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# The Thirteenth-Century Fresco Decoration of Santa Maria Ad Cryptas in Fossa, Italy

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THE THIRTEENTH-CENTURY FRESCO DECORATION OF SANTA MARIA AD  
CRYPTAS IN FOSSA, ITALY

A THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in the  
College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2009

by

Ashley Wilemon Walker

Committee:

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Dr. Glenn Gunhouse, Chair

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Dr. Maria Gindhart, Member

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Dr. John Decker, Member

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Date

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Department Chair

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CRYPTAS IN FOSSA, ITALY

by

ASHLEY WILEMON WALKER

Under the Direction of Dr. Glenn Gunhouse

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the fresco decoration of Santa Maria ad Cryptas. The frescoes are described and analyzed, and then compared to similar programs in order to determine which features are based on earlier sources, and which are unusual or unique to this particular church. The traditional features are found to reflect a long-established pattern of church decoration reflected in such monuments as Old Saint Peter's, Sant'Angelo in Formis, the Cathedral of Monreale, and the Cappella Palatina. The unusual features (including the placement of the Passion cycle in the presbytery, and the location of the Crucifixion over the altar) are explained as modifications that emphasize themes of local importance, or of special significance to the patron. The Fossa frescoes utilize programmatic elements, such as the Old and New Testament narrative cycles, to explain sacred history as it related to a medieval man of the patron's class and profession.

INDEX WORDS: Medieval, Italy, Abruzzi, Romanesque Fresco, Old Testament narrative cycles, Creation, Passion cycle, Crucifixion location

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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## INTRODUCTION

Santa Maria ad Cryptas in Fossa, Italy, is a small single-aisle church decorated primarily with thirteenth- and fourteenth-century frescoes that cover the interior walls and the vault of the presbytery (Fig. 1). The basic components of the thirteenth-century fresco decoration include, in the presbytery, a portrait of Christ enthroned flanked by portraits of saints and apostles, a cycle of the Passion of Christ, arranged so that the Crucifixion appears behind the altar, and a donor portrait. The thirteenth-century frescoes that decorate the nave include, on the east wall, a scene of the Adoration of the Magi, a Creation scene, and a Madonna of the Milk. The Genesis cycle that begins on the east wall continues to the south wall, followed by portraits of six prophets, two equestrian saints, and a cycle devoted to the labors of the months. The Last Judgment occupies the west wall. The north wall of the nave was painted in the fourteenth century with scenes from the life of Mary. Because such a large area of the church retains its original thirteenth-century decoration, and because this decoration is largely intact, it is possible to attempt an analysis of the entire decorative program of the church. An analysis of this kind, focusing solely on deciphering the Santa Maria ad Cryptas program, has never been undertaken. The analysis will attempt to explain the program through comparison with contemporary regional churches and the most important church decoration programs of Italy (including Old Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, the Abbey of Monte Cassino, and the Sicilian mosaics at the Cathedral of Monreale and the Cappella Palatina). To explore fully the meaning of the Santa Maria ad Cryptas program, it will be necessary to also consider the narrative and iconographical influence of regional church decoration, illuminated manuscripts, tapestries or altar coverings, and sculpture. I will show that the Fossa frescoes utilize the Old and New Testament cycles in concert with the portraits of saints and prophets, the Labors of the Months, and the Last Judgment to explain the meaning of

the universe and sacred history as it related to medieval man, specifically someone of this particular patron's class and profession.

### History, Location and Influences

The frescoes can be positively dated to the thirteenth century for two reasons. First, there is an inscription integrated into the frescoes on the east wall of the presbytery that refers to a patron of that period. The inscription reads: “(Guilielmus Amore) LL (us) DE SA (nto Eusanio) UXOR EIUS GUILIELMI (Amo) RELI ABBAS GUIDUS...(Gui) LELMA D (omina) IO (ann) A LUCETTA.”<sup>1</sup> This inscription accompanies a painting of a group of people who wear thirteenth-century garments, presumably the patrons of the frescoes. In this scene, the donor or patron is depicted first with hands upraised in prayer to the Crucifixion. He wears a white hat or helmet and bears a shield decorated with a large white cross. Directly behind him is a woman, probably his wife. There are eight additional people in this scene. They form a single-file line facing the Crucifixion. All raise their hands in worship. After the donor's wife, there are five men, discernible by their headdress and hairstyle. One of these men is a member of the clergy, as evidenced by his tonsured head; the inscription identifies him as Abbot Guidas. The final three figures in the procession are women, also evidenced by their headdress. All of the figures wear the under and outer tunics of the thirteenth century, worn longer for women. The men, except for the abbot, wear military-style hoods.<sup>2</sup> This scene has a large eroded swath that bisects the procession almost obscuring the three men at center, including the abbot. The position of the abbot, behind the donor and his wife, is significant because it is clear that he is not the principal donor. Guglielmo Matthiae, in his book *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, speculated that the donor

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<sup>1</sup> Guglielmo Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese* (Milan: Electa, 1969), 54, for the remaining inscription.

<sup>2</sup> Jill Condra, ed., *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Clothing through World History* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2008), 208-210, 232.



portrait is a family portrait. The head of the family, Guilielmo, is depicted in the primary position, followed by his wife. The children are presumably then arrayed by birth order and order of importance. Of the five sons, the second has pursued a career in the church and has risen to the rank of abbot. The rank within the church of the second son speaks to the power of the family. The three daughters bring up the rear of the procession. The costumes of the women and men place them in the latter half of the thirteenth century. The inscription can be argued to support this date as there are mentions of a Guilielmo Amorelli in documents from the area of Santo Eusanio Forconese that correspond with this time period.<sup>3</sup> Matthiae dates the patronage of the frescoes between 1264 and 1283, but he is cautious in identifying the patron as the Guilielmo Amorelli of Santo Eusanio because the name was common in the Middle Ages. The second reason to date the frescoes to the late thirteenth century is that one of the paintings on the east wall of the nave is attributed to Gentile da Rocca, a well-known Abruzzese artist who is documented to have been painting in the Fossa area of the Abruzzo region of Italy between approximately 1271 and 1294.<sup>4</sup>

This dating places the frescoes in a period of important developments in the region. Central and southern Italy was divided from the rest of Italy during the eleventh and twelfth centuries because the Norman kings of Sicily ruled the territory.<sup>5</sup> Throughout the thirteenth century, the region continued to be ruled distinctly from the rest of Italy by the Hohenstaufens and, finally, the Angevins.<sup>6</sup> At the time of the painting of the Santa Maria ad Cryptas frescoes, the Abruzzi was ruled by the Angevin ruler, Charles I of Anjou, whose territory included Sicily,

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<sup>3</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 54, for the thirteenth-century dress and the inscription.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 59, for Gentile da Rocca being active in Abruzzo, 62, for the date of the frescoes.

<sup>5</sup> Decker, *Romanesque Art in Italy*, 38.

<sup>6</sup> Jean Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou, Power Kingship and State-Making in Thirteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1998), 55-56; Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 54.

Naples and southern Italy.<sup>7</sup> In addition to being separated from other regions of Italy by rule, the Abruzzo region of southern Italy is isolated by its topography, bordered by the Apennine mountain range in the north and west and a treacherous seacoast with no significant port to the east.<sup>8</sup> There were, however, two types of travelers that braved the difficult terrain. Pilgrims and soldiers regularly traversed the region, passing through Fossa in order to reach the seacoast and board passage on ships to the Holy Lands.<sup>9</sup> Within this setting, the village of Fossa is located approximately four miles from the city of Aquila, the modern day capital of Abruzzo. Aquila was founded by Frederick II, a Hohenstaufen ruler of Sicily and southern Italy in the first half of the thirteenth century, before the decoration of Santa Maria ad Cryptas.<sup>10</sup>

In 1263, the French pope Urban IV offered the throne of Sicily and southern Italy to Charles I of Anjou as a papal fief. In January of 1266, Charles and his wife Beatrice were crowned King and Queen in Rome by five cardinals. In order to make the title a reality and to claim his lands, Charles defeated Manfred, the last Hohenstaufen ruler, at the battle of Benevento in February 1266. Over two years later, in 1268, Charles went to battle again to defeat Conradin, the young grandson of Frederick II and nephew of Manfred, at the battle of Tagliacozzo in the Abruzzi. This final battle strengthened Charles' claim on the area but drained his coffers. In 1273, Charles I implemented a *Liber Donationum* to reward his supporters with the gifts of land. These grants, however, were not without demands.<sup>11</sup> In order to cover his expenses in gaining control of the territory and to finance the crusade of 1270, Charles I ruthlessly levied taxes on the people of Sicily and southern Italy throughout the final quarter of the thirteenth century. In the

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<sup>7</sup> Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou*, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Decker, *Romanesque Art in Italy*, 37.

<sup>9</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 52, for pilgrimage route.

<sup>10</sup> Decker, *Romanesque Art in Italy*, 39.

<sup>11</sup> Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou*, 4, 60.

San Martino reforms of 1283, Charles I bestowed important privileges on the barons and knights of southern Italy. The privilege basically meant that barons and knights were exempted from taxes as long as they were responsible for collecting a specified amount in taxes from everyone else.<sup>12</sup> The *Liber Donationum* of 1273 and the San Martino Reforms of 1283 were most likely pivotal events for the patron of Santa Maria ad Cryptas as he is depicted as a knight by his shield (Fig. 2).

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<sup>12</sup> Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou*, 60-63.

## FRESCO DESCRIPTION

The fresco decoration of Santa Maria ad Cryptas is related in a general way to a long established tradition of church decoration going back to the Early Christian frescoes of Old St. Peter's.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, it exhibits many features that depart from that tradition, some of which are found nowhere else. Before we can consider the possible meanings of these features (whether traditional or innovative), we need to identify as clearly as possible what they are, and that will require a detailed description of the fresco decoration, and a careful analysis of its relationship to possible sources that emulate the Early Christian program, either directly or through intermediaries. The possible sources considered for this analysis are mostly found in southern Italy. They fall into two groups: monumental churches, including the Norman churches of Sicily, the Abbey of Monte Cassino, and Sant'Angelo in Formis near Capua, and secondary sources which include the Abruzzese churches of Santa Maria di Ronzano in Castel Castangna, and San Pellegrino in Bominaco.<sup>14</sup> In some instances, Santa Maria ad Cryptas may exhibit a specific scene or feature not found in southern Italy that requires comparison with more distant churches exhibiting similar elements.

The frescoes of the church occupy five areas: the presbytery and the four walls of the nave. The frescoes are comprised of narrative cycles of the Old and New Testaments augmented by portraits of saints and prophets. The prophet and saint portraits are generally depicted in the top register above the narrative cycles. In the presbytery, the Passion cycle of the second register proceeds in a linear fashion from the north wall to the south wall. The Genesis cycle originates on the east wall of the nave and progresses to the south wall where it covers the first architectural

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<sup>13</sup> Otto Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily* (New York: The Philosophical Library, Inc.: 1950), 205.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 205-206.

bay. The scenes, beginning in the top register, are read from left to right. The Labors of the Months proceed from left to right in a single register in the third architectural bay. The Maryological cycle on the north wall follows a left-to-right pattern, progressing from west to east, ending on the east wall of the nave with the scene of the Adoration of the Magi.

The artists at Santa Maria ad Cryptas depict the subjects of the east wall of the presbytery centrally to emphasize their importance, and continue to use centralized compositions emphasizing symmetry throughout the program. The architectural plan of Santa Maria ad Cryptas lends itself to centrally planned compositions. For instance, in addition to the obvious centrality of the three-walled presbytery, each wall of the nave is architecturally divided into three zones. The Last Judgment on the west wall also follows a centrally planned pattern. At times during the description, it will be necessary to describe the subjects beginning with the center of the composition.

Throughout the description, there are several partially damaged and destroyed scenes. As these sections of the program are described, I will propose alternative scenes based on comparisons to similar sequences that occur in churches in the Abruzzo region and southern Italy. The alternative scenes proposed assume that the missing elements continued the tendency of the Fossa artists to plan and depict walls and scenes in a symmetrical and centralized manner, as employed throughout the thirteenth-century decoration.

The subject matter of the presbytery frescoes falls into three registers (Fig. 3). The uppermost is comprised of three lunettes that form a centralized composition with the east wall claiming the position of primary importance (Fig. 4). The middle register contains a narrative cycle of the Passion of Christ. The third register of the apse serves as a *dado* and is painted to

resemble gold draperies decorated with red or ochre patterns. This decorative motif covers the lower zone for both the north and east walls, and the remaining portion of the south wall.

The lunettes at the top of each wall are divided symmetrically into five frames that contain portraits. The center frame of each lunette is interrupted by a narrow window that necessitates the abbreviation of the portrait in that position, while also emphasizing it (Fig.5). Christ is depicted enthroned at center, flanked by Saint Paul and Saint Peter and, secondarily, by John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. The remaining apostles complete the composition of the top register by filling the lunettes of the north and south walls of the presbytery. Christ is pictured seated on a patterned cushioned throne at center. He has a cruciform halo and is bearded; his arms are outstretched and he gives a blessing gesture with his right hand while holding an open book displaying text in his left hand. The Christ figure is small because he is depicted in a small space above the window and below the vault-line. On the east wall, beginning from the left, John the Baptist is pictured in a fur robe with wild hair. He looks upward and points with his right hand toward Christ. In his left hand he holds what appears to be an unfurled scroll. To the right, Saint Paul is easily recognizable by his bald head and sword. He holds the sword in his right hand and gestures toward Christ with his left hand. Saint Peter is depicted on the left side of Christ. He is pictured with white hair and beard gesturing toward Christ with his right hand and holding keys in his left hand. To the right of Saint Peter is John the Evangelist. He is the only figure in the register that is un-bearded to denote his youth.

At top of the north wall, there are five male portraits. Again, a narrow window, necessitating a three quarter portrait, interrupts the center portrait. The first three figures are not labeled, but the fourth figure is labeled Bartholomew and the final figure is labeled as Thaddeus, so these figures are apostles. All of the figures in this lunette are nimbed and carry a book or

some sort of document. The artist has used facial hair, hair color and style to differentiate them, and to make them consistent with other portrayals of the same figures in the program.

The top register of the south wall, like the uppermost register of the north and east walls also contains five portraits (Fig. 6). All of the figures in this lunette gaze toward the east wall. Together the three registers form an image of Christ Enthroned flanked by Peter and Paul, the two Johns, and the remaining apostles in a centralized composition of the sort typically found in apses.

The middle register of the presbytery decoration is dedicated to a narrative of the Passion that reads from left to right. The fresco on the north wall of the apse is comprised of two scenes; the left scene is of the Last Supper (Fig. 7). It includes Christ and eleven disciples on one side of the rectangular dining table, and a comparatively smaller, plainly clothed Judas without a halo standing on the opposite side of the table. The table is covered with a cloth and set with jugs, plates and serving dishes. The apostles are depicted in varying poses with contrasting haloes. Although they are labeled, it appears that the artist sought to differentiate them, perhaps in order to make them recognizable and to break up the monotony of the composition. They are depicted as individuals and have recognizable features. For example, Peter, shown third from left, bearded with white hair — a common and easily recognizable type. Christ appears at the far left in cruciform halo. He cradles a beardless man, John the Evangelist, who leans into him. Christ looks right toward the other men.

To the right of the Last Supper is a scene of Judas kissing Christ in the garden (Fig.8). The pair appears at center surrounded by soldiers. Although there is no emotion depicted in the faces, the artist has made an effort to vary the facial structure of the soldiers by differentiating the eyebrows, noses and jaw lines. Judas even appears to be pursing his lips in preparation for

the kiss. Peter, in the same brown and pink robes of the Last Supper, is depicted kneeling at the bottom left of the frame as he cuts the ear from a soldier. His head is thrown back to acknowledge Christ who gestures to him to cease the action.

The Passion cycle is continued in the second register of the east wall of the presbytery with the Flagellation of Christ (Fig. 9). All figures in this scene are attenuated and abnormally tall. Pilate is depicted on the left hand side, enthroned within an architectural enclosure. The throne is geometrically patterned, and the cushion has the same oblong shape as in the scene of the Enthroned Christ. Pilate is seated, gazing and gesturing to the left. He wears a headdress and hat, a long ruffled collar, a dark tunic, and a white over garment trimmed with gold and red embroidery. Christ is depicted abnormally tall, lashed to a red porphyry column with a white Corinthian capital. Two figures flank Christ. Both are aggressively attacking him, the one on the left with his hands, and the one on the right with some tool, perhaps a whip.

