation of this scene is that it represents the Church receiving the life-giving Spirit at Pentecost.
- ***Separation of Land and Water:*** Note that the plants are now beginning to grow on the earth. The typological interpretation of this scene is unknown – it is somewhere between Pentecost and the Last Judgement (see below).
- ***Creation of the Sun and Moon:*** note the emphasis on the "power" of the act of creation – God is shown in "rotating" movement. Again, the typological interpretation is unknown.
- ***Creation of Light and Darkeness:*** chronologically the latest of the frescoes to be painted. It was done with such haste (the Pope wanted to see it before he died ... 4 months later!) That the quality is among the least of the ceiling depictions. The separation of light and darkness is an important theme typologically because it refers to the Divine Judgement – the definitive separation of the universe that will come at the end of time. Thus, the "first" chronological painting is actually the "last" typological painting! Note: This painting was done in only one day.

The Decorative Figures...

- Why are there so many "Nudes" on the ceiling? Golden age of the renaissance? Symbols of "fine arts"? Different "spheres" of being – corporal (body), reason (soul), and intellect (mind). Carrying over this last interpretation to the vault, the nudes are seen in relation to the prophets and the sibyls: Thus, the putti with name tables are "natura corporale", the figures besides the seers are "anima razionala", and the Ignudi are "natura intellegttiva". Who knows?!
- The "bronze shields" refer to accounts from II Kings and II Samuel. Four illustrate David, three the ruin of the godless tribe of Ahab, one the destruction of the heathen cult

of Baal, and the last the Sacrifice of Isaac. Note that one medallion is unexplainably left plain.

- Bronze Nudes. These really pose a problem. Who are they? Most scholars think they refer to the "Rebel Angels" who lurk in the shadows watching for those who take one step outside the "sanctuary" of the Church. Note their "luciferine" aspects of fingers and long claws. Also, they are centered around the image of a ram's skull – a symbol of death.

Prophets and Sibyls: Universal Announcers of Christ... (Concurrence)

- The inclusion of Sibyls with the Prophets had been common since the Middle Ages. Of course, the prophets and sibyls are understood to have "foretold" the coming of Christ and so it natural that the "genesis" of Christ be connected to the "genealogy" of Christ. Hence, along with the prophets and Sibyls, there is also a listing of the ancestors of Christ. (Cf. The facade of the Duomo of Siena for scenes which incorporate prophets and sibyls.) Universality of redemption.
- Each one holds their books or scrolls – obviously they are announcing the coming of the Christ. Their presence confirms the typological interpretation of the ceiling.
- Around each figure are the small figures, *Putti*, who act as the divine intermediaries communicating inspiration to them.
- The 4 major prophets can be presumed but what of the "lesser" prophets? (4=Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel).
- ***Zechariah*** is depicted over the main entrance since he is the prophet of Palm Sunday and the pope made a festive entrance through that door on Palm Sunday. (He prophesied the coming of Christ to Jerusalem.) Note he is holding a book in which he is seeking something he cannot find.
- ***Delphic Sibyl*** prophesied the coming of a savior *"who shall be betrayed into the hands of the infidels and crowned with a crown of thorns."* Note that she is placed below the Drunkeness of Noah (Noah ridiculed by his son is a prefigurement of Christ's mocking by the soldiers).
- ***Joel*** (the prophet of Whitsuntide) can be explained because the Whitsun vigil was held in the chapel and during Conclave, the Mass of the Holy Spirit was sung there. Also, Joel is across from the Delphic Sibyl. Joel's presence may also be explained by his presentation of the "grapevine" image: a time of punishment will be followed by a promise of abundance which is a sign of God's mercy.
- ***Isaiah*** is most famous for his Suffering Servant passages. (Servant of Yahweh who preaches the true faith, expiates the sins of the people with his own death, and is glorified by God) He is placed next to the Sacrifice of Noah which is related to the Sacrifice of Christ. Note Isaiah is in discussion with one of the Putti.
- ***Erythraean Sybil*** – note the fire being lit by the putti; this is probably an allusion to the trance that overcomes seers at the moment of inspiration.
- ***Cumaean Sibyl –*** In the fourth of his Eclogues, Virgil prophesied the advent of a new age of gold and his verses were interpreted by the Christians as a prediction of the

coming of Christ. Also, she is old and gigantic and witch-like: Ovid recounts that Apollo condemned her to a life of a thousand years yet she seem unbroken by it!

- ***Ezechiel –*** Ezechiel was a priest and his prophecy concerned the temple of the Lord. The guiding spirit shows him first the temple contaminated by sin and abandoned by God, and then, the construction of the new temple to which the Lord would return and from which a fruitful and miraculous river would flow. The symbolic connection with the scene of the Creation of Eve, above, is clear: Mary is the new Eve, the image of the Church founded by the blood that had flowed from the Redeemer's side and, as such, the new temple from which sin had been erased.
- ***Daniel*** – Daniel is the prophet most associated with the "End of Time" prophecies. Note that he appears near the cosmic scenes of creation in the ceiling (separation of earth and water).
- ***Persian Sybil –*** She is also a prophetess of the end of time. To her was attributed a prediction relating to the triumph of the Virgin over the Beast of the Apocalypse.
- ***Libyan Sybil –*** It is interesting that she "never reveals the truth unless she is furious, demented and wretched; and the divine plan is discerned when her mind is affected, not when it is sound." She also appears in that part of the ceiling which deals with Divine Judgement.
- ***Jeremiah –*** Note how saddened he is. His hand resting in resignation. The Putti sad standing behind him. He was the prophet of tragedies who had a sensitive disposition. He felt sorrow over the agonies the Omnipotent had decided to inflict. He is intent on his grief but resigned to the will of God. Michelangelo most identified with Jeremiah! Rodin received his inspiration for the "Thinker" sculpture from this scene!
- ***Jonah*** and the Whale are placed over the altar since Jonah is a symbol of the Resurrection. Also, Nineveh was converted by the power of preaching! Note the branch of the castor-oil plant that gave him shade! The theme of divine judgement, which is the subject of the Book of Jonah, is linked to the scene that has been placed above the prophet and at which he seems to be looking – it is the scene of God separating Light from Darkness, a clear symbol of the Last Judgement.
- Note that the Roman sibyl, ***Tiburtina***, is missing (odd) yet the Delphian, Erythrean, Cumaean, Persian and Libyan sibyls are included!
- Note the "companions" in each of the scenes. In two scenes, these are actively representing "inspiration" to the seers and prophets. Most probably, that was their function in all the scenes.

- ***Ancestors of Christ*** (according to St. Matthew). Matthew was the "Gospel of the Church". It is also the Gospel that stresses the Kingly role of Jesus. Both of these aspects were to be stressed in a "papal" chapel! Note: Matthew contains the key passages of Peter's primacy. The question as to why this ancestry may also be explained by the fact that there were feasts of the Blessed Virgin from 1507 on and some of these feasts used a motet called ***Liber Generationis Iesu Christi*** which is a genealogy taken from St. Matthew's text.
- The Popes: Note that there is listing of the first "generations" of popes as well. This listing is to be interpreted in similar line to the ancestors of Christ – they are the "Ancestors" of the Papacy of the 15th & 16th century!

Lunettes...

- The four lunettes contain a series of "Scenes of Salvation": These are incorporated into the "Ancestor" series and bear witness to the existence of a Divine Plan of Salvation for the chosen people. God will protect them!
- Note that the 1st two (Judith and David) were understood as representing the triumph of the Church over evil. The second two represented the triumph of the cross, which destroys evil, and the necessity of faith.
- ***Judith and the Beheading of Holofernes*** (Assyrian general of Nebuchadnezzar)
- ***David and the Slaying of Goliath***
- ***Moses and the Bronze Serpent*** – see difference between those who believe and those who don't. The serpent "lifted on high" was an image for the cross (cf. Gospel of John). Note: this "judgement" of those with faith and those without faith is depicted very close to the Last Judgement but, more importantly, close to the *Creation of Light and Darkness* panel on the ceiling.
- ***Esther and the Punishment of Haman (Aman)*** – Note: in Scripture he was hung, here he is crudified! Real teaching is about the power of the cross, not just retribution for his evil! This is also placed next to the ceiling panel of Divine Judgement (Creation of Light and Darkness).
- See the four corner spandrels – scenes from the Old Testament: Brazen Serpent, the Punishment of Haman, the Death of Holofernes, and the Death of Goliath. All are scenes of salvation. ***More significant – they are also scenes of virtue over vices!*** David as ***strength and bravery*** over Goliath as greed, Judith as ***moderation*** over Holofernes as presumption and excess, Haman and the Jewish people of the Brazen serpent are examples of ***presumption***. These connect well with the side panels (Moses, David, Jesus).
- Notice how the Virtues are shown *in action* and not as static figures shown: David is "in" battle, Judith is "on her way back" to their city, Holofernes is in the "instant" of being discovered, etc. ***Purpose: virtues are not "static", they are dynamic; they "happen" in people's lives in the midst of busyness and not passivity.

Last Judgement...

- Very tumultuous history. Soon after the ceiling was done, Pope Julius II died. Leo X (1st Medici Pope) ordered ten tapestries from Raphel in 1516 with the stories of the Apostles (hung on Christmas of 1519). Leo X was bad news for Michelangelo; in 1513 Leo commissioned him with the facade of the Medici church in Florence (San Lorenzo). Just when work was in a decisive phase, Leo changed his mind. In 1521 he made Michelangelo break off his work with the church and start on the Medici Chapel instead. Note: All this time Michelangelo had still not completed the work on Julius' tomb!
- In 1523, Giulio dei Medici became Pope Clement VII and was accompanied by terrible political events. In 1527, the Medici's were driven out of Florence and Michelangelo had to cease work on the tombs. In the same year, the Sack of Rome by Charles V saw the

worst plundering in modern times. In 1529, the Spanish troops moved against the Republic of Florence to restore the Medicis to their hereditary rights. Michelangelo fought against the Spanish and tried to help Florence keep the Medici's out! Florence lost. Add too all this the Protestant Reformation which had now been lauched by Luther and the immediate loss of vast areas of Europe, not to mention the undermining of Catholic teaching, authority of the papacy, value of intercessory prayer, etc.

- In 1533, as preparations for the Council of Trent were underway, Clement VII called Michelangelo to Rome for a new project: The Last Judgement. His work in Florence was still far from completion. There was supposed to be another fresco of the Resurrection on the entrance wall. But the pope died in 1534 before the work was begun.
- Also, Pope Clement VII specifically wanted a fresco that represented Divine judgement of the fallen angels. This was to be done on the opposing wall from the Last Judgement. Note the theme of divine retribution for rebellion and lack of faith! Michelangelo was also aware that judgement was not only for those who abandoned faith; it was also for those who abandoned the responsibilities of their ministry – he knew that this was the "Papal" chapel and that here Cardinals would elect the new pope. The Last Judgement is to remind them that nothing will hide them from accountability.
- Paul III (Farnese) renewed Michelangelo's commission and in April 1535 the work was begun. In six years (October 31, 1541) the work was revealed. However, Paul III only had Michelangelo do the Last Judgement and NOT the Fall fo the Rebel Angels.
- This was a mamoth project – the size of a tennis court (591 square feet). Nearly 400 figures are painted in it.
- Michelangelo was very affected by the many changes of this period (Reformation, Sack of Rome, Political upheavals, changes of Popes, etc.). The Last Judgement is a departure from every other style in the Sistine Chapel. Michelangelo was a changed man and he would paint his new insights!
- Note: everyone is equal in the Last Judgement;
- Michelangelo was strongly influenced by a poetess who in 1538 he came to know: Vittoria Colonna. She was a spiritual leader calling for reform from within the Catholic Church. She taught that only God's mercy and not human achievement is the definitive quality of the Christian life. He no longer seeks immortal beauty (as in the Pieta); It's now more than "appearances".
- Note: there is no real architectural arrangement of figures. The color palate is minimal as compared to the ceiling and walls. Only once does Michelangelo put color in first place: the yellow behind Christ.
- Christ is ACTIVE in judgement; he causes the dead to raise and the damned to fall all with gestures of his hand. His head is turned almost as if to say, "I don't want to hear it!" Judgment is not a mental act but an execution! It is action. The scene is definitely one of action. Many contemporary scenes of Last Judgement are done with static figures posing in their respective places. Not here!
- The saints show neither happiness nor relief but anxiety and concern – judgement is for them too! They display the many signs of their love (martyrdom) for God. Discernable figures include:
    - Adam: wearing animal skin (some claim this is John the Baptist)
    - St. Andrew with his cross
    - St. Lawrence with the gridiron

- The flayed St. Bartholomew
- St. Peter with the keys (Baptist along side him?)
- Dismas at Peter's feet with his cross
- St. Siomon the Zealot with the saw
- St. Blaise with the combs used for carding wool
- St. Catherine of Alexandria with the broken spiked wheel
- St. Sebastian with the arrows
- Simon of Cyrene behind Sebastian with his cross
- Moses (old man with tangled beard leading the people)
- Cumaean Sibyl removing veil from her face (extreme left)

- Michelangelo's vision of himself in these years is illustrated in two self-portraits: The skin of Bartholomew (referring to the many sorrows he owed to the wickedness of others) and to an idea he put in the Pauline chapel between 1542 and 1550: he contraposed the fresco of the Conversion of St. Paul with the Crucifixion of St. Peter (Conversion is never sealed except by martyrdom).
- The second self-portrait is of the old man helping the bodies to rise from their graves.
- Note the monumental setting given to the symbols of the Passion (also, these are the great relics of Rome). In the "highest place" is not the perfect harmony of heaven awaiting the Elect but something different: the appearance of God as Man in the world brought to fulfillment in the conquering of sin through his death (the "price" of victory, heaven).
- In the bottom of the Last Judgement, Michelangelo presents two images from literature: the vision of Ezekiel (skeletons will come from their graves and be clothed in new flesh) and Dante ("Charon, the spirit with eyes of fire, has gathered them all together with a sign, fells with his oar any who still hesitate"). Minos awaits the damned as their judge.
- See how much "work" is involved in the resurrection. The bodies struggle to free themselves from the earth.
- Also, see how prayer helps souls enter heaven! One figure is able to "raise" another with a rosary – powerful symbol used to contradict Luther's teaching on praying for the dead.
- Some claim that Michelangelo used contemporary faces for many of these figures. Ex: Paul III is used for St. Peter, Pietro Aretino for St. Bartholomew, etc.
- It was towards the end of this undertaking that Michelangelo fell from the scaffolding and was injured.
- On All Saints Day 1541 the ceiling and the Last Judgement were fully unveiled for the first time. It gave rise to both scandal and admiration.
- Even before the painting was unveiled, the Master of Ceremonies, Biagio da Cesena, climbed up the scaffolding with the Pope and, upon being asked his opinion, replied, "It was a very improper thing to paint so many nude forms, all showing their nakedness in that shameless fashion, in so highly honoured a place; such pictures were better suited to a bath-house, or a road-side wine-shop, than to the chapel of a Pope." Displeased by these remarks, Michelangelo immediatly painted Cesena in the figure of Minos, the Prince of Hell! Minos complained to the Pope that "Michelangelo has put me in Hell!" to which the Pope replied, "Hell you say. Well, too bad, if he had put you in purgatory I could have done something about it!"
- Dangers lurked. Paul IV actually planned to destroy Michelangelo's masterpiece in order to enlarge the chapel. Michelangelo was told my Paul IV to "mend" the paintings (e.g., put clothes on them). Michelangelo refused. The decision to "mend" the Judgement was

taken by the Congregation of the Council of Trent at the time of Pius V. On January 21, 1564 it decreed: "Picturae in capella Apostolica coperiantur, in aliis autem ecclesiis deleantur, si quae aliquid obscoenum aut evidenter falsum ostendant"

- The painting of "***braghe***" or breeches began in 1565 by Daniele da Volterra. He also re-did (e.g., chiseled out the original and completely re-did the fresco) St. Blaise and St. Catherine. Most others were painted *a secco.*

Of Interesting Note Regarding the Recent Cleaning and "Insights into Art"

Michelangelo Rediscovered – the Sistine Chapel

- See the message and story of the frescoes – from painting to cleaning
- 1475 by Sixtus IV. Michelangelo was born in the same year!
- 1580-1583 Sixtus called the most important artists to fresco the sides of the chapel: Moses and Christ.
- already, the sistine chapel was a showcase of fine art.
- Michelangelo accomplished the undisputed greatest work of Fresco in the world.
- called by Julius II, he wanted the 12 apostles on the ceiling! Michelangelo had the courage to say so to the pope! Man of great courage. Michelangelo proposed 14 lunettes representing the ancestors of Christ with 5 sybiils, 7 prophets and some nudi., 9 scenes from Genesis.
- frescoes became dirty because of smoke: candles, oil lamps, torches, etc.
- Other damages: structure – before buttresses were built, one century after completion there was trembling which brought cracks all over the ceiling. Also, the roof started leaking and brought salt deposits on surface of paintings.
- Also, the restorers themselves caused much damage. Restorers added lots of "shadows" to heighten the light appearance.
- In effort to restore brilliance, a wash of animal glue was applied all over the frescoe. Worked for a few years but became brown after time. The glue also contracted and pulled the color pigment from the fresco causing small dots to appear.
- In the last judgement, the restorer added some vegetible oil to the glue which made very dark areas.
- Extensive research to prove Michelangelo did not apply the glue (some critics thought to tone down the color!). Cross-sections were made to show layer of dust and soot between Michelangelo works and later glue addition!
- cleaning was done with distilled water, very mild cleaning solution, repeated every 24 hours.
- see creation of darkness & light: some thought Michelangelo's understanding was total absence of light. But cleaning revealed "grey" instead of black for darkness – Darkness contains light!

- the trembling of 1522 caused part of the east wall to collapse. Two figures of Noah became unstable. In 1565, an artist replaced these figures when he was filling cracks. New figures are much darker! Had to match the colors.
- Creation of eve: before restoration it was the darkest scene in the chapel. Wondered why? But after restoration it was seen differently. See Eve's face: awe, fear, etc. See Creator: skepticism – he knows what awaits her!
- Clement VII in 1533 commissioned the last judgement. Michelangelo didn't want to do it – sculptor, not painter. Signed contract but didn't do it! Waited till the pope died! Paul III called Michelangelo and wanted the last judgement done. Michelangelo claimed he couldn't because he was working on the tomb of Julius II. However, the pope called and said he wanted it done before he died! Michelangelo did it when he was 60.
- Michelangelo was encouraged to do the painting "secco" instead of Fresco. Fresco – apply plaster for one day's work. Paint pigment seeps into it and is locked in when it's dried. Indestructible. However, is difficult – artist must be very quick and there is no possibility for correction. Secco is much easier – artist has a wall that is primed; artist can use oil if he wants. BUT, colors do not penetrate and can be easily damaged. Didn't do it!
- 1536-1541 more than 400 figures were painted on area the size of a tennis court.
- feeling among the people at the unveiling was shock, surprise. Violently different from tradition. Tradition wanted still figures (medieval) but Michelangelo has movement in his work. Figures rise and fall in a cyclic pattern.
- Heralding Angel: sounding the trumpet that awakens the dead bodies.
- Bodies are slowly re-composing. Resurrection was not an easy process; was painful, slow, difficult. Slowly they free themselves from the hold of the ground. Helped by angels and hindered by demons. Some resurrected go up on their own steam but all the others need help. Go in bliss or shame. These are not souls but bodies going to paradise. See the bliss they experience. The just experience the last instance of life on the threshold of eternity. Scriptures: fisherman catches all kinds of fish; keeps good and throws bad. Same with the Son of Man.
- Up the damned go – same angels that pull up the elect throw down the sinners. Grabbed and pulled down to hell. Movement stops; end of the line.
- Note: There is no color in hell. Color is life; no life in hell only eternal damnation.
- 2 lunettes – angels holding the instruments of Christ's passion – cross, pillar, etc. Michelangelo put them there to show the sinner that there is no more forgiveness but only justice.
- Michelangelo shows a realistic view of humanity – see the terror even in paradise: Christ is no longer the distributor of mercy and forgiveness but judge. Also, judgement has just started; arm that brought up the resurrection while other is sending down the damned. Judgement is in process - no one is certain of their future! Even the martyrs don't feel too certain and feel the need to show the Lord the instruments of their martyrdom: Andrew, Lawrence, Bartholomew, Dismas, Catherine of Alexandria, Blaise (iron brushes to peal flesh), Simon with the cross, Sebastian, even Peter and Paul – "You gave me these, don't send to hell!"
- Most people didn't like the last judgement. This is also true of Mary – she doesn't look at her son as a judge.

- See the body of Christ – some Vatican authorities thought Michelangelo was exalting the body too much – it is the same body of a classical Hercules statue – unemotional, detached, aloof. It's the face of the Belvedere Apollo! Some wanted to destroy the last judgment – including a pope who wanted to white wash it!
- Council of Trent in 1564: warranted to cover private parts only. No one dared do anything to it after that! Safeguarded for history.
- Michelangelo was obsessed with the thoughts of death and life after death. 24 years after the ceiling, he couldn't control his obsessions (or he didn't care). New personality from ceiling!
- Note difference in styles – contrast is strong in last judgement; figures are contorted and twisted (ceiling: spacious, composed, elegant). Full of passion, (ceiling was done to perfection), primitive. See the sinner – only one eye visible "Why me?" Finally he sees that he's been blind all his life to the values that really count. Through that eye he sees the eternal horror that awaits him.
- Michelangelo did correct some areas of his paintings (changed his mind!). Problem for cleaning – how do you know how much to remove? Very difficult. Example: hair of tempting serpent and the arm of Christ at the last judgement. Also, Adam in scene with creation of Eve. The Cross section reveals no dirt between glue overlay! Therefore, these corrections were done by Michelangelo and not by later restorer.
- Last judgement was started in upper left hand corner – see figures: fuzzy, photographic technique to give impression of being "focused" on some figures. Appearance of different levels (fuzzy in background and sharpness at focal point!).
- Sky – had to be beautiful because it was connecting point to paradise. Used Lapis – very expensive. Artists had to create their own paints!
- Angels do not have wings; they simply float in the sky.
- Loin clothes – later application. Glue is visible between fresco and loin cloth! Council of Trent ordered these cloths added. See covering for St. Peter – has another one under it; looked too small and had a bigger one painted!
- Note: many loin cloths were transparent. Michelangelo did loin cloths only when he wanted color in particular places – green, blue, etc. Scene would be monotonous without the color.
- There is an older copy made in 1549 (8 years after completion) of the last judgement by Marcello di Nusti. This copy shows the naked bodies (including Catherine of Alexandria and St. Blase!). St. Blase was "re-focused" as a good saint should! Catherine's body was destroyed and a tunic was painted in its place.
- 23 coverings were done under order at the Council of Trent in 1675 and 17 were done nearly 200 years later. The 23 were kept and the 17 were removed.
- Much more aggressive cleaning was needed on the last judgement – more corrections done by Michelangelo.
- For centuries, Michelangelo was judged by the "darkness" of the paintings. Now we see the color and brilliance of his mind. Colors in last judgement are stronger than on the ceiling (thinner).
- Michelangelo used to transfer the male beauty to the female body. Note the muscles on the women in the last judgment!

- Minos, the prince of the underworld – master of ceremonies in the Vatican – criticizing Michelangelo because of nudity. "If he had put your portrait in purgatory I could have done something about it!" Note the donkey ears.
- Note: bodies are attached to each other; see the expectation – hands open in hope of receiving salvation. No space between figures – wanted to tell us we will be surrounded by great crowds but will have nothing in common but our final destination (crowded bus). Won't have family, peers, friends to share our personal responsibility. All of our "little dark corners" will be exposed not only to God and strangers but to friends, relatives and family.
- Faces of the last judgement is really made of faces. Here we see the expressions of human sentiment. Sadness, reviewing, death, etc. See Death's shock at seeing all those bodies returned to life – he thought he was the end! Rage of damned figure; all the others accept their destiny. Contorted self-portrait – reminder of his own tormented soul; he was not an outsider to judgement but its participant! However, he's not totally resurrected – only a partial presence.
- We may even find our own feeling and sentiments there!
- It took 15 years to clean the entire Sistine chapel.
- After cleaning, the Sistine chapel no longer "ends" at the altar. Rather, the last judgement means to "continue" the chapel into eternity! The last judgement is not framed as other paintings are. There are multitudes outside trying to squeeze in. To see the last judgment is like trying to see eternity through a peep hole!
- Michelangelo was a lonely person all his life "My soul speaks with death". In the Last Judgement, we receive the fruit of his faith and obsession. For centuries, travellers have come to experience his feeling. One day we too will hear the trumpets that will call us to the same judgement. This is the message Michelangelo wanted to give us!

Vatican Museums

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- Modern religious art museum displays more than 500 works at a time – all of them gifts to the Vatican from artists or collectors including Georges Rouault, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, Bernard Buffet, Ben Shahn, Paul Gauguin, Maruice Utrillo, Marc Chagall, Georges Braque, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Fernand Leger, etc.
- In all, the Vatican museums occupy hallways that measure more than 4 miles in length.
- They were accumulated over a 15 century period starting with Pope Symmachus of Sardinia (498-514).
- Nicholas III (1277-1280) built most of the existing buildings with more added in 1377. Impressive art began appearing with Fra Angelico's frescoes in the chapel of Nicholas V (1447-1455) and Sixtus V (1471-1492) who built the Sistine Chapel. Finally, Julius II (1503-1513) began the collection process in earnest.
- VERY IMPORTANT STATUARY TO SEE: 2 pieces with which Julius began the Vatican collection – the ***Apollo Belvedere*** and the ***Laocoon***. The Apollo is 2nd century copy in marble of a Greek bronze of 330-320 BC. The Laocoon portrays the Trojan priest Laocoon and his two sons dying in the coils of two snakes; 1st century carved in marble from Rhodes is actually a copy of 2nd century BC bronze (it was lost for more

than 1,000 years and rediscovered in January 1506 in Nero's palace next to the Colosseum; it impressed Michelangelo who studied it).

- Clement XIV (1769-1774) and Pius VI (1775-1799) greatly expanded what is now calld the ***"Pio-Clementine Museum"*** housed in the 18th century Belvedere Palace. Of other important mention in this collection is the *Belvedere Torso*, another ancient piece of which Michelangelo was very taken (found in the 15th century and carved in the 1st century BC).
- More museums of ancient statuary: Pius VII (1800-1823) called the ***Chiaramonti Museum*** which contains the "colossal" heads of Augustus and Tiberius along with 1,000 ancient sculptures. Pius also started the Braccio Nuovo which houses objects Napoleon looted from the Vatican in 1797 and were returned in 1815 by the Congress of Vienna.
- Etruscan Museum (1837) and Egyptian Museum (1839) started by Gregory XVI. Note: <u>much of the Egyptian museum statuary was taken from Egypt by ancient Roman conquerors</u>.
- ***Pinacoteca***: an art gallery dating to 1932 under Pius XI and containing works from 8 centuries: Giotto, Fra Angelico, Filippo Lippi, Benozzo Gozzoli, Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, and Guido Reni plus a room full of Raphaels.
- John XXIII added the ***Gregorian Profane Museum*** (vast collection of ancient Roman and Greek statuary including pieces from the Parthenon of Athens, a bronze head of Cleopatra and representation of Diana of Ephesus), the Pio Christian Museum (*Sarcophagi*, "flesh-eating", from the catacombs of the 3rd & 4th centuries) and the ***Missionary-Ethnological Museum*** (artifacts of other religions assembled from 85 nations.
- Papal palace itself: Brussels tapestries woven from cartoons by Raphael; Gallery of Maps (390 feet long) built in 1578-1580; Raphael rooms including frescoes of the miracle of Bolsena, and the School of Athens with faces of fellow artists Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Bramante; the Borgia Apartment with murals of Pinturicchio (1492-1494).
- ***Sistine Chapel***: Michelangelo's Last Judgement and ceiling portrait of the Old Testament. Side walls were painted by Renaissance masters Perugino, Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, Luca Signorelli and others. Recent cleaning has restored it to the greatest brilliance since it was first painted. The College of Cardinals meet here to elect the new pope in a "*conclave*" ("with key").

- Image has power – especially when people couldn't read or write.
- The first collection as a collection was done in 1475 by Sixtus VI (same year as Sistine chapel was built) – called the ***"Cabinet of Rarities"***.
- First collection non-religious objects was with Julius II. He brought a personal collection into the Vatican when he became pope!
- All noble families in Rome were collecting classical art – had to keep up with the Jones'!
- This collection of classical statues were for decoration – were placed in gardens. Placed his collection in the Belvedere garden (lemon orchards)
- First statue brought in: Belvedere Apollo. Most classical example of Greek art. Unemotional. Used to have bow and arrow in hands.

- However, the Lacoon (brought in 1508) is incredible – very emotional. Priest in Troy who was trying to convince citizens not to bring into the walls of the city a wooden horse the Greeks left at the gates. Had a huge serpent come from the sea to silence him! This, too, is a roman copy of a greek original from the isle of Rhodes!

- Must wait 250 years for "exhibition" collection – ***Museo Cristiano***.
- Finally, the Vatican built the Pio-Clementino museum to house art – the building itself was a work of art! Popes wanted a place to exhibit classical statues collected by popes year after year.

- Not all popes collected. In fact, one pope began to give statues away (distraction to pilgrims). In 1564, he had the statues hidden behind wood doors!

- Famous – Belvedere torso. No head, no arms, nothing. Michelangelo used to sit before this statue to study the muscles and style. When he painted the sistine chapel, he used these images for his paintings!

- Roman sculptures are very realistic. Neo-classical followed the rules of the classical style.

- Napoleon pillaged much of the Vatican museums in 1815. In 1816, most was returned by Canova (but not all!). The Pinotecca is where the stolen paintings were returned to. Contains a beautiful altar piece of Giotto from the old St. Peter's basilica! Also, many Fra Angelicos, Raphael (Transfiguration), Carravaggio, da Vinci, Tappestries (famous-fishing by Raphael in 1515). Woven in Brussels. Hung on north wall on the Sistine chapel. In 1527 with Sack of Rome, many of these were sold and burned by merchants for the gold thread. In 1975 (500^{th} anniversary of Michelangelo's birth) the tapestries were hung once more in the Sistine chapel! Other works include: St. Jerome – note that the had been sawed off at some point and was later found being used as the back of a chair in a shoe-maker's shop! Also, fresco works from dilapicated church (angels playing musical instruments, etc.). Carravaggio: deposition of Christ,

- There is also a room full of Bernini's sculptures (originals of statues in St. Peter's today). Clay pieces used to model actual works on.

- In 1922, more galleries were added.

- Also, there are Egyptian and Etruscan collections. Rooms are crammed with artistic objects. One of the great statues is Mars, the god of war from 500 BC. The Egyptian collection contains artifacts from 2000 BC.

- There are also sections dedicated to Greek orginals. These include a bas relief rider and horse from 500 BC. Also, some statues from the Acropolis in Athens.

- Lots of Roman mosaics as well – floors were often times done in these art forms. Removed and carefully framed for museums.

- The Pio-Christiana museum has early Christian art. Lots of Sarcophagi. Also, etching describing the building of the famous tower of Alexandria (a wonder of the world no longer existant).

- In 1925, 60,000 pieces collected by missionaries all over the world were put together into a new ethnological museum.

- Also, a collection of papal carraiges! Cars, etc.

- Finally, between 1970 and 1973, all artists sent to the vatican various works of modern art to ensure continuity of the collection (Dali, Degas, Chagall, etc.) The bronze scene of the Resurrection in the audience hall is one of these pieces. 750 pieces are exhibited only.

- ***Apartments of Julius II*** decorated by Raphael: School of Athens, Liberation of Peter

- ***Chapel by Nicholas IV*** decorated by Fra Angelico.

- ***Gallery of the Maps*** – maps of the known world in the 16th century.

- Sixtus V in 1590 had frescos with chronicle of the times – placing of the obelisk in St. Peters. (Obelisk is 4,000 years old!). So delicate: silence – or execution; ropes start to burn, man shouts for water. Mid-way in this gallery is the Sistine hall with the Vatican library. Also, the Bramante staircase for horses to bring people up and down!

- Open spaces – historical courtyard of the Pine Cone (niche by Bramante with staircase by Michelangelo). The Pine was a originally a fountain. Note the peacocks – were in front of the old St. Peters between the 8th century and 1508!

- Tower of the winds – under Gregory 15th, pope had a sun dial and telescope installed. This is the place where the Gregorian calender was born! This is why we have 29 days every 4th year in February!

- Sistine chapel in 1475 by Sixtus IV. Between 1480-1483 he had the most important artists of that time (Perugino, Signorelli, Botticelli, Roselli, Ghirlanaio, etc) do scenes from the life of moses and Christ. Note that two more were there by Perugino but were removed when Michelangelo did last supper.

- The vatican museums can be difficult to navigate – remember that only one of the buildings (1960) was actually made to be a museum for crowds! Most of the vatican museums were actually built as apartments and residences – palatial settings for scholars and not for visitors. Have to be ready for difficult navigation at times! Signs are there but do no good when the crowd takes control!

- Suggestion Box Note: "I don't understand why, to reach the Sistine Chapel we have to pass through all that junk!"

- Note: The cost of visiting the Vatican Museums does not even cover the cost of maintenance, restoration, etc. Costs of electronic barriers, security, etc. is difficult. There are some who are crazy who want to be caught. There is a famous Raphael Madonna – a man in a wheel chair jumped up and threw flammable liquid on painting and then lit it. Guards tackled him and put fire out before it could damage much – didn't get satisfaction of publicity! Why? He said, "I don't like women." Also, the Pieta has been attacked by man with hammer.

- Guards are trained in art preservation and martial arts!

- Also, climate control system is crucial to keep temperature and relative humidity. Computer continually adjusts the environment.

- Laboratories for conservation and research also exist to care for statues, mosaics and paintings as well as tapestries, bronzes, ceramics, etc. Restoration can completely change the appearance of an object. Many laboratories were founded in early 20th century.

Borgia Apartments

- Pope Alexander VI (Borgia – Borghese – Bougoise). Known for avarice and libertine life. Commissioned Pinturicchio (1492-1492) to decorate. Famous work is the "Hall of the Saints" which is not very saintly (Egyptian mythology is used to depict

Apartment of St. Pius V

- Pius V (1566-1572) – stern Counter-Reformation Pope. Fought against immorality of the Curia and the city. Today the gallery contains 15th century tapestries and a collection of precious miniature mosaics.

Vatican Apostolic Library

- Established in 1475 by Sixtus IV. Became one of the most important libraries in the world with more than 800,000 printed books in addition to thousands of codices, manuscripts, etc. The original "Salone Sistina" by Domenico Fontana (1587-1589) has magnificent frescoes.

Cortille della Pigna

- Properly called the "Belvedere Courtyard". Famous in the Renaissance for the tournaments held there. It houses a large pinecone that was discovered on an ancient public building in the Campo Marzo. For centuries it was placed in the entry courtyard of the old St. Peter's.

Map Gallery

- 40 geographical maps of Italian regions and church possessions that Gregory XIII had painted between 1580 and 1583. The maps on one wall (courtyard side) represent regions of the Ligurian and Tyrrhenian seas and on the other wall are regions of the Adriatic.

Chiaramonti Museum

- Founded by Pope Pius VII (1800-1823). Displays almost 1,000 ancient sculptures and epigraphs. Also, lots of copies of Greek statues as well as urns, reliefs sarcophagi, etc. from the Roman period. The "Braccio Nuovo" contains sculptures removed by Napoleon including some very famous pieces: statue of Augustus (found in Livia's villa in Prima Porta – most famous portrait of the first Roman Emperor), the "Wounded Amazon", the "Satyr in Repose", etc.

Egyptian Museum

- Established by Gregory XVI in 1839. Contains a collection from the 3rd Century BC to the 6th Century AD. Many of these pieces came from Hadrian's Villa near Tivoli. Others are from the important sanctuary of Isis in the Campo Marzio.

Etruscan Museum

- Established by Gregory XVI in 1837. Most of these items were found during Church excavations in Etruria during the 19th century. Of particular note is the "Regolini-Galassi tomb" which yielded splendid jewels and furnishings from the 7th century BC. Also, the famous *Mars of Todi* is one of the bronze masterpieces from the 5th century BC (a young warrior pouring out an offering before leaving for battle – according to the epigraph on the base, the donor was Celtic).

Museo Gregoriano Profano

- Established by Pope Gregory XVI in 1844. It was originally in the Lateran Palace and moved to the Vatican by John XXIII in 1970. It includes several pieces excavated from the papal state. Also, a significant section is dedicated to Greek works including some fragments from the Parthenon, an Attic funerary relief (5th century BC), and a head of Athena.

Ethnological Museum (Museum of the "cultures")

- Established by Pius XI with materials brought to Rome for the 1925 Holy Year. It contains extensive documentation of cultures and traditions outside Europe.

Pio Clementine Museum

- This was the first major component of the Vatican Museums. Primarily the result of efforts by Clement XIV and Pius VI. Their intention was to safeguard works of art that were well-known in the 16th century. Clement wanted to build a permanent house for works that had been accumulating in the Belvedere Palace since the time of Julius II. Pius VI completed the new installation (begun in 1771) which was financed with proceeds from a lottery!
- For centuries many of the works here influenced art throughout Europe. "Apoxiomenos" – 4th BC. "Apollo di Belvedere", "Lacoon", "Hermes", etc. The collection also includes the "Apollo Killing a Lizard" from a bronze by Praxiteles, 4th Century BC, and the "Torso Belvedere" from the 1st Century BC which inspired Michelangelo for his Sistine Chapel nudes.

Museo Pio Cristiano

- Established by Pius IX in 1854, it contains artifacts from the catacombs and the early Christian basilica. It contains an impressive collection of early Christian sarcophagi, mosaics, architectural fragments and sculpture. Most of these date from the 1st to the 7th centuries AD.
- Of particular note is the funeral pillar of Abercius, bishop of Hierapolis of Phrygia (AD 161-180) who lived during the time of Marcus Aurelius. It bears an inscription in Greek that reads: *wherever my faith pushes me, and prepares for my meal, fish from streams... untainted, which the pure Virgin takes and each day places before her friends so that they might eat, with excellent wine that she offers mixed with bread.* This is the most ancient Christian epigraph about the Eucharist!

Pinacoteca Vaticana

- Established by Pius VII (1816) who welcomed the Congress of Vienna's decision that works plundered by Napoleon's troops should be returned from France. Other works were added creating a collection ranging from pre-Renaissance to 17th century. Also contains 10 tapestries from Brussels from cartoons by Raphael depicting scenes from the Acts of the Apostles (these were commissioned by Leo X to decorate the walls of the Sistine Chapel).
- Giotto's *Stefaneschi polyptych* which was originally painted for the high altar of the old St. Peter's is the best preserved work by the 14th century artist in Rome.
- Raphael's *Coronation of the Virgin*, *Madonna of Foligno, and Transfiguration*.
- Leonardo da Vinci's *St. Jerome*
- Caravaggio's *Deposition*
- Pietro da Cortona's *Pieta*
- Domenichino's *Communion of St. Jerome*
- Guido Reni's *Crucifixion of St. Peter*

Raphael Rooms

- These rooms were the official portion of the apartment of Julius II entrusted to Raphel who worked here between 1508 and 1525.

- ***Stanza della Segnatura*** – illustrates the highest attributes of the human spirit:
- Divine Truth, investigated by Theology (NOTE: Disputation fo the Sacrament depicting the debate about the mystery fo the Eucharist),
- Rational Truth, investigated by Philosophy (School of Athens),
- Beauty, represented by Parnassus
- Goodness expressed by the *Theological and Cardinal Virtues*
- and Law: both Civil (Justinian, the Emperor handling the pandects) and Ecclesiastical (Gregory IX handling the Decretals).
- **Note: many of the people represented are from Raphael's time: Julius II is portrayed dressed as Gregory IX, Leonardo as Plato, Bramante as Euclid, etc. Even Raphael's own self-portrait is contained as a spectator in the School of Athens.
- ***Stanze d'Eliodoro*** – contain illustrations of divine interventions to protect the church:
- Faith Threatened: Mass at Bolsena when blood issued from the host held by a doubting priest
- The Person of the Pope: cf. The Deliverance of St. Peter from Prison
- In the Office of the Pope: cf. Attila with Leo the Great
- and The Church's Legacy: cf. Expulsion of Heliodorus – thief trampled by the horse of the divine envoy.
- ***Stanze dell'Incendio*** – extolls the new pope, Leo X, in four episodes from the lives of the popes with the same name (Leo III and Leo IV).
- Blessing of Leo IV – stops the fire from destroying the Borgo district (gives the room its name)
- Battle of Ostia – Same pope, thanks God for a storm that dispersed the Arab fleet.
- Coronation of Charlemagne (Leo III) and the Oath where he refutes the false charges of the nephews of Hadrian.
- ***Stanze Constantino*** – Decorated by pupils of Raphael from his drawings. The theme is the victory over paganism and the establishment of the Church in Rome: *Baptism of Constantine, Battle of Ponte Milvio, Apparition of the Cross, and the Donation of Rome.*

The Catholic Counter-Reformation: Rome's Spiritual Renewal

The Protestant Revolt in Northern Europe and the Sack of Rome had a traumatic effect on the Roman Church. When in 1517 Martin Luther posted his 95 theses of protest on the doors of Wittenberg Cathedral, the Holy See was occupied by the Medici Pope Leo X. This pleasure-loving humanist, inveterate nepotist and munificent patron of the arts had recklessly sold indulgences along with his palace furniture in order to pay his huge debts. Unhappily, he was typical of the Popes of his day.

Ten years later, in 1527, the Sack of Rome reduced the Eternal City to rubble and ashes. By then Protestantism had snatched ½ of Europe away from the Mother Church. For most of the 16th century a string of Renaissance Pontiffs had emphasized luxury and the arts at the expense of piety and moral leadership. Much of the clergy was corrupt and the populace lacked spiritual guidance. It was time for a thorough reform of the Church.

The reform and revival we now call the Counter Reformation – generated by a series of energetic Popes and by the decisive Council of Trent – was carried out in the last 3/4 of the 16th century.

- In 1535 Paul III (1534-49) commissioned a report, the *Consilium...De Emendanda Ecclesia (Advice for Reforming the Church)*, which severely indicted the Papacy and led to his convening the Council described below.
- His work was continued by Julius III (1550-55) and by the austere and ascetic Paul IV (1555-9) who vigorously implemented the Roman Inquisition against heresy.
- Pius IV (1559-65) brought the Council of Trent to its conclusion.

The Council of Trent, meeting intermittently under 5 popes for almost 20 years (1545-63) was the most far-reaching achievement of the Counter-Reformation. The Council defined the Church position on all major points, drawing a sharp line between Catholic and Protestant doctrines. Disciplinary decrees were set forth for the clergy requiring priests to undergo solid doctrinal and spiritual training, and insisting that bishops reside in their dioceses. Mystics of the period, such as Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, inspired believers with their writings and example.

The emergence of several new Religious Orders proved to be a dynamic influence in the Catholic revival. Different in their outlooks, but united in their defense of the Church, Jesuits, Oratorians, Theatines and other reformists congregations intensified and disseminated the Counter-Reformation. These groups exercised a profound influence on art in general and particularly on the building of Roman Churches.

The Council of Trent provided guidelines for art and architecture as well as religion. Paintings and sculptors were to be clear and intelligible in style, moral and didactic in subject matter, and in purpose should provide an emotional impetus to piety.

Church decorations stressed Catholicism's reasserted tenets: the indispensable mediation of the Church between God and the faithful, the veneration of Mary and the saints, and the necessity of

the sacraments for salvation. Early Popes and saintly bishops, martyrs and missionaries thus paraded their stories around naves and presbyteries.

The new churches were designed to accentuate the altar where the priest celebrated Eucharist – and for the preaching of Tridentine Catholic reforms. New forms of liturgical music were composed and added to church services to heighten the emotional impact on the participating faithful.

It is true that the more rigid Counter-Reformation produced no geniuses such as the Renaissance's Pinturicchio, Bramante, Michelangelo, or Raphael. Nevertheless, the much-needed reforms imbued the Church with a renewed confidence – resulting one century later in a plentitude of Baroque Roman Churches.

Il Gesu and *S. Ignazio* – The Jesuits

The 'Mother Churches' of the Jesuit Order were dedicated to the *Name of Jesus* and to *St. Ignatius of Loyola*. The sanctuaries contain shrines of the Order's founder (St. Ignatius), its chief missionary (St. Francis Xavier), and several young Jesuit Martyrs.

Reformers have a way of showing up at critical points in Catholic Church history. Like Francis and Dominic in the Middle Ages, Ignatius of Loyola could not have chosen a better time to appear on the historical scene. By mid 16th-century the Papacy had recognized the urgent need for internal reform and an external counter-attack against Protestants in Europe. The Church found a brilliant standard-bearer in St. Ignatius. His new religious order, the Jesuits (an abbreviated form of 'The Society of Jesus') helped accomplish a consolidation and regeneration of the Church from within.

The youngest of a Basque nobleman, Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) was brought up to be a knight. He set off to become a valiant soldier but was wounded in the French siege of Pamplona. During a long convalescence period in his Loyola family castle, young Ignatius recuperated by reading *The Lives of the Saints* and *The Imitation of Christ*. It was at that time that he experienced his profound religious conversion. Afterwards he spent almost a year of intense asceticism in a cave near Manresa, praying on his knees for seven or more hours a day.

After more years of penitence and prayer, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, run-ins with the Spanish Inquisition, and university studies in Spain and Paris, Ignatius arrived in Rome with several followers in 1537 and offered his services to the Pope. His new religious Order, the Society of Jesus, was approved by Paul III in 1540. Ignatius was chosen as the first Jesuit 'General' and spent the rest of his life in Rome directing the Society he had founded. By the time of Ignatius' death in 1556, the Jesuits numbered 1,000 in nine European provinces and, following the missionary work of Francis Xavier in the Far East, were sending missionaries far and wide.

Ignatius transposed his warrior ideals to the religious sphere creating a tightly structured, rigorously trained, and deeply committed organization. The Society became the Pope's 'army'

in the Counter-Reformation using as its weapons advanced academic studies, the education of youth and zealous missionary activities. The Jesuits almost immediately began to argue against Protestant theologians in Church councils, set up excellent schools throughout Europe, and were soon preaching the Gospels in Africa, Asia and the Americas.

Il Gesu

This is the site of the church of the *Madonna della Strada* which St. Ignatius of Loyola and his small band of former students of the University of Paris took over as their place of worship shortly after their Society of Jesus (Jesuits) was born in 1540 (Paul III Farnese [1534-49] gave the smaller *Madonna della Strada* chapel to them). It was from here that 34 year old Francis Xavier set off to convert Asia. Thousands were led to baptism by his preaching many of the communities he founded in the 16th century are still in existence. Next to St. Paul, Francis Xavier is remembered at the Church's greatest missionary. Since the time of Pope Pius X (1903-1914), Xavier has been the patron of foreign missions.

For these reasons, *Il Gesu* is the 'Mother Church' of the Jesuits! The smaller neighborhood chapel needed to be enlarged. It took over 40 years and 3 'foundation stone' ceremonies and 6 architects (Nanni di Baccio Bigio, Michelangelo, Vignola, Giovanni Tristano, Giovanni de Rosis, Giacomo della Porta) before *Il Gesu* was consecrated in 1584 (most think the 'definitive' cornerstone was laid in 1551). This design of this church marks a clear transition between Renaissance and Baroque. ***The plan of the Gesu became the model for Jesuit churches throughout the world.

The Gesu stands in the heart of crowded downtown Rome on one of the busiest and nosiest intersections. It is a meeting place for all classes and generations of the city's population. From the beginning Ignatius placed a great deal of emphasis on the location of the Society's churches. He located his headquarters in urban centers where the Society could easily carry out its preaching, teaching and social ministries. In Ignatius' time, the Gesu was situated at a perfect crossroads between the Pope and his court, the Campidoglio (center of city government) and the teeming life of the city.

The Gesu stands carefully oriented to the surrounding streets and piazza. Ignatius wished the church exterior to appear as a great gateway, from where the Jesuits would set forth for apostolic activities in the city and in the world and from where the city would be drawn into the sacramental life of the church. The Gesu facade was the *first of its kind*. Giacomo della Porta's sober tripartite front has classical elements, although its enormous side volutes already anticipate the Baroque. The facade clearly exhibits the IHS monogram of the Holy Name of Jesus – and the name in large letters of its donor, Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (1571-5).

Note how the Gesu's interior differs from that of earlier Roman churches. Here we have the nave as one large hall, a shallow apse with the altar moved up front, and interconnecting side chapels clearly separated from the main body of the church. All attention is drawn up front, across the transept illuminated by light pouring in from the cupola above to the high altar where the priest celebrates Mass. In fact, Il Gesu's interior accentuates the two main functions of Catholic worship as defined by the Council of Trent! The wide nave with laterally placed pulpit

serves as a great auditorium for preaching; the prominent altar provides a theatrical stage for the Eucharistic liturgy.

The Gesu is a Counter-Reformation church but its decor is almost all Baroque, dating from the late 17th century. In fact, Ignatius' church was largely undecorated since the Jesuits preferred austerity in church decor – and also lacked funds and patronage – in their earliest years. Giovanni Battista Gaulli (1639-1709), known as 'Il Baciccia', was the artist responsible for the Gesu's innovative ceiling frescoes – cupola, pendentives and vault, which he painted between 1672 and 1685. The vault fresco, representing *The Glory of the Holy Name of Jesus* seems to open up a hole in the ceiling through which heavenly light pours on to the nave and altar. Thus, according to the Baroque interpretation, the Jesuit church becomes not only a gateway to and from the world but a window into paradise as well.

The Gesu complex consists of a church and four rooms beside it. The latter is where St. Ignatius established his residence and the headquarters of the Society of Jesus in 1544.

The altar of S. Ignatius is the largest and most ornate in Rome – more than 100 artists and craftsmen worked on this project which involved white and colored marble, gilded bronze, silver, lapis lazuli, and semiprecious stones. The statue of St. Ignatius above his altar has had a history of its own. It has a body of bronze and silver and originally had a head, hands and feet of pure silver. When Napoleon exacted tribute from Pope Pius VI in 1798, the solid silver was melted down to give to him and it has been replaced now by silver-coated stucco. As one looks upon the altar one can only wonder: Would St. Ignatius have approved?!

The small chapel of the *Madonna della Strada* is in the left transept next to the saint's tomb. It hosts a 15th century image from the facade of Ignatius' first church (this is a rather famous image). In a round jewel-like setting, scenes from the *Life of the Virgin* by the Jesuit artist Giuseppe Valeriano (1542-1606) circle the tiny altar.

Directly across from St. Ignatius' Chapel is that of the first Jesuit missionary saint, Francis Xavier (1506-1552). Francis is in India, but his right forearm (used in preaching and baptizing) was brought here in 1614 and encased in a reliquary designed by Pietro da Cortona (1597-1669) and Carlo Maratta (1625-1713). Painting depict Francis' death off the China coast, Francis finding his lost crucifix, baptizing an Indian princess, and Francis in glory.

St. Ignatius' famous *Spiritual Exercises* were published while he resided next to the church. His constitution for the Jesuits was composed in his next-door four-room suite which was converted into a chapel in 1605.

Sant' Ignazio

Built in the 17th century, this is an entirely Baroque style and can be said represent the Jesuit's "Triumphant" phase as well as that of the Counter-Reformation.

The square is an early 18th century rococo space designed to look like an opera setting and succeeding eminently in the attempt! Sant' Ignazio stands on the site of a smaller church used by the students of the Roman College founded in 1551 by Saint Ignatius. It was a 'school of grammar, humanities, and Christian doctrine, free of charge.'

By the early 17th century the Roman College's original chapel had become too small for its bustling 2,000 students. Pope Gregory XV (1621-1623), who had canonized Ignatius in 1622, nudged his nephew Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi into funding a new church (the Ludovisi family crest is throughout the church). The inscription on their tomb states: 'One raised St. Ignaius to the altar, while the other raised altars to Ignatius.' The work of designing the building was entrusted to the College's 'own mathematics professor, Orazio Grassi and the church was opened in 1650.

St. Ignatius' floor plan repeats that of Il Gesu but on a greater and grander scale. Originally the church served as both a college chapel and an auditorium and its wide hall-like nave is functional for both purposes. Here famous theologians expounded on doctrinal matters and students defended their doctoral theses. In the 17th century the church was also an important cultural center hosting concerts and public ceremonies for the Roman population.

One important characteristic of S. Ignazio is that it has always been a Jesuit sanctuary for youth. Here two of the Jesuit's most beloved young saints are buried: St. Aloysius Gonzaga (d. 1591), who refused the honor of becoming a Spanish prince to study at the Roman College, and died at the age of 23 after ministering in Rome's plague hospitals; and St. John Berchmans (d. 1621), a young Jesuit student at the Roman College, who passed away here at 22 years of age. The elaborate Baroque tombs of these appealing saints face each other from both sides of the transept. Robert Bellarmine is buried near St. Aloysius whom he had a student at the Roman College (Bellarmine is said to have indicated his desire to be "buried at the feet of his student"). Aloysius Gonzaga was proclaimed the protector of young students by Pope Benedict XIII (1724-1730) and patron of Catholic youth by Pope Pius XI (1922-1939).

Much of the painting of the transept and pendentive was done by young art students from the Roman College under the guidance of their professor, Andrea Pozzo. The students painted themselves and others in many of the scenes. For example, the figure of Judith was one of the student's mother, her maid is his grandmother, and Holofernes' severed head is the likeness an all-too-strict school care-taker!

A striking feature of the church is a trompe-l'oeil. Perhaps because funds were running low and a cupola was part of the plan, Jesuit brother Andrea Pozzo (1681-1701) painted on the flat ceiling an extraordinarily convincing impression of a cupola. This is one of the most famous examples of Baroque illusionism. It is 56 feet across and 112 feet above the floor, the mock dome shows Christ flashing a ray of light to the heart of Ignatius and from there out to Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe where Jesuit missionaries were already at work.

As the visitor progresses under the nave the painted sky seems to open out with figures of saints and angels flying outwards into space and several colossals (infidels and heretics) tumble downwards, desperately grasping at the nearby clouds. The fresco shows the Society of Jesus'

missionary activity throughout the world and has four monumental women, appropriately dressed to represent the four continents which were being converted by the missionary work at that time (cf. North American Indians!).

Nearby on the Via di Pietra one can see the massive remains of the 145 AD temple to Hadrian. Used by Innocent XII (1700) as a customs house, it has been the Italian Chamber of Commerce and stock exchange since 1879. The 50 foot white marble corinthian columns of Hadrian's temple adorn the outer wall.

Santa Maria in Vallicella (Chiesa Nuova) – A 'New Church' for New Times

When S. Maria in Vallicella was rebuilt in the late 16th century, Rome was just emerging from a dark period of Papal corruption, spiritual indifference and social decay. Reformist popes, a newly disciplined clergy and several dynamic new religious orders were bringing about a Catholic revival from within.

The *Institute of the Oratory* was one of these new religious congregations and its founder, St. Philip Neri, was perhaps the Counter-Reformation's most appealing personality. S. Maria in Vallicella, the Oratorian's headquarters and center of Neri's reforming activities, became a beacon of spiritual and social renewal. It was immediately dubbed *Chiesa Nuova* ('new church') by enthusiastic Romans. It is still called that today.

Philip Neri (1515-95), son of a Florentine lawyer, was born in a period of profound crisis for the Church and for Catholicism. He grew up in Renaissance Florence and a love of art and poetry inspired his entire life. As a boy, he spent much time with the Dominican friars of St. Mark's.

At the age of 17 Philip was sent to be apprentices to his wealthy uncle Romolo near what is now Monte Cassino. The thought of a commercial career repelled him and the next year (1533) he left for Rome as penniless pilgrim. There he tutored his landlord's sons to make a living. Philip spent his free time praying and meditating in the Catacombs of San Sebastiano.

In 1551, while the Council of Trent was still in session, Philip was ordained a priest. He founded a brotherhood of laymen who devoted themselves to the care of pilgrims and the city's poor. Many flocked to attach themselves to Philip's apostolate. Philip, however, was a shrewd judge of character. To exclude the possibility of false, show-off piety, he required several aristocratic hopefuls to go about in ragged cloaks or with foxtails attached to their pants!

Philip moved into the church of S. Girolamo where he soon became one of the city's most sought-after confessors. He strolled the streets, playing games with the local orphans and loafers. To further encourage his penitents Philip initiated a series of afternoon services – liturgy readings, prayers and discussions, enriched by beautiful music. All of Rome seemed to gravitate to these sessions – pious old ladies and neighborhood toughs, theology students and artists, society women in silks and furs, prostitutes, top Curia Cardinals and religious reformers. A new

room, called the *Oratory* was constructed above the church to accommodate the clamouring overflow.

Philip and his fellow priests became known as the *Oratorians*. Their Order was approved in 1575 by Pope Gregory XIII (1572-85), who also gave them the dilapidated church of S. Maria in Vallicella as their new headquarters. The Oratorians immediately set about restoring and reconstructing their new home. The church was raised in record time.

On the day of the big move, the Oratorians marched in a bizarre procession from their interim headquarters at another church, ceremoniously brandishing an assortment of household implements (frying pans, wooden bowls, brooms, dustbins, chairs, etc.) To the delight of the people. Philip interrupted his parade long enough to kick a few soccer balls with the neighborhood youth.

When Philip died in 1595 all Rome mourned. He had contributed to the reform of the Church such a degree that he was awarded the title: *Second Apostle to Rome*. In the Chiesa Nuova, one tomb inscription for a simple parishioner commented aptly: *'in gratitude to St. Philip Neri who was able to render cheerful the paths of the Lord even in the most difficult of life's adversities.'*

In St. Philip Neri's day S. Maria in Vallicella was known as the 'joyous house' but that was not always the case. Philip's Chiesa Nuova rose on the site of an earlier church called *in Vallicella* because it had stood in the valley of a small stream flowing into the nearby marshes. In remote times the hollow depression was characterized by stagnant waters, sulphurous odors, and damp mists – maybe even a cavernous hole.

The area was so ominous that pre-Republican Romans believed it covered the *Gates of Hell*. They even built a temple in honor of two underworld deities: Dis and Proserpina, on that very spot. In fact, during the Oratorian's zealous excavations for their new church they discovered (and reused or sold) some of the panga marbles and statues!

The earlier S. Maria in Vallicella was founded by Gregory the Great in the 6th century (his statue and inscription decorate the church facade along with that of St. Jerome). 12th century church annals mention the building in relation to the sale of indulgences. Throughout the Middle Ages the district was called Pozzo Bianco (white well) after its pride and joy – a marble drain top from imperial Rome standing in front of the church.

By Neri's time the area had become a melting pot of different classes and professions: bankers, thieves, painters and printers, courtesans and innkeepers, Cardinals and functionaries in the Curia. The population offered the ideal conditions for the Oratorian's apostolate.

The church boasted its customary miraculous icon: the Vallecellian Madonna and Child, frescoed in a hovel across the street (site of the present apse) which had been venerated throughout the Middle Ages. In 1535 after losing in a street competition, a resentful ball-player hurled a stone at the revered image which began to bleed from the cheek and neck. The picture was removed and placed inside the sacristy where it continued to work miracles. According to tradition, the Vallecellian Madonna appeared to Philip Neri in a dream during construction

warning him to replace a rotting wooden beam. Pietro da Cortona's nave-vault fresco shows the Virgin holding up the perilous rafter, thus saving workers and worshippers from a terrible catastrophe.

Philip had the original S. Maria in Vallicella pulled down and replaced. The facade of the new church was completed in 1575. The palazzo to the left of the church (now called the Oratory) was built between 1637 and 1650 after a design by Borromini as a residence and library for the Oratorians. Note the great "triumphant" style of the counter-reformation.

Inside the church one sees the following:

- The church originally housed Carravaggio's *Deposition* which is now in the Vatican Museums.
- Philip wished the church walls and vault to be left white and undecorated. The Baroque century that followed, however, had other preferences. The interior presents us with a wealth of stucco, gold, whirls of painted angels and spiralling clouds.
- Pietro da Cortona (1597-1669), 17th century Rome's most sought-after painter, was commissioned to decorate the Oratorian's church. He worked for 23 years, on and off, from 1647-1669. He frescoed the vaults over the nave (*Philip's Vision of Our Lade and the Falling Beam)*, cupola (*Trinity in Glory)*, and apse (*Assumption of the Virgin)*. He also painted the pendentives and the ceiling of Neri's former chambers.
- Additional Treasures: Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) was commissioned to paint three presbytery paintings in 1608: Over the main altar (*Virgin, Child, and Angels)*, and, on either side, *St. Gregory the Great with SS. Maurus and Papius*, and *St. Domitilla with SS. Nereus and Achilleus*. St. Gregory is the founder of the church; Ss. Maurus and Papius are Roman martyrs whose relics were brought to the church and placed beneath the main altar in 1599. Under Ruben's oval Madonna (removable) is hidden the Vallicellian Madonna!
- Other works: *Visitation* and *Presentation of the Virgin* by Il Baroccio. The *Visitation* was Philip's favorite painting – according to his biographer, he went into ecstasy in the Visitation Chapel.
- St. Philip is buried in a small side chapel to the left of the altar.

San Andrea della Valle – The 'Operatic' Church

It is not hard to see why Giacomo Puccini set the first act of his opera *Tosca* in S. Andrea della Valle (in the Barberini Chapel, first on the left after the entrance). It is hard to imagine a more 'theatrical' church. The majesty of the white marble hall, glittering with gold and bold paintings. The very environment seems to warrant orchestral accompaniment! By the time S. Andrea della Valle was constructed there was much to celebration (Counter-Reformation, that is).

The drama unfolds as soon as you enter the basilica. Mattia Preti's enormous paintings (1650-51) tell the story of St. Andrew's martyrdom across the curving apse. The three frescoes: *St. Andrew Raised on the Cross, St. Andrew's Crucifixion,* and *St. Andrew's Burial* are uplifting and tragic. Above the apse, Domenichino's frescoes (1624-1627), less dramatic but more beautiful,

also depict episodes from the life of the saint, including the famous *St. Andrew brings Peter to Jesus* and *Jesus' call to the Fishermen Andrew and Peter.*

The site of S. Andrea della Valle was originally occupied by the tiny but famous church of S. Sebastian. The sanctuary existed here from the 4th century and was an immensely popular pilgrimage site. As a reminder of the church's origins, Sebastian's statue can be seen on the church facade; he also appears in a rather dingy altar painting by Giovanni de Vecchi (1614) in the 3rd chapel on the left.

In 1582 the devout and widowed Donna Costanza Piccolomini, Duchess of Amalfi and last heir of the Roman family branch, bequeathed to her favorite Order of Theatine Fathers her palazzo, her property and the adjacent crumbling Church of St. Sebastian. Costanza stipulated only that a much larger basilica be built on the site and dedicated to the patron of Amalfi, St. Andrew.

The Theatine Fathers, for whom S. Andrea della Valle was founded, and who administer the basilica to this day, were one of the new religious orders of the Counter-Reformation. Established in 1523 as the Congregation of Regular Clerks, they were known as the 'Theatines' because the first Superior General was the Bishop of Theate – and later Pope Paul IV. The attempted to instil virtue in the laity and to reform the clergy. From the beginning the Theatines emphasized the study of scripture and care for the sick and poor.

In 1591 the palazzo and church were demolished and construction began on the new church. A chapel in S. Andrea's left transept is dedicated to the Theatine founder, St. Cajetan of Tiene (1480-1547) while the chapel in the right transept venerates another member of the Order, Andrew of Avellino. The painting above this later altar represents the saint suffering an attack of apoplexy. The two saints are also represented by statues on the facade along with S. Andrew and Sebastian.

The Theatines kept their promise to honor St. Andrew. The disciple was a fisherman from Capernaum (d. 60) and a brother of Peter. He was first a disciple of John the Baptist before becoming one of Christ's first Apostles. In fact, the Gospel of John tells us that he introduced Peter to Jesus. Andrew preached the Gospel in Greece (scythia and Epirus) and also founded the Churches in Scotland and Constantinople. He supposedly at Patras, crucified on an X shaped cross.

After the fall of Constantinople (1204) the Crusaders took Andrew's body to Amalfi and the Pope obtained his head in 1461. The latter was considered one of the Vatican's greatest treasures until it was returned to the Patriarch of Constantinople by Pope Paul VI (1963-78). Andrew is the great patron of the Eastern Churches, almost on a par with Peter in the West.

The basilica's cupola (Carlo Maderno, 1622, with the assistance of his nephew, Francesco Borromini) is the 2nd largest in Rome after St. Peter's! (Andrew as the "2nd Apostle").

- Houses one of the most incredible of the "incorruptibles" buried in the left alter near the front behind glass. (Cardinal Marie de Val)

- Tombs of the early Renaissance humanist Pius II Piccolomini (1458-64) and his nephew Pius III who reigned for only 27 days (1503). These tombs are located high in the walls of the nave (to the right and left before the transept) and have bas reliefs by the shool of Andrea Bregno (started late 1400's) which tell the life stories of these two popes.
- S. Andrea della Valle was the scene for one of Rome's great pre-Baroque rivalries between the Bolognese Domenichino (1581-1641) and Giovani Lanfranco (1581-1647) from Parma. Domenichino's *Four Evangelists* in the dome were greatly praised and admired in their day but it was Lanfranco who received the commission for painting the cupola. His *Glory of Paradise* set the pattern for many other dome frescoes in Rome.
- The Ginetti Chapel (1st on the right) was designed by Carlo Fontana (1670) and has a graceful white marble relief of *The Angel Tells the Holy Family to Flee to Egypt* by Antonio Raggi (1624-86).
- Across the nave in the Barberini Chapel stands a statue of John the Baptist sculpted by Pietro Bernini (1562-1629) with the help of his son, the much more famous Gianlorenzo Bernini. This was done for Cardinal Maffeo Barberini who later became Pope Urban VIII (1623-44).
- The Strozzi Chapel (2nd on the right) is full of somber bronze plagiarisms of Michelangelo's *Pieta, Leah* and *Rachel.*

There are two explanations for the church's name: either it refers to *'of the Valley'* referring to the area where the church was built or it refers to *Cardinal Andrea della Valle*, who had palaces and property across from those of the Piccolomini and could have given his name to the Piazza and the church.

The Basilica of St. Peter on the Vatican Hill....

The 18th century traveler Charles de Brosses once said, *St. Peter's is the finest thing in the universe ... all is simple, natural, and August, consequently sublime."*

A French magistrate wrote to his friend, "*You might come to it every day without being bored ... It is more amazing the oftener you see it."*

Peter was a man of character!

- fallible and loveable
- slow to understand; impetuous in action
- fell asleep when he should be awake
- sliced off the ear of the High Priest's servant
- refused to let Jesus wash his feet
- disagreed with the necessity of Christ's suffering and death
- denied he ever knew Jesus
- walked with the Risen Lord
- give pastoral charge of the 'flock'
- came to Rome in fulfillment of that mission!
- Was crucified upside down since he wasn't worthy to die as Christ did.

Note that the term "basilica" is not a religious term but an architectural term designating a building with a central nave and two side aisles separated by supportive columns. The basilica was a place of commerce where people gathered for their daily affairs; some were large enough to hold several thousand people (Basilica of Constantine). Interesting enough, the early Christians chose to build their churches on the basilica model instead of the "temple" model of Roman religious practice. The reason was simple: the temples were small and built only as places for the divine (gods) to dwell; the basilicas were large and were built for the people to participate. Christianity emphasized the necessary participation of the faithful in the religious ceremonies.

The current basilica was erected on the foundations of the Constantinian basilica of the 4th century. It is a living history book stemming from the 1st century to the 21st century. The current, "New" basilica of St. Peter's was begun by Julius II on April 18, 1506 and dedicated by Urban VIII on November 18, 1626.

Information regarding the "Old" Basilica of St. Peter's...

- Trophy of Gaius had already been built in mid-2nd century ("Trophy" was used to describe the "victory" Peter's faith over death in martyrdom)
- Part of pagan necropolis located on the *Mons Vaticanus* near the Circus of Gaius and Nero where Peter was martyred in 64 AD
- Circus fell into disuse at the end of the 2nd century. More tombs were built in the former circus area.

- two major funerary monument include a large rotunda built next to the obelisk that was consecrated under Pope Symmachus (498-515) to St. Andrew. It was later connected to another mausoleum for Honorius. Both of these mausoleums were originally destined to be the imperial family tombs of Theodosius.
- Trophy of Gaius – named after Gaius (presbyter) who mentioned it for the first time in 200 AD. Stood in an open space 7 meters by 4 meters. On the west was a red plaster wall.
- The monument, in the shape of an *aedicula* was built at the same time as the red wall and consisted of two niches excavated in the wall itself and a third, invisible, underground niche communicating with the tomb of the apostle. A slab of travertine separated the two upper niches 1.8 meters wide and resting on two small columns in front. The lower one survives in today's "Niche of the sacred Pallia". Monument was approximately 2.3 meters high. During the 3rd century, two small walls were added to the north and the south. The north wall is covered with graffiti containing invocations to the apostle. The floor in front was covered in marble (mosaic covered the 3rd niche).
- Basilica was built between 321 and 329. Favored the growth of the cult
- Architects buried the necropolis and excavated the hill.
- Constantine built it in a terrible location: on hillside (almost as high as church stands today!). Instead of building at base or on top of hill, he built THERE. Millions of pounds of dirt had to be moved. It took 800 men 2 years just to move dirt!
- Basilica had a large rectangular atrium with porticoes inside. At the center of the courtyard was the pine cone fountain with a bronze canopy and two bronze peacocks.
- The funerary monument was in the apse. Constantine built a *Memorial* in marble which was a large marble box that actually encased the 'trophy' of Peter.
- A marble "parallelepiped" set off the 2nd century structure. Had six twisted columns and curtains to conceal it. A canopy also rested over it. (Note: these twisted columns continue in the current basilica around the shrines of the relics: St. Loginus, St. Andrew, St. Helen and St. Veronica)
- The Constantinian basilica had several functions: assembly hall for population, a *martyrium*, a church and object of pilgrimages, a covered cemetary, and a hall for banquet and funeral libations.
- **There was no fixed altar in the Constantinian Basilica!
- First altar dates to Gregory the Great (590-604) who raised the presbytery and concealed the tomb of Peter. The presence of the tomb was identified by the *ciborium* and the altar that was directly on top of it.
- St. Peter's was larger than St. John Lateran. 90 meters deep and 63 meters wide (central nave was 25 meters wide). 38 meters high.
- Only remains of this basilica are in the crypt of the current St. Peter's
- the ivory "Pola casket" from 430 depicts the original basilica.
- After Gregory the Great, two other popes built subsequent altars on top of his: Calixtus II (1119-24) and Clement VIII (1592-1605). The current altar is actually in the new basilica.
- In 1538, a dividing wall was added so that religious functions could go on while the new building was under construction.
- On Christmas Day in 800 AD. Pope Leo III entered with Charlemagne. Gave most of Italy to Church after driving Germanic invaders out. Crowned him "Emperor of the

West". Now the pope is the one who crowns emperors! Raises power of pope, not just that of the emperor.

- During late middle ages, Rome and Italy were terrible places to live. Cities at war, families controlling papacy, etc. A french pope was elected and decided to live in Avignon to be close to their patron Philip IV of France. "Babylonian Captivity". Why would they want to go back to malaria-ridden, dangerous city of Rome?! Domani....
- Power factions erupted; Great Western Schism
- Vatican was settled on as final place for pope to reside!
- To mark their return, popes would build new St. Peters – statement of power; reclaim Rome.
- The original St. Peter's had 48 frescoes of scenes from the Old and New Testaments.
- Also, had five doors:
- Judgement Door (for funeral processions),
- Argentea or Silver Door,
- the Roman Door (used to post the signs of victory),
- The Ravenna Door,
- the Guidones Door (named after the guides who accompanied pilgrims).
- Nicholas V (1447-1455) resolved to rebuild the apse after consulting the architect Alberti
- Julius II decided to have the entire basilica redone.
- Note: <u>The obelisk in St. Peter's square is the only one Rome devoid of any Roman inscriptions. Legend has it that the ashes of Julius Caesar are contained in the orb at its top! To combat this myth, Pope Sixtus V had a cross containing a relic of the True Cross placed atop the obelisk</u>.
- <u>The middle door to the current basilica is the most ancient. Above it is the famous Giotto mosaic of *La Navicella* – the "boat scene." Pay attention to this scene of the boat of Peter being tossed about in the waves</u>. It was very instrumental in the life of St. Catherine of Siena! She prayed before this mosaic in January of 1380 on one of her daily visits to pray in the old St. Peters. It was here, in prayer before that mosaic, that she asked to experience the force and weight of the sin which Christ bore for the Church on the Cross. In response to that prayer she collapsed and never regained her strength. She died three months later at the age of 33.
- St. Francis of Assisi made a pilgrimage to Rome as a young man. After praying on the floor he noticed the "small amount" of donation being left by the crowds. He took his purse of gold coins and poured it out on the floor. Once outside the basilica, he saw a group of poor beggars and resolved to become one of them.

The Decision to Rebuilt the Basilica of St. Peter's...

- Creation of St. Peter's is greatest construction project in western history!
- Begun in 1506 by Julius II. Nicname was "Il Terribile"! The "Awesome One"
- Julius wanted to make Rome secure; donned armor and led troops in battle to drive the French out of Italy! Fighting the "Battle of the Lord".
- He wanted to make the Vatican secure AND magnificent; political and secular power on equal with great monarchies of Europe. Architecture is tool of power. <u>St. Peters is re-built to project power in European stage</u>.

- Julius hired Donato Bramante, most famous architect, nic-name: "Maestro Ruinate" – Master Destroyer!
- The old St. Peters was in ruinous condition. Walls in nave were 6' out of plumb!
- Old St. Peter's came down; people objected but too late. Some fragments still exist!
- indignation gave way to excitement for what was to come.
- 4 gigantic pillars were first part of building put up. Bramante didn't know how to build dome that big but trusted "someone would".
- Leo X (Medici) embraced project with zeal but funds were not boundless. Well ran dry.
- Leo began encouraging indulgences to benefit the building project of St. Peters. Johanne Titzel, "As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul in purgatory springs!".
- Work on St. Peter's stopped.
- 700' from end to end. Notre Dame could easily fit inside St. Peter's!
- 27 chapels, 48 altars, 390 statues, 748 columns!
- Spiraled columns echo those of Solomon's temple!
- 1546 – St. Peter's stood half built and abandoned. 20 years before construction stopped after the Sack of Rome.
- Paul III inherited project. In desperation, he calls Michelangelo to save project.
- Michelangelo came to Rome from Florence. Did great works. At age 24 he came to Rome to enter a contest; did the Pieta! In Florence, he did the David at 21! Then he did the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. Was called "Il Divino" – the Divine One.
- At age 71, he accepts task of rescuing St. Peter's from ruin.
- Julius II had demanded a dome, Bramante;s pillar's dictated the size – 137' diameter.
- Dome that size had not be built for 1400 years since the Pantheon! No one knew how to do it!
- But, 100 years earlier in Florence an architect had worked out the secret for the cathedral of Florence.
- Nephew of Michelangelo climbed 463 steps to take exact measurements! Remember, the science of physics and, therefore, exact engineering had not yet been developed! It was an art, not just a skill, to build a structure that large.
- Material: 75,000,000 lb of material..Lantern itself is 3,000,000 lbs!
- Cranes weren't enough; Michelangelo had ingenious plan – spiral ramps set deep within walls of the basilica itself!
- Scale of space is dazzling; It's actually bigger than it looks!
- There are no paintings in St. Peters – all mosaics with stones the size of people's hands!
- Statues are 15' tall and 19' tall (upper statues)
- Lettering is 6'; upper lettering is 8'
- NASA space shuttle can fit inside the dome 3x! Statue of liberty can fit 3x as well!
- Altar is reserved for Pope alone
- Bernini did Bronze Baldichino. Gives focal point to building.
- Columns resemble Constantine's shrine to Peter as Solomon's temple.
- Baldichino means canopy; processional canopy carried on pilgrimage. Signifies "end of pilgrimage!"
- Completed in 1624, it was the largest metal sculpture ever made at that time. Bronze was taken from the facade of the Pantheon! (Gave rise to the expression, "What the Barbarians didn't take from Rome the Barberini's did!") Baldichino is 95' high, took 9 years and 186,000 lbs of bronze.

- Paul V (1605-21) instructed Carlo Maderno to complete the basilica by adding a dignified and worthy facade. This occurred nearly 100 years after Martin Luther began the Protestant Reformation. The design for the facade of St. Peter's is clearly "Counter-Reformation" in design. In fact, it became the most imposing counter reformation church in the world – a lasting symbol of the Catholic Church's presence and mission in the world. Note: although many popes contributed to the construction of St. Peter's, it was Paul V who had his name emblazoned across the front of the building!

