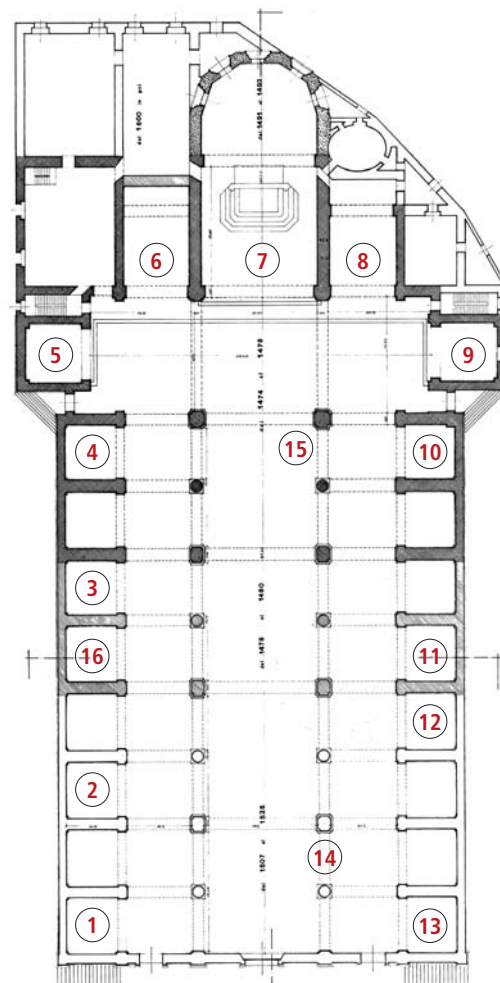


The early presence of the Christian Church in Faenza is proved by the participation of its bishop Costanzo in the Roman Synod of AD 313, but the information concerning the Episcopal Residence and the Cathedral is more obscure. Occasional findings convinced the scholars that the sacred place discovered in a nearby area was the site of the first cathedral. The oldest cathedral on which we have definite information was built there during the late 9<sup>th</sup> century. It was dedicated to St. Peter Apostle and was located on the podium (a small hill) already occupied by a pagan temple.

The idea to rebuild the Cathedral in the same area and, partially, on the very foundations of the ancient one, was conceived by the bishop *Federico Manfredi*, brother of the princes *Carlo* and *Galeotto*. Federico saw the new cathedral as the pivot of Faenza's urban renovation. The first foundation stone was laid on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1474 and Federico monitored the works until he fled from Faenza in 1477. His brother *Galeotto* took his place and when the Manfredi family died out, the construction works were continued by the local community. The architect of the cathedral was *Giuliano da Maiano* (1432-1490), a master craftsman who had learnt his skills from the teachings of Filippo Brunelleschi. The re-interpretation of his drawings by local workers might explain the presence of local architectural elements such as the pillars, that are clearly visible throughout the church. In 1486, *Lapo di Pagno di Lapo Portigiani* took *Giuliano's* place in supervising the works until 1511. The monument presents an unfinished façade; the marble facing of the wall, limited to the base, dates back to the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The interior, divided into three naves and a transept, has a polygonal apse with a bowl-shaped vault in the form of a shell. The square shape is constantly replicated in the interior architecture. The system of vaults is enhanced, in the transept, by large disks with the coat of arms of the Manfredi family, made of majolica and painted by the *Della Robbia* brothers in Florence. The additions and modifications to the chapels during the centuries reflect different styles belonging to various periods of artistic production in Faenza. Unfortunately, they have greatly altered the illumination of the cathedral.



It is advisable to begin a tour of the interiors on the left-hand side with:

#### 1. The Baptistry Chapel

The font was the only one existing in town until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The frescoes in the vault, depicting biblical scenes and prophets, have been ascribed to *G. Tonducci* (1562). The decorations of the front scene and side walls were made by *P. Saviotti* from Faenza (1828). In the central panel of the font is the image of St. Peter holding a round building in his hand. On the sides are the images of two saints. These decorations were done in collaboration with *P. Barilotto* from Faenza (1546).

