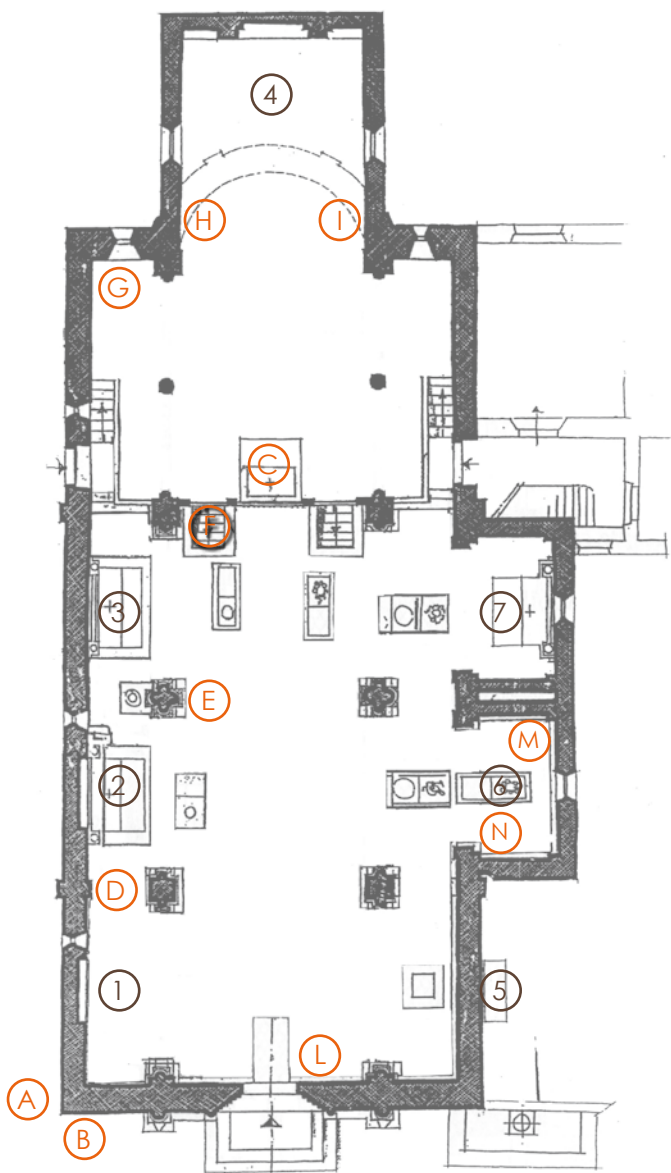# SAINT ANDREW'S CHURCH
PARISH OF MADERNO

PLAN OF THE CHURCH

New elaboration of the drawing of Roberto Bottoli and Claudio Stabili

SAINT ANDREW'S CHURCH

The Romanesque church of Saint Andrew was built on the bishop's initiative at the beginning of the twelfth century in the place where there probably, used to be an ancient sacellum (small chapel). The church also functioned as a "pieve" (that is a rural church with a baptistery) and was part of a complex including the rectory and the baptistery on the south side and the cemetery opposite the holy building.

THE FAÇADE

The **façade** is divided into three sections, reflecting externally the three naves of the inside, and is made of polychrome blocks of stone. It is fitted with many decorative elements such as the consoles supporting the Lombard bands, the single lancet window and the portal with embrasures: all the pieces of sculpture are inspired by Lombard models, especially the eagle, the ram and the two-tailed siren. Two fourteenth-century frescoes decorate the doorway: in the lunette the *Virgin Mary with the Child between two saints*, while in the lintel there remain some traces of a series of saints. Among them you can distinguish a bishop, maybe this is a portrait of Saint Herculanus. The lower part of the façade and the beginning of the side walls are characterized by the presence of architectural elements of the roman period: an epigraph **(A)** and three low reliefs representing a cupid on a two-wheeled chariot, two bucrania **(B)** and a banner holder. The top of the building is defined by five pinnacles of the modern age, the central one of them completed by an interesting Romanesque capital. The bell tower, dated 1469, is completed by a conical roof made of bricks of different colours.

