

The Cathedral Treasure Museum Chur

The Cathedral Treasure Museum comprises of two groups of objects: The actual cathedral treasure and the cycle of murals of the images of death from 1543, both of which are exhibited on two floors and are of unique value to visitors of all ages and specialists. The location of the museum, the baroque Episcopal Palace in Chur, is a grown cultural monument of national importance and also one of the most important secular buildings in Graubünden.

A cathedral treasure consists primarily of relics. These are remains of the body of a saint or also objects that were connected with the saint.

One of the oldest forms of the veneration of saints is the veneration of relics. The importance of relics is shown by reliquaries, i.e. the precious vessels in which relics are kept.

In addition to relics, a cathedral treasure also includes other treasures that have been gathered in a cathedral over the centuries, such as liturgical equipment used in worship. These include chalices, jugs for wine and water or incense burners.

The variety of objects belonging to the Chur Cathedral Treasure makes it possible to divide the exhibition on the ground floor into different thematic areas. Similar to walking through a cathedral from west to east, you will experience an increase in content. It begins in the secular area and leads on to the history of the diocese of Chur, which is around 1600 years old. In the actual cathedral treasury, you will then see in the third area precious liturgical equipment used for Holy Mass. And finally, you will reach the highlight of the exhibition, the cathedral's treasure of relics.

THE DIOCESE OF CHUR

- 1 a Ceremonial sword made of iron, known as the two-handed sword. Around 1500.
- b Mitre with rich silk and metal embroidery. 18th century. In 1777 a stand was made to match the mitre.
- c Silk pontifical shoes with gold embroidery. Early 20th century.

THE CATHEDRAL AS PLACE OF THE LITURGY

- 2 Great Rood of Triumph. Was originally located in the choir arch of the cathedral. Probably 13th century.
- 3 Bronze cross foot. The lower part shows the Garden of Eden, the upper Adam rising from his coffin. Around 1130–40.
- 4 Christ buried in Wollerau, 2nd half of the 14th century, from the collection of the 'Diocesan Museum of Schwyz'.
- 5 a Measuring set tray. Master stamp of the Augsburg gold- and silversmith Franz Christoph Mederle. 1743–1745.
- b Measuring jug for wine and water.
- c Measuring cup in gilded silver with the coat of arms of Bishop John V Flugi (r. 1601–1627). Dating from this period.
- d Gilded silver measuring cup. A work of the goldsmith Hans Mendl from Feldkirch, who worked from 1587–1626. Around 1612.
- e Neoromantic chalice. On the cupola there is an engraved round frieze with the Lord's Supper of Christ. Around 1917.
- f Palla. Depicted is the sweatshroud with the face of Christ. Painted silk relief. Early 19th century.

- 6 a Incense burner. The dome dates from the 2nd half of the 17th century and was reused for a barrel created in 1780/90.
- b Rococo incense burner. Work of the Augsburg master Caspar Xaver Stippeldey. Around 1779/81.
- c Portable brass holy-water basin. The Annunciation to Mary is depicted on the bottom. Around 1500.

- 7 Eucharist box. Belongs to the genus of the Bursen reliquaries. Gilded copper plate on wooden core. Can be opened at the bottom with a slide. 8th century.

- 8 Gothic tower monstrance. Around 1500.

- 9 a Cylindrical ivory pyxis. Fittings of gilded copper. 13th century.
- b Paxtafel. Mother-of-pearl tablet with flat cut crucifixion group. Southern German. Middle 15th century.
- c Case for the pax chart. Cowhide. On the front below the diocese coat of arms. South German. Middle 15th century.

- 10 Chasuble with maniple and stole (called robes). At the bottom coat of arms of Ulrich VII von Federspiel (bishop from 1692–1728). 1st third of the 18th century.

- 11 a Chasuble. Embroidered coats of arms Casaulta (?) applied to the back left and right. 2nd half of the 17th century.
- b Bursa. White silk with colourful silk embroidery. First half of the 18th century.

- 12 Chasuble. Silk fabric with ribbon decoration. Every second ribbon with Arabic characters. 1st half of the 14th century, around 1500, made into a chasuble and decorated with figures in relief embroidery.