The center scene in the second register is the Crucifixion (Fig. 10). This scene is shorter than the Flagellation in order to accommodate the window directly above. Christ is depicted in a twisted position, feet crossed right over left, and torso twisted. His hands are outstretched and the nail wounds are apparent. His head tilts to the left and his eyes are closed. Mary stands to Christ's right. She is dressed in a white dress with ochre striations and wears a blue cloak that covers her head. Her eyes are somewhat downcast and her expression is sad. She gestures to Christ with both hands, the right hand at her waist, the left uplifted from the elbow. John the Evangelist is to the left of Christ. His eyes are downcast and his eyebrows draw together in an expression of grief. The busts of two angels with multi-colored wings flank the top of the cross, filling the area above Christ's outstretched arms.



The right side of the second register of the east wall is divided into two unequal sections. The larger scene occupies the upper portion of the register; it is the Entombment of Christ (Fig. 11). The smaller lower scene is the donor portrait discussed earlier. In the Entombment, Christ is shown with bare chest, wrapped in funeral linen, reclining in what appears to be a sarcophagus. Three women surround his head and torso beating their breasts in grief. The fourth standing figure is John the Evangelist, shown in similar garments from the previous passion scenes. He leans in toward Christ and appears to be grasping his hand. John's hand is covered with his robe as a sign of respect. The other two figures, identified by label, are Joseph of Arimethea and Nicodemus.<sup>15</sup> The sarcophagus, decorated with curving lines, fills the lower portion of this scene.

There are two largely destroyed scenes on the lower south wall of the presbytery. In the left hand scene, there are several heads still visible (Fig. 13). The robed figure on the far left has a golden halo, brown hair and what appears to be a short brown beard (which could, however, be shading). He gestures with an upraised open hand toward the right. The second figure is also nimbed. He tilts his head back slightly, and gazes up toward the third figure. All that remains of the third figure is the upper portion of his nimbed head from the bridge of his nose. He has brown hair and wears a brimmed hat.

I think that this scene continues the Passion sequence because the heads of the figures that are still visible seem to be those of the Apostles as they appear in the preceding scenes. If this is the case, then the Passion narrative would continue around the presbytery in chronological order from the Last Supper to the scenes on this wall. This scene includes what appears to be two of the apostles, which eliminates a *Noli me Tangere* scene. Given that at least two apostles

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<sup>15</sup> Of the surviving labels, only the labels for Joseph and Nicodemus are now legible.

are present, and given the location of this scene, following the Entombment, I think it is likely that the scene is of one of the incidents of Christ appearing to the apostles after his death. Two possible scenes are the “Doubting Thomas” or the “Encounter on the Road to Emmaus.” There is a complete scene of the “Encounter on the Road to Emmaus” at the nearby church of San Pellegrino in Bominaco, decorated in 1263, that includes similar elements to the remains of the Fossa scene (Fig. 15). At Bominaco, the figures are reversed. The first figure on the left is a traveler wearing a brimmed hat and carrying his belongings in a pouch attached to a rod. The figure in the hat is not nimbed in the Bominaco scene. There are three other male figures in the scene, all nimbed, two of them are labeled as Luke and Cleopas. In the book of Luke 24: 13-18, the scripture identifies one of the men who spoke to Christ as Cleopas.<sup>16</sup> I identify this scene as the “Encounter on the Road to Emmaus” because of the hat and the orientation of the figures, and because of the similarity between the remaining scene at Fossa and the intact scene at Bominaco.

Only the upper right hand corner of the final presbytery scene remains. This scene has two zones, but I think that it is only one scene because the gazes of the figures in the two zones meet. In the upper zone there is only one surviving figure, a winged angel who supports what appears to be a mandorla (Fig. 14). The artist uses a frame line to indicate the mandorla; the same type of frame line separates the angel from three haloed men below. The artist has used a frame line to indicate the boundary between heavenly and earthly zones. Of the three haloed heads remaining below the frame line, only the far right two have describable faces. The second from the right has gray hair and a beard; he tilts his head back and gazes upward. The figure on the far right has white hair and a beard; he too tilts his head back and gazes up toward the angel

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<sup>16</sup> All references to Biblical scripture are taken from the New International Version of the Bible.

at the center of the top zone of this frame. The remaining elements in the Fossa scene can be compared to the Ascension scene at Sant'Angelo in Formis. At Sant'Angelo, Christ is depicted standing in a mandorla supported by two angels. Below the mandorla is Mary in an orant position surrounded by two angels and the apostles.<sup>17</sup> Although the Fossa scene is mostly destroyed, the remaining elements follow the format of the scene at Sant'Angelo in Formis. Because of its location at the end of the Passion cycle and because the surviving elements are similar to Ascension scenes such as the one found at Sant'Angelo in Formis, I believe this is the scene of the Ascension.

#### East Wall of the Nave

The east wall of the nave is divided into three primary bands or registers crowned by a mostly destroyed fourth register in the apex of the wall. The upper portion of the wall contains a window, above and around which are four partial roundels (Fig. 16). The subject of the uppermost frame and the roundels is indistinguishable. The fresco decoration surrounds the pointed archway that divides the presbytery from the nave. Post-thirteenth-century additions to the church interrupt the wall decoration to the left and right of the archway. On the left, a chapel obscures the bottom two registers, and, on the right, a masonry niche housing a Madonna nursing the Christ child obscures the bottom register.

At the upper left of the east wall of the nave is the scene of the Adoration of the Magi which includes the three kneeling kings bearing gifts, Mary enthroned and holding the Christ child on her lap, and a diminutive white-haired Joseph somewhat obscured by the throne and almost crushed by the frame of the fresco above him (Fig. 17). The kings are differentiated by hair color and facial features. From the sixth century, the Magi were identified as Caspar,

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<sup>17</sup> Glenn Gunhouse, *The Fresco Decoration of Sant'Angelo in Formis* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1992), 53.

Melchior and Balthazar. They were associated with the three ages of man and the three known continents, Europe, Africa and Asia.<sup>18</sup> Mary is by far the largest figure in this scene. She is seated and she reaches out to accept the gift of the first king. The Christ child resting on her lap has a shining halo, he gestures with his left hand toward the king as though accepting his gift, and with the right hand he makes a blessing sign.

The apex decoration of the east wall of the nave, now almost entirely destroyed, shows remnants of four roundels that fill the apex of the wall, and at least one scene or figure in a square frame below the roundels, adjacent to the window (Fig. 16). Below the eroded section, the Adoration of the Magi fills the upper-left section of the wall, and the upper-right section is filled with a centralized scene including an enthroned male figure (Fig. 18). The enthroned center figure is shown with both arms upraised, flanked by two roundels containing stars and celestial orbs at top and schematic renderings of water and land at bottom. He makes a blessing gesture with his right hand, while his left hand is open with palm showing. This is the figure of the Creator. His backless throne is embellished with geometric patterns. The upper-left-hand corner of the composition is eroded, obscuring a portion of the orb enclosed in the semi-circular frame line. The remaining portion of the orb on the left is painted with a crescent-shaped figure. The round gold-colored orb on the right is intact. A horizon line separates the top of the scene from the bottom. In the lower section of the frame, the Creator is flanked by water on the left, depicted with a dark blue background and waving white lines, and land on the right depicted with a brown ground and two large, schematic, ochre-colored plants. This scene combines several Creation episodes described in Genesis 1:3-11.

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<sup>18</sup> Leslie Ross, *Medieval Art, A Topical Dictionary* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 5.

<sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." <sup>7</sup> So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup> Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation....." <sup>13</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

This is a conflated scene of various elements of the first three days of Creation. The actions that are apparent from this scene are the division of light from darkness, the separation of land and sea, and the creation of vegetation.

The frescoes that once occupied the apex of wall (the area above and to the left of this scene) are badly damaged. There is a fragment of water, outside the frame of the conflated creation scene, beneath the aperture, that suggests at one time either this scene was larger or another episode of the Creation once existed. An expansion of the conflated creation scene, just described, would ruin its symmetry, so I speculate that another episode once existed.

It is possible that the apex medallions housed images of Christ, flanked by angels, over an image of a descending dove, representing the Holy Spirit. This scene of the Spirit on the Waters, from Gen. 1: 2, would explain the water depicted directly below the apex adjacent to the first intact scene of Creation. If the apex of the east wall of the nave began with the first scene of Creation, it would be in keeping with the Creation cycles at Palermo and Monreale, for example, which include both the Creator in the heavens and the descending Dove of the Holy Spirit.<sup>19</sup> The centralized bust image of Christ, flanked by angels, at the apex of the wall would be in keeping

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<sup>19</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, Plates 26A, 93.

with the centralized images found at the top of the east wall of the presbytery and the apex of the west wall. This imagery would function, simultaneously, as a hieratic portrait and as the first scene of the Creation.

### First Bay - South Wall

The south wall is divided into three architectural bays. The fresco decoration originally covered each bay from the open truss roof to the floor in three registers. Over the centuries, architectural niches were added that now obscure portions of the frescoes. The first bay, adjacent to the east wall of the nave, is intact and decorated with the remaining scenes of the Creation cycle (Fig. 19).

In the first scene, in the upper left-hand corner of the wall, the Creator, depicted with cruciform halo, is shown enthroned between two medallions containing profile busts and two groupings of three people (Fig. 20). There is an inscription above the right shoulder of the Creator that reads, "I H S," identifying him as Jesus, or Christ Logos.

To the left, at the right hand of the Creator, the semi-circular medallion contains a portrait bust of a black head with a red headdress and lips. The sky around the black orb is a darker blue with fewer stars than the orb on the right side of the frame. Beneath the orb are three nimbed figures. All figures face the Creator at the center of the frame. The two figures in the forefront have blue haloes and gesture with both hands toward the Creator. The body of the third figure is behind the two front figures, directly beneath the black head suspended in the sky. The frame line surrounding the personification abbreviates his gold-colored halo.

The left side of the composition is symmetrical to the right. There is a semi-circular field painted with blue ground and six stars. At the center of the field is a white circle containing a profile portrait of a human head. The three figures beneath the medallion face the Creator. The

two figures in the foreground gesture toward the Creator with outstretched hands. The striations on the robe of the back figure suggest a similar motion. As on the opposite side, the two front figures have navy blue haloes, and the center back figure has a gold-colored halo. On this side, however, all three haloes are shown complete, and the three figures are of similar size. This scene is the Creation of Moon and Sun as described in Gen. 1: 14-18.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. <sup>16</sup> And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also. <sup>17</sup> And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

The next scene, to the right, is the Creation of the Birds and Terrestrial Animals (Fig. 21). In this frame, the artist has combined creation acts from day five (birds), and day six (animals), as outlined in Gen. 1: 20-25. Christ Logos is shown enthroned at left, gesturing to the animals. His left hand forms a blessing gesture while his right hand is depicted with open palm, as though presenting his creation. The birds are shown at top with a dividing frame line beneath them. The artist differentiated the birds by color, body type and beak to show a variety of species. The animals, shown in the lower right of the frame, are also differentiated. Along with easily recognizable species like the horse, wild pig and ox, there are also hybrid or imaginary creatures, for example, the creatures at the center and far right. The final animal in the procession is depicted in black and gray tones, a contrast to the warm browns and reds of the other beasts. This animal is the only one facing right. Only its head and shoulders are visible. It is a hybrid animal with scales or feathers about the neck, and its horned head has human-looking features.

This is the first scene in this narrative cycle where Christ Logos is shown quasi-profile. The artist in this case adapts the frontal figure by depicting Christ Logos' face frontally while

presenting his body in profile. We can still see both of his eyes; his body, however, is oriented toward the animal figures on the right side of the frame. The background in this scene is in two parts; the Creator is shown on a blue and green background. The cushion of his throne overlaps the left hand frame of the scene, but does not overlap into the right hand zone of the frame. The right side of the scene has a white background.

The sequence continues at the east end of the first bay with Christ Logos creating Adam and Eve (Fig. 22). The Creator and Adam are both labeled. At one point, there may have been a similar label for Eve, located between her right hand and her head, as there appears to be a white smudge on the blue ground, but the label has either eroded or was never present. There is a vertical frame line that divides the Creation of Adam from the Creation of Eve. As in the preceding frame, Christ Logos is shown enthroned with a cruciform halo at the left side of the frame, gesturing toward the right. Adam is shown nude and at the moment of creation. He is gesturing with both hands toward Christ Logos. Although his right foot is firmly on the ground and his left foot is shown with toe to ground, he does not appear to be standing of his own accord. He is held upright by the gesture of the Creator. Eve is depicted only from the waist up, her torso rises from the side of the sleeping Adam. She gestures toward the Creator with both hands in an orant position.

In the next scene, Christ Logos is shown standing and holding with his left hand an unfurled scroll with writing on it (Fig. 23). As in previous frames, the Christ Logos figure overlaps the frame of the scene with his feet and halo. With his right hand he points to an adjacent tree. There are three trees in the frame, each with specifically colored trunks and leaf patterns. Adam and Eve sit before him on a geometrically patterned banquette. This scene can



be interpreted as the Giving of the Law. In Gen. 2:16-17, God gives the Law to Adam before he creates Eve.

<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

This scene depicts the Giving of the Law to Adam out of the order specified by scripture. There is no scene, described in scripture in which God tells the law to Eve.

In the following scene, the artist once again returns to the east end of the wall (Fig. 24). The first scene depicts the Fall. There is a large tree in the center, around which is coiled a serpent. Adam and Eve flank the central tree. Two additional trees complete the composition at the far left and right.

Following this scene is a small frame taking up the space beneath the window. It contains a single six-winged figure (Fig. 25). The figure is badly damaged, but the three sets of wings are visible, as well as the garment of the figure. The right arm of the figure is raised, although the hand is no longer visible. This figure is a representation of the Cherubim that God placed at the east end of the Garden to prevent man from eating of the Tree of Life. Although it is no longer visible, it is reasonable to assume, because of the remaining upraised arm, that the figure once held a raised sword, as described in Gen. 3: 23-24.

<sup>23</sup>...therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. <sup>24</sup> So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

The next frame and the last scene in this cycle depicts Christ Logos at left, still recognizable because of his halo and garments, pushing two figures, labeled as Adam and Eve, toward the right side of the frame (Fig. 26). Although this scene is poorly preserved, it appears that Adam and Eve are wearing some sort of rough garments. The hands of Eve are still

discernible. One of her hands grasps some sort of implement. Adam carries a gardening tool, and turns to look back at the figure of the Creator. All that remains of Eve are her hands and the tool she carries. This is the scene of the Expulsion from the Garden of Eden as described in the scripture above. Both figures carry what appear to be farming implements, indicating the curse to labor and work the ground. In scripture, God fashions rough garments of animal skins for Adam and Eve and expels them personally from the Garden. The scene of the Expulsion at Fossa follows the scripture in that the Creator personally expels Adam and Eve from the garden. Erosion, however, has destroyed their garments beyond the ability to distinguish if they are made of animal skins, although the remaining outline suggests that this is so.

#### Second Bay – South Wall

The next decorated area is the center bay of the south wall of the church. The lower two registers are now obscured because of an altar that was added in later centuries. The only remaining painting that is still nearly complete is the uppermost register, in which there are six figures, each enclosed within an arch and flanked by individually patterned columns (Fig. 28, 29). Each figure is holding an unfurled scroll in his right hand and making some sort of gesture with the left hand. All of the figures are nimbed with haloes alternating between blue and gold. They are also differentiated by the color of their robes, hair color and style. Proceeding from left to right, the first figure has an inscription next to the right side of his head that reads ‘YSAIAS,’ identifying him as Isaiah. The following figure is labeled ‘AGEUS,’ or Haggai. These labels and the scrolls held by each figure (a common attribute of an Old Testament prophet) indicates that the men depicted are prophets.

The sixteenth-century altar mostly obscures the bottom two registers; there is, however, a fragment on the far left side of the bay that may provide some clue as to what was originally

there. The lower section was divided into two registers, following the format set forth in the previous bay. The upper register shows a fragment of a bearded man wearing a brown hat, brown cloak, and a white robe (Fig. 29). Only the left side of his head and left torso remain at top, and at bottom there is a small fragment that appears to be the lower portion of the white robe. The fragment on the bottom register shows a heralding angel in the upper corner overlapping the frame. The angel is set against a blue background, perhaps the sky. A small section of an architectural arch is the only other remaining element of this scene.

In the surviving fresco of the second register, the man is seated on a geometrically patterned bench similar in motif to the throne of Christ, the Creator and the seat of Pilate in the Flagellation scene. Since the figure lacks a halo and is enthroned like Pilate, he could be a judge or an elder. The elders depicted in the apse at San Pietro ad Oratorium, also in the Abruzzo region, are bearded and wear similar robes and crowns of a shape similar to that of the remaining Fossa figure.<sup>20</sup> With only one surviving damaged figure, however, it is impossible to ascertain the subject matter of this frame. Likewise, there is insufficient evidence to reconstruct the scene of the bottom register from the surviving fragment (the trumpeting angel).

