



## CHURCH OF S. TEODORO (ST. THEODORUS)

You can find this point of interest in Cantù - Path 1 - Stage 2

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### INFORMATION

**Location:** the church of S. Teodoro (St. Theodorus) prospers on the square of the same name, opening on a side of via Eugenio Corbetta.

**Access:** the main access is through the front door on the square; it is also possible, however, to enter from a secondary door, on the left side of the church, situated on a passage between the square and via Volta. A third entrance is on the back of the building, between the right apse and the chapel of the Crucifix; it is accessed from via Volta crossing a fenced space on the back of the church.

**Paving:** the square is paved in slabs of stone; at its centre is a green flowerbed, that holds some archaeological relics. The staircase is paved in stone, as well as the small platform at the top.

The passage that, starting from via Volta, flanks the left side of the church is in cubes of porphyry. The fenced space on the back is paved in stone.

The church is paved in bricks, with the exception of the apses, in small slabs, and of the chapel of the Crucifix, in polished marble.

**Architectural barriers:** the entrance is reached by a staircase with eight steps and a hand railing on both sides. The staircase leads to a platform delimited on the front by a low iron railing resting on small stone pillars. Before the main entrance there is a low step in stone. The main entrance has a revolving door.

The side entrance on the left also has a revolving door. At the beginning and at the end of the passage on the left side of the church are two cement kerbstones.

To access the fenced space at the back of the building you have to descend two steps; the entrance on the back also has a revolving door.

Inside the church, to reach the apse of the central nave, four steps have to be ascended; to reach the apses of the side naves two steps (a slide is also available in the right apse); to reach the chapel of the Crucifix, one stone step.

**Services:** parking available nearby (you can park in the square only at the time of religious services; cash dispenser in Via Corbetta; bus stop in via Alessandro Volta).

**Leisure and Food:** bars and restaurants in the neighbourhood; shops; city theater San Teodoro in via Corbetta 7; public garden in via Dante (Parco Argenti).

**Other information:** the church is usually open. For opening times call 031.714570 (Parish of S. Teodoro – Secretary).

### DESCRIPTION

The church of S. Teodoro (St. Theodorus) was mentioned for the first time in a document of the year 1207; according to recent studies, the church should have been built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In some documents the church has the double dedication to the Saints Bartholomew and Theodorus.

During the Counter-Reform, at the half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the church was subject to renovation works: in particular the lateral apses were demolished and replaced by two chapels with a rectangular plan, with the wall at the bottom almost in line with the main apse. The desire to align the architecture of the church to the baroque style was completed by the intervention of Gerolamo Quadrio (who at the time was leading the Fabricery of the Cathedral of Milan, and was already working in Cantù in the project of the church of S.

Maria). He redefined the vaults and the pillars, and probably reconstructed the bell tower (which was renovated again in 1831 by adding the octaedron and the dome). The chapel of the Crucifix was built on the right of the church in the second half of the 19th century; at the beginning of the following century, under the direction of the architect Campanini, a series of interventions were carried over in order to restore the church in its original shape, not least the reconstruction of the two side apses. In the years 2001-2003, under the direction of the architect Luigi Vaghi, who also designed the project, further important works of restoration and consolidation were completed.

The simple facade alternates big square blocks at the bottom with pilasters in cobbles and fired bricks. It is dominated by a beautiful portal of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in gray and yellow sandstone; above, at the centre, is an image of the bishop Teodoro. The interior shows a structure with three naves, delimited by heavy square pillars. Each nave ends with an apse, but only the central one is considered original. Few traces remain of the decoration mentioned by cardinal Federico Borromeo in 1604; one is the fresco of *San Giovanni Battista (St. John the Baptist)* on the first pillar on the left, another is the refined ***Our Lady of the Milk***, dated by some art historians at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, that was ripped and inserted in a baroque frame along the left nave. At the beginning of the right nave, a niche, decorated by a fresco of the *Battesimo di Gesù (Jesus' Baptism)* contains a baptismal font of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The presbytery opens at the end of the central nave, delimited by a beautiful marble balustrade, with an elegant wrought iron gate; the main altar, of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is in polichrome marbles; on the wall of the apse stands a fresco with *Il Crocifisso tra San Bartolomeo e San Teodoro (the Crucifix between Saint Bartholomew and Saint Theodorus)*, dating back to the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The altar at the end of the left apse is currently dedicated to the *Immaculate Conception*, while that at the end of the right nave is overlooked by a lovely wooden statue of *Sant'Agata (Saint Agatha)*.

The chapel of the Crucifix holds a precious wooden *Crucifix*, with true hair and spines, originally in the demolished church of the Saints Giacomo and Filippo; under the plan of the altar is a representation of the *Souls of the Purgatory*.