- 13 a Altar cross. Base with shell-like decorations. The figure of Christ crucified with fluttering loincloth. 3rd quarter 18th century.
- b Painted altarpiece with the image of St. Catherine. Probably southern German. Partially painted over. Around 1500.
- c Painted altarpiece with representation of St. Barbara. Probably South German. Partially painted over. Around 1500.

- 14 a Bishop. May be from the circle of the sculptor and painter Jörg Kändel. Early 16th century.
- b Schmerzensmann. Attributed to the workshop of the Ravensburg carver Jakob Russ. Around 1490.
- c Holy Mary. Probably from the workshop of Niklaus Weckmann, Ulm. Around 1480.

- 15 a Cross made of a tin-lead alloy. It comes from an excavation next to the church St. Lawrence near Paspels. Approximately 600.
- b Oldest seal of the cathedral chapter with the enthroned Mother of God. Leg carved. 12th–13th century.

- 16 a Chestnut wood gymnasium plaque with a record of the sequence in which the canons were to perform the various functions of the choir service on a weekly basis. 12th/13th century
- b Lecture cross. 2nd half of the 15th century. Three-nailed crucifix around 1700.
- c Lecture cross. First half of the 14th century.

- 17 Lecture cross. First half of the 15th century.

- 18 a John the Baptist. Attributed to the workshop of Niklaus Weckmann in Ulm. Comes from the church San Vittore in Misox. Around 1505.
- b Gothic disc chandeliers. 15th/16th century.

THE CATHEDRAL'S TREASURE OF RELICS

- 19 a Ivory box with silver fittings. Made in the 14th century as a jewellery box and later converted into a reliquary.
- b Wooden reliquary boxes covered with richly decorated plates of bone. 11th century.
- c Ivory box in the shape of a chest with gilded copper fittings. Probably made around 1400 for secular use and later used as a reliquary.
- d Relic box from the collection of the former vicar general and cathedral provost Giusep Pelican. Originally taken from the high altar of the church of St. Laurentius, Surcasti. 11th century.

- 20 a Relic capsule. Inside wax medal, framed by relic packages and a monastic writing volume. Late 15th century.
- b Relic capsule. Inside wax medallion, including a medallion of St. Ursula. Framed by reliquary packets and a monastic writing volume. Late 15th century.
- c Rosary. Silver filigree with pendant medallion and reliquary capsule. 18th century.
- d Reliquary with wax medallion. Reverse side with representation of the Lamb of God and the Orsini coat of arms of Pope Benedict XIII (reigned 1724–1730). Around 1724.

- 21 e Reliquary glass. So-called. Nuppenbecher with authenticity from 18 September 1662. 16th century.
- f Reliquary glass. Enamel painted with three saints. Comes from the Antonius altar of the church of St. Thomas in Sevgein. 13th/14th century.
- g Roman bottle for ointments and essences. In the Middle Ages often reinterpreted as a reliquary.

- 22 a Reliquary bags. Silk fabric with gold thread. Guinea fowls and stems with leaves and grapes alternate in a row. Spain. 13th century.
- b Reliquary bags. Silk knitting. Shields and lilies alternate in a row. Western or Southern Europe. 14th century.

- 23 Wooden shrine. Engraved chalk base silver plated, partially gilded. The thin sides show the half figures of St. Lucius and St. Emerita. Early 15th century.