### Third Bay – South Wall

The third bay of the church is divided into three registers. The uppermost register is divided into two frames. The left frame is a portrait of a nimbed man, facing right, on a white horse (Fig. 30). The man wears the fitted hood of thirteenth-century military dress, and carries a shield similar to that of the principal figure in the donor portrait.<sup>21</sup> He is shown thrusting his spear into the mouth of a reptilian creature. A label survives in the light blue frame next to the

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<sup>20</sup> Ferdinando Bologna, *Early Italian Painting, Romanesque and Early Medieval Art* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1963), Pl. 14.

<sup>21</sup> Condra, ed., *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Clothing through World History*, 210.

man's head reading 'GEORG.' This is a portrait of Saint George with his most recognizable attribute, the dragon.<sup>22</sup>

The right half of this register is painted with another man dressed in a short belted tunic with brown hose, the military costume of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>23</sup> He is mounted on a white horse (Fig. 31). This man faces left and wears a black garment and black hat with white headscarf. He wears brown hose and a white cape or mantle. There is no surviving label to indicate the identity of this man. Guiglielmo Matthiae identifies this person as Saint Mauritius.<sup>24</sup> Another possible identification for this saint is Saint Martin of Tours who is also customarily depicted on horseback. He appears at Bominaco and at both the Cathedral of Monreale and the Cappella Palatina.<sup>25</sup> The frescoes at Bominaco are contemporary with those of Fossa, and the representation of Saint Martin there is typical – the saint mounted on horseback with mantle, sword and beggar (Fig. 32). The absence of the cloak at Fossa argues against identifying the figure as Martin.<sup>26</sup>

The second register is divided into six vignettes by a trompe l'oeil arcade (Fig. 33). Within each arch, there is a single male figure dressed in clothing that resembles the hats and garments of the equestrian portraits in the register above.<sup>27</sup> Each figure performs an outdoor task. The artist has painted this frame as though the viewer is standing inside the church looking out into the countryside to observe these activities.

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<sup>22</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 52.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Clothing*, 232-233.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 52.

<sup>25</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 326-30.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 97.

<sup>27</sup> Condra, ed., *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Clothing through World History*, 242, for agrarian pursuits, men wore loose versions of the military tunic.

All of the figures are male and each performs a specific task. The first figure wears a wide-brimmed grey hat and bends forward reaching out his hands toward a plant (Fig. 34). The second figure holds a sickle and is brandishing it at wheat plants. This scene is labeled with the letters 'AU.' The third figure carries a basket with one hand and picks fruit from a tree with the other. The fourth figure is standing in a vat filled with grapes. Liquid flows from the vat into a waiting container. This scene is labeled with the letters 'OC.' The fifth figure stands with one hand outstretched and one hand holding up the end of his cloak. The sixth and final figure is partially destroyed. Only the top half of the figure is preserved, but the scene is still discernible. This figure bends forward at the waist and grasps the snout of a pig. In his right hand he holds a bloodied knife. The blood of the animal pours into a white bowl (Fig. 35). Although there are only six of these vignettes, it is logical to interpret that the activities take place over period of time because of the changing dress of the figures and the seasonal activity. The scenes in this frame represent the occupations of the months. This is a common theme found in floor mosaics, sculpture and manuscript illumination throughout Italy.<sup>28</sup> In the nearby village of Bominaco at San Pellegrino there is a similar fresco sequence complete with the occupations of the months and the corresponding zodiac symbols.<sup>29</sup> The activities portrayed are commonly associated with specific months of the year. For instance, the slaying of the pig is a labor generally associated with December, and the stomping of the grapes is an activity generally associated with October. This imagery would have been easily identified by the thirteenth-century viewer.<sup>30</sup> By

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<sup>28</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 52; James Webster, *The Labors of the Months in Antique and Mediaeval Art to the End of the Twelfth Century* (New York: AMS Press, 1970), 57-58.

<sup>29</sup> Decker, *Romanesque Art in Italy*, 38, 73.

<sup>30</sup> Colum Hourihane, *Time in the Medieval World: Occupations of the Months and Signs of the Zodiac in the Index of Christian Art* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 1v.

identifying the final vignette as December, it appears that the six vignettes are July, August, September, October, November and December. Additionally, August and October are labeled, supporting this conclusion.

The bottom register of the third bay is largely intact; only the far right-hand portion has been destroyed. It consists of three large nimbed, seated men flanked by trees and cradling within their robes several small people (Fig. 36). The small people include women and men. Some of the men are clergy, as evidenced by their tonsure or mitered hat. The women have contemporary hairstyles similar to those seen in the donor family portrait. Proceeding from the left, the first large man is white-haired and bearded. He cradles seven small figures in his robe; an eighth small figure is shown emerging from behind his left shoulder and holding a branch of the adjacent tree. The second large male figure cradles six figures in his lap. The third large male figure is dark-haired and bearded with a gold halo. He cradles eight small figures in his robe, among them two bishops with mitered hats and a monk with tonsure. The final figure in this frame is a small figure to the right of the third large, haloed man. This figure is partially destroyed; his arms are raised to the tree at the end of the frame, which is also partially destroyed. The three large figures are the Patriarchs of the Old Testament: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The notion of being cradled in the bosom of Abraham as a reward for a righteous life was not unknown in Romanesque art. It occurs in the lower left hand corner of the Last Judgment scenes at the Baptistery of Saint John in Florence, for example, and the Torcello Cathedral near Venice.<sup>31</sup> Abraham sometimes appears singly in this manner as part of the parable of Dives and Lazarus from Luke 16: 19-31. This parable appears in the porch sculptures of the Abbey Church

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<sup>31</sup> Edgar Waterman Anthony, *Romanesque Frescoes* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1951), 92.

at Moissac, c. 1130, and in the nave paintings at Sant'Angelo in Formis (Fig. 37).<sup>32</sup> The image of the three Patriarchs became a part of Last Judgment imagery in the West around the year 1000.<sup>33</sup> The three patriarchs represent the paradisaical fate of the Elect after the Last Judgment.<sup>34</sup> At Fossa, the scene of the Patriarchs functions as part of the Last Judgment pictured on the west wall of the church.

To review, the sequence of scenes begins on the east wall of the nave with the first episode of Creation, continues through the first bay of the south wall in a top-down, left-right pattern, to conclude at the bottom right with the scene of the Expulsion. Of the scenes in the second bay, the top register is the only one fully intact, and it contains the portraits of six standing prophets. The partial second register shows a seated man wearing a hat. The fragment of the bottom register shows a small trumpeting angel and a portion of an architectural arch. The third bay of the south wall consists (from top to bottom) of two equestrian, warrior saint portraits, the occupations of the last six months of the year, and, finally, the three patriarchs. The patriarchs are actually part of the Last Judgment scene on the adjacent wall. So, the scene of the Patriarchs is situated to function at the end of the south wall, in which the cycles of Genesis and the months move from left to right, and as part of the Last Judgment that radiates from the center of the west wall to both the left and right.

### West Wall

The west wall of the church is painted with scenes of the Last Judgment. The scenes are centralized and the wall is organized into five registers. The top register is a scene of Christ in

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<sup>32</sup> Petzold, *Romanesque Art*, 73.

<sup>33</sup> Andre Vauchez, *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2000), 8.

<sup>34</sup> Heinrich Ewald, *The History of Israel* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1883), 288-289.

Majesty as he sits in judgment (Fig. 38). This register is triangular, as it follows the roofline of the open truss ceiling. Christ is flanked by four trumpeting angels whose postures are varied to accommodate the triangular shape of the register. The angels immediately to the left and right of Christ are standing, while the outer two angels kneel, facing away from Christ. Christ is depicted wearing a deep-red open robe. His chest and arms are bare, and he exhibits his wounds. A portion of his head has been destroyed, but his halo and two-thirds of his bearded face remain. He is enclosed in a green and red mandorla. Here, the mandorla is round rather than the usual lozenge shape.

The next register contains portraits of the twelve apostles, six on each side of the window (Fig. 39). They are easily recognizable, as they appear in a form consistent with the portraits in the apse area and the Last Supper. Each apostle holds a book and points upward to Christ. The halos of the apostles alternate between blue and gold. A portion of the fresco at the far right has been repainted. The demarcation line between the thirteenth-century figures and the latter repainting is evident as it partially bisects the third figure. The two figures at the far right are slightly larger and set apart from the original figures (Fig. 40). In addition, the halo of the last figure on the right is red which sets him apart from the others. There is no apparent reason for the change in halo color.

The third register is uninterrupted from left to right, featuring three angels at center, flanked by the Blessed and the Damned (Fig. 41). On the left-hand side the angel presents a banner indicating that the following figures are welcome to the kingdom of God (Fig. 42). The people raise their hands in praise and gaze at the angel. There are a variety of personages depicted here — women and men, some with hats, some with tonsures indicating clergy. To the right, another angel presents a banner that proclaims the people on the right (the left-hand side of



Christ) to be damned (Fig. 43). These people appear sad with downcast gazes, bowed heads and wringing hands. At the center of this register, directly below the window, separating the two proclaiming angels, is an angel who faces forward.

The next register is of the dead emerging from their coffins and graves (Fig. 44). This register is perhaps one half the heights of the other registers. Red ochre-colored frame lines separate the rising figures, perhaps to indicate that people are rising from the dead in many separate locations. The terrain from which the figures emerge varies from frame to frame.

The bottom register consists of two scenes that flank the door to the church. On the left side (the right-hand side of Christ) there is a partially destroyed scene of Saint Michael weighing souls with a scale. Saint Michael's head has not survived, but his body and hands are shown wielding the scale (Fig. 45). A small human figure sits in each of the weighing cups, and a small human figure, immediately to the left of Saint Michael, awaits his turn. The Virgin Mary sits enthroned to the left of Saint Michael. The lower part of the Virgin's body and the area to the left is damaged. By appearing in this scene, the Virgin is performing the role of intercessor for mankind.<sup>35</sup> Saint Michael and the partial figure of the Virgin are the only scenes remaining in this portion of the wall.

As mentioned above, an architectural niche now obscures the area to the left of the Patriarchs, in the center bay of the south wall. The area following the last Patriarch is eroded, as is the area before the Virgin and after Saint Michael, leaving sufficient space for other figures. There is a scene at Castel Castagna, also in the Abruzzi, which includes Saint Michael weighing souls followed by Saint Peter unlocking the gates of heaven and the Patriarchs cradling souls

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<sup>35</sup> Herbert L. Kessler, *Seeing Medieval Art* (Toronto: Broadview Press. 2004), 78.

(Figs. 46, 47).<sup>36</sup> The figures of the Patriarchs are so similar to the Fossa scene, that it is plausible that the same artist painted them. Both scenes depict weighted bearded figures seated on patterned benches framed by trees. The figures cradle groups of souls portrayed as small people, including men, women and clergy, in thirteenth-century dress. This scene appears at Bominaco in a different order. At Bominaco, the Patriarchs precede the scene of Saint Michael weighing souls (Fig. 48). At one time, a composition including elements similar to Castel Castagna and Bominaco probably occupied this area at Fossa, complete with the Patriarchs, figures waiting to be weighed, Saint Michael and Saint Peter. If the Fossa composition followed a version of the format depicted at Castel Castagna, then the scene of Saint Peter Unlocking the Gates of Heaven may have occupied the now obscured bottom register of the center bay of the south wall.

On the other side of the door is a scene of the horrors of Hell (Fig. 49). Although partially destroyed, it shows several tiny naked figures of men and women in various states of torture. At the far left, a scaly-tailed figure presides over a scene of burning human figures. Dark blue monsters in varying sizes grasp the small human figures and tear at them. Serpents slither throughout the scene.

#### North Wall

The original frescoes of the north wall have been lost. The scenes visible today were painted in the second half of the fourteenth century.<sup>37</sup> It appears from the plan of the church that the foundations on the north side of the church were fortified after the initial building of the church. The crumbling foundations may have caused the original wall and decoration to

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<sup>36</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, PL. 21.

<sup>37</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 46.

deteriorate only a short while after completion.<sup>38</sup> On the basis of surviving evidence, it seems likely that the subject of the fourteenth-century frescoes (scenes from the life of Mary) reflects the original scheme. The thirteenth-century painting of the Adoration of the Magi that appears on the east wall of the nave is a scene that often concludes the Infancy of Christ cycle. It is reasonable to assume that scenes of the Annunciation, Visitation and Nativity preceded this scene as in other cycles such as those found in the Basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi and Sant'Angelo in Formis.<sup>39</sup> In addition, scenes from the life of the patron saint of the church would likely occur somewhere in the church, and, given that the presbytery and south wall retain their original décor, the north wall is the only possible candidate for a cycle of scenes from the life of the church's patron saint (Mary). Finally, the patron portrait was left intact, as was the thirteenth-century program that covers all other surfaces in the church. The fourteenth-century frescoes were likely not a redecoration so much as a repair to complete the existing program. It is also interesting to note that when the sixteenth-century enclosure was added in the northeast corner of the nave, the sixteenth-century paintings inside the enclosure continued the Maryological cycle with additional scenes of the Visitation and the Annunciation. This could be an indication of a continuing practice. In other words, it is an indication that the fourteenth-century artist did the same thing and merely repainted the subject matter of the pre-existing scenes in the contemporary style.

The fourteenth-century scenes at Fossa include the Nativity of Christ, a cycle devoted to the Dormition of Mary, and episodes from the lives of Mary's parents, Anna and Joachim. These narratives are frequently interrupted by paintings and architectural additions of later centuries.

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<sup>38</sup> Herbert Kessler, "On the State of Medieval Art History," *The Art Bulletin* 79, no.2 (1988), 182.

<sup>39</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 30-31; Gunhouse, *The Fresco Decoration of Sant'Angelo in Formis*, 47.

Although the narrative follows a left-to-right pattern, the chronology of the scenes is out of order. At the west end of the wall, the first scene is the Annunciation to Mary. This is followed by the Nativity. The narrative then changes to scenes from the Dormition of Mary, culminating with her Assumption. The top register of the easternmost bay then begins with scenes of Anna and Joachim before the conception of Mary. Although the subject matter of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century cycles was most likely similar, the placement could not have been the same because the scenes of Anna and Joachim immediately precede the scene of the Adoration of the Magi on the east wall of the nave.

### Reconstructing the Program

In order to reconstruct the thirteenth-century scenes now missing from the north wall of Santa Maria ad Cryptas, it is necessary to review similar regional programs, such as San Pellegrino at Bominaco and Santa Maria di Ronzano at Castel Castagna, as well as the applicable scenes in premier churches like Sant'Angelo in Formis, the Cathedral of Monreale and the Cappella Palatina. The nearby church of San Pellegrino in Bominaco is a logical venue with which to begin this comparison.

San Pellegrino at Bominaco is a logical choice for comparison to Santa Maria ad Cryptas for several reasons. First, the fresco decoration is contemporary with that of Fossa. Second, the narrative cycles are similar. Both churches include cycles of the Infancy of Christ, the Passion of Christ, the Labors of the Months, portraits or scenes of the lives of popular warrior saints, the Patriarchs cradling souls, and Last Judgment scenes of Saint Michael weighing souls and of Hell. In addition to similar subject matter, the two fresco programs have stylistically and compositionally identical scenes like the scene of the Flagellation of Christ in which Christ is depicted as inhumanly tall, clinging to a narrow Corinthian column. The composition,

iconography and style used throughout the Passion cycle are very similar.<sup>40</sup> If the Fossa artists used Bominaco as a model, then its scenes may provide clues as to what has been lost at Fossa. For example, the Bominaco, “Encounter on the Road to Emmaus,” scene was instrumental in identifying the same scene, now mostly destroyed, on the south wall of the presbytery at Fossa. A diagram of the Santa Maria ad Cryptas program, including the existing thirteenth-century scenes and scenes proposed to complete the program, can be found in the Appendix at Figure 50.

Beginning at the west end of the north wall, and assuming a symmetrical layout, the upper register would have included the same kind of subjects that appear in the equivalent space on the opposite wall — that is, portraits of saints (perhaps Saint Martin as depicted at Bominaco, and one other). The placement of the Labors of the Months at Bominaco may provide a clue as to where the missing January-through-June scenes may have resided at Fossa. The Bominaco Labors are located in the vault of the church. Six months are located on one side of the vault, while the other six months occupy the opposing space. If Fossa followed the Bominaco example, then the first six months of the year, beginning with January, would have been depicted in the second register, adjacent to the Last Judgment, proceeding from west to east. This placement would situate January, the first month of the New Year directly after the Last Judgment, in a position of renewal. The scene of the Last Judgment demonstrates that the sacrifice of Christ makes it possible for Christians to be renewed in the Kingdom of God. The Last Judgment is, therefore, both the end and the beginning of time.<sup>41</sup> Following the format set by the scenes of the Patriarchs that extend the Last Judgment onto the south wall, the bottom register of the north wall, connecting with the scene of Hell on the west wall, could have been a parable of the consequences of a poorly lived life. This would be in keeping with the message of the Labors of

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<sup>40</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 62, for the date of the two churches.

