What is the Patriarchal Basilica of Aquileia

The Patriarchal Basilica of Aquileia

The **Patriarchal Basilica of Aquileia** is a church of a very long time ago.
This basilica is a very big and special church.

This basilica is called patriarchal because a patriarch ruled there.
A patriarch is a very important bishop.
A bishop is the head of the Christians of a city.
A Christian is someone who prays to Jesus Christ.

Together with the Basilica you can visit:

- **Two crypts.**
  A crypt is a room built under
  a church.
  This is the **Crypt of the frescoes**.
  In one of the crypts you can see
  many frescoes.
  Here you can see many paintings
  made on the walls.

This is the Crypt of the excavations.
Here you can see
the most **ancient** parts
of the church.
Ancient means
of a very long time ago.

- **The Baptistery.**
  The Baptistery is the place
  where people go to receive **Baptism**.
  Baptism is the moment
  when a person becomes a Christian.

- **The South Hall.**
  This was the room where people got ready to be baptized.

- **The steeple.**
  Many churches had a steeple near them.
  A steeple is a very high tower where they keep bells.
  Bells ring to remember people to pray.

The Basilica you see today is very different from the one of a very long time ago.
Over the years many bishops had new parts built and had some of the most ancient parts of the basilica changed.

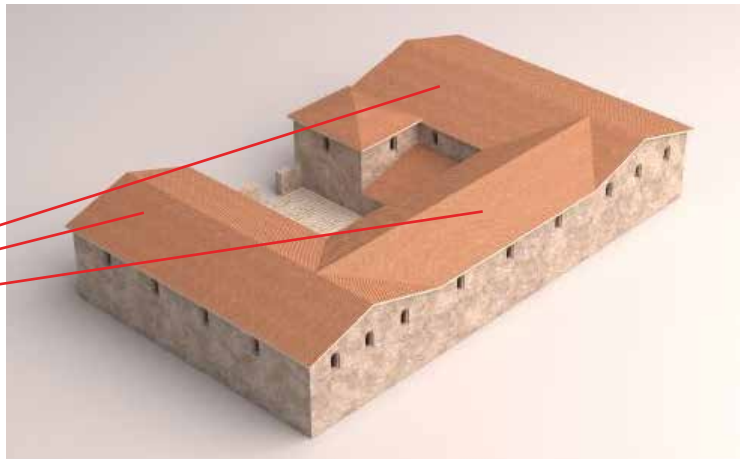
INSIGHTS

For more information about what is a basilica go to page 77.

The history of the Patriarchal Basilica of Aquileia

Bishop Theodore had part of the Patriarchal Basilica of Aquileia built, that is the oldest one.
Bishop Theodore was the leader of the **Christians** of Aquileia of a very long time ago.
A Christian is a person who prays to Jesus Christ.
Bishop Theodore decided to have the Basilica built here because Aquileia was a very important and rich city where many Christians lived.

In this drawing you see what the Basilica looked like built by Theodore:
3 large spaces joined by a corridor.



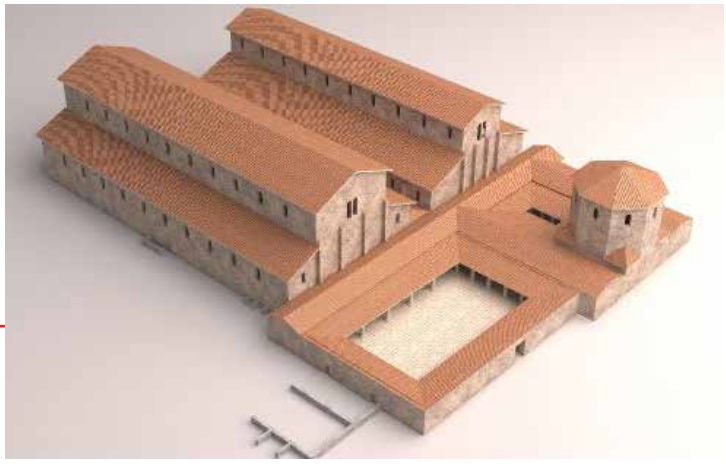
All the floors were made of **mosaics**.

