

Devotion and Pilgrimage

Devotion is the gift of oneself or one's activities to God. It is the willingness and desire to dedicate oneself to serving God, either in terms of prayers or through a set of pious acts, such as the adoration of God or the veneration of the saints or the Virgin Mary. This is a key characteristic of Roman Catholicism. Devotion is not part of the official liturgy, but a part of the popular spiritual practices of Christians. Private devotion is expressed in burial monuments and devotional gifts given to the Church as jewellery, artefacts such as a goblet, textile, wax or glass. Places of worship were built as an important part of residences. Common aspects of devotion are seen in prayers, pilgrimage, festivities, veneration of various saints and saintly images. The adoration of God, devotion to Divine Mercy and various cults are related to the belief in an afterlife and miracles, which are centred on saving lives. This is why the cult of devotion increases in times of war or epidemics. An important role was played by commemorative culture, which included not only epitaphs and tombs, but also prayers, music and masses. An important aspect of devotion is connected to the Revelation of God or the saints, which was seen as verification for the real presence of Divine Mercy in the world. Most artworks of the period are related to aspects of devotion – churches, votive paintings, sculptures and reliquaries. Various expressions of devotion are found in folk art – not only in various votive artefacts, but also in the music, ceremonial culture or literature. The veneration of various saints and devotional festivities has also influenced some parts of the Christian calendar. Small votive buildings, such as Calvary chapels complete the landscape with parish or pilgrimage churches, monasteries, castles, cities or villages, all of which are employed to spread the idea of Divine Mercy.



High altar for San Pietro Cathedral of Bologna

1753- post 1756

San Pietro Cathedral of Bologna
Bologna, Emilia-Romagna, Italy



Goblet

1687

Chiesa della Natività di Maria
Portoferraio, Isola d'Elba, Italy



Saint Charles Borromeo Administers the Sacrament to the Plague-Infected

1752–53

Christian Museum of Esztergom
Esztergom, Közép-Magyarország /
Central Hungary, Hungary



Church of Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres

1672

Braganza Dynasty, King Pedro II
Beja, Beja, Portugal



Tomb

1739–1740

Zagreb Cathedral Treasury
Zagreb, North-West Croatia,
Croatia



Mikulov Town

1680–1720

Mikulov, Moravia, Czech Republic