<sup>41</sup> Kessler, *Old Saint Peter's*, 224-225.

the Months and the Last Judgment. The three registers of this bay would then symmetrically balance the three opposing registers of the south bay.

The center bay of the north wall most likely displayed six prophets in the top register, in correspondence to the six prophets in the top register of the opposite wall. The second register could have contained a series of seated figures, such as elders or judges, to balance a similar element on the opposing wall. Without further evidence, however, this section of the program will have to remain unknown.

The bottom register of the second bay of the north wall could have been the beginning point of the Maryological cycle. Maryological cycles that included scenes from the life of Mary before the birth of Christ became popular in the last quarter of the thirteenth century in Italy. There are contemporary Marian cycles at both the Basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi, painted between 1274 and 1284, and the mosaics of San Marco in Venice dating from the mid-to-late thirteenth century.<sup>42</sup> In order to depict a Maryological cycle and an Infancy of Christ cycle, more than a single bay would be necessary. This location is the logical starting place, allowing enough space to depict scenes from the lives of Mary and her parents before reaching the Adoration of the Magi scene on the east wall of the nave. Assuming that the fourteenth-century artists copied these scenes, the scenes would be Joachim among the pastors, the annunciation to Joachim, and the meeting of Joachim and Anna at the gates. The top of the next bay would begin with the birth of the Virgin, followed by the marriage of the Virgin. The second register would begin on the left with the Annunciation, followed by the Visitation, and the third register would begin

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<sup>42</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 30, for the popularity of the Marian cycles at this time and the cycle at the Basilica of Saint Francis; Otto Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 51.

with the Nativity, followed by the Flight to Egypt and the Journey of the Magi. These are logical scenes to follow the Nativity and to precede the Adoration of the Magi.

Beneath the Adoration of the Magi on the east wall, there may have been scenes of the death of the Virgin followed by the Assumption of the Virgin into heaven where she is shown enthroned with Christ. A centralized frontal scene of the Assumption, with Mary shown as Queen of Heaven enthroned with Christ, would work for this space on the east wall of the nave, and it would balance the Madonna and Child opposite the triumphal arch. Although this scene would complete the New Testament cycle, its format and position would also allow it to function simultaneously as a devotional image.

The lower right-hand side of the east wall of the nave, beneath the Madonna and Child, could have been occupied by a single stand-alone image. Perhaps it was not painted at all, but was the location of an altar, as it is today. This is not a logical location for an additional Creation scene, because of the continuity of the images above. Additionally, the conclusion of the Passion with the Ascension is a logical end to that sequence, so the Life of Christ cycle could not have continued here.

## RELATIONS TO EARLIER TRADITIONS OF WESTERN CHURCH DECORATION

The program of Santa Maria ad Cryptas is related in a general way to the Early Christian program of Old Saint Peter's. It does, however, exhibit features that depart from this tradition. In order to understand the placement and inclusion of the unusual elements of the Santa Maria ad Cryptas program, it is necessary to consider other models that exhibit similar characteristics. In order to understand how the Fossa artists would have been aware of specific imagery, iconography and program compositions from distant areas, a discussion of medieval image transmission is necessary.

### Source and Dissemination

An artist's job is by nature itinerant; one must travel with the work. This is a satisfactory explanation for the similarities between Fossa and pre-existing frescoes in the immediate region. Although people traveled great distances in medieval times, acquiring personal knowledge of far-flung church programs could have been accomplished through alternative means. Otto Demus gives credit for the dissemination of imagery during this period to two primary elements: emulation of the decorative program at Monte Cassino via the growth of Benedictine churches and possessions throughout southern Italy, and pictorial guides used by individual artists.<sup>43</sup>

From the eleventh century, as the number of Benedictine churches in southern Italy continued to grow, they were decorated to emulate the most important church in the Benedictine network, the abbey church of Monte Cassino. Abbot Desiderius's significant redecoration of Monte Cassino and the spread or growth of Benedictine properties throughout central and southern Italy was, therefore, the overarching mode of dissemination. The Italo-Byzantine style that developed at Monte Cassino came about as the result of the importation of Byzantine

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<sup>43</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 444.



craftsmen that Abbot Desiderius brought from Constantinople to revive the mosaic tradition of early Christian Rome. The style filtered through to Monte Cassino's possessions and dependent churches in different ways. Sant'Angelo in Formis, for example, is thought to have been decorated by artists sent directly from Monte Cassino who were perhaps trained by the Byzantine craftsmen who decorated the abbey. Although there is no historical evidence, Abbot Desiderius is thought to have specified the master plan and exact decoration for Sant'Angelo in Formis because his portrait with square halo is included in the apse decoration, and an inscription above the main door specifies that he rebuilt the church.<sup>44</sup> Circulation of imagery by model book is a by-product of the Benedictine movement to increase its influence through adding to its number of churches and possessions. The master plan of a church's decoration determines what imagery travels from church to church. The master plan could be communicated via letter from one church to another, a practice that had been in place from the Early Christian period, when Paulinus of Nola wrote detailed descriptions for his friend Sulpicius Severus to use in decorating a new church.<sup>45</sup> This practice continued throughout the Middle Ages. For example, Abbot Desiderius maintained a close correspondence relationship with Alphanus of Salerno, who was once a monk at Monte Cassino and later archbishop of Salerno. The communication between these church leaders may account for the reported similarities between the two churches.<sup>46</sup> This type of communication would have been between church leaders, and would have established, at a minimum, the cycles and their locations within the church, most likely specifying the major

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<sup>44</sup> Gunhouse, *The Fresco Decoration of Sant'Angelo in Formis*, 10; Otto Demus, *Romanesque Mural Painting* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc, 1970), 294.

<sup>45</sup> Kessler, *Old St. Peter's*, 215-220, on Transmission; Davis-Weyer, *Early Medieval Art 300-1150, Sources and Documents*, 20-24.

<sup>46</sup> Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages*, 93-95, the decoration of both churches is now largely destroyed.

areas of decoration like the apse. The individual scenes within the cycles, however, may have been left to the discretion of the church leader, the patron, and artist.<sup>47</sup>

According to the chronicle of Leo of Ostia, Abbot Desiderius ordered that the Byzantine artists imported from Constantinople train Italian artists so that a grass-roots artistic tradition could flourish in Italy once more.<sup>48</sup> In addition to the imported artists and the workshop they founded, local and regional artists would have emulated the decorative programs of the most important churches in the region, continuing the spread of the new style. The revival of the Early Christian model of Old Saint Peter's began in the eleventh century and spread throughout southern Italy over the next two hundred years as artists circulated looking for work.<sup>49</sup> Near Fossa, the Benedictine church of San Pellegrino in Bominaco was decorated around 1260, probably a few short years before the Fossa frescoes.<sup>50</sup> The designer of the Fossa program may have looked to Bominaco for a model, or both churches may have been trying to emulate another model. Santa Maria ad Cryptas and Sant'Angelo in Formis have similar programmatic elements, but the only specific similarities of the surviving scenes are in the Last Judgment.

Another source for imagery in the Middle Ages is the pictorial guide of the artist. Three pages of such a book survive today in the library of the Augustinermuseum in Freiburg.<sup>51</sup> In the remaining three leaves there is a page with the scene of Christ speaking to Zacchaeus in a tree, depicted in the upper half of the page, and two equestrian Saints, SS. Constantine and Theodore, depicted in the lower half of the page. The Zacchaeus scene is purely Byzantine, and the figures

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<sup>47</sup> Davis-Weyer, *Early Medieval Art*, 17-21.

<sup>48</sup> Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages*, 92, This reference relates specifically to the art of mosaic, but the argument is valid for the transmission of Byzantine form for other media.

<sup>49</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 205-207.

<sup>50</sup> Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages*, 592; Marvin Becker, *Medieval Italy, Constraints and Creativity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 38; Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 31.

<sup>51</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 444-445; Kessler, *Old Saint Peter's*, 220.

of Peter and Christ appear in almost exactly the same form several times in the Monreale mosaics. The lower scene of the equestrian saints is more German in nature according to the anatomy of the horses and the draperies of the saints. A type of contents page survives from this book in which a variety of unrelated scenes are listed. The scene of Zacchaeus and the equestrian saints are listed separately.<sup>52</sup> This example gives us some insight into how model books evolved and how they were used. It is easy to imagine an artist continually adding to his model book, acquiring images from other artists' books, adding images seen and studied on travels or jobsites, and incorporating images from manuscripts.

Robert W. Scheller and Ernst Kitzinger also identify model books as valuable tools in the transmission of images. Scheller cites several examples of imagery moving, via model book, from manuscript to monumental decoration and back again, while Kitzinger notes that model books, or the pictorial guides of artists help to explain the conflation of scenes, differences in color, compositional format and scene selection that exist between church programs that have been linked to other churches or to illuminated manuscripts.<sup>53</sup> In reference to the relationship between the Cotton Genesis and the mosaics at San Marco in Venice, Kitzinger, while maintaining that the source imagery is certainly the Cotton Genesis, points out that the artist would not have had access to the actual manuscript as it was a precious and valuable item fit as a gift for royalty. He argues that tracings were made from the miniatures, explaining the differences in color, and other interpretations of the artist.<sup>54</sup> While the above is a compelling argument for the existence and use of model books, Kitzinger warns that model books can only

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<sup>52</sup> Robert W. Scheller, *Exemplum: Model Book Drawings and the Practice of Artistic Transmission in the Middle Ages (ca. 900 - ca.1450)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995), 35-36; Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 443-446.

<sup>53</sup> Scheller, *Exemplum*, 31.

<sup>54</sup> Kitzinger, "The Role of Miniature Painting in Mural Decoration," *The Place of Book Illumination in Byzantine Art*, 100-106.

be tools. The skill of the artist who transforms the miniature model into a fresco or mosaic is the true disseminator of form.<sup>55</sup>

### The Narrative Pattern

By considering the possible sources of individual scenes at Santa Maria ad Cryptas, we are introduced to comprehensive programs with overarching messages that may have provided a programmatic model. Churches emulate the programs of other churches in order to align themselves with that church, or to communicate the same message as that church.<sup>56</sup> The narrative program of the frescoes at Santa Maria ad Cryptas contains all of the elements of the type of Western program derived from Old Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. The program of Old Saint Peter's is important to church decoration in Italy throughout the Middle Ages because it establishes the placement of key elements and the ways these elements work together. The longitudinal nature of Old Saint Peter's accommodated the following elements of the decorative program, including: an apse decorated with Christ enthroned between saints; registers of Old Testament narrative cycles on the south wall opposed by registers of New Testament cycles on the north wall; and, in the transept, a narrative cycle devoted to the patron saint of the church.<sup>57</sup> The narrative cycles of Old Saint Peter's began at the apse and proceeded to the entrance wall, in a pattern that has been named the "Double Parallel."<sup>58</sup> Organized in registers, the narrative cycles proceeded linearly from the apse end of the church to the entrance wall. Portraits of

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<sup>55</sup> John Beckwith, "Review of *The Mosaics of Monreale*, by Ernst Kitzinger," *The Burlington Magazine* 103, no. 701 (1961), 363.

<sup>56</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 15.

<sup>57</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 200-201; William Tronzo, "The Prestige of Saint Peter's: Observations on the Function of Monumental Narrative Cycles in Italy," *Studies In The History Of Art* 16 (1985), 93.

<sup>58</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 7, 24-25; Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 201.

prophets in the clerestory level of the church oversaw foretold events taking place in the narrative cycles located in the lower registers.

Many southern Italian churches in the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries also included core elements of Old Saint Peter's decorative program, including the enthroned figure of Christ in the apse, full cycles of the Old and New Testaments on the nave walls, and figures of prophets. These churches include Sant'Angelo in Formis, Santa Maria di Ronzano, San Paolo near Spoleto, Santa Maria ad Cryptas in Fossa, and San Pellegrino in Bominaco.<sup>59</sup> All of these churches have architectural plans that accommodate longitudinal programs like the one from Old Saint Peter's. There are other Italian programs that include Old and New Testament cycles with similar placement and iconography resembling the Early Christian example of Old Saint Peter's. These churches include the Cappella Palatina and Cathedral of Monreale in Sicily, San Pietro in Valle in Ferentillo, and the Baptistry of Florence. All of the churches listed above are either part of the Benedictine order or located in a region under strong Benedictine influence. The revival of these Early Christian elements takes place after the eleventh-century decoration of the Benedictine Abbey of Monte Cassino.<sup>60</sup> Abbot Desiderius revived this model when he launched an extensive decoration program at the Abbey. The eleventh-century decoration of Monte Cassino was partially destroyed by an earthquake as early as the thirteenth century, and has subsequently been entirely lost through the ravages of time. What we know of the Monte Cassino decoration must be gleaned from churches that emulated its decoration, and from descriptions recorded by Leo of Ostia, and Alphanus, later Archbishop of Salerno.<sup>61</sup> From these accounts, we know that the façade and portions of porches and the atrium walls of Monte

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<sup>59</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 205.

<sup>60</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 201.

<sup>61</sup> H. E. J. Cowdrey, *The Age of Abbot Desiderius, Montecassino, the Papacy, and the Normans in the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 14-15.

Cassino were covered in mosaics, and that the walls of the narthex were painted with scenes from the Old and New Testaments.<sup>62</sup> We also know that the central apse of the church included the figure of Christ enthroned and flanked by saints, including John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. Popular southern-Italian apse imagery, including the enthroned Christ flanked by Saints Peter and Paul, also stems from Old Saint Peter's via Monte Cassino. This grouping was probably found at Monte Cassino, in the Chapel of Saint Peter, one of the first churches decorated by Abbot Desiderius.<sup>63</sup> The influence of Monte Cassino, in terms of painting, survives in two forms: illuminated manuscripts and the monumental frescoes of Sant'Angelo in Formis.<sup>64</sup>

Over time, the double parallel plan was adapted to make the narrative cycles easier to read. In the adapted plan, the narrative cycles on the left-hand side of apse proceed toward the entrance wall, while the narrative cycles on the opposing wall proceed from the entrance wall back to the apse. By utilizing this plan, a viewer, entering the church, is confronted first with the apse imagery, then, turning to the left, he is able to follow the narratives that occupy the nave walls in a continuous circuit beginning and ending at the apse end of the church. This design facilitates compositions that read from left to right. This pattern can, however, serve to isolate the nave from the sanctuary by making it function as a "self-contained spatial unit."<sup>65</sup> The nave frescoes at Fossa follow a version of the double parallel plan. At Fossa, the surviving nave frescoes, while referring to the apse imagery, function as a self-contained unit. The narrative cycles, although not presented in strict linear fashion, progress from the east end of the nave to the west wall, and back again.

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<sup>62</sup> Herbert Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 90, 124.

<sup>63</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 207-208.

<sup>64</sup> C.R. Dodwell, *The Pictorial Arts of the West, 800-1200* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 168-169.

<sup>65</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 200-201.

Marilyn Lavin, in her book, *The Place of Narrative*, identifies another narrative plan that applies to Santa Maria ad Cryptas called the “Apse” pattern.<sup>66</sup> According to this pattern, narrative scenes proceed around the apse in a left-to-right pattern. This pattern is followed in the presbytery of Santa Maria ad Cryptas in the cycle of the Passion of Christ. Of the churches, mentioned above, that derive their decorative programs from Old Saint Peter’s and Monte Cassino, none feature narrative cycles wrapping the apse area or a Crucifixion scene located in such a prominent position. The location and arrangement of the Passion cycle at Fossa is, therefore, unusual and requires further explanation.

The frescoes at Santa Maria ad Cryptas exhibit the apse pattern and a version of the double parallel pattern of decoration. In both the double parallel and the apse pattern, the decoration on the center wall of the apse, or presbytery, is the most important.<sup>67</sup> The apse decoration, specifically the scene of the Crucifixion, sets the tone of the decoration of the entire church. It is the lynchpin that connects the narrative cycles in the presbytery and the nave. Pictorial elements throughout the program refer to the Crucifixion, for instance, the cruciform halo in the Genesis cycle, the cross-adorned shields in the patron portrait and in the portrait of Saint George, and the wounds of the risen Christ in the Last Judgment.