Dome – Michelangelo.
Colonnade – Gian Lorenzo Bernini, son of Pietro Bernini.. 643 feet across; can hold 250,000 people, 284 imposing columns of travertine (Doric), 48-60 feet tall. Note perfect alignment from the stone markers on either side of the obelisk. Colonnade built between 1656-1667. Statues are 10' tall. Colonnades were meant to form a key hole but they ran out of money and couldn't complete the task; now is more benevolently interpreted as "arms" reaching out to faithful. Statues are most revered saints and martyrs holding instruments that killed them! Is symbol of the power and the price of faith! Very impressive for visiting dignitaries! The colonnade and the square were completed by order of Alexander VII. The two statues of Peter and Paul were made in the 19th century and placed before the basilica in 1847.

Obelisk – 84 feet tall, 312 ton granite. According to legend, Sixtus V was so concerned when it was moved that he threatened capital punishment for anyone who made a sound during the delicate raising of the shaft. 100 men and 14 oxen strained at ropes; a sailor saw smoke curling from the strands and shouted! Superstition held that the sphere on the top contained the cremated ashes of Julius Caesar; the cross was added to confront this myth. Note: Rome has 13 original obelisks – more than any other city in the world.

Plaza left – cluster of offices for Vatican poste, medical stop, bus to Vatican museums, rest rooms, etc.

Balcony – place of newly elected Pope. Each year the Pope gives his New Year *"Urbi et Orbe"*.

Atrium – two equestrian statues represent papal history: Constantine (4th Century) on left and Charlemagne (9th century) on left. Charlemagne was the 1st of 20 emperors to be consecrated at St. Peter's. See the famous ***"red porphyry" disk*** just inside the main center door of St. Peter's basilica – it is on this very disc that all 20 emperors were crowned! Note also the symbolism in how Charlemagne and Constantine "Guard" the entrance to the Church – they are being viewed as the Church's "protectors" (civil authority serving religious authority). Also, note that such disks were also used in imperial rites in Constantinople.

Interior: St. Peter's covers 6 acres and holds 60,000 people. See immensity of cherubs (8') at the holy water fonts! Note the pavement plaques in center. St. Peter's = 606 feet long, St. Paul's = 514 feet, then Florence, Brussels, Washington, Rheims, Cologne and Seville, Paris, St. Paul's Outside the Walls, Prague, Toledo, St. John Lateran, Mexico City, Antwerp, Esztergom, St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, and Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (356 feet). Spellman insisted that St. Patrick's be listed: "Neo Eboracen" @ 326 feet.

History: 67 ad -- Peter's crucifixion
313 -- Edict of Milan ends persecution of Christians

326-349 -- Constantine builds 1st basilica
1309-1377 -- papacy is seated in Avignon
1506 -- Julius II has the old St. Peter's torn down
1506-1585 -- work on St. Peter's as a Greek cross church (Michelangelo)
1585-1612 -- work on St. Peter's as a Latin cross church
1626 -- consecration on Nov. 18; 1300th anniversary of old St. Peter's
1656-1667 -- construction of the Piazza (Bernini)
1870-1929 – the papacy is a prisoner of the new Italian state
1929 – Reconciliation between the Vatican and Italy
1936 – Mussolini begins building Via della Conciliazione

*Also, 2 Ecumenical councils in 4 centuries: 1870 (20th Ecumenical Council) and 1962.

Right – Pieta (Michelangelo). Commissioned in 1498 by the French Cardinal di Lagraulas for his tomb. Single block of marble. 1498-1499 @ 24 years old. Name is chiseled along ribbon on Madonna (only work ever signed). (He had to bribe the sacristan of St. Peter's to let him in at night so he could chisel his name by lantern light onto the band that crosses Mary's breast.) A vandal attacked with hammer in 1972 causing slight damage that has since been repaired by the Vatican restoration studios. It has been protected by defensive panels of glass ever since. The Pieta: contains the inscription *Angelus Bonarotus Florentinus Faciebat* to identify Michelangelo as the creating sculptor. The Pieta was ordered to its current location by Benedict XIV (1740-1758) in 1749. Note: Many art historians believe that Michelangelo sculpted the face of Mary to resemble his own mother's face – she died when the artist was only 5 years old.

On the right aisle's left-hand wall are the funerary monuments of several amazing women: among others, the eccentric Queen Christina of Sweden (1626-89) who relinquished her throne to convert to Catholicism and Countess Matilda of Canossa (1046-1114), Pope Gregory VII's champion against the Emperor Henry IV!

Pius XII – bronze. Expression of horror; note right arm twisted to the left as if to fend off evil (fruitless efforts to avoid WWII). Monument is above the tomb of Blessed Innocent XI (1676-1689) – one of the few popes entombed in the basilica nave, he was a campaigner for morality in public life and noted as Defender of Vienna (Turks turned back in 1683). Pius is buried in the crypt. He is also depicted as tapping open the Holy Door.

At far end of nave, near the confession, is the 13th century bronze statue of St. Peter by Arnolfo di Cambio (c. 1285). This statue is clothed in papal vestments every June 29th (Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul). Note the foot worn from pilgrims' reverence. (**Tradition has it that this statue was made by melting down a statue of Jupiter – a symbol of the triumph of Christianity over Pagan Rome).

Left – John XXIII – bronze. Shows him visiting people in jail after being elected in 1958. Dog at feet represents mankind's starvation for justice and peace. Also, John's coat of arms (tower as centerpiece) is in the center of the pavement. He is also depicted on the "door of the dead." This door is to the left of the "centerpiece", itself a 15th century work; the sole survivor from the first basilica.

Near choir: footnote to English royal history– monument to son and grandsons of the Stuart king, James III of 1633-1701. The last Catholic British monarchy ended their days in Rome. English King George III contributed to the cost of the monument! (Good sport!) This monument attests to the sad exile and end of this family of 18th century Pretenders to the British throne.

Crossing – Altar is reserved for the Pope alone. Altar-top is a single marble slab once part of the 1st century imperial forum. Bronze canopy is 17th century (Bernini @ age 26) – tall as 5 story building.

Dome – 335 feet above the floor of the basilica (30 story building) (450' high from ground level! 16 ribs with a diameter of 130'. Lantern on top is 58 feet tall. Six circles depict: 1. The first 16 popes buried in the basilica; 2. Christ, Mary, John the Baptist, Paul, and the twelve apostles; 3-6. Series of angels and cherubs in postures of worship. 98 figures in all. Quotation circling the rim: letters are 5 feet tall from Mt 16:17-19 "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

Pillars – 16 feet square with saints holding relics of Christ's passion: Roman Centurion St. Longings (Longinus) with the spearhead; St. Andrew, St. Veronica with the veil, and St. Helen, mother of Constantine, with a fragment of Christ's cross. The relics they contain are the Sacred Lance (donated to Innocent VIII by Bajazet II), Veronica's veil, the largest fragment of the Cross, and the head of St. Andrew. The relics themselves are in a recess at the Veronica statue and displayed for Holy Week. The head of St. Andrew was returned by Paul VI to Patras in 1963 in an Ecumenical effort (This relic of St. Andrew had been taken from Constantinople by some ill-willed Crusaders. Paul VI returned it to the Greek Church who consider Andrew to be their great Apostle much as the Latin Church considers Peter.) High in the niches of these pillars are located twisted columns, imitated by Bernini in his baldacchino – Constantine had placed these around the shrine of St. Peter (one can be seen close up in the Treasury)..

Altar of the Chair – St. Peter's Chair – The actual wooden chair is a composite. The wood itself (skeleton) is from the 11th Century while the ivory strips are from the 6th Century. The decorative friezes inserted in the back are from the 11th Century. The bas-reliefs and figures represent the giving of the keys, the washing of the feet, and , in the center, *"Pasce oves meas "* (Feed my sheep). **Reliquary**: Bernini (1658-1666) Bronze. Supported by 4 doctors of the Church from both east and west: St. John Chrysostom, St. Athanasius, St. Ambrose and St. Augustine. Wooden chair enclosed was a gift to Pope John VIII from Emperor Charles the Bald in 875.

Blessed Sacrament Chapel -- began in 1549 during Paul III (1534-1549). In the vault are scenes from the Apocalypse amid a burning fire and saints in adoration. Episodes from the Old Testament are reproduced in the vaulting as well while the theme of the Eucharist received by those who are unworthy is represented in the lunettes. The Tabernacle is the work of Bernini (1674). The Iron Gate was created by Francesco Borromini (1629-1630). The magnificent altar piece is the Basilica's *only oil painting*: Pietro da Cortona's *Trinity* (1628-31).

The Baldachin – Begun on June 28, 1633. Spiral columns repeat the form of the ancient "*ciborium*". The origin of the large *ciborium* and the *baldacchino* lie in the fact that curtains were used to "conceal" the Eucharist (and the celebration of Mass; hence the bells at consecration) before the use of modern-day tabernacles existed. They would actually "close-off" the entire canopy area where the celebration was taking placed. Some very ancient baldachins, like that of St. Paul Outside the Walls, still have the "curtain rods" as an architectural relic of the past (Italian Motto: never know when you might need them again!).

Rumor has it that the Barberini Pope Urban VIII commissioned Bernini's Baldacchino as a 'thanksgiving offering' for the safe childbirth of his favorite niece. Close inspection of the bases of the canopy columns how the face of a woman in the various stages of labor and, finally, a cherub - like baby's head. The "bee" motif is from the Barberini family coat of arms.

The Baptistry -- contains a porphyry sarcophagus dating to the time of Hadrian and later used a tomb for the Emperor Otto. Note the mosaic: it contains references to the three forms of baptism – water, blood, and desire.

"Confessional" – Place of greatest reverence: sunken confessional with 70 oil lamps. Altars were built here by Gregory the Great, Calixtus (1119-1124) and Clement VII (present). See the " *Niche of the Palia*"; box in which the palia are placed before being bestowed on new archbishops once a year on the Feast of Peter and Paul. That Palia is a "yolk-like" white cloth with 5 crosses on it that symbolizes the special communion with the successor of Peter which marks the office of the Archbishop. The bones of St. Peter are less than 12" from this box in a wall – it is this wall which makes the niche "off-center" in the confessio!

Nave Lettering – As you enter St. Peter's you will notice that all around the top of the interior are large mosaic words that encircle the space. These are the various biblical texts that relate the various commissions of authority of Jesus to Peter. (I.e., "You are Peter and upon this Rock I will build my Church and the jaws of death shall not prevail against it", etc.). These texts also repeat the basis of Apostolic Succession which is the Pope's foundation of ecclesial power. Of particular note is the apse where the lettering changes from Latin to Greek. This is a theological statement: At the time St. Peter's was being built and decorated, the Church of Rome had split with the Greek Church; by including some phrases in Greek, it is a way saying that the Church of Rome rightfully encompasses *all* Christianity and not just the Western Church – this was a claim to sovereignty over the Greeks as well.

General Interior – 50 altars & 450 statues (Many are great founders of religious orders)

- Throne of St. Peter (apse).
- 147 popes are buried in St. Peter's with all but 2 in the crypt. Exceptions: St. Pius X (1904-1914) and Blessed Innocent XI (1676-1689).
- Holy Year popes:

- Gregory XIII (on right side of nave; walked barefoot churches in 1575),
- Urban VIII (to right of Petrine chair), and
- Pius XI (near the tomb of Blessed Innocent XI).
- Also, monument to Pius VII of 1800 who had no Holy Year due to being Napoleon's prisoner.
- Two popes were called "The Great": St. Leo of 440-461, who dissuaded Attila the Hun from invading Italy and St. Gregory of 590-604 who sent missionaries to England. Leo is honored by 17th century marble relief in far left corner of the apse and Gregory in an altar on the left of the nave near the transept. Gregory XIII is also commemorated (on right of nave, just before crossing): he gave us our calendar. Note the monument shows the goddess of knowledge uncovers an urn disclosing the length of each year.
- Exit at left: ***Basilica Treasury***: looted by Vandals in 455, Saracens in 846, Normans in 1084, Spanish in 1527, and Napoleon in 1798. 9-room exhibit. Puzzle for curators: what to do with a bust of Lyndon Johnson bestowed by himself on Paul VI!
- Exit at right: stairs to crypt where the tombs of Pius XII, John XXIII, and John Paul I, Paul VI, etc. Note: you can see parts of Constantine's original basilica walls here.
- Outside the crypt exit is the entrance to the rooftop of St. Peter's and the dome. Magnificent panoramic view of Rome! 1st walkway is 160 feet above the Basilica floor; the 2nd walkway is 224 feet above the floor. The top lantern is 394 feet above the floor.
- Residence of the popes since 1377.
- St. Peter's has no stained glass – the window of the Holy Spirit is in Alabaster.
- St. Peter's also has no paintings (except the Blessed Sacrament Chapel) – the pictures on the wall are very fine mosaics.

View from the observation deck on the Dome of St. Peters...

St. Peter's Basilica is the centerpiece and reason for the existence of the independent kingdom of the state of Vatican City totaling 105 acres. Vatican City State houses some of the world's great treasures from the Renaissance and Middle Ages.

From the dome one can see the following: (Note: The development of the Vatican gardens began only in the latter half of the 19th century when the pope became a "virtual prisoner" of the small area and needed "on site" gardens in which to walk since the local gardens and villas of Rome were no longer accessible.)

- First wall built by ***Leo IV*** to defend from the invaders (Saracens?) thus forming the "Lion City" in 848-52. Other popes added further walls; those of today were built between 1550 and 1640 by Popes Paul III, Pius V, and Urban VIII.

- ***Cemetery*** on left: Swiss Guards were buried there after Emperor Charles V decimated their ranks in 1527. The guard's sacrifice gave Clement VII the time he needed to escape into Castel Sant' Angelo.
- 2 Seminaries: on left – one for German speaking clerics. The other, on the hill, serves Ethiopian students.
- Opposite the rear on the left: New house for cardinals during time of papal elections: ***Domus Marthae.***
- ***Railroad station***: built in 1930. Note bas relief of Elijah in his fiery chariot! Was rarely used for passenger service except in October 1962 when John XXIII went to Assisi and Loretto. John Paul II has used it as well.
- ***Palace of the Tribunal***: housing for most of the actual residents of Vatican City State.
- ***Coat of arms of reigning pope*** which are always represented via landscape design.
- ***Helipad***: on top of the Vatican hill (254 feet). John Paul II uses it to make summer flights to his summer residence at Castel Gondolfo.
- ***Walls of Leo IV (847-855)*** and barricade of Nicholas V (1447–1455).
- Vatican radio transmitter.
- ***Tower of St. John***: used as a summer residence by John XXIII. Also, John Paul II stayed there while his Vatican apartments were being renovate. Several guests have lodged there as well including Constantinople's Orthodox patriarch, Athenagoras.
- Copy of the ***Grotto of Lourdes***. This grotto contains the original altar from Lourdes and was a gift to John XXIII.
- ***English gardens***: the only place in Vatican City where vegetation is allowed to grow naturally.
- Statue of ***St. Peter in Chains***: a tribute to the voluntarily imprisoned Leo XIII by Amalia Dupre (1887).
- Chinese pavilion given to Pius XI by Chinese Catholics in 1933.
- The ***"Tower of the Winds"***, where astronomical observations gave Gregory XIII the information he needed to create the present calendar.
- Complex of ***Vatican Museums*** and archives and papal palace. Here, too, is the Vatican Post which dates to the 14th century! Vatican City also houses a "polyglot" press that published in more than 30 languages and a newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano (150 years old – source of constant irritation to Nazi's because of publication of information "leaked" from occupied territories).
- Lastly, check out the ***Pope-duct*** that connects Castel Sant'Angelo to the Vatican Palaces. It was installed when Giovanni Gaetano Orsini became Pope Nicholas III in 1277. He conceived the idea of integrating the fortress into his planned renovation of the Vatican. Even though he had rebuilt the Sancta Sanctorum in the Lateran, Nicholas disliked the Lateran area and sought the establish the administrative center of the papacy adjacent to St. Peter's. For this reason, he constructed a new papal palace at the Vatican and built a passageway atop Leo IV's wall to give pope's sheltered access from it to the fortress.

Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls…

We know something about St. Paul; in fact, we know more than about almost any other New Testament person:

- A Jew born in Tarsus
- trained as a Pharisee
- Intense and Ambitious
- first persecuted Christians with fanatic determination
- participated (supervised) in the Stoning of St. Stephen, the First Martyr
- received a personal call from Christ in his Conversion on the road to Damascus
- pursued his worldwide evangelizing mission
- tireless missionary and great theologian
- gave Christianity its universal momentum
- Paul lived in Rome under 'house arrest' for 2 years and preached
- died by being beheaded – a courtesy since he was a Roman Citizen (he could avoid the humiliation of crucifixion or the pain of the wild animals).
- Legend says that three fountains sprang up where his head bounced. Today there is a monastery on that site called "Tre Fontane".

The Basilica...

- Terrible place to build a church. Had problems with persistent flooding from the Tiber until the 19th century when large dykes were established. Also, placed it right in the middle fo the Via Ostiense – a major road. Why go through all the trouble if not for the importance of *that* place?
- Rome's 2nd largest church and one of the 12 largest in the world.
- The Acts of the Apostles tells of Paul's travels to Rome for an imperial trial since he was a Roman citizen. This trial ended with his beheading. It was built over the place where Paul was buried following his martyrdom in 64-68 (commonly estimated in the year 67). A Christian matron, Lucina, buried him in her vineyard-cemetery and conserved his tomb; she owned the surrounding territory.
- A *celle memoriae* (grave memorial) was venerated by Christians and was even mentioned along with St. Peter's 'trophy' by the presbyter Gaius around 200 AD.
- In fact, during excavations in the 19th century archaeologists found a typical 1st century grave surrounded by many pagan and Christian tombs much like that unearthed under St. Peter's. Note: When they actually dug into the area of the grave, they found the remains of St. Paul encased within a 'bronze sarcophagus' – exactly as St. Peter was reputed to have been buried as well. This sarcophagus dated to the era of Constantine. Also, there were two flat, joined marble slabs bearing the letters PAOLO APOSTOLOMAR which stand for *Paul Apostle Martyr*. These slabs contained two openings – one round and one square. Researchers claim that the round hole was used to introduce an incense-holder

into the Apostle's grave while the square opening served the earliest pilgrims for lowering items to be blessed near St. Paul's remains

- Pope Anacletus (103) built an oratory on the site which the Emperor Constantine wished to transform into a basilica..
- Constantine ordered the basilica, which the emperor's contemporary, Pope Sylvester (314-335) consecrated on November 18, 324 (Sylvester may have actually requested the basilica of Constantine).
- This Constantinian structure was unable to accommodate the pilgrims and so in 385 it was demolished and a more spacious basilica was rebuilt. Note: the reason for the many pilgrims coming to St. Paul's is because of Paul's mission of evangelization and primary role in the conversion of the educated pagan classes. He was "their" saint!
- Between 384 and 386, the emperors (who all ruled ***simultaneously***) Valentinian II (375-392), ***Theodosius the Great*** (379-395), and Arcadius (377-408) – (the son of Theodosius who inherited only the eastern part of the Roman Empire) commissioned a plan for a new edifice which was completed under the Emperor Honorius (395-423) in 402-403. This new basilica would have 5 aisles so as to hold all the pilgrims. The basilica was completed at the beginning of the 5th century (so the inscription on the main arch tells us!).
- ***Note: St. Paul's is one of the greatest products of imperial patronage in Rome. Theodosius' generation (347-95) had a particular devotion to this 'Apostle to the Gentiles'. It was during this imperial period that <u>pagan worship was officially banned.</u>***
- Several popes undertook restoration projects beginning with Leo I (440-461), Syummachus (498-514), Gregory the Great (590-640), Sergius I (687-701), Hadrian I (772-795), Leo III (795-816), and John VIII (872-882).
- **<u>St. Paul's was the *largest Christian church in the world until the new St. Peter's was built!*</u>
- A large porticoed courtyard stands in front of the basilica. St. Peter's originally had a similar one in front of it.
- Note: this was now the largest church in Rome until the new St. Peter's was built in the 17th century!
- The funerary monument in St. Paul's was located in the center and not in the apse as in St. Peter's.
- Massive building: 89 meters long, 30 meters high, center nave was 24 meters wide (side aisles were 9 meters and 8 meters wide).
- Not much is known of the original decoration. It was re-done under Leo I (440-61). Gregory I (590-604) raised the transept level by 90 cm and built the altar above the tomb.
- Pope Symmachus built the Baptistry (498-515).
- <u>Since it was "outside the walls", many misfortunes befell this basilica. In 739 it was plundered by the Longobards, in 847 by the Saracens, however it was respected by the Goths, Vandals and the Visigoths</u>.
- In the 8th century the Benedictine monastery was built next to the basilica.
- To defend the basilica, Pope John VIII (872-882) built a citadel around it in 872. John's building projects were memorialized in the complex that followed the fortifications; it was called *Giovannopoli!*
- In the 11th century the basilica received its bell tower and the bronze door of the principle entrance.

- In the 11th century, the Emperor Henry IV (1050-1106) besieged St. Paul's and destroyed its famous portico; the basilica's abbot, who became Henry's nemesis as Gregory VII (1073-85) restored the church and transformed it into a powerful monastery. This same abbot, Hildebrand, was also responsible for commissioning the famous bronze doors (see below).
- Additional restorations continued under Gregory VII (1073-1085), Innocent II (1130-1143), Honorius III (1216-1227), Clement VIII (1592-1605), Innocent X (1670-1676), Benedict XIII (1742-1730) and Benedict XIV (1740-1758).
- The statue of St. Paul to the right of the facade (Courtyard) is from the Constantinian period!
- On the night of July 16&17, 1823 it was destroyed by fire (possibly due to a work force on the roof – a hot coal falling unnoticed on the wooden beams). Some Italians held the belief that when a designated number of mosaic spaces were used up for the popes that the world would end. There were only a couple left in 1823! It's reconstruction lasted almost a century and was begun under Leo XII. The coat of arms of Pius IX is in the middle of the ceiling; (he dedicated the basilica in 1854).
- When the basilica burned in 1823, the cardinals didn't even tell Pius VII because of his frail health. His successor, Leo XII (1823-1829) began the task of rebuilding. Several plans were put forth (ancient vs. modern design) and eventually it was decided to repeat the ancient design. On October 5, 1840, Gregory XVI solemnly consecrated the Confessional altar.
- The new basilica was consecrated on December 10, 1854 in the presence of 187 bishops (an unusually large number for the time). They had come to Rome for the proclamation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.
- It nearly broke the Vatican coffers to reconstruct this basilica. Taxes were assessed on the Church throughout the world. In addition, many goods were donated: The Viceroy of Egypt (Mohammed Ali) donated 6 alabaster columns (flank the inside entrance) and Tsar Nicholas I of Russia sent blocks of malachite and lapis lazuli which were used for the two side altars in the transept. The windows are actually made of thinly cut sheets of alabaster, a gift from King Faud I of Egypt. Collections were taken up on every continent to finance the reconstruction!
- The reconstructed building took great care to maintain the dimensions of previous buildings.
- Parts of the original basilica have been preserved including
- a ***Venetian apse mosaic*** of 1220-1230. These artists were summoned to St. Paul's by Pope Honorius III (1216-27). A minuscule portrait of the pope shows himself at Christ's feet.
    - Artisans from Venice had to be summoned because they were the finest in Italy.
    - Christ is enthroned and holding a book in which are inscribed the words of Matthew 25:34: *You have my Father's blessing; come, enter and possess the kingdom that has been ready for you since the world was made.*
    - It is a 'welcoming sentiment' and a 'warning' – a reminder of the Last Judgement at which every soul will stand before the real Judge.

- As on the ciborium, Peter and Paul flank the Savior. Behind them are Luke and Andrew. Honorius bows in a radiant white-gold vestment and carasses Christ's right foot.
- A ***Parallel composition*** fills a band beneath the main apse conch.
- It's center is the empty throne (looks like an altar, too)of the 2nd Coming flanked by angels.
- On the throne is a sealed book, Christ's cosmic mantle, and the instruments of his torture (lance, sponge, thorns, chalice, etc.).
- Most prominent is the jeweled cross recalling the cross carried in papal processions.
- The image thus condenses into a spare handful of symbols of past, present, and future: Christ's death on the cross, the re-presentation of that sacrifice in the Eucharist, and the promise of ultimate redemption at the 2nd Coming.
- On either side of the angels beside the throne are the Apostles with each bearing a prophetic text.
- Beneath the throne-altar, 5 sad-eyed youths hold gold palm fronds – they are the martyrs described at the breaking of the 5th seal in Revelation (6:9-11): *I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for God's word and for the testimony they bore*. More specifically, they are the Holy Innocents in the sarcophagus directly below. To either side of them the sacristan Adinolfus and John of Ardea, the Abbot of St. Paul's responsible for the magnificent cloister, kneel in prayer. The message is clear: *by worshiping at the at the grave of the Holy Innocents and the other saints, the faithful can prepare themselves for the judgement promised to come at the end of time.*
- The ***Baldachin*** – by Arnolfo di Cambio (c. 1245-1303) (cf. Bronze Peter in St. Peter's basilica) and was completed in 1285. Note the rods that once supported the curtains! The corner statues are of St. Paul, St. Peter, St. Timothy, and St. Benedict.
- Baldachins were originally above altars from the 4th Century one. It was used for hiding the Eucharistic service from the people gathered in the church. Thus, there were side curtains drawn during the rite.
- They were used to mark places of 'sanctity'.
- Pope Sylvester had one placed over the altar of the Lateran Church.
- The 4 *porphyry* columns that support the St. Paul's ciborium adhere to ancient Roman convention. However, the newer '*francigenum'* style has clearly influenced di Cambio's work.
- ****Specifically, this ciborium has been patterned after King Louis IX's tabernacle of the crown of thorns in his Ste. Chapelle in Paris*. This is the same chapel that inspired the *Sancta Sanctorum*.
- This ciborium has great symbolism based on its different 'tiers'. The dark columns suggest the materiality of the terrestrial world. Above them, the elegant white marble arches and gables inset with gold tesserae evoke heaven. The spaces between represent the firmament inhabited by angels bearing wheel windows which stand for Christ's Church.

- Note that other angels fan downward from the pointed vault and others holding a candlestick or bearing censers descend toward the altar.
- ***Easter Candelabrum*** – 11th - 13th Century (est. 1170). 5.6 meters in height (18').
- ***This massive candle stand is meant to recall the imperial 'Pillars' which documented the military triumphs of Roman conquests. This one, however, documents the triumph of the Risen Christ!***
- The scenes from the life of Christ include scenes in front of Caiaphas, the derision of Christ, Christ before Pilate, Pilate washing his hands, the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension.
- An inscription under the life of Christ reveals the identity of the two sculptors: Nicola d'Angelo and Pietro Vassalletto (signed *"I, Nicholas de Angelo with Pietro Bassaletto produced this work*"). Note: Pietro Vassalletto is the same person who designed the cloister!
- This candle stand is actually a Dark Ages 'tree of life' that winds upwards with a series of grotesques, mythological and Christian scenes all 'triumphed' by the 'light of Christ'!
- See the effect of the death and resurrection of Jesus – it 'conquers' all these images of sin and depravity.
- Note: The troops are mounted against Christ; Christ before Caiphas, the soldiers deriding the enthroned Messiah, Pilate condemning Christ and then washing his hands, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and the Ascension (at the top).
- A poem inscribed on the band above the heads of the creatures at the base states the column's function: +ARBOR POMA GERIT ARBOR EGO LUMINA GESTO PORTO LIBAMINA NUNTIO GAUDIA SED DIE FESTO SURREXIT CRI[S]TUS NAM TALIA MUNERA [CHRI]STO which means ***A tree carries fruit. I, too, am a tree, and I carry light. I carry the offering. I announce the feast day, the good news that Christ is resurrected. I am the witness of such a great gift.***
- Note: The *Exultet* is really a 'victory hymn' which makes it a perfect interpretative companion for this Easter Candle stand. ***The Exultet offers insight into other symbols on the stand: hybrid creatures are the demons of darkness (which were copied from other ancient monuments). Specifically, they are the demigods of paganism vanquished by the light of Christ.***
- Note at the base are several animals. In particular, there is a woman riding on the backs of one sphinx and one lion. She is the 'Whore of Babylon' of John's Apocalypse! The light of Christ triumphs over her as well.
- Finally, the column itself evokes the *Pillar of Fire* that preceded the Jews in their journey through the parted Red Sea to the Holy Land. Cf. Exultet: *the night in which our fathers, the Children of Israel, were conducted across the Red Sea....*
- Thus, this candelabrium joins the varied themes of
- Imperial Columns,
- Ancient Demons,
- Early Christian Sarcophagi (scenes of Jesus),

- Old Testament Liberation from Egypt, and
- Apocalyptic Victory to form one basic teaching:
- ***Christ's death on the cross at the hands of the Roman governor Pilate was but a prelude to his ultimate victory over paganism and the forces of evil.***
- The ***Holy Door*** of St. Paul's was commissioned by the consul Pantaleone of Amalfi (originally from Amalfi, that is) at the direction of Abbot Hildebrand of St. Paul's. This door was originally the central portal in the old St. Paul's Basilica. It is now the *Holy Door* through which pilgrims may pass only during Holy Years.
- It was cast in Constantinople in 1070 by the artist Teodoro. This explains why there is both Greek and Latin inscriptions on the panels.
- Hildebrand was eventually to become Pope GregoryVII (1073-85)! This is significant because while Hildebrand was abbot of St. Paula, the emperor Henry IV laid siege to the basilica and did a great deal of damage. This encounter was just a foreshadowing of what was to come in future years between the two men!
- The door contains 54 panels: 12 scenes from the life of Christ, 12 Apostles (with scenes from their martyrdom), 12 prophets, 2 eagles and 2 crosses.
- The entire door is crafted in silver covered in-laid bronze. This door serves as the *Holy Door* for St. Paul's and is only open during a Holy Year. It is difficult to discern the theology of the panels because they have lost their original order and placement.
- It is known that several of the scenes do include 'doors' of their own: Mary stands before a door awaiting the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the Entry into Jerusalem, the Harrowing of Hell, the Appearance to the Apostles, etc.
- In one scene, the donor is being introduced to Christ's presence by the apostle. Meaning is clear: As Pantaleone's patron, Paul opens the portals of eternal life for him who gave a door to St. Paul!
- An outside column inscribed "***Siricius Episcopus***" (St. Siricius was the bishop of Rome and pope from 384-399).
- The triumphal arch, called the ***Arch of Galla Placidia***, after the sister of Emperor Honorius (and daughter of the Emperor Theodosius), who paid for it to be built. This arch with mosaic is from the 5th century! Pope Leo the Great also had a hand in designing it.
- It depicts a now-familiar theme like that of Ss. Cosman and Damian. That is, the adoration of the 24 Elders of Revelation. They bow not just before the Lamb of God but an actual half-length portrait of Christ.
- Bearing a cross on his shoulder, the Savior is portrayed among the clouds in the manner of the *Sol Invictus* – the victorious solar deity of the ancient Romans.
- There are also angels and 4 apocalyptic beasts.
- The 12 on the right with covered heads are the Old Testament prophets; those on the left are the apostles. ****This division controls the rest of the mosaic:

- Beneath the prophets, Peter, the apostle to the Jews, stands gesturing upward.
- Beneath the apostles is Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.
- ***Now Lost Wall Portraits:*** The current basilica does *not* contain a series of frescoes that dated from the 5th century and lasted until the 19th when they were destroyed by fire. Imagine that the entire walls of the basilica's upper nave were covered in a series of frescoed scenes from the Old Testament and the New Testament. These scenes corresponded with one another according to a 5th century typology which correlated the Old Testament figures with the Apostles.
- Also, more than 200 popes are depicted in mosaic ***Papal Portraits***; space is getting tight but there is still room for another 24 pontiffs! These portraits were originally begun by Leo I (440-61) or an immediate successor and continued by subsequent successors. They are depicted in sequence linking each pope to his predecessor and, ultimately, to Peter, the first Bishop of Rome. Remember: In 'reading' a church one must always 'start' at the altar – that is where one finds the portrait of Peter. The original series of Leo was re-done by Nicholas III in the late 13th century.

Chapels Inside St. Paul's

- ***Chapel of St. Benedict*** – Note that after the 8th Century, the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls was under the auspices of a Benedictine community that occupied the monastery attached to it.
- ***Blessed Sacrament Chapel*** – built for the Jubilee of 1725 for the specific purpose of housing the 14th century crucifix (attr. Pietro Cavallini, c. 1250-1330). Note the statue of St. Brigid who is represented kneeling in front of the crucifix which, according to tradition, turned its head (1370) towards her while she was absorbed in prayer and spoke to her. This is the only chapel to have survived the fire of 1823. It was designed by Carlo Maderno (1556-1629).
- ***St. Brigid*** (1303-1373) was from an aristocratic family. She turned her house into a meeting place for scholars who had an enormous influence on her mysticism. After her husband's death, she began to have visions which she wrote. She founded the Order of the Most Holy Savoir (Brigettines). She came to Rome for approval of her order and stayed there until her death. She was proclaimed a saint in 1391.
- ***Ignatius of Loyola*** – unable to get to Jerusalem, he came to Rome to be close to the Pope. His followers took their vows in this chapel in front of Ignatius. He is said to have *"prayed to the blessed lady". "One day he found himself in a church about a mile outside of Rome. While at prayer in this place, he experienced such a change in his soul that he saw clearly that God the Father was uniting him to Christ his Son. He had no courage to doubt: he was certain that God the Father was uniting him to his Son."* This mosaic of the Madonna and Child is still preserved in the Eucharistic Chapel (12th Century!)
- ***Chapel of St. Lawrence*** – Of particular note is the marble ornamental hanging on the back of the altar; it dates from the end of the 3rd Century to the first quarter of the 5th Century. Originally, it was in the counterfacade of the basilica. The sculptural reliefs represent the saints Antony the Abbot, Dionysius, and Justina.

- ***Chapel of St. Stephen*** – Stephen was martyred by Paul. Note the palm branch in his hand.
- ***Chapel of the Conversion of Paul*** – St. Gregory the Great and St. Bernard. The altar table was a donation of Czar Nicholas (1825-1855) and is composed of malachite and lapis lazuli.

- ***The Cloister*** – A unique example of cosmatesque art. The cloister was begun at the expressed wish of Cardinal Pietro de Capua and completed between 1212 and 1235 following the orders of Giovanni Caetani, Abbot of the monastery. John XXIII used the handsome 13th century cloister to announce to a startled group of cardinals that he was summoning Vatican Council II – the first assembly in more than a century and only the second since the 16th century.
    - Cf. The 'Cautionary Notes' sculpted in the midst of this otherwise tranquil garden.
    - Adam and Eve in that other paradisaical garden. The couple is disobeying God as they eat of the fruit.
    - A 'fox' in monkish garb distracted from his reading by a goat passing by.
    - Still others warn of the 'dangers lurking in nature'. A demonic face eferges from a leaf or a crowned head forms both a front view and left and right profiles
    - these messages are meant to be 'chastening'.
- The ***quadriporticus*** was not completed until 1928. Final reconstruction ended in 1931 with the installment of the bronze door (commissioned by Pius IX) and the building of the baptistry in an adjacent room.
    - There are 150 columns in the *quadriporticus*.
    - <u>Note the additional statue of St. Luke, the companion of St. Paul, who is in the corner of the entry square</u>.

St. John Lateran....

Although omitted from the required two in 1300, it has a special place in Holy Year history since it was from here that Boniface VIII proclaimed the first Holy Year (February 22, 1300). A fresco depicting the scene just inside the nave to the right is the work of the contemporary Giotto (1267-1337). For a thousand years the Lateran palace was the residence of the popes. To this day St. John Lateran, rather than St. Peter's, remains the Cathedral of Rome.

The history of the church includes the following:

- It was 1st large place of Christian worship within the city walls of Rome (just barely...).
- Tabernacle: Many tabernacles in major basilicas are actually made to "look" like little churches themselves. This reflects the deep theology that "the Eucharist makes the Church".
- It was in the Lateran that St. Francis of Assisi and his "little brothers" came to visit Pope Innocent III in 1209 or 1210 under the auspices of Cardinal Giovanni Colonna. The pope kicked them out but following a dream in which the friars were "holding up the Church from collapsing", he summoned them and authorized their preaching.
- In March and April of 1123, the First Lateran Council took place in this basilica. The pope was Calistus II and the decision was the result of the belief that it was no longer necessary or convenient to summon ecumenical councils in the East. Subsequently, five other ecumenical councils were held in the Lateran: Councils of 1138, 1159, 1179, 1215, and one held between 1512 and 1517. In all, nearly a quarter of the crucial, lawmaking ecumenical councils of the church took place (1123, 1139, 1179, 1215 and 1512).
- 1929 – the Lateral Accord was signed on February 11, 1929 between the Holy See secretary of state and Mussolini creating Vatican city state "giving God back to Italy, and Italy back to God."
- Sacked by Alaric in 408 and by Genseric's Vandals in 455
- wrecked by an earthquake in 896 and burned out both in 1308 and 1360
- bronze doors date from 29 BC when the Emperor Augustus installed them at the Curia in the Roman Forum, the meeting place of the senators. Curiously, expectant Roman mothers "touch" them in the hope that they will give birth to a boy. Such historic figures as Julius Caesar, Cicero and all the emperors passed through these doors! They had to be "resized" for the basilica and you can see the repair work on them as well as the newer additions. The bronze doors were donated by the Roman Curia and modified in 1600.
- the interior pavement is medieval and was restored in 1425 while the overhead ceiling is Renaissance.
- The 12 Apostles are prominently displayed in niches of each of the main pillars of the main nave. Above the apostles are 12 of the Old Testament Prophets. This architectural design is meant to concretely illustrate the theology expressed in the New Testament letters of St. Paul that, "The Church is built on the Apostles and the Prophets".
- Note the parallel panels depicting the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Each scene has a counterpart (similar to the Sistine Chapel).

- Apse mosaics are 13th century (which carefully incorporated and preserved earlier mosaics)
- Note the "bejewelled" cross in the central nave. This mosaic is from the 4th - 5th centuries. The use of a "bejewelled" cross instead of a crucifix is significant and designates a very early work of Christian art. The Church began using the crucifix as its primary symbol of faith only after Christianity was long established as the legal religion of the Roman Empire. After that point, the "sacrificial" elements of the faith were virtually ignored as was the reality of the call to "suffer" and share in the cross. Thus, the church depicted the suffering of Jesus at a time when the majority of "Christians" did not consider it to be an important part of their own faith life!
- The figure of Jesus in the main apse was made to commemorate the date of dedication when our Lord appeared to Pope Sylvester I in 324.
- The Medallion of Jesus located above the "former entrance" (now a side door!) Was taken from the original basilica. ***NOTE: this is the first image of Jesus to be displayed outdoors. It was put in a public setting (piazza) so the people could see it in vast numbers.
- Papal Altar – Gothic Altar is of 1357: The Holy Father is only one who has a "right" to celebrate Mass on this altar. It was restored in 1851. In the upper part, behind the gilded fan-windows, is preserved the precious wooden altar where the first popes – from St. Peter (64 or 67) to Sylvester (314-335) – celebrated Mass. Note: all popes have celebrated Mass on this same altar with the only exception being the prisoners of the Vatican and Avignon
- The current appearance is mostly attributable to Borromini who redesigned it. The image of the statues is that the church rests on the foundation of the apostles and prophets!
- Rome's tallest and oldest obelisk, from the time of Pharaoh Thutmose III & IV (1420-1411 BC) adorns the plaza. It was originally located in the Circus Maximus!
- As the Cathedral of Rome, St. John Lateran continues to be the place where the Pope celebrates every Holy Thursday liturgy symbolically washing the feet of 12 priests.

Origins...

The name "St. John Lateran" stems from an 8 century process. The basilica was a Constantinian contribution after the land-holding Laterans fell into imperial disfavor and their holdings confiscated (Emperor Maxentius, who Constantine defeated at Rome's Milvian bridge, had been using the Lateran grounds as barracks for his bodyguards). Many historians think that Constantine built this, and other Christian basilicas, in reparation for ordering the deaths of his wife Fausta and his son Crispus (by his first wife, Minerva) and several other relatives. Only at the age of 64 did Constantine (emperor from 306-337) accept baptism and died dressed in the white garment of a new convert. Constantine donated his personal property, received in dowry from his wife, for the first Papal cathedral and residence in Christian history. So begins the story of St. John Lateran!

The Laterani family was an old and well-established family in Rome. The historian Tacitus informs us that the Laterani family (*Platus Lateranus)* took part in the conspiracy organized by the Pisani against Emperor Nero in 66 AD. The plot failed and they were condemned to death and their properties confiscated. During the 2nd century the rich house had given way to the

barracks of the *Equites Singulares (*the emperor's mounted body guards and lodgings for the commander). About the same time a matriarch named Domitia Lucilla owned the property; there, her son, who was to become the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-80) had spent his youth amid baths and nymphea fed by the aqueduct built by Claudius. In the early 3rd century, the Lateran family once again took possession of their property only to have it expropriated again for unknown reasons. Finally, Constantine took possession of the properties.

The property, and existing estate, were given by Constantine to Pope Melichiades (311-14) or pope Sylvester (314-335) and was dedicated simply to "The Savior". Basilica is built on the barracks of the *Equites Singulares* (Constantine had the existing barracks leveled since these were the troops he had routed in his 312 battle at the Milvian Bridge). Could there be a better symbol for Christianity's victory over the old pagan order???

The original basilica bore the common name of "golden" probably because the dominant color was yellow both from gold leafing, donations from Constantine, 30 columns of Numidian yellow marble, side panels of the same marble, and mosaics with gold background. The basilica was first erected to "Christ the Savior" and provided a papal residence inside the city walls for the next 10 centuries by 162 popes.

It was dedicated to the "Savior" because Rome hoped for salvation from the Barbarian invasions. It may also have been an act of thanksgiving by Constantine to "The Savior" who helped him in battle! Later it was dedicated to St. John the Baptist because of the presence of the baptistry and after that to St. John the Evangelist for unclear reasons. By giving it the name of an Apostle, it raises the Lateran to a par with St. Peter's. It was also dedicated to the savior (Redeemer) because of the Icon in the Sancta Sanctorum and the legend of the apparition of the face of Christ on the day fo the consecration.

Constantine chose this spot, which was an out-of-the way location near the Aurelian walls, so as to not antagonize the still dominant pagan population of imperial Rome.

Disputes exist regarding the history of the naming; some claim that Gregory the Great (590-604) gave it the name "St. John" in honor of the Baptist and the Evangelist while others say that "The Lateran" was the name commonly used for the basilica until Pope Sergius III (904-911) renamed it for St. John the Baptist and, a century later, Pope Lucius II (1144-1145) added a second John, the Evangelist.

Atop the facade are three figures 22 feet tall, Christ, flanked by the two Johns. The significance of the basilica is affirmed by a forthright statement retained from the Middle Ages above the front columns: *Sacrosancta Lateranensis ecclesia, omnium urbis et orbis ecclesiarum mater et caput* meaning "The sacrosanct Lateran Church, mother and head of all the churches of the city and of the world.". Although this title may seem a little presumptuous today, it has historical and theological basis! These figures not only represent Christ and the two St. John's but they also include the important Church Fathers from the East and the West.

Of interesting note is that the church's actual entranceway, in fact, faces east (reverse order from most church designs). When the church was originally built the custom of orienting churches

had not yet developed. Here, the architects followed the foundations of the razed barracks and faced the church toward the city wall.

The Patriarchate of the Lateran was the residence of the popes for nearly 1,000 years until the Avignon Papacy. When the popes returned from Avignon in 1378 they found it, and Rome, in such a state of disrepair that they decided to start over and so moved their residence to a new facility at the Vatican and near St. Peter's.

History of Renovation...

- Pope Leo the Great (440-461) ordered it restored after the Vandals sacked it in 455. Adrian I (772-795) continued the restoration process.
- An earthquake in 896 caused further damage and Pope Sergius III ordered its complete rebuilding in 905.
- Pope Nicholas IV (1288-1292) had it magnificently decorated.
- A fire disfigured it in 1308. Clement V undertook its reconstruction from Avignon and the work continued under Urban V (1362-1370) and Gregory XI (1370-1378).
- Sixtus V (1585-90), one of his 'frenzied' urban renewal projects tore down St. John Lateran's original buildings and replaced them with the late Renaissance structures by his favorite architect, Domenico Fontana (1543-1607).
- Innocent X (1644-1655) ordered a radical transformation for the Jubilee of 1650. Borromini directed this project.
- In 1735 Clement XII ordered another transformation including the new facade by Alessandro Galilei in 1735.
- In 1885, Leo XIII continued the work and ordered the ambulatory around the apse, a stupendous example of paleochristian art, demolished in order to enlarge and renovate the apse.
- ****Of the original Lateran Basilica and palace only the Pope's private chapel, the *Sancta Sanctorum* remains. Sixtus V removed this magnificently frescoed shrine to what has become a grimy traffic island. Sixtus V also removed the staircase from the entrance to the Papal palace and placed it at the *Sancta Sanctorum*.

Walking Tour...

- The statues on the front of the church are of Christ blessing the people flanked by John the Baptist and the Evangelist along with Fathers of the Church from the East and the West.
- The pope used to bless the people from this balcony on Ascension Day.
- As you enter the basilica, note the large statue of Constantine on the left – this was found in one of his thermal baths on the Quirinale!
- Above the door and the statue of Constantine are marble high reliefs that reproduce some of the episodes from the life of St. John the Baptist.
- Upon entering the Cathedral, it should be remembered that the present basilica *retains the original Constantinian arrangement and virtually the same layout.* The Emperor obviously envisioned an edifice to rival the Roman *basilicae* or monumental public meeting hall.

- Central Nave:
    - Ceiling was finished under Pius V and later restored under Pius VI (1775-1799) who ordered his coat of arms placed in the center.
    - The cosmatesque pavement was completed under Martin V (1417-31)
    - The niches were designed by Borromini and before 1718 they contained the statues of the apostles. Above them are reliefs with scenes from the Old and New Testaments dating from about 1718.
    - On the right side are Thaddeus and Nahum, Matthew and Jonah, Philip, Thomas and Hosea, James the Greater and Ezekiel, and St. Paul and Jeremiah.
    - On the left side are Peter and Isaiah, Andrew and Baruch, John the Evangelist and Daniel, James the Less and Joel Bartholomew and Obadiah, and Simon and Micah.
- Martin V is buried in the confessional with a bronze slab dating to about 1443. Note that many people throw coins into the confessional area. This practice probably originated with the ancient pilgrims who left coins in holes as an offering at the sacred site. It is probably the origin, too, of the coins which are left at the Trevi Fountain today!
- It is appropriate that Martin V receive this honor. True, he is not the "first Pope to be spoken about in Catholic households" but he is probably one of the most pivotal figures in history. He was elected Pope at the 16th Ecumenical Council (1414-17) in Constance which brought at end to the Great Western Schism and restored a peace and unity lost for nearly fifty years. Martin, in many ways, was the glue that preserved and reconciled the Catholic Church during its most difficult time of division (even worse than the Protestant Reformation, although it prepared the way for it). Martin also began the renovation of Rome that would ignite the Renaissance. For his influence on secular and sacred Rome he was given the title: *"2nd founder of the Papacy and Restorer of Rome*". That explains why he is buried under the altar!

Details of the Apse....

- When the ambulatory around the apse was dismantled, the ancient forms were respected and replaced much of the ancient mosaic. These events are represented on the left wall of the presbytery where the architect, Francesco Vespignani, is shown in the act of presenting the plan of the presbytery and apse to Leo XIII.
- <u>The prized mosaic of the apse was not only transported from the ancient apse but was also restored</u>. This was ordered by Nicholas IV in 1292.
    - <u>In the center of the mosaic is the jeweled cross and the dove sitting on the hill that encloses the celestial Jerusalem</u>.
    - <u>The four rivers gushing forth represent the four evangelists who will quench the thirst of God's people represented by the sheep and the deer</u>.
    - On the left is the figure of Mary together with a kneeling Nicholas IV (1288-92) and Sts. Peter and Paul.
    - On the right are the admirable images of St. John and St. Andrew.
    - The two smaller figures are those of St. Francis and St. Anthony of Padua – these two were included because Nicholas IV was so disposed since he was a Franciscan (Friar Minor)!

- Below, note the river *Jordan* with swan, fish and boats while further down are 9 of the 12 apostles in the spaces between the windows. The two figures in the smaller spaces are the artists.
- On the right wall of the presbytery are two large and splendid 19th Century frescoes representing episodes from the pontificate of Innocent III, specifically his approval of the Dominican and Franciscan orders.
- Above the metal grill of the high altar are 19th century reliquaries which contain relics of the heads of Peter and Paul which were brought here in 1370 from the Sancta Sanctorum. The Gothic Papal Altar (Tabernacle) is known to be the ***last Gothic work in Rome*** and was designed by Giovanni di Stefano in 1367.

Entering the ***Transept*** we pass from the Middle Ages to the height of the late 16th century Mannerism. Clement VIII (1592-1605) employed Giacomo della Porta (1539-1602) to direct the works. These frescoes tell the story of Constantine and St. John Lateran.

- After *Constantine's Dream* and *Victory at the Milvian Bridge*,
- come *Constantine's Search for Pope Sylvester I,*
- *Baptism of Constantine,*
- *Dedication of the Basilica,*
- *Miraculous Appearance of the Savior in the Basilica,* and
- *Presentation of the Emperor's Gifts.*
- Much of this legend has been disputed by later historians who claim that Constantine thought little of Pope Sylvester and waited until his death to be baptized.

To the left of the apse is the 19th century tomb of Innocent III (1198-1216) which was moved here from Perugia in 1891. It is fitting that Innocent's remains lie in St. John Lateran for it was here that the powerful Pope approved the Franciscan Order after a frightening dream in which he saw St. Francis holding upon his shoulders a collapsing Lateran basilica!

Renovation work done by Borromini took great pains to preserve the past by using pieces of the former tomb monuments in the present structure and purposely preserving enough of the other "artifacts" to give the visitor an intended sense of the history.

Other important relics contained at the Lateran include:

- The chalice from which the Evangelist drank poison
- chain with which he was bound
- miraculous tunic he used to raise three people from the dead
- Sackcloth of St. John the Baptist
- cloth Jesus used to dry the feet of the Apostles
- red garment Jesus was given by the soldiers of Pontius Pilate.

<u>Due to the large number of very significant relics, the Lateran acquired a prestige even greater than the basilicas of Sts. Peter and Paul and was considered the true heart of Christendom</u>.

Nothing remains of the Constantinian Patriarchate. Present Lateran Palace was built by Sixtus V (1585-90) as was the Scala Santa. The Scala Santa does include earlier structures: *Scrinium (6th -*

7th cent. Frescoes of St. Augustine), 13th cent. Chapel of Sancta Sanctorum, and the Leonine Triclinium.

Baptistry

Baptistry built behind the apse – it was the only one in Rome in existence at Constantine's time. Once a year the Pope would do baptisms here at Easter.

Liber Pontificalis states that Constantine offered magnificent gifts to the basilica and the baptistry even though he never saw it completed. Legend holds that Sylvester I baptized the emperor in this baptistry. Actual dates for the baptistry's useful completion are 313-318. Note that it was necessary for the baptistry to be build in proximate vicinity to the church since the Sacraments of Initiation required that the newly-baptized receive Eucharist as well.

The font was originally filled with water from the Aqua Claudia Aqueduct which was built to feed a noble family's baths!

It is here, according to tradition, that Pope Gregory the Great, inspired by the Holy Spirit, composed his *Gregorian Chants* which became famous and provided the setting for the divine liturgy.

Note the use of the red porphyry columns: porphyry was very expensive and only made in Egypt (up until the 5th century AD). These columns are obvious *spolia* from taken from ancient public buildings in imperial Rome. No building in the city of Rome claims such grandeur of *spolia* as this Baptistry! Note how the idea of "reusing" the ancient *spolia* came to be a perfect symbol for Baptism: that which is profane now becomes sacred.

- The "Octagonal" design is a graphic depiction of the *ogdoade*, the "8th day dedicated to God" and a reference to the resurrection of Christ as well as man who, through the waters of baptism, is reborn to new life and destined for salvation.
- There is a basin for the immersion rite as well as an urn made of green Egyptian basalt from the end of the 14th century.
- Although Constantine did build the baptistry, it's architecture was altered in two instances: 5th century when it was redone by Sixtus III (432-440) who gave it its current "octagonal" shape and in 1637 when it was restored under Urban VIII. (1623-44).
- Because of the "sanctity" of this place, several chapels and oratories were eventually added. These include:
- Chapel of St. Venantius – containing mosaics from the time of Pope John IV (640-642)) and Pope Theodore (642-48) and an elegant 16th century wooden ceiling.
- The chapels of St. John Baptist and St. John the Evangelist were constructed during the papacy of Hilary (461-67) and stand to either side of the entrance (the chapel of the Evangelist has a mosaic of the same period with the mystical lamb at the center).

- ***Chapel of St. John the Evangelist*** – in the shape of a cross, it contains mosaics from the time of Pope Hilary, the Romanesque bronze door of 1195, and a bronze statue of the saint belonging to the 16th century. This shrine was built by Pope Hilary (461-8) in fulfilment of a vow to St. John the Evangelist in whose tomb the then Papal legate had hidden during a dangerous riot in Ephesus!
- ***Chapel of the Baptist*** – containing a bronze door with silver crosses and epigraphs and the name of pope Hilary inscribed on it. These bronze doors have been praised down through the ages by Dante and others for the 'singing' sound they make when they are opened. Note: the 'singing' ceased when they were damaged by the 1993 bomb by the Italian Mafia just outside the Baptistry.

- Under the baptistry are traces of a Roman building thought to be the Laterani palace.
- Above the walls of the baptistry are paintings with episodes from the life of St. John the Baptist.
- Further down the walls are scenes representing the life of the Emperor Constantine.
- Note the depiction of the "Destruction of the Idols"
- Sixtus III in 435 had an inscription carved on the cornice of the columns that reads *"Generated by the Spirit who rendered these waters fecund. Here is that source of life, which cleanses the whole universe, gushing from Christ's wound. This water which receives the old man has a new man arise. There is no difference among those who are reborn. A one and only baptism, a one and only spirit, a one and only faith: they are one."* Other sources attribute this inscription to Leo the Great who was a deacon at the Lateran – possibly done while he was still a deacon. Note: These are 8 *distichs* inscribed on the architrave. What a perfect concept: Christ's death upon the cross brings life to all those who submit to his will and accept the sacrament of baptism.
- Note the "vine" image oni the mosaic apse – this is an image that will be continued in many other Roman churches wishing to 'connect' with the ancient Christian and Papal heritage of the Lateran.

Cloister

The cloister contains a 4th Century chair of the Popes.

- It took 17 years to build the cloister from 1215-1232 during the reigns of Honorius III (1216-1227) and Innocent IV (1243-1254).
- It was designed by Pietro Vassalletto and his son who also worked on the cloister in St. Paul Outside the Walls.
- Note the rose-shaped tympanums from 1297 that bear the coat of arms of Cardinal Colonna.
- At the beginning of the 2nd ambulatory are bronze door panels completed in 1196 by Umberto and Pietro di Piacenza. These panels were ordered by Celestine III (1191-1198) and Honorius III (1216-1227). Finally, on the corner between the first and last ambulatories, the fragments of the 13th century tomb of Cardinal Annibali contains sculptural reliefs by Arnolfo di Cambio (who did the bronze statue of St. Peter).

Santa Maria Maggiore

The name "Santa Maria Maggiore" means "St. Mary Major". It is given this name because it is considered to be the most important church dedicated to Mary in Western Christendom.

It stands at the highest point of one of Rome's ancient 7 hills. The church is a jewel box of art treasures of each epoch and style. Classical columns divide the nave and aisles while Byzantine mosaics glitter with gold in the apse. The basilica's architectural and artistic masterpieces underline one constant theme: the pre-eminence of Mary, Mother of Jesus and true Mother of God.

Founding Legend and Historical Events...

- According to legend (depicted in 13th century mosaics in the loggia and others in the 15th century apse) the church was built by Pope Liberius (352-366) after a dream on August 5, 352 or saw a vision of Mary who requested a church where it would snow that a snowfall on the Esquiline Hill. Other versions of the "Miracle of the Snows" claim that Pope Liberius and Giovanni, a rich citizen, dreamed of an immense cross in the sky which revealed the miracle of the snow. The following morning a snowfall covered the precise spot on which the basilica would be situated. The legend says that when he awoke there was indeed snow outlining a large area. ***NOTE: The first record of this legend appears in oral tradition in the 7th century and in written tradition in 1250 (writings of Fra. Bartolommeo of Trento).
- Pope Liberius was a firm crusader against the Arian heresy, which denied the divinity of Jesus. It is known that in Liberius' time the Esquiline Hill had been settled by barbarian troops who were largely Arian! By constructing a church to the Virgin Mary, Liberius evidently wished to foster her cult as Mother of God against the spread of the Arian beliefs!
- The original church (that of Liberius) was completed in 358.
- Because of the 'Legend', every year on the anniversary of its dedication a Mass is celebrated with a symbolic "snowfall."!
- *"myr"* means "the loved one" and suffix "jam" means "God". Result of "Mary = loved one of God"
- it was also named the "*Liberiana*" (or 'Liberian Basilica') then later *"Saint Mary of the Snow*" (since the 11th century: Santa Maria ad Nives)
- St. Mary Major is the first church built in Rome with the money of the People and not with private or imperial funds! Note that Constantine built Sts. Peter and Paul and the Pope built the Lateran!
- Before the 6th AD it also came to be known as Santa Maria ad Praesepe since the remains of the manger had been brought to this basilica.
- Finally, it was called Santa Maria Maggiore because it is the largest of the 26 churches consecrated to the Mother of God in Rome.
- It should be noted that S. Maria Maggiore is distinctly antique in feeling among all the basilicas. In fact, it is the only major basilica in Rome that has remained essentially the

same since it was built in the 5th century! To visit this sacred site is to truly step into ecclesial history.

- ****Note: Virtually all churches in Rome claim to house sacred relics relating to their name. There are NO RELICS OF THE VIRGIN MARY IN THIS CHURCH. The reason is simple: Mary was assumed into heaven bodily intact and left no essential physical remains on earth. Thus, S. Maria Maggiore *originally had no transept* (used for pilgrims to circulate around the *martyrium*! A transept was added to S. Maria Maggiore only in the papacy of Nicholas IV (1288-92) which required the construction of a new apse. The basilica does boast several 'secondary' relics (Virgin's milk, hair, garments, bones of SS. Matthew, Jerome, and the arm of St. Thomas Becket). These are in addition to the *praesepe*, wooden crib, used by the infant Jesus.
- Other significant relics include wood from the stable in which Jesus was born and an icon of Mary called the *Salus Popolo Romani* which, like the *Acheropita*, is claimed to have been painted by St. Luke.
- Many of these relics are kept in a special 'Tabernacle' to the right of the *schola cantorum*. The tabernacle of the relics was donated in 1256 by Giacomo and Vinia Capocci.
- ****This tabernacle was decorated with *cherubim* and was intended to recall the Old Testament Holy of Holies.
- Thus, it embodies a sacred theology: ***Mary has long been likened to the Ark of the Covenant sheltered in the inner sanctum of the Jewish Temple because she bore Christ within her who then superceded the Old Law.***
- Note the 'Altar in Vico', it has re-used the original altar front mosaic from this tabernacle. It was made between 1256 and 1300. The icon in this scene is known as the *Regina Caeli* and is perhaps the oldest in the city. Note it retains its early Christian character. The Virgin gently clasps her hands around the quite mature and attired Christ Child. The infant holds a book (just like the *Archeropita*) with his left hand and blessed with his right.
- This altar front has obviously been reused from antiquity. The original date of composition is unknown but it was probably sometime before the 8th century.

Facade Mosaics

- The original facade of S. Maria Maggiore is hidden behind the grand staircase (1721-43) and loggia (1743-50).
- This older facade is a magnificent Romanesque design and dates to the time of Pope Eugenius III (1145-53). The Mosaics are from the time of Boniface VIII (c. 1300).
- The primary subject of the mosaics is the legend of the founding of the church
- Leftmost of 4 lower tiers: Pope Liberius wears a nightcap while above the canopied bed the Virgin with the young Christ addresses the dreaming prelate. He is to build a church on the place where the snow will fall.
- A second panel depicts a similar scene with the donor John the Patrician. The similarities of the two dreams verifies their content.
- In a 3rd lower panel the truth of the vision is confirmed as the two men meet.
- In the 4th panel, the Virgin's command is carried out. Christ, now an adult, appears alongside Mary in a star studded aureole (recalling an icon). The two

reach out to unfurl a curtain of snow. Below them, Liberius bends over a stylus to etch in the snow fallen on the Esquiline Hill's summer flora the plan of the basilica he will build. On the plan is inscribed the word [CON]GREGATIO meaning both an accumulation of snow and the congregation of the faithful. John the Patrician, his wife and sons, members of the Curia in the miters and other clerics look on in awe.

- Although it depicts an episode in 358, this facade mosaic really is new at the time of the first Jubilee year (in fact, it was only then being completed). All architecture and clothing is contemporary with the Middle Ages. The 'liturgy' being depicted is also 13th century.
- ***Note: the depiction of Christ in the upper register of mosaics is a near replica of the image of the *Acheropita* (who 'visited' this church once every year on the feast of the Assumption – heavenly reunion). He is blessing with one hand and holding a book in the other. On the book are inscribed the words: EGO SUM LUX MUNDI QUI meaning "*I am the Light of the World who...*". This is virtually the same Christ who is depicted in S. Prassede's Zeno chapel. Note that the angels around Christ carry liturgical items like candels and censors – these reveal this icon to be a 'Heavenly Liturgy'.

****This 'Heavenly Liturgy' representation is not surprising since we have already seen it in so many other churches. But that's the point – this one isn't "in" a church, it's on the front facade of the church!!!!! Here's why: This mosaic is placed here because on the feast of the Assumption the entire piazza becomes a church and its outward-curving facade a kind of apse! The crowds were too great to be accommodated inside.

- As in an apse mosaic, among the saints to the left and right are Mary (with the Greek *MuRho and ThetaUpsilon* which stand for ***Meter Theou*** – 'Mother of God'). Note that she is elevated to stand beside her son at his left; she mediates on behalf of the People of Rome. Her right hand is raised to her breast just as it is in the reliquary of the Holy Cross in the Sancta Sanctorum.
- Other Saints: To Christ's right is John the Baptist – the other intercessor. This is the same arrangement of 'intercessors' that was found in S. Prassede (except in the Chapel of Zeno Christ was represented by a window rather than an icon). On either side of the three main figures are Rome's ubiquitous apostolic protectors: Peter and Paul, James and Andrew, and Jerome and Matthew (whose relics are preserved in the Basilica).
- At the feet of Mary and John appear the miniature figures of two kneeling men – Pietro and Jacopo Colonna (1288-1326 and 1278-1318 respectively). They were Pope Boniface's sworn enemies and were living in exile at the time the mosaics were completed. However, the Colonna's were the patrons of the mosaic. They hired the painter Filippo Rusuti (d. 1317) who signed the work in the center beneath Christ's footstool.
- Another plea for heavenly grace is inscribed on the columned portico below. This was a gift of Pope Eugenius III (1145-53): TERTIUS EUGENIUS ROMANUS P[A]P[A] BENIGNUS OBTULIT HOC MUNUS VIRGO SACRATA TIBI QUE MATER [CH]RISTI FIERI MERITO MERUSITI SALVA PERPETUA

VIRGINITATE TIBI ES VIA VITA SALUS TOTIUS GLORIA MUNDI DA VENIAM CULPIS VIRGINITATIS HONOR meaning *Eugenius III, the Roman pope, willingly brings this gift to you, Virgin Mary, you who truly deserved to be the Mother of Christ and perpetually preserved your virginity. You are the way, the life, the salvation, and the glory of the entire world. Oh honor of virginity, grant forgiveness for sin.*

- As with other church designs, the facade of S. Maria Maggiore clear distinguishes, with a travertine cornice, the realm of the heavenly church (gold mosaics) and the present world down below. The two connect only at God's will as manifest through visions and miracles.
- Note: separating the two scenes at the left and at the right are majestic columns, rendered illusionistically in mosaic; each supports one of the two 'pillars' of the Roman church: Paul and Peter. Moreover, they symbolize the Colonna family, the church's patrons, whose name means "column".

Additional History:

Modern archeologists now hold that St. Mary Major has nothing to do with Liberius' church, supposedly built on a different Esquiline site. The disclaimers are based on excavations carried out between 1966-72 which unearthed, six meters below the church pavement, a private 1st century Roman villa with a large portico and 3rd century frescoed calendar scenes.

This original church of Pope Liberius fell into ruin and disappeared. The Mary Major we see today took shape in 432 when Pope Sixtus III (432-440) decided to build a more magnificent structure near the site of the Liberian Marian church. The time was ripe for Sixtus to forcefully reaffirm the Marian cult.

> (Actually, the current basilica was more probably begun under Pope Celestine I (422-32) and finished under Sixtus III. Celestine had presided over the Council of Ephesus where the dogma of Mary as *Theotokos* was clarified and affirmed. This grand basilica, then, was more probably Celestine's idea to celebrate the triumph of Mary as Mother of God. Nonetheless, Sixtus capitalized on it.)

In the late Empire, a temple to the Roman mother goddess Juno Lucina was flourishing on the Esquiline Hill and was frequented by many Roman matrons approaching childbirth. It is highly likely that a church to the Virgin Mother of God was erected to supplant the enduring pagan cult of Juno Lucina. In fact some of Mary Major's marble columns probably came from the Juno Lucina temple which was located (according to archeological finds) some 300 meters from the basilica's current site.

Sixtus had additional motivation for the church based on the Council of Ephesus which rejected the Nestorian heresy (the denial of both human and divine natures in Jesus stressing only the divine but from the moment of birth). Nestorius claimed that Mary could only be called the *Mother of Jesus* but not the *Mother of God.*. ***It was Sixtus' intention, realized in a series of Mosaics (*Annunciation, Adoration of the Magi, Flight into Egypt, etc.)* In the triumphal arch over the altar, to invite the faithful to meditate on the *divinity of Christ* and the Virgin's divine

motherhood! The series of wall mosaics take care to emphasize the link between Christ's birth and the Messianic prophecies.

- According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, construction began under Sixtus III (432-440) who wished to consecrate it to the Madonna following the Council of Ephesus (June 7, 432) which established that Mary could be called "Mother of God" or Theotokos.
- However, Sixtus conserved the original mosaics in his reconstruction project! These mosaics are of great importance.
- Eugenius III in the 12th century enlarged the atrium and Nicholas IV rebuilt the apse. In 1670, Clement X (1670-1676) reconstructed the rear facade and in 1740-58 Benedict XIV added the front facade.

General Nave Information

- The gilded ceiling was decorated with the first gold retrieved from the "New World" (Peru) by Christopher Columbus and was a gift from King Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain to the Spanish pope, Alexander VI.
- The pontifical coat of arms of Alexander VI Borgia (1492-1503) adorn the ceiling.
- The mosiac pavement was installed by Eugenius III (1145-1153) and was a gift of the Roman aristocrats. It is a Cosmatesque original.

Central Nave Mosaics

- All mosaics in the central nave were done when the church was built in the 5th century!
- Mosaics in the central nave represent on the left wall: life of Moses and Joshua. Of the 42 panels that were here originally, only 27 remain. The 12 panels on the left wall, and those on the right wall, do not possess a unifying theme. Of the 12 panels which today are on the left wall, 3 refer to the story of Abraham and 9 to Jacob.
- These are important because they represent certain 'typologies' for Jesus and the Christian Mysteries. They are meant to be ***read from the altar proceeding towards the door.***
- The 1st scene is not from the Creation story but from Melchizedek's presenting Abraham with bread and wine. This marks an obvious typological significance for the celebration of the Eucharist on the main altar and provides an important reference for the claim (Heb 6:20-7:28) that the Christian priesthood 'in the succession of Melchezedek' had superseded the rites of the Jews. The point is made clear: Christ appearing in heaven gestures not toward Abraham (who approaches with his men on horseback in the manner of a Roman emperor) but to Melchizedek.
- The 3rd aedicula introduces a related typology. While depicting the story of Abraham's hospitality (Gen 18:6-8) it shows one of the 3 messengers whom the Patriarch greets enclosed in an aureole to signify that this figure is Christ (more importantly, that the 3 are the Trinity). Below in the same panel, the cross is introduced over the doorway of Abraham and Sarah's house and bread and wine are offered in the final moment of Abraham's offering sustenance to his guests.

- The farther away from the altar, the less emphasis is on liturgical typology and more on the theme of the transfer of God's covenant from the rightful brother to a younger sibling, as exemplified by the story of Jacob and Esau.
- The other side of the nave reveals similar characteristics in parallel mosaics. Some of these (near the Triumphal arch) are derived from legends rather than the Bible. They connect with the story of Christ entering Egypt on the Triumphal arch:
    - Pharaoh's daughter, attended by ladies in waiting, sits in her palace to receive her adopted son who, in a test, has rejected the offer of precious stones.
    - Below, the young Moses appears again defeating the wisemen of the Egyptians with his knowledge (an allusion to Christ in the Temple).
    - Farther along the name, Moses and his successor Joshua – the name was the same as Jesus' – are shown overwhelming their enemies in a more literal way: Moses inundation of Pharaoh's army.
- These nave mosaics make it clear that many secrets are hidden in the accounts of the Old Testament. Among others are the guarantee of God's perpetual protection and the transfer of that protection to the Jews' younger brothers, the Christians. These messages are almost hidden in a church dedicated to the Virgin.
- One should not miss the special importance given to women in these pictures: Rebecca Rachel, Leah and to Pharaoh's daughter. *These women are **types of Mary***.

Apse

- The apse was renovated by Nicholas IV (1288-1292) who replaced Sixtus III's mosaics with an even more splendid portrayal in the Virgin in Glory. The Franciscan Jacopo Torriti completed these mosaics around 1295.
    - ****NOTE: Nicholas *changed the focus of Sixtus' original mosaics away from Mary as the Madonna with child to Mary as the Queen of Heaven! This is a shift in theology and not just a shift in art!* Mary is not the Byzantine *bride* next to her enthroned son sharing the same throne!
    - This particular Marian iconography made its first appearance a century earlier at S. Maria in Trestevere which coincided with the spread of the Marian cult in 12th and 13th century Europe.
    - An inscription, taken from *Assumption Day liturgy* brings everything together: MARIA VIRGO ASSU[M]PTA EST AD ETHEREU[M] THALAMU[M] IN QUO REX REGU[M] STELLATO SEDET SOLIO EXALTATA EST SANCTA DEI GENETRIX SUPER CHOROS ANGELORUM AD COELESTIA REGNA which means *The Virgin Mary is received into the celestial bridal chamber in which the King of Kings is seated on a starry throne. Mary, the holy bearer of God, is raised into heaven above the choirs of angels.*
    - As on the facade, Christ is within a starry aureole. Here, however, instead of 4 angels, he has 9 on each side to designate the three choirs within the three angelic hierarchies: *Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones; Dominions, Virtues, and Powers; Principalities, Archangels and Angels.*
    - In the open book that Christ holds are the words: VENI ELECTA M[E]A ET PONAM IN TE THRONU[M] MEU[M] which means *Come my chosen one and I*

will put you on my throne. These words recall the Song of Songs recited on the Assumption Day liturge: *Come from Lebanon, my bride; hurry down from the top of Amana* (SS 4:8).

- Note that the throne 'floats' above the firmament; great care has been taken to place the sun and moon under Christ's feet.
- The Virgin's face is depicted much as it is on the *Regina Caeli*. Mary's hands are raised in 'intercessory gestures. Mary continues her work, sitting beside her son, of intercessing for all penitents!
- The artist signed the apse mosaic: IACOB TORRITI PICTOR H[O]C MOSIAC FEC[IT] meaning *James Torriti, painter, made this work in mosaic.*
- The enter connection between the apse and the facade seems to have been the work of Nicholas IV who coordinated these two works according to a great theological treatise. He explained this treatise in a letter to Jacopo Colonna in 1288: *he describes Mary as the "woman clothed in the sun with the moon beneath her feet" and includes phrases referring to her elevation that are virtually identical to elements found in the mosaic!*
- On the left are Sts. Peter, Paul, Francis of Assisi (Nicholas was a Franciscan! – Francis was just canonized in 1228), and Pope Nicholas IV, kneeling. On the right the saints are Sts. John the Baptist, St. John the Evangelist, and St. Anthony. The kneeling figure is Cardinal Giacomo Colonna.
- Note: Francis had a particular devotion to Mary and the Doctrine of the Assumption was not yet defined. Thus, this mosaic was a very RADICAL statement of theology! Bonaventure, Nicholas' predecessor as head of the Franciscans, had been a strong advocate of the Marian Dogma. He had even written sermons for this day celebrating the ***Feast of the Assumption***. Francis and his followers, including Pope Nicholas IV, were closely identified with this doctrine.
- The quartets of saints and patrons stand on the banks of a river alive with fish and fowl, boats, fisherman, and putti. One vignette showing a man saved from a shipwrech symbolizes the salvation of those who, abandoning worldly concern, attend to their spiritual lives. Classical personifications of river gods with upturned urns, anchor the waterway at each end.
    - In the center, the river divides into 4 streams which define the River of Eden (to water all the earth).
    - 2 deer drink from the waters which also symbolize the Eucharist which offers redemption.
    - Note that Eden is represented at the center as a gold-clad city. See that a sword-wielding seraph closes off this paradise.
    - Within the walls are Enoch (Gen 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kgs 11) – the 2 Old Testament figures who ascended to heaven. They are perfect counterparts to Christ and Mary enthroned above.
- Note the floral scrolls growing from large planters which anchor the apsidal space.
- Also, there are similar vines the run along the underside of the apse's edge – medallions of angels interrupt the vine and at the top, directly above a cross

suspended in the fan of heaven, are the Chi-Rho and Alpha-Omega, ancient symbols of the eternal Christ!

- Other mosaics below recount the events in the life of the Virgin:
- *Annunciation*
- *Nativity*
- *Adoration of the Magi*
- *Presentation in the Temple*
- ****in the center of these previous 4 scene is found the icon of the ***Dormition***. See how Mary's soul is taken by Christ standing behind her. This is an inversion of the *Regina Caeli* icon! In the clouds above are David and Moses as well as Enoch and Elijah. Also, the burial is situated between 'Mt. Zion' and the 'Mt. Of Olives' which is precisely the place described in a letter by Jerome: *The grave of Mary is in the Valley of Josaphat, half way between Zion and Olivet.* The artist even pictured the column of flagellation (which is now in the Chapel of Zeno at the church of S. Prassede).

Tomb of Cardinal Consalves

- Note the tomb of Cardinal Consalves Garcia Gudiel, Archbishop of Toledo, and bishop of Albano, who died in 1299. An inscription announces that the elaborate marble mosaic shrine is the work of John of the Cosmati clan; the lettering identifies him proudly as a Roman citizen: HOC OP[US] FEC[IT] JOH[ANN]ES MAG[IST]RI COSM[A]E CIVIS ROMANUS.
- At the top of the gothic arch, the Virgin enthroned is represented in a mosaic. She is surrounded by St. Matthew and St. Jerome while the cardinal is kneeling in prayer. Note the Cardinal is represented as enjoying eternal life.
- The figures of Matthew and Jerome hold inscriptions attesting to the presence nearby of their relics: ME TENET ARA PRIOR (*The high altar contains me*) and RECUMBO P[RAE]SEPIS AD ANTRU[M] (*I rest next to the grotto of the crib*).
- Mary is again rendered as *Regina Caeli* with the Greek epithet that identifies her on the basilica's facade.
- Encased in the wall in the lower part of the apses circle there are four bas reliefs which were originally in the ancient baldachin of the papal altar (the nativity, Miracle of the Snow, Assumption, and Epiphany).
- The 'curtain' behind the cardinal's sculpted image symbolizes the 'curtain of our earthly sojourn' which closes for all of us!
- This tomb witnesses to the pilgrim's belief that by visiting sacred sites and praying before the remains of holy persons their soul will gain God's mercy.

Apsidal Arch

- The mosaics on the apsidal arch become clear with the Assumption Day readings.
- On the left side: St. Jerome reads a pastoral letter (actually written in the 9th century by the theologian Paschasius Radbertus) in which he addressed two

Roman woman, Paula and Eustochium. The letter to these two women argues that Mary entered heaven body and soul. In the mosaic, Jerome sits with a book beneath the ceiling of a little chamber as he reads the words *Cogitus me* (Think of Me). This is the text which begins the read in the Assumption Day Mass!

- The rest of the vision on this arch is similar to that in other churches. It depicts the 24 elders of the Apocalypse adoring Christ, flanked by the 4 evangelical symbols and 7 candlesticks. Christ appears at the pinnacle of the arch as the Lamb of God standing on a throne within a clipeus filled with stars, the sun and the moon. As such, it is the culmination of the hierarchical ascent that begins on earth at his mother's deathbed, continues into heaven (where he presides) and presents the future when he will open the sealed book at the end of time.

