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Founding Figures

In 612 AD, Gallus found his way to the shores of Lake Constance with other Irish monks and settled into seclusion within the high Steinach valley.

His cell and oratory led to the beginning of a small settlement. Legend has it that Gallus made a pact of peaceful co-existence with a bear in the wilderness. Iconography therefore depicts him with a bear at his side and bread in his hand. His testimony of faith attracted more and more people until his death around 650 AD when he was buried in the oratory within his cell. Today, his tomb is located beneath the high altar in the Gallus crypt, erected 837–39. Relics, which Gallus is said to have brought to the site, are placed at the Gallus altar located in the vestry to the right of the choir screen. Here is also the Gallus bell, which dates back to early medieval times. In 719, the priest Otmar of Raetia was appointed to form a monastic community from the hermit settlement around Gallus' grave. He adopted the rules of the Benedictines and became the first abbot of the rapidly thriving monastery. He was famous not only for his building activities but also for his care of the poor and sick. Due to political turmoil, he was exiled to the island of Werd, where he died in 759. His remains are housed at the west end of the cathedral in the St.Otmar crypt, where former bishops of St.Gallen are also laid to rest.



Domparrei



bistum st.gallen

„So come to him, to the living stone which was rejected by men but chosen by God and of great worth to him. You also, as living stones, must be built up into a spiritual temple.“
(Bible: 1 Peter 2, 4-5)

Pastoral Ministry today

As both a parish and Episcopal church, the St.Gallen Cathedral is dedicated to serving all people.

A living heritage – facing all needs – at the centre of things

With this mission in mind, we offer

- various types of worship and prayer services on weekdays, weekends and holidays
- opportunities for individual confession
- guided tours: 'The Cathedral Experience'
- a rich tradition of sacred music in liturgical and/or concert settings provided by various DomMusik ensembles.
- pastoral support and diaconal services in DomZentrum (Gallusstrasse 34 – Gallusplatz)

Information

Additional information regarding our worship services as well as other offers of the Dom Parish can be found in the foyer at the west entrance.

www.dom.kathsg.ch

www.dommusik-sg.ch

www.stibi.ch

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St.Gallen Cathedral

Dear Visitor

Welcome to the Cathedral of St.Gall, the Episcopal Church of the Diocese of St.Gallen. The magnificent Baroque splendour of the Cathedral is a visible expression of the greatness of God.

I wish you a fulfilling experience whether you are exploring the church and its surroundings, participating in a worship service or taking time for reflection and private prayer.

May God bless you.

Markus Büchel
11th Bishop of St.Gallen



World Heritage Site

The first abbey church was built over Gallus' grave around 719, followed by various alterations and new constructions. The present day church was erected between 1755–66 under the auspices of Prince-Abbot Cölestin Gugger. Considered one of the last great sacred structures of the Baroque era, it is distinguished by the perfectly harmonious longitudinal and transverse axes supported by the central rotunda. After the dissolution of the Benedictine monastery in 1805, the abbey church became the Cathedral for the Diocese of St.Gallen, established in 1847, as well as the head church of the Dom Parish. The interior was renovated and restored to its original state between 1962–67. 2013, design of the sanctuary. The Cathedral, along with the abbey precinct, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Place of Prayer and Tranquillity

What men have built of stone to the glory of God will stand the test the time forever. The liturgy and prayers of the monks as well as those of many believers today have influenced and sanctified this place for hundreds of years. Countless people enter – to allow themselves a moment of tranquillity, to bring a prayer request before God by lighting a candle or to experience strength and forgiveness..... The power and beauty of this sacred place lie beyond the scope of our imagination and lead us into the realm of the Divine. Open your mind and heart to this and it will uplift you as you continue along your journey.



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Places in the Cathedral

The rotunda marks the centre of the church. There you find the altar, ambo and font. The congregation is seated in the nave along diagonally placed pews. Around the altar are seats for those assisting in the liturgy as well as the special wooden cathedra or bishop's throne.

Looking upward into the cupola, one sees a painting depicting paradise with the Holy Trinity in the centre surrounded by a host of saints. They represent each of the beatitudes and are grouped together in order of their significance. It is clear: they are interceding before God on our behalf.

The floral floor pattern, renewed around the altar in 2013, and the gilded flowers along the choir screen symbolize a garden. A garden was the first place God put man and it is here that God's

presence with his people begins. New life arose in a garden. The risen Lord appeared to Mary Magdalene in a garden. She was the first witness to the Resurrection.

Behind the screen are the original monks' choir stalls. These precious stalls with their beautiful inlay and woodcarving depict scenes from the life of St. Benedict. The curved form of the stalls is strikingly noticeable and through its design, leaves an empty centre space, mysteriously suggesting God's presence among us.

The confessionals along the walls of the nave are additional works of art from the same group of craftsmen. They are adorned with relief carvings based on bible stories of renewal and reconciliation. Along the left side are stories with women, to the right, stories with men.