Following many southern Italian models, the apse at Fossa includes images of Christ enthroned in the central position with John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, Peter, and Paul. The scene of the Adoration of the Magi is a final scene of the Infancy of Christ cycle. Its position on the left-hand side of the east wall of the nave suggests that there were once other scenes from this cycle on the north wall. Adhering to a late version of the double parallel narrative pattern, these

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<sup>66</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 7.

<sup>67</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 21, for apse pattern, 25, for the apse imagery setting the tone of the decorative program; Demus, *Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 201.

scenes would have progressed from west to east. Therefore, the Old Testament narrative on the south wall was once, most likely, opposed by a New Testament cycle on the north wall. Given the constraints of space and the nature of the church, Santa Maria ad Cryptas follows the Old Saint Peter's, and later the Monte Cassino program sufficiently to be classified as part of this group.

While aligning itself programmatically with the southern Italian group of churches that follow the Early Christian protocol, the Santa Maria ad Cryptas program diverges from this model in the location of the Passion cycle. In addition, the Fossa program differs from Old Saint Peter's and Monte Cassino by including a Last Judgment and a cycle devoted to the labors of the months. Although the Last Judgment was not part of the Old Saint Peter's program, by the twelfth century it was a common element in church programs that emulated the Early Christian program.<sup>68</sup> The location and format of the Fossa Last Judgment is similar to Sant'Angelo in Formis. They both occur on the west wall of the church and are planned centrally in multiple registers that feature similar subject matter.<sup>69</sup> The location and inclusion of these key elements in the Santa Maria ad Cryptas program suggest there is another message to be gleaned. In order to ascertain this message, additional analysis is needed of select scenes in the Old and New Testament cycles.

### The New Testament Cycles

With the medieval methods of program planning and pictorial transfer in mind, in this section I will compare select scenes from Santa Maria ad Cryptas to scenes in other churches in an attempt to ascertain the reasons for the location of the Passion cycle and the Crucifixion, and the models on which the New Testament scenes are based. The similarities between the

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<sup>68</sup> Kessler, *Old St. Peter's*, 159-160.

<sup>69</sup> Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice*, II/1, n.78.



Abruzzese programs suggest that they share a common model. Other churches in the Abruzzo region were influenced by Monte Cassino or Sant' Angelo in Formis (for instance, the apse decoration of San Pietro ad Oratorium, 1100, near Aquila). The logical place to start, therefore, is at Sant' Angelo in Formis. The Crucifixion and the Last Supper at Sant' Angelo in Formis exhibit characteristics that warrant further investigation. The Last Judgment scenes allow for additional comparative analysis that argues that the Fossa decoration is linked to that of Sant' Angelo in Formis and possibly Monte Cassino.

The location of the New Testament cycle — particularly the position of the Crucifixion in the presbytery — is interesting for two reasons. The Crucifixion is part of a narrative cycle that proceeds across the main wall of the apse, an area usually reserved for stand-alone hieratic imagery. Additionally, the Crucifixion was not a scene generally chosen for the center of the apse wall behind the main altar of the church until the latter Middle Ages. Before the ninth century, there is no record of a Crucifixion located in the center of the apse above the main altar of the church.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, there is no Crucifixion in the apse of any of the regional churches reviewed, the Sicilian churches, or Sant' Angelo in Formis. At Old Saint Peter's, the crucifixion scene is located in the nave as part of an extensive Christological cycle which probably at one time consisted of forty-three scenes. The Crucifixion is given special importance at Old Saint Peter's, being double the height of the other narrative panels in the cycle. The scenes from the Passion of Christ at Fossa, including the Crucifixion, in the apse instead of on the north wall, are perhaps a derivation that stems from the liturgical practices at Old Saint Peter's. For instance, as argued by William Tronzo in his article, "The Influence of Old Saint Peter's," the movement of Crucifixion scenes to the position of primary importance may have occurred because of the

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<sup>70</sup> J.M. Spieser, "The Representation of Christ in the Apses of Early Christian Churches," *Gesta* 37, no. 1 (1998) 63-64.

spread of the cult of the Cross from Byzantium to Rome in the ninth century.<sup>71</sup> The Christological cycle at Old Saint Peter's was repainted sometime between the seventh and the ninth centuries. At this time, according to Tronzo, the double-height Crucifixion was added. Liturgically, the scene of the Crucifixion, emphasized by its height, became more important. Seeking to copy or emulate Old Saint Peter's, other churches moved the Crucifixion and related scenes to a place of primary importance that would correspond with its new liturgical importance, that is, into the apse behind the main altar of the church. Tronzo cites Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome as an example of a church that copied the elements of Old Saint Peter's while relocating the Crucifixion to the apse.<sup>72</sup>

The Crucifixion scene at Sant'Angelo in Formis is taller than the flanking scenes because it extends into the spandrel of the arcade below (Fig. 51). The larger size of the Crucifixion in relation to the other narrative scenes is a quote of the Crucifixion scene at Old Saint Peter's, which also spans two registers.<sup>73</sup> The greater height of this scene emphasizes it, making it more important than the surrounding scenes despite its location in the nave as part of a continuous narrative cycle. While the Crucifixion scene at Fossa is the same height as the scenes to its left and right, its location, directly behind and above the primary altar of the church at the center of the square apse, serves to emphasize the importance of the scene. The core composition of the Sant'Angelo in Formis Crucifixion scene and the Fossa scene are similar in that Mary and John the Evangelist flank Christ beneath his outstretched arms, and the busts of two angels flank Christ's head. These are all very common. At Sant'Angelo in Formis the scene is extended,

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<sup>71</sup> Tronzo, "The Prestige of Saint Peter's," *Studies In The History Of Art*, 101.

<sup>72</sup> Tronzo, "The Prestige of Saint Peter's," *Studies In The History Of Art*, 97, for the date of Christological cycle at Old Saint Peter's, and page 101, for liturgical practices changing at Old Saint Peter's.

<sup>73</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 28.

beyond the small grouping at Fossa, with throngs to the left and right. Perhaps the most interesting and important difference is the depiction of Christ. At Sant'Angelo in Formis, his eyes are open and he appears to be alive, while at Fossa his eyes are closed and his head slumps down to the left as though he has lost consciousness or died. The body of Christ at Fossa is twisted, his torso cants to the left and his legs are crossed, right over left. At Sant'Angelo in Formis, Christ is shown in a more rigid upright stance with one leg beside the other. The only deviation from this strict posture is that his head tilts slightly to the left. Although located in the sequence of a narrative cycle, the Fossa Crucifixion functions more like a devotional image than a narrative. Its position at the center of the east wall of the presbytery makes it a focal point for all viewers entering the church. The artist has also used a painted frame that sets the scene apart from the flanking scenes. The frame emphasizes that the Crucifixion is situated in the center of the wall. The narrative aspect of the Crucifixion scene is not realized until the viewer looks to the left and right of the central scene.

In Sant'Angelo in Formis and Santa Maria ad Cryptas, the Crucifixion scenes, while included in a narrative cycle, are emphasized in a way that makes them function as contemplative images. The images, however, are not emphasized in the same way. The Sant'Angelo in Formis scene is enlarged and the Fossa scene is located behind the main altar of the church. The Sant'Angelo in Formis Crucifixion has an obvious antecedent in the enlarged crucifixion scene of Old Saint Peter's. The location of the Santa Maria ad Cryptas scene, however, could be due to a number of factors that could or could not include the influence of Old Saint Peter's. The different methods of emphasizing the Crucifixion scenes, therefore, cannot link Santa Maria ad Cryptas to Sant'Angelo in Formis. The differences in the posture and wakefulness of Christ during the Crucifixion support this theory.

There are two significant differences between the scenes of the Last Supper at Sant'Angelo in Formis and Fossa: in the Sant'Angelo scene, the table is semi-circular and Judas is not pictured (Fig. 52). At Fossa, the table is rectangular and Judas appears alone, opposite the table, wrapped in a cloak with his hands covered. The C-shaped table is a Byzantine element; rectangular tables appear more commonly in Western monuments. Presenting Judas with covered hands is also a Byzantine iconographical element. As at Fossa, Judas is presented with covered hands on the opposite side of the table at Bominaco and Monreale, programs that follow the example of Monte Cassino. The differences in the Last Supper scenes support the theory that Fossa did not utilize Sant'Angelo in Formis as a model for the Passion cycle.

The eighth-century apse decoration at Santa Maria Antiqua is also significant for this discussion because its presbytery is wrapped in narrative cycles on two registers, and the narratives encompass the Infancy and the Passion of Christ. At Santa Maria Antiqua, the oversized Crucifixion is both icon-like and narrative. It works outside of the narrative cycle because of its size and placement above the tiered registers in the top of the apse. The Crucifixion is, however, integrated into the Passion cycle that occupies the bottom register. This apse-wrapping pattern of disposition, established at Santa Maria Antiqua, became popular with churches devoted to the Virgin.<sup>74</sup> Santa Maria ad Cryptas is similar to Santa Maria Antiqua because of the position, in the apse, of the Crucifixion, and because of how the Crucifixion functions as both an icon-like image and as part of the narrative cycle of the Passion of Christ.

There is another possible reason for the position of the Crucifixion and Passion scenes at Fossa, and that is that it could be meant to relate in some way to the crypt of the church. The location of the steps leading down to the crypt is directly in front of the main altar of the church.

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<sup>74</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 21-22.

Indeed, the crypt, which contains an altar of its own, is directly below the presbytery and the main altar of the church. In other churches dating between the eighth and thirteenth centuries, Crucifixions often occupy the apse or primary position above the altar. For example, in the ninth-century Crypt of Saint Maximin at Trier the end wall is covered by a large Crucifixion, and in the crypt of Aquileia Cathedral, circa 1200, a Crucifixion and Deposition are prominently displayed.<sup>75</sup> At Fossa, though, the Crucifixion scene with donors is not located in the crypt itself, but in the church above.

An arrangement strikingly similar to the one at Fossa can be found in the church of Sant'Urbano alla Caffarella outside Rome. The program of Sant'Urbano is similar to Old Saint Peter's in that opposing cycles are used to highlight the similarities between the patron saint of the church and Christ, or to demonstrate the transfer of God's covenant from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Whereas the Vatican basilica contained scenes from the life of Peter, these frescoes include scenes from the life of Urban I, the precursor of the current Pope Urban II who supported the Gregorian Reform. These frescoes, however, were commissioned by lay patrons who appear in portraits in the lower zone of the Crucifixion scene (Fig. 53). The husband and wife kneel before the Crucifixion. They are depicted in a separate color band to indicate that they are not actually in the sacred space. The apparent message of the frescoes is to demonstrate a reform agenda, linking this church to Old Saint Peter's with programmatic similarities, and linking the current Pope Urban II to Saint Peter by including a cycle devoted to Urban I, his precursor.<sup>76</sup> The fresco decoration raises two primary questions, why would the donors commission this cycle of frescoes in a church outside the walls of Rome, and why are

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<sup>75</sup> Dodwell, *The Pictorial Arts of the West, 800-1200*, 46, 186.

<sup>76</sup> Kristin Noreen, "Lay Patronage and the Creation of Papal Sanctity during the Gregorian Reform: The Case of Sant'Urbano alla Caffarella, Rome" *Gesta*, 40, 51.

they pictured in portrait at the foot of the Crucifixion scene? The answer may lie in the original function of the church. The church is built over a series of tombs. Although none of them can be definitively linked to the patrons, the presence of the crypt helps to explain the inclusion of the Christological cycle and the donor portraits. Funerary chapels and crypts often include scenes of the Crucifixion, Anastasis and Resurrection as evidence of Christ's promise of salvation to all who follow Him.<sup>77</sup> If the church of Santa Maria ad Cryptas functioned similarly as a funerary chapel for the donor family, or as a setting for Masses for the souls of departed members of the donor family, then the scene of the Crucifixion here would likewise have acquired a similar meaning, promising salvation, in particular to the family that paid for these frescoes.

In addition, the image of the Crucifixion at Santa Maria ad Cryptas could have been a personal statement about the patron, Guilielmo Amorellus. In the donor portrait he is shown with a shield decorated by a cross. The shield indicates that he was a soldier, and the cross decoration implies that he fought in the service of the Lord. He was probably, therefore, a crusader. In 1270, around the time of the painting of these frescoes, Charles I of Anjou was organizing a crusade. The scene of the Crucifixion would, then, represent the sign under which the patron fought. Of the Passion scenes, the central placement of the Crucifixion, would, therefore, emphasize the calling and service of the donor.

There is another medium in which there are examples of Crucifixion scenes presented with adjacent donor portraits, and that is in medieval psalters and sacramentaries. In these illuminations, dating from the ninth century on, anachronistic figures are represented outside the sacred space of the Crucifixion, yet adjacent to the scene as though they are witnessing and

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<sup>77</sup> Noreen, "Lay Patronage and the Creation of Papal Sanctity" *Gesta*, 40, 51.

celebrating Christ's sacrifice. Portraits of this nature continued to appear in manuscripts into the eleventh century. For example, in the Breviary of Oderisius, circa 1100, produced at Monte Cassino, an anachronistic figure is depicted kneeling before a scene of the Crucifixion. Robert Deshman proposes that anachronistic figures depicted in conjunction with Crucifixion scenes are pictorial demonstrations of the Eucharist, in which a living person, through the rite of communion, symbolically reenacts the death of Christ. In eleventh-century Italian sacramentaries, the association of the Crucifixion and communion is demonstrated in miniatures where the donor of the manuscript is depicted before the Crucifixion scene in illustrations of the Canon of the Mass. The donor figures at Sant'Urbano and Santa Maria ad Cryptas are depicted in this way.<sup>78</sup>

Setting the tone for the entire program, the apse imagery is the generating force of the narrative cycles of the church, and therefore, the origination point of most decorative programs.<sup>79</sup> By virtue of its placement, set high above the altar, apse imagery is the first thing the viewer sees when he enters the church. There are several reasons that support the location of the Crucifixion in this position of primary importance at Santa Maria ad Cryptas; 1) Liturgically, the scene of the Crucifixion had been gaining importance since the eighth century when the scene was emphasized at Old Saint Peter's.<sup>80</sup> This liturgical importance of the Crucifixion continued into the eleventh century as evidenced by Italian sacramentaries containing illustrations of the Canon of the Mass that depicted the donor of the manuscript before the Crucifixion;<sup>81</sup> 2) Scenes of the Passion of Christ are appropriate for the crypt of the church, and at Santa Maria ad Cryptas, these scenes are located directly above a small crypt; 3) The patron, possibly a crusader, could have

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<sup>78</sup> Noreen, "Lay Patronage and the Creation of Papal Sanctity" *Gesta*, 50.

<sup>79</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 25.

<sup>80</sup> Tronzo, "The Prestige of Saint Peter's," *Studies In The History Of Art*, 97, 101.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., "Lay Patronage and the Creation of Papal Sanctity" *Gesta*, 50.

placed significant importance on the scene of the Crucifixion, as it would have symbolized the emblem under which he fought; and 4) In this position, the Crucifixion works with other programmatic elements. In the apse we see Christ enthroned in a green tunic with a brown overgarment above the scene of the Crucifixion. Opposite the apse on the west wall, we see the same figure of Christ, now in Judgment, seated on the same throne, wearing the same clothes, but now with the wounds of the Crucifixion. The placement of the scenes emphasizes Christ's role as both sacrificial lamb and ultimate judge. The first image the viewer sees is also the last image the viewer sees but in a different context. The Crucifixion and the Last Judgment work in concert to send a message to the viewer. The message is that the promise of eternal salvation is possible only through one's faith in Christ.

As the west wall is the last image seen by the churchgoer, it concludes the experience with a final impression. The west wall of Santa Maria ad Cryptas is painted with scenes of the Last Judgment. A comprehensive Last Judgment encompassing the entire west wall of the church does not occur in the thirteenth-century decoration of other Abruzzese churches.<sup>82</sup> The designer of the Santa Maria ad Cryptas Last Judgment must, therefore, have looked to another model. At Sant'Angelo in Formis, there is a Last Judgment that is similar to Fossa in its tiered format and the content of the scenes (Fig. 54). At both churches, Christ is enthroned in majesty flanked by angels in the top registers, and by apostles in a lower register. In the register directly beneath Christ's feet, three angels separate the Elect from the Damned. The angels on the left and right bear scrolls designating the processions of souls as either Elect or Damned. At Sant'Angelo, in the lower register, almost on eye level with the parishioners, the blessed are depicted plucking fruit from trees. At the same position on the opposite side of the portal, the

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<sup>82</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 46.



right side of the wall, there is a scene of Hell. The Fossa frescoes follow mostly the same format, but the left side of the bottom register is comprised of the Virgin Mary standing next to the Archangel Michael weighing souls, as in the Abruzzese churches at Castel Castagna and Bominaco. The scene of the Blessed plucking fruit spills over onto the south wall of the church, as the background for the scene of the three patriarchs cradling blessed souls. There is no way to know if scenes of the Damned may have once spilled over onto the north wall, as it is now repainted. The scenes of Hell, partially destroyed at both churches, depict large dark-skinned demons devouring small nude damned souls. The scenes of the Elect are similar in that both depict a long row of the Elect with similar facial structure and the Byzantine red cheek dot. At Sant'Angelo in Formis there are two groups of the Elect. The front group seems to be all male and mostly clergy, whereas the upper group is a mixture of men, women and clergy.<sup>83</sup> At Fossa, the Elect include clergy as well as non-clerical men and women. The landscape behind the Elect in the Sant'Angelo in Formis scene is similar to the trees surrounding the Patriarchs at Fossa. In both cases, tiny figures pick fruit from the trees.