Triumphal Arch

- At the center of the arch is the Pope's dedicatory inscription: XYSTUS EPISCOPUS PLEBI DEI which means *Sixtus, the Bishop of the People of God*. (Sixtus III – 432-440).
- Note the "gothic" windows in the apse – this is the first example of gothic architecture in Rome!
- The mosiacs on the triumphal arch are from Sixtus III (432-440). Note that the scenes reflect the mystery of the incarnation with episodes relating to the birth and childhood of Christ taken from the canonical Gospels *and* from apocryphal texts (Proto-Evangelium of James). Another dominant idea is the Divine Motherhood of Mary, proclaimed at the Council of Ephesus in 431. The intention is to reveal Mary as the preordained instrument of the Incarnation of the Savior. Notice that Mary is always accompanied by a retinue of angels (demonstrating her role in the divine plan).
- <u>At the summit a clipeus presents images from Revelation: the sealed book and jeweled throne flanked by the four evangelical creatures</u>.
- <u>The Lamb is missing; in its place is a jeweled cross and crown, emblems of the victorious Christ who is in heaven but who will return to rule from the imperial throne</u>. This throne is adorned with a lion's head.
- Medallions of Peter and Paul on the throne suggest that, in the interim, *it is the pope, Peter's successor in Rome, who governs in Christ's place!* The point is reinforced both with full length figures of the two Apostles on either side of the clipeate medallion and with the inscription proclaiming Sixtus as 'bishop of God's people'.
- <u>As 'Apostle to the Jews' and 'Apostle to the Gentiles', respectively, Peter and Paul represent the entire faithful populace now led from Rome by the Pope</u>.
- The other scenes relate to the early life of Christ.
- Beginning at the left, Mary sits to the right of the Jewish Temple, weaving purple wool.
- *She is making the curtain that, according to the Epistle to Hebrews (10:19-20) separates the outer court of the tabernacle and the inner sanctum; the curtain, in turn, is identified with Christ's flesh which, at the Crucifixion, was rent to provide humankind a direct way to heaven.*

- *The yarn Mary weaves is a metaphor for the incarnation which is announced by the angel approaching Mary from the right and which is effected by the dove and angel in the sky above.*
- To the right an angel tells Joseph of the miraculous birth.
- Enthroned and dressed like a Roman princess, the Virgin embodies the humblest and most elevated of all conditions. She is the *Theotokos.*
- On the other side, Mary, accompanied by angels, appears within the Temple courtyard, where she presents the Child to Simeon and the other priests; the presence of Anna in the scene signifies the Jew's recognition of Christ's divinity. In the far corner an angel approaches Joseph a 2nd time to tell him to flee to Egypt. This time Joseph sleeps outside the Temple (a pagan structure adorned with a depiction in the pediment of the *Dea Roma* (personification of Rome).
- In the second register, Christ occupies the gemmed throne – a diminutive figure now, dwarfed on an enormous cushion.
- Mary sits to the left; on the right sits Ecclesia, dressed in the blue maphorion and hence closely associated with Mary.
- The gift-bearing Magi, in Persian garb to indicate their eastern origin, approach from both sides to convey the reach of Christ's true dominion.
- The angels and stars behind symbolize Christ's divinity; the cross and halo his humanity.
- In the counterpart scene at the right, another pagan king recognizes Christ, this time the Egyptian ruler Aphrodosius, who (according to legend) greeted the holy family in flight from Palestine.
- In the 3rd register down at the left is the Massacre of the Innocents who died for Christ. The Magi Consulting Herod and His Advisors is represented at the right, the episode in which Christ is named as the "leader of my people Israel" (Matt 2:6) – an obvious reference to the central theme and to Sixtus' epithet in the inscription. Herod, flanked by armed men, wears military garb.
- At the bottom left and right, Jerusalem and Bethlehem are representing the faithful, congregate before the portals. The two cities may be understood as Rome with receding colonnades so carefully depicted as to extend visually the actual rows of columns in S. Maria Maggiore.
- While honoring Mary and her role in sacred history the triumphal arch mosaic introduces a political message into the story of the Incarnation. Devised only a generation after Aleric's sack of the city in 410 and at a moment when the papacy was establishing its secular authority in Rome, it emphasizes Christianities dominion in the pagan world. In so doing, it asserts the Church's universal claims over pagans as well as Jews.

Confessio

- "Confession": Shrine with relics under an altar. Built in 1864. Statue of Pius IX kneeling is about 1880.
- The urn contains the relics of St. Matthew as well as those of other martyrs.
- Among ancient objects of veneration are claimed fragments of Christ's crib from Bethlehem in a silver and gold reliquary of 1802. These relics were allegedly brought

from Bethlehem by St. Jerome in the 4th century and have been associated with St. Mary Major since early times (cf. the 'naming' above).

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The Presepio Oratory

- originally there was an oratory reproducing the Bethlehem grotto in the days of Sixtus III which was first documented by Pope Theodore I (642-9) who brought it to Rome shortly after Jerusalem fell to the Muslims in 638.
- The chapel stood outside the basilica and was visited by pilgrims throughout the Middle Ages. Some indications claim that it was accessible from the basilica as well.
- Successive Popes endowed this original oratory with a golden alter, jeweled statues and silver gates. Towards the end of the 13th century, Arnolfo di Cambio (1245-1303) decorated the grotto with his world-famous Nativity statues. These were brightly painted marble statues.
- Sixtus V decided to transfer the Presepio oratory to his own newly -designed chapel inside the basilica. In the process, the whole construction caved in and fell apart.
- The relic of the crib is now in it's current location under the altar.
- Some of Arnolfo's statues can be seen in a subterranean room inside Sixtus V's chapel (Note that the original Madonna and Child were lost to history or destruction and are now replaced by 16th century figures).

The Chapel of Sixtus V

- Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament or Chapel of Sixtus V: commissioned by Sixtus V (1520-1590) when he was still a Cardinal and created by Domenico Fontana. The tabernacle is from 1590 and is in the shape of a small temple.
- On the level below (in the Chapel of Sixtus V) is the *Oratorium ad Praesepe*, the chapel belonging to the high Middle Ages and renovated by Arnolfo di Cambio (c. 1289) who added the nativity statues. Note the David and Isaiah in the pendentives of the entrance arch, inside the Magi, St. Joseph, the ox and donkey in the frontal of the altar. The Madonna is from the 16th century. Pavement is of mosaic.
- The tomb of St. Pius V is in the left wing with scenes of five bas-reliefs from his pontificate. The tomb of Sixtus V is situated in the right arm (e.g., a right transept. Sixtus V (1585-90) created many new streets and gave Rome much of its current appearance. **Note: Sixtus V actually made S. Maria Maggiore the axis of a new series of radial streets extending like the points of a star to connect with Rome's other major basilicas.
- The five bas reliefs contain scenes of his pontificate. In the side niches are St. Francis, Anthony, and statues of Sts. Peter and Paul.
- This chapel became part of the structure of St. Mary Major thus ending the previous 'oratory' which stood for nearly 1,000 years.
- Sixtus V is buried in the chapel as is Piusl V (1566-72) who made Sixtus a Cardinal.
- A chapel with the remains of St. Jerome (341-420) is attached to the side.

The Borghese Chapel

- The Borghese family chapel, with a Byzantine Madonna of the 12th century (revered as the protector of Rome) is in a left transept. It was in this chapel that the young, newly ordained priest named Eugenio Pacelli celebrated his first Mass (later Pius XII).The image is venerated with special fervor in times of distress and tragedy Most recently, Pius XII called a prayer vigil during WWII to save the city of Rome. Although unannounced, thousands of Romans came with candles to pray at St. Mary Major before the image of the Blessed Mother. Rome was spared – the only bomb to drop did harm the ancient basilica of St. Lawrence but that church is located "outside" the walls of the city! Pius was nearly arrested for "aiding the allies" by the Germans who were convinced the candle lights had directed the allied bombers! On the top of this icon is an image depicting the legend of the snow.
- Pauline or Borghese Chapel: Name derives from Paul V Borghese. In 1605 he commissioned the project to Flaminio Ponzio and it was completed in 1611. Note the baroque style as opposed to the Chapel of Sixtus V.
- Prophets and Sibyls are in the pendentives of the cupola while in the large lunette above the altar is the Apparition of the Madonna and of St. John the Evangelist to St. Gregory Thaumaturgus.
- The altar is ornated with jasper, agate, amethyst and lapis lazuli. On the frontispiece are bronze angels by Camillo Mariani and Pope Liberius who signs the plans of the basilica – a marble relief by Stefano Maderno. In the center is a sumptuous frame made of angels unfolding the image of the *Madonna Sancta Maria ad Nives*.
- The *Salus Populi Romani*
- The image is of Byzantine Origin and is attributed to St. Luke by tradition. The image is also known as the *Salus Populi Romani* for the exceptional devotion which the people of Rome have for this image of the Virgin (see story of Pius XII above). On the sides of the altar are statues of St. John the Evangelist and St. Joseph.
- The icon is said to have been painted by St. Luke (7th century tradition) but most accounts date it to some time between the 5th - 9th centuries.
- Gregory the Great in the year 594 carried the icon through the streets of Rome to pray for deliverance from a terrible pestilence. It was during this procession that Gregory received his image of the angel sheathing its sword. Shortly after the procession the plague ceased the people attributed their 'health' to the intercession of Mary venerated in the Icon. This how the Roman's first named the icon the *Salus Populi Romani* – Salvation of the Roman People.
- Note: This chapel was originally built specifically as a chapel to house the *Salus Populi Romani* icon.
- At the end of the left arm is a statue of Paul V. On the sides are statues of David and St. Athanasius. The frescoes represent stories of St. Francis, St. Dominic and others. In the right is the tomb of Clement VIII who made Paul V a Cardinal. On the sides are Aaron and St. Bernard.

Other varied interests concerning S. Maria Maggiore:

- Much of the interior is well preserved from the original structure. Note that there are no arches between the columns – this architectural style is very ancient and reflects the 'simplier' building style of the 5th century.
- The *Liber Pontificalis* speaks of a "quadriporticus" (4-sided courtyard) but no traces have been found.
- On the right side of the main altar is a tomb inscribed "Gian Lorenzo Bernini, who brought honor to art and the city, here humbly lies." A floor marker adds, "The Bernini family here awaits the resurrection." Pietro Bernini, Gian Lorenzo's father and lesser known artist, is buried there as well.
- Another chapel commemorates the descendants – who are supposedly buried here – of Pope Liberius' first generous 'sponsors', the patrician Giovanni!

Exit

- Of interesting note is the clipeus enclosing the Lamb of God above the doorway on the inner wall of the facade. This depiction is now badly damaged (fresco) but it once formed the 'last statement' for pilgrims leaving the basilica.
- It recalls a similar figure pictured at the other end of the church at the summit of the apsidal arch where there it is a sign of the final days.
- Perhaps the Lamb here is the culmination of the Last Judgement scene.
- For obvious reasons this subject is often depicted on the reverse facades of Roman churches where it reminds worshippers as they leave the 'House of God' and reenter the physical world that they must one day face their Creator.
- Lower down, the dedication of the basilica in the 5th century is visible: **Virgo Maria tibi Xystus nova tecta dicavi, digna salutifero munera ventre tuo. Tu genitrix ignara viri te denique feta, visceribus salvis edita nostra salus.** Which means, *I, Sixtus, have dedicated a new temple to you Virgin Mary, worthy of honor because of your salvific maternity. Mother without having known a man, you conceived our Salvation.*

Outside the Basilica:

- The obelisk behind St. Mary Major was installed by Sixtus V and is done in the "Egyptian style" but is believed to be not original to the pharaohs. Sixtus removed it from Agustus' mausoleum.
- Since the time of Paul V (1605-1621) the plaza in front of St. Mary Major has been dominated by the last of eight enormous columns which were part of the huge Roman Forum basilica of Constantine's foe, Maxentius and was placed there in 1614 with a bronze statue of the Madonna and child. The other seven have vanished. The existent column is 38' high.
- The facade of St. Mary Major and the interior were a Holy Year consequence as Benedict XIV (1740-1758) appointed Ferdinando Fugo to make extensive changes. Just as Peter and Paul are atop ancient columns in Rome, so is Mary.
- The 12th century Romanesque bell tower is the highest in Rome.

Santa Croce in Gerusalemme – Shrine to the Holy Cross

This basilica has been a magnet for Christian pilgrims down through the centuries.

Located ½ mile along the Aurelian city walls from St. John Lateran, this church has an unusual history and houses relics that have been venerated for more than a thousand years. This church claims Christianity's most precious relics: Fragments of the True Cross.

The approach to S. Croce in Gerusalemme is disappointing. Although the facade is declared by many guide books to be the "most delightful Rococo monument in Rome' it simply does not do justice to the church's ancient origins and spiritual heritage. This exterior (current) was transformed in 1743-4 by Pietro Passalacqua and Domenico Gregorini for Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758).

The story of the church is that St. Helena (250-330), Constantine's mother, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land about 326, returning with a fragment of Christ's cross and some of the earth of Calvary (which now lies beneath the floor in the Chapel of St. Helena). Legend states that Helena chose this spot and a very 'unassuming' building (see the surrounding structures) because she didn't want to offend her still mostly pagan neighbors with too ostentatious a Christian edifice. That is reason she converted her personal palace into a church by building an apse onto one end and introducing an entrance at the other. (Note: except for the bell tower added much later the church of the Holy Cross still looks hardly like a church from the outside!)

Helena is an interesting person. Some say she was an English princess and others that she was a servant girl or an innkeeper's daughter born in Bithynia. In any case, she married the Roman general Constantius Chlorus who, upon becoming Caesar in 292, immediately divorced her for a bride more politically suited to his office (and aspirations!). The date of Helena's conversion is not known but in 326 she made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land where she found and carried off many important relics (including the above relics as well as the stairs believed to have been ascended by Christ in Pontius Pilate's Jerusalem Palace and not revered as the Scala Sancta).

Helena came back to her residence (near Constantine's Lateran Palace) in the imperial *Sessorian* (meaning "to dwell, stay") palace (palace of Septimus Severus – 3rd century) and a hall was converted into a chapel to house the relic. The Calvary soil served as flooring for this chapel.

The first account of St. Helena's finding of the True Cross comes from St. Ambrose (334-97) who wrote of it in 395. Strangely enough, Constantine's contemporary biographer, Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea (263-340) does not record her discovery. Also, St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem at that time, while alluding to veneration of the True Cross and other relics of the Passion in one of his *Catechetical Homilies* (347-8) makes no mention of Helena in that connection. Still, the absence of statements does not mean the absence of event!

Despite these gaps in the historical record, it is likely that Helena lived and prayed on this site. There are concrete accounts of her residence (between 317 and 322) in the imperial *Palatium Sessorianum* built on this spot around the year 200. From earliest times the church was known

as the *Sessorian Basilica* and was associated with the cult of the True Cross. Archaeological research has revealed that a monumental basilica was built into the atrium of the palace. More recently, the foundations of the palace's private amphitheater were discovered beneath the next door convent.

Two small rooms (now on a lower level) have from the beginning been known as the chapel and bedroom of St. Helena; the floors of these have been dug up by countless pilgrims who wished to take away holy soil from Calvary.

During restoration of the church in 1492, relics with inscriptions describing them as fragments of the True Cross were found walled into a niche in the triumphal arch before the apse. This is hardly surprising since such items were susceptible to destruction or theft during the years of incessant barbarian invasions (cf. the relics found in the 'body' of Jesus in the apse at S. Clemente).

The shrine was allegedly consecrated to the Holy Cross by Pope Sylvester I (314-35) who also consecrated St. John Lateran and the basilica was much visited and venerated during the early years of the Church.

In the 5th century the Emperor Valentinian III (419-55) adorned S. Helena's Chapel, where the relics were undoubtedly kept at first, with famous mosaics of himself, his mother (Galla Placidia) and his sister Honoria.

Medieval Popes celebrated the Good Friday liturgy in St. Helena's Chapel bringing in procession from St. John Lateran a golden rose as the symbol of the radiant joy of eternal life!

Interior of the Basilica

- Pope Lucius II (1144-1145) reconstructed the edifice raising the pavement, except in the area of the earth from the mount of the crucifixion (a Romanesque 8-story bell tower survives from his work). Note: the original basilica prior to this was a great hall and probably open to the air.
- Lucius II also built the Romanesque Campanile (bell tower) and the cloistered monastery next door.
- Benedict XIV (1740-1758) undertook a thorough rebuilding giving is present shape. He also had painted the scene over the nave *St. Helena in Glory* by Corrado Giaquinto (1744) as well as St. Michael subduing the demon of heresy and many other pious saints and Doctors of the Church.
- Many side-altar paintings depict episodes relevant to the Cistercian Order reformed by St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) and custodians of the basilica since 1561 (*St. Bernard Subjugates the Antipope to Pope Innocent II, St. Bernard Miraculously Extracts a Tooth from the Dead St. Caesarius,* and *Vision of the Founder's Mother*).
- The Cosmatesque pavement is original.
- The legend of the discovery of the true cross is illustrated in the late 15th century fresco in the apse. The painter is unknown despite extensive research from art historians. This

fresco is one of the most beautiful in Rome. Versions of the Legend of the True Cross differ. Here we have from left to right across the lower apse:

- *St. Helena Discovers and Excavates the True Cross in Jerusalem*
- *A Dead Youth, Placed Upon the True Cross, Is Brought Back to Life*
- *King Chosroes II [d.* 614] *of Persia Conquers Jerusalem and Carries Away the True Cross*
- *Emperor Heraclius* [d. 610-41] *Defeats the Persians and Returns the Cross to Jerusalem*
- Above, the Savior surrounded by cherubs imparts a blessing from a glorious gold background.
- The entire apse work was commissioned by the Spanish Cardinal Bernardino Carvajal (d. 1522) shown kneeling beside S. Helena and the True Cross in the middle of the fresco. The work was commissioned to honor the rediscovery of the relics in the church in 1492.

The Chapel of St. Helena and the Reliquary of the Relics of the Passion.

- Helena's relics and others are in a chapel reached by a staircase to the right of the left aisle.
- Other "reputed" relics include
- an arm of the cross of the Good Thief,
- fragments of the inscription of the cross,
- two thorns from the crown of thorns,
- one of the 30 coins of Judas,
- a fragment of the post of the flogging
- The Bethlehem crib
- and even the index finger of Doubting Thomas!
- A portion of the *Good Thief's Cross* is on a left wall.
- The Chapel of St. Helena is decorated with a magnificent Renaissance reproduction of a 5th century mosaic. This is a magnificent chapel – the vaulted ceiling is incredible. Those commissioned by Emperor Valentinian, which were so famous thoughout the Middle Ages, were restored by Melozzo da Forli in the late 15th century, touched up by Baldassare Peruzzi (1481-1536) in the 16th century and completely redone by Francesco Zucchi in 1593. Regrettable: although the colors are bright, the figures (Helena, Pope Sylvester, Peter, Paul, the Evangelists, and, of course, Cardinal Carvahal) are clumsy and awkward.
- This chapel does have a very interesting work: the altar-niche is a classical statue of S. Helena holding the Cross. What is interesting is that it is actually a Roman (1st century BC) image of the goddess Juno which had lost its appendages! With the addition of a head, arms and a cross the pagan goddess became a Christian saint!

Appendix: Roman Secular History: Republic and Empire

"Not to know what happened before we were born is to remain perpetually a child", – Cicero.

- Origins: Aneas (descended from Venus) leaves Troy on adventure. Encounters the Carthegians; has relationship with Carthegian queen who kills herself upon Aneas' departure – swears that out of her bones will come one to avenge her (Hannibal?). Aneas goes to Rome. Descendants Romolus and Remus are born from mother's relationship with god Mars. NOTE: Roman history was written by Virgil who was the court poet under Augustus. It is a history of "origins" rather than descendency. Note also that the goddess Juno becomes Rome's eternal enemy from the time of Aneas on. Virgil's story is entitled "The Anead". See how Virgil tried to explain the phenomenon of 1st Century BC Rome in language of "origins." Also, see how Juno (goddess of all that feminine, feeling oriented, and chaotic) is fundamentally opposed to the Roman sense of order, masculinity and reason/logic. Rome's history is a history of trying to impose its sense of destiny and identity on the world.

- Roman Empire eventually Covered three continent from Brittan to north Africa, Asia, Middle East and beyond.
- Began along banks of the Tiber river in 8th BC. Daughter of Numator (king) bore twins. Their older brother feared they would cheat him from throne. Threw the brothers into the Tiber. Rescued by she-wolf who suckled to health.
- 753 – grown men. Set the foundation of Rome. Romulus killed Remus during family quarrel. Followers settled on one of the seven hills.
- Rome is defined by the river and the hills. River controlled crossing; hills provided fortification.
- Italy was a region of ancient cultural diversity: Greeks, Sabines, Latins became Romans!
- Lived in grass huts and were ruled by kings from wealthy families.
- 50 years later, a tribe conquered them: Etruscans. Sophisticated people. Built elaborate burial tombs. Ruthless, reigned terror.
- In 509 BC roman aristocrats ousted the Etruscans and created the Roman republic.
- Dawn of new era: power not in hands of one person.
- 2 councils – magistrates shared power by making laws an overseeing legal cases.
- Each year senators were elected who made decisions on policy
- Latins dominated the Etruscans – established two social categories: Patricians (aristocrats) and Plebeians (people). 2 classes: plebians (workers) and patricians (political power)
- Much of it was unplanned – no constitution, no guiding "documents"
- However, each of the models was basically based on that of the Etruscan kings! Plebians complained. They could vote but only the Patricians could run for office!
- 471 BC, plebians created a tribune in which 10 men were elected to represent them against political oppression by councils or patricians
- 450 system of laws called the 12 tables set up to protect the rights of every citizen.
- law became a prestigious profession: Cicero became one of Rome's most celebrate lawyers and nobleman. Parents were not senators! Self-made man. Crafty public

defender. During one trial, he hired orphans from the street to pose as starving children in a case of a woman against her husband!

- With social equilibrium, the Romans began to expand their interests for commercial supremacy and security. 5th BC – defeated the Sabines, the Aequi, the Volsci to form the "Latin League". 4th BC – defeated the Veii but were themselves defeated by the Senone Gauls who left Rome in ruins. Then they triumphed over the Samnites. Rome then looked to the Greek colonies to the south (Sicily, etc.). Lastly, Rome had to address the Carthaginians who dominated the Mediterranean Sea and controlled Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica. Rome was victorious over Hannibal and Hasdrubal (Carthaginian leaders). Carthage became a Roman Province in 146 BC.
- Disparities in social status grew which provoked the "servile wars" of 133 BC – these were revolts of the proletariat.
- 5th - 2nd BC – influence expanded beyond boarders of Italy. Each of the 2 consuls developed armies. Soldiers were motivated by wealth to conquer more and more provinces. Provinces were "bled" for Rome!
- 2nd BC – Greece, N. Africa, Spain, Asia, Middle East, Europe – most were allowed to become Roman Citizens. Citizens of conquered areas could participate in further conquests. Rather than pay tribute, they had to offer their sons to serve as soldiers! Conquered communities received wealth of other conquered areas!
- Rome was decorated with booty of conquered areas – statues for Forum
- 100 BC – forum is flowing with activity. Orators in front of the Sentate building. Temples abounded. Blossomed into a monumental wonder!
- Rome was a vertical city – skyscrapers! 4-5 stories tall. Rome needed manpower to build these cities. Many from conquered lands became slaves and were auctioned off. Some were teachers but more were forced into brutal manual labor.
- Syracuse has one of the largest stone quarries from the ancient world. Dangerous jobs are jobs slaves had to do. All those ancient buildings were built by slave labor. Glory and suffering went hand and hand.
- Slave revolts: Largest instigated by Sparticus who was forced to fight as a gladiator to fight for public amusement. He escaped an assembled 10's of 1000's of slaves. For 2 years they held off the roman army and plundered the Roman countryside. Reminded the Romans that the slaves could, and perhaps wanted to, murder them in their beds! Enormous embarassment for Roman army. Crassius and Pompii were sent as generals to conquer the revolt. In 72 BC Crassius commanded 40,000 men to hunt the slaves. Sparticus and 6,000 slaves were crucified along the Appian Way. People lived for some time – up to a week – before they suffocated. This was the last slave world of the ancient world. These two generals were made consuls; lost power to man who would rule the entire Roman world.

Julius Caesar

- Caesar – Kaiser – Czar : All variations of the name.

- 100 BC – woman, Aurelia, gave birth. 1st Child (son). Gaius Julius (Clan name) Caesar (Family name).
- Child of nobility, brought up in luxury. Drove a goat chariot as a child pretending to be a general.
- Rome was groomed to follow in his father's footsteps. Beaten for every mistake he made. Indoctrinated that his role was to pursue the highest ambitions and carry on the family name.
- Instilled a sense of pride in Rome's task. Kings were overthrown, cities absorbed, Rome's armies conquered N. Africa, Greece, S. Gaul and Spain.
- Every afternoon he was engaged in physical training learning skills to be used in battle.
- at the age of 15 he was introduced to political life (wearing the "toga", distinguishing dress of a Roman citizen).
- Rome was wealthy but Rome's very expansion was causing political instability.
- Father died when he was 15. He became head of the family. He was on his own. Had to push his political career further.
- Married at 16 to establish a match with a high-ranking political family.
- Civil war breaks out – wealth is confiscated and life threatened by family that took power. Fled and took refuge in the army.
- Spent 4 years on campaign in Asia Minor. Returned a man ready for a new and different campaign. Situation in Rome had changed.
- Was particular of his personal appearance. He suffered from Epilepsy. Removed body hair with tweezers; was self-conscious of premature balding!
- Caesar sailed to Rhodes to learn oratory skills (needed for political life). He was captured by pirates on his way and when they charged 20 talents, he laughed and said he would pay 50! He wrote poetry to his captors and called them illiterate savages if they didn't like it!
- Caesar, upon release, turned and captured the pirates and had them crucified! But had their throats slit because he admired them.
- Each year 2 senators were elected to rule jointly as Consuls. Highest office. Open only to those over 42 years old.
- At age 30 Caesar secured a foothold in the Spanish provinces. He saw a statue of Alexander the Great – at age 30 he had conquered most of the known world. Caesar broke down and wept!
- Returned to Rome. Post in Spain granted life-long entry into the Senate. He could now wear a broad band of purple on his tunic.
- Death of 1st wife enabled him to remarry. New wife, Pompia, brought new connections and wealth.
- Caesar was not welcomed by the elite so Caesar turned to the poor to look for his support there! Streets were horrible and crowded with trash and sewage and stench. People went down the streets with a cloth covering their noses. No other aristocrats dared do this!
- Caesar was given an ideal appointment because of these efforts: responsibility for Rome's public entertainments.
- Spent enormous money on extravagant games. Mock naval battles, wild beasts, 320 pairs of gladiators at once who fought to the death, etc.

- Caesar was lavish in his spending. Debts were mounting fast; if political gamble failed he would face death/exile. He continued to indulge his taste. He was so ashamed at the high prices he paid that he forbade the prices to be entered into the account books!
- Caesar loved pleasure. He spent a lot of money on sex. At night he threw lavish dinner parties; at day he was a bully.
- At 36, he tested his popularity by running for election as supreme priest of Rome. Staked everything. By nightfall he would either be a priest or a pauper! He won.
- As supreme priest, he gained funds, connections, and a home. He still wanted to be Consul. Established a network: Crassius and Pompeii (conquered Palestine, Syria, etc.). The three formed a pact and Caesar gave his daughter to Pompeii to seal the pact. Crassius has lots of money and Pompeii has popularity.
- In 59 BC Caesar was appointed Consul. He didn't want to share power and mounted a campaign against Bibilus who was forced to stay at home.
- Caesar was accused of establishing his own laws. Was accused of taking gold bars and replacing them with bronze.
- Those who opposed faced violent retribution from supporters.
- Fears for the future of the Republic began to emerge.
- When his year as Consul ended, Caesar prepared to take up his customary governorship of a major province. His enemies in the Senate tried to have him appointed as governor of forests and cattle paths! He ended up with Gaul instead!
- Caesar was desperate for money; did anything he could to get an army to support his endeavors. He wanted a war!
- In spring of 58 BC he intercepted and defeated the Helveti. Then he struck north (without the Senate's permission) and conquered Gaul. Caesar was determined to gain a "Triumph" – a procession through Rome. Roman custom required that you had to kill at least 5,000 to get a Triumph.
- When a province rebelled, the Romans set out to kill every living creature in the town. Now see why most towns surrendered automatically.
- He judged his troops based on fighting ability, not moral upstanding or social rank.
- Relentless: Over 60 tribes were absorbed into the roman world.
- In 55 BC he was the 1st man to bridge the Rhine. In 54 BC he was the 1st Roman to invade the island of Brittan.
- Landing on Brittish soil was almost a disaster; made sure that Rome heard only of a great success.
- 8 years of travelling, poor food, sleeping rough, battle, etc had paid off. He was a brilliant commander and leader of men. He dispatched glowing accounts of his military campaigns to Rome. Caesar knew the names of his centurions! Shouted encouragement to troops from the front line.
- Executed counsellors of conquered people and sold the populations as slaves. In less than 10 years he conquers France.
- Julius was particularly brutal – responsible for the deaths of more than 1,000,000 men. One of the great killers of history.
- Julius now had the power to conquer anyone who opposed him. Cassius died in the battle against the Parthians (head used in greek play by parthian king).
- Now he has the ability, success, prestige and money to make success of politics in Rome.

- Next Battle was against Rome itself! "The die is cast". He promised his troops land and now he had to deliver! The Senate would not help; they feared him. Commanders who are far away aren't a problem, but when they come back.... His opponents in the Senate still wanted prosecute him for his actions 10 years ago!
- Some of the senate went to Pompeii and persuaded him that Caesar was out of control. This broke the alliance. Caesar was ordered to surrender his legions. He was outraged.
- Crossed the Rubicon River and headed toward Rome: The die is cast (it's done, no going back; or – the die is in the air and no one knows how it will end).
- Towns of Italy were spared. Opponents in Rome felt increasingly isolated (Cicero).
- When Caesar entered in Rome he found his opponents had fled. Within weeks Pompeii had formed legions under his command.
- Note: The soldiers were pushing as much as Caesar was pulling!
- Caesar went to Spain to confront any opposition there. Then he headed to Greece to confront Pompeii. He had 22,000 troops and was outnumbered 2:1 but he proved the more skillful general. 15,000 of Pompeii's finest troops were killed and the rest captured.
- Pompeii fled to Egypt (Alexandria). The young Egyptian king presented Caesar with the head of Pompeii. Caesar was mortified and relieved. Caesar could always say, "I didn't do it."In Rome, the two new proconsuls for 50 BC were hostile to Julius. 49 crisis – Julius returns and wants to run for office once again. They say no – Julius wages conquest against Rome! Marches Armies. Pompii fled Rome and mobilized men in Greece. Julius hunted him down and waged an attack (pompii's men abandoned him in droved). Julius won. Pompii fled to Egypt with Julius in pursuit. When Julius arrived in Alexander, he was greeted by a 10 year old king – Ptolomy XIII – who presented him with the head of Pompii. A good will gesture form the the citizens of Egypt to the Citizens of Rome. Egypt was in anarchy for years. Julius saw Egypt and decided to form a partnership with King Ptolomy's sister: Cleopatra!
- Trouble in Egypt: family fued. Ptolomy XII willed throne to son Ptolomy XIII. Cleopatra was witty and educated woman (gifted one – not Ptolomy XIII). These two co-ruled. Ptolomy XIII had her exiled. When she heard that Julius was in Alexandra, she had herself smuggled into Alexandra to meet him (wrapped in a carpet) and plotted to depose Ptolomy XIII. She became pregnant with Julius' son.
- Duty called: Julius had to return to command a war in Asia Minor. 47 BC – cried out Veni, Vedi, Vinci. 46 BC – returned to Rome in a triumph with Cleopatra and son. Romans made him "Dictator of Rome." A position citizens voted on in times of war or other crisis.
- Cleopatra was looked on with suspicion – opposed all that "decent" Roman womanhood stood for! She was renowned by her sexual practices. Cleopatra was bad news.
- Julius took up other mistresses as well. Adultery was legal as long as the woman wasn't married! Note: Julius was married when he brought Cleopatra to Rome!
- When he was on campaign the soliers would sing, "Men, lock up your wives because Ceasar is on his way!"
- He launched numerous reform programs including the cancellation of farmers debts.
- He also established the "Julian Calendar". In fact, July was named to honor him!

- Caesar took a powerful mistress: Cleopatria, queen of Egypt. Sailed up the Nile. Returned to Rome. After a battle with a king near the Black Sea he said, "I came, I saw, I conquered".
- Rome wondered what his intentions were? He said, "I am not King, I am Caesar!".
- Finally, he rode in Triumph through Rome dressed in purple cloak decorated with gold. Under the chariot was a huge phallus to symbolize virility. Had a slave whisper in his ear each time the crowd cheered to remember "You are just a man".
- The Senate made Caesar "Dictator" for 10 years (usually on 6 months in time of crisis). The civil war had disrupted life in Rome. It was weakened by the division.
- Caesar worked to stabilize the Roman world after years of conflict. He could ride, dictate and read at the same time!
- Rewarded veterans with land; started grand public works, replaced the lunar calendar with a solar year of 365 days!
- NOTE: Need to establish "order" everywhere. Needed order, logic, predictability, etc.
- Now life was comfortable but had no solutions to Republic's problems. Thoughts returned to war: Parthians (rival to East).
- He now wore a toga entirely of purple; his birthday was declared a public holiday; the month of his birth, Quintilus, was renamed Julius (July). A group of Senators, even his friends, were concerned about his display of power.
- Caesar was behaving like a king – most dangerous word that could be uttered in politics. Rome got rid of "kings" centuries before.
- Was also ignoring his 3rd wife, Capernia, to pay attention to Cleopatria.
- In 44 BC, the people elected him Dictator for life. Opponents are outraged. The aristocrats considered this unacceptable. Not all Rome was against him, just some leading aristocrats.
- The Republic was suspended. Even Caesar's allies began to turn against him. His arrogance had gone too far. Friends, including Brutus, determined things had gone too far.
- on March 15th a plot was established. Three days before he was to leave to fight the Parthians.
- Caesar had dismissed his body guard saying, "it is better to die once than constantly to fear death."
- The senate building was under renovation so the senators were meeting at the only stone theatre built by Pompeii.
- On entering, he was assalted and stabbed 23 times. Caesar collapsed pulling his purple toga over his head as he fell so no one would see him die.A group of Senators led by Cassius and Brutus plotted his demise.
- Ides of March 44 BC Ceasar went to Senate building, enterered the chamber and was stabbed. 27 fatal blows were given. Covered face with the toga so no one could see him die! The assassins came out crying "Liberty" but many were angered.
- Mark Anthony made a plea for a proper burial.
- 5 days later at a lavish public funeral, his body was burned.
- Took body to other end of the forum and cremated the body on the spot. A monument was raised on the spot and the remains of the altar are still visible! Still venerated by

some Romans today (Monarchists). In death, he became a Roman icon despite his detractors. Temples were built in his name where he was called "Pontifex Maximus".

- Julius Ceasar defines Imperial Rome. His memory hung over Emperors for the next 6 centuries. He was killed in his pursuit of power.
- Caesar himself set the standard that "changes could only happen through violence" and he ends by the standard he set: violence!
- Caesar also defines Rome's future. From then on, his successors were called "Caesars"!
- 4 months after the Ides of March, an unexpected comet streaked across the sky and many considered it to be proof that he was a god. The Roman Senate officially declared him "The Divine Julius"!

Augustus

- took Rome from civil war to age of prosperity.
- Took the title "first among equals" but accepted the title "Augustus"
- There was nothing more incumbent on him than to avenge his uncle's death.
- 44BC Rome is in chaos. Caesar was stabbed. They would not accept the absolute rule of a dictator or king. Those who killed him were not prepared to assume power!
- Who would become successor? Cleopatria bore only son (Cesarean). Mark Anthony had positioned himself as rightful heir. But Ceasar had his way and post-humusly adopted his sister's son: Gaius Octavius was to become heir to his estate and Rome.
- In the Forum, Caesar's will was read by Marc Anthony. Left gifts to Rome but passed on wealth and family name to his nearest living male relative, great nephew Octavius, who would become Augustus. He was 19 and lived on land outside of Rome. He was unknown to the Romans.
- Augustus had little military experience. He had spent a summer with Caesar in Spain and then he was in Greece when he heard of Caesar's death. His inheritance also! His mother wrote to him to ask that he not get involved in murderous politics.
- See the situation: He's been appointed. If he doesn't act, he will be killed. It is a risk either way. Augustus just decided "go for it!". Very little chance of success.
- Mark Anthony had taken charge; elected as one of 2 consuls who led the senate. Many senators feared that Anthony sought the powers of dictatorship. Everything he did was to make himself close to Caesar.
- Anthony's enemies hatched a plan: Octavious can be a "puppet" for the senate to help re-establish the Republic. Then they could get rid of Octavius. They underestimated the teenager! (He was 19).
- Took name Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus. "Octavian", for short.
- Promised to use his name to bring peace to Rome. He addressed the senate and promised no more anarchy and dictatorship. Offered the royal army and demanded legitimacy. The senate made Octavian a senator!
- However, Anthony had a reckless side. Wild living. Sex with men and women. All night parties, etc. Cicero calls Anthony a drink-sodden, sex-ridden wreck! In one incident he was so hung over the next day he attended a meeting still so drunk he vomited in his toga during the meeting

- Cicero then unleashed a flood of abuse against Mark Anthony. Called him a public drunk. Anthony countered with vicious accusations. Claimed that Caesar has sexual relations with Octavian and that's why Octavian was given the adoption. Cicero says that Anthony makes accusations from his own background! The gloves were off!
- Cicero even said, "The banquet of the Ides of March was one course short!"
- Senate forced Mark Anthony's hand and sent an army against him in N. Italy. Legions were led by Octavian. In two battles, Anthony's legions were defeated. Senate was happy – thought they had saved the Republic! But..... Octavian! And Octavian had an army! If he disbands, he ends. If he keeps the army, he has a chance.
- Octavian kept a firm grip. Turned south towards Rome. At 19 he marched on Rome. Demanded that he be made Consul. The Senate obeyed.
- Octavian needed a powerful ally – turned to Mark Anthony! Together with Lepidus (commander of Gallic regions) they made a pact to divide the empire and eliminate any opposition.
- In Rome, Octavian and Mark Anthony launched a series of prescriptions. 100's of senators were killed and others fled into exile. Anthony made sure that Cicero was among them. Octavian himself signed the death warrants!
- In search of vengeance for Caesar's death, they travelled to Greece and at Philippi they attacked Bruttus and Cassius and defeated them. Then they divided the empire between them and edged Lepidus out.
- Anthony held the eastern provinces and Octavian took the west. Both knew they would fight for it all one day.
- In Rome, Octavian consolidated power. Tired of his new wife, shortly after the birth of his daughter Julia he divorced her. The following year he met and fell in love with Livia (already married with one child, Tiberius, and was pregnant with another). Octavian forced her husband to divorce her. This was not a political marriage – he gained nothing from it and sticks with it for the rest of his career!
- Marriage was also used to strengthen relationship with Anthony – gave his sister Octavia for marriage who goes to his home in Athens. But Anthony fell in love with Cleopatria. She saw Anthony as the new ruler of Rome and she seduced him.
- Following in Ceasar's footsteps, Antony formed an alliance with Cleopatra. Famous meeting in South coast of Turkey. Cleopatra sails up the river dressed as goddess Venus to meet Antony. Rowers caressed the water with oars of silver that dipped to the music! The queen fell in love with Mark Antony. She knew how to manipulate powerful Roman Generals. He was ensnared! They all knew precisely what they were doing. One of the most famous relationships in all history.
- Interesting: Antony left Cleopatra after that and didn't see her for four years. In fact, he married Octavian's sister – Octavia (seal the alliance). Obviously wasn't panning for Cleopatra.
- Then Antony goes to Egypt and plots with Cleopatra to seal a political deal. Plan to oust the young Octavian and rule the western world together.
- Cleopatria wanted a new empire centered on Egypt; Anthony saw uses for Cleopatria's wealth to help pay off Octavian.

- Anthony sent Octavia back to Rome (without divorcing her) and married Cleopatria. Octavia was humiliated. The alliance with a foreign woman was repulsive to the Roman senate who now backed Octavian!
- However, Octavian spearheaded a ruthless smear campaign. Told the Romans Antony was ready to give her ½ the Roman world. They supported Octavian in declaring war.
- Also, Anthony started to declare that Cessarian, the illegitimate son of Caesar and Cleopatra was the legitimate heir to Caesar and not Octavian!
- Octavian said "Anthony is an Egyptian, not a Roman!"
- Octavian made ready for war to defend "Roman Tradition". He spent 4 years building a fleet. Tattle of Actium on the west coast of Greece.
- Virgil describes the "shameful thing" of Anthony with his Egyptian wife.
- Octavian's sea general, Agrippa, won the sea battle.
- Anthony fled to Egypt and took his own life. Cleopatria sought and audience with Octavian; he was unmoved – planned to parade Cleopatria through Rome. Faced with humiliation, Cleopatra killed herself with a deadly asp snake. Octavian then ordered the murder of her son, Cessarian. No one left to oppose Octavian.
- At age of 33, Octavian returned to Rome. He knew that he had to go slowly and carefully or he might be murdered! How to be sole ruler and survive!
- Octavian claims that he has "rid Rome of the tyrant". But he becomes the monopolizer of power.
- Octavian rewarded the old aristocracies with political office. He used Egypt's wealth to put on games and provide gifts for Rome. Those who accepted the gifts were accepting servitude.
- Octavian knew that Rome wanted a man of decency who respected Republican values. That's what Octavian gave them! In reality, one man was in charge.
- 4 years after Actium he offered to surrender his power back to the senate! Brilliant political move! The Senate, thrown off balance, feared renewed civil war and had no choice but to renew and increase his power. They refused his resignation! Resignation is his power base! "We need our Savior"! So long as they say that, he isn't the tyrant that has seized power.
- 27 AD – He took on the title "Princeps" meaning "first" among equals. This was to avoid the title "king".
- Rome: he secured the city's population by doing public works. He cleaned up the Tiber, formed a Fire Squad, Water Supplies, etc. He also began an extensive building campaign. "I found Rome brick and left it Marble" – Octavian.
- The visible signs of "Peace and Stability" were being generated! 82 temples were restored very quickly. Symbolic gesture: I am physically restoring the fabric of the empire.
- Within 5 years the memories of civil war had faded; benefits of peace was felt across the empire. Political enemies were embraced and rewarded. Octavian built an incredible reward system; no wanted the system to collapse on them.
- His regime was making many rich. Senate honored him with a new name: Augustus (The Revered One).
- Emperor Caesar Augustus. Most powerful man in history to date. Founder of the Pax Romana – Roman Peace.

- I restored, I completed, I built, I gave – Augustus.
- Demanded unquestioning loyalty. In return, offered peace, law, stability, safety to all citizens.
- Benefitted from unprecedented prosperity. Rome's provinces even benefitted. New towns, aqueducts, roads, baths were being built. Trade prospered, agriculture flourished.
- He was the "restorer" of people's lives.
- Now in his early 40's, he cultivated the image of a frugal man. Slept on a camp bed, ate plain meals. Was frugal and ate food of common people.
- Actually lived a simple lifestyle – even wanted his wife to weave and make their own clothing! Probably not too sincere in all these actions.
- He was conscientious emperor, worked hard, didn't sleep well, studious judge, etc.
- Augustus made sure that youthful images of him were shipped out to all the ends of the empire. He is identified with the gods. Iconography is that of a classical Roman god. From that time forward, he has no "age"!
- This was part of his act – boasting his power and hiding middle age.
- Popularity continued to grow. A summer month was re-named in his honor: August. Now a new cult was gathering momentum: the cult of Augustus. Priests made sacrifices for his well-being.
- in 18 BC Augustus , at age 45, took on the "moral reform" of Rome to restore traditional family values in Rome. Divorce was made difficult, fines for adultery, encouraged to marry and have children.
- BUT, hypocrisy was there – he had adulterous relationships with women. Friends claimed this was for information on what others were up to so he got intimate with their wives and daughters.
- Public image was untarnished.
- He had to find a worthy successor..... The republic was at an end. Now he wanted to create a dynasty to inherit his power. Succession is a dangerous issue – to name a successor takes away your power. Augustus never names a successor. Instead, he builds up a whole group behind him. His only child was from a previous marriage: Julia. She was the hope for a dynasty. He needed grandsons.
- Augustus married Julia to successive husbands to meet his political ends. Married her to Agrippa; had five children two of which were adopted by Augustus – Gaius and Lucius.
- After Agrippa died, Augusta passed Julia on to her step-brother, Tiberius. She rebelled and disgraced her father. She roamed about the city in sexual exploits; turned into a whore. Willfully violated her father's moral laws. Augustus exiles her to an island for 5 years and prohibited her from having male visitors or drinking wine! It may be that Augustus' wife brought on her downfall.
- Both of Augustus' grandsons died young. He was heartbroken. His health began to fail.
- in 9 AD in a campaign to consolidate near the River Elba disaster struck: 3 legions were attacked by German tribes and annihilated. Augustus cried and banged his head crying "Give me back my legions". To his step-son Tiberius he said: Push the boundaries no farther. Tiberius had become a strong and reliable general.
- Augustus had no heirs. In 5 AD he adopted Tiberius as his own son and successor. An imperial dynasty had been established.

- in 14 AD Agustus was taken ill. He called his family and advisors to him. He asked to be "dismissed with applause." With Lyddia at his side, Augustus died peacefully in bed. He was 76. At his funeral, an eagle was released. Soon after, he was declared a god.
- Augustus "defines" the new model of the future that was initiated by Caesar. All successors will look back to Augustus.
- Rome was now a stable monarchy and no longer torn by civil war.
- Augustus could appoint governers, propose laws, preside and public ceremonies and control the senate. The senate did little more than run the empire's treasury.
- Augustus was an educated man and knew how to work the senate. He was a politician, not a military leader.
- Main issue at hand: Pax Romana. In 27BC the population of the empire was in the millions. Roman citizenship was key – offered to newly conquered peoples. Certain rights. Only children from wealthy families could receive primary education. Only boys could go on the secondary education. The Father of the family held all power of all the family. Had the power to execute sons and daughters if he wanted to. Could force marriages and divorces of children.
- Private matter of marriage became a public concern during the age of Augustus. Men were a prized commodity. More were needed to fill army and government posts. Instituded polices to encourage upperclass men of Rome to marry and procreate!
- Regulated marriages – if a Roman senator married and had children, he received certain dispensations. If you didn't have children, there were certain penalties! Also for woman, if she bore three children or more, she could inherit her husbands or fathers property upon death. Even with incentives, it was still a heavy burden. Many women died in birth. Practiced birth control and abortion. Writings from doctor of 1st century wrote about these things.
- Augustus wanted to reform the "failing morals" in society. Family values plan causes scandal withing the imperial palace. Romans were known for orgies and lustful indulgences. In 2 BC augustus went on a campaign to clean up behavior. Adultury was now a crime! A matter for the state and not just a private affair! Note just loss of property but even exile if caught. Roman men could kill daughters or wives if caught performing adulterous acts. But not for men; no equal standard.
- Augustus himself committed adultery. He excluded himself from all moral judgement. Inflicted laws on own family memebers. In 2BC Augustus found his daughter Julia in an adulterous act (wild orgies). Exiled her to an island and she died there. In the first 5 Imperial families a total of 6 "dangerous" women are exiled for adultery.
- Agustus' wife escaped moral scandal. Was married and pregnant when she met Augustus. Divorced husband and married Augustus. Wanted her son, Tiberius, to eventually take over the throne.
- Augustus remained married to Olivia (wife) until his death.
- In time, his harsh tools of governing fell out of favor with the citizens of Rome.
- Rome generated incredible culture under Augustus. He funded, supported and controlled the court poets that celebrate the moral revolution and the golden age. Wrote for money and under strict conditions of patronage. He dictated the kinds of books they could write. But some wrote others. Ex: Ovid – "the art of love". Augustus exiled Ovid from Rome! One of the most immoral and dysfunctional families in ancient Rome was Augustus'; this

led to him being perceived as a hypocrit. It was difficult to enforce legislation that he himself discarded.

- He re-established several pagan cults including the Vestal virgins – Goddess of hearth and home. Girls 6-10 were chosen by Emperor. Violation of chastity (30 years) means death. Put on funeral bier, torn through streets, then buried in a chamber underground and is left to the god Vesta whether she lived or died.
- During his 30 years on the throne he did all sorts of civil projects: built roads, bridges, cleaned up streets, instituted a fire department, revitalized Rome making it the most oppulent: I found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble.
- New order endured for centuries but fortunes of his imperial family was not so sure. Among his immediate successors were terrible figures: Nero and Caligula.
- Augustus even banished Ovid to exile in Romania for writing on "human love"!
- Augustus suffered a stroke in 14AD. The 74 year old emperor pondered his successor.
- Augustus had no sons. Without a blood hier, he turned over the title to his step-son Tiberius. Tiberius didn't want the job! Of the first 12 emperors, 4 died peacefully, 2 committed suicide and six others were assasinated! It was a dangerous job and everyone knew it. Many emperors became seriously paranoid about plots on their lives.
- Augustine established the Pretorian guards – protect the emperor at all costs. At times even the guards found it difficult to protect emperors from their own children! They were the "secret service" of the ancient world.
- The threat of assasination most serious within the imperial family!
- If Augustus invented the term "dysfunctional family" then his successors perfected it!
- Tiberius died after 23 years on the throne. His successor was Caligula his grand nephew. Suffered from epilopsy and insomnia. Plotted murders of mother and brothers and committed incest with his sisters. He was considered insane. He loved his horse so much that he was going to make the horse a Consul! The senate had their moment against this brutal man. In 41 AD he was assasinated by the Senators.
- Claudius (Caligula's uncle" was next in line. When he heard of the assasination, Claudius hid behind curtains fearing he would be next!
- Claudius stammered, head was shakey, foamed at the mouth, weak knees, trickled at the nose! – Seutonius.
- Grew up a sickly child who suffered verbal use. His own mother called him a "monstrous man." He hid away and covered his pain with drinking, sex, and gambling. As emperor, he was always on the lookout for assasins. Dodged 6 plots against his wife. His paranoia led to the execution of 35 senators and more than 300 knights that he suspected. His assasin lurked within his own home!

Nero

- Early in 1st AD, Rome stretched from west to east.
- no civil war for 70 years; acceptance of hereditary ruler was price of peace and stability.
- In 37 AD Lucius Domitius Achinobarbus (Nero) was born.

- Childhood was insecure; father died when he was 4. His mother, Agrippina, was the sister of Caligula. Although an imperial princess, she fell from favor and was sent into exile. But she was ambitious and wanted her son to be emperor.
- The arrogance and cruelty of Caligula turned the roman aristocracy against. He even appointed his own horse as consul. After 4 years in power he became the first emperor to be assassinated.
- Claudius, Agrippina's uncle, was proclaimed the new Caesar. Recalled his exiled niece to Rome and took his place at court. Lucius was brought up in the court. Lucius had tutors and limited exposure to the outside world.
- He enjoyed writing poetry and song.
- When Lucius was 11 the imperial house was shaken by scandal once again. Claudius' wife, Messolina, publically married her lover and declared him emperor! It was crushed and she was ordered to commit suicide. Claudius never married again.
- Agrippina used her charm and seduced her uncle Claudius. He changed his mind and took her as his 4th wife!
- This is now a possibility to get her son converted into the son of Claudius and to become the future emperor. Claudius already had two sons: Brittanicus and Octavia. Agrippina arranged that Octavia was married to Lucius. Then Lucius was adopted to Claudius giving him the name: Nero Claudius Caesar.
- At the age of 13 Nero made his first speech to the senate written by Seneca, his tutor.
- Still, Nero had not been designated the heir! What of Brittanicus? Agrippina decided to act during a banquet on October 12, 54 AD Claudius collapsed and died. Rumors claimed Agrippina had poisoned her uncle with a mushroom (laced). When that failed, she had a physicial put a drop of poison down his throat! Brittanicus hasn't yet come of age. Had to strike now while Nero was at the minimum age.
- At noon the following day Nero appeared outside the palace and was hailed emperor of Rome.
- Nero addressed the Senate; promised to uphold tradition and treat the senators with respect.
- However, Agrippina expected to share the power! The first coins that were minted show the two heads looking at each other as equals! It was a battle of wills from the beginning. Nero didn't accept this equality.
- Nero surrounded himself with trusted advisors: Borus, the prefect of the Pratorian Guard and Seneca, his former tutor. Seneca had enormous influence. Seneca encouraged Nero to believe in clemency, justice, and the sanctity of human life. See the popularity of being a "good" ruler.
- Rome enjoyed strength, efficient administration, and institutional stability for a while.
- Nero started off pretty well.
- Seneca prompted him to send explorers north and south – even to Scandinavia!
- Much to mother's disgust, Nero began to explore his love of the theatre. In private, he consulted the actors, musicians, etc. Soon, he undertook these positions himself.
- Such a profession was unsuitable for an aristocrat and unthinkable for an emperor. Nero used advisors to keep his mother at bay.
- Nero was ruling under guidance. He accepted instruction because the advisors protected him from his mother.

- Interested in experiencing things to the full. He realized that he really could do anything he liked. Didn't have to follow the vices of his tutors.
- Surrounded by luxury and flattery, he had less and less interest in governing the empire. He wanted to be master of his own destiny. Began to explore the possibilities of absolute power.
- whereas at first he was moderate, later, he came to believe that excesses were not really bad. Carried it much further.
- feasts lasted from noon to midnight. Had a row of brothels on the Tiber for when he sailed from Rome to Ostia. Developed a novel and strange sex games. Stalked the streets at night in disguise with his friends. Visited taverns, etc. Attacked men, stabbed them, then dropped their bodies in the sewer. Some claim that such behavior was an "acknowledged sport" at the time!
- Agrippina chose to develop a relationship with her step son, Brittanicus. Nero was threatened. At a dinner, Brittanicus collapsed and died. Nero claimed it was an epileptic fit. The body was being burned as the guests continued to dine. Killing Brittanicus weakened his standing with his mentors.
- Agrippina tried to regain influence but in vain. Nero turned on her. Nero invited her to dine with him at his villa near the bay of Naples. Presented her with a gift of a boat for her return journey. The boat was constructed to collapse and kill her. It failed; she swam to safety. He sent his naval officers to murder her at her villa. As a soldier was drawing his sword to strike her, she exclaimed, "Strike Here!" pointing to her womb!
- Nero announced that she was planning his assassinated and planned a public thanksgiving that he was delivered from her fate. The crowds felt humiliated to be subjected to this spectacle. The crowds knew it was wrong; he pretended to be above suspicion. First shadows of Tyranny were cast.
- Freed from his mother, Nero devoted time and energy to be Rome's greatest performer. He even became a chariot racer. (Note: most charioteers were slaves – the emperor was out of place here). The people flocked to see him race!
- If you murder your brother and mother, you're going to work very hard to get attention and applause! Especially if you're not an accomplished general.
- by 62 AD, at age of 24, Nero dispensed with the advisors of his youth.
- The system was based on fear; anyone could be accused of slandering the emperor. People learn to keep emotions hidden from other people.
- Nero wanted to marry his pregnant lover Pompeia and divorce his childhood bride Octavia (no children – no heir). But, Octavia was popular with the masses. Nero tried to blacken her name as an adulteress. Nero banished Octavia to an island. There, he had her murdered.
- 12 days later, he marries Pompeia. She was everything except "good"! She had a heard of 500 donkeys so she could bath in their milk!
- In January of 63 BC she gave birth to a daughter, Claudia. But the infant died in March.
- Nero was nervous. He executed all his relatives in the imperial family.
- "Good, now at last I can begin to live like a human being." Nero.
- on July 18, 64 AD (10th year of reign) Nero at seaside villa south of Rome. News: fire in Rome. Nero returned to Rome to organize fire-fighting and relief measures. Had food brought in from neighboring towns. These measures earned no gratitude, however.

- 3/4 of the city had been burned. Nero saw a great opportunity. Empty stage for new city! Rumored he would call it “Neropolis”.
- Wide boulevards, etc. with a great palace in the center (green spaces) in the center of Rome. Built the “Golden House”. Spared no expense. The entrance hall contained a huge statue of Nero 120' high. The arcade ran for a whole mile. Vineyards, woods, fields all were present. Precious stones, mother of pear, etc. were on walls. It was here that he had the famous “Lacoon” statue. The main dining room was circular and revolved by day and night in time with the sky. When the palace was finished, Nero remarked, “Good, now I can at last begin to live like a human being.” It even had sprinklers that sprayed perfumed water on the area!
- Rumors started that Nero set the fire so he could build this palace. This was a decisive, negative turning point.
- Nero needed a scape-goat on whom to blame the fire: Christians.
- Christians were “loathed for their vices.” Vast numbers were executed. Many Romans felt sympathy for the Christians.
- “A violent power no ruler wields for long. “ Seneca
- Nero returned to the theatre. Now he performed in public. The Roman elite were horrified. “In putting on the mask of an actor, he threw off the dignity of his sovereignty.” Cassius.
- This would be likened to the president of the US doing mud-wrestling!
- No one could leave the theatre during his recitals. Some woman gave birth and some men fell to their deaths off the top walls!
- in 65, some enemies prepared to strike. The plot was uncovered. In his rage, Nero force more than 50 senators and officers to commit suicide.
- Seneca was implicated and also forced to commit suicide.
- Even Nero’s wife, Pompeia did not survive this night. Nero kicked her so violently one night that she and her unborn child both died.
- Nero murdered his mother, 2 wives, and a step brother. He even castrated one of his male lovers.
- 100's of aristocrats were killed or sent into exile. Spies were everywhere. Fear and suspicion pervaded Rome.
- Any mention of insurrection risks death. Nero’s rule was secure as long as the military was with him. Nero felt so secure that he planned a tour of Greece. Here, Nero summoned rome’s most respected general Corbulo, and was accused of plotting against him. He was summoned to Greece and was forced to commit suicide.
- Message: you are not safe if you are successful and aristocratic.
- Some in Rome’s military high command prepare to strike.
- Nero continues to show off as an actor and charioteer. At the Olympic games, he even won the 10 horse chariot race despite falling from his chariot and failing to finish. Nero returned to Rome in a blaze of pomp and lavish ceremony.
- Rebellion broke out: 1st in Gaul, then in Spain. Legions renounced their allegiance to Nero. After 14 years as emperor, Nero fled Rome in disguise.
- Hiding outside Rome, on June 9, 68 AD, the Roman senate declared him a public enemy. He ordered his servant to stab him because he lacked the courage to kill himself!
- His dying words: “What an artist I die.”

- Rome descended into civil war. The whole system of government nearly collapsed under Nero. Nero was the last descendant of Caesar and Augustus. With him fell the dynasty. BUT, the name "Caesar" lived on. A new breed of soldier emperors would emerge from the provinces.
- Nero's decision to kill himself was inspired by more than just being a "public enemy." He discovered that he was to be punished in the "ancient style": stripped naked and beaten to death with metal rods. It was too much for him to bear that the kind of torture he had inflicted on others was about to be done to him!

- In the next year the empire went through 3 emperors; each meeting a violent death.
- In 69 AD Vespasian became the 9th emperor (middle class background). Began to rebuild the burned down city of Rome once again. He also built a grand ampitheatre – the coloseum.
- 80 AD – no other site attracted more attention than the coloseum. 4 stories high, arched vaults decorated with stone statues of Roman gods. Commissioned in 70 AD was completed by Titus , Rome's 10th emperor in 80.
- Admission was free on opening day – games were a gift to the people. This became a political tool to win the people.
- Some gladiators volunteered for this dangerous career. Most, however, were criminals, slaves, etc. For them it was a dangerous battle to stay alive or maybe win their freedom. People would bet on which one they thought would win.
- Also, wild exotic animals were imported for africa and asia. Hundreds of lions and tigers were kept in cages.
- set program: morning – animal fights, then animal fighters coming in, then midday criminals would be brought in to entertain the public.
- Since 80 BC, similar stone ampitheatres were constructed in almost every Roman province. Syracuse – built ampitheaetre in 200 AD. Had to protect spectators from wild beasts. Had barriers etc.
- As games grew in popularity, each emperor had to put on bigger and better shows. Sometimes the coloseum was flooded for mock naval battles.
- In 107 AD the emperor Trajan held the largest slaughtering match: 10,000 gladiators and over 11,000 animals were brutally killed.
- More famous than the gladiators were the chariot races of ancient Rome. Teams were called Reds, Blues, Greens and Whites. Up to 8 would compete at once. Race was dangerous, often collided on corners; loss of limbs and lives.
- Also, entertainment came from plays, music recitals, and public bath houses. Bath Houses – visited on a daily basis for relaxation, business, etc. There was a whole series of rooms to visit: cold rooms, hot rooms, etc. Massive money was put into baths. 30 or 40 naked people in one small hot swimming pool! See the concerns for moral problems. They separated men and women to cut down on "problems". Romans didn't have bathtubs or showers. Citizens visited the baths often. Put oil on skin and scraped it off. Also had massaging, body waxing and hair plucking. Seneca talked about "how horrible it was to have a flat near a public bath – worst of all is the under-arm hair plucker!"
- Remember: the Roman empire was based on bondage, slavery, etc. It was the very best and the very worst of humanity in its time.

- By end of 1st AD roman citizens became a diverse group of cultures engulfing the entire Mediterranean world. Marked by aquaducts, bridges, roads, etc.
- Rome was still capital of the world – "cosmopolitan"
- there were also 4,000 other Romes too – cities within the provinces.
- The vast expansions was due to the since 3rd BD strength and engenuity of gov. as well as army. Conquering foreign terratories.
- When took over: sent in a group of lawyers to blend local law codes with Roman law codes. Then a governor was appointed for each province. People in turn elected town counsels to make local cities.
- Terratories were allowed to maintain personal identity.
- In time, however, the empire's architecture became a mixture of Roman and provincial styles.
- Other towns reflected the private side of roman life. 150 south of Rome was Pompeii – near Vesuvius and Naples. Resort for Rome's rich and famous.
- Roman dinners: no breakfast or lunch. More a series of finger-foods. Lasted well into the night.
- Titus visited Pompeii and set up a disaster relief program for survivors. In AD 79 the Roman Empire was at a peak – vast wealth coming into Rome from all over the world.
- Pompeii symbolized the empire's fragile mortality.
- times were changing: provinces began to exert influence.
- Provinces brought in new ideas and new blood. Empire became an equal-opportunity employer.
- 98 AD – Trajan becomes first non-Italian emperor. (Italica Spain). The emperor Nerva make him his successor. Proven track record as general in charge of upper-Germany.
- Trajan faced all sorts of prejudices. Was an aggressive soldier interested in foreign policy and invading people. At the same time, he was a philanthropist and initiated a welfare program for the poor that lasted 200 years. He also introduced farm reform. These programs earned him the title "Optimus Princes" – the perfect prince! They also respected Trajan's wife, born in France – Pompia Platia. Less interested in pomp and circumstance and more interested in the people of the empire. Trajan was known for frivilous spending; also he had a pinchant for wine and young boys. Trajan wanted to Romanize through art, architecture and engineering. In return, the provinces exported various items back to Rome where they were sold in "Trajan's Market!".
- Trajan's Market – 1st and largest indoor shopping malls in the world! One of the most complex pieces of architecture to have survived. Very similar to modern shopping complexes! Different levels for different types of goods: food, clothes, furniture, jewelry, etc. Very exotic – cosmopolitan nature of Rome.
- Trajan expanded the massive system of roads. By the 4th century AD, there were more than 53,000 miles of roads spanning the empire! Arteries that branched off from the nerve center in Rome. Communication link between Rome and its provinces!
- Roman army constructed much of the infrastructure of the Roman empire.
- Road were built for official purpose: troops, intelligence, etc. The army needed them. Then the roads were for transport of goods. Eventually, it became the earliest Poastal service!

- Rome could now important anything! By 100 AD all roads led to Rome.
- Trends in architecture: aqueducts. Cities needed water. Made massive aqueductes to carry water in channels to lead pipes to fountains, baths, and wealthy homes. Operated entirely on the basis of gravity. Water had to always flow downhill. Also created a sophisticated plumbing system. Only the rich had private latrines. Most people used public restrooms – long series of benches with conspicious holes! Social gathering place.
- The flow of information was two-way. Provinces were becoming centers of imperial power.
- The provinces made Rome one of the most culturally diverse cities the world has ever seen.
- Since the early years, all people were required to worship the state-gods of Rome. Needed to visit a public temple and make a sacrifice to a particular god: Jupiter – king of gods, Bacchus – the god of wine and celebration, Apollo – the god of the sun. Also central was sacrifice to the guardian spirit of the Roman Emperor.
- Exposed to customs and ideas pouring in from the provinces.
- The role of the gods was to help you out in your career. Romans were not interested in any "afterlife", it was all about "this life". You do for the gods so they would do for you.
- New religious became appealing to the population at large. The roman channels of communication accelerated this process. Ex: Isis – Egypt, Rome, Ephesus, London.
- Mithrus – Perisan god of good vs. evil. His cult, symbolizing death and renewal, appealed to soldiers who faced mortality on the battle field. By 1st Century AD Mythriac temples are found in Rome and England.
- Rome was tolerant of various cults as long as people who followed these cults ALSO followed Roman state religion (loyalty to the Roman state).
- Trajan was quite tolerant. In 117 AD, Trajan suffers stroke and dies. No successor. Was childless. Pompeia forges adoption papers making Trajan's younger cousin, Hadrian, emperor. Hadrian's father had died early and Trajan and Pompeia had been his guardian since age 10. Hadrian grew up to be a respected general and consul. Hadrian became emperor at age 42.

Hadrian

- Was an "outsider" from Spain – the provinces. He was the emperor of the golden age.
- by 1st AD, the Roman world was its height. 4,000 cities!
- Hadrian was born in 76 AD in Italica near Seville in modern Spain. Parents belonged to the elite, descended from colonists from Italy. Brought up children to think of themselves as Romans.
- At age 9 his father died. Upbringing was entrusted to Trajan, 2nd cousin. When Trajan was sent to the Capital, Hadrian went with him. Magnificent buildings! Very exciting for someone from the provinces.
- Hadrian was educated in Rome. Learned about great men from Rome's past and subsequent emperors that took his name. Spent 5 years of education here. Gains love of art and literature.

- After education, he returns to Italica and pursues hunting and outdoor sports; mixture of worlds!
- At 18 he returns to Rome to begin career in Imperial administration.
- He wore a full beard to cover up blemishes on his face.
- Then he joined the Roman army as an officer posted on the river Danube. Proved bravery and talent.
- In September of 96 AD a messenger announced that Emperor Domitian had been stabbed to death in a plot by his wife and part of the Senate. An elderly senator took his place (Nervia).
- Nervia knew he needed the support of the military; formed an alliance with the powerful commander on the Rhine: Trajan!
- Within 2 years Nirva died and Trajan took over as emperor. Empire was now an empire that included the elite of the conquered in its upper class! Leaders of conquered peoples actually become leaders of Rome! See: A new man takes position of power. Trajan!
- Before he left the Rhine, the aristocracy was already seeking his favor.
- Hadrian was also an outside but was now on the inside. Hadrian concentrated attention on Protina, Trajan's wife, who took an interest in this handsome young officer. Note: the marriage between her and Trajan is childless!
- Before long, Protina arranged for Hadrian (24) to marry Sabina, a young relative (Trajan's great neice).
- Trajan needed to place loyal supporters in the senate (senate provide the commanders for Rome). Hadrian, although young, became a senator.
- Hadrian felt both Roman and "on the outside". The senate laughed at his provincial accent. Hadrian undertook serious study of latin.
- In 101 AD Trajan led troops in battle for Dacia (modern Romania). Hadrian joined the campaign. The Dacian Wars are the making of Hadrian! Trajan marks Hadrian out as one of the finest generals of the time.
- He was rewarded as governor of lower Pannonia.
- At age 31 he was elected as Consul of Rome.
- in 113, Trajan launched an attack on the Parthians in the East. Again, he triumphed with a huge army. Roman soldiers bathed in the Persian Golf.
- Hadrian was given the whole of the eastern empire with his base in Antioch.
- Trajan, 64, had a stroke and died. On August 9, 117, a declaration was read by Trajan's wife. They announced that Trajan, before dying, had adopted Hadrian.
- Hadrian turned to his legions for support!
- Paying off the troops was a way of establishing a clean transition. Hadrian was 41.
- Hadrian, in Antioch, wrote to the Senate and asked that he be confirmed as Emperor of Rome. He said he would respect the senate and never put a senator to death.
- Then, Hadrian announced that the empire should fight no further – this shocked Rome. The expense of conquest was costly. Overexpansion was weakening the stability of the empire. There was no advantage for the empire to occupy these "uninhabitable" lands.
- Hadrian's philosophy: Rather than bash your enemy, simply Romanize your provinces!
- Established a buffer zone of friendly kingdoms between the Persians and the Roman Empire.
- Hadrian burned the only bridge across the Danube for security.

- A coup was planned to depose Hadrian for "giving away the empire".
- The chief of the Pratorian Guards discovered the plot and had four senators put to death.
- The senate was subdued. Hadrian moved to Rome with his wife to the Palatine home. He considered his next move.
- He was the 14th emperor. It was expected to have "spectacular" gestures. Hadrian filled their hopes by building a bonfire in the forum and burned the lists of all unpaid taxes and debts to the treasury. This was a standard expectation to gain the support of the people.
- Also, he renovated the legal system – people could no long punish slaves by castrating them, or cast them to the gladiators or wild animals. Slaves would now be tried before a court of law.
- Rome was pacified. But, what of the frontiers?
- Hadrian knew the legions held the key to his rule.
- However, if he ended the military conquests, would the army turn against him? He was confident of the eastern legions. In 120 he went on an expedition to win over the western legions.
- Hadrian traveled across the Alps to the Rhine and visited the troops there. Wanted to make sure they were loyal to the emperor.
- He did exercise ruthless disciple. Orders were considered divine. The army was won over.
- In 122 Hadrian goes to Brittan. Julius Caesar was the first Roman to visit the Island. Claudius began conquest in 43 AD. Hadrian decided to keep out the tribes rather than conquer them! Built a 73 mile wall to keep out the world of the Barbarians.
- Barbarians = someone who can't talk Greek; say "ba, ba, ba, ba,"
- Hadrian creates the "edge" of the civilized world. It took 15,000 soldiers to protect the wall. Those who served here were given citizenship! Some terms were for 25 years.
- Extending citizenship was both a great achievement of Rome and a cause of discontent.
- In his private life, Hadrian was married to Sabina, great niece of the emperor Trajan. Loveless marriage. She swore she would never bear him children and publically announced the use of contraceptives. Hadrian remained childless. Hadrian had his own issues which may explain his childless life – he had a passion for men rather than women.
- Passions of Hadrian: He was excessive. In 124 AD his travels took him across the empire ending in Greece. As a young man, his love of Greek culture earned him the name "Greekling". His hair and beard were from Greek culture and set the imperial style for decades. Hadrian regarded the Greek culture and literature as far superior to Rome. Hadrian was in love with a young man from near the Black Sea called Antinious.
- Hadrian and Imperial Roman homosexuality: It was a matter of "who's in charge" . Wealthy Romans were known to have not only beautiful slave women but also males with whom they would have sex.
- Hadrian traveled the empire extensively. For the 1st time, the people of the provinces came to know the face as well as the name of their emperor! In 121 AD Hadrian began the 1st of 4 grand tours of the Roman Empire (2,000,000 square miles, 4,000 cities and 44 provinces). He was a savy politician and met with provincial governors, sampled local cuisines and sampled the diverse cultures that he ruled as one.
- To help people know what the Emperor looked like emperors could travel, like Hadrian. He had coins minted with his picture on them and built temples to himself in every city

he visited. He read greek poetry, took a male lover, wore a beard like greek philosophers, dressed like greeks, etc. Those in Rome who opposed "changes" said, "See what happens when you go East!" but most people like it. Remember: Roman culture was very inclusive culturally, sexually, religiously.

- Homosexual practice between Roman citizens was taboo – it was typical for Greeks, however. Hadrian not only had a homosexual relationship but he displayed it openly.
- In late 124 they arrived in Athens. Commissioned a new aqueduct, new temple, section of the city called Hadrianopolis and a new library.
- He returned to Rome. He was 49. He had spent 5 years away from the capital and away from his wife, Sabina.
- His workload was enormous. He even commissioned the Pantheon.
- Reserved his evening for scholars and orators trying to score academic points over them. He ridiculed, scorned ,and humiliated his teachers!
- Hadrian was called away from intellectual pursuits and he was called to tour the empire. Less than a year back in Rome, he was on his way to make his mark on the cities of the empire.
- The empire was not one block; transport was slow – took up to 3 months for messages to be delivered. Each area was somewhat autonomous, independent.
- As they went to cities, they brought a sense of "belonging" to the world.
- Antinuous went with him (as did his wife!).
- Delegations meet him outside the walls, sacrifices are offered (meat distributed), speeches were offered, etc.
- A building was usually dedicated in honor of the emperor. He was called restorer, benefactor, liberator, divine savior of the world, etc. New cities were named in his honor like Hadria Avenio ("Avignon" in France).
- The empire is at peace. The emperor can afford to leave Rome and travel at the head of a great procession. This was a symbol of the success of his policies!
- In 130 AD he arrived in Egypt. He was like a modern tourist. He cruised the Nile with Sabina and Antinuous. At Thebes they saw the ancient sites. The tour was marked by a personal tragedy; Antinuous met his death (slipped on the edge of the Nile and drowned). Hadrian was devestated. Hadrian declared Antinuous to be divine and inaugurated a new religious cult in his honor. Founded a city in Egypt in how honor. Hadrian was proud of this relationship.
- In 125 AD he began construction of his imperial palace in Tivoli. 300 acre estate decorated with Greek art and pillars he had taken from Athens. He loved the arts and build a theatre to show productions from throughout the empire. Note: the theater originated in Greece.
- 118 AD – commissioned the reconstruction of the Pantheon – all the Roman gods.
- Hadrian remained very much a warrior. In 122 AD he built a 73 mile stone wall across the northern country of Brittan. It separated the civilized from the un-civilized. It still stands.
- 130 AD – 3rd world-wind tour. Asia, Egypt, etc. He was very superstitious man; intrigued by Egyptian mythology (Isis, Osiris). He studied magic and astrology in Egypt as a youth. He traveled with an entourage including his male lover. During a trip on the

Nile, Antinuos slipped off the boat and drowned – Hadrian wept "like a woman". Hadrian diefied his lover and named the city on the Nile after him!

- 131 AD – entered Judea. The empire had been rather accepting of religious pluralism but times were changing. This was a volatile area – Judaism was tigher and more resistant to religious change; difficult to break. The Jews could not worship other gods (even Roman gods). Tension was mounting between Emperor and leaders in Judaism. Jews tried to set themselves apart by diet, dress, etc. Real clashes emerged with failure to understand the sensitivities. 70 AD – savage rampage through streets of Jerusalem. 73 AD – Massada is assalted (mass suicide – 960 men, women, children). Hadrian knew this hostility but was determined to keep Jerusalem a Roman city. Hadrian entered Jerusalem and ordered that a temple be erected in Jerusalem to Jupiter. Worse yet, he ordered it to be built it on the same spot were the Jewish temple once stood before it was destroyed in 70 AD! Hadrian went even further – he insulted the cultural rituals. He found it difficult to tolerate these "bizarre" practices.
- 132 AD – thousands of Jews banded together led by Simon bar Kochba. For 4 years they fought off several Roman legions. Over 500,000 Jews were killed. Hadrian ordered the body of bar Kochba to be brought to him. Bitter memories on both sides. Jews were forbidden from living in Jerusalem from this time in the Roman empire. The area was renamed "Syria Palestina." Hadrian had a bottom line: no revolt.
- 134 – Hadrian returned to Rome. Had toured 38 of the 44 provinces.. Hadrian's mausoleum is now the Castel Sant' Angelo.
- Hadrian knew that the seat of power was no longer in Rome – it was in the provinces!
- Hadrian returned to Rome in 134 AD. He was 58 and travelled 1000's of miles. He built a villa at Tivoli a few miles east of Rome. 7 miles in circumference. Each part represented a province (Africa, Italy, etc.) He could walk through the Roman world in miniature!
- In 135 AD, Sabina died and Hadrian's health began to decline. He feared plots and arrested some senators. Most remained passive. He had a flow of blood from the nose and it was increasing.
- Hadrian had no children or close relatives; the best choice was a 51 year old senator called Antonaius.
- ***Note: Hadrian looked for the "best person" rather than a blood heir! This was a new way of finding a successor.
- For health, he traveled to Naples to bath in sulphurous springs. He died at age 62 in 138 AD and was buried next to his wife
- Hadrian had a huge mausoleum built. His ashes were deposited there.
- Hadrian always saw life from the perception of the provinces. Rome was stable because of his appreciation of the peoples.
- In the 1st century, everything is sucked out of the provinces for Rome.
- In the 2nd century, there is a flourishing of the provinces from Rome!
- As Rome moved to the Golden Age, it needed emperors of Hadrian's ability.