A mosaic is a drawing made with many little squares of stone or coloured glass placed next to each other.
A mosaic can be made on floors, walls and ceilings.
Making a mosaic is very difficult.
For this reason mosaics are very precious.

After a long time other bishops had other rooms built and covered the mosaics with other floors.

When the Huns arrived in Aquileia
they destroyed the city and part of the Basilica.
The Huns were a group of people
who lived far away from Italy.
The Huns attacked Italian cities
to take food and treasures.

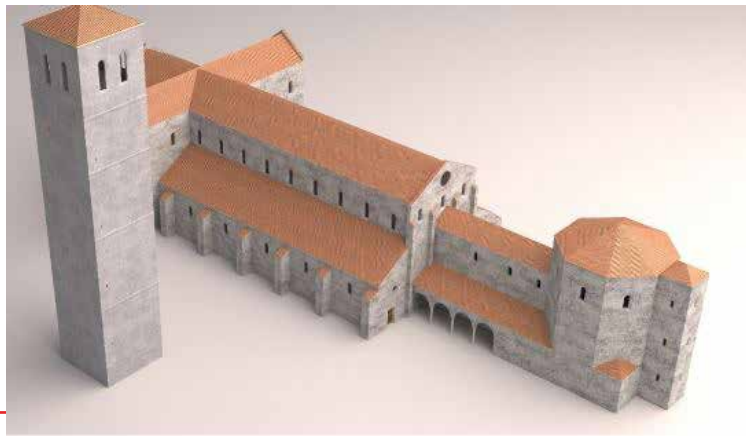
After a long time, other bishops
had other rooms built
and the Basilica became
bigger and bigger.



Those bishops had the mosaics covered with other floors.
For a long time no one remembered they were there.

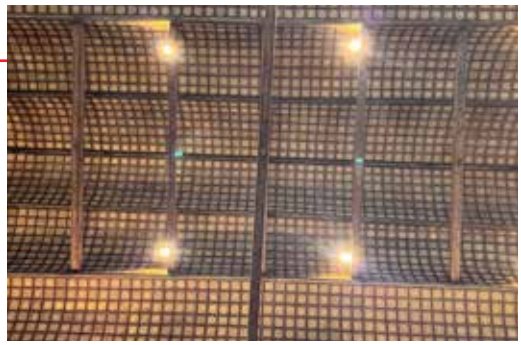
After a long time, in the year 1031,
Patriarch Popone had
a much larger Basilica built
to remember Mary, the mother of Jesus.
A patriarch is a very important bishop.

Popone had
the Basilica built over
the older parts
of the basilica itself.
The Basilica became
as you see it today.



After a long time, another patriarch had some parts of the Basilic fixed, those that had been damaged by earthquakes:

- He had arches added to divide the **central aisle** from those on the right and left.
  The central aisle is a large, long rectangular room.
  This is the most important part of the basilica.
- He had the ceiling covered with square, painted pieces of wood.

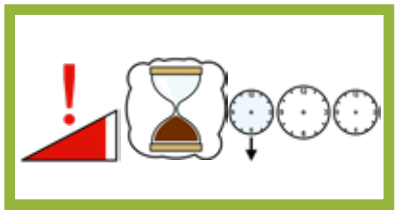


Only a short time ago,
about 100 years ago,
the people working in the basilica
decided to remove the floors
to show everyone the mosaics that were underneath.

INSIGHTS

For more information about how mosaics are made
go to page 79.

A very long time ago



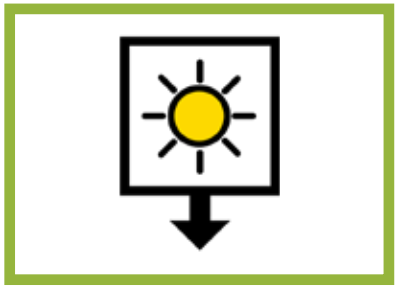
Bishop Theodore
has the Patriarchal Basilica
of Aquileia built.

The Unhs burn some parts
of the Basilica.

Some other bishops
fix the burnt halls
and make the Basilica
bigger.

Year 1031

Patriarch Popone
has a new Basilica
built over the old one.



Many people
come to the Basilica
to see its very beautiful
mosaics.

Today