

The windows on the right side depict:

- Damage to the Jesuit church and college during World War II; John the Baptist, the patron saint of the church
- Christ healing the leper (Mark 1:40-45)
- Christ saving the adulteress from being stoned (John 8:7: „Let him who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her“)
- The parable of the lost and found son (Luke 15:11-32)
- Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuit order (1491-1556): „In Rome I will have mercy on you“ (reference to the order's services in Rome in the 16th century)

The Pieta

The statue of our lady of grace, dating from around 1500, is a folk work from the Lahn River and has been worshiped here since 1587.

Legend tells, that in 1529 a wedding party threw the statue into the Lahn River. This resulted in an argument and the thrower lost his right hand. Intercessory prayers to Mary in front of the pieta led to healings from paralysis and headaches.

The miraculous image survived the destruction of the church in 1944 almost unscathed.

To this day, many worshippers find dialogue with God through the statue of the grieving Mary, both in their sorrow and in their gratitude.

The Jesuit Buildings

Adjacent to the church on the left side is a building, built around 1770, of which a part still belongs to the church today. To the right stands the magnificent Jesuit Gymnasium, completed in 1701, for more than 300 students. Since 1891, it has been part of the town hall. From 1947 to 1948, the state parliament of Rhineland-Palatinate met here, whose capital was Koblenz until 1951. The gateway leads to the old Jesuit college (today: Town Hall Building II). The Renaissance portal of the west building (1592) leads into a courtyard around which the church, the Princes' Building (1671) and the south building (1589) are grouped. This is where the Jesuits and their students lived and studied.

Text:

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City Church Koblenz
Am Jesuitenplatz 4
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City Church Opening Hours

Monday to Saturday
(except public holidays)
9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Open Doors in the Foyer
Tuesday to Saturday
10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Counseling Services

with pastoral workers and priests
from the Koblenz Pastoral Area
(* with opportunity for confession)

Monday	3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday *	3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday	3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Thursday *	9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Friday	9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Saturday *	9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.



A guide through the City Church



September 2025

Welcome to the City Church

The former Jesuit Church of St. John the Baptist is in a long spiritual tradition. Beguines, Cistercians, Jesuits and most recently the Arnstein Fathers prayed and worked there. For almost 800 years, people have encountered God in worship, in silence and in meeting different people at this place in the heart of the city.

Today the Koblenz City Church, a member of the „Ecumenical Network of City Church Projects,“ is a place for creative breaks, as well as for dialogue and discussion on religious and social issues.

With its varied events, meditative inspiration and pastoral care (including confession and counseling), it offers a space for encounters and the opportunity to rediscover faith.

In the foyer of the City Church, guests are welcomed by a team of volunteers and full-time employees at the so called “open-door”.

From the Beguinage to the City Church

Where the City Church stands today Beguines founded a new settlement in 1242. They were pious women who, inspired by the „religious women’s movement“ of the High Middle Ages, sought a new way of life. The beguines soon adopted the Cistercian rule. In 1254 the Construction of their monastery began and finally in 1290, the church was consecrated to St. Bernard.

In 1580 the Archbishop of Trier settled Jesuits into the monastery as a result of the Counter-Reformation in Germany. Meanwhile the nuns had to move to Niederwerth, a small island close to Koblenz.

A focus of the Jesuit priests’ activities was the services and confessional counseling in the newly built Church of St. John the Baptist, which was completed in 1617, as well as sermons and missions in the surrounding parishes. Their grammar school was the leading school in Koblenz and the surrounding area until the temporary dissolution of the order in 1773. The tradition of the Jesuit grammar school still lives on in the “Görres Gymnasium” a school close by the City Church.

On July 19th, 1944, the Jesuit church was destroyed during the bombing of Koblenz in World War II. The new building was designed by Gottfried Böhm (1920-2021). Only the Baroque sacristy with its original furnishings and the west façade were preserved.

The Jesuits were forced to leave Koblenz three times. They left permanently in 2003 due to lack of new members. From 2004 to 2023, Arnstein priests from the Order of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (ss.cc.) worked at this church (which has been called „City Church Koblenz“ since 2004).



A tour through the City Church

Facade

Of St. John’s Church, consecrated in 1617, only the facade and sacristy remain. Gottfried Böhm added a modern nave in 1958/59.

The City Church’s facade combines a Gothic-style rose window and a Renaissance portal, featuring a figure of the patron saint, John the Baptist, in the center and the founder of the Jesuit order, Ignatius of Loyola (left) and his companion, Francis Xavier. The use of familiar Gothic elements testifies to the efforts of the then-young Jesuit order to establish itself in the Rhineland.

The Interior

The three-aisled structure of the old church is still reflected in the separation of the side rooms. The entrance hall and the side meeting rooms were redesigned in 2006/2007 by Gottfried Böhm to make them more open and brighter.

The modern church interior, with its clear walls, is striking in its height and width. It is open all the way to the roof ridge. At the same time, the open space is meditatively introspective. The richly decorated sacristy door next to the sanctuary is a testament to the old church, as are the sandstone pillars and keystones with coats of arms and saints in Renaissance styles, which have been integrated into the new building.

Choir and Trinity Image

The high point of the church is the sanctuary with its raised tabernacle. The current celebration altar and the ambo, the place where the Word of God is proclaimed, have been moved closer to the congregation.

Jakob Schwarzkopf’s choir windows from 1962 characterize the choir. The left-hand windows depict the creation of heaven and earth, light and darkness, the sun, moon and stars, water and plants. In the right-hand windows, God creates fishes, birds and land animals, as well as Adam, who is enlightened by flashes coming from God’s hand.

The Trinity image above the tabernacle was carved from oak by Edith Peres-Lethmate in 1959. The crucified Christ, God the Father and the dove of the Holy Spirit form a circle in impenetrable unity, a symbol of perfection and eternity.

Stations of the Cross and Stained Glass Windows

The artist Edith Peres-Lethmate (1927-2017), born in Koblenz, designed the Stations of the Cross with its 14 stations in oak wood in 1959.

The Koblenz artist Jakob Schwarzkopf (1926-2001) created all the stained glass windows of the City Church in 1962.

The windows on the left side of the nave depict:

- The sinful tax collector as a genuine person and the Pharisee as a seemingly pious person (Luke 18:9-14)
- Jesus resurrects the young man of Nain (Luke 7:11-17)
- The good Samaritan as a model of selfless charity (Luke 10:25-35)
- Christ as the good Shepherd (John 10:11)
- The Jesuit Peter Canisius (1521-97), committed to the restoration of church life after the Reformation: „You opened your most sacred heart to me, Lord.“