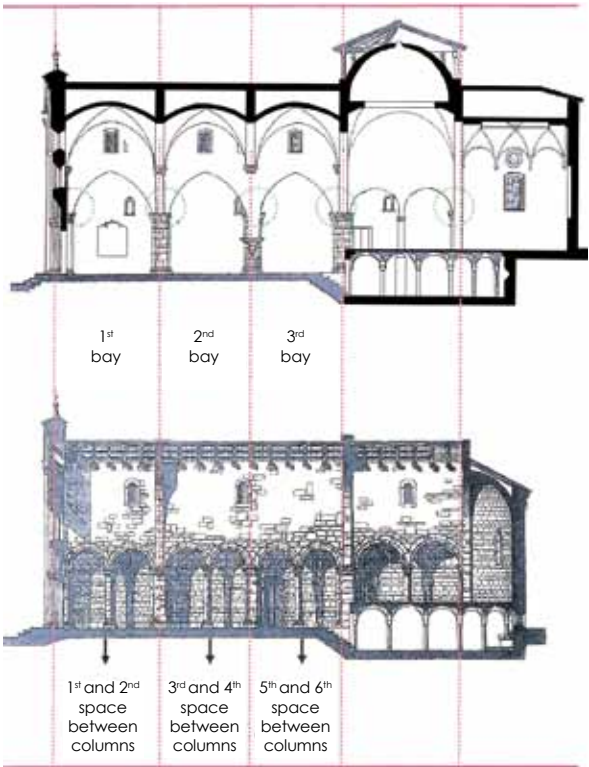
A

B

THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE CHURCH

During the centuries the church underwent deep transformations that remarkably modified its original aspect, mostly inside the building. In the beginning, the three naves were separated by a sequence of columns and pillars supporting round arches and the covering consisted of wooden trusses. The main section of the church building, oriented to the east, ended with a semicircular apse, under which lied the hall crypt where Saint Herculanus's relics were kept. At the end of the fifteenth century, the wooden roofs of the side aisles were replaced with cross vaults; this led to the elimination of the columns; consequently, the two pairs of round arches they supported were replaced by a single, large ogival arch supported by two pillars.

Towards the second half of the sixteenth century, after having made the side walls higher, the nave roof was replaced with cross vaults; in order to give more light to the holy building, a large rectangular window was opened in the centre of each bay; at the same time, on the façade, the round window above the portal was widened. A lantern tower was built and the ancient apse took on a rectangular form. The main altar was built in 1577.

After the Apostolic visitation (1580) by Milan's archbishop cardinal Carlo Borromeo, some

CROSS SECTION

Picture above: current situation
Picture below: Romanesque phase -
                         beginning of the XII century

1st bay	2nd bay	3rd bay

1st and 2nd space between columns	3rd and 4th space between columns	5th and 6th space between columns

New elaboration of the drawings of Roberto Bottoli and Claudio Stabili

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

1. Bell tower
2. Lantern tower
3. Side chapels
4. Added height to wall

of the dispositions that he had set on that occasion were implemented, such as: building of three chapels alongside the southern wall and lowering of the presbitery floor in order to offer a better vision of the altar to the people attending church services. This intervention led to the demolition of the upper part of the crypt and its subsequent filling in with earth.

PAINTING AND SCULPTURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

On the artistic view point one of the most interesting aspect of the church is represented by the richly ornamented **capitals** of the pillars in the nave; they are carved with iconographic motives such as vines, vegetal elements, beasts with intertwined tails or tongues and a two-tailed siren between rampant lions. In the presbytery the sculpted decoration is rich in Christological symbols, such as the fish, the eagle, the ram and the lion.

A **pluteus (C)**, that is a marble slab, initially part of the ancient railings that divided the believers from the clergy, is now used as the altar frontal. This sculpted piece dates back to the early Middle Ages and it is one of the few remains that has survived of the chapel that existed here before the building of the Romanesque church.

In the **keystone** of the triumphal arch there are two sculpted pieces: the one looking towards the church entry represents a grotesque face, similar to those that can be found in the façade while the second one, which can only be seen from the bottom of the apse, shows two human figures hugging each other.

Of the **original pictorial decoration** that enriched all the internal surfaces of the church, there remains only the capitals' red ground colouring. At the beginning of the fourteenth century the side walls and the walls of the nave were ornamented with a series of frescoes, with additions made during the fifteenth century coinciding with the increase in height of the side aisles.

THE ALTARS AND WORKS OF ART

Left of the main entrance, below the capital of the pillar leaning on the counter façade, you can see a coat-of-arms that could be a bishop's; at the beginning of the left aisle, the **first altar (1)** consists of a niche crowned by an inflexed arch, dating back to the fifteenth century; going ahead, on the first pilaster strip of the northern wall, you can see a painting of Saint Apollonia (according to local tradition), or more likely Saint Lucy **(D)** if the plate she's holding really contains her eyes (fifteenth century).

The **second altar (2)** is dedicated to Saint Bernardino of Siena and Saint Catherine of Alexandria, portrayed near the sarcophagus with Christ resurrected (fifteenth century). The fresco is set into a marble structure dating back to the half of the seventeenth century. The late fifteenth century decoration of the vault contains floral motifs, converging towards the Mystical Lamb. Two-tailed syrens and the Church Fathers are represented on the intrados. Around the

pillar ending the second bay, in ancient times there was the pulpit, of which only the base, dated 1566, and the painting with Moses and the Tablets of Law remain **(E)**.