- Rome was most magnificent city in ancient world for more than 600 years.
- However, Constantine built new capital in East that would seal the fate of the West.
- Messianic hopes in Judea reached a height in the time of Jesus.

- Fearing repurcussions from Tiberius in Rome, Pilate condemned Jesus to death.
- Paul helped found small Christian communities throughout the empire.
- Other religious movements were happening in ancient Rome: some had many similarities to Christianity.
- You could practice other religions as long as you still offered sacrifice to Jupiter.
- By the end of 1st AD, the Christians had recruited people from all groups including Jews and soldiers. The government was beginning to collapse – the relative strength of Christian groups grew proportionately.
- 202 AD – Septimus Severus banned any Roman from converting to Judaism or Christianity. Executed if converted.
- East: Greek, developed rich cities.
- West: Latin, agriculture, less developed

Constantine

- by 3rd AD the empire was in crisis; attacked from without and divided from within. It took a soldier to reunite this fractured empire; he did so in the name of a single God and changed the course of history.
- Persian armies swept through the weaker provinces. In the west, Barbarians pillaged at will. Cities were plundered, agriculture laid waste, etc.
- Born in Nis (modern Serbia) in 272 AD. Mother was a bar maid and father was an ambitious army officer. Young Constantine knew he would live by the sword as well. His was a world of warfare.
- Frontier armies decide who will be emperor! Peace cannot be taken for granted at this time.
- Standard pagan military upbringing. Tough kid preparing for war. While still in his teens, his father took a political gamble and supported Diocletian, head of the Praetorian body guard. They plotted to overthrow the young emperor Numerian. The coup succeeded.
- Diocletian was a bold and remarkable statesman. Chose to share his power. Appointed Maximian as co-emperor. Both took the name Augustus. Diocletian was in the Eastern ½ of the empir; Maximian was the Augustus in the west.
- Constantine's father was into the political games. He cast aside Helena and married Maximia's step-daughter. Shrewd move.
- Diocletian decided they needed a tetrarchy. Each of the Augusta's were responsible for choosing a deputy with the title of Caesar. Diocletian chose Galarius; Maximian chose his new son-in-law, Flavius Constantius. Reasoning: To achieve unity, one must divide for rapid response and administration rather than wait for communication.
- Rome was no longer the imperial power. Diocletian at Nicomedia, Galerius at Antioch, Maximian at Milan, and Flavius Constantius at Trier (near the river Rhine).
- At 21, Constantine was embroiled in political intrigue. Flavius asked him to marry another one of Maximian's daughters but Constantine refused. Wanted to choose his own wife.

- Diocletian's orders could not be refused. He summoned Constantine to join him as a hostage to guarantee his father's loyalty.
- Diocletian was confident that he had stabilized the empire. Legions were now ordered onto the offensive. Galerius was sent to fight the Sumatians (across the Danube). Constantine distinguished himself as a soldier.
- In Diocletian's grand palace, Constantine witnessed preparations for a new campaign: Against the Christians!
- Hard to know the percentage that was Christian. Probably between 2-10%. Were concentrated in Greek-speaking cities and in members of the government. Christians had a disproportionate impact.
- The church was well-organized with Bishops and priests. Glorious afterlife and forgiveness of sins was appealing. But belief in one God was offensive – denied the existence of all other divinities.
- Diocletian was convinced that his gods has helped stabilize the empire. He had to ensure that as many citizens as possible will worship his god. Diocletian, encouraged by ruthless Galarius, ordered Christians to be punished. On Feb. 24, 303 an edict of persecution was announced. Churches demolished, bibles burned, suspected Christians were rounded up. Those who refused to recant were punished, tortured and executed.
- Constantine saw the ferocity of Christian commitment to their faith. He must have wondered why they were so courageous and yet so un-Roman. Constantine needed courage and faith to accomplish his own destiny!
- After 20 years in power, Diocletian's health began to fail. Stepped down and appointed Galarius emperor in the East. Flavius Constantinus was the emperor of the west. Constantine himself thought that he would be a Caesar.
- Galerius didn't want to create a rival dynasty in the west; Constantine was not chosen. Constantine was trapped in the court of Galerius and in a very precarious situation – could be killed. Still being held hostage.
- When Galerius was resting, Constantine made his departure and escaped. Rode 100's of miles to the coast of Gaul and joined his father who is campaign to subdue the revolt of the Britts. On July 25, 306 in York, Flavius dies. Soon after, his troops proclaim his son Constantine the new emperor of Brittan and Gaul. Constantine accepted the offer without consulting Galerius. He returned to his father's capital Krier with his 2nd wife Faustina and his son Crispus. As an usurper he faced an uncertain future.
- He was only hailed by the troops in Brittan. He needed legitimacy.
- He was 34. Needed to establish himself. Said he was against the persecution of Christians and ordered those in prison released.
- Christianity could do much for Constantine! Remember the courage, the stamina, the faith in the face of martyrdom.
- Constantine then went on the offensive and had successful assaults against the barbarians across the Rhine. Some were brought back and used to entertain people in the arena – kings of the barbarians were exposed to wild beasts.
- Constantine was operating within the framework of the Tetrarchy. As his rule succeeds, so his ambitions and belief in himself expands.
- Constantine now controls the west but the central empire was seized by another usurper: Maxentius.

- 312 – Constantine crosses the Alps to seize those territories for himself. Maxentius destroyed all the bridges across the Tiber (except one) and prepared his armies for the battle.
- Constantine camped near the ruined Milvian bridge. As final preparations were made, Constantine made a dramatic announcement – divine vision: saw a cross (pillar of light) which was inscribed "In this conquer".
- Constantine always worshipped the sun god Apollo. During the battle, the bridge collapses and hundreds of soldiers died. All seemed lost to Constantine. Then he sees in the sky a sign that looked like a Chi-Rho, Christian symbol – first letters of the word Christ. Under it were the words "In this sign you shall conquer". He ordered all his troops to use this symbol (shields, etc.). Army defeated Maxentius. Constantine now professed his devotion to Christianity.
- Remember: Religion and politics were closely connected in ancient Rome. One always went with the other. Christians were now a powerful group.
- 313 – edict of Milan – freedom to worship as they wanted to worship.
- For the minority of Christians in the army, this was an inspiring moment. The remainder were persuaded of victory. The battle was bloody and brief. Constantine overwhelmed the opponents who fled in panic back to Rome. 100's including Maxentius drowned in the river Tiber.
- Constantine's troops felt they had a powerful deity. Constantine entered Rome in Triumph. He, too, was not Augustus of the entire Western empire. 6 years after death of his father.
- In the East, Galerius had died. He was succeeded by Lachinius (able General) with whom Constantine formed a pact. Gave his sister, Constantia, in marriage.
- Constantine promoted his popularity with the Roman people: vast building projects – basilica, renovated the Circus Maximus, and built the largest and last triumphal arch in Rome. Constantine played all the right games that the senators wanted an emperor to play.
- Constantine remained pagan but took on a new role: became the head of the Christian church?! Very close relationship with the Christian hierarchy. Has a due course on Christian doctrine. Becomes an arbiter of Christian Church as well emperor of secular matters.
- Constantine was determined to unite the Roman world.
- Broke pact with Lachinius and marched to the Balkans. Lachinius sued for peace and agreed to recognize Constantine as the senior emperor. That's not enough.
- Constantine is acquiring more and more interest in the East. People in the east are looking for him to come for protection.
- In 324 Constantine provoked war with Lachinius and a huge battle was fought at Adrianople. At 52, Constantine was active in the battle.
- Lachinius withdrew to the city of Byzantium. Here, he was defeated.
- Despite his sister's pleas for mercy, Constantine had his brother-in-law executed.
- This was a pure civil war – Constantine grabbed the power from the East.
- Constantine wanted to build a new Rome in the East. "Where Caesar is, there Rome is" – Herodian.

- Constantine expanded the ancient city of Byzantium and renamed it Constantinople. He needs this capital. Has the west but needs to run the east.
- Military success demonstrate the strength of "his God". Constantine says this in a letter to the king of Pursia. How does it happen? Because I worship the True God!
- Emperor pushes his own reforms. 324 – Pagan sacrifice is banned; pillaged pagan temples of wealth. Also, Jews could not own Christian slaves. Elopement was illegal. Convicted Rapists were burned alive. Etc.
- Constantine becomes personally involved in church organization, discipline, etc. Gives the church vast wealth.
- Constantinople was a new capital. Constantine wanted this capital to be grander than the others. The change of capitals (Rome to Constantinople) was a gradual transfer.
- Classical world was looted. Nobles of Rome were offered incentives to travel east and establish there. The nobles refused to go! Romans have seen capitals like this come and go. Also, Constantinople had only 50,000 people and Rome was still at 1,000,000.
- 330 – Constantinople was a Christian city. Provided financial incentives for priests and bishops to set up home there!
- Personal religious beliefs were full on contradictions; he continued to worship the sun god.
- Constantine, like Diocletian, adopted the lavish style of oriental potentates. Rituals of the court elevated Constantine far above ordinary men.
- In 325, Constantine summoned 300 bishops to Nicaea. Constantine sat at their head while they agreed to a standard Christian doctrine. Soon after, Constantine left for Italy to celebrate 20 years of power. Should have been triumphant but was tragic. To widespread shock, he turned on his family. Ordered arrest and execution of eldest son Crispus. Suspicion also fell on his wife Fausta. Fausta plotted Chrispus' death so her sons from a previous marriage could become emperor! Constantine had Fausta suffocated in a steam bath on his orders.
- Constantine's mother told him he must redeem himself by erecting Christian Churches. He did this throughout the empire. Two of the grandest: Holy Sepulcher and St. Peter's.
- Building projects took on grand proportions.
- Remember: 3 of the previous 36 emperors had died in their sleep! Constantine's first defense was always the sword!
- Constantine looked to the Christian church to consolidate that power. For there to be a single emperor then the Christian religion would need to be at the heart at the empire. Constantine equated the Christian God with the Sun God. Made Sunday a public holiday.
- Constantine did act with piety in the court.
- The vast majority of his subjects are Christian. He can encourage them but he cannot force them. Balancing act. Christian communities are given properties and individual Christians are given places in government offices.
- This was his political ideology he needed. Constantine became the "friend of Christ".
- Constantine achieved stability within the empire but the threat outside remained. Barbarians continued to threaten the boundaries. Larger and more organized entities are appearing (Goths across the Danube).

- At the age of 58, Constantine once again leads the army across the Danube and pursued the Goths and Sarmatians deep into their own land and forced upon them a humiliating peace.
- He welcomed those who would participate to become members of the empire and rewarded them for their cooperation.
- Rising costs of consolidation and protection weighted heavily on those being protected! The system Constantine creates has within itself the seeds of its own destruction.
- In spring of 337 AD, the barbarian threat was contained. A unified empire lay before him. Constantine, now 65 was sick. At Nicomedia he decided his hour had come. Asked his bishops to baptize him. "Now I too may have that seal which confirms immortality"
- Deathbed baptisms were rather common in the early church. Baptism washed away sins. As an emperor he's committed a vast number of serious sins but now they're washed away.
- At the end of the ceremonies, he clothed himself in radiant imperial robes and lying on a couch in pure white he refused to ever wear purple again. He died weeks later.
- He was placed in a sarcophagus alongside 12 others representing Christ and the 12 apostles.
- Without Constantine's decision, Christianity might have remained a small marginalized sect.
- Within 70 years Rome would be sacked by the Goths. The struggle for future Caesars would be to unify both a Roman and Christian empire!
- See how many matters of faith were worked out under Constantine! Who Jesus is, etc. We are still influenced by Constantine!
- Late 4th AD – further division. East – rich, ancient, well established, tax base is close, protected by sea. West – turbulent, difficult to defend, tax base is spread out, open to barbaric areas, etc.
- by 6th AD the West ceases to exist as it once had. Barbarian tribes seized provinces and sacked Rome.

Justinian

- Born in poverty; a peasant from the eastern provinces. BUT, he ruled for almost 40 years. Undertook final bid to reunite the Roman world but in doing so he would be remembered as the "Last of the Romans".
- "The city that once conquered an entire world has been conquered" – St. Jerome
- Petrus Sebatius (Justinian) was born in the early 480's. Son of peasants in modern Serbia. Life was harsh. Empire was undergoing hard times. For 2 centuries Germanic peoples had been pouring across the weakly defended Danube and Rhine.
- There was no Roman Emperor in the west at his birth. Rome was in the hand of the Goths. Most of the western empire was ruled by the barbarians and local kings. North Africa was under the Vandals. The eastern side has survived the invaders.

- From his time as a child, Justinian dreamed of leaving the poverty of the provinces. His uncle, Justin, had left Phragia in this way and became an important officer with the palace guard. His uncle summons him to join him.
- Justinian arrives in Constantinople; it is another world! From provincial backwater to center of imperial pageantry.
- Constantinople prospered. 500,000 people. Sat at the heart of a divided empire.
- Power and wealth are concentrated there.
- They are very Greek, not Roman. Spoke Greek, wore tunics and not togas, etc. Still, they considered themselves Roman.
- His uncle becomes the head of the imperial guards. Justinian took up a post under his command. It was more a decorative, ceremonial role in the city. He joins in the highlife of the city; is close to those in power. He is in a very advantageous position. Under his uncle protection, Justinian enjoyed the privileges of courtlife. As years passed, he moved up the imperial hierarchy.
- In July of 518, the ruling emperor (Anastasius) died. He was in his 30's. No clear successor and Constantinople was full of plots. After a night of bribes and plots, Justin (Justinian's uncle) was declared the new emperor. Justinian is influential in making this happen. His uncle took control of the city.
- Justinian really was the power behind the throne of Justin. He was his uncle's favorite. Soon the childless 68 year old emperor adopted his nephew as son and heir. Born Petrus, he was renamed "Justinian".
- Justinian sat on the imperial council, represented his uncle at state events, at age 40 he is elected to the highest post: Consul.
- He is now the heir apparent. He alone can walk behind the emperor. Great symbolic importance. Being consul allows him to host magnificent games in the Hippodrome (Constantinople's great race track that held a crowd of 250,000 people!)
- Entertainment changes in the late 5th - early 6th century. Traditional entertainments (wild beast fights, gladiatorial combat, etc.) Have been prohibited. Chariot racing does continue to take place and it is very popular. Four teams: Blues, Greens, Reds, Whites. Each team attracted enormous groups of followers. These factions effectively controlled the city. Within one faction, Justinian met an exotic entertainer, Theodora. She was barely 20 years old. Justinian was 40. Tradition says she was a prostitute but may have only been a stripper. It was against the law for an aristocrat to marry an entertainer (circus performer). For him, the law was changed! The aristocracy was outraged.
- Rumors about her were extensive. Justinian was unconcerned about the public scandal his marriage had caused.
- In 527 Justin dies. Justinian and Theodora were escorted to the royal box in the Hippodrome as Emperor and Empress.
- Justinian retreated into the private secretive world of the imperial court. Fearful of assassins, the emperors were increasingly isolated from the people. The palace covered a very large area. A whole complex of rooms, chambers, apartments, slaves, servants, private passage to Hippodrome, etc. Justinian appeared rarely in his imperial box and when he did he was in silk and fine gems.
- Justinian and Theodora are both sticklers for court ceremony. They were from pauper backgrounds and needed these ceremonies to establish their presence. Senators had to

prostrate themselves before the emperor and his wife. Everyone had to fall on the floor and stretch out their hands and feet as far as they could, touch the feet of the emperor and empress with their lips and then they could stand!

- People resented this. The attacks on Theodora increased terribly. People claimed she ran the empire.
- Justinian creates grand and ambitious plans:
- codification of Roman Law – comprehensive. First time this was done. One prior on in the 5th century was not complete. Justinian believed in law. The law was then promulgated to the west. Law was to control society. Called it: "Digest of Roman Law"
- In the 2 centuries since Constantine, the empire now became Christian. Justinian wanted to set a strict moral code on his subjects. Gamblers had their hands cut off, homosexuals were arrested and had their genitals amputated, etc.
- Justinian attempted to clamp down on the lawless activities of the circus factions as well. Pushed too far. After 5 years there were huge crowds and riots in the Hippodrome. Justinian hear them calling or his death. He wanted to run but Theodora talked him into staying. "Royalty is a good burial shroud"– Theodora. She was going to be in charge and not in charge then nothing else mattered. This was the famous Nike Riot!
- 532 – competition turned violent as fans began quarreling. "Blues" and "Greens" argued; city officials tried to appease the crowds by executing seven criminals (both Blues and Greens). It didn't work – the ropes broke and the criminals got away who then incited the crowd to a riot. They ran through the streets shouting "Nika" – charioteers victory cry.
- Justinian turned to his friend Belasarius to crush the riot. He showed no mercy, 1000's were slaughtered as he regained control of the streets. Riots were fairly common due to the large unemployment rate.
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- At the end of the day, the roman emperor's position still depended on the sword!
- Justinian regained control of the capital but he needed military success abroad to solidify his power. The campaigns against the Persians had stalled. So, he looks to the western provinces which had fallen into the hands of Barbarian kings.
- Justinian bought peace from the persians with massive amounts of gold and then mounted expeditions with Belasarius to reconquer North Africa from the Vandals. Belisarius had only a small army but within two years he had overwhelmed the Vandal kingdom. Paraded the Vandal king through Constantinople in triumph! Booty as well: slaves, gold, jewelry, royal treasure, etc.
- Justinian's gamble had paid off. Success in N. Africa inspired him to send his armies to re-conquer the rest of the Western Empire. Was this a decision from the beginning or just after the taste of success in N. Africa?
- First aim: take back Rome and Italy from the Goths. The Goths were not unruly barbarians. They were almost more Roman than the Romans! Careful to wear toga's and have offices. Rome a very Roman place; in some ways more Roman than the Greek speaking Constantinople.
- In 537, Belasarius retook the great capital Rome. Back in Constantinople, Justinian decided to mark the "re-conquest" of Rome with the reconstruction of Hagia Sophia

which had been destroyed in the Nika riots. Justinian wanted to be a builder. This church was a symbol of a reinvigorated, reunited Roman empire.

- In 540, Belisarius was advancing toward the Gothic capital at the northern Italian city of Ravenna. Then, he receives orders to return to the east: the Persians had broken the peace. Persians are the great threat to Justinian's empire. Persians just sat there waiting to take advantage of any kind of weakness.
- When Belisarius arrived with spoils from Italian campaign, there was no public Triumph to honor his victory. Justinian began to fear the popularity of this successful general!
- Justinian undercut Belisarius (shamed him). In the following years, Justinian ordered Belisarius back and forth to the two opposing fronts without enough men to wage a successful war! Persians took advantage of this confusion and sacked the cities of the east, most notably Antioch. Cities were looted and carted back to Persia.
- In 543, at the heart of this crisis, a deadly , unforseen enemy struck at the heart of the empire: a new disease – the bubonic plague! Pestilence swept through the empire wiping out communities. They dug pits outside for the cities. Soon, they couldn't bury them fast enough and had to store corpses in the towers!
- Justinian became ill but recovered. 200,000 died in Constantinople alone! Lots of revenue lost as tax payers died! Government was worried. Made heirs pay or other members in the family.
- 40% of the Mediterranean manpower is wiped out. Enormous effect on tax base. Justinian ordered that taxes must be paid especially by the rich. Taxation was even increased. Resentment grew by leaps and bounds.
- Every province expected to paid no matter how serious the burden. If a farmer died, his neighbor was expected to pay for him!
- Justinian was now in his 60's. He had ruled for 20 years. The empire was cracking apart.
- New threat on northern boarder: Sloths and Visgoths. Reached the walls of Constantinople!
- In Italy, the armies were inconclusive. Rome changed hands 5 times and suffered irreparable damage.
- As the years passed, Justinian tried to strengthen his frontiers. BUT, enemies also laid within – Justinian was assailed by long-standing aristocratic opponents. To them, he was a peasant upstart who had made a whore his empress. To the general populace he was a tyrant with forced taxation. Justinian issued another moral regulation closing all places of entertainment! It was too much. It did not generate moral rejuvenation; just anger.
- Glories of his regime were over; future held only decline.
- In 548 Theodora died of cancer. It nearly killed Justinian. He was in seclusion as he grieved her loss.
- Isolated in his palace, he contemplated his fate. The armies in Italy did more damage to Roman life than the Romanized Goths had done! Northern and western provinces were as stretched as ever.
- The hippodrome beneath his balcony remain empty. A shadow fell over the city as all waited for Justinian to die.
- On Nov. 14, 565, the 83 year old emperor died. His last years were devoted to the church.

- With him dies the hope of any further empire. During the ½ century of his power he faces challenges that transform the Roman empire the a post-Roman world. Byzantine in the east and other successful kingdoms in the west.
- 3 years after the emperor's death the Lombards (German) poured into the Italian peninsula and it was lost to Roman control forever. The Persians remained a menace until they themselves succumbed to the Arabs (Islam). Within 100 years they had also conquered N. Africa.
- A reduced eastern empire was to survive for many centuries. Only in 1453 did Constantinople fall to the Ottoman Turks.
- Justinian was the last emperor to rule over a united Roman empire.
- The Sultan entered the city and converted Hagia Sophia into a mosque. Nearly 5,000 faithful seeking refuge in the building were put to death if they failed to convert.

Imperial Monuments

- ***Traces of ancient Rome:*** Termini Train station – walls of King Servio Tullio. These are probably the oldest and most visible sections of the truly "ancient" part of Rome!
- ***Roads***: necessary for maintaining contact with conquered territories (communication and military access).
- ***Roman Arch***: symbol of Roman architecture and presence. Used in bridges and buildings.
- ***Circular buildings***: as opposed to the rectangular design of the Greeks (Pantheon, Coliseum, etc.)
- ***Dome***: exploited for circular buildings.
- ***Triumphal Arches***: Titus, Septimus Severus, Constantine, Giano Quadrifronte. Monuments of military victories.
- ***Roman art:*** Passed through phases. Originally, they left art to the Greeks and Etruscan's; then they developed their own style under Augustus by choosing new "subjects" to depict. These subjects were "living realities" instead of the "stoic" or frozen realities of the Greeks and Etruscans. This new form was used to celebrate the "deeds of the emperors".
- ***Examples of "new art":*** Ara Pacis, interior reliefs of the Arch of Titus, Trajan's Column, etc.

Ancient Rome According to the Age of the Emperors

Augustus' Altar of Peace (Ara Pacis)

- The Ara Pacis celebrates the "Pax Romana" achieved by Augustus during his imperial reign. It was constructed between 13 BC and 9 BC in the Campo Marzio. The remains of the altar were discovered in stages beginning in the 16th century.
- Carved on the front are the legends of Aeneas' Sacrifice of the White Sows (which, according to prophecy, marked the site for Aeneas of future Rome) and of the Lupercalia festival; on the sides, there is carved the procession of July 4, 13 BC, celebrating the victories of Augustus in Spain and in Gaul which established peace throughout the empire.
- Representations of Roma and of Tellus (earth goddess or Italy), with goddesses of air and water, are carved on the back. Also, there is the goddess Pax and other mythological scenes.
- Reconstructed in 1937-38 from scattered fragments, the carved decoration is a splendid example of Roman sculpture influenced by Greek classical and Hellenistic art. The area

and buildings surrounding the Ara Pacis date from the time of the reconstruction and indicate Mussolini's ambition to associate himself with Augustus and his Golden Age of peace. It has been protected inside a glass pavilion since the 1930's.

- Of historical interest is that the Ara Pacis was part of a much larger complex of buildings and monuments that were intended to make a statement about Augustus' divine authority.
- The Obelisk of Psammetichus II (6th century BC) was brought from Heliopolis and placed by Augustus in the Campus Martius to serve as the gnomen (pointer) for a massive sundial. (Today this obelisk sits before the Chamber of Deputies in the Piazza di Montecitorio – near the Column of Marcus Aurelius. It was moved to its current location when it was discovered in 1748). It is more than 65' tall and commemorated the conquest of Egypt.
- It originally cast it's shadow over a vast travertine base forming the dial or face and indicated the hours, days, cycle of seasons, winds and astral influences by means of markers set into the white stone (bronze markers – the original pavement is now some 27' below the current ground level!).
- Pliny states, "*the divine Augustus attributed miraculous powers to the obelisk that stands in the Campus Martius, believing that it could capture the shadow of the sun and determine the length of the days and nights. Thus he had made a pavement of slabs of the size proportionate to the height of the obelisk, so that the shadow was equal to this paved area at the sixth hour of the winter solstice. Little by little, day be day, this would shrink and grow again, indicated by bronze rulers inserted in the pavement. It should be known that this was the work of the astronomer Novius Facundus. The latter added a gilded globe to the top of the obelisk, thus allowing the shadow to gather at the summit, and preventing the apex from casting too long a shadow..."*
- This clock was constructed in 10 BC! Augustus brought in famous astronomers and mathematicians from Alexandria. It not only measured time but was a symbolic monument as well.
- On September 23, Augustus' birthday and also the day of the fall equinox, the pointed shadow of the gnomen stretched out towards the center of the Ara Pacis with a clearly commemorative effect: it symbolically marked the "divine origins" of the emperor signaled out by destiny to introduce a new era of peace and greatness for the city of Rome and its empire.
- ***The obelisk (pink granite) was further set up in such a way that one of its sides faced the rising sun on April 21 – the date of the foundation of Rome. Thus, everything was carefully arranged to emphasize the divine destiny of the birth of the man who as the first to assume the title of "Augustus", a destiny decreed in the stars and sanctioned by the sun!***
- Nothing remains of this great piazza today. It was once more than 500' long from east to west and 250 ' from north to south.

Mausoleum of Augustus...

- At the center of Mussolini's Fascist piazza sits the Mausoleum of Augustus, though its previous grandeur is difficult to recognize in the decaying ruins. Once it was a vast

dynastic monument dedicated to the first great emperor of Rome, probably inspired by the Mausoleum of Alexander which Augustus would have seen in Alexandria following his defeat of Antony and his conquest of Egypt.

- To imagine its original condition, think of the way Castel Sant' Angelo would appear if it were stripped of everything after the time of Hadrian! Previously faced with marble, the Mausoleum of Augustus was surmounted by an earthen dome and circular rows of cyprus trees (traditional symbol marking a grave site), and crowned by a 50 foot bronze statue of Augustus.
- The first to be buried there, however, was Augustus' nephew Marcellus who died in 23 BC.

Pantheon

- Pantheon – Augustan Rome. Constructed by the son-in-law of Augustus, Marco Agrippa, at the time of his third consulship. Built in 27 BC, it is dedicated to the 7 planetary divinities. Called Pantheon because is was called the "holiest" temple. It is the world's largest dome. Inside are the tombs of Raphael and the Italian kings.
- The site of the Pantheon has deep religious roots in history. Legend has it that a *tumulus* existed here in the days of the Etruscan kings and Republican times to mark the spot where Rome's mythical founder was taken off into heaven by the god Mars.
- Remember: Mausoleum of Augustus was buried by Tiber River. 27-23 BC. 6-7 meters, workers hit pavement of massive blocks. What were they?
- 1964 Roman Antiquities experts continue excavations. In pavement were full scale architectural plans. Served as workshop for building. Mausaleum was ruled out – proportions too big.
- Why laid out in full scale? So marble could be cut exactly.
- **Mausaleum was near river where marble could be moved by water to build a structure. But what structure?
- Pantheon? Some measurements matched well but others did not.
- Note the pantheon doesn't fit classical rules of architecture. In middle ages, believed that Satan had built the Pantheon because no one else could do it!
- Original builder of Pantheon was Marcus Agrippa (son-in-law of Augustus – 1st Emperor) who built it in honor of his father-in-law. Spent much of personal fortune on public works including the pantheon. Began in 27 BC and completed 2 years later. It was originally dedicated to the dynastic gods of the Julio-Claudian family: Mars, Venus, and Julius Caesar. Note that Marcus Agrippa built this temple as an addition to his personal newly-landscaped area of baths and gardens thus making is only part of a much larger complex.
- Fire of 64 destroyed this original building. Attempts were made by Domitian to rebuild but another fire brought reconstruction to an end.
- Dedication to "all gods" was to ensure their protection of the city and the widespread territories.
- The current building process began (120-125) under Hadrian (117-138). Involved in many building projects, Hadrian was an amateur architect. He dedicated the building to Marcus Agrippa. Note that Hadrian was responsible for some Christian persecutions (cf.

S. Sabina) and so it is appropriate that a building he built would later become a Christian church dedicated "to all the martyrs!"

- Remarkable: rotunda in cement and brick and vault. Special significance of interior? 142' wide and 142' high. Walls are 25 feet thick. Bronze doors (original to the building) weigh 20 tons each. Some claim animals were sacrificed in center of temple. Opening (*Oculus*) measures 27' in diameter.
- The dome was originally covered in gilded bronze plates by Hadrian.
- Statues of roman gods used to be around walls. 7 niches – for seven planets konwn to exist at that time. The opening symbolized the sun allowing solar rays into the interior. Scholars don't agree on purpose of pantheon. All agree on astrological plan at play. Note that the *oculus* (eye) in the ceiling does act as a very precise sun dial.
- The *oculus* is believed to be the way in which Zeus gazed down on the world. (Cf: The original Pantheon building may have only been dedicated to the 7 planetary gods and then the name would have been later changed to include all gods.)
- Why doesn't it match the plans on pavement at mausoleum of Augustus? Probably wasn't built exactly – compromised building. Pillars were supposed to be taller (10' taller) and it becomes totally predictable! Pediments match up, etc.
- Why was the building altered so radically? Present columns are 40' high and weigh 100 tons. Egyptian marble. Plans called for 50' columns. Sunk in sea voyage? Problems with quarrying?
- Constructed of cement – fire resistant. It was saved as a monument because it was converted into Christian church called S. Maria ad Martyres in 609 by . Tomb to some of Italy's great men (Kings, artists, etc.)
- The Pantheon is a masterpiece of ancient Roman architecture. With the perfect dimensions of its spherical interior, the Pantheon mirrors the divine intelligibility according to which the cosmos itself was thought to be rationally ordered. Its rectangular portico, supported by 16 monolithic granite columns with marble capitals and bases, recalls an earlier temple from the time of Agrippa (whose name Hadrian preserved in the pediment's dedication). Although the gigantic bronze doors are original, the gilded bronze exterior of the portal was removed by Urban VIII and melted to give to Bernini to make the baldachin above the high altar in St. Peter's (giving rise to the actual Roman saying, "What the Barbarians didn't take from Rome the Barberini's did!"). Note: Bronze that was not used for the baldachin was used to make canons for Castel San Angelo!
- Inside, the awe-inspiring cupola rests upon a cylindrical wall of three layered sections. The admirable proportions of the cupola (height and diameter are equal), with its concentric narrowing of coffers, in relation to the seemingly vast space enclosed beneath it, convey a sense of perfection and harmony to those who stand below this celestial vault. The only source of light in the rotunda remains the single *oculus*, always open to the sky above. Two Italian kings are buried there as well as Raphael and his pupils.
- The current ground level of the piazza is now 7 meters higher than it was in ancient times. The Pantheon would have originally been approached on an incline rather than a decline. It is the best preserved building of ancient Rome and one of the most influential pieces of architecture in the world. The power of the Pantheon, whose dome is the largest of its kind ever built – 43.3 meters in diameter -- (exceeding St. Pater's by more

than 1 meter), has certainly had a tremendous impact upon centuries of artists and architects. Brunelleschi's Duomo in Florence, Bramante's Tempietto in Rome, and even Michelangelo's designs for the dome of St. Peter were all inspired by the greatness of the Pantheon.

The Pantheon becomes a Christian Church... Triumph of the Cross!

- A significant moment in the "victory of the cross" came when the most illustrious pagan shrine in ancient Rome was transformed into a Christian church.
- In the year 608 the Pantheon was ceded to Boniface IV (608-15) as a church. The transfer was granted by Phocas, Emperor of Byzantium and overlord of Rome. Note that by this time there were no more "Roman" emperors.
- Boniface re-dedicated the building to "St. Mary and all the Saints and Martyrs".
- On the day of its consecration, 28 wagons of martyrs' were transported here, taken from various cemeteries. This event is the origin of All Saints Day, instituted by Gregory IV in the 9th century. (Note: The day of its consecration was in 609.)
- This act of consecration was an impressive statement of Christianity's definitive triumph over pagan Rome.
- With the Christianization of the building the purpose of the *oculus* changed. It now was understood as that the light and grace spreading through the world eminates from one eternal and omniscent source.
- Other historical moments: In 663 the Byzantine Emperor Constans II stripped the roof of its gilded bronze tiles. Pope Gregory III (731-41) replaced these with lead sheeting. The Barbarini Pope Urban VIII (1623-44) took the bronze from the beams in the portico to use for the Baldacchino in St. Peter's and for the canons in Castel Sant'Angelo.
- The Barberini Popes did commission two bell towers from Bernini (1598-1680) which lasted for nearly 100 years and were dubbed "The Donkey's Ears" (polite translation!). They were removed and the building was returned to it's former status.
- The building was periodically used as a fortress in the Middle Ages.
- Note the holes in the pillars – these were used for wooden poles to support the stands of fish-sellers at a market in front of the Pantheon. It was smelly! Pope Eugene IV (1431-47) made it his priority to clean out added canopy hoping to drive the fish-sellers away. However, the market continued to operate in the piazza until 1847! The porch itself served as an exhibition fall for artists during the 16th and 17th centuries giving rise to an artists gild called the *Pantheon Virtuosi* which still exists today.
- In 1878 it became the chosen site for the tombs of the kings of Italy.
- The fountain in the plaza in front was designed by Giacomo della Porta. And constructed by Pope Clement XI (1700-21).
- The Obelisk dates from the dynasty of Ramses II (1292-1167 BC). This dating of this obelisk, one of the oldest in Rome, gives this piazza a perspective that spans 4 millenia!

Pyramid of Casius Cestius

- Pyramid of Caius Cestius – a magistrate and tribune of the people. Built between 18 and 12 BC, it is 90' high and 70' wide on each side. It bears an inscription stating it was built in 330 days. It is Christian tradition that St. Paul was taken a mile out on the Ostian Way to be beheaded. Cestius's pyramid would have been one of his last views of the city.
- In Rome, in the Augustan period, at least 4 pyramids were erected which were inspired by those of Egypt. This is the only one that has survived till today. (There were once twin pyramids at the Campus Martius where the two churches of Bernini now stand. In addition, another pyramid once stood near St. Peter's known as the "Borgo Pyramid" which was destroyed by Alexander VI to make way for his new road through the Borgo.)
- Caius Cestius was a *septemvur* of the *epulones* – that is, one of the priests of the prestigious college whose duty was to prepare the ritual feasts for the gods. He decided to build his "stairway to heaven" on a platform of travertine and faced it with blocks of white marble.
- It was located at two crossroads of ancient time – the *Ostiense* and the *Vicus Portae Rauduscularae*.
- People preferred to be buried near major roads and near gates to the city so that travellers passing by would marvel at their monuments and "remember" them. To be forgotten was one of the worst tragedies the Roman could experience!

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Hadrian's Mausoleum / Castel Sant' Angelo

- Castel Sant'Angelo – Planned as Hadrian's mausoleum, his family, and his successors. Hadrian also built the bridge across the Tiber in front of the mausoleum. Begin in 135 AD and completed in 139. In 271, Emperor Aurelianus built a new wall around it and created it into a fortress (Its inclusion within the Aurelian walls (275 AD) inaugurated its use as a citadel capable of resisting the assaults of the Visigoths (410) and the Ostrogoths (537)). It served as a prison under Theodoric. Also, several popes used it as their refuge in times of war and siege. It is topped by a bronze angel sheathing its sword to dramatize a vision of Gregory the Great who saw such a vision indicating an end to the plague.
- The fortress of Castel Sant' Angelo has played an intimate role in Roman and Vatican history since the time of its original construction. In fact, to speak metaphorically, this distinctive place mirrors the history of Rome as a whole: Begun as a memorial tomb for the ancient Roman emperor Hadrian, it later was used as a fortress for the defense of Rome; a strong-hold from which to subject the city of Rome, a papal retreat in times of danger, a papal residence and prison; and finally a site that pleases tourists.
- Main rooms and structures within Castel Sant' Angelo include a Spiral Ramp, the diagonal staircase by Alexander VI, the bastions of the four evengelists, prison cells, the courtyard of the angel, the room of Apollo, a private chapel, a hall of justice, the courtyard of Alexander VI and Loggia of Julius II, Sala Paolina, Halls of Perseus and of Cupid and Psyche, a treasury, and the belvedere.

A few important dates associated with Castel Sant' Angelo:
- 135 AD Constructed
- 139 Hadrian entombed

- 547 Totila destroys Rome, holds the mausoleum for offensive purposes
- 800 Charlemagne protects the papacy, fortifies the Vatican
- 1493 Alexander VI restores the Vatican Corridor to Sant' Angelo
- 1527 The Sack of Rome by Charles V
- 1540 Paul III constructs Sala Paolina

- It's current name and Christianization come from 590 when, in a vision, Pope Gregory the Great saw the angel Michael sheathing his sword and ending the plague. The event is evoked in the large bronze statue atop the structure. Note that there have been several "editions" of this statue over the centuries. Past ones are stored in the various museums of Rome including that of Castel Sant'Angelo itself.
- Of opportune note is that it's terrace and view has been made more famous by Puccini's *Tosca*.

The greatest collection of Imperial Monuments in one place is without doubt the area of the Roman Forum. The following is a brief list of what can be seen in that dense area.

Roman Forum...

- Originally a swampy zone, the forum was drained by storm sewers (some still in existence and being used more than 2,000 years later).
- Earliest tombs found in the Forum date to 7th BC (were originally buried "outside" the city; are now located in front of the ancient senate building). Remember: the original settlement needed a hill for defensive purposes, not a valley!
- Origin of the word is probably "foras" which means "space outside the urban dwellings" (from which we get the name "forest").
- when the various "hill towns" united, this market became the center of the established city (Rome).
- Soon, it lost its function as a market and became the center of political and administrative life for the Republic.
- Roman Forum: 4th century BC – center of Roman Life. Before Augustus Caesar became 1st emperor in 27BC Forum was already in place. Building was haphazard. Lacked harmony so necessary for classical Roman architecture. Augustus Caesar began complete overall of forum on plans of Julius Caesar (before assassination in 44bc). Carried out Julius projects!
- How could he turn Rome from Republic into Imperial Monarchy? Augustus beat competing generals with his own army. Gave him power since he was the "last man standing".
- Eliminated most buildings in forum by razing them and paving them over. Creates puzzle: what did the actual buildings look like? Don't know. Made of wood for the most part.
- Augustus built the Imperial Forum: *no wood in new forum* – cement and stone.

- One building he added to the works of Julius Caesar's plan: temple to fallen leader (Julius). Built on site where Julius Caesar was cremated.
- Devastated by a series of fires: Beginning of the republic, 64 AD under Nero, under the Emperor Commodus, and in 238 under the Emperor Carino.
- Also, disastrous earthquakes and barbaric invasions (note the "rope marks" on the pillars of the "Temple of Antonius and Faustina" where they tried to "pull down" the building) contributed to its decline (as well as the perpetual flooding of the Tiber – see the stairs to the "ancient" library; now more than 15' from the level of the forum! Actually, the flooding is what preserved the forum – the sediment hid the monuments from erosion and pillage preserving them for archeologists in the 19th AD.
- Most damage to the Forum was caused in the Middle Ages and beyond when it was used as a quarry for building materials and eventually became known as "Cow's Field" because of its use of pasture.
- 19th AD – 1st methodical archeological exploration was begun with French initiative..

The Temple of Vesta

- Temple to Vesta (ancient and important goddess). Related to fire and the hearth. Flame was spiritual force of the ancient roman home and state. Priestesses job was to make sure that the flame was never extinguished. They were always virgins; penalty of death required to remain that way. Lived together in house adjacent to temple. Selected at 6-10 yrs old. Serve for 30 years. Lived at public expense. Made the Salt-bread for all major sacrifices in Rome AND kept track of wills. At end of term of service, most remained priestesses! Some found challenge of chastity too great – penalty was to be burried alive! Some relate closely to Roman history – Rae Silvia (founding of Rome) daughter of king Numidor (founding kings of Rome) younger brother Amoleus deposed father and made Rae Silvia a vestal virgin. Pregnant – set of twins (Romulus and Remus) placed in basket on Tiber. Found by She-wolf. Get's in trouble at religious festival and are returned to Rome (before uncle). Story comes out, king is killed and romolus and remus become new founders of Rome. She blames it all on god Mars. Thus, founders of Rome trace lineage to gods.

Arch of Titus

- Arch of Titus – built during Domitian and Trajan to celebrate the victory of the Emperor Vespasian and his son Titus over the Jews. There is a famous bas relief on the inside of the arch depicting the pillage of the Jerusalem temple and the carrying away of the treasury (including the Menorah) back to Rome. To this day, Jews do not pass under this arch!
- The image on the other side of the arch is of the Triumph procession given Titus when he entered Rome.
- During the middle ages, Christian pilgrims came to Rome and carried the *Acheropita* image of Jesus in process (Triumph!) Passing under the arch of Titus. The symbolism was this: just as Jesus predicted that the Temple of Jerusalem would be destroyed (and so

it was by Titus), the Christians are now triumphant over the Romans and Rome becomes the New Jerusalem.

Arch of Septimus Severus

- Arch of Septimius Severus – Victories of Septimius Severus and his sons Geta and Caracalla in the East. Build in 203 AD it is 75' high and 75'wide.

Basilica of Constantine/Maxentius

- Basilica of Maxentius or of Constantine – begun by Maxentius between 306-312, it was a massive building capable of holding several thousand people at once. Was used for administration of justice and civil affairs. The surviving arcades measure 65' in width, 55' in depth, and 75' high. This arcade is only one side-aisle to the much larger structure!

The "Imperial Forums"

- Imperial Forums: An area originally occupied by houses, these buildings were cleared (Julius Caesar was first to do this) for Imperial Forums. These were areas used for "public life". Forum of Caesar (54-46 BC), Forum of Augustus (built to commemorate the Battle of Philippi, 32-31 BC), Forum of Vespasian (aka Forum of Peace – 71-75 AD), Forum of Nerva (98 AD), and the Forum of Trajan (113 AD). These forums were mostly excavated in the 19th and 20th centuries and completed under Mussolini who desperately wanted to fall in line as a Roman Emperor – he did everything he could to reveal the "glory" of the empire and to attach himself to it.
- Forum of Agustus: Here was located the famous Temple of Mars Ultor (Mars the Avenger) where the Emperor met visiting foreign dignitaries.
- Of interesting note in the forum of Trajan is a 13th century tower erected by Pope Gregory IX called "Nero's Tower" because of a legend that from it Nero directed the fire of Rome!
- Trajan had a huge hurdle to overcome: born in Spain – 1st non-italian to become emporor. Sought to solidify his position in the empire. Build forum and market of immense scope and proportion. Six stories and 120 shops. In all, was the largest forum every build. Made to look like a military camp. Temple remains buried. Presence of temple is confusing – not in keeping with design as a military camp. Now think: successor Hadrian was responsible for addition of temple.
- Hadrian needs to associate himself with good and competent predecessors. Adds temple to adopted Father Trajan! Trajan greatly respected. 20 years of leadership.
- Roman architecture flourished under Trajan. More than engineering, it was the egos of the emperors that promoted greater and greater buildings!

Trajan's Column
(Colonna Traiana)

- Trajan's Column – 90' tall and built to commemorate the warlike exploits of the Emperor Trajan (98-117) against the Dacians. A statue of St. Peter (placed there by Sixtus V) has been on top since 1587 but it originally held a statue of Trajan (which disappeared during the Middle Ages). When the Statue of St. Peter was placed on top, the entire column was blessed with a solemn consecration and "purged of all traces of paganism!"
- Trajans column is one of best preserved monuments of ancient Rome and spirals 23 times from bottom to top for a total length of 656 feet. Reliefs contain more than 2,500 figures. Tell story of victory over the Dacians (tribe beyone Danube River – present day Romania). 1st campaign in 101 AD. Defeated the Datians and humiliated their leader. In 105, he inspired another revolt. Trajan went back between 105-107 in three campaigns. Octavaliaus is eventually caught and beheaded. Trajan wanted the land for deposits of metals. Make him VERY wealthy and allowed him to build his forum! Three triumphal arches entering his basilica. Was the victory really that great?
- The column was preserved principally because it was contained within the church of S. Nocola "de Columna" in the Middle Ages.
- This column is the most famous in all Europe is repeated in several other major cities.

Marcus Aurelius' Column
(Piazza Colonna)

- Marcus Aurelius (180-193). Tells the story of the emperor's battles against the Germanic tribes along the Danube river (Vienna) where Marcus Aurelius composed his philosophic *Meditations* (eastern boundaries of the empire).
- hough smaller than Trajan's column, the spiral reliefs herald the remarkably dramatic style of the 3rd century.
- Until the late 19th century, this plaza was the center of the papal city. Sixtus V placed a bronze statue of Paul on top after the original was lost in medieval time (1588-1589). The reason for this piazza marking the "center" of the city is because of the many significant streets which intersect here that were traveled by pilgrims: Porta Salaria to Ponte S. Angelo, Porta del Popolo to the Campidoglio, etc.
- This was also the site of the first papal post office.

Domus Aurea

- The Colle Oppio (Oppian Hill) Park contains the ruins of extraordinary important Roman monuments, particulary the Domus Aurea (name chosen by Nero) which was the immense residence he built after the fire of 64 AD (which burned for seven days while he stayed at his sea side resort) and which he blamed on the Christians.
- The structure occupied 198 acres and contained rooms, *nymphaea* (rooms with fountains), reception rooms, and porticos, with thousands of square feet of frescores, marbles, stucco work as well as gardens, woods and a lake.
- The complex disappeared within a few years after Nero's death, dismantled by Trajan who used it as the foundation for his monumental baths.

- in the 15th & 16th centuries, painters such as Pinturicchio, Lippi, Perugino, and Raphael descended into its underground passages to study classical art. These were reproduced in their own works. It is here that the Lacoon, now in the Vatican museums, was discovered.
- Recent times brought another discovery: an enigmatic fresco with the image of a Roman city seen from above, perhaps dating from the late 1st century. It is the oldest and largest urban landscape from antiquity.

Colosseum

- Colosseum – begun by Flavian in 72 AD; completed by Titus in 80. In honor of the Flavian family, it was originally called "The Amphitheater of Flavius"
- A "colossal" Bronze statue of Nero once stood near it of some 114' in height. This "colossal statue" is what gave the name to the building. The site was previously occupied by Nero's artificial lake (part of his Domus Aurea).
- Main axis is 600', minor axis is 480', circumference is 1700' and greatest height is 180'. It held up to 50,000 spectators. The "brackets" lining the "upper wall" originally held poles which suspended a covering to shield the spectators from the sun ("velarium"; originally required a team of sailors from the fleet of the Misenum to operate it!). During the Middle Ages, materials from the Colosseum were used to build the Palazzo Venezia and other buildings in Rome. In 1740-58, Pope Benedict XIV declared the Colosseum "sacred" because of the blood of the martyrs (legend). Popes since have restored it. The 3 tiers of the colosseum's seating was designated for different "societies": Imperial and high society Romans (1st tier), Citizens (2nd tier), and Common folk (3rd tier). There was also a division according to sex. The "arena" was sprinkled with sand (which is called "arena" in Latin and which names the area). In 404 the Emperor Honorius prohibited gladiator games while the hunting of wild beasts continued into the 6th AD.
- Special effects: fill with water for mock naval battles; used siphon from roman baths. To drain out, developed sewer system to Tiber River.
- Re-enactments of important roman myths. Criminals and Christians were cast in most perilous roles.
- 80 AD – Opening. Titus hosted ceremonies for 100 days. 5,000 animals died on opening day.
- Gift to people of Rome from Vespasian (Titus' father & Predecessor). 69 AD came into power. Member of Flavian family. Critical point in Roman history.
- Vespasian was governor of Syria before seizing power after the death of Nero.
- Crushed Jewish rebellion in Jerusalem and in the Rhineland. In 10 years, eliminated treasury deficit left from Nero.
- Colloseum was grand undertaking to show power and success of familiy.
- 10 years to complete. 1,000's of slaves and laborors. Prisoners from Jerusalem.
- Sack of Jerusalem provided more than just slaves. Where did he get resources? Cf. Inscription on front of Colloseum: "The emperor Vespasian built this building from the spoils of the Jewish war"
- Who was architect? Still unknown. Brilliance of design is evident.

- Exterior: Travertine. Inner: Tuffa. Volting: brick paste cement.
- Sophisticated crowd management: 80 entrances to specific banks of seats. 50,000-70,000 people would have tickets for a specific doorway.
- (Domitian, while rooting for a gladiator, became enraged when favorite warrior got "booed". Ordered the man executed to the cheers of the crowd!)
- Romans didn't know how to keep animals alive; no zoo. Animals had to be shipped quickly.
- Last games were in the 6th Century AD (532 AD to be exact).
- Colloseum decayed afterwards. 9th century – tremendous earthquake that destroyed much of it.
- Used as a quarry to build palaces & churches. Some of the great churches which "benefitted" from this quarry include St. John Lateran (travertine), St. Peter's, Palazzo Venezia, Palazzo della Cancelleria, Palazzo Barberini, and Porto di Ripetta.
- In response to this terrible plunder, Bernini took a stance in opposition to the practice and planned the overall renovation of the complex for the 1625 Jubilee. Although the "project" never occurred, the 1625 Jubilee did declare the sanctity of the site (there was already a chapel built there). This act was confirmed by Benedict XIV in the mid-18th century with the building of the 14 stations of the cross and an edict prohibiting the monument's desecration.
- In the 19th century, the monument was restored as much as possible and the "additional" buildings and vegetation were stripped away.
- In the 8th century, the Venerable Bede made a famous prediction: *As long as there is the Coliseum, there will be Rome; as long as there is Rome, there will be the world."*

Arch of Constantine

- Arch of Constantine – built in 313 to commemorate the victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge (312). The arch was dedicated to Constantine by the Roman Senate in 316.
- Located on the ancient "Via Trionfale" aka "Sacred Way" – street through the forum that is lined with the temples. It is on this route that victorious generals passed with their armies in parade.
- This is the last of the Triumph arches built in Rome!
- Rome's grandest and best-preserved ancient arch.
- The epigraph states that the victory at the Milvian bridge was *"by divine inspiration"* calling to mind the legend of the cross superimposed on the sun.
- The arch is a miscellany of sculptures and reliefs from earlier works (note: many of the great artists had already moved to Byzantium to begin working on the new city; there were not many craftsmen left in Rome to build a new work!).
- Another reason for this reuse of previous monuments may be Constantine's attempt to make a statement: he wanted to be associated with the merits and might of his predecessors! To do this, he literally appropriated pieces from his imperial forebearers memorials! Thus, alongside reliefs from Constantine's age, parts of monuments erected in the days of Trajan (98-117), Hadrian (117-38), and Marcus Aurelius (161-80) are embedded in the imposing 4th century structure!

- This is the first evidence of "recycling" Roman older monuments for new ones.
- Raphael regarded the artistic value of the arch to be minimal. He called them, "very silly, without any good art or design"!

The Palatine Hill

- Palatine – one of the seven hills. Legend holds that on this hill is where Rome was founded. The city was traced out by Romulus in the form of a square (and ridiculed by Remus which caused the fight leading to fratricide). It is the preferred placed for villas of the wealthy – giving the name "Palatial" to describe them and eventually generating the term "Palace" for all grand dwellings. Such things on the Palatine: Temple of Cibele, House of Livia, Criptoporticus of Nero, Flavian Palace, Comus Augustana, Palace of Septimius Severus, Stadium of Domitian, houses of Tiberius and Caligula, Temple of Jove Statore and that or Venus and Rome.
- It was on the Palatine Hill that Augustus first constructed the Imperial home. Succeeding emperors followed suit, each improving on the previous emperor's efforts.
- The shift of power to Constantinople began the decline of the Palatine as a place of opulence though many popes and nobles continued to have homes on this hill.
- In the late 4th century, a space over Domitian's palace was occupied by an oratory to St. Caesarius and then converted to a monastery of Greek monks (Note: this was during the "Byzantine Domination" when the Dux of Rome resided here).
- During the 11th and 12th centuries, the hill was fortified and became the site of baronial struggles.
- During the Renaissance, it was occupied by Patricial families who covered it with palaces and gardens.
- Archeology has found the most famous treasure on the Palatine: a "graffito" of a crucified donkey and a man at the foot of the cross with his arm raised and a Greek inscription that reads, "Alexamenos Worships his God". The author was clearly making fun of a Christian. This drawing dates from the first half of the 3rd century and is one of the oldest representations of the crucifixion.

"Temple of Vesta" at the Boario Forum

- Temple of Vesta at the Boario Forum – wonderful round temple near the Tiber. In reality it has nothing to do with Vesta; was dedicated to Portumnus, divinity of the river gate (sun god). Later became the church of Santa Maria del Sole.

Marcello Theatre

- Marcello Theatre – begun by Julius Caesar and finished by Augustine in 13-11 BC who dedicated it to the memory of his nephew Marco Claudio Marcello. It held 10,000 spectators. Material was recycled from this building to restore the Ponte Cestio in 365-70.

Arch of Giano

- Arch of Giano – late 3rd century (between Diocletian and Constantine). It was dedicated to "Giano Quadrifronte" – the name Giano comes from "janus" which means "a covered passage leading in four directions.

Temple of Fortuna Virile

- Temple of Fortuna Virile – one of the oldest structures of Roman Antiquity; dates from 100-80 BC. In 872 AD it became the Christian church of Santa Maria Egiziaca.

Area Sacra of the Largo Argentina

- At the end of the *Pigna* district, a chance discovery during the building of a large modern building in 1918 led to the excavations now revealed in the sunken square of Largo Argentinia!
- It consists of four temples with a number of altars in front. The temples are simply known as A, B, C, and D since their dedications are not clearly known.
- The oldest is "C" which dates from the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd century BC.
- The whole complex forms a vast archeological park that brings together in one area various temples of the Republican era.
- Of particular note is that the *Theatre of Pompeii* is also located in this area. Only small portions of the theatre are now visible – most of it extends underground and into the neighborhood (towards St. Peter's). ******This is the theatre in which the Roman Senate was meeting which the Senate Building in the Forum was being renovated in the year when Julius Caesar was assasinated!***
- Be sure and have lunch or dinner in the resturant of *da Pancrazio* just off the Campo di Fiori and ask for a room *Sottoterreano*. This resturant has a basement that is actually part of the 1st century BC theatre comples of Pompeii and they "claim" that Julius Caesar was assassinated there! Now that's atmosphere!
- Note that there are very extensive tunnels under this whole area that have been excavated to discover underground altars, libraries, etc. It is a vast complex and not just a series of individual buildings.

Baths of Caracalla

- Baths of Caracalla – important part of Roman life. Most places lacked running water. Washing & grooming done at public baths. Largest and most richly decorated ever built. Begun by Septimus Severus in 206 AD and dedicated by son Caracalla in 216 (217) AD. By time of dedication, no way to wash blood from hands! Sordid tale – before fathers death, Septimus decreed Caracalla would share power with younger brother (very competitive) and rival Gaeta. Jealosy. Caracalla had brother killed. Caracalla claimed brother tried to kill him. Bribed Pretorian guards. Killed all Gaeta supporters (Massacre). In early months of 212 AD, 20,000 people were killed. Soured relationship

with senate! To pay bribes, devalued currency and increased taxes. Destroyed economy. Granted citizenship to all freemen (only citizens paid inheritance tax!).

- Needed money for baths. Lavishly decorated with marble, stucco, mosaics, etc. Used as gymnasium. Refreshed in cool water pool called frigidarium and then go to caldarium to soak in hot tubs. Elaborate plumbing and heating systems.
- Rooms for resting, steam baths, massages, body-hair waxing, shops, libraries, art galleries, enormous stadium were all part of baths. Everyone was gained entrance to the baths. Originally men and women bathed together but Hadrian stopped coed practice (concerned about sexual behavior). Use during different hours. However, prostitutes were commonplace at the baths after this point.
- Caracalla was assisinated in 217 AD by commander of pretorian guards (29 years old). Took 29 years to continue completion. Used until 535 AD when the Goths cut the acquaducts. Suffered same fate as monuments – destroyed from neglect (no money from falling empire).
- Bronze and marble were stripped over the centuries.

Beyond the Roman Forum and the previous monuments, there are other areas of the city that bear witness to an Imperial reality.

Monumental Rome...

Walls of Rome...

- Servius Tullius, Etruscan, Rome's 5th king. Appalled by the Celts who burnt and sacked the city in 390 BC, the king surrounded the seven hills and a two square mile area with a wall seven miles long with 23 gates. Sections of it can be seen at Stazione Termini.
- Aurelian, emperor of 270-275 AD, erected barriers as Rome began its decline and no longer posed military offensives. 12 miles long, made of concrete faced with red brick, the walls were, and still are in many areas, 21 feet high and 13 feet thick at the base. The Vatican was left out by Servius Tullius but, in the second round were included.
- Aurelian walls were strengthened by Emperor Maxentius (306-312) and Honorius (395-423). The walls were useless, however, as waves of barbarians swept over Italy, sacked Rome and inaugurated the Middle Ages. In some sections, the Aurelian walls tower 5 stories tall.
- Leo IV constructed the Leonine walls around the Vatican zone in 847-852 amidst the insecurity of the medieval centuries. The Saracens had invaded Rome on August 23, 846, raiding St. Peter's and St. John Lateran. Along the top of the wall is the covered passageway Nicholas III added in the 13th century to allow besieged popes to flee from the Vatican Palace to the fortress of Castel Sant Angelo (7 blocks).

Aqueducts...

The barbarians quickly realized that one way to paralyze Rome was to damage their aqueducts.

- By Augustus's time there were 4 aqueducts (Appia of 312 BC, Vetus of 272, Marcia of 144 and the Tepula of 125).
- By 1 AD there were two more: The Virgo of 19 and the Ansientina of 2 BC.
- Trajan built an additional aquaduct in the 2nd Century AD. The water from the Trajan Aqueduct was gathered in a famous fountain built in 1612 by Pope Paul V – Fontana dell'Acqua Paola on the Gianicolo. Paul had marble from the Forum of Nerva and columns from the 1st Basilica of St. Peters (6) used. In 1690 Alexander VIII commissioned Carlo Fontana to design the broad piazza in front of the fountain which offers an excellent view of the city of Rome.
- Water was collected in containers at public fountains as Romans chose the water they favored most.

Ancient Bridges....

- 1st bridge is reported in the 7th century BC (wooden)
- 179-142 BC – 1st stone structure: Pons Amelius just downstream from the Tiber Island. It finally fell in the 15th century AD during a flood losing both ends. It is now called the "Ponte Rotto".
- 1 BC – the Pons Caestius and the Pons Fabricius connect the Tiber Island to either side. This bridge was later called the "Ponte Sisto" after Sixtus IV who restored it in time for the Jubilee of 1450. The original bridge probably collapsed during the flood of 589. Until the 19th century, the bridge was the only one remaining from the rime of the Roman Empire.
- The Pont Sant' Angelo was built by Hadrian to give access to his mausoleum on the other side. It lost both ends during the centuries but were replaced. Clement VII (1534) had the statues of Peter and Paul added at the "entrance" to the bridge. Clement IX (1668) added the 10 angels to "watch over" the pilgrims after the tragic events of the Holy Year stampede. Each Angel holds a symbol of the Passion (many of which are the major relics of Rome). ***See the theology here: The relics bring special protection to the City of Rome and all who dwell there. Two of the angels were created by Bernini himself and considered too delicate to be exposed to the elements (crown of thorns and scroll) so they were moved to the church of S. Andrea delle Fratte. Note: it was in the *Piazza di Ponte S. Angelo* that executions took place (since it was a frequently traveled area) – it was here that the famous Beatrice Cenci and her accomplices were executed in 1599.
- Ponte Sisto built following the wake of the collapse of Ponte Sant' Angelo in 1450 by Sixtus IV. He restored an ancient bridge to the Janiculum in time for the 1475 Jubilee. The original bridge was built during Roman times and probably collapsed during the flood of 589. It is now a walking bridge only.

Roman Roads

- Appian Way – built in 312 BC by Appius Claudius Cieco, the Roman censor, it was one of the greatest of Roman roads extending to Brindisi. Thus, this most famous road of Rome played a major role in the empire's economic development because it allowed trade from the eastern Mediterranean to reach Rome (from the south). It is really the only

ancient Roman road that still as the "character" of the imperial days. It is a marvel to experience! You can even see the remnants of chariot tracks worn into the stone slabs.

- Via Aurelia
- Via Salaria
- Via Flaminia
- etc.

Piazza Navona

- Piazza Navona – stands on the site (and preserves the shape) of the Stadium of Domitian. Also contains the Fountain of the Rivers (Bernini) and the Church of St. Agnes in Agony (by Francesco Boromini).

Rome – The Great Pilgrimage

HOLY YEARS

A survey of their origin and evolution

Rome as Place of Pilgrimage

"Saints" is first used to describe the Romans in Paul's letter (1:7). "Saint" or "Holy One" meant those who were "devoted to worship", "set apart", or "distinct." Paul arrived in Rome in 61 AD before the first persecutions. Three years later Rome was destroyed in a fire that lasted between 7-10 days.

On "Pilgrimage" from the Catechism of the Catholic Church

1438 ***"...pilgrimage as signs of penance..."***

1674 ***"Besides sacramental liturgy and sacramentals, catechesis must take into account the forms of piety and popular devotions among the faithful. The religious sense of the Christian people has always found expression in various forms of piety surrounding the Church's sacramental life, such as the veneration of relics, visits to sanctuaries, pilgrimages, processions, the stations of the cross, etc.***

2691 ***"Pilgrimages evoke our earthly journey toward heaven and are traditionally very special occasions for renewal in prayer. For pilgrims seeking living water, shrines are special places for living the forms of Christian prayer "in Church."***

In 64 Nero began the first persecutions of Christians in Rome itself. The first persecutions of Christians throughout the whole empire began in the 3rd century. Note: More Christians died for their faith between 1918 and 1948 than in the first 300 years of Christianity! Christian teaching was at odds with Roman thought in several respects: Jesus' sole authority (made them "enemies of the state"), their belief in another God (source of ridicule – cf. 2nd century Graffiti on wall of Palatine Antiquarium mocking a soldier "Alexamenos worshipping his God" crucified; note: this is the oldest representation of the crucifixion known to exist), desire to influence culture (seen as subversive), inclusion of women (scandalous), claiming to "eat the body of their God" (cannibalistic), the fact that they referred to each other as "brother and sister" (taken to mean incestuous relationships), and finally various unfounded rumors (ex., that Christians fried their babies and ate them). Nonetheless, some emperors were tolerant of Christians ... within limits – for example, Trajan advocated over looking the Christian element in society yet he was also responsible for commanding Clement I to be executed in Crimea! In the early centuries, Romans blamed the Christians for everything. The great social claim stated, "There is no rain, the Christians are to blame!"

Before the 5th century, victims of persecutions were classified as either "Confessors of Faith" or "Martyrs". Confessors were people of faith but not necessarily martyred for it. Confessors include biblical figures, angels, as well as great figures from the first centuries. Those martyred were automatically considered "Saints." Note: the way in which a martyr died could indicate

whether or not they were a Roman citizen (decapitation was reserved for Roman citizens: cf. St. Paul, Sixtus II, etc.). Women were raped before their executions as way of taking way their virginity as a "statement of faith" (e.g., vow made to God). Women martyrs outnumbered men martyrs significantly and helped establish a certain equality in the Roman church.

Several writings document and elaborate (cf. Hagiography) the events of martyrdom. *Acta Martyrum* reports the martyrs trials and the *Vite* tells of the confessors. The Church collected information about martyrs immediately including significant dates, names, place of burial, and brief life stories. These were first published in the Roman Calendar from 313 and the *Depositio Martyrum* in 354. From these early calendars and biographies from the 5th - 9th centuries, a later biography of the martyrs called the *Martyrologium Romanum* was composed in 1584. The *Acta* were read between the 3rd and 4th centuries on the anniversary of the Martyr's death. However, the accounts were laden with so much legend that their liturgical use was eventually prohibited (until they could be "re-edited" in the 16th and 20th centuries). Other more apocryphal writings included the *comes* "Companions" and the *legenda* "legends" from Medieval times – these two writings were used by the Franciscans in their preaching and by the Dominican Bishop of Genoa to write his *Legenda Aurea* in the mid 13th century. It was because of these legendary accounts that Martin Luther (16th century) rejected all the saints and all the literature about them branding them as "false." A revision of these writings took place as part of the Counter-Reformation (1545-1563) and culminated in the *Acta Sanctorum* in 1643.

Saints were represented according to some artistic rules. Very few paintings were done during a person's life and, therefore, the faces had to be created. However, artists used names (4th) century, halos, beards, baldness, clothing, Apostles wore royal mantles with pallia, soldiers, bishop's with shepherd's crook, kings with crowns, etc. Intellectuals, doctors, evangelists, prophets always hold a scroll. Knights always have a weapon. Pilgrims and hermits have a staff. Martyrs are often depicted with a palm (victory) and the instrument of their martyrdom or some symbol from their life. Until the late 15th century saints were represented in a "dignified" and non-violent fashion. After that time, depictions of violence became common – examples of how good Christians should live and preserve the faith that others died for (especially in a time of challenge by Protestant Reformers). The more the Reformers rejected saints, the more the Catholic Church sought them out; this led to a recovery of "obscure" saints in renaissance times. Also, saints were depicted in increasingly bloody ways. Missionaries who were sent to Protestant or non-Christian lands were often paraded past scenes of dramatic martyrdom and the tombs of the martyrs in final preparation for their journey! The Council of Trent established clear guidelines to make the meaning of sacred images immediately recognizable to the lay person. Some scenes that not meet this criteria were destroyed. For example, Clement VII attempted to obliterate Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* for this reason!

Relics: The word "Relic" comes from the Latin *reliquus* and means "that which remains." Christians began paying overt homage to the Martyrs at two significant times – in 260 when the Emperor Gallienus granted Christians the right to practice religion freely (and even returned confiscated property – to be reverted by the persecutions of Diocletian 284-305) and 311 when the co-emperor Galerius issued an edict ending the great persecution. The first to be honored were the Martyrs – their place of burial, objects they were in contact with, etc. Relics stem from

the belief that God acted in a particular place and time through created means and, often, human will. Thus, the Martyrs were the instruments and proof of Divine presence. Eventually, a major market developed in relics and their significance was distorted and certain "magical" qualities were attributed to them as well as prestige for those who possessed them (ex: Relics of St. Mark being stolen from Cairo by Venetian merchants). The most important relics are those that relate to the life of Christ, of which Rome has many.

– Church of S. Prassede: Column of the Flagellation(brought to Rome in 1223 from Jerusalem)
– S. Croce in Gerusalemme: relics of the True Cross (3 pieces of wood), a nail, and part of the inscription (INRI)
– S. Giovanni in Laterano: table from the Last Supper, stone slab on which the soldiers played dice for his tunic, Scala Santa (Praetorian Palace in Jersalem) – 15th century identification), Well of Samaria,etc.
– S. Pietro: veil of Veronica, part of the wood of the cross, part of the lance which Longinus used to pierce the side of Christ.
– San Clemente: the apse mosaic contains part of the True Cross.
– Santa Maria Maggiore: contains the crib from Bethlehem.
– Santa Susanna: houses relics from the cross and the tomb of Christ.

**Note: The Church makes actual pronouncements of "authenticity" only after extensive examination. The vast majority of these relics have not been proclaimed authentic due to the problems in actual process. However, they remain, and have remained, objects of veneration for centuries and millennia.

The burial practices and laws of the Romans changed with the centuries. Until the 5th century, it was illegal to bury anyone within the city walls. Then from the 5th century on they began to bury in courtyards, churches, orchards, etc. Those who could afford it were buried near a tomb of a Martyr or an altar. Rome was soon a city where the dead outnumbered the living as barbarian invasions forced the evacuation of the catacombs so as to preserve the Martyr's remains. Also, those Christians coming from distant lands wanted relics to take home and often plundered the catacombs as well. The Romans were very comfortable with being around death. St. Francis even used the term "Sister Death" in his famous Canticle of the Creatures. Death was common place in the Middle Ages – plagues, war, famine, poor hygiene took lives indiscriminately. Probably the most striking place where death is enshrined is in S. Maria della Concezione die Cappuccini where an underground chapel is constructed with the bones of 4,000 friars! The visitor is greeted with the inscription: *I am what you will become. I was what you are.*

Interestingly enough, the past 300 years have been a time relatively low on "Saints" in Rome. The Eternal City was secularized first by the Enlightenment, then by the "Risorgimento" (Resurgence – nationalist struggle against the Austrian-Hungarian empire), then by the modern era. Still, 2000 years of faith are not easily erased. The Saints have left a very tangible history of their presence in the churches and monuments of the great city. Indeed, the religious orders they established are firmly rooted in the city and the many apostolic works which express their

saintly charisms continue to be the tool by which the Church remains in continuous touch with humanity.

The "Jubilee" Year – cf. Lev 25 for the reference to every 50 years being a year of "setting things right" and resolving debts (primarily financial). "Jubilee" comes from the Hebrew word "yobel" which refers to a ram's horn formed into a trumpet.
Medieval man was much more concerned about spiritual debts than temporal ones, however.

Pilgrimage: During the Middle Ages, a pilgrimage was the best means of obtaining forgiveness and redemption from guilt. Although pilgrimage was a part of Christian history before that time, it was in the 8th century that pilgrimages were assigned as penance on a large scale. Special manuals, called "Tariffa", listed the appropriate penances (pilgrimages) for everything from murder to adultery. The severity of the penance was in proportion to the severity of the sin. Pilgrims were given special clothes during a liturgical celebration and often traveled in groups.
Before leaving on a pilgrimage, the Pilgrim received a blessing from the Bishop as part of a solemn ceremony. The clothing included a staff with a metal point (note: the staff was "crooked" to symbolize the new condition of the pilgrim), a long dress of rough texture, sandals, a short cape and a leather bag to carry foot and money. Pilgrims could travel as far as their destination under church protection but were to be excluded from society until their pilgrimage was complete. The 9th century saw a revision of this practice due to the fact that it generated wandering bands of criminals! Great pilgrimage places included Jerusalem (center of Christianity and the

What is a Pilgrimage?

Pilgrimage is linked to the situation of man who experiences his life on a journey. From birth to death, the condition of each individual is that of "Man on the Way." The Sacred Scripture often attests to the special significance of setting out to go to sacred places. The history of the Church is the living account of an ongoing pilgrimage.

To journey to Rome, the city of Sts. Peter and Paul, to the Holy Land, or to the old and new shrines dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints: This is the goal of countless members of the faithful who find nourishment for their devotion in this way.

A pilgrimage evokes the believer's personal journey in the footsteps of the Redeemer: It is an exercise of asceticism, of repentance for human weakness, of interior preparation for a change of heart.

The experience of the pilgrimage becomes a tangible sign of our choice to take up our journey towards Christ: with some sacrifices, often involving inconveniences, and with prayer.

The Church encourages and makes provisions for such pilgrimages. A pilgrimage can be an occasion for an interior renewal and rededication along the path of Christian perfection, striving to attain, with the support of God's grace, "the state of the perfect man, to the measure of the full maturity of Christ" (Eph 4:13).

Each pilgrimage visit to a sacred shrine should include a moment of sincere prayer. Recommended prayers include the following: The Our Father, The Apostle's Creed, and the Hail Mary.

world), Rome, and Santiago do Compostela in Galicia where the Apostle James is buried. During these centuries, Rome was little more than just a stopping place on the way to Jerusalem since Italy served as a natural bridge between East and West.

Crusades: Arab incursions throughout the Mediterranean made access to the Holy Land difficult. The Crusades were launched from the 11th - 13th centuries to ensure Christian access to the Holy Hand. In 1270, the 7th and final crusade, against Tunisia, ended in defeat for the Christians whose forces were destroyed by the plague (King Louis IX died and was buried there just outside Carthage). In 1291 the last Crusader foothold in the Holy Land was lost (St. John of Acri, now Akko, in Israel). Since the likelihood of regaining control of the Holy Sepulcher was quite remote, the center of the Christian world shifted to Rome – site of the papacy and the tombs of Peter and Paul. Since pilgrims could not go to biblical sites, biblical sites were brought to Europe (especially Rome) and housed in reliquaries. Many of these were brought back by the Crusaders who also plundered the imperial treasury at Constantinople (Venetians, 4th Crusade, 1202-1204). The relics were often times credited with spiritual power and miraculous healings; accordingly, churches, monasteries, and sanctuaries became the centers of Christianity and destinations of popular devotion.

Holy Routes: The actual "Pilgrim's way" to a holy site became dotted with a series of religious houses that offered sanctuaries, cultural centers, and hospitality. These, in turn, became commercial hubs. Soon these settlements vied with one another for pilgrim's attention. This is the reason behind the creation of a "speculative market" in relics during the Middle Ages.

Indulgences: The practice of indulgences arose from the need to temper the "just" penalties of sin with mercy. Thus, the sinner who was unable to fulfill the assigned pilgrimage could receive forgiveness and redemption by expressing contrition in other ways. This led to the formulation of prayers, solicitation of donations, and creation of "alternate" pilgrimage sites as well as the granting of plenary (complete) indulgences of forgiveness or partial indulgences. The 13th century began a canonical review of the practice because it was already distorted. The Lateran Council IV (1215) established papal authority over this matter. Thus, the Church was not only the fiduciary custodian of the Communion of Saints but also the guardian of the treasury of Christian merits acquired by them. The Church began to distribute this moral capital to the faithful. Originally, indulgences were granted only for those participating in a Crusade. However, pilgrimages soon became the alternate way of receiving them.

> The first Papal Plenary Indulgence for a Pilgrimage: 1300. Pilgrims began swarming to Rome because of a rumor that the Pope was proclaiming a grand indulgence on the occasion of the century's close. Boniface VIII looked for precedent but found none in the archives. However, an elderly pilgrim came forward and told of how he and his father received a plenary indulgence granted at the end of the previous century (his father requested that if his son be still alive a century later, that he should complete a similar pilgrimage). Thus the foundation for the first Jubilee Year's Plenary Indulgence: *The elderly are circulating a trust-worthy account that those who go to the honored Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles in Rome are granted great remissions and indulgences of sins.* It was with these words that Boniface VIII issued the papal bull *Antiquorum habet*

fida relatio which proclaimed the first Jubilee year. It was Boniface's intention that the Jubilee would take place only at the end of each century.

Dangerous Journeys! These were not glorious and comfortable travels. The roads were perilous, the seas were controlled by pirates (who would sell pilgrims into slavery if they were caught), friends and family were left at home, etc. There was no guarantee that one would complete the journey and safely return home – in fact, most pilgrims made their last will before embarking. It was also expensive for the individual who was traveling for months if not a full year and for the family who lost the pilgrim's labor at home. Also, the roads had suffered considerable deterioration since their zenith in 476 AD. Many pilgrims were lost in the night; at dusk a bell called the *smarrita* "those gone astray" rang out from places of shelter to indicated where the lost could find shelter. This *smarrita* was renamed the "Ave Maria" when St. Bonaventure ordered his monks to recite a prayer three times a day for those who might be lost during the night.

Help along the way: To help the pilgrim survive these obstacles, some guidebooks were written including the *Itinerary of Einsiedeln* and the *Notitia Ecclesiarum Urbis Romae* which both date from 900. Some books even included maps with distances on foot (counted by days) and suggestions for the best routes to take (cf. The *Chronica Maiora* 13th century and the *Tabula Peutingeriana* – a 23 foot scroll). However, most pilgrims didn't read. Therefore, they banded together for safety companionship as they shared their common journey for redemption in this life. When pilgrims arrived in Rome, they entered the city at the Milvian bridge and came in through the Porta del Popolo. Once inside, the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae* served as a guidebook to inform the pilgrim about the legends, monuments, etc. There were also guides to help the pilgrim find their way (remember: as of yet there were no street signs!). Rome was a city filled with ruins, villas, vineyards, churches, and sanctuaries. It was to help the pilgrim that much of modern Rome developed as it did. In fact, several urban renewal projects were specifically designed to facilitate the flow of pilgrims through the city: Via della Lungara (16th century), Via del Pillegrino (1497), Via dei Coronari (16th century – contains the oldest shrine in Rome), Piazza di Tor Sanguigna (Piazza Navona), Via del Plebiscito (Galleria Doria Pamphili – shrine on front). Lastly, because pilgrims came all over the known Christian world, various nations set up assistance leagues to help their own countrymen – S. Maria dell'Anima (Germans), Nostra Signora del Sacro Cuoue (Spanish), S. Luigi dei Francesi (French), San Antonio dei Portoghesi (Portuguese), S. Ivo dei Brettoni (Brittany, France).

