



## What is a basilica

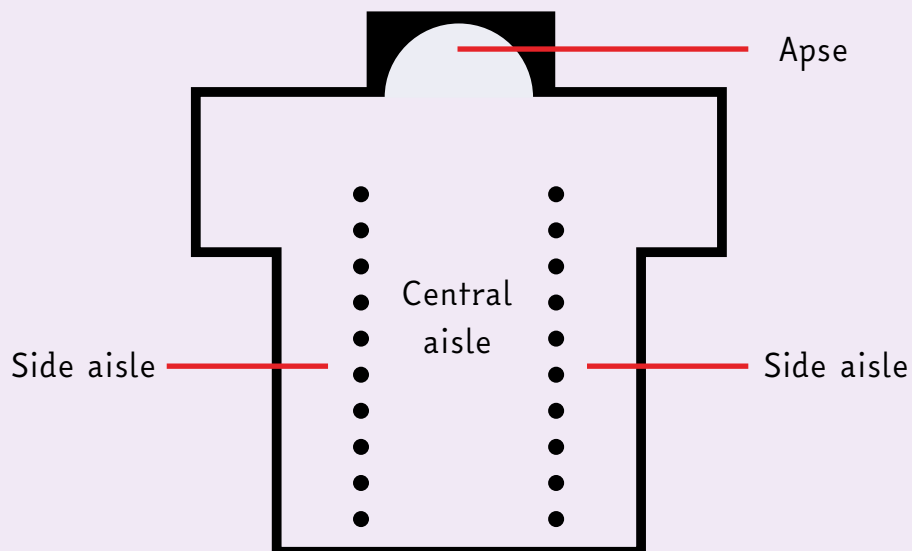
Today, very large special churches are called basilicas.

Basilicas are always built in cities

where there are many Christians.

A Christian is a person who prays to Jesus Christ.

A basilica always has:



- **A central aisle.**

The aisle is a large, long rectangular room.

This is the most important part of the basilica.

- **An apse.**

This is the part at the end of the aisle and has the shape of a half circle.

- **2 side aisles.**

The side aisles are smaller rectangular rooms.

The side aisles are to the right and left of the central aisle.



A long time ago, a basilica was not a church.

When the ancient Romans ruled in Italy, basilicas were the place where people discussed important laws for a city.

Every important city had its basilica.

In the apse sat the judge who decided the laws of the city.

After a very long time, Christians started to use the basilicas of the ancient Romans to pray to Jesus Christ.

Christians used basilicas because they were very large and many people could fit inside them.

Where before the judge sat,

the Christians put the **altar**.

The altar is the table that priests and bishops use to do mass.



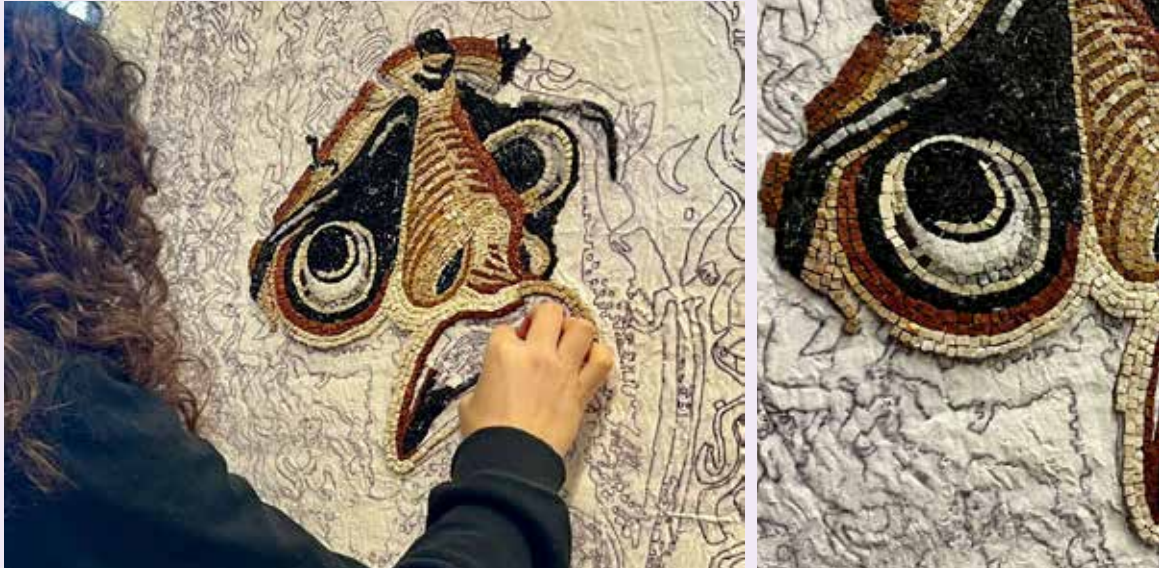
After a while, Christians started to build

