

- Christ as the Good Pastor (Jo 10, 11);
- the Jesuit Peter Canisius (1521 – 97), committed to restore ecclesiastic life after the Protestant Reformation: “Lord, you have opened to me your Sacred Heard.”

The windows on the right side show:

- destruction of the Jesuit Church and College during World War II; John the Baptist, the patron of the church;
- Christ heals a leper (Mk 1, 40 – 45);
- Christ saves the woman caught in adultery from being stoned (Jo 8,7: “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”);
- the parable of the lost and found son (Lk 15, 11 – 32);
- St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits (1491 – 1556): “In Rome, I will be merciful to you” (in reference to the services of the Order in Rome in the 16th century).

The Statue of Our Lady

The statue of Our Lady was created about 1500 as a popular art work of the Lahn river region. She is venerated here since 1587.

The legend tells us, that during a marriage in 1529 the statue was thrown into the Lahn river. Then the group entered immediately into a fight and the one who threw the statue lost his right hand.

Later, praying for intercession of the Virgin in front of the statue of Our Lady lead to the healing of paralysis and headaches.

The statue of Our Lady resisted the destruction of the church building in 1944 nearly without damages.

Until today people pray in front of the statue of the grieving Mother and find to a dialogue with God within their needs and thankfulness.

The Jesuits' Buildings

On the left side of the church, you find a building constructed about 1770, and the right part of it still belongs to the church. On the right side you can find the Jesuit College built in 1701 for more than 300 pupils. Since 1891 the City Hall of the municipality of Coblenz is occupying these buildings. In 1947/48 the parliament of Rhineland-Palatinate used this building, as Coblenz was its capital up to 1951. The passage leads to the old Jesuit College (today: City Hall Building II). The Renaissance-Portal of the Western Building (1592) leads to a courtyard, limited by the church, the Princes' Building (1671) and the Southern Building (1589). Here lived and studied the Jesuits and their pupils.

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“Open Door”:

Tuesday to Saturday
10.00 hs to 17.30 hs (october – march)
10.00 hs to 19.00 hs (april – september)
(on Thursday evenings, two hours longer)
Tel: 0261/1330537 (in Germany)

Confession and Pastoral Conversations with Priests (generally in German):

Monday to Saturday:
9.30 hs to 11.30 hs
Monday to Friday:
15.00 hs to 17.00 hs

Pastoral of Conversation with Women in Pastoral Care (generally in German):

Monday: 15.00 hs to 17.00 hs



Citykirche am Jesuitenplatz
Project of an Open Church
Coblenz/Rhine River

Small Guide through the Church



Welcome to the Open Church

The former Jesuits' Church has a long spiritual tradition. Beguines, Cistercian Nuns and Jesuits prayed, lived and worked here. Since nearly 800 years, in this place of the Historic City, people are meeting God during liturgies, in the silence or while meeting other people.

Since 2004, this tradition is continued in the actual Open Church by the Fathers of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (in Germany known as "Arnsteiner Patres" – the Fathers of Arnstein). They celebrate Masses, the Laudes (the liturgical morning prayer) and the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and they are also responsible to accompany those who want to join again the Catholic Church.

At the point of information "Open Door" in the entrance hall of the Open Church, a team of committed Christians welcomes the visitors.

From the Beginage Community to the Open Church

About 1242, the Beginage formed a community of pious women who searched for a new way of life inspired by the "Feminine Pious Movement" of the High Middle Ages. Soon, they took the rule of the Cistercian Order. In 1254 they began the construction of their monastery, and in 1290 the Church was consecrated to St. Bernhard.

Attempting to stop the spreading of Protestantism, in 1580 the Archbishop of Treveris invited the Jesuits to settle in the monastery. The Nuns were resettled on the island of Niederwerth, situated in the Rhine River just north of Coblenz.

Within the main tasks of the Jesuit Fathers, there were the liturgies and confessions, both realized in the church that had been modernized in 1617 and since then was dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The Jesuits assured as well the preaching of missions in the neighboring parishes. Their secondary school was the most important one in Coblenz until the dissolution of their Order in 1773. Its tradition lives on in the "Görres Gymnasium" (College of Secondary School of Görres). On the 19th of July of 1944, the Church of the Jesuits has been destroyed. The architect Gottfried Böhm (born in 1920) has rebuilt it in modern style in 1958/59.

Three times the Jesuits had to leave Coblenz. In 2003, because of the lack of vocations, they left definitely. Since then, the Fathers of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary serve at St. John the Baptist's Church.



A guide through the Church building

The Facade

In 1617, the Church has been dedicated to St. John the Baptist; from that time, only the facade and the sacristy remain. In 1958/59 Gottfried Böhm added a modern nave to them.

The facade combines a Gothic style rose window and a Renaissance-Portal with, in the center, a statue of the patron St. John the Baptist and on his right hand the founder of the Jesuits, St. Ignatius of Loyola and his companion St. Francis Xavier on his left hand. This shows that the young community of the Jesuits at that time made an effort to become at home in the Rhineland as they included traditional Gothic elements of the regional construction style.

The Interior

The plan of a nave with two aisles of the old church building still is visible; the rooms for confession and conversation occupy the aisles. Together with the entrance hall, they have been remade in 2006/07 by Gottfried Böhm in order to be more open and illuminated.

The modern central nave with its clear walls surprises by its height and extension as it opens up widely up to the roof. At the same time the room invites to meditation and contemplation.

The richly ornamented sacristy door beside the choir is a testimony of the old church building, such as the columns of sandstone and the angular stones with coats of arms and saints in Renaissance style in the entrance hall.

The Choir and the Representation of the Holy Trinity

At the height of the central nave, you find the choir with the elevated altar of the Blessed Sacrament. The actual altar for the celebrations and the ambon as the place to announce the Word of God are placed within the assembly.

The windows of the choir, created in 1962 by Jakob Schwarzkopf, give a specific ambiance to the choir room. On the left hand, the windows represent the creation of heaven and earth, light and darkness, sun, moon and stars, water and plants. On the windows on the right hand, you see God creating fishes, birds, land animals and also Adam – enlightened by lightnings from God's hand.

The representation of the Holy Trinity just above the altar of the Blessed Sacrament was made of oak wood in 1959 by Edith Peres-Lethmate. The crucified Christ, God Father and the Dove of the Holy Spirit form, in an inseparable unit, a circle as a symbol of perfection and eternity.

Cross Way and Stained Glass Windows

Edith Peres-Lethmate is an artist born in Coblenz in 1927. She composed the Cross Way centered on the most significant elements. The 14 stations are realized in oak wood.

Jakob Schwarzkopf (1926 – 2001) was another artist of Coblenz, who created all the stained glass windows of St. John the Baptist Church in 1962.

The windows on the left side of the nave show:

- the sinful tax collector as a real pious person and the pharisee showing only the appearance of one (Lk 18, 9 – 14);
- Jesus wakes up to life the young man of Nain (Lk 7, 11 – 17);
- the merciful Samaritan as ideal of selfless charity (Lk 10, 25 – 35);