Holy Years
and
Events Related to Rome

1300– 1st Jubilee Holy Year established by virtual accident. The 13th Century was a time plagued by wars and epidemics. A great "Fear of end-of-time" began to fill Europe as people associated the number "13" with bad happenings.. Dread was the dominant mood. People began seeking peace with God by prayer at the tombs of Peter and Paul. Boniface VIII invoked papal primacy calling for an indulgence from God on behalf of those who came in faith. (Precedent for indulgences to those going to Jerusalem, etc.) Feb. 22: the first papal bull for a Holy Year was issued and required prayerful visits to Bas. Peter & Paul 15 times (on different days) for those coming from outside Rome and 30 times for Romans. Dante was among the 2,000,000 pilgrims who came for this first Jubilee Year. Boniface wished for the Jubilee to be proclaimed every 100 years. Immediately it was reduced (Clement VI) to every 50 years – this reduction in the period was achieved by a delegation of nobleman to the Pope in Avignon offering him the governance of Rome. The reasons for the reduction were the brevity of life and the memory fo the Hebrew Law.

1302 – Boniface issues *Unum Sanctam* which states papal supremacy over secular authority (e.g., the French).

1303– Philip IV of France reacts by having Boniface captured at his residence in Anagni, South of Rome. Boniface is released due to popular insurrection and dies in October.

1309– Clement V (1305-1315) transfers the papal residence to Avignon, France. Papacy remains there until 1377. Papacy is subject to the French crown.

1341 – Tiber floods Rome

1343 – Delegation visits Clement VI (1342-1352) to request a new Jubilee. The first one was good for the Roman economy!

1347 – Cola di Rienzo assumes power in popular revolt (with support from the papacy). He esteems the model of republican Rome; awakens interest in the monuments. Is killed on the Campidoglio in 1354 during an uprising.

1348 – 1. The stairway of S. Maria in Aracoeli is opened.

2. ****A powerful earthquake in September strikes – worst since the founding of Rome 2,000 years earlier. Destroys secular and sacred monuments. The facade of S. Giovanni in Laterano collapses and the basilica of St. Pietro is damaged.

3. The Black Death strikes the city.

1350 – Jubilee Year were set at 50 year intervals following the scriptural tradition. (Lev 25:8-55 & 27:17-21 and Numbers 36:4). Seven weeks of years were to be marked by forgiveness and initiated with the sound of the trumpet (horn = yobel).

The Avignon Pope Clement VI sent 2 cardinals to Rome for 1350. He raised to 3 number of churches with required prayer (adding St. John Lateran). What the Cardinals found was shocking: brigands prayed on travelers; city in collapse; cows grazed, pigs rooted in forum, etc. Also, the Plague in 1348 and the earthquake in 1349 had seriously affected the city. Monuments were falling; looters were making off with priceless ruins, etc. Prices soared in response to the "opportune" moment of visitors and some people had to stay 8 to a room.

1377 – End of the Avignon captivity. Gregory XI returns to Rome and moves the papal residence from the Lateran to the Vatican (shift in city center). Rome's population had declined from 35,000 in 1300 to about 25,000.

1383-88 – Plague further decimates the population.

1389 – New Jubilee is proclaimed. Desired to address the antischismatic struggle against the antipope in Avignon. Also, the pope was having trouble dealing with the clan rivalies in Rome for control of the city.

1390 – Unexpected Jubilee: Holy Year was planned amidst the Great Western Schism by Urban VI (who died before it could begin) and was carried out by Boniface IX. (Urban had established the interval for holy years to 33 in honor of the life of Jesus; however, the holy year of 1383 never happened and was delayed until 1390). Gregory XI had added St. Mary Major as the 4th place of worship in 1373. Great political problems existed due to the schism which blocked pilgrims from going to Rome. Also, baronial families have taken over the ancient monuments and made fortresses out of them from which they control transit in the city. Due to the plague, a decree states that pilgrims need pay only 1 visit to the basilicas (to get the pilgrims out of Rome more quickly!). The Church is financially strapped and has to take out loans from Tuscan bakers; profits from the Jubilee (indulgences) help raise money. Also, for the first time those outside Rome can take part financially if not physically!

1400 – Boniface IX. TRAGIC experience. Flagellanti Bianchi, Penitents arrived fromp France and walked the streets performing public penance and self-flagellation. This caused great illness & brought on the Black plague. 600-800 died each day in Rome. These penitents were called the "Company of the Whites" in honor of their robes giving this jubilee the title "Jubilee of the Whites." They cried *Pace e Misericordia* as they passed through the city. The pope receives them when they arrive on September 7, 1399. Note: the pope did not proclaim this Jubilee – it was "claimed" by the throngs of faithful streaming into the city! Nearly 120,000 came in September of 1399. The outskirts of Rome were littered with corpses of the dead (plague). Finally, the pope begins work to rebuild S. Paolo Fuori le Mura.

1415 – Another flood strikes Rome
1422 – More plague and another flood.

1423 – Martin V Holy Year (Boniface had explained the year1390 as a commemoration of the 33 years of Christ life, therefore Martin used the formula of 1390 + 33 == 1423!). Martin was elected at the Council of Constance to remedy the Western Schism. He was the1st to use a Holy Door at St. John Lateran symbolizing entry into purification. This gesture was soon imitated in all four basilicas. Now, the Pope opens the door at St. Peters with hammer & closes it with a trowel. The Plague struck once again. Martin responded by ordering shortened church services & cut back on the number of church visits required for indulgence. Martin begins work to restore the damaged city of Rome.

1427 – Masaccio paints the fresco of the Trinity in S. Maria Novella in Florence. He dies a year later in Rome at age 27.
1433 – The cupola is completed on Florence's Duomo by Brunelleschi.

1450 – (Return to cycle of 50 years) Nicholas V (the "humanist" pope). This Jubilee was to celebrate the reestablishment of ecclesial peace. However, pestilence broke out. A total of 30 visits were required for Romans; 8 for those from beyond the Alps (pilgrims only had to remain in Rome 5 days due to the plague). The pope blessed the crowds every Sunday in St. Peter's square and the Veil of Veronica is displayed every Saturday. Problems still besieged the system: crowds were overwhelming, people had to sleep in the open, illness overtook many and they died. In November the Tiber overflowed. On December 19 pilgrims were returning from benediction at St. Peters and were in a nightmare incident on the bridge in front of Castel Sant' Angelo as a mule & 4 horses panicked, kicking wildly; two hundred pilgrims died. In commemoration of this tragedy, the Pope had to propitiatory chapels built at the beginning of the bridge which were later replaced (Clement VII – 1534) with the statues of Peter and Paul that stand there today. Nicholas continues the effort to restore Rome; he initiates a great period of the arts and establishes the basis for the Vatican Library's first collection of books by acquiring codices and manuscripts. He also established the Vatican Botanical Garden. Finally, he begins work to alter the Constantinian Basilica of S. Pietro and commissions Leon Battista Alberti to begin construction of the Vatican Palaces (where he established a personal chapel painted by Fra Angelico). Cosimo de' Medici is commissioned to strike the first "Giubileo" or Holy Year medal for pilgrims to take home as souvenirs.

1451 – Christopher Columbus is born.
1452 – The three "pilgrim roads" are improved: Via dei Pellegrini (to the Ghetto), Via Papale (to the Campodoglio), and via Recta (the present day "Via dei Coronari). Also, the rebuilding of the Leonine City begins.\
1455 – Construction of Palazzo Venezia begins; this is the first renaissance building in Rome. It was used as a papal residence for a brief time. Also, Beato Angelico dies in Rome.

1458 – Pius II is elected pope (1458-1464). He is a leading figure in the cultural renewal of Rome.

1462 – Pius II issues *Cum Almam Nostram Urbem* which promotes the protection of ancient monuments.

1473-75 To prepare for the Holy Year, Sixtus IV (1471-1484) begins further renewal of Rome: roads, sanitation, restoration of monuments, etc. Builds the Ponte Sisto (only bridge built over the Tiber from ancient Rome until the 19th century), straightened medieval streets, demolished external stairways (thieves assaulted pilgrims at night by dropping from them), etc. Renaissance Rome has begun!

1475 – Paul II started a cycle of every 25 years (but he didn't live to see it) so that people of every generation could experience a Jubilee. Sixtus IV presided and used Gutenberg's invention of movable type to print announcements (thus formally establishing the *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana)*. He relieved pressure on Pont Sant' Angelo by adding the Ponte Sisto downstream. He also made use of Luca Signorelli, Perugino, Ghirlandaio, Verrochio and Botticelli to paint the Sistine Chapel (1475-1481). Other projects include S. Maria del Popolo (1475-77), S. Agostino (1479-83), S. Maria della Pace (1482), the Ospedale di S. Spirito in Sassia (1473-1478). Troubles existed because of wars among France, Spain, Germany & Hungary which blocked the way for many. Also, Turkish and Saracen pirates infested the sea. Tiber floods brought a new epidemic. All indulgences outside Rome are cancelled this year. The plague affects the Jubilee to such an extent that it has to be extended until April of 1476. Pilgrims this year include illustrious figures: King Ferrante of Naples, Queen Dorothy of Denmark, Mattia Corvino king of Hungary, Federico da Montefeltro Duke of Urbino and Charlotte of Lusignano former queen of Cyprus.

1498 – The Dominican Friar Savanarola is hanged and burned in Florence as a heretic. He had established a democratic republic based on moralistic philosophy after the expulsion of the Medici family in 1494.

1499 – Leonardo da Vinci completed the *Last Supper* for the refectory of S. Maria delle Grazie in Milan.

1500 – Alexander VI (Borgia 1492-1503). Holy Doors were placed in remaining three basilicas. He used the following prayer to open them: *"Open to me the door of justice. I will enter your house, O Lord. Open the door because God is with us."* Passing through the doors now becomes a requirement for the indulgence. On behalf of pilgrims on highways & sea, he threatened to excommunicate local authorities who didn't combat brigandage. He also stationed warships along the Tyrrhenian Sea. Lastly, he established the inaugural ceremony still observed today in which all holy doors in the major basilicas are opened simultaneously; St. Peter's by the Pope and the other three by his legates. Of artistic note, Michelangelo creates the *Pieta* and Bramante begins work on his first two projects in Rome: the cloister of S. Maria della Pace and the tempietto of S. Pietro in Montorio.

1503 – Julius II (della Rovere) is elected. Becomes Rome's greatest patron of the arts. Reigns until 1513.

1508-12 Michelangelo paints the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

1509 – Raphael begins work on his Stanze in the papal apartments.

1510 – Martin Luther visits Rome and is scandalized by the popes and the sale of indulgences.

1513 – Machiavelli writes *The Prince* – the strongest expression of renaissance political thought.

1517 – Lateran Council V concludes in Rome. Leo X declares the world of "self-reformation" complete within the Church!

1521 – Leo X (1513-1521, a Medici) excommunicates Martin Luther precipitating the Protestant Reformation.

1523 – Another devastating plague strikes.

1525 – Clement VII (Medici 1523-1534). Few pilgrims participated. Luther had launched the reformation and Henry VIII broke with Rome. Turkish Muslims swarmed the north Balkans. Roman citizens were notably unruly. An Indulgence was granted to pilgrims who were unable to make it all the way to Rome or who died after arrival. Romans who abused pilgrims were punished with fines, floggings, even confinements in papal jails. It was a low point for Rome. On a good note, Clement opened the Via del Babuino (completed in 1543) and the Via Paolina thus creating the "trident" of the Campo Marzo with Piazza del Popolo at the top. Two years later 14,000 mercenary troops of Charles V (German) sacked the city as Clement VII fled for safety into Castel Sant'Angelo (Tomb of Hadrian 117-138). It was during this jubilee that the first commemorative actual coins were struck.

1526 – First reliable census puts Rome's population at 55,000

1527 – Charles V's imperial troops cause the Sack of Rome.

1542 – Paul III establishes the Holy Office (Santo Uffizio) as custodian of Catholic orthodoxy.

1545-63 The Council of Trent begins. Lasts for 18 years!

1546 – Antonio da Sangallo, who was overseeing the construction of the new S. Pietro, dies. Michelangelo takes over.

1550 – Julius III (1550-1555). He repaired, with Michelangelo, what the invaders of 1527 had damaged. He pressed ahead with the rebuilding of St. Peters, replacing the 1,200 year old structure of Constantine. As a side job, Michelangelo redesigned the Capitoline hill. Julius stopped lodging profiteering by forbidding evictions and price increases. He also set up feeding stations for poor pilgrims; imported extra food from Spain and gave indulgence to sailors who rid Tyrrhenian Sea of Dragut, a Barbary corsair. Michelangelo sought the indulgence at 76 but was in no condition to walk barefoot to the Holy Year churches; Julius gave permission for a horseback ride. This jubilee was characterized by the zeal of St. Philip Neri and his Confraternity of the Holy Trinity of the Pilgrims (these distinguished themselves by aiding all the pilgrims no matter of their national origins – similar institutions were begun as a result of their example in the following jubilee year).

Also, St. Ignatius of Loyola and his companions are active in the city with preaching. Julius prevented price increases by freezing rates for lodging and food. Julius III accelerates the preservation of antiquities (Roman monuments) as a way of sanctioning the continuation between the Roman empire and the papacy.

1551-55 – Julius III build a suburban villa, the Villa Guilia.

1555 – Paul IV (1555-1559) creates the Jewish Ghetto to become the compulsory residence of the Jewish community until 1870.

1561 – Pius V, persecutor of heretics, is elected pope. Later becomes a Saint.

1568 – Construction of the Chiesa del Gesu begins.

1571 – A multinational fleet defeats the Turks at the Battle of Lepanto. Europe is safe from the Ottoman Empire!

1575 – Gregory XIII 1572-1585 (the man who gave the world it's present calendar – note that many of the Protestant lands refused to adopt the calendar at first because it was issued by a Pope!). Trent had launched the counter-reformation, re-establishing ascetic values undermined by Borgia scandals. Gregory increased churches to 7 (Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, San Loorenzo fuori le Mura, and San Sebastiano). Carnival festivals were prohibited for austerity's sake. Strong participation; 400,000 came from Italy, France, Spain, Germany and Hungary. Problems: Rainstorms, plagues in Trent & Sicily. Gregory closed some gates in the 3rd century walls to keep plague bearers out of the old city. The great Poet Torquato Tasso treated this jubilee in his writings. Gregory introduces the concept of "building for the public good" in his law *Quae Publice Utilia*. Carlo Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, participates in the Jubilee by walking barefoot over the itineraries. Now that there were seven churches, Philip Neri establishes the "way" or the Via Sette Chiesa that pilgrims travel; construction begins to connect these major basilicas (Via Merulana and Via Gregoriana are opened in 1576).

1584 – the Company of Virtuous Musicians (Academy of S. Cecilia) is opened. Remains Rome's most important musical institution.

1585-90 – Papacy of Sixtus V. Because he begins using a carriage, roads must be widened to accommodate it!

1586 – Under the direction of Domenico Fontana, the Vatican Obelisk is placed in the center of the Piazza. It took six months to complete this "memorable undertaking", as it was called.

1592 --Maleria epidemic strikes Rome.

1598-99 – Tiber floods Rome.

1599- 1602 – Caravaggio paints three canvases dedicated to St. Matthew for the church of S. Luigi dei Francesi.

1600 – Clement VIII (1592-1605). Age of scientific discoveries, printing press, explorations, etc. Holy Year marred by Giordano Bruno, Dominican friar, accused of revolutionary religious and philosophical ideas, jailed for 7 years in Venice, was brought to Rome and tried for heresy by the Inquisition. Found guilty at 52, he was burned at the stake on February 17 in Campo de' Fiori. A monument was erected in 1887 by anti-clerics and

used after WWII by Communists as a rallying place. Still, Clement wanted it to be an edifying experience: he visited basilicas, walked barefoot, washed the feet of pilgrims, invited 12 visitors daily to dine with him, visited the sick, and heard confessions. Reports state that between 500,000 and 3,000,000 pilgrims showed up for this jubilee. Still, this jubilee was marked by outstanding generosity as the Pope, cardinals and all the people of Rome gave generous alms to the pilgrims. Some notable projects include: creating piazzas in front of churches (S. Prisca, S. Gregorio Magno, s. Nicola in Carcere, and S. Giovanni in Laterano), restoring the titular Basilicas and building new churches (Chiesa Nuova is consecrated this year). This Jubilee took on a "theatrical" atmosphere as members of different Confraternities organized processions through the city wearing their different garments, carrying banners, singing songs, etc.

1614 – Rome's first public library, Biblioteca Angelica, is founded.

1622 – Carlo Maderno creates the dome of S. Andrea della Valle, the second tallest in Rome. The church is consecrated in 1650.

1623-24 Gian Lorenzo Bernini begins work on the bronze baldachin for S. Pietro using bronze from the Pantheon portico. The project is completed in 1633.

1625 – Urban VIII 1623-1644 (Barberini). A Tiber flood blocked the way to the Pauline basilica so he substituted Santa Maria in Trestevere as one of the Holy Year four (substitutions also included S. Maria del Popolo and S. Lorenzo in Lucina). He added an indulgence for those who visited the four churches with prayers at each of them for European peace (Thirty Years' War: France, England, the Republic of Venice, and the Kingdom of Savoy were at war with Spain and Austria). For those who could not go to Rome (old, ill, in jail, monks, etc.) the indulgence was granted anyway. For those who could go to Rome, 30 sets of visits to the four churches were required. A new plague struck.

1626 – The new Basilica of S. Pietro is consecrated.

1633 – Galileo faces the Inquisition.

1638 – Borromini begins construction of S. Carlo alle Quattro Fontane.

1650 – Innocent X 1644-1655 (Pamphili). St. Peter's cupola was illuminated for the 1st time with oil lamps. Borromini redid the Constantinian basilica of St. John Lateran in its present baroque form. 700,000 pilgrims in attendance. Rival confraternities (Filippini and Gonfalone) competed with processions; gave the Jubilee a "gaudy" appearance. Fireworks were launched on Easter Sunday by the Spanish confraternity in Piazza Navona. Bernini conceives the Fountain of the Four Rivers for Navona and completes it the following year. Borromini designs the church of S. Ivo alla Sapienza.

1667 – The colonnade of Piazza S. Pietro is completed (Bernini). The project was begun in 1656.

1675 – Clement X (1670-1676) 1,400,000 persons participated. Prominent at ceremonies was Christina, a former queen of Sweden and convert from Protestantism to Catholicism – symbol of "triumph of Catholic faith". Wool blankets were given for charity beds. 20 hospitals were set up by different nations in preparation for health needs -- some are still in service today. Bullfights in the Colosseum were banned; the Colosseum was consecrated to the cult of the martyrs.

1678 – Vivaldi is born in Venice. He dies in forgotten obscurity in Vienna in 1741.
1694 – Carlo Fontana completes the Palazzo di Montecitorio begun in 1653 by Bernini.

1700 – The Holy Year of 2 popes: Innocent XII (1691-1700) and Clement XI (1700-1721). Roman population was 135,000 (mere remnant of the 1-2 million from imperial Rome but improvement from 15,000 at heart of Middle Ages). 6% were clergy (8,327 with 42 bishops). Clement forbade nepotism and opened original papal palace in St. John Lateran to house those unable to work. Once again, he had to use Santa Maria in Trestevere due to Tiber flooding. Cleaned streets of litter; marble plaques threatened punishment for dumping garbage in streets – still to be seen on walls near Piazza di Spagna.

1704 – Reconstruction of the Porto di Ripetta, the Tiber's ancient port used for small river traffic from Tuscany and Umbria begins. This is Rome's largest urban renewal project of the 18th century!
1707 – Austrian domination replaces French domination over Italy.
1720-90 The "Great Tour" begins. Northern Europeans visit Italy and start the "trend" for classical studies. Famous writers include Edward Gibbon, Jacques-Louis David, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

1725 – Jubilee of the Needy. Benedict XIII (1724-30), Dominican, emphasizes the need for charity for pilgrims. Visits the ill and imprisoned, devotes himself to the assisting the needy. Shows little interest in the secular needs of his time.

1726 – Piazza di Spagna is lined to the Pincio by the steps of the Trinita dei Monti.
1743 – The names of the various "Rioni", or streets, are placed on the walls of houses at street intersections. Before this event, visitors had to constantly ask for directions at each intersection.

1750 – Benedict XIV (1740-58). He was a very ascetic pope. He prepared for the Holy Year with a 10 day retreat. He had the year focus on the preaching of two clerics, later canonized: Alphonsus Liguori, founder of the Redemptorists Order, and Leonard of Port Maurice, a Franciscan friar. The Stations of the Cross are moved into the Colosseum thus reinterpreting this ancient monument as a place of martyrdom.

1762 – Clement XIII (1758-1769) starts the Trevi Fountain.
1763 – German archeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann is put in charge of Rome's antiquities.
1771 – Clement XIV (1769-1774) establishes the Pio-Clementino Museum thus beginning the transformation of the Vatican palaces into museums.
1773 – Clement XIV disbands the Jesuits. The order will be reinstated in 1814.

1775 – Clement XIV summoned the Holy Year but died after suppressing the Jesuits due to complaints they exercised too much political power (they ran most of the universities in Europe). The Superior, Fr. Ricci, was jailed in Castel Sant' Angelo. The event had American repercussions: Jesuit Father John Carroll, member of patriot family that gave signers to both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, and had accompanied Benjamin Franklin to Canada in an effort to recruit them in to war, was dismissed from his order but still a priest. Benjamin Franklin urged the Pope to make him a Bishop and so he became the first American Catholic bishop and in 1793 founded the first American Catholic college: Georgetown in Washington. Jesuits did not revive for more than 50 years (after the fall of Napoleon). succeeded and opened the Holy Year. Pius VI (1775-99) welcomes Maximilian of Austria and others who harbor ideas of the Enlightenment – a symbol of the Church's gradual opening to new thoughts. Only 300,000 pilgrims attended. Notable spectacles: Some roman fountains gushed wine rather than water on the day the Pope took symbolic possession of St. John Lateran.

1778 – Teatro alla Scala is completed in Milan.
1789 – Antonio Canova creates Clement XIV's funerary monument in the basilica of the Ss. Apostoli.
1796 – Napoleon begins his Italian campaigns annexing Rome and imprisoning Pius VI four years later.
1799 – A conclave is held in Venice electing Pius VII (1800-1823). He arrives in Rome on July 3.

1800 – (no Holy Year) Pius VI died in imprisonment in France ion August 29, 1799. Pius VII was elected pope in March of 1800. Italy had broken into several republics after Clement was arrested in revolutionary France. Pius assigned a two week summer-time period during which an indulgence was offered under certain pious conditions but with no need to visit Rome. Pius was also jailed by Napoleon for five years.

1804 – Napoleon crowns himself emperor while in the presence of Pius VII – note: before this, only the Pope could crown someone a Holy Roman Emperor.
1816-24 – Piazza del Popolo is redesigned. Napoleon had used it for the site of his public executions by guillotine.
1823 – Fire destroys the basilica of S. Paolo Fuori le Mura.

1825 -- Leo XII. Urged the faithful to come for *"a year of expiation, of pardon, of redemption, of grace, of remission and indulgence."* Come, he said, to *"this Holy*

Jerusalem, this royal priestly city which has become the capital of the world as the sacred see of Blessed Peter," a place whose *"soil, walls, monuments, churches, sepulchers of martyrs and everything else inspire souls with the sense of the sacred."* Efforts were made to keep the unruly locals from interfering with the spirit of prayer: barriers were set up at hostelries to keep wine out. Preaching was arranged in plazas with singing, dancing and loud talk forbidden. Repairs were made to the Colosseum and the Forum's Arch of Titus. There was great fear that revolutionary elements might infiltrate the crowd.

1848 – Riots were inspired by Guiseppe Mazzini's republican ideals resulting in the creation of a short-lived republic that was defended by Guiseppe Garibaldi's volunteers. Pius IX (1846-1878) retreats to Naples until French troops retake the city.

1850 – Again, no Holy Year. Revolutionaries had besieged the last papal king, Pius IX, in the Quirinal Palace. He was rescued in 1850 by French and Bourbon troops. Indulgences were granted during a three week summer period for those participating in specified novenas and other church services. Pius summoned the first ecumenical conference in 300 years which asserted the doctrine of papal infallibility. The council was interrupted suddenly when the troops of the Garibalidi and the Savoy king, Victor Emmanuel, marched into Rome and created the modern united Italy. Pius IX withdrew to the Vatican Palace as a voluntary prisoner as did all of his successors until 1929. Pius IX served for 32 years, longer than any other pope.

1860 – Garibaldi defeats the Bourbon rulers in Sicily and Naples. The Kingdom o Italy is established a year later.
1868 – Cholera claims 8,500 victims in Rome.
1870 – Vatican Council I proclaims the dogma of Papal Infallibility in matters of faith and morals. After a short siege, Italian troops occupy Rome, the last city to fall in this 10-year-old kingdom. This is the end of the Church's secular power.
1871 – Rome becomes the new capital of Italy.

1875 – The holy year is celebrated without any public ceremonies or the opening of the Holy Doors. This is due to the polemics with the state of Italy.

1876 – After the disastrous Tiber flood of 1870, construction begins on river embankments. These will be completed in 1900.
1881 – Rome now has more than 270,000 residents. It is the 3rd largest Italian city after Naples and Milan.
1891 – Leo XIII (1878-1903) publishes *Rerum Novarum* which attempts to find balance between the Italian state and the Church, and a role for the Church in the new state.

1900 – Leo XIII. No outdoor ceremonies were conducted due to the papal "imprisonment". It was attended by 350,000 people. An indulgence was given for Romans who prayed at

the four basilicas 29 times and for out-of-city visitors who did so 10 times. It was now permissible for pilgrims to go via street cars and not just on foot to make their visits. Some anti-church activists called for pilgrimages to the four "laic" basilicas: the Pantheon (the assassinated Savoy King Umberto was buried there), Janiculum hill (Garibaldi's monument), the Porta Pia (place of entry into the Aurelian wall in 1870), and the Capitoline hill (Rome's municipal government offices).

1900– King Umberto I is assassinated by an anarchist. He is succeeded by King Victor Emmanuel III.
1915 – Italy enters World War I on the side of the Allies.
1922 – The fascist march on Rome concludes with Benito Mussolini forming a new government.
1924 – Socialist House Representative Matteotti is assassinated by the fascists.
1925 – Governorship of Rome is established; the capital assumes unique administrative status.

1925 – Pius XI. 500,000 participants included Australians, Argentines, Africans and Asians. Pius sought to normalize relations with the Italian government. Electric lights were added to the dome at night. Foul speech was prohibited. *These actions were done by the <u>civil</u> government, no the papacy* (gesture of reconciliation to the Church). A huge cross was reinstalled in the Colosseum along with the 14 stations of the cross (previously removed by the Savoy kings). In 1927, Pius XI signed the Lateran Accord involving mutual concessions and creating Vatican City State. Pilgrims can obtain indulgences by praying for the unity of Christians, peace among people and a solution to the Palestinian problem. A large "Missionary Exposition" teaches about the Catholic Church's missionary efforts. This exposition eventually becomes a new collection in the Vatican Museums.

1925 – Mussolini establishes a fascist dictatorship.
1929 – The Lateran Treaty is signed which defines the relationship between church and state.
1933 – The Via dell'Impero (present day "Via dei For Imperiali") opens.
1940-45 – Fascist Italy fights with Axis powers in World War II.
1943 – On July 19, U.S. planes bomb the S. Lorenzo quarter.

1950 – Pius XII; Last pope to be carried in the *sedia gestatoria*. Vatican Radio, designed by Guglielmo Marconi, gave up to date reports on Holy Year events. For the first time, reporters and photographers were given access to watch the opening of the Holy Door – the fruit of having a Vatican press office; a suggestion of a young priest 26 years earlier from Fordham University: Francis Spellman. Required visits were reduced to one basilica. The "time" obligation was eliminated. Specific conditions required confession, Communion, recitation of the of the Apostle's Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary and the Glory be (one of which was to be for the Pontiff's special intention). 1,100,000 pilgrims attended. One group was led by Cardinal Spellman with New York policeman

holding the U.S. flag. It was the 1st and last time a national emblem was carried through the Holy Door! (Mons. Ludwig Kaas, the basilica's forceful administrator, announced the next day a ban on national emblems!) Airlines increased service to Rome (TWA offered 60 per week), campsites were set up and other reception centers added. The Dogma of the Assumption was promulgated. Pilgrims were able to visit St. Peter's for the first Jubilee year by using the recently-completed Via della Conciliazione (built by Mussolini to celebrate the Lateran Treaty).

1957 – The Treaty of Rome is signed and Italy becomes a founding member of the European Economic Community.

1968-79 – Years of violence when terrorists resort to bombs and murder which culminate in the kidnapping and murder of former prime minister Aldo Moro in 1978.

1975 – Paul VI (1963-78). Holy Year was used as an opportunity to restore hurt relations with the Orthodox, Anglican, Lutherans and Protestants. Paul VI returned the great relics of St. Mark to Cairo and St. Andrew to Constantinople. *Populorum Progressio* was issued calling for international economic justice. 10,000,000 pilgrims attended. 100,000 attended weekly outdoor audiences. 350,000,000 watched the Holy Year events on television.

1991 – Rome's population numbers more than 2,700,000.

1991 – Waves of refugees stream in from neighboring Albania.

1999 – NATO alliance planes bomb Yugoslavia in an effort to stop ethnic strife in Kosovo.

2000 – John Paul II established it to celebrate the 2000th anniversary of the Incarnation. Attendance was approximately the same as the previous Holy Year.

Additional Information regarding Rome

Gianicolum Drive

Not counted as one of the Seven Hills of Rome, the Janiculum is a ridge rising steeply from the far side of the Tiber, parallel to the river's course. It has been an indispensible defense for the city from ancient time to present. The hill took its name from the Roman god Janus. Now mostly covered with tranquil gardens, walking paths, and superb panoramic views of the city's architecture, the Janiculum was in recent history a site of great import to Italy; for here, fierce fighting took place between invading French troops and the staunch but outmatched supporters of the Republic of Rome in 1849. These defenders of Republican Rome staged a revolution, known as the Risorgimento, in response to an alliance in 1848 between Pope Pius IX, who wished to distance himself from the Italian nationalists, and Louis Napoleon, the nephew of Napoleon I and newly elected president of France. They were led in their battle for the unity of Italy by the eloquent rhetoric of Giuseppe Mazzini and the guerrilla strategist Giuseppe Garibaldi. The poet Tasso loved this area and used to spend time here as well as Leopardi and

Chateaubriand. According to one legend, it is on this hill that St. Peter was crucified upside down and that he gathered the entire city in an unencumbered visual embrace. In 1870 a *passeggiata* was constructed on the crest of the hill.

Fontana di Aqua Paola

Built by Fontana in 1612, this sparkling fountain dedicated to and commissioned by Paul V helps us to understand what happened what happened to the beautiful marble that used to be in the Roman Forum. The water itself flows abundantly from the ancient subterranean aqueducts of Trajan, rehabilitated by Paul V to supply this area known as Trestevere with fresh water. Paul had marble from the Forum of Nerva and columns from the 1st Basilica of St. Peters (4 of the present 6) used. In 1690 Alexander VIII commissioned Carlo Fontana to design the broad piazza in front of the fountain which offers an excellent view of the city of Rome.

- With the return of the Popes following the Avignon years, Rome took on a whole new splendor and became the capital of art and culture in Europe.

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

- Victor Emmanuel Monument – build on the Capitoline Hill, it celebrates Italian independence. It is fairly hideous – the Romans hoped it would be bombed in World War II! Contains a bronze statue of King Vittorio Emanuele II (36' high). The goddess Roma stands on the front of the tomb. The tomb holds the remains of the "unknown soldier."

Palazzo Venezia

- Palazzo Venezia – This is the first renaissance work in Rome (1455-67). It was the residence of the popes until 1564 and then became the residence of the ambassadors from the Republic of Venice.
- It was from this palace that Mussolini gave his famous speeches to the crowds below. Note how it connected him with "Imperial Rome" and forums just a few yards. He could see the Colosseum from his balcony!

Campidoglio

- Campidoglio – Capitoline Hill. Religious and political center of ancient Rome. Michelangelo created the beautiful square with the bronze statue of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius.

Quirinal Palace

- Quirinal Palace – Highest of the Roman hills where the sanctuary of Quirino once existed. Residence of the Popes and then of the "sovereigns" after 1870. From 1947 to present it has served as the residence of the President of Italy. Gregory XIII began it in 1574; it was completed in 1730-40.

Fontana Trevi

- Trevi Fountain – Designed by Nicolo Salvi, it was built by Pope Clement XII to care for the water called "Virgin Water" (legend of young woman who shows Roman soldiers a spring). It was brought to Rome in 19 BC by Agrippa (15 mile aqueduct to thermal baths). The fountain was finished in 1762 and is called "Trevi" since it marks the spot where three streets meet ("tre vie").

Bernini's "Elephant"

- Elephant – created by Bernini in 1667. The base supports and Egyptian obelisk of the 6th BC.

"Mithraism"

- Mithraism revived a declining paganism just as Christianity was beginning
- Similar elements with Christianity: Rituals and Liturgies, Redemptive and Cathartic elements, Catechumenate structure for initiation, ritual "agape" meal of bread and wine/water, immortality, etc. However, Mithraism was very exclusive as compared to Christianity's universal welcome.

The Origin of Mithraism...

- Persian origin, the name comes from the Indian and Persian god, Mithras. He was always identified in the East with the Sun – he was the "guarantor" of pacts between tribes; god of the oath and contracts (basis of stability in agricultural societies).
- Attributes began to transform even in ancient Persia. Soon, Mithras took on military guise and the religion spread throughout the Roman Empire. Mithraism arrived in Greece by Cilician pirates in 67 BC and was immediately well received.
- In the west, Mithraism took on a new character different from its eastern form. The original Zoroastrian elements were replaced by Chaldaean and Babylonian doctrines and liturgies and more specifically by astrology, astralism and the magico-religious disciplines of Magusai sects. Thus, Roman Mithraism was born from a syncretic process that endowed the god Mithras with much more than the Persian version. Mithras in Rome was mystical and redemptive.
- The cult reached its peak in the 3rd century AD and rapidly declined with the spread of Christianity. By the 4th century, Mithraism is virtually gone, coinciding with the decline of the Roman Empire in the west.

The Myth of Mithraism...

- Mithras, a young and beautiful god, appeared as a *light* out of the solid vault of the sky "invictus de petra natus".
- The *rock* that had given him life put him down on the banks of a river under the shade of a tree.
- *Shepherds* witnessed this miraculous birth. They saw him rise out of the rock naked, armed with a knife, torch in his hand and a Phyrigian cap on his head.
- They sheltered him and *gave him gifts* and worshiped him.
- Mithras began *heroic deeds* that sought to *subjugate the evil* of the cosmos.
- He first challenged the Sun who, defeated, struck a pact of alliance with him and *passed to him his radiant crown* which became one of Mithras' attributes.
- Mithras captured a wild bull and led it to his cave, *specus*, a task that was made difficult because of *obstacles* in the way (*transitus*).
- The bull escaped and was seen by the Sun who ordered Mithras, via a Raven (his messenger), to kill it. Reluctantly, Mithras undertook the task.

- Mithras set off after the bull with his faithful *dog*. As the bull was about to take shelter in the cave from which he had fled Mithras seized it by the nostrils and plunged his knife into its side (*tauroctonia)*.
- From the *side* of the bull there miraculously sprang all the beneficial plants what were to inhabit the earth: from it's spine came *wheat* and from its blood came *vine* (grapes).
- Ahriman, god of Evil, unable to stand by in the face of this profusion of life, sent his evil attendants, the *scorpion* and the *snake*, to fight the spread of these life-giving forces.
- However, these attempts were in vain. Rather than preventing the bull's seed from being shed on the earth, which, aided by the Moon, gave rise to every special of useful animal, they instead decided to infect life with their own venom of evil.
- Mithras and the Sun sealed their victory with a feast (*agape*).
- Then, climbing into the Sun's chariot, Mithras *ascended* to the heavens from where he continued to *look after the faithful*.

The Mithraic Cave...

- The cult of Mithras took place inside mostly artificial "caves" (*specus*).
- Dark, gloomy places met a symbolic need: *It was Zoroaster who first dedicated to Mithras, father of all things, a natural cave situated in the nearby mountains of Persia..., the cave wsa for him the image of the cosmos of which Mithras is the demiurge, and the objects placed in it at carefully calculated intervals were symbols of the cosmic elements and the regions of the sky.*
- The cave, then, was chosen for astrological reasons, as an allegory of the cosmos. (Tertullian called them *castra tenebrarum* – "kingdom of the shades")
- Caves helped to draw out the symbolism of Mithras as the "sun" god.
- Remember: Mithras, *invictus de petra natus*, was born ***on December 25th***, the day of the *natalis solis*. He assumed the radiant crown and main life-enhancing virtues of the Sun.
- Why the dark cave? The caves had symbolic meaning and made allusions to the cosmos and the movements of the planets (Chaldaean and Babylonian astrological ideas). The cult relied on "astrological exegesis" reserved for only a few members of the highest grade of initiates.

Astrological symbolism...

- The structure of the "Astrological symbolism" gave rise to various "stages" of a member's journey. These stages corresponded to journey a soul made into the world beyond.
- There were 7 degrees of initiation corresponding to the 7 planets. Also, remember that the Mithraic "cave" had 11 holes in the ceiling – 7 for the planets and 4 for the seasons.
- Moreover, the mysteries of Mithras taught the symbolic relationship between the 7 planets that "move" and the stars that are stationery.
- The Mithraic devotee (*miste)* was encouraged to pursue an inner path to redemption. This journey had to be accomplished in set stages by means of progressive initiation focused on the 7 grades: (note: each stage was associated with the seven doors, the seven planetary spheres, the seven days of the week and the seven metals)
- Raven (*Corax*) – Moon (Silver) Vital and nutritive energy

• Occult (*Cryphius*	Mercury (Iron)	Desires
• or *Nymphus* - nymph) –	Venus (tin)	Erotic Inclinations
• Soldier (*Miles*) –	Sun (gold)	Intellectual Capacities
• Lion (*Leo*) –	Mars (alloy)	Warlike Ardor
• Persian (*Perses*) –	Jupiter (bronze)	Ambitions
• Runner of the Sun (*Heliodromus)* –	Saturn (lead)	Accidia (sloth)
• Father (*Pater*) –		

- Additionally, the signs of the zodiac were also associated, in a complex pattern, this passage sequence. With each passage the soul freed itself from the astral influences associated with each of the planets crossed, influences acquired originally when the soul had passed towards earth!
- The shedding of each passion was symbolically enacted by the initiate as he went through the progressive stages of the initiation rites.
- Nothing is known of the rituals themselves because they were a secretive society. It does appear that some of the rituals involved being blindfolded and jumping across a ditch with hands bound by chicken entrails as a way of overcoming and dominating "fear" and control over the realm of feelings and emotions.
- During the ceremony, the initiates wore animal masks corresponding to the grade to which they belonged. Ex: a "lion" grade member would wear a lion mask and act like that animal acted.
- The central act of the Mithraic religion was an animal sacrifice (which was claimed to have salvific and redemptive benefits).

Rituals...

- In the admission ceremony the initiate was offered a crown at the end of a sword which he placed on his head and then removed as a "refusal" and placed it back on the sword. The meaning of this gesture is that from this day forward he would wear no crown because the crown belonged to Mithras.
- Songs and hymns were sung in the cave with candles for light. The ceiling had stucco stars on it. The walls were dark and the *Tauroctonia* was a very light colored marble.
- Many ceremonies included drunkenness.
- Worshippers were required to perform purifying washings (similar to Christian baptism).
- The specific form of the ritual was linked to the stage of initiation.
- A banquet formed part of the ceremony in which the mithraic *agape* was eaten with *bread and wine*. Christians were very alarmed with the analogy to the Eucharist!
- See the Bread and Wine in conjunction with the final sacrificing of a bull: In the myth, when the young god plunges his blade into the belly of the ferocious beast, a *vine* springs from its blood while *miraculous ears of wheat* grow from its tail. (Some sublimation of an agrarian sacrifice in which the annual sacrifice of a bull was thought to ensure the growth of new vegetation and, particularly, of wheat (or corn). This vision of fertility was augmented by another eschatological myth which was associated with the beginning and end of the world.

Tauroctonia*...*

- Each Mithraeum had one sacred image either carved or painted which occupied a central place in the cave. It was an icon intended to conjure up the religious paradigm of Mithraism. This image is called the *Tauroctonia.*
- It depicts a young god with golden hear, barely restrained beneath a Phrygian cap, and a broad cloak. He is plunging a long knife into the belly of a virile bull. A dog and a snake are licking its blood and a scorpion is reaching towards the animals testicles.
- This is the "culminating" moment of the myth: *tauroctonia*, or the "killing of the bull".
- For initiates, the victory over the wild bull was the affirmation of order over pirmordial chaos and barbarism. Thus, the inevitable evolution towards the civilization of mankind.
- Only a small elite, belonging to the upper levels, could grasp the more complicated examples and rituals. By the killing of the primordial bull, Mithras was creating the universe. From this action sprang the movement of the planets which, with their rotation around the heavens, gave life to ***time***.

The Inevitability of Time...

- The idea of time without limits took on a new role in Mithraism. Astrologers saw in the actions of the planets the fatal determination of the course of the universe.
- Time, as expressed in the planets, took on a quality of inevitability. This fatalistic trend was shared by the Stoics as well.
- In many mithraea the statue of a lion-headed monster has been found – a symbolic representation of the qualities of Time with its potential to devour, and its speed in running! This images is called the *Kronos.* Terrifying image: both man and beast, with wings, head of a lion, and a body would round with the coils of a snake.
- Wings – speed of Time
- Lion's head - Time's voracity
- coils of snake- cyclical movements of the heavenly bodies that govern
- Often this creature is depicted holding one or two *keys*: Opens the gates in the morning and closes them in the evening (east and west).
- Time is the maker and destroyer of all things.

The Triple Mithras...

- Other statues or paintings might include two youth who resemble the Persian god with cloaks and caps. These were the *Cautes* and *Cautopates* or sometimes the *dadophori* (torch-bearers), and were often represented along side Mithras. One holds the torch high, the other holds the torch down. They form a "triple Mithras".
- These represent dawn (*Cautes* – raised torch), noon (Mithras), and sunset (*Cautopates* - inverted torch). They also represent the extremities of existence: the heat of life and the freezing chill of death.

The only Mithraic caves to survive in the west are to be found in Rome. Of the few that have survived, only a couple are accessible and often with special permission.

The Mithraeum were rectangular rooms with vaulted ceilings and *triclinia*, bench seats, lining the room on three sides. Here the members sat to eat their *agape*. Other more functional rooms were near the main one.

After a rather hectic and "induced" experience of liturgy (shouting, animal sounds, bells, incense, candles, etc.) The lights are extinguished and the stench of blood fills the room as the bull is sacrificed and its blood runs through the grating, bathing the worshipper in a warm "baptismal" liquid: The initiation ceremony of *taurobolium*.

The Mithraeum of San Clemente

- This is the most famous of all the underground sites!
- In 1857 the archeologist De Rossi began to excavate the 4th century church beneath the present basilica. They could go no farther because of an underground river that flooded the work.
- In 1912 a 700 meter long drainage conduit was installed to eliminate the flooding problem. Now a 4th level came to light!
- They discovered a number of houses destroyed in the fire of 64 AD during Nero's reign.
- In the lowest level the Mithraeum was discovered. It consisted of a series of rooms created in the 2nd half of the 2nd century within the walls of an older *domus* (1st century).
- Distinguishable among these rooms is the *Mithraic School* – a rectangular space where the initiates were given instruction before being admitted to the more intimate secrets of the triclinium.
- The lower initates (*corax, cryphius (nymphus) and miles)* were not allowed to participate in the mithraic *agape*.
- The rooms were richly decorated with floor mosaics and frescoes.
- Graffiti has been found which relates to the seven grades of initiation.
- In the Mithraeum, there is a small statue representing the "birth of Mithras" placed in a cavity of the *specus* and in line with the altar placed in the center of the room. The statue clearly shows a young Mithras emerging from the rock light the light from the solid vault of the sky. In the Indian verses, his birth is described with the words: "leapt from the rock, came out of the cave"!

Francis and Clare – A Brief Biographical Sketch

- Born 1181 or 1182. Most likely in a nice home near the Piazza del Commune.
- Mother: Giovanna (but called Pica), Father: Pietro di Bernardone
- Baptized in the Cathedral of San Rufino. Given the name "Giovanni" after the Baptist, the one who announced the coming of the Messiah. Pietro was a businessman before being a father; he left Assisi when Giovanna was 7 months pregnant. Business was business.
- sickly child who required constant nursing throughout childhood.
- Pietro was angered by the name "Giovanni". He was a cloth merchant and was infatuated with all things "French". He called his son Francesco meaning "Frenchman". Francis grew up learning to speak french.
- Pica was most likely from France. Early records state that she met Pietro on her way back from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.
- In all the family had three sons.
- Most information from Francis' life comes from Thomas of Celano (friar and poet of genius), he also authored the *Dies Irae*. He wrote in Rome under commission from Pope Gregory IX and had all resources (depositions pro and con) at his disposal.
- Francis attended St. George school right next to the town walls. The story of St. George slaying the dragon is story that defined Francis' vision of his own dreams.
- Interesting society, both religious and licentious. Ex: Feast of Nicholas on Dec. 6 that initiated three weeks of the "boy Bishop" reigning. Reversal of roles intended to establish humility in fact licensed debauchery. Innocent III had to condemn the practice from Rome!
- Town of 2,300 homes and 22,000 inhabitants. Roughly 1/3 of current day statistics.
- Vestiges of the city's pagan past abound. Santa Maria Maggiore, the first cathedral, arose on the site of the temple of Apollo. Minerva is the best-preserved temple example (Goethe fell in love with the pillars). San Rufino is built on the foundations of the shrine of the Mother God adored under the name Gaia, the Earth. One monastery stood on the remains of Hercules, another on those of Mars. All this supplanting points to a decisive moment when there was perceived a real need to eradicate pagan symbols by replacing them with Christian ones.
- Note: Assisi was an Imperial city while Perugia, its hated rival, was a Papal city.
- at the age of 12 Francis accompanied his father on his business trips to France. Francis was moved by the troubadours and by the fact that French priests elevated the host at the consecration (begun in Paris by Bishop Eudes de Sully in response to the heretic Berenger). Little did he know that these experiences were planting the seeds of a new spirituality.
- Francis showed great promise as a businessman; his sense of customers was uncanny – he could give personal attention and discern the heart very quickly.
- The "imperial" world of Francis was unstable. Milan had only recently (1187) won recognition from Frederic Barbarosa. In 1187 news also reached the west of Saladin's capture of Jerusalem which prompted the princes of the west to promise a crusade. Only Barbarossa kept his promise but he died unfortunately by drowning while bathing in the Cydnus just when Syria lay open before him. His son, Henry IV, took revenge on Italy

and took back all the franchises his father had given. Imperial troops were assigned to Assisi to enforce the "Pax Germanica". These troops resided in the Rocca Alta, the fortress overlooking the town. Francis was 8 when Frederick Barbarossa died. Henry IV was a merciless person. At Palermo, William (the son of the Tancred who had stirred Sicily to insurrection) personally had to carry the crown of the Two Kingdoms during Mass and lay it at Henry IV's feet. A few days later, the day after Christmas, this 8 year old child had his eyes gouged out and was castrated. The bodies of Tancred and Roger of Sicily who had been the soul of the Norman revolt were ripped from their tombs and beheaded in the public square. Of interesting note: the empress had to stop at Jesi and gave birth in a tent hastily erected in the town square – it was a boy, the future Frederick II. Frederick would be baptized several months later, early in 1195, in the same baptismal font of stone and porphyry as the little Giovanni di Bernardone. Francis attended this baptism at the age of 13.

- Francis' life returned to the store. His father assigned him the duty of "modeling" new styles of clothing. Francis enjoyed wearing the finest and he enjoyed this task. He was the trend-setter of Assisi. Selling cloth to noble youth proved to be very profitable because they were particularly susceptible to buying on their parent's credit. Pietro knew the parents would settle their accounts with tracts of land when the gold ran out.
- Francis' challenge to lead the good life (part marketing ploy by his dad) was effective. In 13th century Assisi there were 150 religious holidays (e.g., celebration opportunities) per year. Francis was quite adept at leading the revelry. He was 14 years old. At age 15 a boy was considered a man. Francis' childhood was quickly ending.
- One of his favorite ways to spend Holy Days was riding with his friends in the countryside to spend time on one of his father's many properties in the area. One of these properties boarded a Leper hospital where the stench of death always abounded. Francis had not choice but to see the dramatic difference between the life of carefree self-indulgence he was leading and the reality of human suffering and poverty that abounded – he had to face it every time he went to any of the properties.
- Beggars were everywhere in the 13th century. Roughly 10% of the population lived in absolute destitute poverty. People were poor from political changes, war, disease, etc. The forests were full of wandering rejects from society who were walking corpses. They fed on rodents and spoiled food that was given to them; little did they know that it contained diseases that only added to their misery. Sometimes soldiers would hunt beggars in the woods as part of their practice. Human life was cheap, especially poor life.
- Stories of "saintly poverty" were abounding. For example, people talked about Pierre de Vaux who wanted to imitate St. Alexis (lived under his father's stairs). There was another group called "Christ's Poor" who renounced everything and criticized the princes of the Church for their sumptuous living when the poor Lord Jesus had nothing. Francis listened to these stories.
- Other challenges emerged as well. Joachim of Floris, a monk from Calabria, wrote a book called *The Eternal Gospel* which advocated the passing reign's of the Trinity. In response to these actions, the church forbade the reading of the Gospel in the venacular!
- Around the time of Francis' birth, one of those fanatics went through the streets of Assisi shouting *Pace e Bene*.

- Other groups also began to emerge. The Cathars claimed that the world was evil. They were "children of the light" who went all the way to Persia to foster their belief. The Bogomils believed that the world was the work of Satan and that only poverty and penance could achieve salvation; they formed a new counter-church. The "Brothers of the Free Spirit" called for nothing less than the sharing of all worldly goods. **All these groups used the Gospels as weapons to attack whatever they wanted. They were not violent but they were seen as being crazy – you had to be crazy to live like Christ.
- In the next year Henry IV died from malaria (contracted while hunting in the marches of Campagna). It was the summer of 1197. Pope Celestine III was 93 years old and died three months after Henry – the two thrones of power were now empty. 1198 was pivotal as Otto and his brother Philip assumed the imperial thrones and Innocent III assumed the papal throne. Innocent was only 34 years old. Which "emperor" would people side with? Conrad of Urslingen who was the duke of Spoleto and resided with troops at the Rocca sided with Otto IV. Innocent III leaned in the same direction.
- the Duke of Spoleto formed an allegiance with the Pope and accompanied most of his troops from the Rocca to join the Pope. In his absence, Assisi tasted freedom and launched an attack on the Rocca. Francis was part of this attack and he carried a weapon. The Germans were massacred and thrown out of the windows or over the walls. When the fortress had fallen a commune was immediately set up by a man named Bombarone who may be the future Brother Elias. The duke of Spoleto was at Narni when he and Innocent III heard of the revolt. The pope was pleased; this was his opportunity to seize a town that the emperor held. As the fortress was demolished the stones were used to build walls around the city (same walls as today). Assisi would resist both Pope and Emperor.
- Many noblemen wanted out of town at any price and Pietro bought their estates for pennies on the dollar. One of the families who barely fled in time was the Offreduccio family whose home was on the Piazza San Rufino – Francis helped ransack this house with his friends; little did he know that he was breaking into the home of Clare, his future spiritual daughter!
- As long as Assisi refused to submit to Rome the Pope placed it under interdict and all the doors of the churches were nailed shut. Inside the crucifix was covered with a veil. No sacraments were administered.
- Francis continued his path of debauchery for the next nine years. Interestingly, Francis had an aversion to any kind of vulgarity or open disrespect for women. Could the story of St. George who delivers the princess be taking root?
- It was in this time of his life that Francis began to experience some of the seeds of his conversion. For example: A beggar came into his shop and he sent the man away. After he left, Francis realized his error and left the customers to go after the poor man and fill his hands with silver. After this moment, Francis to never again turn down any request "For the love of God."
- Francis also encountered a "simpleton" in Assisi who proclaimed that he "will accomplish great things and will be given magnificent honors by the faithful."
- In January 1200 war broke out with Perugia over a nobleman who had taken refuge in Perugia following the revolt against the Rocca. December 12, 1202 marked a decisive battle. The army was mustered and troops gathered in front of the cathedral. Francis was outfitted as a knight – in today's terms such an outfit would cost between $50,000 - $75,000. After four hours of travel the army arrived for the battle. Perugia massacred

them. Archers and infantry were massacred while knights were taken hostage. Interestingly enough, the battle took place on land owned by Francis' father. Francis more than likely killed Perugians in the battle. Only a few Assisians returned to bring the bad news.

- Francis was now a prisoner with many others, all noblemen except himself. He always wanted to be among nobility; now he was! Francis handed imprisonment very well and once again began to lead others in jokes and singing. He helped the sick but his perpetual good cheer became an irritant. Celano states that when Francis was asked why he did this he responded, "I rejoice because someday I shall be venerated as a saint all over the world." Francis did eventually loose his health and his lungs were affected. A year had passed. Francis' release was arranged by a charitable organization in exchange for a ransom. He was 22.
- Francis returned home with tuberculosis. He was too sick to enjoy his freedom. Also, he remembered his friends who were still in prison. Nothing could bring back the dead. Finally a peace with Perugia was established and Assisi had to submit to the Commune of Perugia.
- Francis returned to the streets with his friends who quickly forgot the terrible year.
- A man by the name of Gautier de Brienne was inspiring Italian youths to rebel against the imperial forces. Gautier himself died in Sicily refusing to submit to the German demands that he respect their authority. Some noblemen from Assisi joined Gautier and Francis decided to go with them. It took months for his armor to be custom crafted in steel. To try it out he walked along the road wearing the armor. It is here that a memorable incident took place: he came across a knight who had been ruined by war. The knight looked so shabby that he was forced to accompany the poor rather than the nobles. In response to this sight, Francis took his rich cloak and handed it to the penniless nobleman!
- That night Francis had a dream: He was in a palace and a beautiful young girl said to him "These arms are for you and all your companions." The room in his dreams was filled with weapons. Francis felt this was his call – no more would he sell clothing, he would be a knight, a prince.
- The next day was the day of his departure. The town was proud of him. He left with the nobleman and traveled a day to Spoleto where they stayed the night. Francis was sick from the brief travel. That night Francis had a dream in which God told him to return home and that he would serve Him there. These were hard words for Francis to hear; he probably knew he didn't have it in him to engage in battle.
- He returned to Assisi. On his way, he stopped in Foligno and sold his armor and horse buying himself simple clothes. Francis continued his revelry for a while and then bowed out. His father was happy that his son no longer spent money for his friends. Something was happening, however. Francis began seeking solitude to pray. He also became more aggressive about giving alms. His mother seemed to be consoled by her sons conversion. He would even stack the table with bread each day to give to the poor who came to the door. The only person Francis ever really talked with regarding what was happening was a secret confident whose name continues to elude us. Francis would meet him in a cave on the side of Mount Subiaso.
- Francis now began to weep for his previous sins. He would take time out from his work to walk quietly and try to sort out his life. It is at this time that he passed by a church

fallen into ruin called San Damiano. He prayed before a crucifix there and heard the Lord say to him, "Francis, repair my house". This filled Francis with joy. His mission was becoming clearer.

- Francis decided to undertake a pilgrimage to Rome. He dressed as a poor man and traveled with others. He went straight to St. Peter's which was thronged wiht beggars. He say the faithful laying stingy offerings and he was enraged. He emptied his purse with a loud clatter into an opening beneath the altar. What generosity! He returned to the poor.
- On the way back home he had a famous encounter when he heard the muffled sound of the leper's clapper. Francis was revolted; he thought he had overcome all worldly aversions but was he sure? Francis approached the leper and kissed him. Immense joy overwhelmed him. When he glanced back at the leper he could see no one.
- Francis returned to San Damiano but he needed money to repair it. He ran to the store and found his father absent. So, he grabbed several bales of scarlet, mounted his hourse and went to Foligno where he sold the fabric and the horse! He went to the priest who served San Damiano and gave him the money. The priest refused. Francis confessed his conversion and left after tossing the money into a window.
- His return home was not pleasant. Bernardone felt robbed by his son. He finally found Francis after a month when Francis returned home. When Francis entered Assisi he was greeted with jeers, mud and even rocks. People shouted *Pazzo! Pazzo!* He remained lost in prayer. Bernardone saw his son dressed in rags. He slapped him and dragged him by the hair inside the house. He threw him in a closet and chained him as he beat him mercilessly. Pica let him go when Barnardone left for business. Francis immediately left his childhood home forever and went to live near San Damiano. Bernardone again found him and demanded "his money". Francis found the purse in the window and gave it to him.
- It is at this point that one of the most famous events in Francis' life takes place. Bernardone decided to act and registered a complaint with the Commune. Francis refused to appear claiming that he was "the servant of the Most High God alone". Bernardone was desperate; since Francis was not under civil jurisdiction, Bernardone brought him before the Bishop. He wanted an objective judgement to protect his business and disinherit Francis. Enough was enough. Francis obediently appeared before the Bishop. Francis tore off his clothes and laid them at his father's feet. He also laid the purse there as well. Francis did wear the horsehair shirt. Francis enjoyed the spectacular and this was spectacular. "Listen, Listen everyone. From now on I can say with complete freedom, 'Our Father who art in heaven'. Pietro Bernardino is no longer my father, and I am giving him back not only his money but all my clothes as well." "I shall go naked to meet the Lord." The Bishop wept and took Francis in his arms wrapping him in his cope. The church took possession of a dear son. The date was April 10, 1206. Francis left for a few days and went to Gubbio. He walked through the forest rather than take the road. He sang. Some brigands appeared in front of him; they were disappointed to see a poor man. They ripped off his cloak and left him with nothing but his shirt. Asking who he was, Francis replied, "I am the herald of the great King!". They threw him into a ditch full of snow.
- Francis knew he couldn't make it to Gubbio for the cold and so he stopped at a Benedictine monastery to seek refuge. They gave him a simple shirt and led him to the

kitchen to wash dishes! He was served a small piece of bread. Not long after the Abbot apologized when they failed to realize they were welcoming "a saint"; Francis forgave them. Francis reached Gubbio and his friend have him a robe, sandals and a pilgrim's staff. Francis had a desire to "find the Lord" and he remembered the Leper. So, he returned to a Leper colony. He demonstrated affection for the lepers.

- Francis never forgot San Damiano. With simplicity, he return and walked the streets of Assisi crying out, "Whoever gives me a stone will get a reward from the Lord." The stones appeared. They also threw stones at him. Soon they began to bring him stones almost like presents. His work of helping build the city walls was now paying off – francis rebuilt the church with his bare hands. The priest fed Francis and cared for him. Francis refused his kindness saying he had to beg for his bread. So he did – passing through the streets begging for food. What he received was refuse and rotten food household dogs wouldn't eat. A team of volunteers eventually joined him and listened to him sing. He completed the project in September of 1206. After that was completed, he continued with other churches. The *Portiuncula* was the 3rd church he restored and would rise to great fame.
- Life was difficult for Bernardino who had lost his son who was now ridiculed by the entire city. Francis younger brother, Angelo, saw him more as the family scatterbrain who moved from one thing to the next. Pica was in sorrow for her son. The family did meet Francis in the streets and Bernardino vigorously cursed him on such occasions. Because of his father's curses, Francis asked another beggar, Albert, to adopt him. Then, when he met his father in the street and was cursed, Albert would bless him, "Do you think that God can't give me a father to bless me and undo your curses?"
- One night when Francis was begging for oil for the church he came to a house where his old friends were celebrating. He was embarrassed but then he went in and begged nonetheless.
- Francis had now completed his 3rd church – the shrine of Santa Maria degli Angeli. At the dedication a priest celebrated Mass. The Gospel read "Take no gold nor silver nor copper in your belts no bag for your journey nor two tunics nor sandals...." Francis immediately threw aside his staff and sandals!
- One of the most striking aspects of Francis character is his undaunted love for the Church of Rome. Abuses were rampant; it was a terrible time for the Church. For all its excesses the Church still had the power of the keys; Francis remained unshakably Catholic all his life. He had known three exemplary priests his whole life: the canon of St. George's, the priest of San Damiano and the third was a Benedictine from Subiaso who celebrated Mass for him everyday at the Portiuncula. It was February 24, 1208.
- Francis was no longer ridiculed. He had begun to earn the respect and admiration of many people. He passed through Assisi wishing the people *Pace e Bene*. Francis did not "preach" like the others – he was not focused on theological points but on a few passages of the Gospel he had memorized. His fervor and humility brought tears to the eyes of those who heard.
- The first disciple was Bernard of Quintavalle – a doctor of both civil and canon law at the University of Bologna. Bernard hosted Francis in his home and invited him to stay there. He considered seriously the way of Francis. Bernard pretended to fall asleep and secretly watched Francis as he prayed all night. The next morning he said, "I am completely resolved in my heart to abandon the world and to follow you in whatever you bid me."

Peter of Catania, a friend of Quintavalle, asked to join them as well. Thus, Brother Bernard and Brother Peter began the Franciscan Order. On April 16, 1208, Francis helped his new disciples give their gold to the poor. As they were doing so, the old priest from San Damiano showed up convinced that he had been underpaid (his name was Sylvester). Francis gave him gold and said, "Are you satisfied now, lord priest?" He went away content. That night Sylvester had a dream of a dragon threatening the city which Francis put to flight. Sylvester did penance in his house then went off and found Francis. He not only gave back the gold he received but gave up his possessions as well. He became the first priest in the brotherhood which caused problems – these problems soon landed Francis in the Bishop's office.

- April 23, 1208 – Brother Giles joins the band. He will be one of the best of Francis' followers. It is with his joining that Francis decides upon a definitive habit for the group. The poorest color was grey but it was the color of Lepers and drove people away. So as to cause undue alienation, Francis chose brown. After receiving his cloak, Br. Giles was immediately commanded to give it to a poor woman who was begging. He complied.
- It is at this time that the brothers began their preaching mission. They spit into groups of two and went all over Italy. The reception was not pleasant and they encountered hostility. Francis returned to the Portiuncula to find all the brothers gathered there. From this time one they continued to spread their message. On one mission to Rieti Francis met a knight in armor and announced to him "From now on you will be a knight of Christ." and so it was that Brother Angelo Tancrede of Rieti jioned Francis. From this time on Francis loved Rieti and sought refuge there.
- Their group now began to grow rapidly. Members from all levels of society began to join the group which was now called the *Poverelli*.
- Francis view of the body was pretty negaitve. He saw it as "the enemy" because of the sense which sought pleasure. In some ways he may have rather close to the Cartharist preachers and event the eastern mystery religions (Zoroastrians) who say the body in a similar light. However, later in his life he came to appreciate the created goodness of his body as well and have it the title *Brother Body.* Even before this, he forbade the classical sorts of ascetical self-torture (whips, belts, sharp points, etc.) – he threw them into a pile and burned them! Poverty, Chastity and obedience were enough.
- It is now that Francis realized he was forming an order and knew he needed the Pope's tacit blessing (e.g., if he wasn't condemned then he was de facto accepted). This would be no easy task – Innocent had just wiped out the Cathars in southern France. The year was 1209 and Innocent was in the prime of life (born in Anagni where Boniface VIII would be rejected). He considered himself the most powerful man on earth. Aside from being forceful in secular matters he was also a spiritual man and ended up saving the church. Francis could not have picked a busier time in Innocent's life (he was preparing war against the Albigensians). When Innocent saw Francis in the Lateran palace he had them shown out – he mistrusted anyone he considered a heretic and Francis looked too much like the other heretics of the time (Good Men of Lyon, Patarins in Milan, *Illuminati,* etc.). Fortunately for Francis, Guido (bishop of Assisi) was in Rome at the time and surprisingly saw Francis there – the man he had once covered with his cope. He took him to Cardinal John of St. Paul (Colonna family) who was doing a pretrial investigation of the Waldesians. Guido explained Francis to the Cardinal and assured him of Francis' obedient Catholic faith. The Cardinal welcomed Francis into his own

palace for a few days of "observation". He secured an audience with the pope. The pope saw Francis and told him "go herd pigs... roll in the dunghill with them..." So Francis did! Obedience that surprised Innocent. Then he came back. Innocent then welcomed him and listened to his rule. The cardinals declared it to be "beyond human capacity". However, to argue the rule was impractical was to reject the Gospel. "My son, pray to Christ to reveal his will to us; then I shall be able to grant you what your generosity desires." Again Innocent met with Francis and presented his concerns. Francis spoke "I leave it up to the Lord Jesus Christ – he who has promised to give us eternal life will surely care for the needs of this life." Innocent then remembered a dream he had about the Lateran Basilica in danger of collapse and a little monk who looked like this beggar holding it up. With this in his mind, Innocent listened to an allegorical story from Francis about being sons of the king who will care for them. Francis succeeded in persuading the pope but not enough to extract a formal approval from him. However, the pope would allow him to preach. Francis left on the Via Salaria with verbal consent – what if the pope died? Verbal consent was only valid while the both of them lived. That night Francis had a dream of a gigantic tree that he was able to bend to the ground; the tree was the pope.

- They returned to Assisi and stayed at Orte for 15 days surrounded by profoundly natural beauty and human generosity. Francis saw an immediate trap: their vocation was calling them to convert the world not just their neighborhood. And so they left. Innocent had given them permission to preach and it would be the Church's counter-offensive against the emerging heretical sects of the middle ages. He had granted what Francis desired and now Francis would not be content to fail fulfillment of his mission. Preach the brothers did – not with eloquence but with passionate love and profound simplicity and gospel purity. Their message was simple and direct – and because of that strikingly challenging.
- Francis established the first real community of brothers in a dry river valley called Rivo Torto. The room was so small that the brothers could not all stretch out. The brothers were not care-free all day; they had to work for their food but NEVER for money (which Francis compared to excrement). Their main task was caring for lepers in a nearby hospital. They even brought the lepers to their small residence to care for them there; on one such occasion Francis sat a particularly foul person next to himself for a meal and shared a common bowl of water with him.
- In September of 1209 the Emperor Otto IV passed from Perugia to Viterbo to be crowned by the pope. Francis sent only one brother to greet the emperor and to remind him that all triumphs are ephemeral with the famous phrase *Sic transit gloriam mundi.* A few months later Otto would be excommunicated and his victories would run out.
- Francis real turning point with the town of Assisi came at this time when he gave his first homily in the Cathedral of San Rufino – the exact same facade as is there today. Francis sermon was powerful and the town acclaimed him as a saint. One only hopes his mother could have been there. There are not many known effects of the saint's sermon but Assisi was still in strife some 10 years after war with Perugia. On November 9, 1210 a truce was finally established with concessions from both sides. This same year Francis received Brother Rufino Offreduccio (Clare's cousin) into his band. Br. Rufino had a stutter and was afraid of preaching so Francis sent him to preach in the Cathedral. Br. Rufino begged to be released but Francis insisted so he went. Francis told him to preach half naked wearing only his breeches. Br. Ruffino did it and the church laughed. Francis

came to his senses and with Brother Leo went to the cathedral and took Rufino's place. Francis spoke of the nakedness of Christ in his Passion and the faithful began to weep. Rufino would become one of the three brothers who always accompanied Francis and cared for him until his death.

- In the spring of 1211 the community had to leave Rivo Torto. For the second time the Bishop had no place to offer them so they went to the Benedictines of Subasio who have them the chapel of Our Lady of the Angels for the rent of a few fish a year. There they built a cottage with huts.
- Some brothers had difficult embracing poverty, especially cultural poverty, like Bernard of Quintavalle. Francis sent him to Bologna to found a convent. He was ridiculed as a madman. On the third day he met Nicholas dei Pepoli who offered Bernard a house he could set up as a convent. However, things went to too well and people soon started calling Bernard a saint. He left Bologna and returned to Assisi telling Francis to send others there because they honored him too much. Nicholas would later join the brothers.
- Other interesting tales of early brothers include that of John the Simple who was plowing fields when he heard Francis was near. He wanted to join Francis and brought an ox to sell to give to the poor; this caused the family to be sad at loosing John and the ox. Francis ate a meal with the family and gave them their ox back. They were happy to get the ox and no longer cared about losing John! John the Simple imitated everything Francis did (greetings, gestures, etc.). In 1213 John died. Francis called him "Saint John". Along with Francis in the highest places of *Pariadisio*, Dante brings Bernard, Giles, Sylvester into the realm of the blessed.
- In 1211 Innocent III excommunicated Otto IV after discovering his was not honoring his commitment recognizing Papal supremecy over the emperor's Italian holdings (Otto said "it's a good document for your archives"). Otto was deposed under order of the German bishops at the Diet of Nuremberg and Frederick was elected in his place. Frederick was 17 and had meager possessions which gave him the name *Beggar Emperor*. Frederick is also the one who was baptized in the same font as Francis! Later, Frederick would show the same attitude towards Islam as Francis. What similarities.
- Francis turned his attention to the Muslim presence in the Holy Land. From the day he traced a cross with chalk on his tunic he was a Crusader. The 5th Crusade was now preparing. Francis joined this crusade in the hopes of shedding his blood (to become the seed of the Church). This effort failed and he returned home seeing in his thwarted effort something of God's divine humor.
- Later that summer the Benedictines gave Francis the *Carcere* (prisons). These were caves where in the early days of his conversion he had come for solitude. Bernard and Sylvester came here also. From the beginning there were two currents in Franciscan life: Active and Contemplative.
- When Francis had preached in the Cathedral, he had no idea that a young girl of 17 was listening. Together with him she fell in love with Love. It was Clare. This was difficult as Clare's family was arranging her marriage. Francis was very wary of women (forbade his brothers to speak with them, he wouldn't even look at them – he was fearful of their presence in his life). Clare went to Francis with a relative, Madonna Buona di Gualfuccio. Rufino arranged the meeting and Brother Philip the Tall was present at the interview. Francis asked her to prove her love for the Lord by putting on sackcloth and begging for her food. She was happy to do so. Lady Poverty now had a face! Clare's

parents new nothing of her activity so well did she hide it. They kept looking for a husband. On March 18, 1212 Clare went to Mass (Palm Sunday) with her parents for the last time. She ran away that night. This decision stressed Clare so much that she could not go take a palm; instead, Bishop Guido, who knew of the plan, came to her and gave her one – this was the Church's tacit approval of her plans. At dawn she left by the "door of the dead" in her house (never used except for a coffin). She and a cousin (Pacifica) went to the Portiuncula and met Francis. He gave them tonsure and they accepted the Franciscan frock. He also cut her hair and they pronounced their first vows. Francis took them to the Benedictines near Perugia. Her family frantically searched for her and her uncle, Monaldo, found her with shaven head. He knew she would never give in and he left her. Eight days later Catherine (15) ran away also. This time uncle Monaldo was more resolved; one of the men beat her unmercifully and dragged her by the hair toward the mountain. Monaldo struck her with great violence and immediately uttered a cry of pain – his arm had been gripped in agonizing paralysis. Clare came in a harangued the men so much that they abandoned their task and returned to Assisi. The Bishop of Assisi gave them San Damiano as a place of refuge. The first monastery of the Poor Clares was now established. Francis gave Catherine the name Agnes – he always gave names that defined people.

- The brothers were everywhere now and their simplicity took the wind out of heretical sects sails – no one bothered listening to the Waldesians or the Perfecti anymore when the simplicity of the Franciscans was self-evident. Innocent III had proven his sanctity and his wisdom! For the first few years the Franciscans doubled in number every year!
- The great scandal of the day was the continued occupation of the Holy Land by the Muslims. So many crusaders had failed – what sick mind thought that children could succeed?! Nonetheless, rather spontaneously a movement seems to have developed in France, Italy and Germany. A Cistercian monk, Alberic of Trois-Fontains left an account in 1241 of Stephen, a young shepherd from Touraine who thought he was chosen by God to lead youth to a holy war. 30,000 children from 8 and older came. The oldest were teenagers. They arrived in Marseilles where two privateers, Hugues de Fer and Guillaume Porc (Iron Hugh and William Pig!) Took them to Palestine free of charge on seven ships, two of which sank and the rest of the survivors were sold to slave dealers. In Germany (Cologne) a boy named Nicholas gathered 20,000 little Crusaders and crossed the Alps. When they got to Genoa (expecting to walk on miraculous dry land through the Mediterranean) the people laughed at them. They broke up and went home; many died along the way in the mountains. In Italy, the bishop of Brindisi tried to prevent an embarkment of an army like this but he couldn't save the girls who were carried off to houses of prostitution or sold as servants (slavery still existed even in Assisi). Innocent cried "These children put us to shame. While we sleep, they joyously leave their homelands". Francis must have been moved by this terrible disorder. Some years later Hugues de Fer and Guillaume Porc were hanged by order of Frederick II.
- In the spring of 1213, Francis and Leo left Spoleto for Romagna. On the way he stopped at a banquet in Monteferto and got up to give an impromptu talk. A man, Messer Orlando du Chiusi, spoke with him about his soul. He also offered him a mountain in Tuscany for his brothers: Mount Alverno. Francis was seeking a place for prayer and now he had this beautiful mountain. Francis returned to the Portiuncula to share the good news. He was too weak to go to the mountain so he sent two brothers to scout it out

(with 50 armed men from Orlando). They built a hut on the top of the mountain and took possession in the name of God. Francis was now a landowner! Francis was so weak he had to be taken to Alverno on a donkey. When Francis arrived at Alverno, he was immediately greeted by an overwhelming number of birds which flocked to the trees and bushes that surrounded him. Francis was still in turmoil, however; was his chosen vocation to give himself to contemplation or to work for the salvation of his neighbor? He sent brothers to various places to pray separately (including even Clare) and the answer came back the same: Act. Contemplation would have to wait.

- Francis traveled most of his life in the region around Umbria. He was so famous that people called him "The Saint" when he came to their towns. Francis reply was an act of honest and humilty, "Don't canonize me too soon, I am still perfectly capable of fathering children.".
- Brother Elias entered the order c. 1213, the son of a mattress maker who would become the 3rd most important person in Christendom equal almost to the pope and the emperor. He was the same age as Francis. Elias is an elusive person because many of the documents about him have been destroyed. It seems that he was one of Francis' closest confidents and greatest admirers while also becoming one of his greatest antagonists. In 1217 Francis did send Elias as the head of four brothers to Syria. It was an important mission so Elias must have been a tried and tested Franciscan for some time. Elias would become the eventual leader of so many Franciscans that he would rival Frederick II and Innocent III. He put the Franciscan way of life on a firm footing.
- 1214 is marked by two losses – the death of John the Simple and that of Pietro Bernardone (the name Angelo replaces that of Pietro on notarized deeds).
- It was at this time that Francis gave his famous Sermon to the Birds. He had gont to Bevagna near Spoleto. As he approached he noticed trees full of birds who didn't budge at his arrival. So, he preached to them!
- 4th Lateran Council. In 1213 Innocent sent out invitations to all the patriarchs, archbishops, abbots, bishops, priors and kings of this world to convene on November 11, 1215 (Saint Martin's day) in the basilica of St. John Lateran. More than 400 bishops answered the call along with 800 abbots and priors. The Patriarch of Constantinople was present but the Greek bishops did not come. The basilica couldn't hold everyone. Much of the Council dealt with the 5th Crusade set for 1217. Other issues included the Holy Spirit, Transubstantiation, reception of Communion during Easter and Absolution once per year. Finally, there was the need for reform in the church. To give an example of how bad things were in the 13th century, one need only remember that an archbishop from Lund in Sweden had the audacity to ask the pope if his having successively kept two concubines constituted bigamy! Although Francis participation in the Council is not known it is known that his cardinal protector died a few months before the council. However, another cardinal would emerge to be his new protector: Ugolino di Segni, the cardinal-bishop of Ostia (who was also a relative and counselor of the pope). He had met Francis in Rome in 1209 where he observed him and was astounded by the simplicity of the little *Poverello*. At the same time as all this was occurring, a Spanish religious was in Rome founding a new order as well: Domingo de Guzman and the Dominicans. Ugolino must have wondered that these two great leaders of men would be at the Council at the same time; the diversity of God's gifts knew no limits. It is probable that the two men met each other – even at Ugolino's invitation. Each of them was a man of unquestioned

holiness and keen judge of character yet so very different from one another. It is a founded guess to say that they saw each other as two wings of the same sparrow. Shortly after this council Ugolino became the legate of Tuscany at Florence.