The **third altar (3)** is dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary and it is decorated with a wooden altarpiece of the 1600s made up of fifteen panels with the Misteries of the Rosary; in the middle, in a niche, there is a polychrome statue representing the Immaculate (twentieth century). The altar front is made of a red marble slab, with an inscription celebrating Saint Herculanus' moral virtues and the miracles he made during his life and after his death as well. He was bishop in Brescia in the sixth century and died as a hermit in Campione del Garda. The frescoes of the vault date back to the first decades of the seventeenth century.

On the third left pillar of the nave, above the entrance to the crypt, on the 12 of August 2011, a Paolo Veneziano **(F)** painting (half of the fourteenth century) that had been stolen in 1975, has been positioned here again. The painting, a wash drawing work on a golden background, shows the V*irgin Mary with the Child.* Saint Sebastian **(G)** (fifteenth century) is portrayed at the end of the left side aisle, in the northern section of the presbytery.

The **main altar** (1577) dedicated to Saint Andrew consists of an altarpiece framed in a painted decoration with volutes and two ionic columns supporting a tympanum. In the middle of the cornice, an arch houses a large crucifix **(4)**.

The walls of the presbytery are embellished by two paintings: Andrea Vicentino's late sixteenth century *Madonna with Child and two musician angels* **(H)** on the left and Antonio Paglia's painting with Saint Joseph, Saint Philip Neri, Saint Lawrence and Saint Valentine **(I)** of the second or third decade of the eighteenth century, on the right.

Right of the main entrance, on the counter façade, you can observe a work of the end of the fifteenth century, representing the bishop Saint Nicholas **(L)**. On the southern wall, in correspondence with the **first right bay (5)**, there used to be the chapel built at the end of the sixteenth century, then demolished between 1959 and 1962 to give a more symmetrical look to the façade.
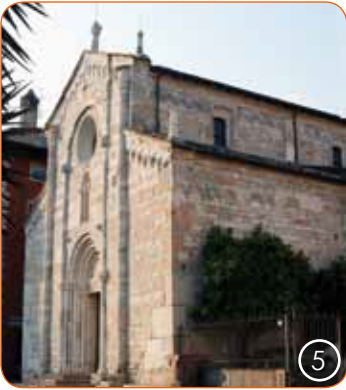
the **second chapel (6)**, **dating back to the end of the sixteenth century, is dedicated to** **Saint Lawrence of Rome;** the altar piece was painted by Giovanni andrea Bertanza and it portrays *saint Lawrence in gloria* (beginning of the seventeenth century). On the eastern wall you can find the painting by Grazio cossali dated 1628 representing the *Baptism of christ* **(M)**. On the altar, there's a 1600s wooden bust of the *ecce homo*. an epigraph commemorating Lorenzino Lancetta **(N)**, died 1389, is set into the western wall.
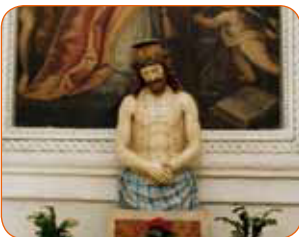
Saint Herculanus is the titular saint of the **third chapel (7)**: it is decorated with stuccoes and frescoes: the main structure was built in 1587, to honour the saint and to keep his mortal remains after the demolition of the crypt. The plastic and painted decoration was completed only at the beginning of the XVII century. Above the altar, a painting represents *Saint Herculanus and Saint Francis of Assisi* (XVII century). The ceiling is decorated with golden stucco friezes and frescoes depicting scenes from the life of the Saint. In 1825 the relics were transferred into the new parish church, where they still are kept in an urn in the second chapel on the right.

Below the presbytery, the hall crypt is the result of a restoration project carried out between 1959 and 1962. The crypt front is characterized by three passageways made of concrete; the access is granted by two symmetrical flight of stairs. the crypt we can see now corresponds exactly to the ancient structure, with the lower section of pilasters still leaning on the perimeter wall. during reconstruction, vaults, pillars and capitals were made in concrete or were assembled using materials found when the crypt was re-opened. apart from the above-mentioned pilasters, other original elements in the crypt are: the traces of frescoes dating back to the XiV and XVi centuries, a fragment of the holy altar and the lower part of a r omanesque splayed monofore, oriented to the east to let in the first rays of the sun, a symbol for the light of c hrist lighting the world.
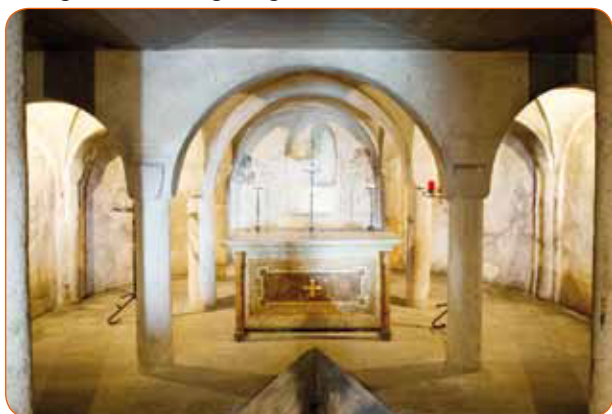
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