

The year 1000

Characterized by the emergence of the Holy Roman Empire and the temporal power of the church, the early Middle Ages end with the year 1000. Chieri appears as a rural village, an imperial "Curtis" under the control of Landolfo, the bishop of Turin.

In his testament (1037) he recalls that in Chieri he completed the tower and the castle with higher walls that girded the Fortress of San Giorgio. Furthermore he had a church built, very quickly but artistically, not far from the castle, devoted to Holy Mary Mother of God. He had it decorated with images, vestments and vessels used for rites and other sacred ornaments. The building was demolished at the beginning of the 15th century in order to build the present gothic temple (the Cathedral), however some traces of it are still visible in the lower part of the baptistery and in the crypt.

Early Middle Ages

Carreum suffered a drastic demographic decline and a downsizing of the town from the end of the second century AD, probably due to the hydrogeological instability that caused the landslide of the unstable hill of San Giorgio with the consequent abandonment of large sections of the city.

In the area of the future baptistery, on the site of a first imperial domus, late-ancient walls arose, perhaps connected to an early Christian cult building with an adjoining cemetery, as attested by an epigraph from the fifth century.

In the second half of the 6th century, nuclei of Longobards

settled on what remained of the Roman city, as evidenced by some precarious structures and the remains of a church for funerary purposes.

Archaeology: Carreum Potentia

In 1957 explorers of the Chieri section of the “National Body of Young Italian Explorers” discovered fragments of pottery and bricks from the Roman Age in a field in Fontaneto road (in the Maddalene area). After these first discoveries archaeological research in Chieri and in the surrounding Chieri area began. It was further carried on in other sites (Valle Miglioretti, Ponte del Nuovo, Regione Tetti Fasano, Baptistry), where the remains of the aqueduct supplying Carreum were found. In the last decades the excavations, supervised by the Regional Archaeological Authority (for example, Palazzo Bruni, Casa Maggio, via San Raffaele), have definitely made clear the Roman structure of Carreum Potentia and the following settlement phases.

The Romans in Chieri

The exact administrative borders of the “municipium” of Carreum-Potentia are unknown. It was located in the centre of a field that had been subject to drainage since the 2nd century B.C. It was inhabited by settlers from central Italy but was excluded from the great commercial route represented by the river Po and, it is thought, not included in the via Fulvia

which connected Turin (Augusta Taurinorum) to Tortona (Derthona) which then headed towards the Tyrrhenian sea.

The Roman presence in the Chieri area is testified by about twenty epigraphs, found between the humanistic age and the nineteenth century, some of which have been lost, as well as by conspicuous remains of the aqueduct between Pino Torinese (Tetti Miglioretti) and Carreum Potentia.

Celtic-Ligurian settlement

The name of “Chieri” comes from the Celtic root “Karr”, changed in the Roman Age to the official double name “Carreum-Potentia”, as mentioned in the list of towns made by the Roman historian Pliny the Elder in the middle of the 1st Century A.D. We know very little about the first Celtic-Ligurian settlement (4th century B.C) which was most likely located on the terraced slopes of the Rocca di San Giorgio. Remains of a hut and an area for baking ceramic pots have been found during archaeological investigations conducted in via Visca. Other traces emerged during excavations in via Palazzo di Città and in the smaller vicolo Tre Re.

Introduction to the exhibition

Welcome! We are in the former convent of San Filippo Neri, an eighteenth century building, part of which are the baroque church and a chapel now used as an exhibition venue. The convent housed the Archbishop's seminary from 1828 up until 1949. The student *Giovanni Bosco*, to whom the exhibition devotes a specific section, walked these same corridors. The history and the art of Chieri are told chronologically: Ancient, Medieval, Modern and Contemporary history.

By using the touchscreens or a smartphone it is possible to study each theme more in depth.