- Francis was on a quest for "perfect joy". One day walking with "Brother Leo, little Lamb of God" (as he called him) he paraphrased St. Paul speaking about all the things a brother can have and do but still not find perfect joy. Then he ends by arriving at S. Maria degli Angeli and they were rejected by the porter! Francis said, "if we can endure complete rejection with love, then it is perfect joy." Again they knocked due to the cold and hunger and indeed they were beaten, dragged, thrown to the ground and thrashed in the mud! They endured all this thinking of the sufferings of Christ – there was perfect joy!
- Back to the 5th Crusade. The pope needed Pisa and Genoa to be part of it but they kept trying to thwart its goal for their own benefits. Pope Innocent III went to Perugia in July 1, 1216 accompanied by most of his Cardinals (22) to settle these difficulties. He was 54 but worn out. Jacques de Vitry had just been named bishop of Acre and was passing through Umbria and wanted to receive his consecration at the hands of the pope; a surprise awaited him – on July 11 the pope had been struck by an embolism. Due to the heat the funeral rites were rushed and there was no one to watch over the body in the Cathedral. The next day Vitry entered with members of the Curia and found the body lying naked and stinking on the pavement. All his valuable vestments had been carried off. "I have seen with my own eyes how vain, brief, and ephemeral is the glory of this world." Francis was present at the Pope's death; he would want to watch by the corpse of the man to whom he owed the official approval of his community just as the Friar Minors later did for Honorius III and Gregory IX.
- Alexander III had decreed in 1179 that the new pope would be elected ASAP when his predecessor had been buried and in the same city where he had died. This was to ensure that dangerous uprisings didn't happen in the meantime. A legal conclave would require1/2 the total number of cardinals +1. On July 18 Cardinal Savelli was elected Pope taking the name Honorius III. He was a kind person who had practically all his goods to the poor. One of his first acts was to consecrate Vitry as bishop of Acre. Honorius had this to say about Francis: "they have only one passion, to snatch souls in peril from the vanities of the world...their way of life is that of the primitive church...in the daytime they give themselves to the active apostolate...at night they withdraw into solitude to lead a contemplative life...." Francis would not see Vitry again until they meet overseas.
- Francis received much honor from Honorius but he didn't receive everything he wanted. After a dream, he returned to Perugia to request a "special favor" – an indulgence to granted for everyone who crosses the threshold of S. Maria degli Angeli if he is absolved and contrite. This was the same indulgence granted to Crusaders who went off to fight for Christ! The cardinals objected thinking it would weaken the crusades. Francis wanted the salvation of as many people as possible he saw this as the best way. This extraordinary indulgence could be obtained once a year on August 2. Seven bishops were on hand for the first proclamation.
- In 1216 Francis visited the Benedictines at Subiaco. Benedict and Francis were companions in many ways. Dante even put the two figures at the very top of his paradise. The church needed them both. Remnant of his visit is a fresco recording a real-life portrait of Francis during his visit (actually finished in 1223).

- Francis required all the brothers who weren't too far from the Portiuncula to convene on Pentecost and September 29th of each year. It was at these times that he would reqwaken the spirit of the brotherhood. Francis required reference of the brothers. For example, he instructed that they fix their eyes on the elevated host in adoration of the Real Presence. He also instructed that when they met a priest they were greet him and kiss his hands. Further, there was a formal prohibition against judging the rich – they too were to be respected. In all things they were to be *Gentilezza* towards all. Over the course of time these meetings became events of curiosity for churchmen who came to "see what it was all about." Even bishops and cardinals attended. Amid all the joy there were some disappointments like the brothers who left for Germany and didn't know a word of German. In their effort to be kind they said *ya* for everything which got them into deep trouble (asked if they were Catholics, they said *ya* and were welcomed; asked if they were heretics, they said *ya* and were beaten with a stick.); the first mission to Germany was a failure.
- Otto died May 19, 1218 – less than ten years after he passed through Rivo Torto and was reminded of the fading glory of this world. Otto locked himself in his castle in the Harz Mountains reigning only over the Duchy of Brunswick. He had fallen prey to schizophrenia and boarded up all the windows in his castle and hung black draperies in the rooms (as Charles V would later do). The entire area around the castle was under interdict. At his request monks from a nearby convent came to whip him as they sang the *Miserere* to appease God's anger; he died exhausted and covered in blood on the pavement of his guardroom. Frederick II no longer had any rivals. A month later Guy de Montfort (Crusader leader laying siege to Toulouse) was struck by an arrow and some women aimed swivel gun at him crushing his skull with a stone cannonball. The Crusaders left the city. Francis had protected Italy from experiencing these terrible realities and the bloodbath of heresy by thwarting the message of the Carthusians and reaffirming "Brother Body" which was not an instrument of Satan but of God.
- About this same time Francis was invited to preach to the pope and his cardinals who were curious to hear the man famous throughout Italy for his eloquence. They may also have wished to test the purity of his teaching. The Cardinal of Ostia arranged the meeting and wanted Francis to do well so he wrote a sermon for him that was in solid truth and well-turned Latin. Francis was told to memorize it which he did but when he stood in front of that audience he couldn't remember a word of it! So he prayed for help, opened the book of Psalms and read, "All day long my disgrace is before me, and shame have covered my face" (44:15). What were all those prelates but the face of the Church?! A face dirtied by their pride, their love of luxury, and the bad example they set for the Christian world? He spoke to them in the venacular. They fell silent before Francis in his habit who told them that God wasn't happy with his Church. The Pope and the Cardinals wept.
- At this time the Franciscans were not a formal religious order. Therefore, people were free to come and "join" the brothers in their way of life and simple faith; they were also completely free to leave after some weeks or several years but always enriched by the experience.
- The first meeting on Pentecost, May 29, 1219, was called the Chapter of the Mats because a straw mat was used by each brother to sit and sleep on the ground. These were festive chapters. This was also called the Chapter of the 5,000 for nearly that many

brothers showed up from all over Italy. This caused a panic in Assisi where people didn't know where to feed them and house them. Almost overnight a house was erected with a roof and that's about it. Francis knew nothing of it. When he returned he was enraged – he climbed on the roof and began knocking off the tiles. He saw the house as an offense against holy Poverty! Some knights managed to calm Francis down and his brother, Angelo (Provost of the Commune), informed him that the house was rightfully property of the town of Assisi and not of the brotherhood. Food was contributed from Assisi, Spoleto, Foligno and Perugia. One very important guest at this first Chapter was Francis' cardinal protector Ugolino (who would succeed Honorius as Pope Gregory IX). This was a difficult chapter as Ugolino tried to get Francis to adopt the Rule of Benedict or Augustine. Francis refused claiming that God had sent him to be a new *Pazzo* in the world and not to continue someone else's mission. Francis considered attempts to adapt his ideas to traditional norms to be an act of treason. Another great person who showed up at the Franciscan Chapters was Domingo de Guzman who had just founded the Order of Preachers. He admired Francis and wanted the two groups to form a single troop but Francis politely refused. Francis saw providence; Guzman saw poor planning. Soon the brothers began to air their griefs (which Brother Leo said caused Christ to lament their ingratitude): Bishops who wouldn't let them preach. Francis chided them telling them to convert those prelates by their obedience "...and they themselves will ask you to convert the people". Even Ugolino was moved to conversion at this Chapter as he walked about the mats with his knights surrounding him he cried out, "See where the brothers sleep! What fate will come upon us, we who live in comfort?" They wept (which helped soothe their consciences!). The Chapter ended with the cardinal celebrating Mass.

- Immediately following this chapter, Francis went to the east to convert the Infidels. Ugolino did not stop him this time – Francis presence was preventing the systematic organization of the brotherhood and his absence may serve the larger interests of the emerging order. Francis went to Ancona to catch the boat but an awkward moment arose: not all the brothers could fit on the boat. Who to choose? Francis asked a child to point his finger at those who would get on board and so the child did as a game – the finger of a child became the finger of God. The moment was so beautifully simple the brothers were moved to tears and there were no hurt feelings. Twelve bothers were chosen, including Francis. The ship sailed on June 24 and arrived in Acre a month later where they were welcomed by Brother Elias, the Guardian of Syria. Elias was an extremely complex man who had incredible organizational skills; he would have great conflicts with Francis in the years to come. Elias understood the Muslims and even won vocations from them. Francis then set sail for the Nile delta to meet the Sultan and convert him – a plan marked by Franciscan simplicity. The Sultan of Babylon resided in Damietta but the Crusaders had the city surrounded. When Francis saw the Crusader camp he was shocked: he would first have to convert the Christians and then deal with the Saracens! Francis knew the Crusaders were not ready for war and he began preaching what he considered to be Heaven's warning. He was called a coward. The attack on August 29 was a dismal failure as the Crusaders fell into a trap. Nearly 6,000 Crusaders died in the desert. Francis decided to go directly to the sultan. Francis went to inform the leader of the camp, Cardinal Pelagius, the pope's legate. The Cardinal refused to give Francis his blessing to convert the Sultan and showed him the door. Francis decided to obey his heaven-sent inspiration. Francis went with Brother Illuminato in the

midst of fierce fighting to the city of Damietta. They were arrested at the edge of the city and were about to be beheaded on the spot when Francis cried out "Sultan! Sultan!" and they soldiers thought they were emissaries from the Christian camp; they were led to the Sultan's palace. The Sultan's nephew, Malik al-Kamil of Egypt, was the same age as Francis. He was one of the most refined men of his day, fond of religious poetry, curious, student of medicine, etc. His first thought was that the two brothers were deserters who had come to surrender and embrace Islam. Saladin's nephew found the situation highly interesting and was intrigued by Francis. They felt an immediate sympathy for each others. He kept Francis as a guest in the palace for a few days. In a desire to test the Christian faith, he asked Francis to walk on burning coals (forbidden by the Church as a way of tempting God). In its place, the sultan had a carpet brought in with crosses on it and waited. Frances walked across the carpet and then said, "As you see, I have walked on these crosses. They are the crosses of the bad thief. You can keep them if you wish. We keep our own, which is the true cross." At the end fo their conversation, Malik al-Kamil remarked, "I would convert to your religion, which is a beautiful one, but I cannot: Both of us would be massacred." He called him "Brother Francis". Francis refused gifts but did accept safe conduct to the holy places and promised to pray for the sultan. This meeting changed both persons. Francis modified his understanding of Islam (the essence of faith could be found outside Christianity) and ten years later, without striking a blow, won over by the *Poverello's* ideas, Malik al Kamil handed over Jerusalem to Frederick II. The Franciscans had permission to preach their religion if they didn't provoke the Muslim faithful. Francis left the crusader camp after witnessing the terrible rape, murder and pillage of civilians by the crusaders. He most probably went to Palestine (July of 1220) where he visited Jerusalem under safe conduct (some deny this since the Pope had excommunicated Christians going to Jerusalem im 1217 since they had to pay an "entrance fee" to the Muslims but Francis' safe conduct did not require him to pay the free; thus, the excommunication did not apply). Jerusalem was a phantom city (El Muazzan, the sultan of Damascus, had destroyed it during a raid). Only the Holy Sepulcher and two mosques remained. Of interesting note is that Jean de Brienne, the (western) king of Jerusalem, who became a friend of Francis on the ship to Syria, would become a Friar Minor after Francis' death and wished to be buried in the upper church of the Assisi basilica in 1237. In the spring he heard chilling news: five of his brothers had undergone martyrdom in Morocco in January. Francis was filled with joy: Franciscan blood had been shed among the infidels just as Christian blood had flowed in Pagan Rome. The seed of faith was now planted.

- In July of 1220 Brother Stephen arrive with some disturbing news: at the Pentecost Gathering, in Francis absence, the two brothers he had left in charge had made some changes to the Rule. For example: the rule for fasting was changed to bring it into line with those of existing orders. Another report claimed that Philip the Tall had petitioned Ugolino for privleges for the Poor Clares that the nuns didn't want. Also, there was a rumor going around that Francis was dead. Now Francis knew why no one had tried to stop him from going to Syria! Indeed, de Guzman was right – without organization, the brotherhood would succumb to such events. Brother Elias saw his chance for glory! Francis decided that his only option was to establish a third group. There was one for men (Friars Minor), one for women (Poor Clares) and now there would be the Third Order for those who wished to live according to the Franciscan Rule without leaving the

world. This was part of his intention to make the brotherhood for "all people". He set sail for Venice and wrote to Clare – the letter is simple and profound: "I, little Brother Francis, wish to follow the life and the poverty of our most high Lord Jesus Christ and his most Holy Mother, and to persevere in it until death. And I beg you and advise you to live always in this most holy life and in poverty. Beware of departing in any way from it because of the advice or teaching of anyone whatsoever." After Francis' death, Ugolino, now pope, would attempt to grant privileges to the Poor Clares but Clare would reply, "Lord Pope, absolve me of my sins, but let me follow the way of Jesus Christ." The pope would agree. Six hundred years later, in 1893, St. Clare's body was exhumed and there in the folds of her dress was the Rule of the Poor Clares with Francis' letter as article 16. Honorius was residing in Orvieto to pass the dog days with his court. Francis left Venice via Verona and Bologna to meet the pope. At Bologna he stopped to visit the brothers and was shocked to find them living in a magnificent house. He promptly threw everyone out including Brother Leo who had fallen sick and was convalescing. At Orvieto, Francis knew that he needed the Church's help to keep the brothers together and so he petitioned the pope that the Church would take the brotherhood under its wing. He suggested that Ugolino be made cardinal protector of the order. Honorius agreed. Francis was rather ill at this point with his liver and stomach suffering from the climate of the Middle East. Also, his eyes had been damaged by the sun in Syria and Egypt – he suffered from a progressive disease called conjunctivitis that was incurable in his time. It is at this time that the postulate was established (1 year). There would also be total obedience. The bull *Cum secundum* was promulgated on September 22, 1220. Francis worked on his Rule in Orvieto. Francis listened to advice from the Curia and then did it his own way! Francis now returned to the Portiuncula where he was met with great joy. Rumors had taken their toll; people claimed that Catharism had infiltrated the brotherhood in his absence. Frinally, September 29th arrived (Feast of St. Michael) and the brothers would meet. Francis was in their midst and they were joyful but many problems loomed. Francis made this declaration: "From now on I am dead as far as you are concerned, but I present to you my brother, Peter of Catania, whom we shall obey, you and I." He then prostrated himself at the feet of Peter of Catania. Francis had abdicated. Six months later Peter died on March 10, 1221. With Ugolino's backing, Elias was there waiting to fill the empty place.

- Brother Elias presided over the Pentecost gathering of 1221. Francis asked permission to speak and read his rule to the brothers. It was set aside as too long and too packed with quotations from scripture. History does not record Francis' response.
- The wolf of Gubbio is probably the most famous story of Francis. In Francis' day Gubbio lived in terror because of an exceptionally large wolf that haunted the countryside. The infernal creature feared no one and took toll of its victims. Francis went to resolve the conflict. He left by the Roman gate from Gubbio and walked with his companion down the path to the forest. He passed by the bones of previous victims. The wolf started running toward him. Francis made a sign of the cross over the wolf and cried out: "Brother Wolf, come here. In the name of Christ I command you not to harm anyone any more. And you will not eat Brother Ass (as he called his body)". The wolf stopped and Francis gravely lectured him. The wolf had to promise to renounce evil which he did by placing his paw in the hand of Francis. Then the wolf was to follow Francis back to town where he gave a homily of repentance in the public square with the

wolf. The inhabitants were required to feed the rehabilitated wolf with food each day. Thus he would remain peaceable. Brother Wolf affirmed his intentions by moving his tail and ears once more and placing his paw in Francis hand again. A new life began for Gubbio that day as the wolf became the pet of all the townspeople entering their houses and making himself at home. He enjoyed this life for to years; when he died, he was heartily mourned and buried in a chapel dedicated to St. Francis. In 1873 workers raising a flagstone uncovered his skull which testifies to the reality of this magnificent event.

- Francis returned to the life of being just a simple brother. He no longer had a position of authority within the order he had founded; still, he did have the de facto respect and love of everyone. Stories of his humility and stern authenticity abound. In one, a brother asked to have his own copy of the breviary which Francis dismissed as a prelude to materialism and pride. When the brother persisted, Francis took ashes, rubbed them on the brother's head and said "There is your breviary." A few months later the same brother brought up the issue again saying that a local minister had given him permission to have breviary. Francis responded by sending the brother packing telling him to go and follow that minister. However, Francis regretted his actions and ran after the brother falling to his knees and saying *Mea Culpa*. However, he reminded the brother that no Franciscan was allowed to possess anything except his tunic, his cord, his underpants, and, when needed in case of illness, a pair of shoes. Nothing more was ever said about the breviary. Francis respected learning in others but not in his own order. He and his brothers were about love and not cleverness. He was enraged when members of his order veered into the academic realm.
- In 1222 it is commonly presumed that Francis agreed to become a deacon which conferred on him the right to read the Gospel at Mass and the privilege of carrying the ciborium at certain liturgical functions (something he greatly treasured).
- The brotherhood was changing. Francis' friends, Elias and Ugolino, had gotten it into shape by making an order out of it. One day he cried out, "Who has torn up my Rule?" He went from hermitage to hermitage visiting with the original brothers. He was seeking their counsel. He then engaged on a journey to Alverno where he would devote his time to prayer. First, Francis went to Bologna where he delivered a talk to a crowd gathered in this university town (the oldest university in the world – founded by Theodosius in the 5th century). After that, he left for Rieti where he would receive treatment for his eye problems. The brothers at Assisi were beginning to wonder about Francis – the longer he was gone, the longer the Rule was going to be! So they sent people to find him. Elias took the Rule Francis had written and promised to review it. Francis knew they didn't want any part of it. He cried out, "Lord, didn't I tell you that they wouldn't trust you?" After several days of waiting with no reply, Brother Francesco di Bernardone went to the town and, behold, Brother Elias said the "Rule has been misplaced." Francis did what no one expected – he rewrote the rule! Of interesting note, there is a 12th century chapel at Rieti where Francis prayed. On the wall of that Chapel Francis traced the sign of the *Tau*, a Greek letter in the shape of a cross – one of the oldest and simplest expressions of a Christian symbol. The use of the *Tau* as a "simple" version of the cross was perfectly suited for Franciscan spirituality and so this symbol continues to be primary symbol of Francis.
- While Francis was staying at Greccio in his favorite hermitage, he was blessed with a vision of Perugia with it's pride and violence and vices. Francis felt a need to be a

prophetic voice of repentance to the people there (after all, he was baptized after St. John the Baptist). Francis sermon in the town square of Perugia moved the crowd to conversion and shame for their past sins. Francis had warned them of civil war if they did not convert. However, a little later a civil disturbance did break out and the city was ravaged. Rome even sent help to the commune and the castles were torn down. Even the knights of Perugia were forced to flee and beg for asylum in Assisi. The *Poverello's* prophecies cam true.

- The Pentecost chapter took place on June 11, 1223 and Francis came with his second rule. The brothers thought the rule to excessive and unnecessarily burdensome; it actually frustrated the Gospel instead of facilitated it. Francis himself agreed with some of these objections – after all, he had ordered the burning of the penitential instruments. He gave in on points that had to do with common sense but fought hard against anything that liked like appeasing the carnal man. He even allowed traveling on horseback when necessary and dropped the prohibition against taking anything on journeys. Francis still had to present the rule to the pope.
- Francis needed a refuge now, a place to find himself and complain to God.
- Image Francis at this point in time – what was he like? There are many representations of him. The finest one by Cimabue was done about 50 years after his death. He shows Francis sick and worn out from his work yet radiant with love. To see Francis as his contemporaries saw him, we would have to go to Subiaco and see the fresco painted during his lifetime. This painting was done at an earlier (1216) point in Francis' life. He went to Subiaco where he remained for July and August. Francis wanted to be there for the dedication of the chapel of St. Gregory by Ugolino on September 3 (Since the cardinal of Ostia was the lord of Jenna in whose lands Subiaco lay). The buildings of Subiaco were begun by Innocent III in honor of St. Benedict and is built around the grotto where Benedict of Nursia had composed his rule and founded his order. It was now at completion. Francis came to give him a little distance from his own brothers and to be close to the founder of Western Monastacism. He arrived alone. There is also a fresco of the dedication ceremony in 1223 and in this second fresco there is another portrait of Francis. Much had happened between these two paintings.
- Ugolino returned to Ostia in mid September and awaited Francis with the copy of the Rule to be presented to the Pope. In November Honorius III had in his hands the modified text of the rule. The pope made an addition: the term *order* now made its appearance thus obscuring the vast and generous word *brotherhood*. The pope approved the rule on November 29 in the bull *Solet annuere*. The pope issued a second bull *Fratrum minorum* which threatened with excommunication those who failed to observe the new rule (this was targeted at the original brothers whom the pope felt might resist this new rule). Francis disillusionment was complete. The felt that the most faithful brothers would be driven away. And so it would happen. Bernard would have to hide in ruined hermitages, the famous scrolls on which Leo recounted the whole history of Francis were so well hidden that they were never recovered. Before leaving Rome Francis did receive from the pope the right to celebrate Christmas with special splendor. He chose Greccio because of a gift made to Francis of the wooded mountain that overlooked the Rieti valley. Francis had a hermitage there and he transformed one of the caves into a chapel. On his request a manger was installed with straw, an ox, an ass, etc. In the middle of the night torches were lit and people came from the region with torches

in hand. A priest came to say the Mass which was celebrated over the manger. Francis, wearing the dalmatic (deaconal vestments) proclaimed the Gospel of the Nativity. This was the first midnight Mass! A year of battle ended on a joyful note.

- in January of 1224 Francis wrote a famous four-line letter to Brother Anthony: "To Brother Anthony, my bishop, Brother Francis, greetings. It pleases me that you are teaching sacred theology to the brothers, provided that in this study you don't extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotion as prescribed in the rule." As the order developed, so did the methods of "preaching." Francis gave tacit approval of this development. Born at Lisbon in 1195 and first known as Fernando, this highly educated man of noble birth entered the Augustinians and was a Canon at Holy Cross in Coimbra when, in 1220, the Franciscan martyrs at Morocco were buried in his church. He decided to become a Friar Minor on the spot and took the name "Anthony". He took part in the Chapter of May 30, 1221 and was sent to a hermitage in the Romagna where he swept floors. Called to assist at an ordination in Forli, he was ordered to address the group when the religious on hand refused for lack of preparation. He was a powerful preacher and surprised everyone (he never told them about his previous studies). Suddenly he was in demand all over the area. Bologna offered him a chair (28 years old!) And other cities clamored for his services. Francis couldn't have asked for a better response to his letter – Anthony put all his learning to work for the Franciscan spirit. He became famous throughout Europe and even lectured at the new University of Pisa in 1229. He was Brother Anthony of Padua.
- Francis attended his last Pentecost gathering that spring. Few brothers showed up now that provincial chapters had been established. There was no laughter and joy in air. Love was missing. Francis was there but sad. Brother Elias tried to speak to Francis a few days later at the convent in Foligno but Francis turned away each time. Finally Elias begged Francis to tell him what was wrong and Francis replied, "Elias, you're heading for damnation." These were painful words for Elias who had been a close friend of Francis' since childhood. Mad desire for power would dominate his career – he became the confident of a pope and an emperor. He would spend his life in beautiful residences with a first-class chef (Brother Bartholomew of Padua). On one occasion Elias remained seated for the podesta of Parma! He was on constant missions to the Pope and the Emperor. History would not treat him kindly – he was a layman and often promoted laymen over clerics within the order. However, clerics wrote the histories! If Elias did it, it to be considered a Franciscan vice! Elias ended up being excommunicated by two popes (Gregory IX and Innocent IV). He wrote a letter justifying himself to the first but it was intercepted by his foes. Elias was probably trying to explain the commission Francis gave him before his death: Reconcile the Emperor and the Pope, whatever the cost. One mustn't be too harsh on Brother Elias – remember, Clare loved and trusted Elias till her dying day. When Francis spoke his words at Foligno, Elias threw himself down and said, "Pray for me." He forgave Elias everything. He prayed that Elias would be snatched from perdition. Years later, just before he died, Elias was reconciled with the Church and saw his excommunication lifted owing to a Friar Minor who went in Francis name to plead with the pope. Francis would now go to Alverno where God had told him several years before to pray and strip off every last vestige of himself.
- At this time Francis experienced the most mystery-filled moment in his life: Mt. Alverno. Francis had gone for solitude. Brother Leo would bring him bread each morning with a jug of water. His time was devoted to meditating on the sufferings of Christ. What

happened in this event is of a well-documented nature. On September 14, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, during the night a Seraph with wings of fire (cf. Isaiah 6:2) bearing the image of the Crucified, swooped down from heaven on Francis as he was contemplating outside his cave and imprinted on his flesh the marks of the nails as well as the lance wound in the right side. On fact that remains beyond doubting is that the whole population around the region saw the summit of La Verna enveloped with light as if the sun had already risen. Brother Leo, too, saw a ball of fire fall from the heights down on to Francis' face and then rise up to heaven again. Francis had prayed to be one with Christ in his sufferings; now his prayer was fully granted. The problem is NOT the authenticity of stigmata but rather what the witnesses make of them. Francis was almost embarrassed of his wounds and hid them jealously from sight. People used to clamor for the band aids that dressed the flowing blood.

- Francis knew he was going to die – Elias' prediction had told him as much. In the last days of September he returned to use the remaining time to say farewell to his beloved earth and to preach the Gospel one more time. One evening Francis had a premonition that Brother Leo was facing a cruel temptation – not of the flesh of the of the spirit, the terror of not being saved. Francis took a pen in his hand and traced these words on a sheet that has come down to us: "May the Lord bless you and keep you! May the Lord show his face and take pity on you! May the Lord turn his countenance toward you and give you peace! May God bless you, Brother Leo." It was signed with the famous *tau*. Brother Leo took this note and kept it close to his heart until his death. Today, it is preserved at Assisi in the Chapel of the Relics in the lower church. On the last day of September, Francis was so weakened by his sufferings that he mounted an ass and journeyed to Assisi with stops in Chiusi, Borgo San Sepolcro, Monte Casale, and Citta di Castello. It took a month to make a trip that ordinarily would have taken three days. The people came out in droves to see him. It took everything Brothers Leo, Angelo and Ruffino had to keep the crowds from tearing his robe off to make relics! Finally in November he reached the Portiuncula where he rested a bit. The next month he continued his preaching rounds in Umbria and the Marches. He visited Gubbio (but the wolf had already died), Ancona, Jesi, Macerata, Spoleto, Montefalco, Bevagna (birds), Rivo Torto etc. In March he returned to the Portiuncula exhausted and there found Brother Elias who wanted to have him treated by a doctor from Assisi. Francis obeyed but it was of no use. Elias informed the pope who ordered the sick man to Rieti to be cared for by his personal physician, an Arab. Francis obeyed after visiting Sister Clare. Francis had to be installed in lodgings outside the cloister. He had to be in complete darkness because of the suffering light now caused to his eyes. He stayed in absolute darkness for 50 days while the nuns took care of him. In addition to all his sicknesses, Francis was also tormented by an infestation of mice that scurried allover him when he ate and slept.
- It is now that Francis wrote his famous Canticle of Brother Sun.

Most high, omnipotent good Lord / to you along belong praise and glory / Honor and blessing. / No man is worthy to breathe your name. / Be praised, my Lord, for all your creatures. / In the first place for the blessed Brother Sun who gives us the day and enlightens us through you. / He is beautiful and radiant with his great splendor, / Giving witness of you, most Omnipotent One. / Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon and the stars / Formed by you so bright, precious, and beautiful. / Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Wind / And the airy skies, so cloudy and serene; / For every weather, be praised, for it is life-giving. / Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Water / So necessary yet so humble, precious, and chaste. / Be praised, my Lord, for

Brother Fire, / Who lights up the night, / He is beautiful and carefree, robust and fierce. / Be praised, my Lord, for our sister, Mother Earth, / Who nourishes and watches us / While bringing forth abundant fruits with colored flowers / and herbs. / Praise and bless the Lord. / Render him thanks. / Serve him with great humility. / Amen. Francis was enchanted with this poem and called his brothers and sisters together with a melody he devised. He instructed the brothers to sing it everyday. He knew he had given the world a masterpiece. Francis was suffering immensely and the brothers offered to give him a sedative (ground poppies) but he did not think he had the right to refuse this suffering. He asked the advice of a brother who had come to take care of him. The brother said to Francis, "Hasn't your body obeyed you faithfully? Then where, father, are your courtesy, your kindness, and your discretion? Is this how you treat a faithful friend? How would you have served Christ if you body hadn't helped you?!" Francis responded, "Rejoice, brother body, I am now ready to let you have everything you want." A month later Francis added a stanza to the canticle. War was threatening to break out between Perugia and Assisi and it was tearing Assisi apart as the Bishop Guido and the Podesta were at odds. Francis ordered two brothers (Angelo and Leo) to sing the canticle with the new stanza: *Be praised, my Lord, for those who pardon through your love / And bear witness and trial. / Blessed are those who endure in peace / For they will be crowned by you, Most High.* Touched by that song the Podesta forgave the Bishop and the Bishop forgave the Podesta. Francis stopped a war with a song. Franciscan inspiration would give the world four great poets: Francis (the 1st to write in the venacular), Br. Jacopone da Todi, Dante (a Tertiary Franciscan), Thomas of Celano's *Dies Irae* and the *Stabat Mater* of Brother Jacopone da Todi.

- Francis was ordered by Cardinal Ugolino to undergo an operation for his eyes. Elias promised to stay close by his side; he knew Francis feared such an ordeal. The heat of 1225 was overwhelming. The doctors planned to cauterize the upper part of his cheeks. The doctor appeared, armed with the cautery to be heated in the fire until it glowed. Francis trembled. The iron was to burn both temples from the top of the ear to the arches of the eyebrows. Leo, Ruffino, Angelo and Masseo walked off unable to bear it. Only Elias remained. Francis addressed the fire: "My Brother Fire, the Most High has given you a splendor that all creatures envy. Show yourself now to be kind and courteous to me . . . I pray the Magnificent Lord to temper his fiery heat so that I may have the strength to bear his burning caress." The heated iron was plunged into him but Francis felt no pain. Nonetheless, the operation was a total failure.
- Another set of doctors decided a short while later that to cure his eyes they would have pierce his ears. Whatever that means, it must have been painful. Francis went off into a cave so hide from the light for a month. Francis was absorbed in his suffering. The winter of 1225-26 passed with no reprieve from his sufferings. Aside from tuberculosis, his stomach and liver were also wasting away. Death was coming. In April, Francis was ordered to Siena to be cared for by "highly reputed" physicians. He obediently complied. His stigmata was still slowing blood; one brother had the indiscretion to ask one day, "What are those holes" to which Francis replied, "Mind your own business." The doctors continued their fallible infallible methods on him. They were caught unprepared one time when Francis began to vomit blood in great abundance. He summoned Brother Benedict and dictated to him a little testament: *Write that I bless all my brothers, those who are now in our order and those who will come to it until the end of time . . . because of my weakness and my sufferings, I am unable to speak; briefly I shall make known my will in three words: May they always love one another in memory of my blessing and of this testament; May they always love our Lady, holy Poverty; May they always prove faithful and submissive to the prelates and clergy of our holy mother Church.* Elias sent Francis to *la Celle* at Cortona to rest. It is there that Francis issued a confession and spiritual biography: *The Lord God gave me, Francis, this way of doing penance – I was a sinner and found it hard to look at lepers, and the Lord God led me among them, and I*

was merciful to them. As I left them, what had previously seemed bitter turned to sweetness of body and soul. And then, soon after, I left the world. He then wished to return to Assisi.

- In mid June Francis asked Elias to take him to the Portiuncula so he could end his life there. Francis couldn't breathe in the hot stifling air. Elias took him to the hills. Francis passed through Assisi on his way – and the crowds came to see him. Francis has gone to the ancient spas of Bagnara; Assisi wanted its saint back fearing that the people of Perugia, Foligno, Spoleto or Arezzo might steal its living relic. Knights were sent from Assisi to escort him safely home. In fact, they carried him like a child as he could no longer ride an ass. He was taken to the bishop's palace. A doctor friend of his (Bongiovanni) came to see him and informed him of his impending death. Francis replied, "Welcome, Sister Death."
- As death approached, Francis added a curious welcome to his canticle: *Be praised, my Lord, for our sister, bodily death / Whom no living man can escape / Woe to those who die in sin. / Blessed are those who discover thy holy will. / The second death will do no harm to them.* He did not want to die in the Bishop's palace but at Portiuncula so they brought him there. He asked them to stop at a spot where Assisi came into view and they pointed out the various quarters to him. He made a sign of the cross over the city so dear to him: *May God bless you, holy city, for through you many souls will be saved, in you many servants of God will dwell, and from you many will be chosen for the kingdom of eternal life.* On his deathbed, he issued to letter to "brother Jacqueline" to inform her of his death and to request some burial cloth and almond cakes. When they left the room to deliver the message (in Rome) Brother Jacqueline was standing at the door having already been summoned by a premonition. Francis attempted to eat the cake and the cloth was rolled out for his last tunic. He called for and blessed Brother Elias "I bless you in all that you shall do ... May God, the king of the universe, bless you in heaven and on earth." He also dictated a letter to Clare. Francis asked that he be placed naked on the naked earth to breath his last. As the brothers chanted the psalm *Voce Mea* death came slowly. He was dressed in a new tunic and was watched until morning. In the morning, on Sunday October 4, 1226, Francis body was placed on the stretcher for his last trip to Assisi. They stopped at San Damiano, at the convent of the Poor Clares, who were waiting for this moment. The brought Francis to Saint George's for burial. There, in that church, he lay beneath the walls which told the story he learned in his childhood of St. George. Where it had begun, it was now ending only to find a greater beginning.

Assisi – the City

- *Asisium*, *Ascesi*, *Assisi* – Evolution of the curren name. Unbrians, Etruscan, Roman, Byzantine, and Lombard presences.
- The most defining part of the city is Francis. Without him it would be nothing.
- Assisi boasts of the following great Franciscan shrines: San Damiano, Portiuncola, Sivotorto, Carceri, Squares and streets, open countryside, churches of the city, and above all the Basilica of St. Francis as well as the Basilica of St. Clare.

Basilica of St. Francis...

- An architectural triptych. The basilica was built on the ancient area known as the "Hill of Hell" (Asio Hill) which was the burial place for wrong-doers and enemies of the city. It was actually the place where common criminals were buried (and sometimes executed). This area was outside the city and completely transformed by Gregory IX who renamed it "Hill of Paradise".
- Before his death, Francis asked to be buried "in sight of the city" but wished to be buried among the outcasts even as Christ was buried in among thieves "*where the gallows of wrong-doers are".*
- On March 29, 1228 Brother Elias received in the name of the Pope the hillside to the west of the city where the current church is built. The gift was made by Simone Pucciariello, a devout citizen of Assisi. Francis was canonized on July 16, 1228 and on the following day Gregory IX laid the foundation stone of the Church, "*it seems right and fitting to us that in reverence towards the same Father, a Church should be erected wherin to lay his mortal remains."* Note: Ugolino da Ostia had been Cardinal Protector of the Franciscans before becoming Pope Gregory IX! The Pope personally knew Francis and loved him dearly.
- **Note: This building was built as a *Papal Church and belonged to none other than the Holy Father. Thus, it could be built according to papal wishes and not limited to the austere expressions of the Franciscans – who had rapidly developed rules governing the style of their churches.* The other reason for this "Papal ownership" of the basilica was to avoid potential conflicts with local religious authorities in the future.
- On May 25, 1230, the body of Francis was laid to rest in its final burial place. This was not a 'smooth' process. In order to thwart any attempt at seizure of the body, the civil authorities locked themselves in the church and concealed Francis body in the bowels of the church! Gregory IX fiercely condemned the action. Nonetheless, Francis' body remained intact and secure until excavated in the 19th century.
- The main structure was completed in 1239 (including the bell tower) and the first bell was installed. It was name "Italia" and cast by Bartolomeo of Pisa and dedicated by Br. Elias to Gregory IX and Frederick II.
- In 1253, Innocent IV consecrated the great basilica (2 churches): the lower *Lombard Renaissance* church and the upper *Italian Gothic* church.
- At the end of the 13th century side chapels were added to the lower church.

- In 1818 the remains of St. Francis were exhumed for the first time and a neo-classical crypt was dug in solid rock.
- This basilica is described as *"the most beautiful house of prayer of which this earth can boast".*
- This church also houses the most extraordinary composition of pictorial art of the Italian middle ages. Artists who contributed to this effort include Pietro Cavallini, Jacopo Turriti, Filippo Rusuti, Duccio di Boninsegna from Rome; Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Simone Martini from Siena; and Giotto and Cimabue from Florence.
- No other church contains such a great wealth of *Bibliae Pauperum* or "Bibles of the Poor" as religious artwork was known.
- Stained glass windows from Italy, France and Germany adorn the interior.
- Instead of "apocalyptic" themes that were popular in the middle ages, the artists depicted themes of the Nativity and the Passion of Christ – the moments Francis admired most. Taking their inspiration from the Book of the Gospels, the artists began a trend which quickly dominated the traditional scenes of Byzantine and Romanesque art (which preferred "triumphant" Christ in judgement). This is a church dedicated to the poor and outcast Christ instead. Francis has a passion for the "Minor Christ". Francis also called upon Christianity to return to a more evangelical way of life.
- The spirit of Francis permeates this building. The Basilica is actually property of the Pope and all other papal buildings of this time were richly decorated in mosaics. Francis' church, however, would be "simpler" and so the work was done in fresco instead.
- Artistic realism: Francis had freed Christianity from the Manichean tendency (matter is evil) and the Spiritualists. The art of his church captures and expresses the wonderful beauty and goodness of the created world.
- Cimabue and Giotto would be the first western artists to paint the characters of their stories in realistic places with bodies that seem alive (instead of static). The landscapes of Rome and Assisi would become the landscapes that held the holy actors!
- The Sacred appears in distressed humanity rather than in glamour (Byzantine). Note that there are no "golden backgrounds" (cf. St. Mark's in Venice), it does present the starry blue skies in the human city. This is to reflect the Gospel theme "God became flesh and dwelt among us".
- Summary: Giotto "translated art from Greek to Latin"! ***Thus, in Assisi Giotto opened the "golden book of the rebirth of Italian art".***
- Dante referred to Francis as the "Sun" and invited all to no longer call Assisi the city that had given birth to him, but rather the "***Orient***", having received from providence the historical role of guiding cultural direction towards "new heavens and new earths".

Lower Basilica...

- The entrance is a statement of faith in itself. The small rose window was described by Adolfo Venturi as "The most beautiful church's eye in the world (13th century)." The wooden door on the left contains scenes from the lives of *Francis and Clare* (Nicolo Ugolinucci, 1546); the door on the right show episodes from the lives of *Sts. Anthony and Louis of Anjou* (Pompeo Scurscione, 1573). The renaissance-style portal, crowned by aa scene of the annunciation, was built in 1407 with the idea of providing protection for the doors. In the small lunette between the wooden doors we find ***the only mosaic***

representation of St. Francis in the entire building! It is pointing towards the rose window, symbol of Christ, "Sun of Justice" who reminds the pilgrim "I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be safe." **For the people of this period, a shrine is like a door opened to the Kingdom of God.

- It should be noted that the entire lower basilica is in the shape of a 'Tau' cross; the symbol of the Franciscans.
- In the entry of the church is the mausoleum of the ***Cerchi Family of Florence***. The decorative vase on top is the gift of the Queen of Cyprus to the Basilica. Another mausoleum is that of ***John of Brienne, King of Jerusalem*** in the 14th century. John had met Francis under the walls of Damietta and was present in Assisi for the Canonization of the Saint. His daughter Yolanda married the German Emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen. John's was actually one of the brief "Latin Kings of Constantinople" (after the 4th Crusade of 1204); it is only through his daughter's marriage that he inherited the title "King of Jerusalem" as a part of the dowry! John died in 1237.
- Brother Elias (architect) intended the lower basilica to serve as a crypt large enough to accommodate the throngs of pilgrims coming to honor the saint. It is a truly prayerful atmosphere inviting the pilgrims to pause before the altar.
- Of interesting note: Innocent IV spent the whole apring and summer of 1253 in the Franciscan Convent next to the Basilica. He wanted to see it completed so badly that he ordered the administrator to spend the next 25 year's revenues on completion of the building!
- Alexander IV, the nephew of Gregory IX and the successor of Innocent IV, was also a protector of the Minorites and was the primary person responsible for the painting of the lower basilica. As well as the stained glass in the upper church. Note: Alexander IV was present at Francis' death (as Cardinal Protector) and had personally seen and touched the wounds on his body. It is Alexander IV who gave Francis the title: ***The Second Christ.***
- All along the main body of the lower basilica are painting of the life of Francis – these were done to accompany the pilgrim as he traveled to and from Francis' tomb. The artist is the unknown *Maestro di San Francesco.*
- ***Chapel of St. Catherine, Martyr (chapel of the crucifix):*** Gothic chapel commissioned by the Spanish Cardinal Egidio Albornoz in 1367. These frescoes were the last of the original beautification of the basilica done in 1368-69. The cycle of eight scenes relates stories from the life of St. Catherine. The suffering Messiah (outside the chapel itself) were done in 1630. The chapel is dominated by a wooden image of the Crucified Christ from Germany (15th century). On Friday's of Lent a devotion known as the *Corda Pia* is prayed in this chapel which honors the sufferings of Jesus and the stigmata of Francis.
- ***Cross and Vaults and the Walls:*** These are oldest frescoes in the lower basilica. They were partially destroyed when side chapels were build in the early 1300's. They were painted around 1260 by an anonymous artists called "Maestro di San Francesco". They are composed of two cycles of scenes paralleling the life of Christ with the life of Francis. This was the first time that the eulogy, "Francis, Another Christ" was affirmed in art!

St. Francis	***Suffering Christ***
Francis divests himself of his inheritance	Christ stripped of his garments
The dream of Innocent III	Christ Crucified

Francis preaching to the birds	Christ taken down from the cross
Francis receiving the stigmata	Christ buried
Death and funeral of Francis	Christ risen

- ***Tomb of Francis:*** This is the spiritual destination for pilgrims. Note the simplicity in which the chapel is adorned. Also note that Francis' closest companions are still buried near him in the side niches. Francis was buried here in 1230 and in the 1400's it was made inaccessible until 1824 (to preserve the body from relic-seekers). Under Pius VII, a team of physicians examined the remains of the saint in 1818 and placed them in a bronze urn, gilded on the inside. Between January 24 and March 4, 1978 (Paul VI) a group of professors again re-examined the remains and arranged them in a glass box which was then placed within the bronze urn. In 1932 the remains of four of the first followers (Leo, Rufino, Masseo and Angelo) were transferred from the lower church to the Crypt. At the back of the crypt are the remains of the pious and noble Roman woman, Jacopa die Settesoli, whom Francis referred to as "Friar Jacopa" (she assisted at the death of St. Francis on October 4, 1226 and died 13 years later). A votive lamp (gift of the Communes of Italy) burns night and day before the tomb; the supply of oil is offered by a different region of Italy ever year on the Feast of Francis.
- ***Chapel of St. Martin of Tours – by Simone Martini***: This is the most beautiful of all the chapels in the basilica! In the arch over the entrance are portrayed Francis, Anthony, Louis (King of France), Louis of Anjou (first Franciscan Bishop), Clare of Assisi, Elizabeth of Hungry, Catherine of Alexandria, and Mary Magdalene. The cycle of frescoes shows events in the life of St. Martin: (Note: Francis was called *The New Martin* because of his similar life!)
  - his investiture as a knight,
  - giving up his career of knighthood,
  - giving his cloak to a poor man,
  - his dream of Christ in that cloak,
  - Martin as a priest celebrating Mass,
  - his being venerated by the emperor for the miracle of the fire,
  - reviving a young person,
  - Martin in meditation,
  - his celebrating the funeral rites of St. Liborio,
  - the giving over of his spirit to God in death
- ***Chapel of St. Louis and St. Stephen***: Built at the beginning of the 14th century to honor St. Louis IX of France and St. Louis of Anjou (Franciscan Friar and Bishop of Toulouse) the chapel is dedicated to St. Stephen, the first martyr (frescoes honor St. Stephen). The ceiling contains prophets and sages (Daniel and the Eritrean sage; David and the Cumean sage; Jeremiah and the Tiburtin sage, Micah and the Persian sage). On the opposite wall are allegories of Charity and Prudence and on the arch of the entrance are those of Vigilance and Abundance. The stained glass windows are of particular note; they were done from sketches by Simone Martini in 1317. ***Note: Bishop Louis Anjou was the younger brother of Charles Robert of Anjou (acclaimed King of Hungary in November 1308). Louis became a Friar Minor, renouncing the throne of Naples. Louis was appointed Bishop of Toulouse by Boniface VIII in 1296 and took his vows before the General of the Order. Louis died in Provence a year later while on his wat to Rome to renounce his bishop's rank.***

- ***Chapel of St. Anthony***: The stained glass windows are of particular note.
- ***Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene***: Decorated c. 1309 with stories from the gospel and legend. These are most probably the work of Giotto. This is an unfinished work (bare plaster is visible).
- ***Cross Vault and Transepts:*** These works were actually the result of competitions between the Florentine and Sienese schools (Giotto and his pupils on one side and Pietro Lorenzetti and Simone Martini on the other) between 1310 and 1320. Francis appears in evangelical and apocalyptic representations. The four allegories above the main altar represent the Saint in the eschatological strife between good and evil: Francis appears victorious in the strife by affirming himself in Obedience (Franicis is shown in total openness to the Church), Poverty (Francis is being "wed" to her), and Chastity. Note Francis enthroned under the "Palio" of victory signed with a cross and the seven stars – a definite reference to "another angel arising from the East bearing in his body the seal of the living God (Rev. 7)". Francis was specifically compared to the "Angel of the 6th Seal" – this angel is depicted on one of the beams of the cross vault. Francis was called a "Prophet" because of his message of peace to the People of God. Francis does not have a beard in this representation – probably an effort to depict the "eternal youth" of the saint. He does appear in a Deacon's dalmatic. ***NOTE: the small representation of Christ at the very center of the apse! This is the "apocalyptic" Christ with the two-edged sword in his mouth! This vault is the work of Giotto.
- The Last judgement appears in the apse from 1623 (an original crucifixion scene was removed). Two other crucifixes are found on the walls of the transepts facing the choir stalls where the friars go for prayer and mediation. *******The crucified Christ is fundamental to Franciscan spirituality.***
- The main altar was consecrated by Pope Innocent IV in 1253. On March 25, 1754 Benedict XIV raised it to the dignity of a papal altar (thus giving it equal status with those of the Papal Basilicas in Rome). Note the rich mosaic decorations – the friars intentionally excluded mosaics from the basilica but allowed it on the altar because it is a dramatic reminder of the devotion St. Francis held for the Mystery of the Eucharist, "*They should set the greatest value on chalices, corporals, and all the ornaments of the altar that are related to the Holy Sacrifice...*"
- ***Left Transept – Pietro Lorenzetti:*** Note Francis is on Golgatha! Cycles of the Passion. Opposite the crucifixion is the scene of Francis receiving the stigmata – The tryptich with Mary and Jesus between Francis and John is the culmination of the entire cycle. Pilgrims find them simultaneously on Mt. Calvary and Mt. La Verna. These scenes are from 1325 by Pietry Lorenzetti.
- ***The Tryptich ("Madonna Who Celebrates Francis")*** – ***Cimabue*** – is probably the most famous – It shows Mary inviting Christ to bless Francis who carries in his body a greater resemblance to the passion of the Crucified Christ than the beloved apostle John. **This is an important painting also because the development of the comparison with the beloved evangelist as a comparison between and Francis and Christ was coined in Venice and rejected by two heretics but eventually defended *in this very basilica* by Gregory IX in 1234 when he personally presided over the Feast of St. Francis. That is the thematic, and theological, history of this fresco!**
- ***Right Transept – Giotto:*** The Nativity cycle (perhaps the most extensive ever depicted). Three frescoes in the lower section represent two miracles of Francis involving young

people in trouble. This was also done by Giotto. For Francis, Christmas was the "Feast of Feasts". Recall that on Christmas Eve 1223 in Greccio Francis established a "living crib" (Honorious III gave permission).

- Cimabue painted the most famous fresco of Francis as part of his "Madonna in Majesty" in 1278-80. It was to have been destroyed to make way for a crucifixion scene but was fortunately saved. ***This fresco is of great historical significance because it is said Cimabue painted it based upon eye witness accounts.***
- Of other interest is the *Chapel of St. Stanislaus, Blessed Martyr*. Stanislaus was the martyr bishop of Kracow, Poland. It was in this basilica that Stanislaus was officially declared a saint by Pope Innocent IV on September 8, 1253. A balcony chapel was built to honor his memory. The sculptures and mosaics were executed by artists of the Cosmati school of about 1255. The frescoes of the Madonna were completed about 1320.

Reliquary...

- ***The Charter***: a parchment containing the hand-written blessing of St. Francis to Brother Leo who acted as his secretary and confessor. It is one of the most precious relics of Assisi. The words written in black are from the hand of Francis, the words in red are by Brother Leo who certified the authenticity of the document and its date of 1224.
- ***The ash-colored Tunic of Francis***.
- ***The Rule of the Franciscans.*** It is introduced by Papal Bull *Solet Annuere* of Pope Honorious III given November 29, 1223. This parchment is the *Magna Carta* of the Franciscan movement.

Cloister of Sixtus IV...

- Sixtus was a former Franciscan Friar (Francesco della Rovere) and he built the cloister to complete the whole complex (which consisted of the Gregorian Palace that also became a papal fortress in the 14th century, and the Sacro Convento where the friars live). This cloister was completed in 1476 in a harmonious gothic renaissance style. Note the classic well in the center – it is a cistern fed by water collected on the pavement of the square and channeled in aqueducts to an underground storage area.

Upper Basilica...

- The upper basilica was completed at the end of the 13th century.
- ***Cross Vault and Transepts:*** This great work was done by Cenni di Pepi (more commonly known as "***Cimabue***"). The many scenes attributed his genius include the Four Evangelists (cross vault), the Marian Scenes (upper and lower sections of the apse), the Apocalypse and the Acts of the Apostles (left and right transepts, respectively), and the Crucifixion ("for the friars", directly opposite the choir stalls). These were done from 1277-1285. Note the Crucifixion scene and how Francis kneels at the base of the cross. The very unusual coloration is the result of using lead-white instead of lime-white in these mural paintings; over the course of time they oxidize into a sort of "negative" of the original image.
- ***Wooden Choir Stalls:*** erected between 1491 and 1501. These are true inlaid wood masterpieces. The panels depict scenes from the Gospels as well as the human figures of

some of the first Franciscans. Note the large swivel lectern in the middle – this was used to "rotate" the psalms so that both sides could see it (they usually only had one book from which everyone had to read).

- Some of the ***stained glass*** in the upper basilica is not only beautiful but ancient as well. In fact, some of the older pieces are French from 1270. Note: at the ruling of the Constitutions of Narbonne in 1260, it was the stated policy of the Franciscans that stained glass could only be used in the chancel behind the main altar and that those windows could only depict Christ on the Cross, Mary, and Saints John, Francis, and Anthony.
- ***Central Nave:*** St. Francis Honored in the Concordance of the Two Testaments. Towards 1290 decoration work began on the single nave of the upper basilica. Francis is illustrated and celebrated in Old and New Testament typology so that he appears as the personified "concordance" of the two Testaments. (Note: all three series are in chronological order and can also be correlated vertically – e.g., between the Old Testament, New Testament, and Francis' Life – as well as horizontally) Giotto's series of 28 frescoes of the life of the Saint are supplemented by the series of biblical themes in the upper sections: Right – scenes from the Patriarchs (Genesis) and Left – scenes from the life of Christ. These three themes converge in the center of the nave vault where Christ blesses the faithful, John the Baptist represents the Old Testament, Mary represents the New Testament, and Francis as the perfect harmony of both.
- ***Paintings:*** The series by *Giotto* depicting events in the life of Francis begins near the main altar and encircles the nave. ***Note: While individual moments from the lives of the saints were popular in the 11th century art, this series represents the FIRST TIME that such an elaborate depiction of an entire life was painted. Francis is depicted as "Another Christ" and given as an example for the faithful to emulate.*** Scenes include:
    - A nobleman spreading his cloak before Francis ("You will do great things"),
    - Francis giving his cloak to a nobleman,
    - Francis dreaming of a palace and Christ's promise to "him and his knights",
    - Francis before the cross of San Damiano,
    - Francis rejects his clothing,
    - The dream of Innocent III,
    - Francis receives approval of the Rule.
    - The Friars in Rivotorto see Francis in a fiery chariot (illumined bright as day)j
    - A Friar sees a vision of a throne and is told "It's reserved for Francis" which used to belong to a fallen angel.
    - Francis casts the evil demons out of Arezzo (peace was restored)
    - Francis challenges the priests of the Sultan to walk through fire with him. They flee.
    - The friars see Francis raised up on a cloud while in prayer
    - Francis serves as deacon for the first Midnight Mass.
    - Francis prays for water to spring forth to quench the thirst of a poor man who had loaned him his donkey.
    - Francis preaches to the birds
    - Francis dines in the home of a nobleman and prays for his salvation; he confesses and died immediately.
    - Francis preaches to the cardinals.

- Francis appears at the Chapter of Arles while Anthony of Padua is preaching about the cross.
- Francis receives the stigmata on Mt. LaVerna
- A friar sees the soul of Francis ascending to heaven in the form of a brilliant star.
- Br. Augustine (in southern Italy) sees Francis die and cries "Wait for me Father Francis" whereupon he dies. The Bishop of Assisi saw Francis who said "I am going to heaven."
- Jerome (famous doctor and scholar) examines the stigmata as Francis lay at the Portiuncola.
- Francis is carried to San Damiano so that Clare and her sisters might see his sacred remains.
- Pope Gregory IX came personally to Assisi and canonized Francis and enrolled him in the calendar of the Saints.
- Gregory IX, in doubt about the stigmata, sees Francis in a dream to verify them.
- Giovanni de Ylerda, who was deathly ill, prays to Francis who heals him.
- Francis restores to life a deceased woman who had died with an unconfessed sin on her soul; she resuscitates, makes her confession and dies peacefully in the Lord. Note hte devil is confused!
- Francis liberates a prisoner accused of heresy and, under the order of the pope, placed under the authority of the Bishop of Tivoli. This happened on the Feast of Francis because the man had fasted on the vigil of the Feast of Francis.

- ***Rose Windows:*** Remember, the twin portals evoke the "double nature of Christ." The Windows, sustained by the symbols of the evangelists, recalls Christ as the "Sun of Justice" and the "Flower of Jesse". In gothic times, the four symbols of the Evangelists offered further Christological meaning:
- ***Winged-man:*** Word made Flesh
- ***Calf:*** Christ Sacrificed
- ***Lion:*** Christ Risen
- ***Eagle:*** Christ Ascended into Heaven

The City...

- At the heart of the city is the ***Piazza del Commune*** which stands on the site of the ancient Roman Forum. Note the 1st century Temple to Minerva which served as the summit of the forum. The Tower of the People dominates the summit with its Ghibelline blackbirds (1305) while the older Palace of the Captain of the People (1282) is next to it.
- ***Church of St. Stephen, martyr.*** Built in 1166, the bells of this church are reported to have begun tolling on their own upon the death of Francis!
- ***Cathedral of San Rufino:*** Mother Church of the city. In the 5th century, Bishop Basilius built the first Oratory to house the relics of St. Rufino, martyred by being drowned in the Chiascio River in 238. In the 11th century, Bishop Hugo incorporated the small chapel into a larger church. The present cathedral began in 1140. The decoration on the portals are of particular interest – they are an enigma to scholars who are still trying to discover their exact theological interpretation. The interior of the Cathedral was unfortunately transformed in the 16th century. Of particular interest in the church is the ***Baptismal Font,*** originally in the former Cathedral of St. Mary Major (it was here that Francis and Clare, as

well as Frederick, were all baptized). *This church also boasts a major Franciscan relic: in the sacristy is the cave where St. Francis used to retire for recollection and prayer!*

- ***St. Francis Piccolino:*** The Oratory of St. Francis was originally the cloth shop situated on the ground floor of the home of St. Francis. In the 13th century it was transformed into an oratory. In the 14th century an inscription was placed over the enlarged portal: "This Oratory, once a cattle-stall, was the birthplace of Francis, mirror of the world". Inside are remains of 13th century frescoes. Some popular legends claim that Francis was born in a "stable" like Jesus.
- ***Basilica of St. Clare:*** born in 1194 and died August 11, 1253, she was canonized by Alexander IV in 1255. In 1257 work began on the construction of a Basilica in her honor. The present building includes the ancient small Oratory of St. George, once the tomb of St. Francis! (This was the church of his youth where he developed the dream of being a knight!) Clare is visible in a crystal urn after she was exhumed in 1850. ***The most famous relic of this basilica is the Crucifix of San Damiano.*** This famous 12th century crucifix formerly was in the Church of San Damiano – this is the cross that spoke to Francis. The chapel of the relic had originally been part of the Oratory of St. George – which is also where Francis preached his first sermon! Of interesting note: Francis was canonized in the square in front of the Basilica of St. Clare in 1228 (because he was initially buried in the church of St. George where the basilica of Clare now stands). It is before this crucifix that Francis also composed the oldest of his known writings: ***Most High and Glorious God, send light into the darkness of my heart. Give me right faith, certain hope, perfect charity, and profound humility, with wisdom and perception, O Lord, so that I do what is truly your most holy will. Amen.***
- ***Church of St. Mary Major and the Bishop's Residence:*** This Romanesque church is the original Cathedral of Assisi. It is built over the ruins of a Roman temple dedicated to Janus. The rose window of the facade bears the date 1162. The residence of the Bishop is adjacent to the church. ***It is in the square in front of this church that Pietro di Bernardone, the father of Francis, publically disinherited his son.*** It is also here that Francis, while very ill, brought about reconciliation between the Bishop and the Mayor of Assisi. On this occasion, in this spot, Francis composed the verse of his "Canticle of the Creatures" which speaks of Pardon (c. 1225). *"Praise to Thee, my Lord, for those who pardon one another for love of you, and endure sickness and tribulation. Blessed are they who shall endure these things in peace, for they shall be crowned by thee, O Most High."*
- ***Abbey Church of St. Peter:*** Built from 1029-1268, it is this monastery which first welcomed Francis after his conversion. Although Francis refused the monastic spirituality of the Benedictines, a friendship was forged between them. The Monks of St. Peter gave Francis the use of the Portiuncola Chapel in the plain below Assisi in 1210.
- ***San Damiano:*** This was the church in which Francis received the insight to "Rebuild my Church". It is also the very first church that Francis physically re-built with his own hands. This church and cloister was the first home of the Poor Clares. Eventually the sisters moved within the city walls because this site was too difficult to defend. They took the crucifix with them! It was near San Damiano that Francis composed the majority of his "Canticle of the Creatures". The public is invited to join the friars for sung Evening Prayer and Adoration every evening. Of interesting note, while Clare was living at San Damiano she lamented being so far removed from Francis' body and on Christmas Eve of 1252 she was "mysteriously escaped" from San Damiano and transported to the tomb of

Francis (this was a vision). It is because of the vision that Clare is now the Patron Saint of Television!

- ***Hermitage of the Carceri:*** One of Francis' favorite places to pray. You can still visit and see on the hillside the individual caves where Francis and the other brothers slept in solitude and prayer. In the 14th century, St. Bernardine of Siena had a small friary built around the original 12th century chapel of the Madonna. Here the grotto of Francis can still be seen.
- ***Rocca Maggiore:*** Built by Frederick Barbarossa (1174), it crowned the hill above Assisi and was an imposing symbol and reminder of the times of bitter strife. In 1198 when the young Frederick II was living in the castle the people of Assisi rebelled against their Teutonic overlords. They captured the castle, destroyed its walls and acquired their own rights. Francis participated in this murderous riot and assault on the trapped soldiers. The stones removed from this fortress were then used to fortify the walls of Assisi – Francis learned his first building skills from this effort and later used them to rebuilt the churches around Assisi!
- ***Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels:*** the place most dear to Francis. The current basilica was built in 1567-1679 and the facade was added in 1924-1930. This large structure protects the ***"Portiuncola"***, or "little portion".
    - The fresco on the facade of the Portiuncola (1829) depicts the granting of the ***"Great Pardon".***
    - The chapel itself dates to the 10th century. It is one of three churches restored by the very hands of Francis.
    - In 1208, while attending Mass here, Francis heard the Gospel passage where our Lord traced out for his disciples his missionary style. ***Francis thus found his own vocation within the Church!*** Thus, it was in this small chapel that Francis received the mandate of his ministry to go forth and preach penance and the conversion of all humanity. When Francis and his Friars were turned out of Rivotorto, they decided to establish themselves in this place.
    - ***It was here, in 1212, that Francis clothed Clare di Favorone in the habit of penance thus giving life to the 2nd order.***
    - What made it most famous was the indulgence associated with its name, the famous "pardon of Assisi", which Francis obtained from Honorious III in 1216.
    - After the ***Chapter of Pentecost***, 1217, which was held here, the first Franciscans were sent on Mission.
    - During the famous ***"Chapter of the Mats"***, 1221, Francis met the Friar who would become his most famous son, *Anthony of Padua*.
    - In 1226, the dying Francis requested to be carried to the Portiuncola that he might die there. ***He died in the small infirmary, now the Chapel fo the Transitus, on the evening of October 3.*** He asked to be laid naked upon the bare earth.
    - In the Crypt, be sure and see the altar piece by Andrea della Robbia (c. 1490). The crypt was constructed in 1966-1979 and makes visible the very primitive convent setting in which Francis lived.
    - Beyond the sacristy is the famous Rose Garden, Chapel of the Roses, and the Grotto of St. Francis. In the corridor leading to the Rose Garden is the famous statue of St. Francis with a nest of living doves in his hands. These doves are NOT

drugged or tied down – they're free to come and go as they please but choose to stay.

St. Catherine of Siena – A Brief Biographical Sketch and Survey of Her Writings

- Lived from 1347-1380. A critical turning point in the Church's history. Europe was at war with the idea of unified leadership receding in the face of independent states. The Church was beleaguered with scandal and the plague took its toll in 1348.
- Struggles between Philip of France and Boniface VIII resulted in a power play in which the pope attempted to establish authority over church and state. Philip responded by forbidding French bishops from sending contributions of money to Rome. Boniface then excommunicated Philip when then unleashed his henchmen on the pope. Boniface died several months later. Frenchman Bertrand de Got was elected Pope Clement V in 1305. Got remained in France, thus establishing a precedent for succeeding pope of the next 70 years.
- From their residence in Avignon, popes continued their rule in Italian lands through French delegates. Tuscany especially balked at this foreign influence. Florence grew impatient to establish its "rightful" influence over the rest of the Italian states. Through bloody feuds the people of Siena and Florence won for themselves representative governments toward the last part of the 13th century. A group of 9 and then 12 elected representatives governed Siena. Common people coveted the *popolani* – those eligible to rule.
- Giacomo Benincasa of Siena counted himself among these *popolani*. He was dyer (fabric) which was a very prosperous business. He married Lapa Piacenti, daughter of a poet and quilt maker.
- Catherine was the 24th of 25 children. She was born in 1347 possibly on March 25. Her twin sister, Giovanna, died soon after birth. Catherine secured her place in the family through her stubbornness, chatter, and disarming directness.
- As a child Catherine was attracted to the services at the Dominican church near her home. She even resolved in a child's way to consecrate her life to Jesus. At Catherine' sentry into adolescence, Sienese custom forbade her free-spirited play in the streets of Siena. Lapa encouraged Catherine's sister, Bonaventura, to take her under her wing so as to arrange a financially profitable match for her.
- With her sister's help, Catherine learned to use make-up, dye her hair blond (admired by Sienese men), etc. Catherine's resolution not-to-marry is presumed to have been forgotten. However, Bonaventura's death in 1362 shattered Catherine's illusion of real happiness in this world – Bonaventura was her confident and closest friend. Catherine grieved at life's deceptions and renewed her choice of childhood: she would give herself to the Lord whom death could not take from her.
- Catherine was 15 and had the willpower to prevail over Lapa's plans for her marriage. For support, Catherine turned to her cousin and first confessor, Tommaso dalla Fonte. Orphaned by the plague in 1348, the Domincan had been raised in the Benincasa home and Catherine trusted him. Tommaso suggested that she offset the marriage by cutting off her hair. Catherine's family was horrified and tried to bring her to her senses. In an attempt to face Catherine with the reality women faced who were not head of their own households, the made her responsible for the maids chores. But Catherine didn't mind;

her good disposition won her father over and he allowed her to live at home with no prospect of marriage.

- Catherine continued her search for a way to live her consecration to the Lord outside of Marriage or the Convent. She was familiar with the *mantellate*, widows dressed in the Dominican habit who lived in their own homes and devoted themselves to prayer and service of the poor and sick. Because of her youth, Catherine was initially not allowed to join them but her persistence won them over and she joined them when she was 18. She began to live as a recluse devoting herself to prayer and leaving the house only for daily Mass at San Domenico church next door. It is claimed that she learned to read at this time (so as to pray the breviary). The excessive penances she practiced permanently damaged her ability to eat and digest food. She became aware of her "mixed motives" (ease and comfort) in seeking this life of prayer and prayed for a pure heart. The Lord answered her prayer by "Binding herself to himself in the union of faith spoken of his Hosea 2:19-20 (Spiritual Marriage), "I will betroth you to me in faithfulness."
- At this point a very significant change happens in Catherine's life (and the history of spirituality). Catherine had been convinced that the way to God was solitude and prayer which could only be reached by removing oneself from the world. However, she suddenly found that the presence of the Lord was denied her until she united herself also to her brothers and sisters in need. The Lord seared into her heart the truth that she could not love the unseen God if she did not first love those she could see (1 Jn 4:20). For three years, until 1370, Catherine dedicated her energy to caring for the poor and sick. Catherine entered wholeheartedly into the *mantellate* She served those whom no one else would touch: the leprous and reviling Tecca, the abusive Palmerina, the dying Andrea (who was still strong enough in her cancer to slander Catherine's reputation by accusing her of impurity!). Catherine wanted to overcome her revulsion of Andrea so one day she forced herself to drink the putrid water in which she washed Andrea's sores. She suddenly experienced being filled with the Lord's life. Later, Jesus would ask Catherine to give him her heart in exchange for his own heart of unbounded love. This would establish a pattern for the rest of her life: Catherine's mystical experience of God would follow upon her self-giving to the most needy of her brothers and sisters. Catherine saw the face of Christ in the poor to such an extent that she gave them her own clothes, food, etc. This obviously caused disharmony in the family and society. Catherine's extraordinary love did not go unnoticed. She began to emerge as a woman of love and peace in the midst of Siena's feuds. She was also a woman of authority; someone who knew and lived with God. People came to her home to speak with her, listen to her, etc. Soon, a devoted group of *familia* of friends began to grow around her. In 1368 Tommaso dalla Fonte introduced to this circle the learned young Dominican, Bartolomeo Dominici. The group also included Catherine's sister-in-law, Lisa Colombini and at least two *mantellate*: Cecca Gori and Alessa Saracini, a young artistocratic widow who became Catherine's confidente and closest companion.
- After three years of ministry to Siena's poor, Catherine became so ill in 1370 that many thought she was dead. The experience caused Catherine to experience a crushing weight. She would later say to her confessor, Raymond of Capua, that this "mystical death" exacted a sacrifice of extreme cost: the Lord had answered her desire to be with him by bringing her back to life – her vocation became clear and it was to spend her life here in claiming others for God. Thus, Catherine now expanded her ministry past her home and

Siena's streets and she entered the arena of the whole Church. From 1370-74, Siena witnessed countless conversions as Catherine's word brought hardened sinners and proud intellectuals to repentance. The grace and power of her presence reconciled divided families and warring factions. In her company, notorious criminals wept openly for their crimes. During the period a young Dominican, Simon of Cortona, and the poet, Neri di Landoccio Pagliaresi, joined her group of disciples. With Neri as her secretary, Catherine began to seek the conversions of people outside of Siena through extensive correspondence with lay people and clergy, prelates and civil rulers. When she traveled to Florence in 1374 persons of every rank sought her out; Nicolo Soderini, a city governor, was one among many of this city who formed a friendship with Catherine.

- It is at this moment that Catherine encountered for the first time the aristocratic and learned Dominican Raymond of Capua (Raimondo delle Vigne) who would become her confessor, biographer, and closest friend. The Dominican Chapter that year in Florence assigned Raymond as lector of Sacred Scripture and the Master General of the Order, Elias of Toulouse, apparently also made him Catherine's confessor. In July of 1374 Siena was again ravaged by the plague; from May until October priests and lay people alike fled the city as the disease spread uncontrolled. Simon of Cortona states that younger Dominican friars were so consumed with fear of infection that they refused to minister who the priests who chose not to flee. Catherine stayed and took care of the victims. Inspired by her selflessness, other *mantellate* and Dominicans, among them Raymond of Capua, ministered with her. Raymond was 17 years older than Catherine and was respected in papal and political circles. He was probably responsible for initiating Catherine into these circles. Two existing letters of Catherine (one written when she was 26) evidence her growing influence in the political and ecclesiastical rank. One letter addresses Piero Gambacorta (a ruling lord of Pisa) and the second urges Cardinal Iacopo Orsini to press for Pope Gregory XI's fidelity to his promises of returning the papal residence to Rome and of inaugurating a crusade to the Holy Land.
- Reports of Catherine's love and courage in ministering to plague victims spread to other cities as well. Inspried by what he heard, Gambacorta invited her to Pisa. Catherine first declined and then accepted when she realized the opportunity for peace that existed. Convinced that God wanted her to go there, she left for Pisa sometime after January 1375 with Raymond, Bartolomeo and Tomasso. Pisa was a powerful city at that time and noted for its naval victories. Catherine's zeal for a crusade was renewed and she began preaching its cause with greater intensity. Pisa brought great personal growth for Catherine; on April 1, 1375 while in prayer after Holy Communion in the church of Santa Cristina she felt the Lord grant her desire to share in his passion by giving her in an interior manner the pain of his own wounds. This was her "invisible" stigmata. This was a pain which never left her as she later confessed to Raymond. Pisa committed two galleys for the pope's safe return to Rome which caused Catherine renewed enthusiasm for such a move. In Pisa, too, she learned of the English mercenary, John Hawkwood, who ravaged the Italian states unable (or unwilling) to pay him dues. The 28 year old Catherine wrote to Hawkwood exhorting him to direct his violent instincts instead toward heading a crusade to the Holy Land.
- Possibly in June of 1375 Catherine briefly returned to Siena long enough to be present at the execution of a Perugian noble, Niccolo di Tuldo. He was condemned to death for inflammatory remarks against the Sienese government. The young man was so touched

by Catherine's ministering to him that he experienced a miraculous change of heart. Under her influence, blasphemy and rage at his condemnation gave way in him to desire martyrdom filled with love. Catherine kept her promise of staying with Niccolo until the end and, at his execution, she received the young man's severed head into her hands. The experience was deeply mystical for Catherine and made a lasting impression on her. In light of her own thirst to give her life for the Church's reform, she interpreted Niccolo's death as the first fruits of those whose blood would be powerful in Christ's blood to win this renewal.

- In July of 1375, Catherine returned to Pisa where she heard that Pope Gregory had encouraged preaching of a crusade to the Holy Land; Catherine entered into preaching with great vigor. Wile at Pisa, Florence sent reports that the pope had refused needed supplies of corn to Florence and that he had engaged the military services of John Hawkwood. These rumors supplied Florence with the occasion to stir up support for a league aimed at economic independence from the French papacy. Bologna joined Florence and Milan in a Tuscan league against the pope on July 24. On August 14 a government of the Eight responsible for overseeing the war against the papacy took power in Florence. One by one, other Italian states supported the revolt. Catherine was heartsick. She undertook a passionate preaching crusade urging loyalty to the pope and in September she traveled to nearly Lucca to encourage this city's allegiance to Gregory XI. At the end of 1375 Catherine returned to Siena to find that her own city had joined the Tuscan league on November 27. One consolation to her return was a young nobleman, Stefano Maconi, of Catherine's age who sought her out as a mediator in a family feud with the Tolomei. He ended up joining her *familia* and served as another secretary. Catherine now began writing directly to the pope to awaken him to the collapse of the Church around him. She urged peace with the Tuscan league and a return to Rome. She also encouraged him to inaugurate the crusade he had promised and to undertake courageous reform in the Church through the choice of holy bishops. On February 11, 1376, Gregory entered into an open test of wills with Florence. The city's leaders had been summoned to appear in trial before him but they didn't show up. Gregory placed Florence under an interdict. Celebration of the sacraments was forbidden, citizens were encouraged to seize the property of their rebellious leaders, and any person offering economic or political support to Florence was excommunicated. Suddenly, Italian states previously loyal to Florence defected. Catherine was filled with grief. On April 1, 1376, still in Siena, she began to see the civil and ecclesiastical tragedy in a new light. In prayer it seemed to her that Muslims and Christians alike were entering into the wounded side of Christ and that she herself was bearing the olive branch of peace to them. Instead of signaling the Church's ruin, the war against the papacy began to symbolize for her the mystery of the grain falling into the ground to die, only to be reborn anew with vigor and purity. Through this tragedy the Church would be finally reformed. This filled Catherine with joy and renewed courage.
- Catherine later wrote to the leader of the Guelphs in Florence, offering her services as a mediator in the task of reconciling with the papacy. In the hope that Gregory would be all the more favorably inclined toward them because of her, the Guelphs accepted her proposal. Catherine and about 22 of her disciples arrived in Avignon on June 18, 1376. From then until September she met several times with the Pope urging him to deal gently with the Florentines and to keep his word to return to Rome. On September 13, Gregory

fulfilled his promise and embarked on the first part of the journey to Rome. Soon afterward, Catherine and her group set out for Genoa, arriving in Siena at the end of 1376 or in early 1377.

- In her home city, Catherine turned her attention to a plan she had long cherished: to establish a convent of enclosed nuns for her disciples drawn to religious life. Nanni di Ser Vanni, a wealthy and sometimes ruthless man who had come under Catherine's influence during this time, offered her his abandoned fortress at Belcaro near Siena. During its foundation, Catherine traveled frequently throughout Italy in the spring of 1377, preaching with a power and warmth that attracted thousands of people to hear her. In October of 1377 Catherine accepted Agnolino Salimbeni's invitation to Rocca de Tentennano at Val d'Orcia in order to mediate peace between him and his brother. However, during her absence Sienese citizens accused her of plotting against them – a charge which cut at Catherine's heart since, as she later wrote, her only plot had been to gain conversions to the Lord. At Val d'Orcia she also may have learned to write, a gift she felt the Lord granted her as an outlet for her heart's outpourings after prayer. A letter which Catherine sent to Raymond in October 1377 from this place contains an account of an experience in prayer which she would later use as an outline for her "book", the *Dialogue*.
- After Catherine's return to Siena in December, Gregory asked her to negotiate peace with the Florentines on his behalf. Catherine accepted, traveling to Florence probably in the spring of 1378. Her charm and holiness won many friends in this city, among them was the young nobleman Barduccio Canigiani, who joined her company to serve as her trusted companion and secretary. Upon her arrival in Florence, Catherine had first concentrated on urging the citizens to observe the interdict but she soon unwittingly became caught up in more political intrigues. Victims of the Florentine practice of "admonishing", arbitrarily excluding certain people from office, stirred the lower class to riot. Members of the wealthy Guelph part, including the Soderini and Canigiani families, were among those who suffered the violent attack. Enemies accused Catherine of involvement in the plot and of inciting the riot through her alleged encouragement of unjust admonishing. In June of 1378, an angry mob bent on her death approached her in the garden of the home provided for her by Pietro Canigiani. Lisa, Neri and Barduccio were with her. As the assassin drew near, Catherine's joy and courage at the thought of martyrdom disarmed him! He turned away, leaving her to weep at the dream that had slipped from her hands!
- On March 27, 1378 Gregory XI died and the newly elected archbishop of Bari, Bartolomeo Prignano, took the name Urban VI; bent on a rigid Church reform, the man soon emerged as a tyrant. On May 16, French cardinals withdrew in protest to Anagni, the Curia's summer home, and on August 9 proclaimed Urban's election invalid. Their justification: that fear of the Roman mobs had forced them to choose an Italian. Gathered again at Fondi on September 20, the French cardinals elected the notoriously ruthless Cardinal Robert of Geneva, and on October 31, he was crowned as anti-pope Clement VII.
- On July 18, 1378 Florence had achieved with Urban VI a concordance in which Catherine finally had played no part; after nearly seven months in Florence, she quietly returned home and there in Siena finished her "book" in October of 1378. For some time Catherine had hoped to support Urban by her own presence in Rome but the criticism of Sienese citizens and the gossip of some of the *mantellate* opposed to her frequent traveling augmented her own sense of uselessness in what had transpired at Florence. When Raymond sent word that Urban wanted her in Rome, she refused to depart without written

evidence of the pope's request! Raymond procured the necessary document from Urban and on November 23, 1378 Catherine arrived in Rome. Although the entire *famiglia* wanted to accompany her, in the end only 24 of her disciples – eight women and 16 men – were able to journey with her. After a short stay in a house provided for them by Urban in Rione della Colonna, they rented a house in Via Santa Chiara. Here Sienese pilgrims lodged, and an endless stream of people from the area came to speak with Catherine. The women of the company took turns each week in caring for household needs. Although the group only existed on alms, the number fed at their table often reached 40. When there was no food, Catherine herself would go into the streets to beg for bread.

