

The sanctuary of Our Lady of the Castle

Structure of the video and layout choices:

The video gives a brief panoramic of the three different churches that make up the complex of Our Lady of the Castle: the crypt, the parish church and the sanctuary. The different structures are presented in chronological order and the video focuses on the history of the building during the centuries and on its most artistically important characteristics. This approach was chosen to highlight the historical value of this edifice, which has stood the test of time while going through numerous changes.

Contents:

Around the I century B.C. a Roman villa was built where the complex now stands, above the slope in which the river Brembo flows.

During the following centuries, the villa was used as a residence for the Longobard king.

Near the palace there was a Palatine Chapel that became a crypt when the area was fortified during the X century and the parish church was built on top of it.

The “Pieve” of S.Salvatore was the parish church and, originally, its style was Pre-Romanesque. At the end of the XI century some changes were made that gave the church a more Romanesque appearance.

During the XIV century, the church was abandoned and started decaying. To avoid the collapse of the edifice, a buttress was built. On the 26th of April 1506 the buttress was found a metre and a half away from where it had been placed, revealing a fresco of the Madonna and Child that was hidden behind it. The miracle attracted enough donations to pay for the erection of a new sanctuary consecrated in 1590.

The sanctuary has a rectangular plan and only one nave. The altar is placed against the front of the old parish church and the miraculous painting is surrounded by a small Renaissance temple with an octagonal plant.

Above the central door on the front we can see an inscription that says “ECCE REGINA MUNDI” (“Here is the queen of the world”).

Recommendations:

It is advisable to also visit all the other Romanesque churches in the area of Lemine, because they hold just as much value as the sanctuary of Our Lady of the Castle. You can find a list of the most important ones at the link:

<https://www.fondazionelemine.eu/le-chiese-del-romanico-degli-almenno/> .

Bibliography:

- P. Manzoni *Romanico, gotico e rinascimento ad Almenno: guida dialogata*, Bolis Edizioni 2014 (in Italian);
- Don A. Rota *La Madonna del Castello in Almenno San Salvatore*, PRESS R3 1989 (in Italian)

Sitography:

- Lemine foundation:
<https://www.fondazionelemine.eu/le-chiese-del-romanico-degli-almenno/madonna-del-castello/>;

- Wikipedia: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santuario_della_Madonna_del_Castello;
- Valle Imagna's website page dedicated to the sanctuary of Our Lady:
<https://vallimagna.com/madonna-del-castello-almenno-san-salvatore/>;