- 24 Gothic reliquary that may have been intended for the bones of St. Florinus. Around 1280.
- 25 Roman reliquary of St. Luzius from the Premonstratensian monastery of St. Luzi in Chur. Around 1252.
- 26 Bust reliquary of Saint Florinus. At the top of the head there is an opening with a hinged lid, below it is a fragment of a skull. Middle 14th century.
- 27 Bust reliquary of the holy Plazidus from the workshop of the Konstanz goldsmith Hans Schwartz. Around 1480.
- 28 Bust reliquary of Saint Lucius. The date of origin 1499 and donor, Abbot Johannes Walser of St. Luzi, are indicated on the pedestal.
- 29 Bust reliquary of Saint Emerita. The coat of arms of the empire (eagle) and the coat of arms of the bishopric (ibex) are attached to the base. Middle 15th century.
- 30 Bust reliquary of Saint Ursula. The inscription on the pedestal band mentions the dedication to St. Ursula and the year of its creation 1407.
- 31 Half-length figure of the Virgin Mary (patron saint of the cathedral). On the pedestal six representations from the life of Mary. Around 1600.
- 32 a Gothic reliquary monstrance with a chapel-like top. 14th century.
b Relic monstrance. Situated in front of the sight glass St. Helena with a cross. On your right the particles of the cross, on your left another relic. 14th century.
- 33 Chasuble cross. Figures made and appliquéd in relief embroidery. Around 1500.
- 34 a Marble sarcophagus. Possibly a former Roman ash box from the 5th century, taken from the sepulchre of the high altar in the cathedral in 1943.
b Pendant reliquary. Flattened hipped roof with eyelet. Comes from the sepulchre of the high altar. 8th century.
c Roman ivory medicine chest. Sliding lid with relief of the god Aeskulap (= god of healing). About 400. Comes from the sepulchre of the high altar.
d Plaster cast with adoration of the three wise men. Comes from the sepulchre of the high altar. Around 7th century.
- 35 a Silver reliquary from St. Lawrence, piping. Engraved medallions with cross, Constantinian monogram and Alpha and Omega. 5th century.

- b Reliquary of deer antlers with incised drawings. Comes from St. Lorenz, Paspels. 8th century

- 36 Fragment of a reliquary cover, so-called 'Samson cloth'. Persian-Egyptian silk. Made in Syria around 800.

GLOSSARY

BURSA. Fold-like, stiffened cloth bag for storing the linen cloth that served as a base for the measuring cup and paten (flat bowl for hosts).

EUCCHARIST. One of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church. Also known as the consecrated offerings of bread and wine.

CHASUBL. From Latin casula, 'little house.' Since the 13th century verifiable upper garment of catholic clergymen at mass celebration.

CHALICE VELUM. A cloth used to cover the communion cup.

BOWL. Upper part of a chalice.

MANIPLE. Double strip of cloth worn by the priest at mass service on the left forearm with a loop for the arm. Originated from a towel with which the priest used to clasp the holy instruments.

MEASURING SET TRAY AND MEASURING JUG. The measuring jugs, often on a suitable tray, are used in the eucharist service. They are used to take water and wine.

MONSTRANCE. From Latin monstrare, 'to show'. Pointing device in the middle of which a particle of a relic or host is visibly inserted.

PALLA. Double fabric with cardboard inlay to cover the measuring cup.

PEACE BOARD. Small tablet made of metal, wood or ivory with religious representation, which is handed out for a kiss of peace.

PREMONSTRATENSIAN. Order, founded in 1121 in Prémontré by Norbert of Xanten. The vestment of the Premonstratensians is exclusively white.

PYX. Cylindrical, tin-like container with lid; from early Christianity on used to store hosts.

RELIQUARY. Often a luxuriously executed receptacle to store relics; a reliquary in the form of a fabric bag is called a purse-reliquary or burse.

RELIC. From lat. reliquiae, 'remnants/remains', relics are mortal remains of saints (bones) or objects, which came in contact with saints; relics are objects of a special form of devotion, which is endowed with supernatural powers.

VERNICLE. Cloth to wipe the face.

SEPULCHRE. Lat. 'tomb'; specialist term for a 'reliquary tomb', i.e. a small hollow to hold a relic.

STOLE. Narrow sash of 2.5m length; reserved for priests, bishops and deacons. For priests and bishops, the stole rests on the neck and extends across the chest down almost to the knees. The deacon wears the stole in a sash shape, i.e. diagonally from the left shoulder to the right side.

CHRISTOGRAM. IHS. From the Greek letters I (=I), H (=E), S (=S): JES. Short for Jesus. Interpretation according to Latin letters: Jesus Hominum Salvator = Jesus, saviour of man.

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