- In January 1378, Raymond had been elected prior of the Dominican church of the Minerva in Rome and Catherine was overjoyed at the opportunity of being with him again. Raymond also was happy at the reunion but he was even more pleased at the enthusiastic reception accorded him and a small number of cardinals still loyal to him. But Catherine's and Raymond's joy in each other's presence was short lived. In December Raymond had to leave on a papal mission to preach a crusade in France against Clement VII (the anti pope). Catherine never saw Raymond again. In January of 1379, when Raymond heard of plans to assassinate him, he turned back. Sympathetic toward Raymond's fear, Urban asked him to stay in Genoa to preach the crusade. Catherine was crushed; what she viewed as the cowardice of her trusted friend deepened the wounds she felt at being left in Rome without his support.
- Several months later, Urban asked Raymond to resume attempts at winning over the French king to the Roman papacy. Hearing of further betrayals among the Spanish who were to have given him safe passage, Raymond made no attempt to go. The pope understood the impossibility of the situation. Catherine did not. "If you could not get there upright, you could have gone on all fours . . . if you had no money you could have begged your way."
- Feeling herself responsible for her friend's cowardice in the face of what could have been a glorious martyrdom, Catherine writes, "Am I always, because of my faithfulness to shut the gates against Divine Providence? ... Lord, unmake me and break my hardness of heart, that I not be a tool which spoils your works." The one who "spoils" God's work – the words betray the would that began to devour Catherine, the crushing sense of her own responsibility for the Church's destruction. If she had not encouraged the pope's return to Rome, the schism would never had happened. She had labored with every fiber of her being for the Church's reform only to find herself defending as pope a hated tyrant. She had spent herself at Pisa and Lucca to prevent their rebellion against Urban and they had ignored her. Florence had made peace with Rome not only without her but also in mockery of her proffered help. "Any contemporary speculating on her political action would see all the threads of her life tangled and twisted into a most ignominious pattern of failure. Her work did not make sense.
- Her energies poured out in selfless love for those close to her did not make sense either. Unwittingly, Catherine's friends had abandoned her. Even as they loved and offered her their presence and support, some betrayed her and left her utterly alone. Raymond's cowardice had refused the martyrdom she bitterly longed to have as her own. The disciples she left behind in Siena as a close-knit family had disbanded within two months of her departure; a letter of Cristofano Guidini to Neri dated January 14, 1379 reads: "Tell our little mother that we are all fallen apart; she must give us some rule which, out of

respect for her, we can obey, and which may gather us together in memory of her." The energies she had poured out on her *famiglia* had come to nothing.

- Her cherished dream for a "papal council" of holy men and women gathered in Rome to support the pope and to intercede for the Church's reform also failed miserably. Among those who refused to join her was her trusted friend William Flete. Catherine saw the "perfect completion" of her own defeat. What she loved best in the world had failed her.
- Her sense of responsibility for the Church's ills became a weight which crushed her body as well as her spirit. Beginning on January 1, 1380, Catherine's health declined distrously; her body seemed on fire with thirst. On January 29, Sexagesima Sunday, there were rumored uprisings against Urban, and she suffered severe convulsions. For 48 hours Catherine battled what seemed to be demons mocking the meaning of her life. In a violent series of what she called "Mysteries", she felt the Lord take the "vessel" of her body and "refashion" it anew in self-giving for the Church.
- Aided by Barduccio, Catherine had made the mile-long journey to St. Peter's every morning for Lenten Mass. On February 26, the 3rd Sunday of Lent, she paused as usual to gaze at Giotto's mosaic on the inner facade of St. Peter's. Pictured was the disciples' small ship caught in a storm at sea. On this day the ship assumed dimensions of overwhelming reality and proportion for Catherine, as it became for her the Church about to be crushed by its division and sin. She felt the whole weight of the ship on her shoulders, yet she was powerless to prevent its shipwreck. After this day, Catherine would not walk again.
- On the dawn of Sunday, April 29, her companions heard Catherine struggle with what seemed to be demonic forces attacking and mocking her. Earlier in the month, Catherine's beloved friend, Stefano, had come from Siena; assured of her eventual recovery, he had left again. Lisa and Barduccio were there, but Raymond was not. At 9:00 am that morning, held in the arms of Alessa, Catherine died. Her last words called out for the mercy of Jesus' blood upon her.

Embracing the Will of God

- "My very sex, as I need not tell you, puts many obstacles in the way!" R: "Does it not depend on my own will where I shall pour out my grace? With me there is no longer male and female, nor lower class and upper class; for all stand equal in my sight."
- "Why is this woman gadding about so much? She's a woman. Why doesn't she stay in her cell, if it's God she wants to serve?"
- "You guide your servants in different ways along different paths, ... though they travel by different ways, they are all running along the fiery road of your charity." Each of us has been created as a singular sacrament of God's mercy, made to manifest in an unrepeatable manner an aspect of the triune God's splendor. As a unique creation of God's love, each of us travels also a singular path to holiness.
- "What I ask of you is nothing other than love and affection for me and for your neighbors. This can be done at any time, any place, and in any state of live by loving."
- "Out of your own will you created ours, and ... ours is strong when it dwells in yours." "She closes her will so that it loves nothing outside of you."
- "Nothing in the world can make it right for you to sit in judgement on the intention of others ... If you do you will be deluded in your judgement. But compassion is what you must have, you and the others, and leave the judging to me!"

- After long hours in the church they would ,"throw her out of the church like so much refuse."
- "O lovely compassion ... you are a balm that snuffs out rage and cruelty in the soul. This compassion, compassionate Father, I beg you to give to all."
- "This is the surest sign that people are clothed in your will: that they see the cause of events in your will not in human will." and the see adversity as "motivated only by love."
- "O dispossessed will, earnest of eternal life! You are faithful even to the point of death ... not to the world but to your most gentle Creator. And you bind the soul to him because she has been completely freed from herself."
- "On what side soever, I find nothing but lies. The Cardinals corrupt the truth and proclaim that Urban is the anti-Pope; But anyone who says it – speaking to you without reverence, because you have deprived yourself of reverence – lies up to his eyes."
- "God is more ready to pardon than we are to sin!"
- "Blindness upon blindness, which does not let its wrong be seen nor the loss to soul and body! Had you seen it (Catherine writes to the Church leaders) you would not have deserted the truth lightly, in servile fear ... What made you do this? The poison of selfishness."
- "If you know and love the truth, you will not fear pain ..., otherwise, your shadow will made you afraid."
- "The more I enter you, the more I discover, and the more I discover, the more I seek you."
- "The one who does not know cannot love. The one who knows, loves."
- "You are insatiable, you in whose depths the soul is sated yet remains always hungry for you, thirst for you, eternal Trinity."
- "Contemplate the truth in the abyss of divine charity."
- "Love follows upon understanding. The more they know, the more they love, and the more they love, the more they will know. Thus each nourishes the other."
- "It is far better to walk by the spiritual counsel of a humble and unschooled person with a holy and upright conscience than by that of a well-read but proud scholar with great knowledge, for true lovers share the light within them in hunger and longing for others' salvation."
- "Have courage ... the truth is our strength. Fear nothing, for the truth sets us free." "Courage, become a good instrument ..., announce the truth generously."
- "Cry out as if you had a million voices! It is silence which kills the world. Proclaim the truth and do not be silent through fear."
- "Clothed in the truth we are set free. Such a heart is so open that it is false to no one; everyone can understand it because it never says something different with its face or tongue from what it has within."
- "Who could reach to your height to thank you for so immeasurable a gift ..., for the teaching of truth that you have given me? .... You willed to bend down to my need and that of others who might see themselves mirrored here."
- "And who am I that you give me your truth? ... Your truth... does and accomplishes all things, because I am not. It is your truth that offers truth, and with your truth I speak the truth."
- "Pray that God will give me grace ever to love and to proclaim the truth, and that for that truth I may die."

- "O immeasurable love! O gentle love! ... You are tha tfire ever blazine, O high eternal Trinity! You are direct without any twisting, genuine without any duplicity, open without any pretense."
- Clothe, clothe me with yourself, Eternal Truth."
- "Build yourself a cell within your heart, and never put a foot outside it."
- "Do you know, daughter, who you are and who I am? If you know these two things you have beatitude in your grasp. You she who is not, and I AM WHO IS."
- "Learn to know in your inmost heart, that I am in the most literal sense your Creator; and so you will have beatitude in your grasp."
- "I do not think it is possible to have virtue or the fullness of grace without dwelling within the cell of our heart and soul, where we will find the treasure that is life for us ..., the holy abyss (of) ... knowledge of ourselves and of God."
- "Let's come down to know our own poverty and indifference, but only after we have gone upward ... There, when we find ourselves in the abyss of his charity – there will we be made humble!"
- "Where were you, Lord, while my heart was suffering the agony of all those horrors?" "Was it not I myself, hidden in your heart's core? ... It was I who was working in you all this time. Hidden in your heart, I was guarding it from your enemies on every side."
- "You are not good because of the thoughts and impulses that fill you. The wise soul, seeing that from this experience proceeds such profit, reassures itself ... and will hold this time dearer that any other."
- "How is purity tested and won? Through the contrary ... Everything is driven out by its opposite. See how humility is won through pride."
- "At no time does the soul know herself so well, if I am within her, as when she is most beleaguered." "I want them to want Me!"
- "Never leave the knowledge of yourself for you will know me in yourself, and from this knowledge you will draw all that you need."
- "You will find yourself in him, and you will find him in yourself ... and you will find in you the infinite goodness of God."
- "Eternal Father, those who look at themselves find you within themselves. Fo rthey are created in your image ... You are in us and we are in you."
- "O fire blazing! The soul who comes to know herself in you finds your greatness wherever she turns, even in the tiniest things, in people and in all created things."
- "We discover so much of God's goodness poured out on us that words cannot describe it. And once we see ourselves so loved by God, we cannot help loving him. And within ourselves we love God."
- "In the cell of your soul you will find God all entire, who gives such sweetness, peace and consolation that nothing can trouble it, because it is filled with the will of God."
- "You are able to have the actual cell little; but I wish you to have the cell of the heart always and always carry it with you."
- "Only you, most gentle loving Father, only you can be my acknowledgment and my thanks. The affection of your very own charity will offer you thanks, for I am she who is not."
- "Let us not put off any longer our move into this holy dwelling of self-knowledge. We so need this, and it is so pleasant for us because ... God's boundless infinite goodness is there."

- "I am telling you what I want you to do. Never relax your desire to ask for my help."
- "I give you whatever you need, for it is I who gave you the very hunger and voice with which you call to me."
- "Who makes us desire and ask...? Only He. Then, if He makes us ask it, it is a sign that He means to fulfill it, and give us what we seek."
- "While she says the words she should make an effort to concentrate on my love."
- "O Holy Spirit, come into my heart, by your power draw it to yourself." "My holy Father, and my gentle Lord, help me in my every need. Christ love! Christ love!"
- "You have drawn me to yourself in unutterable love, and you draw all of us to yourself not because you must but freely – if only we choose to let ourselves be drawn to you."
- "What tongue could describe the marvel of this final unitive stage ... perfect union – you cannot describe it with your tongue, which is a finite thing!"
- "If anyone should ask me what this soul is, I would say: She is another me, made so by the union of love ... Not even the soul's own will stands between us, because she has become one thing with me."
- "I want you to pray to me for them so that I can be merciful to them." "Though you created us without our help, it is not your will to save us without our help."
- "In spite of their hardness, let them ... seek the blood of my Son and with that same hand ... pour it over the hardness of their heart."
- "O best of remedy givers! Give us then these christs, who will live in continual watching and tears and prayers for the world's salvation." "Not by ... violence will she regain her beauty but through peace and through the constant and humble prayers and sweat and tears poured out by my servants with eager desire."
- "I am to them a peaceful sea with which the soul becomes so united that her spirit knows no movement but in me."
- "One who never stops doing good never stops praying."
- "Those who are willing to loose their own consolation for their neighbor's welfare receive and gain me and their neighbors, if they help and serve them lovingly. And so they enjoy the graciousness of my charity at all times."
- "Put into the scales the price of your Son's blood; it is this blood that your servants, hungry as they are, are asking for at this door. They are asking you through this blood to be merciful to the world."
- "Hide yourself under the wings of the mercy of God, for it is more included to pardon than you are to sin. Bathe yourself in the Blood of Christ."
- "It is my will that they should put their trust in my mercy even at the point of death, after they have spent their life in wickedness. My mercy is incomparably greater that all the sins anyone could commit."
- "No one ought to despair. No, reach out trustingly for the blood, no matter what sins you have committed, for my mercy, which you receive in the blood, is incomparably greater than all the sins that have ever been committed in the world."
- "The despair of Judas displeased me more and was a greater insult to my Son than his betrayal had been."
- "Stretched out on the cross you have embraced us. For us you have made a cavern in your open side, where we might have a refuge."
- "We are unworthy of God. But God is worthy of us and desires to give himself to us as food; with his own worth Jesus makes worthy those who desire him."

- "I created your soul with a capacity for loving – so much so that you cannot live without love. Indeed, love is your food." (Eucharist feeds us with the fire of God's love)
- "I impose upon you nothing save to see yourself drowned in the blood and flame poured from the side of the Son of God."
- "I love you without being loved and without any self-interest ... Because I loved you without being loved by you, even before you existed ... you cannot repay me." (Instead, love others as God has loved us – without being loved by them.)
- "I wanted to make you dependent on one another so that each of you would be my minister, dispensing the graces and gifts you have received from me."
- "I have put you among your neighbors so that you can do for them what you cannot do for me ... love them without any concern for thanks and without looking for any profit for yourself. And whatever you do for them I will consider done for me."
- "But you will say to me, 'Since I have no such love, and without it I am powerless, how can I get it?' I will tell you. Love is had only by loving. If you want love, you must begin by loving – I mean, you must want to love."
- "The love and possess creatures apart from me, and so they pass through this life tormented, becoming insupportable even to themselves." (On imperfect love)
- "Fear absolutely nothing. I am here for you. I am in heaven for you. I will protect you and defend you. Do not be anxious; do not be afraid" (Raymond received these words spiritually from Catherine the day she died – she died in Rome and he was in Genoa)
- "No matter *where* they turn ... [those who trust in my providence] will find nothing but my deep burning charity, and the greatest, gentle, true, perfect providence."
- "How can you lift up your head against my goodness? ... All things except my grace are changing and ... because you ... are constantly changing, I am constantly providing for what you need at any given time." (We so often cling to present yet outgrown securities that unless someone else removed them from us we would grow little in human maturity. God's tender care in this way allows people and investments to fail us so that in the absence of previous supports our trust in him may lead us to greater personal autonomy.)
- "I wanted her to learn that although everyone else might fail her, I her Creator would never fail her ... and that with or without the help of another person, in any situation or at any time whatever ... I know how to and can and will satisfy her in wonderful ways."
- "You ought to be the providence of the poor, of those who have nothing." (When we allow the Holy Spirit to possess and lead us, we become in this way not so much "possessors" of wealth as "distributors" of wealth to the poor among us.)
- The "Chain of Charity": "I have something to one, something else to another, so that each one's need would be a reason to have recourse to the other ... In my providence I wanted to make each of you dependent on the others, so that you would be forced to exercise charity."
- "The whole life of my gentle poor is thus cared for by the concern I give the world's servants for them."
- "In your nature, eternal Godhead, I shall come to know my nature. And what is my nature, boundless love? It is fire, because you are nothing but a fire of love. And ... by the fire of love you created me."
- "I see you fashioned after us and us after you through the union you have effected with humanity ... O abyss! ... O deep sea! What more could you have given me than the gift of your very self?"

- "O sweet tender engrafting, you, sweetness itself, stooped to join yourself with our bitterness ... What drove you? ... Only love .... And was this enough? No, you, eternal Word, watered this tree [humanity] with your own blood"
- "He did as the wet nurse who herself drinks the medicine the baby needs, because she is big and strong and the baby is too weak to stand the bitterness. My Son was your wet nurse."
- "O God eternal! O boundless love! Your creatures have been wholly kneaded into you and you into us."
- "O depth of love! What heart could keep from breaking at the sight of your greatness descending to the lowliness of our humanity! We are your image, and now by making yourself one with us you have become our image ... You, God, became human and we have been made divine!"
- Catherine's words describing the Church of her time are not restrained. "All look for their own interests and the world's honors and riches – and it is a great poverty." Of the priests and Church leaders she comments, "...bloated with pride," the devour money meant for the poor and spend it on their own pleasures. "Woe, woe to their wretched lives!" What the "gentle Word" gained on the cross these priests "spend on prostitutes." "Temples of the devil," they feed their own children with what "belongs to the poor;" instead of growing full on others' salvation at the table of the cross, they make "taverns their table." They are reduced to "beasts" and "do not so much as know what the Divine Office is, ... oh devils and worse than devils." Church leaders live wedded to luxury and grandeur rather than to the poor, while bishops ordain persons like themselves, "little boys instead of mature men," "idiots who scarcely know how to read and could never pray the Divine Office," ignorant of Latin and unable to say even the words of consecration. Appointed to proclaim God's word "by their life and teaching," these priests shout words that are only "empty sounds." They consider it beneath them to visit the poor; refusing to lift a finger to help, they stand by as others die of hunger. In 1376 Catherine understood her ministry to this Church, still the eternal chosen Spouse of Christ: Jesus gave her a coss and an olive branch and told her to proclaim: "I bring you tidings of great joy." As the rose is born only in the midst of thorns, Catherine began to see that the Church's healing and purity are gained only through tribulation.
- As she approached her death, Catherine begins to experience a living martyrdom for the Church. Catherine felt the Lord promise to continue remaking the vessel of her body in and for the Church. The sacrifice of her prayer and tears and tormenting desire would replace the physical labors she could no longer undertake for the Lord's community. "My life is consumed and shed for this sweet Bride: I by this road, and the glorious martyrs with blood."

At her death, the immense mystical fire within Catherine broke through to its goal. The passionate heart which had spent itself for the Church finally came home to the heart of the triune God who had claimed her entire being. As she promised, she lives now with Jesus to make intercession for us. May her tenderness and ardor continue to draw those who seek the living God as surely as it drew the disciples of her day. And may the zeal for God's house which consumed her inflame us with a passion that will set fire to the world she so loved.

"I wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ ...[provided that she could still love God, she would gladly endure forever hell's torments *if all others could be saved.* Even more, she would make of her own body a stopper against hell, setting herself upon the very mouth of hell to close it, and to "prevent any further souls from entering it."] I would love that hell should be wiped out; or at least that no soul should ever go there again."

An Outline Chronology of Catherine's Life

1347 Catherine is born in Siena on March 25th.
1348 Siena suffers its first bout with the Plague.
1354 Catherine consecrates herself to God.
1362 Bonaventura, Catherine's sister and confidente, dies.
At the advice of Tommaso dalla Fonte, O.P., her first confessor and director, she cuts off her hair as a way to offset marriage plans.
1365 At about the age of 18, she receives the Dominican habit of the *mantellate* and begins a three year period of solitude during which she also learns to read.
1368 Jesus espouses her mystically to himself, calling her out of solitude to serve Siena's poor and sick.
On August 22, Catherine's father dies.
Bartolomeo Dominici, O.P. becomes her second confessor
1370 Catherine undergoes a "mystical death" which opens her to a more extensive ministry in an ever widening circle of influence.
1374 At the age of 27, Catherine undertakes her first trip to Florence and acquires Raymond of Capua, O.P. as her confessor and director.
She ministers to Plague victims in Siena.
1375 Catherine journeys to Pisa in an attempt to dissuade Pisa and Lucca from joining the anti-papal league.
Here she spends the major portion of the year and gains new vigor in preaching a crusade to the Holy Land.
In Pisa she experiences light from Jesus' wounds transfixing her with invisible stigmata.
In the summer she ministers to Niccolo di Tuldo at his execution in Siena.
1376 Catherine volunteers her aid in mediating with Pope Gregory XI for the release of Florence from interdict.
She travels to Avignon to meet with the pope on Florence's behalf.
Her energies focus on Church reform, preaching the crusade, and encouraging Gregory's fidelity to his promise of returning the papal residence to Rome.
On September 13, Gregory sets out for Rome.
1377 Gregory solemnly enters Rome on January 13.
Catherine founds a monastery of nuns in the fortress at Belcaro donated by Nanni di Ser Vanni.
From May until December, Catherine stays at the Salimbeni castle in Rocca d'Orcia in order to mediate peace between feuding family members.
Raymond leaves Siena to assume his responsibilities as prior of the Church of the Minerva in Rome.
Catherine perhaps learns to write, and a mystical experience at Rocca d'Orcia leads her to begin her "Book", the *Dialogue.*
In December, she returns home to Siena.
1378 In early 1378 or late 1377, Catherine travels to Florence at the Invitation of Gregory XI in order to mediate peace between him and the Florentines.
In Florence she continues composing her book through dictation to her secretaries.
Gregory XI dies on March 27, and on April 8 Bartolomeo Prignano is elected as Urban VI.
On June 18, to her sorrow, Catherine escapes assassination as a suspected accomplice of the Guelphs.
In late July or early August, the papacy achieves peace with Florence.
Catherine travels to Siena and completes her *Dialogue* in October.
Schismatic cardinals gather at Fondi and on September 20 elect Cardinal Count Robert of Geneva as rival pope Clement VII.
On November 28, Catherine arrives in Rome, at Urban's request, to support him in the papal schism.
Urban sends Raymond on a papal mission to France in early December.
1379 Living with a large number of her disciples in Rome, Catherine gives her energies to the work of Church unity and reform.
The majority of her recorded prayers stem from this time.
Her health declines.
1380 Against the backdrop of Roman uprisings and deepening schism, Catherine becomes increasingly ill.
Unable to eat or drink beginning January 1, she continues to make the mile-long journey daily to St. Peter's, where she spends each day interceding for Church reform and unity.
On February 26, she becomes paralyzed.
Catherine dies on April 29.

Siena – the City

- Sienese tradition holds that the city was founded by one of the sons of Remus, the co-founder of Rome. On the death of their father (Remus), the two boys Aschius and Senus, distrustful of their uncle (Romulus) decided to flee Rome. They entreated Apollo (because they had no horse) and promised to erect a temple to him if he helped them. The horses were given and the boys galloped without stopping until they had covered 230 Kilometers. When they stopped, their first action was to erect a temple. Thus, Siena was born.
- That's the legend. The name of Siena is very similar to Senus. However, it seems that the name is probably derived from the Senonian Gauls (Senese) who were the founders. Nonetheless, the city likes the Roman connection and has adopted the she-wolf for its coat of arms!
- Originally a Roman colony, Siena converted to Christianity towards the end of the Fourth century. Constantly under siege and invasions, in the XI century (after the Carolignian rule) it passed to several Bishops who ruled it for less than 100 years when the Consuls gained the upper hand.
- Siena favored the Ghibellines and knew great splendor in that period. However, Florence was a Guelph supporter and so Siena and Florence became enemies in the 13th century.
- In 1253 Florence gained the advantage and forced peace with Siena. In 1296 Florence gained control of Pisa, Pistoia and Arezzo as well.
- Siena was then governed by ***"The Nine"***. These were representatives of the powerful families of the city. It regained its splendor and again underwent several rules, plagues, wars and outrages.
- In 1553 it was forced to give in to the siege of the Germans and Spaniards and finished under the rule of Cosimo de'Medici in 1559. It remained under the Medici's for a long period until it passed, with the rest of Tuscany, to the House of Lorena.
- The Italian Risorgimento witnessed Siena in the foreground and in 1859 it was the first city to attach itself to the Kingdom of Italy.
- Great treasures bear witness to the culture and life of the city:
- Palazzo Publico (1297-1310) with the Torre Mangia (1348),
  - the Fonte Gaia (1419),
  - the Duomo and Baptistry (1100-1376),
  - the Merchant's House,
  - the monumental walls (7 kilometers long),
  - the gates (Porta Camollia is inscribed "Siena opens an even greater heart to you [than these gates]"),
  - St. Dominic's Church,
  - The Chigi-Saracini Palace,
  - Fontebranda,
  - the St. Barabara Fortress,
  - the House of St. Catherine, etc.
- Probably the most famous person from Siena was the painter Jacopo della Quercia who worked on projects in Rome, Florence, and the Duomo of Venice!

Piazza del Campo...

- This is the heart of the city – a must see. Enjoy the restaurants and bars that surround the edge of the piazza. This piazza is one of the most famous sites in the world.
- The scallop flooring channels water into the central drain. This drain served as a cistern receptacle in ancient times that kept the city alive under siege.
- Note the "nine" segments that fan out from the center. These are to represent the "Rule of the Nine". It is surrounded by flagstones that frame it.
- Several famous palaces line the piazza. Among these is the Piccolomini Palace built in the XV century – it houses the state archives with famous wooden tablets that protected the ancient Rule. These were decorated by famous Sienese artists.
- Of important note is the *Fonte Gaia* (Fountain of Joy) designed by Jacopo della Quercia and built at the beginning of the 15th century. It has been supplied by an aqueduct since the middle of the 14th century. The name "joy" refers to the atmosphere at its inauguration. The original statues have been removed for fear they would deteriorate – they are now located in the Palazzo Publico. Note the she-wolf prominently displayed here (and elsewhere in the piazza). The statues represent (from left to right), The Creation of Adam, Wisdom, Hope, Strength, Prudence, and angel, the Madonna with Child, an angel, Justice, Charity, Temperance, Faith, and the banishment from the Garden of Eden.
- The Capella di Piazza is also of interest. Built in the 14th century (1352) to commemorate the end of a plague, it is decorated by a series of statues of saints in the pillars. The prized fresco of Sodoma has unfortunately been damaged over the years.
- The real jewel of the Piazza is the Palazzo Publico which was begun in the second half of the 13th century. Built in Tuscan Gothic style, it is the present-day house of the Town Hall and also houses several remarkable works of art.
- The Torre del Mangia is next to the Palazzo Publico. It is more than 260' high and was built in the 14th century. It is named after its first bell ringer, Mangiaguadagni or "Mangia".

Palio...

- The most famous event connected with the Piazza del Campo is the *Palio* – a world-famous horse race straight from the middle ages.
- The origins are unknown but it is recorded as early as 1310 when an official document set the date to be August 16th.
- Originally the palio may have been linked to the Battle of Monteaperti in 1260 with the victory of the Sienese people over the Florentines.
- Only in 1656 was a second Palio, the "Palio of the Contrade", instituted on July 2nd.
- Twice a year (July 2nd and August 16th) the ancient tournament of horses between the *Contrade* (parishes) is held. The Contrade are various areas of the city.
- Practically, the development of the Contrade can be linked to the decline in the central government in the Middle Ages.
- People were forced to join various "Associations" or "Guilds" and thus to rule themselves with a strict code of conduct, etc.
- In the 13th century the Contrade numbered about 80 but gradually their number dwindled and now they are only 17.

- Today they only have a representative function and they serve as "Mascots" for the city.
- Historically, each Contrade was responsible for maintaining a portion of the city's walls during attack. The regions developed a competitive spirit which generated this annual race. The winning team takes home a banner painted by a famous artist depicting the Assumption of Mary. These banners are the trophies and are displayed in each Contrada's parish church from then on. Some of these banners are several hundred years old.
- Ten of the seventeen contrade are selected by chance each year. They are each named after a different animal (these animals are usually depicted on their colorful flags): Aquila, Chiocciola, Onda, Pantera, Selva, Tartuca, Civetta, Leocorna, Niccio, Valdimonte, Torre, Bruco, Drago, Giraffa, Istrice, Lupa and Oca.
- The piazza fills every year for the race (which lasts only 1 minute!) And for the medieval spectacle which precedes it. During the actual race, the horses run three times around the piazza. Riders must ride bare-back in strict medieval style. The track is created by bringing in tons of dirt and sand to cover the stone pavement.
- Lots of other celebrations surround the Palio. The horses are blessed at the parish churches and then by the Bishop at the episcopal palace. Parades, etc.
- This not a "clean" race. Horses have been stabbed, riders trampled, bribes paid, etc.

The Duomo...

- It took more than 200 years to complete the Duomo. The various stages of construction can been seen in it's exterior.
- Note the variation in stripe patterns – some are narrow and others wide. This reflects the different styles of the time. The narrow stripes represent the oldest part of the building; the wide stripes represent newer construction.
- It was begun in 1136 and finished in 1376.
- The ***facade*** is one of the masterpieces of Italian art. It's lower part (Romanesque) made by Giovanni Pisano and its upper part of Gothic style.
- It's foundations stand on an ancient pagan temple.
- The three ***spires*** contain mosaics by Castellani from the 19th century. Very modern.
- The ***rose window*** contains scenes from the Last Supper. The busts of the four evangelists surround it along with the 36 patriarchs and prophets.
- All along the ***nave*** runs a cornice supported by 172 busts of popes – a work dating to 15th - 16th century. Below are the busts of 36 emperors.
- The ***dome*** has a hexagonally shaped base and was built around 1259-64. It is supported by six "pillars" with golden statues of saints. Note: these 'pillars' are the saints proper to Siena who are the 'pillars' of the Church in that city! Note especially Catherine and Bernadine. In the dome itself are figures of the patriarchs and prophets.
- The ***pavement*** is world-famous. Inlaid marble is used to depict scenes from various parts of the Gospel. This precious pavement is uncovered only from August 15th till September 15th . It consists of 56 pictures and was the work of about 40 artists. These pictures all represent biblical images made from the 14th - 16th century.
- Among works of particular note are the statues of Bernini, a prized stained glass window by Duccio di Boninsegna, numerous works by Jacopo della Quercia, and other famous works including Nicola Pisano's wonderful pulpit.

- The ***Piccolomini Altar*** is of particular note. It is located along the left aisle and was made by the order of Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini in 1481. It is a work of Andrea Bregno. The Madonna in the niche above is attributed to Jacopo della Quercia. The statues were made by ***Michelangelo*** and placed in the niches. These are lesser known works of Michelangelo although they are of high quality.
- ***Pulpit***: Done by Nicolo Pisano (1220-1284). Supported by nine columns of granite, porphyry and marble (central one with eight other for the octagonal shape). The upper part is divided into various panels separated by statues of Saints and Prophets. The facades represent the Nativity, Adoration of the Magi, The Presentation in the Temple, the Massacre of the Innocents, the Crucifixion, the Final Judgement of the Bad, and the Final Judgement of the Good. The eighth facade is the opening of the access stairway.
- The ***bell tower*** was built in 1313. It has six windows progressing from the single-lighted one towards the base to the six-lighted one at the top.
- The ***facade mosaic*** is rather recent. The top spire represents the Coronation of Mary.
- The ***Main Altar*** is adorned with a large bronze ciborium by Vecchietta.
- The ***Baptistry*** in the Cathedral proper contains a famous bronze sculpture by Donatello. It was made in Florence and sent to Siena in 1457.
- The ***apse*** contains a magnificent wooden choir which was begun in 1363 and finished in 1397. Originally it consisted of more than 90 stalls in a double line.
- ***Piccolomini Library*** – Began in 1492 by order of Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini Todeschini. – the future Pope Pius III. This building was to collect the books of the library of Pope Pius II, his uncle. The library contains many frescoes depicting scenes from the life of the Piccolomini's. Some of these famous scenes include the Canonization of Catherine and Pius II in Mantova to promote the crusade against the Turks. It also contains a wonderful marble sculpture of the "Three Graces" from the 3rd century. The library is a work of art in itself.
- ***Cathedral Museum*** – the Cathedral museum is housed in an 'uncompleted' section of the new cathedral. It houses wonderful works of art including Pisano's original statues from the facade of the church. One of the hidden treasures of the museum is the *Facciatone* which is a magnificent view from the abandoned shell.

The Baptistry...

- The Baptistry rises on the back of the Cathedral and functions like a crypt. It's facade was begun in 1317 and again in 1382.
- The frescoes of the vault represent the articles of the creed (baptismal creed).
- Of particular note is the magnificent baptistry font itself. It was made by a consortium of famous artists including the following:
- Reliefs: ***"The Angel announcing Baptist's birth to Zechariah"*** by Jacopo della Quercia (1428-29)
- ***"The Baptist's Birth" and "The Baptist's Preaching"*** by Giovanni di Turino (1427)
- ***"Baptism of Christ"*** and ***"Arrest of John the Baptist"*** made by Lorenzetti Ghiberti (1427) who also made the famous "Gates of Heaven" for the Baptistry of Florence.
- ***"Herod's Banquet"*** by Donatello (1427)

- Statues: ***Faith, Hope, and Love*** were made by Donatello
- ***Justice, Charity, and Providence*** were made by Giovanni di Turino
- ***Fortitude*** was made by Goro di Ser Neroccio.
- ***Prophets***: Jacopo della Quercia
- ***Madonna with Child:*** Turino
- ***Bronze Angels:*** Donatello and Giovanni di Turino
- The Font: It is a hexagonal base designed by Jacopo della Quercia with a beautiful statue of the Baptist.

National Picture Gallery...

- It is a very fine collection of Sienese art from the end of the 12th century to the first half of the 17th century.
- The gallery maintains some 700 paintings in 28 halls according to style or chronology.
- The building itself is a work of art and was built in 1440. It is known as the *Palazzo Buonsignori.*
-

Basilica of St. Dominic...

- The style is known as "severe gothic". It was begun in 1260 by the Dominicans.
- Around 1300 they built the lower crypt which was so large is was called the "Lower Church" or "Church of the Dead" because of the tombs found there.
- The bell tower was built in 1340.
- In the 14th century construction continued on the rest of the church and it was completed in 1465.
- A fire severely damaged the structure in 1532. An earthquake caused further damage in 1779.
- The building houses several famous frescoes (by Sodoma) and relics of Catherine.
- The cloister was built in 1425.
- ***The Church of Catherine***
- Catherine's home was less than 50 years from this church. She came here to pray with the monks every day.
- Sodoma painted the only 'true' portrait of Catherine in this church near the exact spot where she sat at prayer. It depicts Catherine holding a lilly and assisting a child.
- ***The Chapel of St. Catherine***
- Perhaps the most important area of the basilica, it houses a marble tabernacle made by Giovanni di Stefano in 1466 containing the head of Catherine.
- The Chapel was completely frescoed by Sodoma with the following scenes:
The Saint interceding for the execution of Niccolo di Tuldo
- ***St. Catherine in Ecstacy***
- ***The Saint delivering a Possessed person*** (by Francesco Vanni, 1593)

Palazzo's and Other Sites...

- ***Piazza Salimbeni***: contains a 14th century gothic palace with a statue of the economist Sallustio Bandini. This is an interesting place because it is the site of the ***Monte dei Paschi di Siena*** which is the ***oldest credit institution in Italy***. Thus, this is one of the oldest banking institutions in all of Europe, even pre-dating the Florentine bankers.
- ***Tolomei Palace:*** Built in 1205, it was completely remade after 1267. It is one of the oldest Sienese private palaces. It now houses the seat of the Saving Bank of Florence.

House of St. Catherine....

- Near the Basilica of St. Dominic is the actual family home of St. Catherine Benincasa (1347-1380).
- Of significant interest is the Chapel which houses the crucifix that spoke to Catherine and a frescoed room with paintings of scenes from her life.
- You can also see the room under the stairs where Catherine lived her 'monastic' life while a child.

San Gimignano

One of the most Magnificent Cities in Italy

- The origins of San Gimignano are shrouded in mixed legends. It was most certainly an early Etruscan settlement. Legends also claim that the city was founded by a Roman named Silvio who came to this area along with his friend Muzio who were both involved in the conspiracy against Catilina and escaped punishment. They decided to settle in this area because of the natural beauty. Variations of their name abound in the region (Muccio, Silva and Selva).
- The current name derives from the bishop of Modena who liberated the castle of Silvia from Attila the Hun in 450.
- Other famous people at San Gimignano include: Desiderius, King of the Lombards and Charlemagne.
- In reality, Attila the Hun never went through Tuscany. The legend of the bishop's liberation probably refers to Totila, King of the Goths, who did terrorize Tuscany a century later than Attila.
- Nonetheless, a painting in the Basilica sacristy is dedicated to Attila's legendary siege.
- Charlemagne's presence almost certain. Charlemagne lived at Villamagna near Volterra in 774. He celebrated Christmas of 786 in Florence.
- What is definite is that San Gimignano became an important center during the 7th century and its very first origins are tied up with the Lombard invasion. The Lombards, coming from eastern Europe, arrived in Italy in 586. Their incursions lasted until 774 and changed the features of rural life. People had to begin gathering on hills near their farms for protection.
- Also, San Gimignano gained great importance because the Via Aurelia (also named the Via Francesca since it led to France and western Europe) passed through San Gimignano; it was necessary to pass through the two ports of the city on one's way to Rome. This path took a person directly in front of the Cathedral.
- Slowly, hospices for pilgrims and hotels for travellers began to be built on the hill around the Church. Then logding and shops for travelling merchants, private houses, additional churches, etc.
- For nearly 1,000 years, San Gimignano relied on the commerce travel for its economy.
- San Gimignano ended in such a way as to "freeze" it in time. Cosimo 1st, Medici, in 1563 forbade the Comune use "any minimum amount of money for any need, be it sacred or profane". The prohibition locked the town in a certain period of history: squares, churches, towers, walls, etc.

Additional History....

- On a hill called Montestaffoli we find the remains of an ancient church dedicated to St. Nicholas. This is from the late 7th century – near the time of Charlemagne. The present basilica was built over the remains of this early church and at a different orientation.
- On August 30, 929, Ubo di Provenza, King of Italy, donated the adjoining castle to Adelardo, the Bishop of Volterra. The castle was called the "Mount of the Tower" and held the house of the bishop as well a Church dedicated to St. Stephen.

- The first walls were built in 900 as the town continued to grow.
- From the very beginning, San Gimignano was under the direction of the Bishop of Volterra. Volterra is an ancient Etruscan city (6th century BC). King Ugo's donation sanctioned Volterra's presence in San Gimignano's history from that time until it came under Florentine jurisdiction in 1352. Even today there remains in San Gimignano a church under the protection of Volterra's Bishop!
- in 1056, the "Plebane" church (note: called "plebane" because this church housed the baptismal font for all of San Gimagno) was held the local Synod of Florence presided by Pope Vittore II.
- Pope Paschal II in 1104 commanded the populace of San Gimignano to remain faithful under Volterra's jurisdiction.
- In 1107, the Countess Matilde took advantage of the town's devotion to her to confirm Pope Paschal's decree.
- Volterra's importance grew stronger. Noble families were not allowed to exist at San Gimignano! Instead, minor feudatory families developed which gave obedience and taxes to the Bishop.
- San Gimignano began to act autonomously for the first time in 1129 when a small war broke out against a neighboring hill town.
- In 1148, Pope Eugene III was compelled to travel from Rome to Florence for political reasons. He went to San Gimignano and consecrated the new church (current one). The fact that the pope would go to San Gimignano was a statement of this town's growing importance.
- The power of the Volterran episcopacy reached its climax in 1150 with the election of Galgano as bishop. In 1170, Galgano is stabbed in front of the cathedral doors (Volterra) by a member of the Pannocchieschi family with whom he was at odds (The Pannocchieschi family hat attempted to transform the office of bishop into a hereditary one). At this moment, San Gimignano began it's efforts for serious liberation.
- San Gimignano was never really very successful in establishing autonomy.
- However, San Gimignano does become an important center of commerce. In 1200, traders from San Gimignano travelled as far as Syria.
- In 1169 San Gimignano is successful in conquering some neighboring hill towns: Casaglia and Montalto. In 1199 Castle della Pietra was also absorbed. San Gimignano was finally independent.
- The city began with four counsuls who handed administrative matters while the judicial power was retained by the Bishop of Volterra. Over the course of time two administrative boards were developed: a public one of 50 people and a "private" one of a few ruling families.
- They did have a kind of "president" of the republic who was called the "Podesta". The Podesta had body guards and his own immediately family was forbidden to be in the town while he ruled (annual renewal). He also could not accept invitations for lunch or donations from anyone!
- Since 1241, many people from San Gimignano were asked to become Podesta throughout Tuscany. According to statues in 1255 and 1268, there were other charges like those of Town Major, Ambassador, Public Crier, Night Guard, Night Bell Ringer, Day Bell Ringer, etc. They also had tax collectors for the commune.

- As of the 13th century, San Gimignano becomes a regional power along with Siena and Florence. The 13th century was a time of considerable strife in Europe as a whole. The Bishop of Volterra was at odds with his priests and people who were trying to oust him. Hence, his efforts to regain San Gimignano's submission were pointless albeit tenacious. Pope Innocent III had to step in and threaten to move the episcopal see from Volterra because of the level of controversy! This is the time of Francis of Assisi – see how the message of peace found so many welcoming ears!
- At one point the Bishop (Pagano) had to seek San Gimignano's protection from his own people in Volterra (this is very shortly after San Gimignano tried to capture him in a seige of Gambassi's castle where the bishop was hiding. It is said that Bishop Pagano handled swords better than Mass books!
- A great was fought on September 4, 1260 by San Gimignano (with Florence and Siena Guelfs) against the Ghibillines. So much blood was shed that the Arbia river flowed red. Dante records this battle in his famous work "The Divine Comedy."
- Although San Gimignano and the alliance lost the battle, they were still strong enough to defend themselves against being taken over in turn.
- Guelf's were favorable to the Pope's authority while the Ghibilline's were favorable to the Emperors. Even Bishop Pagano got involved in the controversy and in 1243 excommunicated Emperor Frederick II and all persons who, at San Gimignano, were associated with the Ghibillines! The extent of these struggles led to fratricidal fighting within San Gimignano itself. Opposing families fought from their towers on which the fire marks can still be seen.
- It is during the 13th century that San Gimignano reached its building climax and had the tallest and most numerous towers. Some estimates place the number of towers at but this is unverifiable. Some old drawings of San Gimignano have given it the nickname, "The Manhatten of the Middle Ages". Records from 1580 indicate that there were 25 at that time. Today there are only 14. The towers were built for defense and for pride (demonstration) of wealth. Many of the towers were destroyed when the residing families were removed, usually for political reasons. The "Podesta" tower, built in 1200, is 160' tall! Others, however, are even tower – the "Big Tower", built in 1300, rises 170'. In 1255 a decree was issued forbidding the building of any towers higher than the Podesta tower (defensive purposes). Note: many of the "holes" in the side of the tower were there for the construction of bridges to join one tower to the next.
- Of interesting ecclesiastical note: at the end of the 13th century San Gimignano imposed a universal tax on all citizens including clergy. The clergy found it too oppressive and left the town taking with them chalices, missals, vestments, paintings from churches, etc. Literally, there was nothing left. The city was without Mass. In response, the Commune hired a temporary priest for 4 penny's/day to celebrate Mass. This situation lasted for two years until 1292 when a bishop who was from San Gimignano (Scolaio, Archbishop of Tiro and Arborea in Sardinia) was able to bring peace and restore an amicable relationship. A painting recording this event now rests in the Commune palace.
- The year 1300 marks a great event for San Gimignano as Dante Alighieri arrives on May 8th as Ambassador to seek the city's enrollment in the Guelf league. San Gimignano accepts.
- 1329 – San Gimignano finally makes peace with Pisa who had since become a significant playing in Tuscan politics.

- 1348 – the Plague reaches San Gimignano.
- In 1353 - 1530 San Gimignano enters into submissive allegiance with Florence. They remained faithful to this pact and in 1478 when the Pazzi conspiracy killed Giuliano de Medici in S. Maria del Fiore the town sent representatives to express her solidarity wiht the Medici family.
- Niccolo Machiavelli came to San Gimignano in 1507 with the intent of helping to update the city's defenses.
- By the 16th & 17th century San Gimignano begins to stagnate. Gunpowder had rendered walls and towers obsolete – the defensive assets of the hill town. Also, the trade routes had now shifted and merchants were taking other roads to France. Lastly, the plague continued to strike and decimated the population of the area.
- by the year 800 San Gimignano had pretty much fallen off the face of the map. Pius VI re-aligned the diocesan boundaries and removed San Gimignano from Volterra giving it to Colle Val D'Elsa. The Emperor Leopold didn't even consider the town important enough to address. Tourist itineraries from the 1800's don't even list San Gimignano as place to visit!
- Today, it is designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. It is a city that never developed past the middle ages and is probably the foremost preserved medieval site in Europe.

S. Fina and Cathedral Square...

- S. Fina lived between 1238 and 1253.
- This is one of the best preserved Romanesque churches in the world.
- consecrated by Pope Eugene III on November 21, 1148 over a pre-existing building dating to the 9th or 10th centuries. Traces of the original building are visible along the interior walls of the facade.
- During the 15th century the church was renovated. The most substantial renovation took place in 1466 when the presbytery was altered to accommodate a larger choir and the transept was opened with six chapels (3 on each side).
- It was at this time that the chapel with St. Fina's remains was opened and established.
- This building is a phenomenal treasury of art. On the interior wall of the facade is the annunciation in wood statues of 1421 by Jacobo della Quercia. These are the only wooden works of the famous Sienese sculptor! Also on the inside front wall is a depiction of St. Sebastian's martyrdom by Gozzoli in 1465.
- On the pillars are St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. Jerome and St. Bernadine
- Upper Part: Last Judgement by Taddeo di Bartolo (1393) with realistic scenes reaching a grotesque limit.
- Left Wall, entering the church: Episodes of the Old Testament from Genesis to the book of Job by the Sienese artist Bartolo di Fredi in 1367. These have been fully restored. The scenes of Hell are interested because they depict scenes of the various "vices" (seven deadly sins): Idleness (sloth), Avarice, Greed, Adultery, etc.
- Right Wall: Life of Christ by Barna da Siena (1350). Barna died while painting the crucifixion scene when he fell off the scaffolding while stepping back to look at his painting. Vasari tells us: "So strangely he fell down from the platform that he was so crushed inside and so indecently broken that in two days time he passed away from this

life." Bummer. A pupil of Barna ended the work, Giovanni d'Asciano. The crucifixion scene was damaged during World War II in 1944. This is one of the most dramatic paintings in Italy – note the scene of Judas' kiss, of going up to Calvary, etc.

- Near the Crufix: The chapel of St. Fina with a fresco by Domenico Ghirlandaio. This chapel was installed in 1463. The frescoes represent two moments in S. Fina's life: The vision of Gregory the Great to the Saint and the funeral. The vaulted paintings were done by Sebastiano Mainardi, a cousin of Ghirlandaio and a resident of San Gimignano. The chapel was consecrated by Bishop Pistoia Noccolo in 1488. Friar Giovanni del Coppo, the first biographer of the saint, is buried in the chapel. He tells the story of her parents who had a premonition that their child would be a particularly "fine" person!

Commune Palace...

- Begun in 1200 it was completed on Dec. 23, 1288. This is the true and sole place of the Podesta.
- The initial design of the palace was done by Arnolfo di Cambio.
- The museum is reached via two stairways and a platform dating to 1323.
- Dante Hall: Alighieri spoke here on May 8, 1300 with the intent of reviving Guelf ideals.
- Chapel of the Podesta: Dedicated to the Holy Trinity.
- Much art adorns these rooms – the most important of which are two round paintings by Filippino Lippi of the Annunciation.

Cistern Square...

- One of the other great areas of San Gimignano is Piazza della Cisterna. This was once the trade center and banking exchange of the city. The square is so named because of the artistic cistern made in travertine in 1237. The square was also named for the Elm trees that used to dominate the area – note: the elm in Medieval tradition represented *loyalty*.
- The coat of arms on the cistern is from 1346 and represents the Podesta who enlarged it, Guccio Malavolti.
- At the end of the square is the church of St. Lorenzo with marvelous paintings of the "End Times". The gloomy palace, standing beyond Via del Castello, is the "Penitentiary": once it was a Dominical Convent and Girolamo Savonarola lived there!

Other Areas...

- The views of Tuscany and Chianti from San Gimignano are world-famous. It is a mystical town with shops that specialize in pottery, fabrics, art, and regional cuisine. The charm and attraction of this town is the utter authenticity with which you can visit it.
- There is also a museum of torture and the instruments used. This is a difficult experience for many visitors to handle and often times ruins a persons experience due to the terrible acts of inhumanity recorded there. Visitors should be prepared to deal with horrific shock if they so choose to go there.

Florence – City of Art, Politics, History

Great People of Florence..

- Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), father of Italian literature
- Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510), artist
- Donatello (b. 1386)
- Fra Filippo Lippi (b. 1469)
- Masaccio (b. 1401)
- Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) came from Pisa to be in the court of the Medici (Mathematician)
- Leonardo da Vinci
- Michelangelo
- Fashion industry: Gucci, Pucci, Ferragamo all started here.

History...

- 10th century BC – Italic tribes settle at the crossing point of the River Arno which is near the present day Ponte Vecchio.
- 5th century BC – Etruscans settle in the hills to the north. Their colony becomes Fiesole
- 283 BC – Fiesole first defeated by Rome
- 59 BC – Caesar's agrarian law creates the conditions for Florence's establishment.
- 541-4 – Byzantine walls added to the Roman walls as protection against the Ostrogoths. Additional walls are built in the 9th, 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries.
- 1001 AD – Becomes the capital of the Margraves (princes)
- 1115 – Death of the last Margrave, Matilda. Becomes an independent city-state, *Commune*, which is run by a 100 person assembly
- 1235 – Florin first minted in silver and then, in 1252, in gold. It is used as the standard coin in Europe which is evidence of the pre-eminence of Florence in European finance.
- 1250-60 – The *Prima Popolo* regime dominated by the trade guilds
- 1265 – Dante is born
- 1296 – building of the Duomo begins under Arnolfo di Cambio.
- 1302 – Dante is exiled by Charles of Valois
- 1340's – Economic crisis due in part to the bankruptcy of the Peruzzi and Bardi by Edward III of England and partly due to the Black Plague during which the population is halved.
- 1378 – Uprising of the *ciompi* (wood carvers). High point of labor unrest
- 1406 – Florence captures Pisa and gains direct access to the sea.
- 1458 – Cosimo de' Medici is recognized as ruler of Florence
- Early 15th century to 1743 – dominance of the Medici banking dynasty
- 1469-92 – Rule of Lorenzo the Magnificent; artistic high point.

- 1469 – Birth of Machiavelli
- 1475 – Birth of Michelangelo
- 1478 – Pazzi conspirators scheme to have Giuliano and Lorenzo de' Medici murdered in the cathedral. Giuliano is killed but Lorenzo escapes by hiding in the sacristy.
- 1494 – Surrender of Florence to Charles VIII of France at Sarzana.
- 1498 – Savonarola is burned at the stake after four years of rule.
- 1502 – Republic of Florence retakes Pisa
- 1570 – Cosimo I creates Tuscan state free from Pope and the Holy Roman Empire
- 1616 – Church condemns Galileo Galilei as a heretic; he takes refuge with the Medici.
- 1743 – Death of Anna Maria Luisa, last of the Medici. Florence is then ruled by the House of Lorraine under Francis Stephen.
- 1799-1814 – Tuscany is occupied by Napoleon's troops.
- 1865-70 – Florence breifly serves as the capital of the Italian state. King Vittorio Emanuele is installed in the Pitti Palace.
- 1944 – On August 4, Germans blow up all the bridges in Florence except the Ponte Vecchio
- 1966 – River Arno floods Florence.
- 1993 – Bombing of the Uffizi Gallery by the Italian Maffia
- 1996 – G7 meeting held in Florence

Duomo...

- Santa Maria del Fiore.
- 3rd largest in the world
- designed in 1296 by Arnolfo di Cambio in the Tuscan Gothic style
- Giotto continued work after the death of di Cambio. Note: Giotto increased the size of the building!
- Between 1420 and 1434, Filippo Brunellschi, who won a special competition held in 1418, undertook work on the building of the Cupola. The dome is egg-shaped and was made without scaffolding! Its herringbone brickwork was copied from the Pantheon in Rome.
- You can see the dome in great detail by climbing the 463 steps to the top (entrance on the left hand side of Duomo). As you pass through the interior, you can see Vasari's much-reviled frescoes of the Last Judgment (1572-9).
- In 1436, the building of the cathedral was practically complete and the Church was consecrated by Pope Eugene IV. The lantern was added to the cupola in 1461.
- The facade is most recent being built in 1887.
- The interior of the Basilica used to house some works by Michelangelo such as his Pieta which is now in the Duomo museum behind the cathedral. This pieta was probably constructed for Michelangelo's own tomb.
- A famous fresco by Domenico di Michelino depicts Dante enlightening Florence with the Divine Comedy. Note that the fresco contains representations of heaven, hell, and purgatory.

- Also, note the clock above the entrance on the west wall inside was designed in 1443 by Paolo Uccello in accordance with the *ora italica*, according to which the 24th hour of the day ends at sunset.
- The crypt of the Duomo contains some ancient relics of the 7th century *Basilica di Santa Reparata* upon whose foundations the current structure rests

The Bell Tower...

- Giotto's *Campanile* (bell tower) – 279 feet tall (19 feet lower than the Duomo). It is considered one of the most beautiful bell towers in the world. The work was conceived and begun by Giotto in 1334. On his death (1337) the work was continued by Andrea Pisano (2nd floor) and subsequently by Francesco Talent (all upper floors)i who followed Giotto's design. Notice the mullioned windows. The lower band of the Campanile has a series of panels carved by great artists such as Andrea Pisano and Luca della Robbia – these depict the story of the progressive civilizing of man. The tower was completed in 1359. The two sets of bas relief sculptures (lower tier in hexagonal panels, the upper tier in diamonds) are really copies; the originals are in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo. The hexagonal panels were executed by Pisano (but probably designed by Giotto); they depict the Creation of Man, the Arts and the Industries (including weaving, hunting, and navigation). On the north face, the five Liberal Arts (grammar, philosophy, music, arithmetic, and astrology) were executed by Luca della Robbia. The upper tier of reliefs is also the work of Pisano and they illustrate the Seven Planets, the Seven Virtues and the Liberal Arts; while the Seven Sacraments have been attributed to Alberto Arnoldi.

Baptistry...

- *The Basilica of St. John the Baptist*. This is the original ancient cathedral of Florence before Santa Maria del Fiore was built! The building dates from as early as the 5th-7th century.
- Note the famous octagonal shape – same as the Baptistry at the Lateran.
- Three gilt bronze doors correspond to the cardinal points (East, North, and South).
- Dante often referred to this building with affection calling it, "Il mio bel San Giovanni".
- Dante himself was baptized in this space.
- It became the Baptistry of Florence in 1128.
- Mosaics in the Cupola are from the 14th century (Byzantine). The large figure of Christ the Universal Judge is attributed to Cimabue. The representations in the center are of the generations of the Angels. Other representations include: Life of Christ, the Baptist, St. Joseph, Genesis, the Celestial Hierarchs, Last Judgement.
- Note that there is a "women's gallery" here as well.
- The floor is completely covered in mosaic.
- The location of the former baptistry can still be seen in the center of the floor; it was removed in 1576.
- Along the walls of the Baptistry are some remarkable works of art including Donatello's celebrated Mary Magdalene, the same artist's St. John the Baptist, and the Tomb of the Anti-pope John XXII.
- The Doors: East Door was called *The Gate of Paradise* by Michelangelo who admired it compared to the other two. It is the masterpiece of Lorenzo Ghiberti who worked on it for

27 years from 1425-1452. The gate has 10 panels in gilt bronze showing stories from the Old Testament. (Stories are: 1. Creations of Adam and Eve; original sin, 2. Cain and Abel, 3. Noah, 4. Abraham, 5. Jacob and Esau, 6. Joseph, 7. Moses, 8. Joshua, 9. Saul and David, 10. Meeting of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.). The originals are in the Museo del Duomo.

- The south doors are by Pisano.

Museo dell'Opera del Duomo...

- This workshop was founded when the Duomo was built to maintain the art of the cathedral.
- In the courtyard of this complex, Michelangelo sculpted his David!
- Since 1891 it has housed works removed from the Cathedral for preservation.
- Note: One reason the Cathedral seems to empty today is because of the vast works that have been relocated to this museum.
- Of very special note is Michelangelo's Pieta (c. 1550 and built for his own tomb) – the figure of Nicodemus is actually a self-portrait of Michelangelo! The damage to Christ's left leg is believed to have been inflicted by Michelangelo in frustration to his failing skills.
- Also, you can find the construction materials for and instruments used for Brunelleschi's dome (pulleys, buckets, and brick molds).
- Other works include Luca della Robbia, Donatello, Pisano, Ghiberti, etc.

Loggia del Bigallo...

- In front of the southern doors of the Baptistry, it was built by Alberto Arnoldi between 1352-1358 for the *Campagnia della Misericordia*, who would display the abandoned babies for adoption in this area.

Loggia dei Priori or Loggia Signoria...

- Built in 1376-1382. The loggia was used for public meetings and ceremonies. Famous works here include *The Rape of the Sabine Women* by Giambologna in 1583, *Perseus* by Benvenuto Cellini in 1533, and others.

Piazza della Signoria...

- This was, and still is today, the political center of Florence since the 14th century.
- It was the site of the triumphal return of the Medici's in 1530 and also of the Bonfire of the Vanities instigated by Savonarola, who was himself burned at the stake here in 1498.
- Michelangelo's David was originally placed outside the palace as a statement of the Republic to the Medici's (the Republic is the "David" and the Medici's are the "Goliath"!).
- Ammannati's *Neptune* (1575) celebrates the Medici's maritime ambitions
- Giambologna's equestrian statue of Duke Cosimo I (1595) is an elegant portrait of the man who brought all of Tuscany under Medici rule.
- The statue of *Perseus holding Medusa's Head* is a stark reminder of what happens to those who crossed the Medicis!

- Of historical note: the site of the Piazza della Signoria was a Roman Amphitheater in the 3rd century AD and it was here that the Christian Martyr San Miniato (St. Minias) was executed by the order of the emperor Decius. It is said that his decapitated body picked up his head and walked into the hills. The Church of San Miniato al Monte was built where the Martyr is said to have collapsed!

Palazzo della Signoria... (Palazzo Vecchio)

- The Palazzo Signora, or Palazzo Vecchio, which rises majestically with a tower of some 300 feet. There is also a "Judith and Olofernee" by Donatello.
- The Palazzo Vecchio was built between 1298 and 1314. The design is attributed to Arnolo di Cambio. It has always served as Florence's "Town Hall".
- Interior of the Palazzo: Note the famous Putti with a fish – a fine work of Andrea del Verrocchio (1476). It was recently been replaced by a copy. Michelangelo's David was actually intended for this interior courtyard space.
- The rooms contain a treasure trove of art; the Salone dei Cinquecento, built in 1495, is one of the largest public halls in existence and contains a series of sculptures. This room was originally the place with the 500 strong assembly gathered to rule during the Florentine Republic.
- Vasari painted the military scenes of Florence's victory over Siena and Pisa (1563-5).
- The room is further enhanced by Michelangelo's *Victory* (1533-4) as well as sculptures of the *Labors of Hercules* by Vincenzo dei Rossi.
- The ceiling is painted with the *Apotheosis of Cosimo I* (also by Vasari) – get the point of this room?????
- It took on the name *Palazzo Vecchio* (old palace) when the Medici's moved their residence to the Pitti.
- During a very brief time (1865-71) it housed the Italian Parliament and Foreign Ministry.

Palazzo degli Uffizi...

- Designed by Vasari in 1560 and completed in 1580, this masterpiece consists of two wings enclosing a view over the Arno river in the background; it was originally built to be the administrative offices (*uffizi*) of the Grand Duchy. A corridor from inside the palace joins it to the Palazzo Pitti by way of the whole length of the Ponte Vecchio. The building houses the world famous collection of art of the Uffizi.
- Note: Most of the collection of the Uffizi was a gift from the last surviving Medici family member in 1743.
- Important works to see include the following:
- Botticelli: Birth of Venus, Spring (1476-78)
- Michelangelo: The Holy Family (1475-1564). This is the first of Michelangelo's paintings to come down to us.
- Filippo Lippi: Madonna and Child (1406-1469)
- Note the technological advances of Uccello's *Battle of San Romano* (1456) which demonstrates some of the first linear perspective techniques of the renaissance.
- In 1993 the Italian Maffia detonated a bomb outside the Uffizi causing substantial damage to the facing of the building and several works of art. The building was re-openned in 1998.

- The collection of art is displayed in chronological order to help the visitor gain a sense of the development of style. The collection ends with displays by Caravaggio, Rembrandt, and Canaletto from the 17th and 18th centuries.
- One of the more interesting rooms in the complex is the *Tribune* – an octagonal chamber with a mother-of-pearl ceiling containing favorite Medici pieces. In the center is the Medici *Venus* (a copy of Praxiteles' Aphrodite of Cnidos, c. 350 BC). This sculpture was called the "sexiest" sculpture of the ancient world.

Palazzo Pitti...

- In rivalry with the richest families of the city, Luca Pitti commissioned from Filippo Brunelleschi in 1440 the grandest, most monumental of all the palaces in Florence. The palace later passed into the possession of the Medici then to House of Lorraine and finally to the Royal Family of Savoy. It is famous both for the art treasures contained within and the Boboli Gardens outside. Vasari created a huge passageway which connected the Palazzo della Signoria to the Pitti Palace and extended across the top of the Ponte Vecchio. Significant works include:
- Raphael: Madonna of the Grand Duke, Madonna of the Chair (1515)
- Rubens: The Consequences of War
- Various other artists including Ghirlandaio, del Sarto and Titian, Van Dyke, etc.
- This collection is really rather haphazardly displayed – the Medici's had so many masterpieces that they were literally overlapping with one another!
- The real value of this palace is the opportunity to see how people actually lived; it is very much a "home" and not just a museum.
- The Boboli Gardens contain a famous statue called the "Bacchino" (Little Bacchus) which is a portrait of Pietro Barbino who the court jester for Cosimo I. The jester, and this statue, became the symbol of the carefree Florence of the people.
- The Boboli gardens were created in 1550 for the Medici family when they took over the palace. Note: The Pitti was originally built by the Pitti banking family specifically to outdo the Medici palace! The Medici's purchased the palace from the Pitti's when the Pitti's fell into financial ruin – what irony. The gardens were open to the public in 1766 and in 1992 an unpopular entrance fee was charged.
- At the back of the gardens is the "amphitheatre" built where the stone for the Palazzo Pitti was quarried. ***This is the site of the first-ever opera performance!***

Capella Brancacci...

- Close to the Pitti and on the same side of the river is the famous Cappella Brancacci.
- Masaccio's frescoes have the power and expression that actually inspired the brilliance of Florentine painters of the 15th century.
- The chapel is a tiny space reached via the cloisters of the otherwise dull Santa Maria del Carmine.
- Two layers of frescoes, commissioned in 1424 by Filice Brancacci, a wealthy Florentine merchant and statesman, illustrate the life of St. Peter (orange gown). The frescoes were begun by Masoline but his pupil, Masaccio, took them over in 1428 and Masaccio died

that same year. He was 27 years old. The frescoes were completed by Filippino Lippi in the 1480's.

Ponte Vecchio...

- not only is it the oldest bridge of the city but also one of the most famous bridges in the world. It already existed in the 10th century but was destroyed by an Arno flood in 1333. Until 1218 it was the only bridge across the Arno.
- Initially the bridge was home to merchants of all sorts: butchers, fishmongers, and later tanners (whose industrial waste caused a terrible stench). In 1593, Medici Duke Ferdinand I decreed that it was reserved exclusively for the goldsmiths. Those who set up shops here built their houses at the back of them. There is a bust of the 16th century goldsmith, Cellini (1900).
- Note the 2nd story row – that is Vasari's tunnel which connected the Pitti to the Uffizi and was called the *Corridorio Vasariano*. The tunnel was built in 1565.
- Note: Although the Germans did not destroy this bridge during World War II (the only one they didn't destroy), they did prevent access to it by demolishing the medieval buildings on either side.
- The bridge miraculously withstood the flood of 1966 and the tremendous weight of water and silt when the Arno burst its banks.

Loggia del Mercato Nuovo...

- The bronze boar, known as the "***Porcellino***" (little pig) was made by Pietro Tacca in 1612. The Loggia is a typical example of renaissance architecture. Designed by Giovanni del Tasso who built it between 1547 and 1551. Characteristic wares of Florentine artisans are now sold there. In the pavement, a round slab marks the spot where in the 16th century merchants guilty of fraudulent bankruptcy were exposed to public scorn. This area is commonly called the "Straw Market".

Church of Santa Croce...

- Attributed to Arnolfo di Cambio, it is perhaps the most beautiful gothic church in Italy.
- Built in 1294 for the Franciscans.
- The church contains the tombs of ***Michelangelo*** and an (empty) tomb of ***Dante*** who is actually buried in Ravenna.
- Other great artists buried here include: Rossini, Machiavelli, Galileo Galilei (excommunicated during the Inquisition and not allowed a Christian burial until 1737 – 95 years after his death).
- Cimabue painted his famous "blue" crucifix here
- When the facade was added in 1854-1863 the Franciscan Prior wished to have the Star of David added to the pinnacle of the building. Permission was granted but only if the "Name of Jesus" (IHS) was placed in the center of it.
- The "Cappella Maggiore" (center, apse) is a magnificent example of gothic effect with the use of light. The frescoes tell the story of the Holy Cross.
- The Pazzi Chapel was built by Brunelleschi in 1436-1446 in a simple, clear renaissance style.

- Giotto painted his famous *Coronation of the Virgin* for this church. Giotto's frescoes also adorn several chapels (Peruzzi and Bardi) demonstrating the artist's later works. Note the dramatic development of his skill and style from his first work which was at the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi.
- An unusual relief *Annunciation* in gilded limestone by Donatello decorates the south nave's wall.
- Of interest to American's is the memorial to 19th century playwright Giovanni Battista Nicolini, left of the entrance facing the altar, which is said to have inspired the *Statue of Liberty*.
- Santa Croce was severely hit by flooding in 1966 and a tide mark shows how far up the pillars the water came.

Piazzalle Michelangelo...

- Located across the river and up a hill, this site contains the world-famous view of the city. In the center of the piazza stands a monument to Michelangelo with a reproduction of the David. The four statues surrounding the David are reproductions of statues made for the tomb of Giuliano and Lorenzo de'Medici: Night, Day, Dawn, and Dusk.
- Note the church of San Miniato al Monte next to the piazza. It is from the 11th century and contains a beautiful apse mosaic as well as the saint's tomb. The Bishop of Florence's summer residence is to the right of the basilica. Of interesting note is the tower to the left – it is the tower on which Michelangelo placed the cannons for the defence of Florence during the siege by the Imperial troops (Charles V).

San Lorenzo...

- This church dates back to 393 and was twice rebuilt in later periods (in the 11th century and then by Brunelleschi in the 15th century – 1419). The existing building was completed in 1460 by Manetti but the facade (entrusted to Michelangelo) remained unfinished.
- At the back of the Cupola is the Chapel of the Princes, built at the order of the Medici Grand Dukes.
- Note the very odd statue of Anna Maria Luisa (d. 1743), last of the Medici dynasty, which is located outside the back of the church.
- It is the parish church of the Medici's.
- Of interesting note are the bronze pulpits that depict the Resurrection and scenes from the life of Christ. These are Donatello's last work (c. 1460).
- Savonarola preached his hellfire-brimstone sermons from these pulpits.

The Medici Chapel...

- Contained within the church of San Lorenzo. The chapel was largely constructed by Michelangelo and contains the tombs of the Medicis. Note the figures of Dawn and Dusk on the tomb of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino.
- The tomb of Giuliano, Duke of Nemours, is decorated with the figures of Day and Night. Note that the figure of "Night" is in a slightly unfinished state which suggests the mystery of death.
- In addition to the these figures, Michelangelo also sculpted a Madonna and Child.

- In a room to the left of the altar are the charcoal drawings found in 1975 and attributed to Michelangelo.
- The Medici were a family of bankers and Florence's royal family in all but name from the 14th - 18th centuries. The greatest Medici was Cosimo il Vecchio (1389-1464), a military leader, politician, and patron of the arts. His son, Lorenzo il Magnifico (1449-1492) was another great patron of the arts and humanist thought, although he lacked his father's economic acumen. After Florence's flirtation with republicanism (cf. Savonarola) and the period with the Medici Popes, Leo X and Clement VII, ruled Florence from Rome, the Medici returned to power in Florence in 1537 under Cosimo I, who became the Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1570. By this time the dynasty was in decline, the rulers becoming increasingly decadent, while Austria and Spain were the powers of real importance. Gian Gastone, the last male Medici, died in 1743 without heir; his sister, Anna Maria Luisa, bequeathed the entire Medici fortune to Florence in perpetuity – becoming the basis of the Uffizi Gallery collection.
- Note that there are three distinct parts to the Mausoleum: the crypt, the Cappella dei Principi, and the Sagrestia Nuova. The Cappella dei Principi contains six Medici Grand Dukes are buried. Michelangelo's art is in the Sagrestia Nuova (new sacristy).

Santa Maria Novella...

- This church is one of the first examples of Tuscan Gothic: a church decorated with 2 colors of marble.
- Ghirlandaio decorated the apse with an interesting cycle of frescoes.
- It is called "Novella" because it was restored. It was begun by two monks who were architects (Sisto and Ristoro) between 1279 and 1357. However, the structure was finished by Giacomo Talenti (who also completed the bell tower in the Romanesque-Gothic style in 1330). The interesting thing about the facade is that it reflects the change in style (lower part is Romanesque). Leon Battista Alberti is responsible for the upper portion of the facade for which he invented the use of the two original volutes.
- The church contains a wonderful work by Ghirlandaio entitled, "he Birth of Mary".
- Also, the Tornabuoni Chapel contains Ghirlandaio's fresco entitled *The life of St. John the Baptist* which is painted with figures in contemporary costume (1485).
- One of the most famous frescos in the church is that of the *Trinity* by Masaccio in 1428. It is this painting that marked the beginning of the Renaissance. The renaissance style is denoted by the mathematical mastery of "perspective" which gives depth and proportion to paintings.
- Note that Dante himself is represented in the *Last Judgement* located behind the altar in the Strozzi Chapel (in the left transcept).
- Lastly, the church was staffed by the Dominican's. Note the Cappellone degli Spagnoli and the painting of the *Triumph of Doctrine (1365).* This chapel was used by Eleanor of Toledo, the wife of Cosimo I. In this fresco, there is a wonderful play by Andrea da Firenze showing the "dogs of God" (*domini canes)* rounding the lost sheep into the fold. (This is a play on the word "Dominican" to mean *Domini Canes* – The Dominicans were in charge of the Inquisition.)

Church of San Marco...

- San Marco was founded in the 13th century by Silvestrine monks.
- in 1437, Cosimo il Vecchio invited the Dominican monks of Fiesole to move into the convent and had it rebuilt by Michelozzo – a gesture motivated by his guilt for having made so much money from banking (which was not theologically correct) and also the fact that the Dominicans were useful allies. Eventually one of the Dominicans, Savonarola, would "bite the hand that feeds him" and turn on the Medicis!
- This is the church of the Dominical Convent (Monastery) of which Savonarola was prior!
- The interior monastic cells have now become the Museum of San Marco and contain the famous frescoes of Fra Angelico (1387-1455) including *The Annunciation.*
- Savonarola was a fire&brimstone preacher who sought to put the fear of God into the pleasure-loving Florentines. Girolamo Savonarola was a Dominican Friar and prior of San Marco. He rebelled against the Medici and founded the Florentine Republic at the end of the 15th century. Convinced that Florence was the "New Jerusalem", he fulminated about standards of public morality, closing many taverns, prohibiting gambling and mobilizing the young in religious processions. Savonarola was excommunicated and then burned at the stake on May 23, 1498 in Piazza della Signoria. The Republic staggered on until 1530 when it collapsed under siege from the Medici.
- Monastery also contains the rooms occupied by Savonarola and even the rooms periodically used by Cosimo il Vecchio who would spent time there.
- The library was on the 2nd floor of the monastery. Built in 1441, it was the first public library in Europe!

The Academia...

- The *Academy* was founded in 1748 to teach techniques of painting, drawing, and sculpture. Since 1873 it has housed the world's single most important collection and sculptures by Michelangelo.
- This is the museum which houses the famous ***David*** of Michelangelo. The figure is 14' tall and was sculpted in 1504 from a single block of marble that had been begun and then abandoned by another artist. A contest was held to see what artist could come up with the best idea for a sculpture for the block. Michelangelo won. It was exhibited outside the Palazzo Vecchio until 1873 when it was moved here to protect it from environmental damage.
- The *Prisoners*, as they are known, are a series of sculptures from 1505 made for the tomb of Julius II. The title refers to Michelangelo's belief that when he sculpted a statue, he was freeing the figure from the marble, and the style, particularly favored by Michelangelo, was called the *non-finito* (unfinished). After his death, the *Prisoners* were moved to the Grotta Grande in the Boboli Gardens. The originals were replaced with casts in 1908.

Fiesole...

- A community now located just outside of Florence. It is the original settlement in the area. Fiesole was an important Etruscan city that became a Roman colony in 80 BC. One of the best preserved ancient monuments is the ampitheatre from this period.
- Leading up to the David are several other uncompleted works of Michelangelo that were to have been statues for the tomb of Julius II. Note that these figures are not
- Other works include a masterpiece by Fra Angelico of the Final Judgement.

Ravenna – The Last Western Capital of Imperial Rome
City of Byzantine Faith

History:

Ravenna most likely developed as an early Etruscan camp on the Adriatic Sea in the region of the Po Delta where small islands form and "pile dwellings" (palafittes) were first established. The area was constantly subject to tidal movements.

Ravenna was situated on a mass of land protected by the sea to the east and a series of swamps to the west. These natural defenses made it difficult to attack while at the same time making it an ideal setting for commerce.

The actual date of establishment for a real city is 45 BC with Augustus. He stationed a fleet of 250 ships there help defend the Adriatic and sea routes to the Near East. For this fleet, the Harbor of "Class" was built about 3 miles from Ravenna (south east). The Romans actually excavated a basin for this harbor out of the sand dunes.

Ravenna really reached its apex after 4-4 when Honorius moved the capital of the Western Roman Empire from Milan to Ravenna. This designation meant that the local bishop moved from Class to Ravenna at the same time (spurning the building of the first cathedral there in the early 5th century). These are also the years when Christianity was spreading rapidly through the empire and resulting in massive building projects for the "new" religion. Because of these developments, Ravenna quickly assumed a role of importance in Christianity second only to Rome. This pre-eminence over all other Italian cities would continue for six centuries!

These were turbulent times as the Visgoths migrated into the area and power struggles were common in the imperial court. Finally, Valentinian III, son of Galla Placidia, succeeded to the imperial throne. Following the accession, Ravenna enjoyed a prolonged period of relative peace and build massive monuments of secular and religious significance. These include the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist, the Neonian Baptistry, and the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia.

After the death of Galla Placidia, the Western Roman Empire ceased to exist with the defeat in 476 of Romulus Augustulus by Odoacer in the Battle of the Pine Woods at Classe. Odacer was himself deposed in 493 by Theoderic the Great, who made Ravenna the capital of his kingdom and of Byzantine dominion in Italy. The "King of the Goths" proved to be a good sovereign!

Theoderic also generated building projects including new structures and land-reclamation efforts. Note that Theoderic was an Arian and decreed that Arianism was the religion of his empire! The Chapel of the Archbishop, Mausoleum of Theoderic, Sant' Appolinare Nuovo, the Arian Baptistry, and the Church of the Holy Spirit are a few of these efforts. He also restored Trajan's aqueduct.

After the death of Theodoric the Great, Justinian, who became Emperor of the East in 518, decided to undertake the reconquest of Italy. He charged Belisarius with the conduct of his "Gothic War" in 535. Ravenna was conquered in 540. The Byzantine epoch would have long-lasting effects. The mosiacs of San Vitale, Sant'Apollinare in Classe and most of those in Sant'Apollinare Nuovo are from this epoch.

In 751 the Longobard king Aistulf seized the Exarchate of Ravenna after many struggles with the Byzantines. This terminated the Byzantine rule in central Italy. At the end of the 8th century, Ravenna came under the Roman Papacy following the defeat of the Longobards by Pepin, King of the Franks.

The 12th century saw the rise of the "Communes" in Italy and Ravenna led the way although it never acquired much state property. The cities leading families gave into extensive infighting. Famous among the families is that of Guido Novello who have hospitality to Dante Alighieri who had been exiled by Florence. Dante died in Ravenna on September 13, 1321.

Papal domination of Ravenna generated more building projects. In 1739 the Ronco and Montone rivers were joined and channeled into a single course along with a new harbor. Today the region is a marvelous countryside of agriculture and forests. However, it is also home to several industries including chemical processing plants that threaten its natural and cultural heritage.

What to see in the city....

Piazza del Popolo

- 2 columns in 1483 during Venetian rule with St. Vitale (soldier) and St. Apollinare (bishop)– patrons of Ravenna.
- Palazzo Comunale in 1681; battlements added in 1857.
- Palazzo Veneziano in 1461 with six granite columns crowned with capitals bearing the monogram of Theoderic the Great.
- Clock tower is from 1483.

Mausoleum of Galla Placidia

- built in mid 5th century after her return from Constantinople
- Latin Cross floor plan
- Mosiac scenes include: Good Shepherd (note gold tunic) with palm branches, stars on blue background in ceiling, St. Lawrence with grill, cross, gospels, brazier, and white robe; 12 apostles, symbols of the Evangelists, famous "birds", Deer drinking from "running streams".
- Sarcophaghi of Constantius III (Galla Placidia's husband) and Valentinian III (son of Galla Placidia) are in the chapel along with Galla Placidia's own.