their basilicas to use them as churches in important cities.


**Even today, basilicas are used as churches and Christians go there to pray.**



## How mosaics are made



A mosaic is a drawing made with many small squares of stone or coloured glass placed next to each other. These squares are called **tiles**.

The tiles used in Aquileia are as big as this little square. 

A mosaic can be made on floors, walls and ceilings. Making a mosaic is very difficult. For this reason mosaics are very precious. The people who make mosaics are called **mosaicists**. These people are very good because they can make beautiful designs using very small tiles.



To make a mosaic you make many layers on top of each other of earth and pebbles.

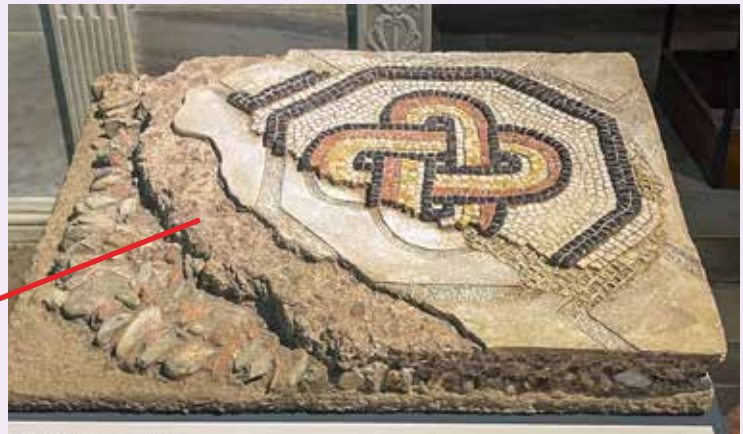
These layers of earth and pebbles must be smooth and flat.

On the last layer of earth, the mosaicists make lines to mark where to put the tiles.

Next, they place the tiles of different colours to make the drawing.

To the right of the **altar** of the church of Aquileia you can see a piece of mosaic.

Here you can see the layers of earth where you put the mosaic tiles.



The altar is the table that priests and bishops use to say mass.

The people who work in the Basilica asked famous mosaicists to make this piece of mosaic.

The people who work in the Basilica wanted to show you how a mosaic is made.

Here you can see and touch all the layers of earth and pebbles that are under the tiles.







The mosaics in the Basilica of Aquileia are from a very long time ago.

Bishop Theodore called some very good mosaicists to make this floor.

In these mosaics many animals are drawn and many important people for the Christian religion too.

**A very long time ago, priests used these mosaics to make people understand some difficult things about religion with drawings.**

These mosaics are very famous and many people come to see them from all over the world.



## Learning about the life of Jesus with mosaics

The **catechists** of the Basilica of Aquileia used the mosaics of Jonah to help people discover and learn the life of Jesus and the important things he said. Catechists are the people who explain the life of Jesus and the things he said. The life of Jesus is told in the books called **Gospels**.



In **scene 1** you see Jonah looking dead after a monster had eaten him. Jonah, however, had remained alive inside the monster's belly. The catechists showed **scene 1** to explain that Jesus had also died. Jesus, however, had really died on the cross.



In **scene 2** you see the monster after three days spitting Jonah still alive on a beach.

The catechists showed scene 2 to explain the **resurrection of Jesus**.

Resurrection is when Jesus came back to life after dying. Jesus also came back to life after 3 days like Jonah.



In **scene 3** you see Jonah resting quietly under some gourds.

The catechists showed this scene to make it clear that Jesus wants all people to be peaceful during life and after death.