



The Sansevero Chapel





The history of Sansevero Chapel



The Sansevero Chapel in Naples was built a long time ago. Inside Sansevero Chapel, people from the di Sangro family are buried. The Chapel gets its name from the family of Raimondo di Sangro Prince of Sansevero. Raimondo di Sangro is the one who made the Chapel as beautiful as you can see it now.



A story of a long time ago tells you how the Chapel was built. Some things are true, some other things are not true. The story is about a man who saw the Virgin Mary in a garden. The Virgin Mary is Jesus' mother. Seeing the Virgin Mary is a very special thing, which only happens to very few people.

This man had been arrested by the police and asked the Virgin Mary if he could be freed. The man was freed, and he went back to the garden, taking a gift for the Virgin Mary. From that moment, many people started visiting that garden and praying there to the Virgin Mary.

After a long time di Sangro family also started praying the Madonna in that garden and had a chapel built there. People from the di Sangro family were buried in the chapel when they died.

When Raimondo di Sangro became Prince of Sansevero, he decided to make the chapel even more beautiful and elegant. Raimondo wanted everyone who visited the Chapel to understand that his family was very important and powerful.



For the Chapel, Raimondo asked many artists to make:

- paintings
- statues.

Raimondo worked on finishing the Chapel until he died.

Many people visited Sansevero Chapel because it was so beautiful.

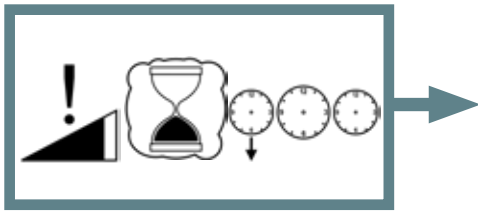
A short time ago Sansevero Chapel became a museum.

Today many people visit the Chapel.





A very long time ago



A man who had been arrested sees the Virgin Mary and asks her if he can be freed. The Virgin Mary helps him.



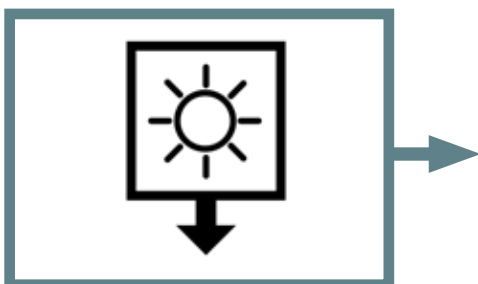
Many people go to that same garden to pray.



The di Sangro family has a chapel built in that garden.



Raimondo di Sangro makes the Chapel bigger and more beautiful.



Today



The Chapel is a museum.



What is the layout of Sansevero Chapel



Sansevero Chapel is a big rectangular room called a nave.

On the right and on the left are 4 big arches.

An arch is like a half circle.

Inside the Chapel you can see many big statues.



Raimondo di Sangro asked some sculptors to make these statues to remember family members who had died:

- the statues under the big arches remember men
- the other statues remember women.

A sculptor is the person who makes statues.

One statue in the Chapel is dedicated to Raimondo's father, who was called Antonio.

Another statue is dedicated to Raimondo's mother, who was called Cecilia.

The statues of di Sangro's parents are on either sides of the high altar.



The statues that remember Raimondo's father and the women in Raimondo's family represent virtues. A person who has virtue is someone who is very good at doing good things.



You will see this drawing every time we talk about a virtue.



For example, this statue represents the virtue of self-control.

A person has self-control when they:

- know how to behave
- can control emotions like anger and happiness
- think a lot before doing something important.



Raimondo had these statues made to help the people who came to the Chapel to understand that everyone have to work hard to become good and clever.

Raimondo wanted every part of the Chapel to be beautiful and special and asked some very good artists to make the ceiling and the floor.

On the Chapel ceiling, you can see a painting called The Glory of Paradise.



Find out how the ceiling was painted on page 38

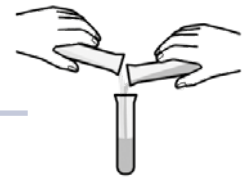
Find out how the floor was made on page 66



Raimondo was a clever and curious man.
He loved to study and **invent** new things.
Invent means to think of
and build objects that did not exist before.
His inventions included:



- **medicines**
that cured people of serious illnesses.



- **a cannon that could shoot from very very far.**
A cannon was a very big weapon
that shot very heavy balls made of stone or iron.
Cannons were used to destroy ships,
castles and big buildings



- **a special cloak**
that did not get wet in water.



Raimondo gave one of these cloaks to King Charles of Bourbon,
who wore it to keep dry in the rain.

- **special paints that lasted a very long time.**
You can see the paints Raimondo invented,
like green and blue, on the Chapel ceiling.





- a carriage that could run on water.

A long time ago people used carriage to move from place to place, like cars today.

The coach Raimondo invented was entirely of wood.



Carrozza Marittima d'invenzione del Principe di Sansevero

It had 4 wheels and 2 horses pulled it.

The horses were not real but were also made of wood.

Instead of wheels, the carriage had pieces of wood that moved the water away and pushed the coach forward.



- **coloured fireworks.**

When these fireworks blew up,
they made beautiful drawings in the sky



- **a very big and special clock.**

The clock was in Raimondo's garden.

When the clock's hands marked the beginning of an hour,
the clock made the sound of nice music.



Raimondo become famous for all of these inventions.

Some people thought he was a special person.

But other people thought he was strange
because he did things nobody else did.