#### 2. S. Carlo Borromeo

The baroque chapel, rich in stuccoes, has an altarpiece with the saint adoring the Holy Cross, painted by *A. Tiarini*; the oil paintings on the walls represent two scenes of the saint's life by *F. Fenzoni*.

#### 3. S. Pier Damiani

S. Pier Damiani died in Faenza in 1702. He was a reformer of the Church, a scholar and a wise man and was venerated in Faenza soon after his death. His remains have been on display in the cathedral since 1826. The decorations of the



chapel are an example of the eclectic style of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The two paintings on the walls, by *T. Dal Pozzo*, depict scenes of the saint's life.

#### 4. S. Emiliano

This Scottish bishop died in Faenza on his way back from Rome and has been venerated here since 1139. The saint's remains were placed inside the small monument over the altar which is made of three marble panels: in the centre is the Virgin and Child and on the sides the saints Emiliano and Luke, ascribed to the *Master of S. Terenzio* (about 1462). The two neo-classical statues represent Hope and Prudence allegories.

The Blessed Virgin of Graces is the patron saint of Faenza and its diocese. She has been venerated since 1412 when, while the people of Faenza were suffering the plague, she appeared to a woman assuring her she would act as mediator with her Divine son Jesus. The broken arrows demonstrate her effective intervention. The fresco at the centre of the altar, depicting the Virgin of Graces, was originally placed in the Dominican church of S. Andrea and in 1760 it was transferred to this chapel which was then dedicated to the saints Peter and Paul. Since that time, the image has been very popular, especially in the form of small ceramic devotional copies embedded in the walls of private houses or placed inside aediculas. In the medallion of the ancon, by the circle of *Toschini*, is a representation of the apparition. On the sides, there are the statues of the saints Peter and Paul that date back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 5. Beata Vergine delle Grazie

The Blessed Virgin of Graces is the patron saint of Faenza and its diocese. She has been venerated since 1412 when, while the people of Faenza were suffering the plague, she appeared to a woman assuring her she would act as mediator with her Divine son Jesus. The broken arrows demonstrate her effective intervention. The fresco at the centre of the altar, depicting the Virgin of Graces, was originally placed in the Dominican church of S. Andrea and in 1760 it was transferred to this chapel which was then dedicated to the saints Peter and Paul. Since that time, the image has been very popular, especially in the form of small ceramic devotional copies embedded in the walls of private houses or placed inside aediculas. In the medallion of the ancon, by the circle of *Toschini*, is a representation of the apparition. On the sides, there are the statues of the saints Peter and Paul that date back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 6. S. Savino

S. Savino was martyred during the persecution of Diocleziano and was buried in Spoleto. The cult of this saint flourished in Faenza during the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, under the rule of *Astorgio II Manfredi*. The widow of Astorgio commissioned the marble sarcophagus in 1468-70 (see the picture above). Vasari ascribed it to *Benedetto da Maiano*, but recently authoritative scholars have suggested the name of *Antonio Rossellino*. As the cathedral was still under construction, the sarcophagus could not be placed in this chapel until 1616. The decorations on the walls date back to this period. The frescoes were made by *B. Marini* from Urbino; the painting showing the death of the saint is by *F. Fenzoni*, while the stuccoes were made by local skilled master craftsmen.

#### 7. The Main Chapel

The name given to the altar is the same as that of the church: St. Peter Apostle, patron of the new Cathedral and of the old church. Originally, this chapel was bordered by a straight wall:

the present polygonal apse was added to the main chapel after 1481. The big altar is an early project by the architect G. Pistocchi from Faenza (1768). In the chancel we can see paintings by A. Tiarini from Bologna and four golden tablets ascribed to late gothic masters. In the vault there is a large ceramic disk with the coat of arms of the Manfredi family, by Andrea della Robbia (about 1477).



