

# Das Baptisterium von Concordia Sagittaria. Ikonographie als Spiegelbild hochmittelalterlicher Taufkatechese und Tauffliturgie

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## Abstract

The Baptistry of Concordia Sagittaria. Iconography as a Reflection of Baptismal Catechesis and Liturgy in the High Middle Ages

The baptistry of Concordia Sagittaria in Veneto, built as a triconchos, is the only Romanesque baptistry from the late 11th and early 12th centuries still intact in Italy today, along with the significant remains of its interior pictorial decoration. Thanks to an entry in the *Liber anniversorium admodum reverendi capituli concordensi* (1576), we know that it was founded by Reginpoto from Bavaria, bishop of Concordia from 1089 to 1105. The essay places the geopolitical, ecclesiastical and baptismal-administrative context of Reginpoto's Baptistry within the north Italian restorative and representative episcopal donor tradition operative since the Ottonian-Salic period. In this tradition, cathedral baptisteries embodied both the 'birthplace' of an episcopally determined urban collective, and the matrix of all baptismal parish churches in their diocese. A first iconographic analysis of both the monumental *Majestas Domini* located in the dome as well as the *Ecclesia coelestis*, which is only partially preserved today in the central baptismal space and in the altar niche, documents a carefully devised figuration of the ecclesiological, baptismal-theological and liturgical levels of meaning presented in medieval commentaries on the Apocalypse. A survey of contemporary Roman episcopal baptismal catechesis and the baptismal liturgy of the Patriarchate of Aquileia, which can be assumed as ritual template in Concordia, the oldest suffragan diocese, together with a corpus of commentaries on baptism dating from the early Christian period to the High Middle Ages – furnishes insight into the multilayered interweaving of the image-axes reaching from the Holy Spirit at the zenith of the dome to the baptism of Christ in the altar niche. These went far deeper than the individual rites, into the most important forms of prayer and blessing, as well as chants.