The Sant'Angelo in Formis Last Judgment is sometimes compared to the Last Judgment at Torcello. The Torcello Last Judgment is characteristically Byzantine. It includes typical Byzantine features like the river of fire spilling from the throne of Christ, the Patriarchs cradling souls, the division of the Blessed and the Damned, the rich man in Hell, and the intercession of Mary shown by her presence, along with John the Baptist, in the register with the Apostles.<sup>84</sup> The Sant'Angelo in Formis Last Judgment does not include any of these elements, which means it cannot be classified as particularly Byzantine. The Santa Maria ad Cryptas Last Judgment,

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<sup>83</sup> Gunhouse, *The Fresco Decoration of Sant'Angelo in Formis*, 59-60.

<sup>84</sup> Anthony, *Romanesque Frescoes*, 44, for comparison of Sant'Angelo in Formis Last Judgment to that of Torcello 92, Fig. 45, Torcello Last Judgment, Fig. 136, Sant'Angelo in Formis Last Judgment; Gunhouse, *The Fresco Decoration of Sant'Angelo in Formis*, 155.

however, includes the scene of the Patriarchs, and a scene of Mary performing the role of Intercessor next to Saint Michael. The Fossa frescoes, therefore, are similar to Byzantine Last Judgments in its inclusion of these elements and by its tiered format.

Another type of Last Judgment that should be considered in the classification of the Santa Maria ad Cryptas Last Judgment is the Roman group of Last Judgments, which include a panel now in the Vatican (Fig. 55) and the west walls of Santa Maria Immacolata at Ceri and San Giovanni a Porta Latina. Roman Last Judgments also employ a tiered format and include images of Christ baring his wounds, an altar surrounded by implements of the Passion, the intercession of Mary, and Saints portrayed within the jeweled-encrusted walls of Eden, as shown at the bottom left-hand side of the composition in the Vatican panel.<sup>85</sup> The only obvious characteristic of a Roman Last Judgment at Santa Maria ad Cryptas is the image of Christ baring his wounds. Santa Maria ad Cryptas, therefore, cannot be classified as particularly Byzantine or Roman.

In addition to sharing a similar format, Santa Maria ad Cryptas and Sant'Angelo in Formis have two striking similarities that do not occur commonly in other Last Judgment imagery. These two distinguishing characteristics separate them from many other compositions. The first is the occurrence of three angels beneath the image of Christ in Judgment. These angels do not occur at Torcello or at the Baptistery of Saint John in Florence, nor in any other Last Judgment that I have reviewed. The angels seem to be specific to Sant'Angelo in Formis, because they mirror the apse imagery, which also includes the three archangels, Gabriel, Michael and Raphael (Fig. 56). The three archangels are significant to Sant'Angelo because the church is

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<sup>85</sup> Gunhouse, *The Fresco Decoration of Sant'Angelo in Formis*, 155; Kessler, *Old St. Peter's and Church Decoration in Medieval Italy*, 109.

dedicated to them.<sup>86</sup> At Santa Maria ad Cryptas there is no similar reason to include the three archangels. Without a comprehensive audit of pre-existing and contemporary Last Judgment imagery, however, I cannot be certain of the significance of the angels occurring in similar number, form and placement at these two churches. The other significant similarity is the absence of the Virgin Mary and Saint John the Baptist in the second register flanking Christ. Both of these similarities seem to be exclusive to Santa Maria ad Cryptas and Sant'Angelo in Formis, indicating that the Fossa artists either copied them from Sant'Angelo in Formis, or that the two fresco cycles derive this feature from a better-known common model, perhaps a Last Judgment scene at Monte Cassino.

One of the most significant dissimilarities between the Last Judgment scenes at Sant'Angelo in Formis and those found in the Abruzzese churches in Fossa, Bominaco and Castel Castagna is the scene of Abraham as Patriarch cradling souls.<sup>87</sup> In the Abruzzi, the Patriarchs occur as part of the Last Judgment imagery. The artists have chosen to personalize this scene by depicting multiple souls who were in contemporary dress, perhaps even local personages, nestled in the bosom of the Patriarchs. The inclusion of the three Patriarchs at Fossa suggests that the artist was familiar with a more typical Byzantine Last Judgment scene that would have included the three figures. Two monumental Last Judgments that include scenes of the Patriarchs cradling souls can be found in Italy on the island of Torcello near Venice, and in the ceiling of the Florence Baptistery. Both of these monumental Last Judgments predate the Fossa scene by over one hundred years.<sup>88</sup> The image of patriarchs depicted cradling multiple

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<sup>86</sup> Demus, *Romanesque Mural Painting*, 294, I noted the similarity of the three angels in both of the Last Judgments, Dr. Glenn Gunhouse pointed out the possibility that this imagery may only occur at Sant'Angelo in Formis and at Santa Maria ad Cryptas.

<sup>87</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, PL. 9 for Castel Castagna, PL. 72, for Bominaco.

<sup>88</sup> Anthony, *Romanesque Frescoes*, 92.

souls is, therefore, not an Abruzzese invention. Given the significant similarities between Sant' Angelo in Formis and Fossa (the three angels and the presence of Mary and John the Baptist), and the dissimilarity of the patriarch images, we must conclude that the Fossa artists either utilized more than one model for the Last Judgment scenes, or an unknown model that contained all of these images (the three angels, Mary and John the Baptist flanking the risen Christ, and images of the three Patriarchs cradling souls).

### The Old Testament Cycle

The Genesis cycle at Santa Maria ad Cryptas exhibits characteristics found in different groups of Genesis imagery, and some characteristics that appear to be unique. By the thirteenth century, Old Testament cycles in southern Italy were the product of over one thousand years of give and take between manuscript illumination and large-scale wall decoration. Any given cycle might include elements from more than one group of manuscripts, while also including scenes copied from the Old Testament cycles of monumental programs like that of Old Saint Peter's. Although the individual scenes and the narrative cycles are familiar and easily read, the source of the iconography may change from scene to scene. It is also common for a single scene to exhibit iconographical elements from eastern and western sources, as well as compositional elements from both miniature and monumental models.<sup>89</sup> The Genesis cycle at Fossa falls into this category of "hybrid" cycles.<sup>90</sup> Although an in-depth analysis of the iconography is outside the scope of this paper, it is important to point out the iconographic elements of the cycle that adhere to larger groups of decoration in order to understand its complexity.

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<sup>89</sup> John Lowdon, *The Octateuchs, A Study In Byzantine Manuscript Illustration* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 96, 98, 99.

<sup>90</sup> Lowdon, *The Octateuchs*, 96, for the use of "hybrid."

The two monumental groups of Creation cycles that are relevant in analyzing Santa Maria ad Cryptas are the group based on Old Saint Peter's and the south Italian group that resembles Old Saint Peter's but has specific variations. The southern Italian group includes the Genesis cycles in Sant'Angelo in Formis, the Cappella Palatina and the Cathedral of Monreale in Sicily, and in San Pietro in Valle in Ferentillo.<sup>91</sup> Of the Sant'Angelo in Formis Creation cycle, only the Expulsion survives. Both groups are variants of the Cotton Genesis and resemble it in many ways. Although elements that appear in a group of manuscripts called the Byzantine Octateuchs, dating from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, appear in each of the two groups, the imagery can be demonstrated to pre-date the manuscripts, thus eliminating them as unique source material.<sup>92</sup>

In the southern Italian group, the initial scenes of Creation are extensively illustrated. These scenes, after the scene of the Spirit on the Waters show the Creator standing at the left and creating things to the right. In the Old Saint Peter's group the initial days of creation are conflated into a single scene.<sup>93</sup> There are a number of monumental cycles that closely resemble that of Old St. Peter's, including Saint Paul's outside the Walls and San Giovanni a Porta Latina in Rome, and the mosaics of the Baptistery of Florence.<sup>94</sup>

Genesis cycles that belong to the Cotton Genesis family often depict the Creation of Eve in more than one scene. In this group, Eve is created in two scenes: God drawing the rib from the sleeping Adam, and God forming the rib into the body of Eve. An example of this can be

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<sup>91</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 251.

<sup>92</sup> Gunhouse, *The Fresco Decoration of Sant'Angelo in Formis*, 163-165.

<sup>93</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 251; Glenn Gunhouse, "Gideon, The Angel and St. Pantaleon, Two Problematic Scenes at Sant'Angelo in Formis." *Arte Medievale*, 2nd series, 9/2 (1995), 113.

<sup>94</sup> Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 24, for Saint Paul's outside the Walls, 28, for San Giovanni a Porta Latina, 40, for the Florence Baptistery.

found at San Marco in Venice. In both the southern Italian churches and at Old Saint Peter's, on the other hand, Eve was created in a single episode.<sup>95</sup>

The Octateuchs present the Creation story quite differently, often with the Creator in the center, creating things to the left and right during the initial days of Creation, and then shifting to a left-to-right format for the story of Adam and Eve. In the Octateuchs, the Creation of Eve is distinctively accomplished in a single scene.<sup>96</sup> The Creation of Eve is depicted in the right-hand side of the scene of Adam Naming the Animals. Adam is shown sleeping as the torso of Eve, with arms uplifted toward the hand of God, rises from his side (Figs. 57, 58).

The Creation scenes at Santa Maria ad Cryptas fall somewhere between the Old Saint Peter's and southern Italian groups as the following discussion will demonstrate. The first intact scene of the Fossa Creation cycle is a conflated scene of various elements of the first three days of Creation. The actions that are apparent from this scene are the creation of heavenly bodies, the division of light from darkness, the separation of land and sea, and the creation of vegetation. The scene is centralized with the Creator enthroned in the center. The centralization of this scene makes it different from the other existing monumental cycles in southern Italy. The Octateuch scenes are centralized, with the personifications of moon and sun shown in profile on opposite sides of the frame (Fig. 59). The personifications are a leftover classical tradition that persists in Christian manuscripts and church decoration throughout the Middle Ages.<sup>97</sup> There is a drawing of the scene of the Creation of Sun and Moon from Saint Paul's outside the Walls in a manuscript in the Vatican library in which the Creator, standing and bearded, is shown centralized between two orbs with facial characteristics labeled as the sun and moon (Fig. 60).

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<sup>95</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 251.

<sup>96</sup> Kurt Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs, Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 31-32.

<sup>97</sup> Webster, *The Labors of the Months*, 58, 62, 98.

The Saint Paul's scene is a copy of the one at Old Saint Peter's. The Fossa artist adheres closely to the Roman model in format and composition, but uses different models for the Creator, sun and moon. The profile features for the sun and moon are more in keeping with the Octateuch creation scenes.<sup>98</sup> The artist either personally adapted the scene or used an unknown model.

In the scene of the Creation of the Moon and Sun, medallions containing personifications flank the Creator. This is another centralized symmetrical scene depicting an episode of Creation. By including more than one scene of the initial days of Creation, the artist has deviated from the Old Saint Peter's model.<sup>99</sup> While the format of this scene is most closely related to the Old Saint Peter's group, the personifications most closely follow those shown in the Byzantine Octateuchs.<sup>100</sup>

Although it is uncommon to see winged figures in Creation cycles, the Creation cycle at San Marco in Venice and the Cotton Genesis (the manuscript on which the mosaics at San Marco are based) include multiple winged figures to mark the specific days of the Creation cycle (Fig. 61). Winged figures appear in the monumental Genesis cycle in the Cathedral at Monreale. Sometimes, the figures represent Days and occur in the appropriate number on each day of Creation, as at San Marco, while sometimes the figures represent angels, as at the Cathedral of Monreale, where seven winged figures are shown in the first Creation scene to indicate the Creation of the Angels.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*, Fig. 33-36; Kessler, *Old St. Peter's*, Fig. 2.14; Pamela Z Blum, "The Cryptic Creation Cycle in Ms. Junius xi." *Essays in Honor of Sumner McKnight Crosby*, *Gesta* 15, no.1/2 (1976), 218.

<sup>99</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 47.

<sup>100</sup> Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice*, PL. 40.

<sup>101</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, Plates 26B, 94B; Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice*, 130; Blum, "The Cryptic Creation Cycle in Ms. Junius xi.," *Gesta*, 218; Adelheid Heimann, "The Six Days of Creation in a Twelfth Century Manuscript." *Journal of the*

The scene of the Creation at Fossa is unusual because the winged figures occur only once, and at the midpoint of the cycle. In addition, the six figures flanking Christ Logos are confusing because they occur on what is surely the fourth day of Creation. The preceding scene includes the Separation of Land and Sea and the Creation of Vegetation, which occur on the third day of Creation, while the subsequent scene is of the Creation of Birds and Mammals, which occurs on the fifth day. If the artist has included these figures in an effort to mark the specific day of creation, then there should be only four figures to mark the fourth day.<sup>102</sup> This is a curious scene, but we must conclude that all of the figures are angels, and not days, since their number does not correspond to the number of the day represented.

At Fossa, the scene of the Creation of Birds and Terrestrial Animals is somewhat problematic. Scripturally, birds and terrestrial animals were not created on the same day. In larger church decoration programs containing Creation cycles, it is customary to depict the creation of birds and marine animals in one scene, to be followed by a scene of the Creation of Terrestrial Animals. Likewise, illuminated manuscripts, without the limitations of architecture, tend to depict individual scenes of the Creation as described in scripture.<sup>103</sup> There is no scene that combines the creation of birds and terrestrial animals in Norman Sicily or at San Marco in Venice. Unfortunately, these scenes no longer exist at Monte Cassino or Sant'Angelo in Formis. There is, however, a Creation cycle at the Umbrian church San Pietro at Ferentillo dating from

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*Warburg Institute*, 1, no. 4 (1938), 273-274; Ernst Kitzinger, "The Role of Miniature Painting in Mural Decoration," *The Place of Book Illumination in Byzantine Art* (Princeton, 1975), 100.

<sup>102</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 47, Matthiae remarks, about this scene, that there are four "angels who mark the days," neglecting to comment on the remaining two figures. His explanation as to why the artist would include personifications of the Days in this frame alone is simply to clarify that this is the fourth day of Creation. The device is necessary to clear up any confusion that the celestial orbs depicted in the previous scene were the sun and the moon.

<sup>103</sup> Kitzinger, "The Role of Miniature Painting in Mural Decoration," *The Place of Book Illumination in Byzantine Art*, 100; Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice*, 162.



the late twelfth century (Fig. 62, 63). Matthiae, in his work on the Art of Medieval Abruzzo, suggests that the Creation cycles at San Pietro in Ferentillo and Santa Maria ad Cryptas at Fossa may share a similar source. The Ferentillo scene that Matthiae compares to the Creation of the Animals scene at Fossa is the scene of Adam Naming the Animals. Though compositionally different, both scenes include birds and terrestrial animals depicted against a white background. Matthiae also notes the general similarities of the Fossa Creation cycle to the Byzantine Octateuchs. In the Byzantine Octateuchs, the only compositionally similar scene depicting birds and animals together is the scene of Adam Naming the Animals (Fig. 57, 58).<sup>104</sup>

The scene of Adam Naming the Animals does not occur in the Creation cycles at the Cappella Palatina or the Cathedral of Monreale. This scene, however, does occur at San Marco in Venice and that scene is similar to the Fossa scene in that it contains the Creator seated at the far left gesturing toward the animals that fill the right side of the frame.<sup>105</sup> There are two important differences, however: the scene also features a nude Adam situated between the Creator and the animals, and the animals depicted are all terrestrial.

As for the depiction of the birds in a scene of the Creation of the Animals, Matthiae notes that the peculiar combination of species, and the different background used for the Creator suggest the combination of different scenes. The Creator in this scene is shown entirely within a green and blue background, almost framed as a separate composition, while the animals occupy a white background. In the other Creation scenes at Fossa, the background is consistent throughout. Matthiae cites the Naming of the Animals scene at Ferentillo as similar to the Fossa Creation of the Animals scene because of the style in which the animals are depicted and the

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<sup>104</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 47; Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs, Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint*, 30.