### 8. SS. Sacramento

The chapel in which the Holy Sacrament is kept is dedicated to the Madonna del Popolo. The frescoes, representing episodes in the life of the Virgin, are by B. Marini from Urbino; the painting, depicting the mystery of Epiphany, is by F. Fenzoni. The ancon, the altar and the tabernacle were made by Pietro Tomba from Faenza at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 9. Beato Nevolone

The Blessed Nevolone from Faenza was venerated soon after his death in 1280. The frescoes representing some episodes of his life are by A. and D. Barbiani (1765); the altarpiece was made by F. Gessi (17<sup>th</sup> century) from Bologna.

### 10. SS. Crocifisso

The dedication of this chapel dates back to 1480. The wooden Cross was made by an unknown German Master. The wall decorations are by the Liverani brothers and T. Dalpozzo (19<sup>th</sup> century). The fresco with Virgin and Child was made by the Florence workshop of Biagio d'Antonio in 1480, while the 17<sup>th</sup> century picture representing S. Sebastiano is by the Bolognese School.

### 11. S. Terenzio

This Saint lived as a hermit in the countryside surrounding Faenza. When he died, his relic was taken into town to a church dedicated to him near the Cathedral and kept in a sarcophagus made by an unknown master of the Tuscan area in 1462. At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the church dedicated to S. Terenzio was suppressed and the sarcophagus was transferred to the cathedral and placed inside the chapel of S. Michael Archangel. The bas-reliefs are amongst the most important works of art in the Cathedral. They represent a blind man advised by an angel to present himself to the saint; the blind man taken by hand to the saint; the blind man healed by the saint in front of notables and ministers. The characteristics of the decorations show that its creator (conventionally called Master of S. Terenzio) was familiar with the teachings of Piero della Francesca.

The neo-classical ancon made of scagliola, representing S. Michael Archangel, is by G.B. Ballanti Graziani (1810) and replaces a majolica lunette by A. della Robbia which is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Arts in New York.

### 12. S. Giovanni Battista

The chapel, named after St. John the Baptist, belonged to the Bonaccorsi family, to whom the altarpiece with the original ancon is dedicated. The "sacred conversation" (in the picture on the left) represented in the painting was made by Innocenzo da Imola (1526) in the style of Raphael. The chiaroscuro decorations on the walls are by R. Liverani (1862).

### 13. Madonna della Neve

The ancon, at the centre of the chapel, is original and dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but the painting by the brothers Dossi from Ferrara, was replaced in 1752 with a copy made by V. Biancoli from Cotignola. On the left-hand side we can admire the funerary monument of Cav. Bosi, made by the local sculptor P. Barilotto (1539).

On the front wall we can see a terracotta bas-relief representing the Annunciation which was recovered from the ruins of the medieval bridge of Faenza in 1842.

### Other Works of Art

Other remarkable works of art are the holy water stoup (14), on the right, by P. Barilotto (1536), the wooden pulpit of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the funerary monument of the General Evangelista Masi (Massi) (15), governor of Romagna who died in 1664, by an unknown sculptor belonging to the Roman Baroque School.

Because of the skeleton holding the banner that carries the inscription, people call this monument "Jacmena", which means death in the local dialect. Another important work of art belonging to the ancient heritage of the cathedral is the painting depicting the Dead Christ adored by two angels (16) (see the picture on the right) by Biagio d'Antonio from Florence (about 1480).

Inside the Cathedral there are many precious implements and sacred vestments and vessels which have been acquired and donated by pious nobles from Faenza throughout the centuries.



stampa Tipografia Faentina Faenza

On the cover of the leaflet: the cathedral seen from Piazza della Libertà; ceramic disk with the coat of arms of the Manfredi family in the vault over the Main Altar.

Weekdays: 7 a.m. to 12 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.  
Sundays and Holidays: 7.15 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

For further information please contact:  
Sacristy of the cathedral : 0546 664510  
Pro Loco - I.A.T.: tel./fax 0546 25231

# THE CATHEDRAL

## Faenza



edited by:



THE CATHEDRAL  
CHAPTER

PRO LOCO (I.A.T)  
Tourist Information  
Office