Basilica of San Vitale

- Extraordinary monument of Byzantine architecture
- Begun during Gothic dominion in 526 under Bishop Ecclesio and completed under Bishop Maximian on May 17, 548 (Byzantine rule).
- Octagonal floor plan with eight pillars and arches.
- upper galleries were for women
- Mosiacs in Presbytery are phenomenal! Note the Mystical Lamb in center of vaulted ceiling with wreath of fruit surrounding him. Also, Peacocks and dolphins (symbols of resurrection and salvation) are present.
- Scenes from Abraham, the evangelists, Abel, Melchisedec, Moses, etc.
- Note: 8 rays emanating from the "A" (Alpha) held by angels.
- See central Christ: two angels surrounded by Ecclesio who offers the basilica to Christ and San Vitale to whom Christ offers the Martyr's crown!
- Panel of Justinian: carrying liturgical vessels and vestments. Halo is symbol of divine origin of his office. Followed by civil authorities, royal guards and ecclesiastical dignitaries including Bishop Maximian. See symbolism of imperial religious policy! Maximiam holds a large cross and pallium with deacons bearing the Gospels and thurible.
- Panel of Theodora: Actress of the pantomime and famed prostitute before she married Justinian! Does the "spouting water" signify the cleansing power of Baptism (and

conversion, we hope?!)? Note the hem of her dress depicting the Magi bearing their gifts. Theodora also appears with halo symbolizing divine origin of her power. The scalloped niche under which she stands is a Christian symbol of immortality.

National Museum

- Formerly a monastery built at the entrance of San Vitale.
- Excellent Sarcophaghi including the visitation of the Magi and the raising of Lazarus,

Tomb of Dante

- Dante was a Florentine diplomat who travelled extensively in the region of Tuscany (Siena, Florence, San Gimignano, Pisa, etc.).
- He was the first to write in "Italian" as a new language. His "Divine Comedy" still stands as one of the classic texts of humanity
- Dante was a deeply religious man whose daughter became a nun (in Ravenna).
- Dante loved St. Francis of Assisi and made several personal visits to Assisi to visit this "holy" place.
- Dante was exiled by Florence and spent his last days in Ravenna living at the Franciscan monastery in the way of a simple monk (unprofessed). He died at that monastery in 1321 and was buried in a sarcophagus near the church
- In 1483 Pietro Lombardo was commissioned to honor the poet with a bas-relief depicting Dante composing a letter.
- In the 16th century, the Pope, from a Florentine family, ordered Ravenna to surrender the body of Dante and return it to Florence – his "rightful home." Ravenna refused. The Franciscans secretly exhumed the body and buried it in an unmarked spot nearby. No one knows where Dante is actually buried!
- The existing monument was erected in 1780 and preserved the 1483 bas-relief of Pietro Lombardo.
- Of an interesting note: Florence has done "penance" ever since rejecting this great author. Each year they send the olive oil that now burns in the votive candle as part of his funerary monument.

Museum and Chapel of the Archbishop

- Small area with a few but very significant holdings including an Easter Liturgical Calendar in marble for the years 532-626.
- An ivory Cathedra with bas-relief depictions.
- Magnificent chapel with a "Warrior" Christ conquering all "evil" (snake) and "powers" (lion). Mosiacs cover the ceiling and walls. Note the youthful Christ in the center medallion with apostles on each side.
- The vault contains 4 angels holding a roman shield with the letters "I" and "X" on it – these are the abbreviations for the title "Jesus Christ" in Greek. Symbols of the Evangelists are with the angels.

Neonian (Orthodox) Baptistry

- Built by Bishop Orso and named after Bishop Neone at the end of the 5th century.

- the oldest of Ravenna's historical monuments!
- the cupola mosaic is divided into three parts: Baptism, the Church, and its Sovereignty.
- Note octagonal design similar to the Lateran Baptistry.

The Duomo

- Current structure replaces the 5th century one built by Bishop Orso after Honorius moved the capital to Ravenna from Milan and the bishop moved from Class to Ravenna.
- Current structure built in 1734. Four of the magnificent columns of the original structure are preserved in the entrance portico.
- Bell tower is 10th century and represents a significant stylistic contrast to the current structure.
- The 6th century pulpit is also to be found in the new structure.

Arian Baptistry

- built at the end of the 5th century by order of Theoderic the Great who decreed the Arian heresy to be the official religion of his kingdom.
- Transormed into the Church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin in the mid 6th century when Justinian expropriated the Arian buildings and gave them to the Roman Catholics.
- Note the throne with the jeweled cross!
- Peter holds the keys (with a cloth) and Paul holds the "tomes" (letters he wrote)

Basilica of St. John the Evangelist

- Oldest of the Basilicas, it was ordered in 426 by Gala Placidia to fulfill a vow she made for safety during a sea voyage for her and her family during a return trip from Constantinople.
- 14th Century gothic portals depict scenes telling the story of the building's construction including the figures of John the Evangelist, Christ, Galla Placidia, her son Valentinian III, and St. Barbatian of Antioch.
- The bell tower is 10th century and contains two famous bells named Marzia and Dolorosa which were cast by the famous Roberto Sassone in 1208.
- The interior contains some interesting mosaics depicting the 4th Crusade and the taking of Constantinople. Note: this crusade was excommunicated by the pope in the 15th century after it sacked and pillaged a city in Greece.

Basilica of Sant'Apolinare Nuovo

- Built sometime before 526 by Theoderic the Great for the Arians.
- Dedicated to the Roman Catholic Church in 561 after the fall fo the Goths. Re-consecrated by Bishop Agnello and called St. Martin in Cielo d'Oro.
- In the mid 9th century, the church was renamed Sant'Apolinare after the saint's relics were moved there from Classe.
- The nave is lined in mosaics. Those of the apse and triumphal arch have been lost to history.
- Famous among the mosaics are the two sides depicting the procession of "white robed martyrs" carrying their crowns to Mary (female saints) and Christ (male saints).

- The upper level mosaics depict scenes from the life of the Christ. Notably absent are the scenes of the crucifixion and death! This is because the Arians used these scenes as proofs of their heresy. The Catholics would not allow those scenes to remain in the church because they gave fuel to the Arians during a particularly difficult time in history.
- At the back of the church are two panels on opposite sides depicting the city of Classe with its port and famous two towers and the Palace of Theoderic. Notable in the palace scene are all the "open spaces" between the pillars where curtains now hang. Theoderic's portrait was once in the center and his main officials (bishops?) Surrounded him. However, these people were the "leaders" of the Arians and so their depictions were removed by the Catholics and curtains placed there instead. You can still see a trace of the original figures because of hands that extend into the columns!

Mausoleum of Theoderic the Great

- Although rather infamous in many respects, it is a monument to behold.
- Ordered by the Gothic king in 520, it was constructed with no mortar. Instead, iron rods were inserted to lock the marble in place – a technique used for the Acropolis in Athens.
- It is capped by a single piece of stone one meter thick and 33 meters in circumference weighing nearly 600,000 pounds.

Basilica of Sant'Apollinare in Classe

- Consecrated on May 9, 549 by Bishop Maximian who dedicated it to the first bishop of Classe, Apollinare.
- Bell tower is from the 10th century. Note the number of windows increase with height – this was an engineering necessity to lessen the building weight on lower floors.
- Christ is in the center surrounded by the four evangelists. Note the 12 sheep who are processing to him from two "cities" – Bethlehem and Jerusalem.
- Apse: Mosaic of the Paradise scene with St. Apoillinaris in the center standing in the "orans" position of prayer with a palium. Note that in the center of the jeweled cross there is a small mosaic of Christ. Also, the Greek word "IXTHUS" is above the cross and "Salus Mundi" is beneath it.
- Bishop Ursicino of Ravenna is depicted with some old testament scenes.
- A scene of the imperial court exists with Flavius Constantine IV, the Emperor of the East.
- Sarcophaghi include those of St. Theodore (5th century) and another two (one 5th and one 8th century).
- There is also a 9th century "Ciborium of St. Eleucadio" where the Eucharist was reserved in a "tent-like" structure (rods of iron held curtains that would conceal the Presence.

Venice

General Background Information...

- 1500 years of history – defying time and tide.
- built on tiny muddy islands. Monument to mankinds will to survive in struggle against raw forces of nature
- The city has changed little in 800 years!
- One of the world's first democracies!
- First Venetians ran to islands to avoid violent and bloody death on mainland. During 5th century, Italy was a dangerous place. Attila the Hun swept through the area. Residents of NE Italy suffered the most. Thousands fled to the only refuge available: a lagoon on the Adriatic sea.
- With the end of the ice aga, this land was inundated and became small islands.
- Never popular. No fresh water. No land for crops. Some fisherman lived here.
- Invaders couldn't be bothered with chasing them to the islands. The people originally went back to the mainland after each raid.
- Terrible place to build on – no building materials. No "foundation"
- Raids became more frequent. The Lombards (Germanic tribe) decided to stay and colonize the mainland. Many mainlanders became Venetians.
- Built wooden huts that wooden sink into the mud.
- Built a community. Letter from 523: *You live like sea birds with you homes dispersed across the surface of the water. Your boats are tied like horses to the doors of your dwellings, opposed to the wildness of the sea*.
- How survive with no crops and no fresh water? TRADE! The waters provided the key to riches. Can't drink the water but can evaporate it and produce salt! With no refrigeration, salt became one of the most powerful substances on earth, "edible gold".
- 600 AD – life remained grim under the Lombards. More and more people moved to the lagoons. Bishops wanted to build churches there but how do you build stone buildings on the islands? Pound logs into the earth until you form a foundation!
- Sponge sediment: must create a foundation. Drove thousands into the deep sediment until they found more solid ground. Metal poles rusted but wood would last indefinitely! They petrify and become stronger and stronger with time. Laid crossbeams to spread otu the pressure. Then laid marble on the wood. Then laid bricks on the marble.
- They had managed to build a cathedral on mud! More than that – they had announced to the world that the lagoon was their permanent home. This was the "Torcello Cathedral"
- Torcello Cathedral: Literally transferred it from the mainland out to the lagoon.
- Not an immediate success. Church was rebuilt several times in its early life. Problem was "Subsidence". See all the "leaning" bell towers around Venice. The mud settles at different rates.
- As the wealth grew (salt trade), Venice grew and suddenly it was worth raiding!
- The first was Pepin, the King of the Francs in 810. Had the stronger army but not the sailing skills necessary to fight in this strange environment.

- Venice had no defensive walls; didn't need them. The water was the defensive system. Others didn't know how to maneuver their boats in the channels.
- Francs also discovered Malaria – would plague Venice for centuries.
- Venetians made radical changes. In the 800's they created a new capital on new islands in the middle fo the lagoon and had more than 2 miles of water on all sides. Called Rialto, it had natural canals that ran through it. These canals became the streets of the city.
- There are some artificial canals (straight) and some that are original with curves and all.
- One of the first things they wanted was respect for their new capital. Around 829, two merchants were sent to Egypt and bribed guards for the body of St. Mark (needed an important relic!). Covered the body with pork (to avoid the Muslim inspectors) and sailed it back to Venice.
- This gave Venice an important patron saint. The resting place guilt for St. Mark is one of Europe's greatest buildings.
- St. Mark's Basilica – Begun in 830's and rebuilt over the next two centuries. Core samples of the soil around the baslica had to drive the poles more than 15' to find compacted sand. Basilica was responsible for architecture for Venice.
- Some buildings needed more than 1,000,000 poles to keep them from sinking into the water!
- Some buildings have lasted more than 1,000 years.
- Today, they still use wooden poles for foundation!
- They even built palaces right on the edge facing the tides. Boats could stop at the palace and load/unload the merchandise.
- The floor at sea level was a warehouse and residences upstairs.
- Could survive the damp because brick foundation was reinforced with a water proof marble. Lapping of water didn't affect it.
- Venetians were building palaces when the rest of Europe was building castles.
- The Venetians became master boatman; also, learned to trade far and wide. Every aspect of life was dominated by the water. Horses were never allowed. Even today, cars are banned.
- Boats were invented nearly 1,000 years ago to navigate the canals and narrow places.
- They became the greatest traders in the world. Became very powerful and wealthy. Venice built the greatest ocean-going fleet in the world.
- Had a ship yard (called the "arsenal") that could turn out one boat a day!
- By the 1300's, they had 3,000+ ships sailing under the Venetian flag!
- Venice dominated European trade. Selling salts and important luxury goods from the east and selling to the west.
- The Venetian coin was like the American Dollar today – -the leading currency for centuries (found in China, etc.).
- Every year the Doge would throw a golden ring into the sea: "We wed thee, O sea."
- Marco Polo went to China in the 1200's. Brought back pasta. Inspired Christopher Columbus to discover new routes as well.
- Venetial ships were built for fighting as well as trading. Merchant families were expected to have their own armed ships to help defend Venice's interest.
- In 1202, Venice rented a fleet for the Crusades to win Jerusalem back. Seeing the chance for earthly rewards, the Venetians sailed for Constantinople. They looted the city (gold, marble, art, holy relics) and took them back to Venice.

- Isolation by water brought subtle benefits: fierce communal pride in the city. Every trading ship was commissioned to bring back riches for St. Mark's Basilica!
- A council of 2,000 members (rich and poor) would elect the cities leader, the Doge. The American's adopted the Venetian system of "checks and balances" to keep government in check.
- Were very defensive about their democracy: established a "Lion's Mouth" so citizens could leave anonymous letters detailing any plots to overthrow the government. The Venetian prisons were known for their instruments of torture!
- in the 1400's a frenchman was hanged for simply saying he would like to wash his hand in Venetian blood. In 1355, a Doge was infuriated when his wife was accused of infidelity – he plotted to kill the young princes and make himself prince alone – he was beheaded.
- The Venetian Republic lasted more than 1,000 years – was not a reign of terror. Never a single uprising – the Venetian state provided welfare unheard of anywhere. Ex: provided doctors as early as 1300's for a state-run medical service and gave poor free legal representation. Venice supported great artists as well. Had money to spend on things not essential! Artists: Titian, Bellini. Composers like Vivaldi and Molteverde.
- Thousands of miles away, seeds of destruction were being sown. In 1492, Christopher Columbus discovered the Americas opening a whole new trade for Europe. Only a few years earlier, Portugal found a route to Asia. Venices ships couldn't deal with the rougher waters fo the new trade routes.
- Closer to home, Venice was being challenged by the Turkish empire.
- By the 1600 and 1700, Venice had become known not for its power but for its decadence! As it lost power, it became a pleasure capital. Gambling became a craze. People lost fortunes. Prostitutes were estimated at 20,000! The brothel of Europe – wealthy young European men would go there for their "education." Casanova was jailed in the 1750's for "outrages against the holy religion." Published a book exaggerating his conquests – said that "nuns made the most exciting lovers" and that everyone could be had for money!
- Decadence spelled the demise as an independent state. In 1797, Napoleon took the city unopposed. After 1000 years, the republic was now a colony.
- For 1,500 years the city won the battle against the sea but in 1966 nature let them know it's not over! Put Venice 6' below sea level and causing massive damage. Invaded the brick wall and began permanent damage. Their city is inevitably sinking.
- Every building is sinking lower in the lagoon. Also, the world sea level has been rising for centuries. Venice has been sinking 4-5 inches every century since it was founded. In older buildings, the water is now above the layer of water-proof marble.
- Inside St. Mark's is one of the lowest points in Venice – basement where the saint was first laid. Originally, it was 3' above and is now 1' below. Salt keeps seeping out of the walls making the bricks brittle and easy to break.
- Many problems caused by Venetians themselves – boat vibrations damage foundation of buildings (vortex of propellers). Sinking is accelerated by man's development – pumping of fresh water caused additional subsidence!
- They simply keep building up higher and higher. In St. Mark's, archeologists have found that the plaza has been raised nearly 10' over the centuries (1,000 years ago).
- Different solution: huge flood gates to stop dangerously high tides. However, Venice depends on the tides to wash the canals each day.
- In the future, water level may rise 1' per century because of more rapidly rising sea levels.

The Patriarchal Basilica of St. Mark

History...

- St. Mark's was the Duke's Chapel until the end of the 18th century. Since 1807 it has served as the city's Cathedral instead of S. Pietro di Castello. It's bishop holds the ancient title of ***Patriarch.***
- It's role as the Palatine chapel ceased with the fall of the Serenissima Republic in 1797. Ten years later, in 1807, Napoleon ordered the patriarchial seat transferred here.
- The 1st St. Mark's Church was designed as the saint's martyrium by Doge Giustiniano Particiaco in 828 when St. Mark's body was shipped by the Venetians from Alexandria to Venice (to avoid "profanation" by the Islamic occupiers of Egypt).
- In 976 this first church was destroyed by a fire which spread from the Ducal Palace to the church during an uprising against Doge Candiano IV who was a tyrant. Although it was restored, it was not until 1063 under Doge Domenico Contarino that the current church was built.
- The current church was modeled after the *Twelve Apostles Basilica* in Constantinople called the *Apostoleion.* This 6th century church was destroyed by the Turks in the 15th century when they conquered Constantinople.
- On October 8, 1094 when Vitale Falier was Doge, St. Mark's body was given its final resting place in a marble arch in the center of the crypt under the high altar and the church was consecrated.
- The extensive mosaic work was started as early as 1071 during the Dogeship of Domenico Selvo. However, it was not until the 12th century that the core of the iconographic plan was constructed.
- Additional mosaics were laid in the atrium in the 13th century as well as in the baptistry. St. Isidore's Chapel (14th century), The Mascoli Chapel (15th Century), and the Sacristy (16th century).
- The basilica was a "living body" throughout its centuries of history. It features styles of both Eastern and Western origin.
- The great civil ceremonies of Venice were celebrated in St. Mark's.
- The Doge was presented to the city after his election in the Basilica. Popes, Sovereigns, foreign dignitaries were received. Also, it was here that sea captains came to ask protection before setting off on their expeditions.
- The floor of the atrium portrays the meeting of reconciliation held in 1177 between Frederick Barbarossa and Pope Alexander III under the auspices of Doge Sebastiano Ziani. This great reconciliation was known as the ***Peace of Venice***.

The Exterior...

- Note the lead-covered cupolas. There are five over each area of the church. They are among the most distinctive in the world.
- After the conquest of Constantinople in 1204, the Venetians decided to cover the facade of their church in marble. They brought much of this marble and other ornamentation from Constantinople as *spolia* including pillars, capitals, etc.

- The ***West Facade*** is divided into two orders by the terrace on which stand four horses with ***triumphal*** significance. These horses are the ***quadriga*** and date from the time of Constantine. They originally were positioned at the Constantinian Hippodrome in Constantinople until being taken by the Venetians in 1204. Of interesting note – the quadriga were known as symbols of imperial power (which is why Venice took them from Constantinople) and Napoleon continued the 'favor' by taking them to Paris when he conquered the Venetian republic in 1797! They were later returned to St. Mark's in 1815. The originals are in the Basilica Museum and copies now replace them.
- In each of the two orders there are 5 large arches corresponding to the 4 entrances and the window of the Zen Chapel.
- The most important of the ***Bronze Portals*** is the principal one – a 13th century adaptation of two very ancient Byzantine doors (5th or 6th century) decorated with arches. The 2nd door from the left is also interesting – it bears the date 1300 and the signature of the goldsmith Bertuccio who made the other doors.
- The 13th century marble cladding is inset with Byzantine relief carvings designed to be viewed in pairs on either side of the main portal (2 holy warriors – St. George and St. Demetrius who defend against evil). Also, the next panel on the right depicts the Archangel Gabriel and its counterpart on the left depicts Mary.
- ****Note: The ***Annunciation*** is an important theme because ancient chronicles record that Venice was established on March 25th (Feast of the Annunciation) in the year 421.
- The ***Portal Mosaics*** depict various scenes related to the body of St. Mark:
- *The Abduction of St. Mark's Body from Alexandria*
- *The arrival of St. Mark's Body in Venice*
- *The reception of St. Mark's Body by the Doge and nobility*
- *The Translation of the Saint in procession to the Basilica* (Note: This episode needs some explaining. The saint's body had been 'hidden' for security reasons and no one knew where it was. In 1094, after days of prayer, the patriarch had a vision of the saint's body deep within one of the supporting pillars of the church. Indeed, they did find the body there and had it interred into the crypt instead.)
- The scheme is completed by the 4 lunettes in the upper register depicting the final mysteries of the life of Jesus: (Note: These are all restored 13th century mosaics)
- *The deposition from the cross*
- *The descent into Hell*
- *The Resurrection*
- *The Ascension*
- Above the main portal is the eschatological vision of *The Last Coming of Christ the Judge.*
- **** These portal mosaics express the message of salvation brought by Jesus and preached among the lagoons by Mark!
- The gothic crownings were added in the 14th & 15th centuries by Tuscan artists.
- The scene of the ***Annunciation*** is repeated in the "end niches" with the archangel Gabriel on the left and Mary on the right. The inner niches portray the ***4 Evangelists*** with their symbols (lion, eagle, angel, and bull). ****Below each one a waterspout in the shape of a man collects and pours out rainwater – the symbolic allusion of the water cascading below the Evangelists to Baptismal water is clear!***
- 4 warrior saints are depicted above the floral arches and are the "Protectors" of the city.

- Surmounting the largest arch, dominating the square, is St. Mark in the act of giving his blessing with incense-bearing angels rising towards him. In the center of the star-spangled mosaic below is the lion with open book and the words ***Pax tibi Marce, Evangelista meus*** which means ***Peace to you Mark, my Evangelist.***
- The ***South Facade*** is of great interest. It once contained the "Sea Gate" – a great portal which led through a corridor into the western atrium directly from the quay. After the 16th century, this opening was closed to the construction of the Zen Chapel.
- On the corner is the porphyry sculpture of the ***Tetrarchs***, or Moors (4th century), which was taken from Constantinople.
- In front of the Baptistry door are two richly decorated ***Pillars*** called the "Acritani" because they were believed to have originated from St. John in Acri in Syria. They, too, were taken from Constantinople.
- The ***North Facade*** overlooks Piazzetta S. Basso. It has the same design as the other two and contains a door called the Porta dei Fiori which is surmounted by an elegant sculpture of a ***nativity scene*** from the late 13th century.
- The gothic 'crowning' on top of the arches depicts various figures of the ***Virtues*** and the ***Fathers of the Church.***

About St. Mark...

- Mark was a Judeo-Christian from Jerusalem and was a leading apostle after the Death and Resurrection of Jesus.
- Together with Barnabas he followed Paul in his itinerant preaching.
- He settled at Alexandria, Egypt and became the first Bishop of the Christian community there.
- He later returned to Rome to join Peter who called him "son" in a letter.
- Mark's Gospel, considered the oldest of the four, is believed to have been written in Rome shortly after 50 AD at the request of Peter who wished to retain a record of Peter's preachings concerning Jesus.
- Mark later returned to Alexandria where he was martyred on April 25, 68.
- It was only in the 8th and 9th centuries that the legend of St. Mark's preaching in the Venetian lagoon was formulated. This legend originated in the Roman town of Aquileia which glorified in founding its Christian faith on conversion by St. Mark. The first Bishop of Aquileia is believed to have been his disciple Ermagora, taken by Mark to Rome to be consecrated by Peter.
- The first historical testimony about St. Mark comes from Papias (135-201), Bishop if Hierapolis in Asia Minor.
- In the Middle Ages, the life of the saint was passed on in ancient tales, known as *Passiones* which narrated the life of great people of faith.
- One of the most famous of the *Passiones* stories about St. Mark is his healing of an Alexandrian cobbler named Anasius who had wounded his left hand. Mark spat on the ground, made mud, and healed his hand in the name of Jesus Christ. This scene is portrayed several times in the baslica.
- Around 1,000 the Aquileia legend was adopted by the Venetians.
- The Evangelistic symbol for Mark is the Lion. Accordingly, the Lion is now the symbol for Venice.

- St. Mark's body was recovered from Alexandria by two Venetian merchants: Buono da Malamocco and Rustico da Torcello. They were told by the monk Staurazio and the priest Teodoro that the Muslims were plundering churches to build mosques. The two merchants removed the remains of St. Mark and concealed them in baskets of vegetables and pork which repelled the Muslims.
- A famous account of the *Inventio* is the final episode of the legend recalling the construction of the 3rd basilica and how the saint's remains had been so well hidden for many years that no one knew where to find them. Discovery required a vision.

The Atrium...

- The atrium was built a century after the rest of the church and was decorated in the 13th century.
- Mosaics cover the cupolas, vaults and lunettes.
- They detail the Old Testament story taken from Genesis and Exodus based on miniatures from an early Alexandrian Bible.
- The series begins in the southwestern corner and continues along the west and north sides.
- ***Creation****:* 26 scenes which start with the Latin words "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Of great interest is the ***Blessing of the Seventh Day*** with God seated on a throne surrounded by the six angels of the first six days with his hand blessing the "7th Angel" of the Sabbath.
- The surrounding arches depict the crime of *Cain and Abel* and the beginning of evil.
- The stories of ***Noah*** are in the next soffit which also contains the building of the ***Tower of Babel*** and the condemnation of human pride.
- Other cupola's portray the story of ***Abraham*** and the stories of ***Joseph the Jew***.
- The decoration of the cupola's culminates in the story of ***Moses*** – a masterpiece of 13th century Venetian mosaic.

Understanding the Mosaics...

- The mosaic in the upper portion of the church covers nearly 8,000 square meters!
- The overall design and unified concept is attributed to a Calabrian monk named Gioachino da Fiore – a prophetic spirit who lived in Venice in the late 12th century.
- The style is purely Byzantine.
- The main route of the "reading" of the mosaics seems to be from East to West which is also from the Altar to the Front Door.
- ***This route recounts the story of the salvation brought to men by Jesus, the Sun of the World which never sets.***
- It begins in the presbytery cupola (***Cupola of the Prophets***) where each prophet is portrayed along with his prophecy relating to the Messiah, the Christ of the central circle. The ***Virgin Mary*** is among them with her hands outstretched to welcome the annunciation of her son. Thus, she represents the link between the Old and New Covenants.

- The five scenes in the next vault – ***The Annunciation, Adoration of the Magi, Presentation in the Temple, Baptism, and Transfiguration*** recount the fulfillment of the prophecies and the beginning of Jesus of Nazareth's historical presence.
- The ***Deeds performed by Jesus to comfort the sick, suffering, and sinners*** are portrayed on the walls and the vaults of the ***two transepts*** starting with the Miracle of Cana.
- Scenes relating to the ***Last moments of Jesus' life*** bring us back to the central cupola which celebrates the glory of his ***Ascension*** into heaven. The Ascension is a fascinating cupola – Note that under the apostles are a series of women standing between the windows. These are the Beautitudes and the Virtues. Also, note the four evangelists on the supporting columns and the 'River gods' Pouring out their water from urns (the waters of Baptism) beneath them (Gion, Fison, Tigris, and Euphrates).
- The 3rd cupola to the west celebrates ***Pentecost*** with the Holy Spirit descending upon the apostles. Note that the peoples who listened to the apostles' preaching are portrayed in their respective cultural attire between the windows.
- The ***2nd Coming of Christ*** is portrayed in the western 2 vaults of the Apocalypse and Heaven.

- Obviously, the Atrium Mosaics are meant to be 'foretastes' and prefigurements of the interior.
- The gold in which the visitor feels enwrapped not only represents a lustrous background with unifies all the mosaics but has a specific symbolic value: ***it is the color of the Divine and the image of Light which is God Himself!*** Thus, this is truly a 'heavenly' representation.
- Note that the more "terrestrial" dimension of the church is decorated with marble panels instead of mosaic.

Additional items of the Interior...

- Note the dual ***pulpits*** to either side of the iconostasis. The one on the left is for the readings of scripture. The octagonal one on the right is the porphyry pulpit from which the Doge was presented to the people of Venice (it was held up by 9 columns); the Doge alone sat in this space.
- The ***Baldachin*** is supported by four carved alabaster columns with historical scenes from the Gospel (13th century). The tomb of St. Mark is now placed beneath this main altar.
- ***Presbytery:*** the story of the "Abduction" of St. Mark's body is recorded on the right hand chancel wall. Of interesting note is a depiction of the *Dream of St. Mark* which part of the legend of the transfer of the saint's body. According to the story, Mark received a dream from an Angel while he was being transported (his remains) by the two merchants in the Venetian lagoon. The angel announced to Mark that he would receive a peaceful burial at last.
- The ***Pala d'Oro*** is perhaps the most famous piece in the Basilica. It is located behind the main altar and has more than 250 *cloisonnes* enamel paintings on gold foil. These are from the 10th - 12th centuries and were made in Byzantium for Venetian clients. The gothic frame in gilded silver was made in Venice in the mid 14th century. Numerous

pearls and precious stones are set in the enamel. ******The gold altar-piece is the only example in the world of a Gothic gold work of any size that has remained in one piece.***

Floor...

- the ancient marble floor is known as an ***opus sectile***.
- this originally covered the basilica like a great oriental carpet.
- Most of it dates to the 15th century.

Chapels & Baptistry...

- The ***Baptistry*** chapel was built in the first half of the 14th century and occupies what was originally a walkway between the Doge's Palace and the church. The mosaics speak of two realities: The figure of ***John the Baptist*** and the ***Experience of Christian Baptism***.
- The tomb of Dandolo, the last Doge buried in the basilica, is found along the external wall in a gothic monument.
- The ***Zen Chapel*** contains mosaics telling the story of St. Mark and other funerary monuments. Of interest is the old bronze door (from the atrium) with small arches; this door dates to the 5th - 6th centuries and was taken from Constantinople.
- ***Chapel of St. Isidore***: Completed on July 10, 1355, it contains very fine mosaics including a series telling the story of the transfer of the body (Isidore) from the island of Chios to Venice in 1125 by the Doge Domenico.
- ***Mascoli Chapel:*** contains wonderful mosaics of the Annunciation and the Dormition.

Crypt...

- The crypt is a huge 9th century room below the presbytery. It is the heart of the Basilica because it contains the votive chapel in which the body of St. Mark lay until the early 19th century.
- Since 1835, St. Mark's body has rested under the mensa of the high altar.

Milano-- Milan – The City

History

	396 BC	Original settlement founded by Umbrian Etruscans in the 6th century BC is overrun by the Celtic tribe of the Insubres.
222		The town of the Insurbres is conquered by the Roman Consux Marcus Claudius Marcellus. From *Mediolanum* (Milan) Roman culture spreads.
49		Roman Civic rights are granted. With the Empire, Milan's influence grows.
	293 AD	With the reorganization under Diocletian, Milan becomes the residence of the co-emperor Maximian and thereby the capital of the Western Empire.
313		The "Milan Edict of Tolerence" is issued granting Christians religious freedom.
374		Born in Trier, the governor of Aemilia-Liguria, Aurelius Ambrosius, is elected Bishop of Milan despite the fact that was wasn't even baptized! He becomes one of the Four Fathers of the Church and has significant influence on the political course of the state and the cultural development of Milan.
387		Ambrose baptizes Augustine who becomes the most influential Father of the Church, St. Augustine of Hippo.
402		After the city is plundered by the Visigoths under Aleric I in 400, during the Barbarian invasion, the Emperor Honorius and his retinue leave Milan which now relinquishes its role as the capital of the Western Empire. From 404 the emperor resides in Ravenna.
452		Attila's Huns conquer the Po Basin and Milan. The city enters a period of decline.
476		The fall of the West Roman Empire. The Germanii take over the reins of power: at first the mercenary leader Odoacer, then the Ostrogoth King Theodoric the Great, who destroys Milan in 539.
553		The Ostrogoths succumb to the army of Byzantine Emperor Justinian.
568		Under their king, Alboin I, the Lombards invade Northern Italy. In 569 the majority of Milan's population flees before the cruel attacks of the king who makes Pavia his residence. Only in 584 do the Milanese return to their city, now in the hands of the milder King Authari and his Catholic-inclined spouse, Theodelinda of Bavaria. In Monza, their favorite residence, the queen founds the first Lombard Catholic church.
773-4		Charlemagne conquers the Lombard kingdom and absorbs it into his Frankish Empire. After the division of the Frankish Empier under his grandsons (843), Lombardy first falls to the central kindgom of Lothair I and then from 881-7 to the East Frankish kingdom of Charles III the Fat.
	888-962	Period of feudal anarchy. The impotence of the Carolingians allows local princes to emerge, who come into conflict with one another. In 962, responding to a call for help from the Papal States, the German King Otto I conquers Norther Italy and is crowned by the pope. From now on the German kings see themselves as the rulers of the Lombard kingdom. Towards the end fo the 10th century, the prosperous towns of Northern Italy cast aside the rule of the princes installed by the German kings. A struggle ensues between the Ghibellines (followers of the German emperor) and the Geulphs (supporters of the pope).
1018		Heribert of Intimiano becomes archbishop of Milan. He creates the economic base for the Milan Communes, and i sinstrumental in the coronation of Conrad II (crowned king of Italy at Pavia in 1026 and emperor in Rome one year later), who founds a new imperial dynasty.
	1154-83	Emperor Frederick Barbarossa tries unsuccessfully to subdue the Lombard cities, but Milan is destroyed in 1162. After the creation of the Lombard League (1167) under the leadership of Milan, the cities defeat the emperor in 1176 near Legnano. In the Peace of Constance (1183) the emperor is forced to recognize their independence.
1236		Emperor Frederick II leads a bitter struggle against the Lombard League, which he defeats in 1237 in the battle of Cortenuova. He imposes a rigid government on Northern Italy, but the Stauffen dynasty falls shortly after the death of the emperor.
1262		Ottone Visconti becomes archbishop of Milan. The Ghibelline nobility allies itself with the archbishop in the struggle against the Guelphs, led by the Torriani family. The internal power struggles finally end with the destruction of the free communes and lead to the installation fo the Signoria, the "rule of tyranny".

1311	Matteo Visconti becomes uncontested ruler of Milan.
1395	Gian Galeazzo Visconti becomes the duke of Milan. During his Golden Age, Milan's influence extends to Verona, Bologna, and Genoa.
1447	After the death of Duke Filippo Maria Visconti the Aurea Republica Ambrosiana, a short-lived democracy, is established.
1450	The condottiere Francesco Sforza, the son-in-law of the last Visconti, becomes the duke of Milan. Another Golden Age ensues, especially during the reign of Lodovico il Moro (1479-99).
1499	On account of his blood ties with the Viscontis, Louis XII of France claims the Duchy of Milan for himself and conquers the city. In 1512, the Sforza succeed in returning, but only briefly.
1525	Francis I of France, who is attempting to conquer Northern Italy and has rid Milan of the Sforzas, is defeated near Pavia by Charles V.
1540	Charles V bequeaths the Duchy of Milan to his son, Philip II of Spain. With the division of the Habsburg Empire in 1556, Milan falls to Spain, and remains under Spanish rule until 1714.
1560	Charles Borromeo (canonized in 1610) becomes archbishop of Milan, and embards on far-reaching reforms within the Catholic Church.
1701-14	The War of the Spanish Succession between Austria, Prussia, England, Holland and Portugal on the one side and Louis XIV allied with Bavaria and Cologne on the other. At the end of the war, the Duchy of Milan falls to Austria, which maintains its rule over the city with short interruptions right up to 1859.
1796	During the Wars of the Coalitions, Napoleon Bonaparte conquers Lombardy. In 1797 he creates Cisalpine Republic, with Milan as capital.
1802	Napoleon makes himself president of the Italian Republic that has emerged from the Cisalpine Republic. In 1805 he is crowned king of Italy in Milan.
1814-15	After the fall of Napoleon, the Congress of Vienna reaffirms Austria's claims to Lombardy.
1848	With the support of the Sardinian Royal House, the House of Savoy, the leaders of the Italian Unity Movement (Risorgimento) oust the Austrians from Milan, which, however, they win back at the Battle of Custoze on 6 August.
1859	Austria declares war on the Kingdom of Sardinia which is allied with Napoleon II. After defeats at Magenta and Solferinoi, Austria is forced to hand Lombardy to Sardinia.
1861	Victor Emanuel II becomes king of Italy. Rome becomes the capital of the new kingdom.
1900	King Umberto I is murdered in Monza.
1922	From Milan Benito Mussolini begins his March on Rome with his Fascist black-shirts.
1939	Mussolini signs Pact of Steel with Hitler.
1945	On 27 April, while fleeing to Switzerland, Mussolini is shot at Tremezzo on Lake Como.
1946	Italy becomes a republic.
1963	The archbishop of Milan, Cardinal Montini, is elected Pope Paul VI (dies in 1977).

Duomo di Milano (Cathedral)

- This is the foremost landmark for Milan.
- Best example of Gothic architecture in Italy.
- Work began in 1386 at the instigation of Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Many Lombard master builders worked on the cathedral in Cologne. It is presumed that they brought the ideas and skills back with them from there.
- Several foreign masters were hired in rapid succession but conflicts always arose with local master. Finally, in 1400 Filippino degli Organi was appointed supervisor.
- in 1418 the high altar was ready to be consecrated by Pope Martin V.
- Work was interrupted in 1499 by the death of Lodovico il Moro and after Amadeo passed away in 1522, progress came to a complete standstill.
- During the time of Cardinal Carlo Borromeo work continued – much of it being paid for by Cardinal Borromeo spending his own family's fortune (he paid for pretty much all the pavement and side naves).

- in 1572 Carlo Borromeo consecrated the church to the memory of the birth of the Virgin Mary.
- Between 1805-13 Napoleon I had the west facade completed according to the plans of Carlo Amati, a period that saw the completion of the decorative elements.
- Additions to the upper parts of the building date from the early 20th century.

"Vital Statistics"

- Total floor area: 13,990 sq yds
- Length: 520'
- Width: 215'
- Transept width: 300'
- Central nave width: 55'
- Central nave height: 157'
- Cupola height: 220'
- To top of the Madonna: 355'
- Main Facade width: 200'
- Main Facade height: 180'
- Capacity: 40,000 persons!
- ****Only St. Peter's in Rome exceeds these dimensions!
- 135 tracery elements
- 2,245 statues
- 95 atlases for supporting the gargoyles

Detail....

- ***Bronze doors:*** 20th century. Note four of the panels are of Milanese motifs: *The Milan Edict of Tolerance* (1948), *Scenes from the Life of St. Ambrose* (1950), *Family Tree and the Life of the Virgin Mary* (1894-1908), *The history fo Milan from its destruction at the hands of Frederick Barbarossa up to the Victory at Legnano* (1950), *The History of the Cathedral up to the time of Carlo Borromeo* (1950).

- ***Nave and Choir:*** The oldest part of the church is the apse area (14th century) and between the 15th and 18th century the nave was gradually extended westwards towards the facade, the most recent part of the building. The magnificent tower above the crossing (16th century) is by Amadeo. Between 1765-9 the main spire was added and subsequently crowned with the golden statue of the *Madonnina* (1774).
- ***The Apse:*** The most beautiful part of the cathedral. The three massive lancet windows (c. 1390 by Nicolas de Bonaventura) are the largest in the world! Their fine tracery is the work of Filippino degli Organi.
- ***Interior***
- Note the main nave with its rows of aisles with 52 pillars. This number was no accident; it was to represent the 52 weeks of the liturgical year on which the life of the "church stands".
- Most of these pillars have decorated capitals bearing figures of saints (mostly 1410-50 by Filippino da Modena).
- The interior contains 914 statues.

- The marble floor was designed by Tibaldi.
- Immediately inside the front door, to the right, is the entrance to the ***Battistero di S. Giovanni alle Fonte*** – the baptistry in which St. Augustine was baptized by St. Ambrose on April 24, 387.

Interior Tour of Cathedral: the following tour is designed to describe the Duomo from the moment a person enters the front doors. Facing, the altar, the pilgrim should go to the far right side of the Cathedral and progress up the right hand wall, around the apse and back along the opposite wall.

- Tomb of Archbishop Aribero of Intimiano (1018-45). Above is a priceless Lombard copper crucifix (11th century) and to the left is a memorial tablet recalling the year the Cathedral was founded (1386).
- Sarcophagus of Archbishop Ottone Visconte (died 1295) from the 14th century. Above and to the left are two stained glass windows portraying episodes from the Old Testament.
- Sarcophagus of Marco Carelli (1408) by Filippino degli Organi). Above is another piece of stained glass by Nicolo Varallo with more Old Testament scenes (15th century).
- Tomb of Canon Gian Andrea Vimercati (died 1548) by Bambaia. To the right is a tablet with a design for a new cathedral facade (1886 by Bretano). The window above (1424, by Stefano da Pandino) has scenes from the New Testament.
- Altar by Pellegrino Tibaldi (16th century) with the painting *Peter's visit to St. Agatha* (1597) by Frederico Zuccari). The window above depicts the life of St. John the Evangelist.
- Another altar by Tibaldo. Above, stained glass with scenes from the life of John the Baptist (15th century, by Cristofero de Mottis).
- On the altar (also by Tibaldi) the marble sculpture *Madonna between St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Paul* (1396).
- Tomb of Gian Giacomo Medici, called *Medighino* (died 1555), a general who served under Emperor Charles V. This masterpiece by Leone Leoni (1563) includes a statue of the Medici in Roman armour, surrounded by allegorical figures depicting bravery (left) and peace (right) as well as wisdom (left) and fame. Allegorical bronze reliefs depict the rivers Adda (left) and Ticino (right).
- Altar donated by Pope Pius IV (16th century) at which Carlo Borromeo usually celebrated Mass. The window above (1564, by Corrado de Mochis) portrays *scenes from the Life of St. James*.
- Cappella di San Giovanni Bono (17th century) built in memory of this 7th century Milan bishop, whose life is depicted on the stained glass of the chapel.
- Stained glass (1556, by Biagio and Giuseppe Arcimboldi) with *Scenes from the Life of St. Catherine of Alexandria.* Underneath are two small doors to an underground passage leading directly to the archbishop's palace.
- Altar with the marble portrayal of the *Presentation of Mary in the Temple* (1543, from the workshop of Bambaia), as well as two reliefs on the column plinths depicting the *Birth and Marriage of Mary* (16th century, by Cristoforo Lombardo). The stained glass window above depicts the life of *St. Martin of Tours* (16th century).
- To the right of the Altar of St. Agnes is the famous statue of *St. Bartholomew being Flayed Alive* (1562) bearing the boastful inscription "It wasn't Praxiteles, but Marco d'Agrate that made me"!

- The octagonal ***cupola*** over the crossing (223') is embellished in its galleries with the figures of 60 saints (2nd half of the 15th century) and in the spandrels with the busts of the Fathers of the Church (1501, by Cristoforo Solari). In the center of the crossing there is a bronze grill beneath which is the tomb of St. Charles Borromeo.
- ***Choir***: At the entrance pillars are two pulpits of gilded bronze and beaten copper (1590, by Pelizzoni) with biblical portrayals decorating the parapets. Then comes the Choir of Senators (*Coro Senatorio*) with the mighty organ from the 16th century, and beyond the *Santuario* with three rows of choir stalls (1572-1620) built according to the plans of Tibaldi; the inlays with scenes from the life of St. Ambrose are by Paolo di Gazli.
- Now see the center of the sanctuary. The ***high altar*** is another Tibaldi creation which surrounds the original altar that was consecrated by Pope Martin V in 1418. The gilded ciborium above (1590 by Pelizzoni) embraces a tabernacle (1561 by Solari) which is protected by four angels and has reliefs showing scenes from the life of Christ and statues of Jesus and the disciples. Behind a copper copestone in the vault (with the image of God the Father by Jacopino da Tradate) is kept the reliquary of St. Nagel which is said to have been found by St. Ambrose. The choir is lined with marble panels which date from the early baroque period (after designs by Tibaldi). Two doors at the side of the choir lead to the crypt (1579 by tibaldi, decorated in the 17th century). From here one walks down into the octagonal ***Funeral Chamber*** (Scurolo, 1606 by Ricchini) of ***St. Charles Borromeo***. The saint rests in a coffin of rock crystal which was a gift from Philip IV of Spain.
- Painting of the *Annunciation* (16th century). This work is a copy from the Florentine Church fo Santi Annunziata that was given to Charles Borromeo by the Medici family.
- ***Southern Sacristy***. Above the font you'll notice a remarkable *Jesus and the Samartian* (1396 by de Grassi) and in a niche to the left *Christ on the Cross* (c. 1510 by Cristoforo Solari). The Cathedral treasures are kept in the large walnut cupboards (17th century). They include a large number of ivory carvings (6th - 10th century), works of gold, Gobelin tapestries and the famous processional picture *Madonna dell'Idea* (early 15th century).
- The remains of an old fresco, the *Nursing Madonna* (15th century). On a Gothic console above is the statue of Martin V (1424). Immediately to the left is the tomb of Cardinal Marino Caracciolo (16th century).
- Old marble panel (pre 11th century) called *Chrismon Sant' Ambrosii*, with engraved symbols fo the Beginning and the End, the circle (symbol of God) and eight rays (symbol of eternal bliss).
- Relief of *Pieta between two angels,* a German work dating from 1389.
- Commemorative plaque to the consecration of the Cathedral on 20 September 1572 by Cardinal Charles Borromeo.
- A Byzantine crucifix wrapped in stole and chasuble (13th century).
- The stained glass of the three large apse windows portrays events from the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Apocalypse. These are mostly 19th century.
- Seated statue of Pius IV (1567). The frescoes *A Crucified Man between Mary and the Saints* and *Madonna with Child and John the Baptist* are both works of the early 15th century.
- Northern Sacristy. The portal is 14th century. The Angel of the ceiling frescos dates from 1611 and the floor is 15th century.
- Baroque altar with altarpiece *St. Hekla with the Lions* (1754).

- Altar with marble altarpiece *Crucifix and Saints* (1594). The stained glass pictures above show scenes from the *Life of St. John of Damascus* (1479).
- To the left of the altar is the door to the *Scala dei Principi* (Count's Staircase), used by notables to get onto the roof terraces. Above the door the modern piece of stained glass details the life of Carlo Borromeo.
- Capella della Madonna dell'Albero. The baroque chapel of the *Madonna of the Tree* contains the alterpiece *Virgin and Child* (1768).
- Famous Trivulzio candelabra. This seven-armed, 16' high bronze candelabra is a magnificent example of French art of the late 12th century and is thought to be the work of the goldsmith Nicolas de Verdun. In 1562 it was donated to the Cathedral by the priest Giambattista Trivulzio.
- The Gothic Altar of St. Catherine (14th century) with statuary by Cristoforo Solari (15th century). The stained glass windows above (16th century) recount the story of *St. Catherine of Siena*. The window to the left (1567) has scenes from the Acts of the Apostles.
- Above the baroque altar by Tibaldi is the altarpiece *Ambrose Forces Emperor Theodosius to do Penance* (17th century).
- Altar by Tibaldi with a *Marriage of Mary* (16th century). The window above deals with scenes from the lives of the Evangelists.
- A further Tibaldi altar with the wooden crucifix that Charles Borromeo proceeded through Milan during the plague of 1562. The stained glass above (16th century) portrays *Scenes from the Lives of the Evangelists.*
- Replica of the tomb of General Alessio Tarchetta (original fragments in the Castello Sforzesco). The stained glass above (1565) depicts the life of the Virgin Mary.
- Two tablets of red Veronese marble bearing relief figures of eight Apostles.
- a sundial on the wall with the sign fo the Capricorn. Its light comes from an opening opposite.
- Baptistry (16th century, Tibaldi) in the shape of a small temple. The font is a Roman urn made of porphyry, dating from the 2nd-3rd century AD.

The Galleria

- It's really a relatively recent addition to Milan. Built between 1865 and 1867.
- It is one of the earliest buildings in the world to use cast iron and glass in its construction.
- The glass dome measures 127' in diameter.
- The mosaics in the lunettes represent the continents.
- at the end of the gallery is the Piazza della Scala, in the middle of which is a monument to Leonardo da Vinci and his Milanese students Boltraffio, Salaino, Oggionno and Cesare da Sesto. The reliefs depict the different fields of work in which Leonardo was involved: painting (Last Supper), anatomy (equestrian statue of Sforza), architecture (fortifications), and physics (hydraulic engineering).

The Teatro alla Scala

- Although the Paris Opera House takes up more space and the Vienna National Opera is a more imposing building, the Teatro alla Scala with its 2,000 seats is still by far the largest theatre in Europe.

- The opening of the season on the day of the city's patron, St. Ambrose (7 December) is the greatest society event of the year with opera, concerts and ballet.
- The "Scala" is famous for its marvelous acoustics.
- Artists consider it the summit of the world of opera.
- Milan owes its opera house to Empress Maria Theresa who, after the old Teatro Regio Ducale burned down in 1776, approved the plan for a new theatre to be built "at the expense of the people of Milan" but then actually covered most of the costs herself.
- The building stands on the site of the old Church of Santa Maria della Scala, which in 1385 had been donated by Regina della Scala, the wife of Bernabo Visconti – hence the name of the opera house.
- The ceremonial opening took place in August 3, 1778 with a performance of the opera *L'Europa riconosciuta*, a work by the Vienna court composer Antonio Salieri – adversary of Mozart and teacher of Beethoven, Schubert and Liszt.
- In 1812, the 12 year old Gioacchino Rossini achieved his first sensational success here.
- In 1822, Gaetano Donizetti made his debut at the Scala, for which he wrote six operas.
- In 1829 came the previere of Vincenzo Bellini's *Foreigner*, one of the greatest successes that the Scala has ever witnessed.
- In 1839 the young Giuseppe Verdi came to the Scala with his mediocre work *Oberto Conte di San Bonifacio*. It was during the "Verdi Era" that the opera house reached its zenith.
- The international success of Giacomo Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* also started at the Scala.
- After a period of crisis, the arrival of Arturo Toscanini heralded an era in which the famous conductor transformed the Scala once again into one of the leading houses in the world.
- In 1943 the building was severely bombed but as early as May 11, 1946 the Scala was reopened with a concert conducted by Toscanini.
- Of other interesting note is the chandelier from 1830.

Santa Maria della Grazie

- Most commonly known as the place of Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*.
- The church itself is not noteworthy of visiting.
- Next to the church is the entrance to the *Cenacolo Vinciano*, the refectory containing the famous fresco
- The fresco was commissioned from Leonardo by Lodovico il Moro and painted between 1495 and 1497. It covers the entire wall of the former Dominican monastery.
- It is 30' long and 14' high.
- This fresco uses a technique developed by Leonardo himself; tempera on a base mixed by himself on the stone wall. This procedure proved unsuccessful: the base began to loosen from the wall and inadequate restoration work from the 17th to the 19th century only made it worse. The rear of the wall was heated in 1908 but made no noticeable effect.
- In 1943 the refectory was destroyed in a bombing raid, but the *Last Supper* remained unscathed. The work is still undergoing restoration today.
- Leonardo's masterpiece portrays the moment when Jesus tells his disciples: "One of you is about to betray me". The power of this painting derives from the striking contrast in the

attitudes of the 12 apostles as counterposed to Christ – they are agitated while Christ sits in transfigured serenity.
- Judas is clearly the guilty figure of the company.
- The monumental simplicity of this fresco is quite masterful and reflects Leonardo's lifetime maxim of *saper vedere* – "knowing how to see."
- On the opposite wall is the fresco of the *Crucifixion* (1495, by Donato da Montorfano) containing the scarcely noticeable figures, added by Leonardo, of Lodovico il Moro and his family.

Sant' Ambrogio

- Built by Saint Ambrose between 379 and 387 to house the relics of the martyrs Gervase and Protasius. Altered in the 9th and 12th centuries, the basilica is the epitome of the Lombard Romanesque style. St. Ambrose was buried here in 387; his tomb is in the crypt. Between the 8th and 14th centuries, nine emperors were crowned in Saint' Ambrogio with the famous "Iron Crown of the Lombards" (Note: The Lombard Kings were crowned 9 miles from Milan in the town of Monza in the 14th century Duomo di San Giovanni. To the left of the choir is the Capella della Regina Teodelinda and the Iron Crown – 9th century – is located withing the crucifix in this chapel. It is said that this crown was made from a nail of the True Cross; 34 Lombard Kings were crowned with it, most recently Charles V in 1530, Napoleon in 1805, Ferdinand I of Austria in 1836.
- In front of the church is a rectangular atrium (1150) on an early Christian plan, surrounded by large arcades. The capitals on the columns are decorated with symbolic animals, acanthus leaves, centaurs and other mythical creatures. Below the arcades is a lapidarium containing Roman and Romanesque capitals, tombstones, and pagan and early Christian inscriptions; there were also the remains of some frescoes on the walls (12th - 13th century).
- to the right is the *Campanile dei Monici* (Monk's tower) built in the 9th century.
- to the left is the *Campanile dei Canonici* (Canon's tower) built between 1128 and 1144 in order to end a dispute about church bells between the canons and the Benedictine monks from the neighboring monastery. The tower is 143' high and has a fine loggia (1889) at the top.
- The facade of the church consists of two superimposed loggie, the upper one of which has five arcades. The lower hall has three portals; the center one is framed by narrow columns and Romanesque decoration. The doors, beautifully carved in cypress wood (4th - 9th century) underwent extensive restoration during the 18th century. The great bronze door-knockers are Lombard (8th - 9th century); the side portals with their massive architraves show likenesses of animals. On the left of the main portal is the impressive marble tomb of the humanist Pier Candido Decembrio (1447, by Tomaso Cazzaniga).
- There are three early 13th century frescoes on the piers (left side near the front entrance): *St. Ambrose, Virgin and Child, and The Founder Bonamico Taverna*.
- On the next pier are antique columns with a bronze serpent (10th century, Byzantine) – according to legend, it is the bronze serpent of Moses!
- The pulpit was originally built in the 11th century and rebuilt after it collapsed in 1201. The Last Supper relief on the front is 11th century; the bronze eagle and angel are over a century older.

- Beneath the pulpit is an Early Christian sarcophagus (4th century) which is said to contain the remains of Stilicho and his wife Serena; he was a general in the army of Emperor Theodosius the Great. The central relief on the sarcophagus depicts *Christ and the Scholars*, to the right of it *Elijah and his Chariot of Fire* and *Noah and Moses*; on the back, *Christ and the Apostles*, and to the left, *The Sacrifice of Abraham.*
- On the high altar is the famous altar casing by the German goldsmith Volvinuius (9th century). The front shows the Redeemer, the symbols of the Evangelists, the Apostles and the Life of Christ; on the back are scenes from the life of St. Ambrose.
- Above the altar is the ciborium (9th century). The baldachin is decorated with gilt and polychrome stucco (Lombard-Byzantine, 9th century); clockwise from the front it depicts *Christ Giving the Keys to Peter and the Book to Paul, The Virgin and Two Worshippers, SS Ambrose, Gervase and Protasius Receiving the Model of the Ciborium,* and *St. Benedict with Two Believers.*
- Around the raised apse are several sections off the double row of choir stalls dating from the 16th century, with carvings depicting scenes from the life of St. Ambrose; at the centre is a marble episcopal chair (9th century). The mosaics in the apse (6th - 9th century) depict: *Christ with SS Gervase and Protasius;* on the left *St. Ambrose at the Burial of St. Martin of Tours*; and on the right *St. Ambrose and St. Augustine.*
- Beneath the choir is the crypt, which is composed of two sections: the first room was baroque-ised in the 18th century; the second contains the silver shrine (1898) with the relics of SS Ambrose, Gervase and Protasius. At the back of the room is a porphyry sarcophagus in which the relics were discovered in 1864, and also the *Colonna della Pieta*, which once stood in the Piazza Castello to mark the site of the martyrdom of Gervase and Protasius.
- In the far right corner of the church, in a separate area from the choir, is the *Sarcello di San Vittore in Ciel d'Oro* (5th century) with a Byzantine mosaic on a gold background from the end of the 5th century; on the ceiling is St. Victor, with (to the right of him) SS Felix, Maternus and Nabor, and to the left, SS Ambrose, Gervase and Protasius.
- Half way down the nave on the right hand side (main church) is the *Cappella della Santa Sevina*, with an early Christian sarcophagus (5th century; scenes from the Passion) acting as an altarpiece.
- On the architrave above the doors (by the tower of the Canons), *Putti Picking Grapes*, a rare work from the 5th century. A little further on, the baptistry has a *Resurrection* fresco by Bergognone (1491) behind its (modern) font, and in the vault is the fresco *Paradise* by Isidoro Bianchi.
- On the left hand side of the choir is another chapel in which the tomb-slab of Pipin, the second son of Charlemagne, is housed.
- Outside on the left hand side of the basilica is the Portico della Canonica, a section of the cloister that was begun by Bramante in 1492 and never completed. The brick building in front of it is the 10th century Oratorio di San Sigismondo. In the middle of the arcade there are relief busts of Lodovico il Moro and his wife Beatrice d'Este (late 15th century).

Heaven in Stone and Glass –
A Guide for Studying the Great Churches of the World

Teaching in Stone...

- Medieval mindset: the whole world is symbolic manifestation of spiritual universe.
- Cathedral must be read; repositories of the Christian spirit.
- Teach the faith and focus the journey of the Spirit.
- Churches dedicated to "Mary". Note: Church is our "mother".
- Note how prominent the "Annunciation" is in Cathedrals – Mary's "yes" is a reminder of the mission of the Church.
- Also, all the consequences of that "yes" are visible as well: Massacre of the innocents, flight into Egypt, vigil at the foot of the cross.
- Nave – boats were dangerous. Human life is a dangerous proposition. We are surrounded by threats: warfare, disease, failure, economic collapse, loss of friendship, death itself. Jesus stands as the Church – safety, peace, still point of God's grace in the tumult of life. If we're rooted in Christ, nothing can harm us.
- for the Church Fathers, the Church is the "Ark of Noah" (Origin of Alexandria)

Light and Darkness...

- Note the darkness of Cathedrals!
- Darkest place is near the main doors! We are people who walk in darkness! Christianity is a salvation-oriented religion: it assumes that there is something dreadfully wrong with us and we require God's grace to solve our problems. Do we understand our need to "change," our blindness?
- We pretend we are not sinners. Most important step in spiritual journey is to see how lost we are. Dante's Divine Comedy opens with: Midway on the journey of our life I awoke to find myself alone and lost in a dark wood having wandered from the straight path."
- We enter the door with confidence but when we are inside we are disoriented, lost, desperately in need of a guide!
- The Cathedral emerges as that guide! As Christ healed Saul whom he blinded, the Cathedral casts both shadows and light. The windows are these first lessons. We make our way to the Light – when we try to leave the Church, our blindness only intensifies.
- The church becomes the harbinger of a new society – a society where light prevails, love prevails (for all people). Note the many images of people contained in windows and statues – all walks of life, all statuses, all professions in one place – City of God.

Rose Windows...

- Medieval Scholastics' characteristics of the "beautiful": Wholeness, harmony, and Radiance. Windows are designed with all three.
- Existence will always be three things: good (desirable), true (knowable), and beautiful (captivates).

- Rose windows were meant to be sacramental – anticipation of the beatific vision of God at the end of time.
- Heaven as place of "rest": savoring, tasting, active engagement (not inactivity). Thomas Aquinas: the will has two basic acts: seek the good it does not possess and rest in the good that it does possess!
- Many rose windows have multiples of "8" images. Ex: Notre Dame – 88 images! "8" is the number just beyond "7" – the number of perfection and completion. "8" is the number that goes beyond time, it is eternity!
- Some depiction of Christ is always at the center of a rose window – all else is ordered around it and connected to it by spokes. This structural harmony is a picture of the well-ordered soul.
- Lesson: when the divine power is the uncompromised center of our lives, then the myriad of energies of our souls (intellectual, moral, physical, emotional, and sexual) tend to fall into harmony around it. When something other than Christ (money, power, prestige, sensual pleasure) becomes the center of our lives, our soul energies become disordered, dysfunctional, chaotic. (Note: demons speak in the plural – they have lost their "union" in God and are fractured, splintered, divided.. When we loose our centeredness, the same thing happens.)
- Also, some cathedrals have "wheels of fortune" where there are four figures: top, man dressed well ("I reign"); right, man tumbling ("I have reigned"); bottom, man in rags ("I have not power"); left, man climbing ("I will reign"). At the center is a figure of Christ – lesson is simple: throughout life the wheel of fortune turns placing one in different positions. The only thing that is "still" is at the center with Christ.

Cruciformity...

- The cathedral *is* a cross.
- Confrontation with the death of Jesus is unavoidable. (Centrality of Paul's message!)
- The pilgrim makes his own way of the cross in this great environment. It is a reminder that God is not a foreigner to human suffering. Rather, it is the forum of our very encounter with the divine!
- The Love of the cross is the structure and foundation of our lives.

Cosmic Consciousness...

- Cathedrals aren't to make us feel "at home"; fact, they purposely make us feel that we are in another world, a better world. (Contrast with contemporary church architecture and emphasis)
- See the "lifting" sensation of Cathedrals. Dante said that Satan was "frozen" in hell up to his waist; when he "flapped" his arms he went nowhere and only cooled the ice! (Augustine says sin is being turned in on oneself; sinners are those who make themselves the undisputed masters of a very tiny kingdom: the ego.) When Dante is finished, he arrives in heaven and begins to fly effortlessly in contrast to Satan's immobility. To be in sin is to be immobile; to be in grace is to venture through myriad worlds. "Why can the angels fly"? Chesterton asks. "Because they take themselves so lightly!"

- First world: the earth. Medieval world saw the world with wonder – all God's creation was good. Cathedrals are full of this world's creation in sculptural anecdote. Creation Spirituality has a root in these cathedrals!
- 2nd world: Cosmos. Planets, stars, open sky. The very dramatic verticality compel the gaze of the spirit upward. Images of the cosmos abound in cathedrals. The Zodiac becomes part of this when inside the building. "The heavens proclaim the glory of God"
- 3rd world: supernatural dimension. Realm of the angels and saints. The holy ones are not dead but vibrantly alive. Churches are not just monuments; they are dwelling places! They are everywhere. The Cathedral is a medium of exchange where these worlds of loving concern meet. Angels swarm. Cathedrals are not just about "their" world but "our"world – together. They *have to do with us!* They are intimately involved in the human story at messengers, conduits, companions, companions, etc. They have gone before us into the reaches of God but they are sill *with us*.
- All three worlds are connected. That's the message. Our life is caught up in all levels of life – the present and eternity; what is here and what is there; transcending all time and space.
- The Cathedrals speak the truth that the entirety of the cosmos, from the seraphim to the simplest elements, form what perfect and complex body which is "Christ come to full stature."

The Last Judgement...

- Front of the cathedral is the apse – Christians look to the "light of the world", the rising Son of God.
- Not only facing "to" something, also facing "away" from something! The "world". Hence why the face of a church is so imposing – resisting the world.
- We don't engage spiritual battles with our own weapons or strength. Rather, we use the... "Helmet of righteousness, breastplate of salvation, sword of justice – Christ's incarnation!".
- Church Fathers: Jesus precipitated warfare with evil – brought God's "order" to the world. Had to move into the arena of disorder to do this. Voided violence through forgiveness rather than feed it with vengeance.
- Although the battle is over, pockets of "resistance" remain!
- See fronts of cathedrals as the front line of these lingering battles – Note the presence of "sin" on facades. Last judgement scenes are common as well.
- Best place for evil to hide is in religious garb! The "pious" rarely have eyes to see the evil they do; cloaked in righteousness. Note: first demon Jesus confronts in Mark's Gospel is in a synagogue! Jesus' greatest enemies are the "religious" authorities. This judgement must awaken everyone to the raw basis of God's justice: It is Mercy I desire, not Sacrifice!
- Authentic Christianity is a fighting religion and it calls evil by its name. Christianity is fundamentally inclusive of the sinner and exclusive of sin.
- The church knows what stands "outside" of itself and turns its back to it: "The one who does not gather with me scatters." The need to turn your back on the world is evident in a Cathedrals entrance.

Our Jewish Origins

- Pius XI: “We Christians are fundamentally Semites.”
- Marcion heresy: Jesus “supersedes” the Old Testament (they only accepted Paul and Luke).
- See Church Fathers: ***The Old Testament is a symbolic anticipation of the New. Must read the Hebrew bible through the lens of the Gospel.***
- In a certain sense, the figures of the Old Testament “find their place” in the Church and are often depicted as people who are “at rest”. Often, scenes from the Old and New are intertwined so as to form a commentary on one another. Cf. Cathedral of Chartres – window telling the intertwined stories of the Good Samaritan and the Fall and Redemption. Message: Through sin, we fall from grace and become like the man in the parable; Only Jesus can save us out of compassion.

The Crypt

- Place of pilgrimage – often it was the destination of people who came to the cathedral.
- Many churches were built with “catacombs” under them so people could have the experience of “going into the earth”.
- **Christians venture into underground sacred places – cf. Tomb of Christ. We feel at home here almost as in the embrace of a mother.
- The crypt is the place of “intimate immanence” with God. The most sacred relics are usually kept here.
- Also, the earth is the place of “preternatural” beings: insects, spirits, goblins, vampires, etc. Don’t’ overlook this connection! When we delve into this area in a cathedral, we find that it has been made holy by the work of the divine – incarnation. The dark recesses have been illumined by the light of the world. It is no accident that Bram Stoker’s Dracula , one can confront the powers of darkness provided they are armed with the cross! God’s journey renders powerless those things that have terrorized and preyed upon the human race; they are driven out by God’s entering in!
- Crypts take you into the “foundation” of the church. That foundation is conversion, sanctity, and the lived experience of God’ historical intervention in the world; it is “Relic”.
- The Crypt is the final destination of the pilgrim (who began at the front doors) – the place where his own sanctification may be a foundation of faith when he too become a “Saint.”
- Note that from this destination, the pilgrim then exits the crypt, a place of darkness, to enter the air, light, and color of the church. The pilgrim “resurrects” to become a new being.

Verticality

- Height was designed to teach and inspire, not impress.
- Christianity and Judaism is distinguished from other ancient religions in that it teaches “God is not the world”. Things on earth are related to God but they are not God.
- The verticality of the cathedral serves to stress the “transcendence” of God.
- The world we live in is “dark” compared to the light from above – because our eyes are fixed on the City above, we see the city below with greater precision and judge it more critically! The heavens alone can illumine the present with clarity!

- Notice how Cathedrals grow in "beauty" the higher you look! No accident.
- Cathedrals invite us to "surrender" to something greater than ourselves. This "being outside oneself" is the term "ex-stasis" or "ecstacy".

Gargoyles

- See how serious plays (Shakespeare: Hamlet, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet) are interrupted by comedy scenes. Audience cannot stand relentless pressure. Dante's *Divine Comedy* also has intermittent conversations and figures of comedy. The Gargoyles serve this purpose.
- Gargoyles may serve a practical purpose but they also serve a spiritual purpose. Gargoyles may be monstrous or hybrids of natural forms (bird's head on a goat's body, etc.).
- Related to verticality: If the "real" world is in the heavens, then "this" world is not to be taken too seriously; it is relatively unimportant.
- Note that in the scriptures, God made the "sea monsters" to play with! What is frightening to us are really God's beloved creatures and to him are beautiful, majestic, indispensable to the full display of divine authority. Even the gargoyles have their place in the economy of salvation and the house of God!
- Hybrids are interesting: Christianity has it's deepest roots in the Incarnation of the Son of God becoming Man. Medieval people were captivated by hybrids – ex. Unicorns. They call to mind the "hybrid" who is our salvation: Jesus Christ – God and human. Hybrids invoke laughter because they bring together opposites (aristocrat who gets a pie in the face, man dressed as a woman, or....a gargoyle part age, part bird, part human). The juxtaposition of the infinite with the finite, the mortal with the immortal, etc.
- Gargoyles ensure that we never forget the comedian who made the world and the sublimity of the jest that saved us!

Sacred Geometry

- Until the modern time, mathematics and geometry were seen as "sacred science" that reflected the divine mind. Harmonic relationships of the cosmos was insight into the one made the earth itself!
- See the "numbering" of letters in the Hebrew bible. Ex: "David" adds up to 14, which explains why Matthew tells us there three sets of "fourteen" generations preceding the arrival of Christ: he is insinuating that Jesus was the perfect David. Also, Noah's Ark, the Ark of the Covenant, and the Jerusalem Temple were all designed according to exact mathematical specifications. All this was part of the "logic" or "Logos" ("Word") of God.
- Numerology was also important in the New Testament and the Church Fathers. Ex: John's catch of "153" fish. 153=1+2+3+4...+17 and 17 is the result of combining 10 (commandments) with 7 (gifts of the Holy Spirit). Origin says that Noah's Ark is 300 cubits long because is represents the crossing of 3 (divine persons) and 100 (totality of creation): divinization of the earth.
- Must read a cathedral's "numbering" system.

Virtues and Vices

- Ancient cities had particular "virtues" they tried to instill in their citizens. The same is true for the City of God – the Church.
- The cathedral, as embodiment of the Christian "city", shows us the warfare between the virtues and the vices. *Courage* (soldier) triumphs over *cowardice* (man running from rabbit), *charity* (woman giving away goods) over *avarice* (man counting coins), *faith* (woman with shield bearing chalice) over *idolatry* (man worshiping an ape). Most dramatic is *Hope* over *Despair*: woman reaching for crown vs. man who pierces himself with a sword.
- These depictions tell the pilgrim what behavior was to be expected of them! What was the "*ordo*" of that city.
- Common virtues to esteem: *Courage* (Christianity is a "fighting" religion), *Charity*, *Faith*, *Prudence, Hope.*
- Thus, Cathedrals aid in our "practice" of Christianity because they show us in very concrete ways what following Jesus "looks like."
- To be a member of this "city", you have to "do" a certain life which is never a generic challenge!

The Heavenly Liturgy

- Oldest term to describe church: *porta coeli* – gate of heaven.
- See Book of Revelation as Heavenly Liturgy!
- The building is subordinated to the ritual that takes place in it! Prayer is the reason for the church – with it they become living organisms.
- The liturgy is the acting-out of the "*ordo*" of God: the dying and rising of Jesus. People from all walks of life come together as one (Catholic). The Church is *communio.*
- *Sign of the Cross* – we live our life immersed in the Divine life of God – we are to reflect that life.
- *Kyrie* reminds us of having strayed from Christ's "*ordo*" for the world.
- Stories of salvation (scripture) reveal Jesus present in our lives.
- Climax of liturgy is the mystery of God present with us.
- Mass is ended, go in peace: once oriented to the heavenly order, we take that order out to transform the world according to it!
- The sacred liturgy acted out in the cathedral below is an icon of the liturgy that unfolds eternally above. If the cathedral is a body, then the liturgy (celestial and earthly) is its soul!

Appendix – Orvieto

History...

The fascinating history of Orvieto begins in the 8-9th centuries B.C. when the rock was inhabited for the first time by the Etruscans. The site of this settlement has in fact been identified with the Etruscan center of *Velzna* (*Volsinii* in Latin), a city which began to flourish in the beginning of the 6th century B.C. This economic prosperity was based mainly upon the production of ceramics and on bronze work.

From a political point of view, Velzna was in the forefront of the struggle against Roman expansionism, as a result of which in 254 B.C., having been occupied by the enemy armies, it was razed to the ground. Following upon the destruction of the city came the dispersion of its inhabitants who for the most part were forced to relocate to the highlands overlooking the lake of Bolsena (note that the name "Bolsena" is a corruption of the Etruscan name "Volsinii").

The name of the city appears to date back to this period of time. In fact, Velzna became known as *Volsinii Veteres* (Ancient Volsinii) or *Urbs Vetus* (the Old City) as distinguished from *Volsinii Novi* (New Volsinii), which today is known as Bolsena.

At the time of the barbarian invasions, Orvieto was occupied by Alaric the Goth and by Odovacar. Vitige took advantage of its strategic natural position to create a defensive stronghold in the war against the Byzantines. The imperial general Belisarius succeeded in conquering the position after a bitter siege in 538 A.D.; it was reoccupied temporarily by Totila before the final defeat of the Goths.

In 596 A.D. Orvieto was occupied by the longobard Agilulfo and had its own bishop and later, in 606, its own counts. One of the counts of Orvieto, Farolfo, within the framework of the religious rebirth imposed by Emperor Otto III, and in collaboration with Saint Romualdo, promoted the establishment of abbeys and monasteries in the surrounding territories. In the 11th century Orvieto became a *Comune* or City-State. The towers and palaces of noblemen of the area who had relocated to the city began to be built.

The institution of the Comune is documented beginning in 1137. Twenty years later a treaty was signed with Pope Adriano IV, which increased papal influence in the city and gave way to the struggle between the Guelfs or papal faction and the Ghibellines or imperialist faction. This struggle was destined to extend over a long period of time and marked the successive history of the city.

Orvieto soon became a Guelph stronghold of central Italy, holding out against the repeated attacks of the Ghibellines who had been expelled and the emperors Frederick I and Henry IV. In 1199, the Pope appointed the first *Podesta'* of Orvieto, Piero Parenzo, who was later killed in the civic battles between the opposing factions of the Monaldeschi (Guelphs) and the Filippeschi (Ghibellines).

In the meantime, the jurisdiction of the Comune was extended from Mount Amiata to Orbetello. The vitality of Orvieto can be seen in the construction activity of the period. It is at this time that the churches of *San Lorenzo degli Arari*, of *San Francesco*, of *San Domenico*, of *Santa Maria dei Servi* were built, as well as many public buildings such as the Comunal Palace, the *Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo*, and the Papal Palace. And in 1290, the building of the Cathedral was begun.

In the years 1281-1284, Pope Martino IV established a seat in Orvieto, filling the city with Frenchmen against whom the citizens rebelled. The battles were rekindled, and the Filippeschi or Ghibellines were expelled in 1313. New factions arose, the Beffati and the Malcorini, into which the Monaldeschi split. In 1334, Orvieto found in Ermanno Monaldeschi della Cervara its first Lord, who reigned until his death in 1337. In 1354 Cardinal Albornoz occupied Orvieto subjecting the city to papal rule. However, Orvieto preserved its comunal institutions, later becoming the capital of the fifth province of the papal state.

In 1860 Orvieto was annexed to the Italian Kingdom, which later became the Italian Republic.

The Cathedral of Orvieto...

1263 or 64, a Bohemian priest was on his way home from a pilgrimage to Rome. He stopped at Lake Bolsena, near the Umbrian town of Orvieto, to celebrate a holy mass, and was astounded to see so much blood drip out of the

communion wafers that it soaked through the cloth below. Pope Urban IV had the cloth carried to Orvieto and, to commemorate the miracle, he established the sacred holiday of Corpus Domini.

At the time, the cathedral of Orvieto was an old dilapidated building, certainly unworthy of housing such an important relic. It took the Popes sixty years to convince the townspeople to sponsor the construction of a new one.

Not until 1290 was the cornerstone laid, but soon the old basilica began to acquire a whole new gothic appearance, which blended Byzantine and northern elements and softened them into the so-called Italian Gothic style, of which the cathedral of Orvieto is a prime example. Still, as so often happens in Italy, no one is entirely certain who the author was. The prevailing opinion is that it was a rather obscure monk named Fra' Bevignate da Perugia, but many scholars think he was merely executing plans drawn up much earlier by the great Florentine architect Arnolfo di Cambio.

Perhaps it is irrelevant to try to link one name to this magnificent sanctuary, which took well over two centuries to reach its greatest splendor..

Visitors to Orvieto stroll down narrow medieval alleyways and suddenly find themselves face to face with this astounding façade, which soars seven stories into the sky. Begun by Lorenzo Maitani in the year 1300, it took more than 100 years to complete.

It might be hard to imagine that behind the incredibly ornate façade of the church lurks this simple oblong structure. No one knows who designed it, but the horizontal stripes of black and white marble, the bifore windows and the external niches all suggest that the Florentine architect Arnolfo di Cambio drew up the original plans.

The delicately carved rose window of the façade is surrounded by framed marble busts and life-sized sculpted figures in gothic niches.

Among the most important examples of early 14th-century Italian sculpture, the panels surrounding the main doors serve a function that was quite common in those days, when only the privileged few knew how to read: they tell stories. These are from Genesis. In the lower left, God is seen creating Eve from Adam's rib; above, the snake presides as Eve hands Adam the apple of original sin.

Elaborate in its simplicity, the cathedral's majestic interior is divided into a main nave and two flanking ones. Notice the delicate capitals atop the columns.

Influenced greatly by Dante's "Divine Comedy," but also and perhaps more vividly by the recent public death by torture of Savonarola, the apocalypse-preaching Florentine zealot, Luca Signorelli created what is perhaps the greatest masterpiece in this treasure trove. The Brizio Chapel is entirely frescoed with scenes depicting the end of the world, the resurrection of the dead, heaven and hell. Here, sinners condemned to eternal damnation bemoan their terrifying fate.

pix/duomo5.jpgOn the wall featuring stories of the Antichrist, Signorelli painted an exquisite portrait of himself (left) and his fellow artist, Fra' Angelico, who was renowned not only for his artistic genius, but also for the sweet naivete of his utter Christian devotion.

The "Well" of St. Patrick...

The **Pozzo di San Patrizio** (Saint Patrick's well) is a well built in the period 1527-1537, based on a design of Antonio da Sangallo, and its famous **double helix staircase** (something like DNA :-) will let you walk down into the well (62 meters or 200 feet, 248 steps for each ramp) and come back up again without retracing your steps. It was useful to carry out water with donkeys.