<sup>105</sup> Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice*, PL. 40.

white background. In the Ferentillo scene (Fig. 63) the nude figure of Adam is depicted frontally and nude at the center of the composition while the various species of animals surround him. Matthiae suggests that a similar source was used for both the Ferentillo scenes and the Fossa creation scenes.<sup>106</sup>

Although it is possible that the artist choose to combine the scenes of the Creation of Birds and the Creation of Terrestrial Animals into one scene through his own initiative, it is more likely that he based this scene on an existing scene in another decorative program, an artist's model book, or an illuminated manuscript. I think that the scene is a derivation of the scene of Adam Naming the Animals, with the Creator being substituted for Adam. I believe this for several reasons. First, in five of the Byzantine Octateuchs there is a scene of Adam Naming the Animals depicted in a very similar compositional format to the scene at Fossa. In each manuscript, Adam sits at left facing a procession of animals with birds occupying the top half of the scene and terrestrial animals at bottom.<sup>107</sup> At Fossa, the artist has portrayed this scene in a very similar manner substituting the Creator for Adam. The second reason is that the depiction of the animals themselves and the use of the white background are similar to the Naming of the Animals scene at Ferentillo. The third reason is that in the Fossa scene, the Creator is depicted with a different background, almost in a separate frame from the animals as though cut and pasted from a different scene.<sup>108</sup>

The next scene in the Fossa Creation cycle is the scene of God explaining the Law to Adam and Eve. This is unusual for several reasons that must be noted to demonstrate the unique nature of the Fossa Creation cycle. This scene does not appear in any of the regional churches

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<sup>106</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 47-48.

<sup>107</sup> Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*, 30-31, Plates 79-82.

<sup>108</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 48.

containing Creation cycles, nor does it appear in any of the existing monumental cycles purported to be based on the presumed Cassinese model. In addition, this scene does not appear in the mosaics of the Creation cupola of San Marco, which has different characteristics than the Monte Cassino group. The scene of God Forbidding Adam to Eat from the Tree of Knowledge appears in four of the Octateuchs, but the warning is for Adam alone, as it occurs before the Creation of Eve, in keeping with the text of the Bible.<sup>109</sup> The Fossa scene is located after the scene of the Creation of Adam and Eve and before the scene of the Fall. The inclusion of Eve is perhaps the most unique feature as it renders the scene incorrect in terms of the chronology and events as told in Genesis. Matthiae, in his book *Pittura Abruzzese Medioevale*, also notes that this is not a scene that occurs in cycles similar to that of Santa Maria ad Cryptas. He refers to the scene as ominous and as a precursor of the events in the subsequent Fall and Expulsion.<sup>110</sup> In the south Italian church of Santa Maria di Anglona, there is a scene of God Forbidding Adam and Eve to Eat from the Tree of Knowledge. Herbert Kessler notes in his book, *Old Saint Peters and Church Decoration in Medieval Italy*, the unique nature of the scene. He speculates that, despite the non-scriptural subject matter, the Genesis cycles at Palermo and Monreale are the source material.<sup>111</sup> In agreement with Matthiae, Kessler points out that this scene emphasizes the sin of man, and man's inability to remain free from sin despite direct orders from God.<sup>112</sup>

The Expulsion scene at Fossa can be compared to similar scenes in churches throughout Italy and in the manuscripts of the Byzantine Octateuchs (Figs. 64, 65). The Fossa Expulsion scene differs from the Expulsion scenes found in other south Italian churches in that the un-bearded Creator does the expelling. He does so in a two-handed manner, however, similar to

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<sup>109</sup> Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*, 29-30.

<sup>110</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, 48.

<sup>111</sup> Kessler, *Old Saint Peter's*, 210.

<sup>112</sup> Kessler, *Old Saint Peter's*, 224-225.

gesture of the expelling angel of the other south Italian venues. The Expulsion scene at Sant'Angelo in Formis is unusual among monumental Genesis cycles because it depicts an angel pushing Eve and Adam from the Garden (Fig. 66). Adam is physically expelled from the garden in the Byzantine Octateuchs, and in the Sicilian churches of the Cappella Palatina and the Cathedral of Monreale.<sup>113</sup> The Creation cycle in total at Sant'Angelo is thought to have resembled the cycles in the Sicilian churches and the Salerno Antependium, all of which are thought to be based on the Monte Cassino model.<sup>114</sup> The Creation cycles at the Sicilian venues are also thought to follow the Monte Cassino model.<sup>115</sup> Given the significant difference that the Creator physically expels Adam at Fossa, it is probable that the Fossa Expulsion scene is based on a different model from that of the Monte Cassino group. Additionally, Otto Demus, a scholar on the Sicilian mosaics, believes that the instances in which the Sicilian mosaics were used as a model for the decoration of other churches or manuscripts in southern Italy or elsewhere after the fall of the Hauteville Dynasty are rare, and that, in each case, a physical historical connection can be made.<sup>116</sup> As thirteenth-century Fossa has no known connection with Norman Sicily, it is also unlikely that the decoration of Santa Maria ad Cryptas is based directly on the monumental mosaics found there. At San Marco in Venice, an un-bearded Creator is shown physically expelling Adam.<sup>117</sup> Perhaps Old Saint Peter's, as part of the Cotton Genesis group, or Monte Cassino, employed similar imagery, thus providing a model for the Santa Maria ad Cryptas artists.

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<sup>113</sup> Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*, 30-31.

<sup>114</sup> Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages*, 94; Gunhouse, *The Fresco Decoration of Sant'Angelo in Formis*, 64.

<sup>115</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 255-257.

<sup>116</sup> Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 444.

<sup>117</sup> Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice*, PL. 40.

In conclusion, the Santa Maria ad Cryptas Genesis cycle includes characteristics seen in the Cotton Genesis and the two groups that belong to the western branch of the Cotton Genesis family (Old Saint Peter's group and the southern Italian group). The frescoes feature images of the un-bearded Creator and include an Expulsion scene that depicts the Creator physically performing the expulsion, as in the Cotton Genesis and its monumental counterpart, San Marco in Venice. Like the southern Italian cycles, the Fossa frescoes have the tendency to depict scenes with the Creator on the left and the created items on the right. Like the Old Saint Peter's group of Genesis cycles, the Fossa frescoes include centralized symmetrical scenes of the first days. Unlike the Old Saint Peter's group, the first days of Creation are depicted in more than one scene, which is more in keeping with the southern Italian group of Creation cycles. The Fossa frescoes also incorporate elements more commonly seen in the Byzantine Octateuchs. Finally, the Fossa frescoes include scenes like the Giving of the Law to Adam and Eve which does not stem from scripture, and the Creation of Birds and Terrestrial Animals that is not found in any monumental cycle that I have encountered.

### Labors of the Months

The second register of the third bay of the south wall is divided into six vignettes depicting the Labors of the Months. Cycles depicting the Labors of the Months are prevalent throughout Italy. Many survive in the form of floor mosaics from antiquity. The Cloister of Monreale has columns sculpted with the labors, as does the portal of the Cathedral at Sessa Aurunca in Campania.<sup>118</sup> In the early Middle Ages, the calendar depicting the Labors of the Months was absorbed into Christian iconography, most commonly in connection to the Creation

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<sup>118</sup> Carl Sheppard, Jr., "Iconography of the Cloister of Monreale" *The Art Bulletin* 31, no.3 (1949), 161; Nancy Fabbri, "The Iconography of the Months at Lentini" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 42 (1979), 231.

cycle as a continuation of the Fall of Man. The combination of the Creation cycle with the Labors of the Months can be found in the twelfth-century floor mosaics of the Cathedral of Otranto and in the Gerona Tapestry. Another way that a depiction of the Labors of the Months changed in the early Middle Ages was in the figures or images associated with each month. Instead of a static personification, the image for each month became a scene in which medieval man demonstrated his power over his surroundings.<sup>119</sup>

The Labors of the Months did not occupy such an important position in other churches during the thirteenth century. Although a familiar motif, this subject was more often relegated to floor mosaics or sculptural elements like doorjambs, portals, or cloister columns. Why do the Labors of the Months appear on the nave walls at Santa Maria ad Cryptas in Fossa and at San Pellegrino in Bominaco, two rural villages in the rough Abruzzo countryside? The geographical location may provide a portion of the answer. A cycle of the Labors of the Months that depicted peasants performing familiar activities was an obvious pictorial choice for conveying a message to the parishioners who frequented these churches. Early Christian church leaders, such as Paulinus of Nola, and later Gregory the Great, recognized images as a way to communicate with illiterate peasants.<sup>120</sup> At Fossa, this premise is expanded beyond the typical biblical illustrations to demonstrate the labors of the common man with images of the common man.<sup>121</sup>

Depictions of the Labors of the Months follow the twelve-month calendar. Although this type of cycle occurs in various media throughout western Europe, the scenes are largely similar, accurately depicting the primary agrarian activity to be accomplished in each particular month. The contemporary medieval calendar would tend to show an active figure performing a task

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<sup>119</sup> Petzold, *Romanesque Art*, 93-96.

<sup>120</sup> Davis-Weyer, *Early Medieval Art*, 18-20; Kessler, *Old St. Peter's*, 20-21.

<sup>121</sup> Petzold, *Romanesque Art*, 96.

specific to the month, thus demonstrating control over his environment. In southern regions like Italy, the activity performed may be depicted in an earlier month. For example, harvest may be depicted in September rather than October. In Italy, it is more common to find antique or pagan representations of the months. For example, March is represented as a figure blowing on two horns, or by the figure of the Spinario, a seated figure pulling a thorn from his foot.<sup>122</sup> At Bominaco, only the first six months are discernible. These include: January – a man warming his hands before a fire; February – a man pruning his vine; March – the Spinario; April – the Flower-bearer; May – a man on horseback riding to war; June – a man gathering fruit from a tree.<sup>123</sup> Because Fossa and Bominaco are similar in both overall program and, in many instances, scene composition, it is likely that the first six labors at Fossa were of the same subjects.

In the medieval mindset, the role of man was a tiny piece of the larger universe, but man's monthly labors were connected to the heavens via the constellations. The earthly cycle of the seasons and the corresponding actions of man echoed the celestial cycle of the year. This agricultural cycle was set in motion by the Creator when he expelled Adam from the Garden of Eden. The Labors of Adam and Eve became examples for medieval peasants. Repeating the work of Adam year in and year out as prescribed by God was a reflection of the heavens as interpreted through the constellations.<sup>124</sup>

Toward the end of the twelfth century, towns grew and became important areas of trade. Nearby Aquila, a relatively new town during the thirteenth century, and the newly established Angevin Court in Naples could have been seen as centers of opportunity by the peasants in the Fossa area. Indeed, in towns throughout southern Italy, ambitious hard-working men could find

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<sup>122</sup> Webster, *The Labors of the Months*, 58, 62, 98; Petzold, *Romanesque Art*, 97.

<sup>123</sup> Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese*, Figs. 73, 74; Webster, *The Labors of the Months*, 62, for the man on horseback representing a soldier.

<sup>124</sup> Petzold, *Romanesque Art*, 99.

employment in the Angevin regime.<sup>125</sup> The division between clergy, aristocracy, knights and peasants began to breakdown. In other words, the peasant began to have alternatives to his existing lifestyle, and found opportunities to change his destiny through trade or training. The clergy, aristocracy and knightly classes depended on peasant labor for food, animal husbandry, farm goods to trade for luxury items and clothing, and ultimately shelter. The response of these classes was to create pictorial messages essentially instructing the peasant to continue working the land because it was ordained by God as their duty from the time of Creation.<sup>126</sup> The penalty for going against the pre-ordained plan was damnation, as depicted in the scene of the Last Judgment, which, at Fossa, is located adjacent to the Labors of the Months.

At Fossa, the position of the Labors of the Months between the Creation cycle and the Last Judgment is important because it signifies the passage of time in a yearly cycle from the Creation to the end of time. The Labors occur at Bominaco, but are not as clearly integrated into the program as at Fossa. There is another instance in southern Italy of the Labors being used in concert with the Creation cycle, namely, the floor mosaics at the Cathedral of Otranto, 1163-1165. This mosaic has a complex narrative structure complete with inscriptions.<sup>127</sup> Perhaps the best comprehensive example of the Creation and the Labors being incorporated as part of an overall message is the Gerona Tapestry in Catalonia. In this tapestry, the Labors of the Months are used as a border around the central figure of Christ surrounded by the wheel of creation. The wheel is compartmentalized and depicts images of five of the seven days of creation. At one time, the tapestry also included an additional border that depicted scenes from the Legend of the True Cross, though most of this portion of the tapestry no longer survives. The Labors of the

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<sup>125</sup> Decker, *Romanesque Art in Italy*, 38; Dunbabin, *Charles I Anjou*, 106.

<sup>126</sup> Petzold, *Romanesque Art*, 72-73, 96.

<sup>127</sup> Petzold, *Romanesque Art*, 60-61.



Months echo the wheel of creation in that they run in a continuous cycle. The tapestry is a guide to the cosmology of the medieval man.<sup>128</sup> Like the Gerona Tapestry, the Labors of the Months at Fossa are included as a necessary part of the overall program that seeks to explain the cycle of the universe that encompasses the sacred history of the Christian religion from Creation to Last Judgment. The transitional position of the Patriarchs on the south wall strengthens my theory that the various elements that comprise the program of Santa Maria ad Cryptas combine to provide the viewer with a concise guide to sacred history. The individual cycles and portraits are not chosen and placed within the church solely because they adhere to the generally accepted model of church decoration. The Last Judgment is directly tied to the actions of current-day man.

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<sup>128</sup> Barbara Baert. "New Observations on the Genesis of Gerona (1050-1100), The Iconography of the Legend of the True Cross." *Gesta* 38, no.2, (1999), 118; Petzold, *Romanesque Art*, 95-96.

## CONCLUSION

It seems clear from the arrangement of scenes in frames and registers that follow a narrative format, and from the presence of specific elements found at Old Saint Peter's and in the southern Italian group of churches that followed and revived the Early Christian model of Old Saint Peter's, that Santa Maria ad Cryptas was meant to follow the Western style of church decoration. The Byzantine instances of iconography and stylistic elements are products of the artists' attempts to decorate the church in the revered style of the period, most likely relying on highly regarded regional models. There is no single model still existing for the program of the church. The Fossa artists either emulated a model, like Monte Cassino, that has since been destroyed, or they adapted scenes and narrative cycles from a variety of sources to support a message established by the donor.

The messages in the frescoes are threefold: 1) They seek to align themselves with the nearby Angevin rulers with their choice of the warrior saints that emphasize the patron's role as warrior and crusader, presumably in support of Charles I of Anjou; 2) They seek to send a message about the sacred history and natural order of the universe to the parishioners who may have been in service of the patron. The message is to live a righteous and productive life in the way of Adam, as directed by God and made possible for men by the Passion of Christ, and for women by the life of Mary, in the hopes that one is welcomed into heaven; and 3) They seek to show that being a soldier of Christ is a valid path to eternal redemption. The artist emphasizes this message by positioning the Crucifixion above the crypt and employing the sign of the cross in numerous scenes throughout the program.

In the third bay the program has two interesting and unexpected elements. The bay begins with pendant portraits of two soldier saints, George and Maurice. Why are they included,

and why at this position within the church? I believe they are included to emphasize yet another method of attaining grace and finding oneself in the bosom of the Patriarchs, as depicted in the bottom register of the same bay. The warrior saints are depicted with cross-emblazoned shields and in similar dress to that of the patron. The method is obvious — become a soldier and fight on behalf of Christ (and the King), and you will be rewarded with a secure place in the afterlife. The patron of these frescoes was a soldier and possibly a crusader, as indicated by the shield he carries in the donor portrait. Therefore, most of the agrarian actions carried out by the men depicted in the Labors did not apply specifically to him. It is probable, however, that the first six Labors included the scene of a knight riding to battle for the month of May. During the Middle Ages, and on through the Renaissance, *condottiere*, Italian soldiers for hire, provided protection and military services for royalty and/or aristocrats in exchange for compensation in the form of land or money. Including the warrior saints is a way of validating his profession as a soldier by showing that his actions will lead to salvation.

The Last Judgment completes the cycle by introducing the concept of the Second Coming, and therefore a new beginning for the righteous.<sup>129</sup> It is not uncommon for the decorative programs of Italian churches to attempt to present the sacred history of the universe, but Fossa's program is remarkable for its concise program and for its powerful placement of the Crucifixion opposite the Last Judgment, and for its inclusion of soldiers and peasants.

In simple terms, I think that the program of the Fossa frescoes is a guide to life and salvation for the thirteenth-century man and woman. God created the world, God created man and gave him dominion over the earth, Adam and Eve fell from Grace and were expelled from Paradise to labor day after day. Man fulfills this curse by laboring on earth generation after

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<sup>129</sup> Kessler, *Old St. Peter's and Church*, 198-200.

generation to the end of time. There is however, the possibility of redemption and heavenly reward. By sending Christ and Mary, God has given man a chance at redemption. Through the actions of Christ, the new Adam, and Mary, the new Eve, God has provided an example for salvation and a means of attaining Grace.

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## APPENDIX - FIGURES

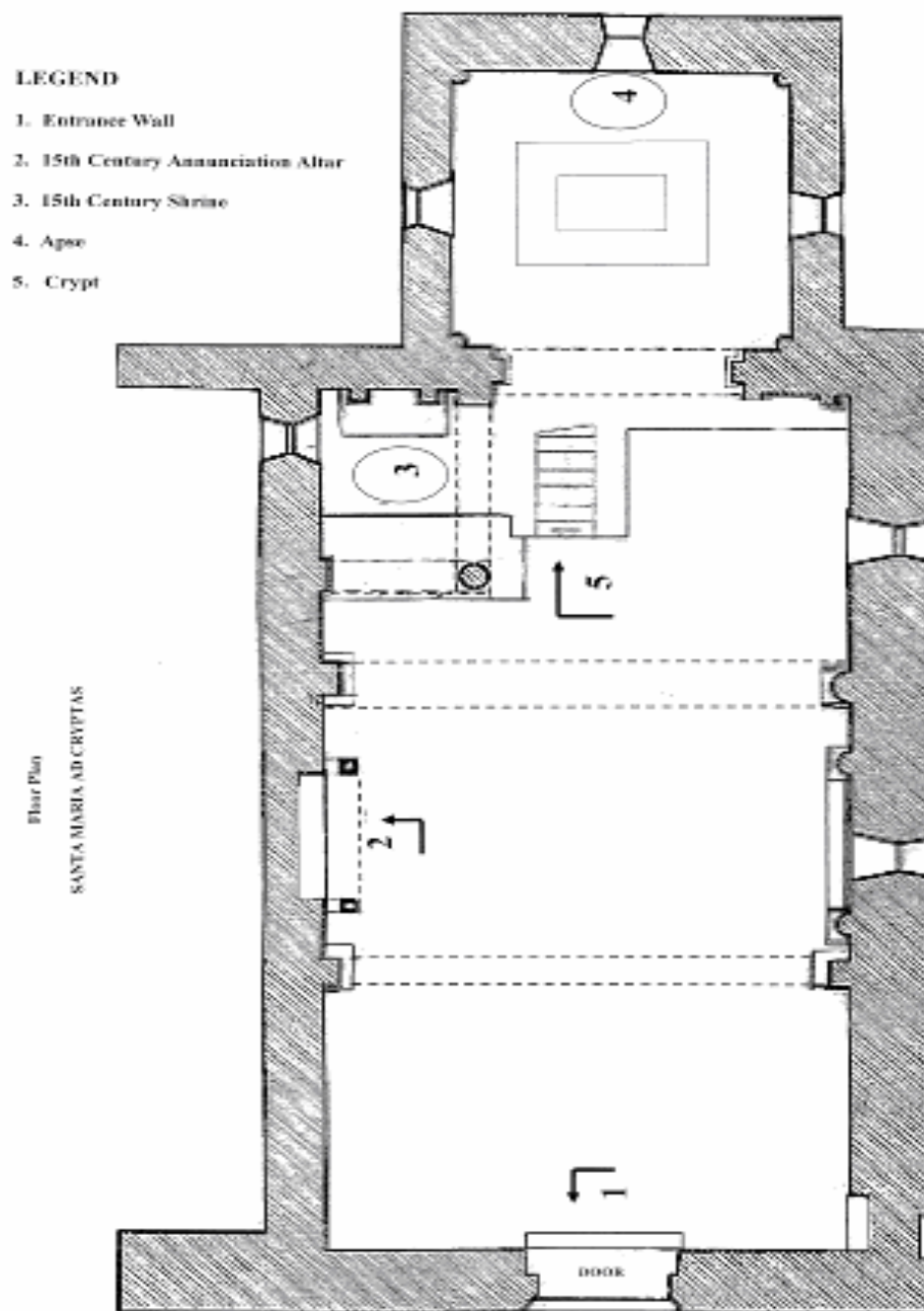


Figure 1. Floor Plan of Church

Plan from [www.santamariaadcryptas.com](http://www.santamariaadcryptas.com), October 7, 2009.



Figure 2. Patron Portrait – Detail of 1<sup>st</sup> Three People

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 3. Fossa – North Wall of Apse

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 4. Fossa – East Wall of Apse

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 5. Fossa – East Wall Lunette

Photograph from Glenn Gunhouse's Homepage – [www.medievalist.net/images](http://www.medievalist.net/images), October 7, 2009.





Figure 6. Fossa – South Wall Lunette

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 7. Fossa – Last Supper

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 8. Fossa – The Betrayal of Christ

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 9. Fossa - Flagellation of Christ

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 10. Fossa – Crucifixion

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



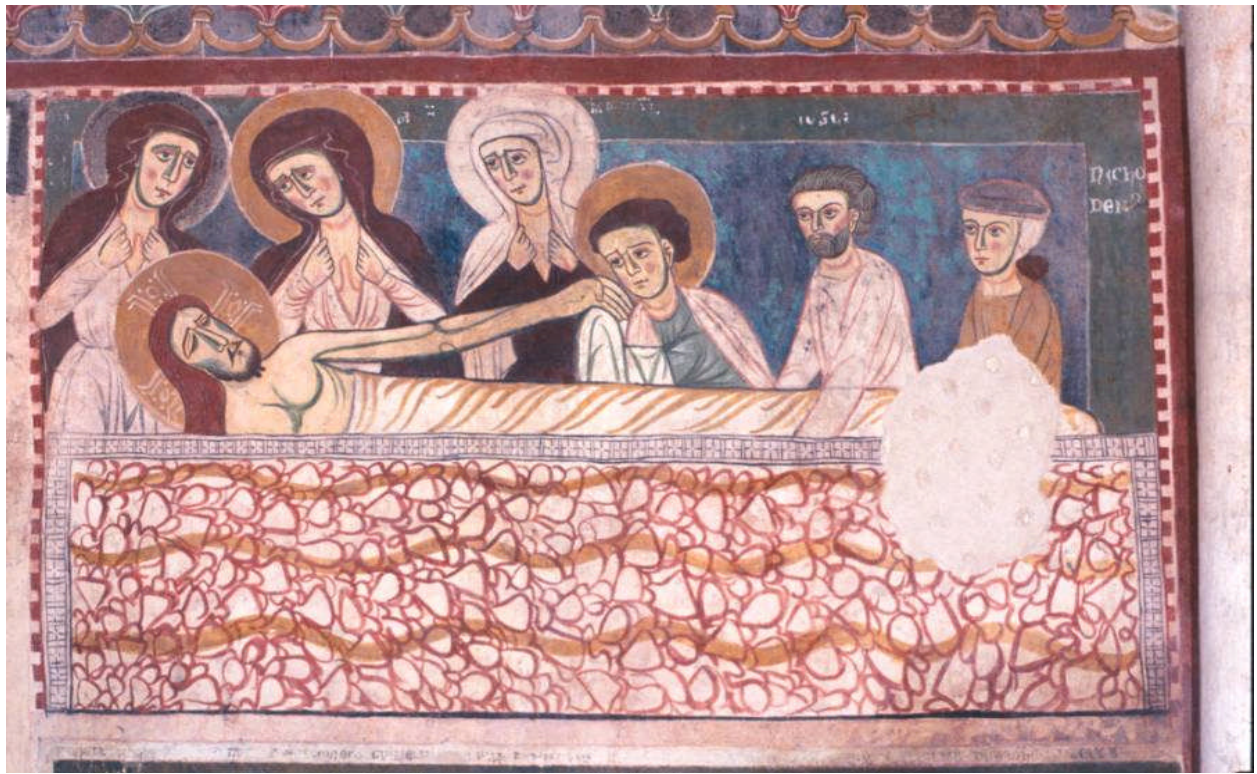


Figure 11. Fossa – Entombment

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 12. Fossa – Donor Portrait

Photograph from Glenn Gunhouse's Homepage – [www.medievalist.net/images](http://www.medievalist.net/images), October 7, 2009.



Figure 13. Fossa – South Wall, Destroyed Scene, left

Photograph from Glenn Gunhouse's Homepage – [www.medievalist.net/images](http://www.medievalist.net/images), October 7, 2009.





Figure 14. Fossa – South Wall, Destroyed Scene, right

Photograph from Glenn Gunhouse's Homepage – [www.medievalist.net/images](http://www.medievalist.net/images), October 7, 2009.



Figure 15. Bominaco – The Encounter on the Road to Emmaus

Reprinted from Guglielmo Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese* (Milan: Electa, 1969), Fig. 56.





Figure 16. Fossa – East Wall of Nave, upper zone

Photograph from Glenn Gunhouse's Homepage – [www.medievalist.net/images](http://www.medievalist.net/images), October 7, 2009.



Figure 17. Fossa – Adoration of the Magi

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 18. Fossa – Conflated Creation Scene

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 19. Fossa – Creation Cycle

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 20. Fossa – Creation of Moon and Sun

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 21. Fossa – Creation of Birds and Terrestrial Animals

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 22. Fossa – Creation of Adam and Eve

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.

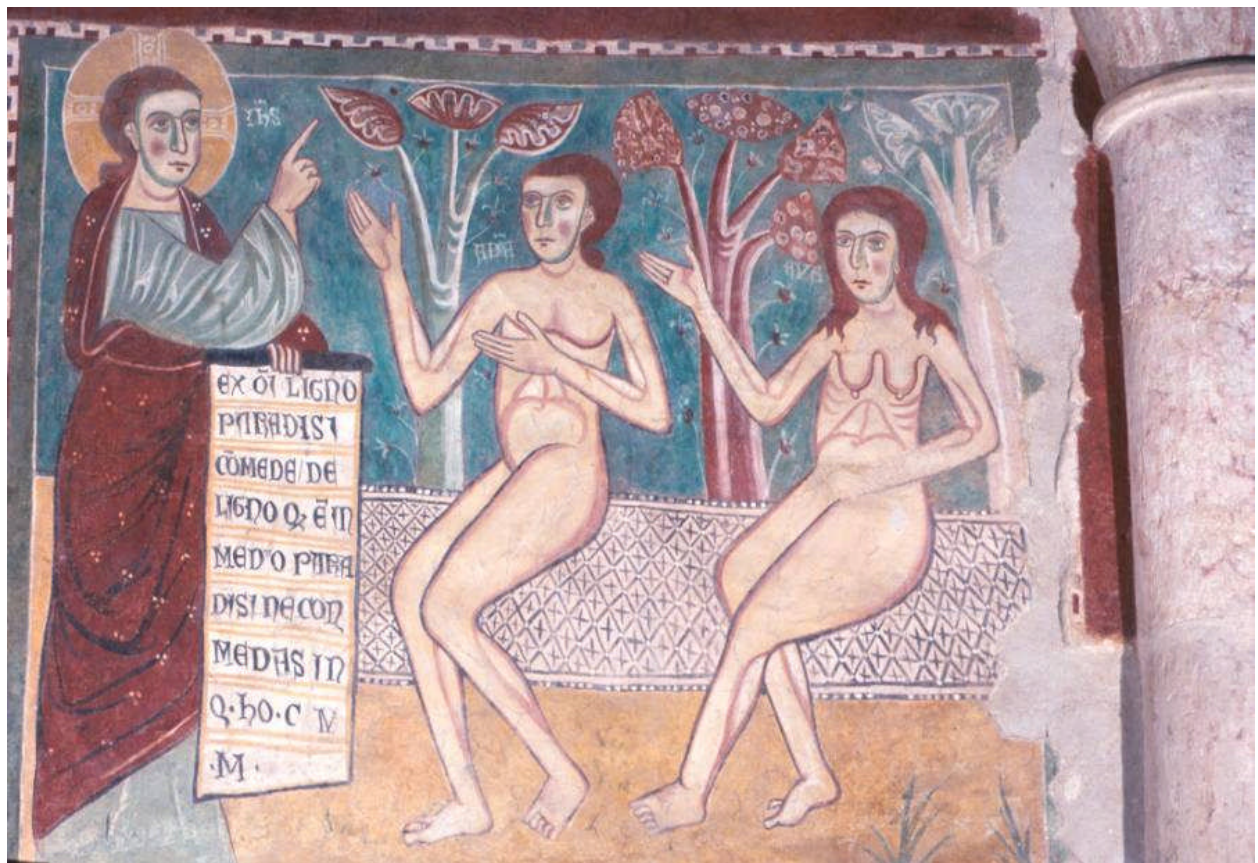


Figure 23. Fossa – Giving of Law to Adam and Eve

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



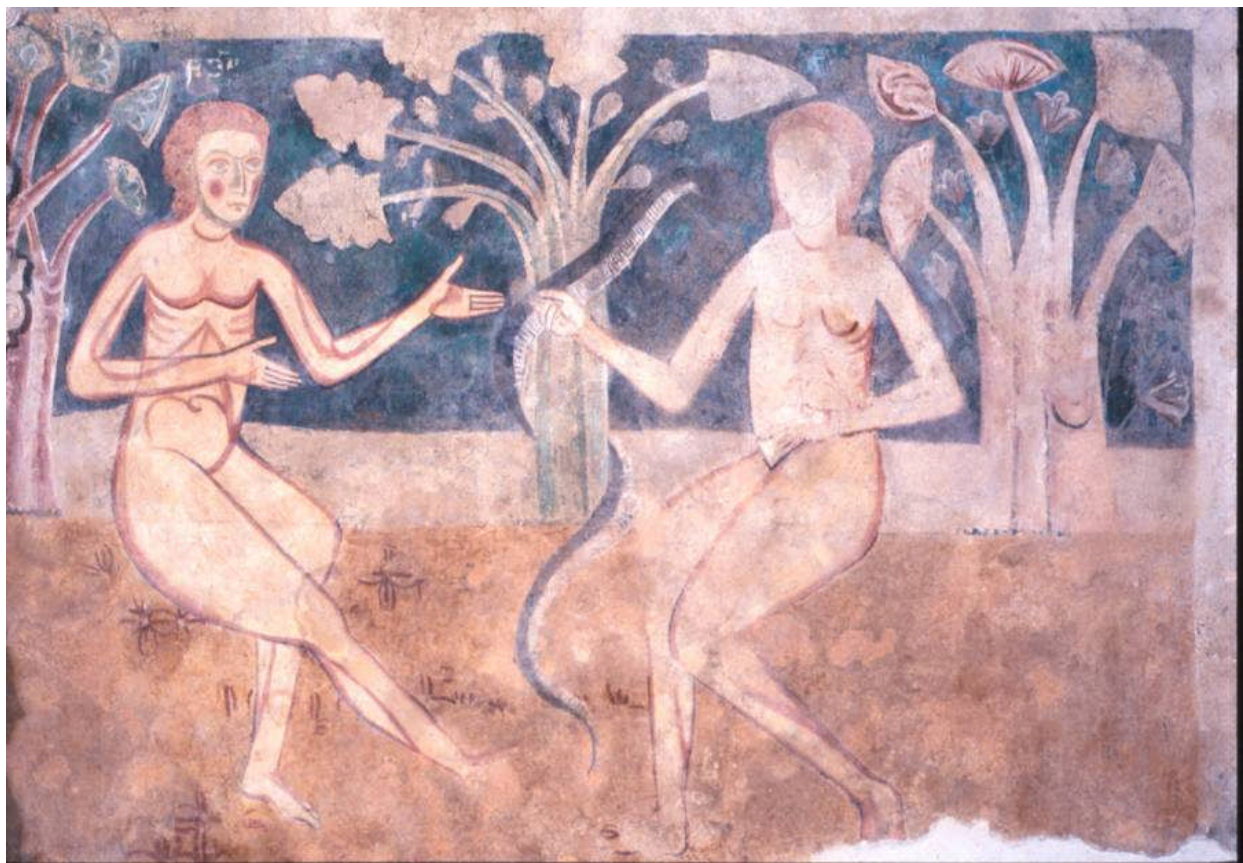


Figure 24. Fossa – Temptation and Fall of Man

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 25. Fossa – Expulsion with Cherubim Guard

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 26. Expulsion

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 27. Fossa - Prophet Portraits, first three on left

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 28. Fossa - Prophet Portraits, last three on right

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 29. Fossa – Remnant of Second Bay

Photograph from Glenn Gunhouse's Home Page, [www.medievalist.net/images](http://www.medievalist.net/images), October 7, 2009.



Figure 30. Fossa – Saint George

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 31. Fossa – Saint Maurice

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



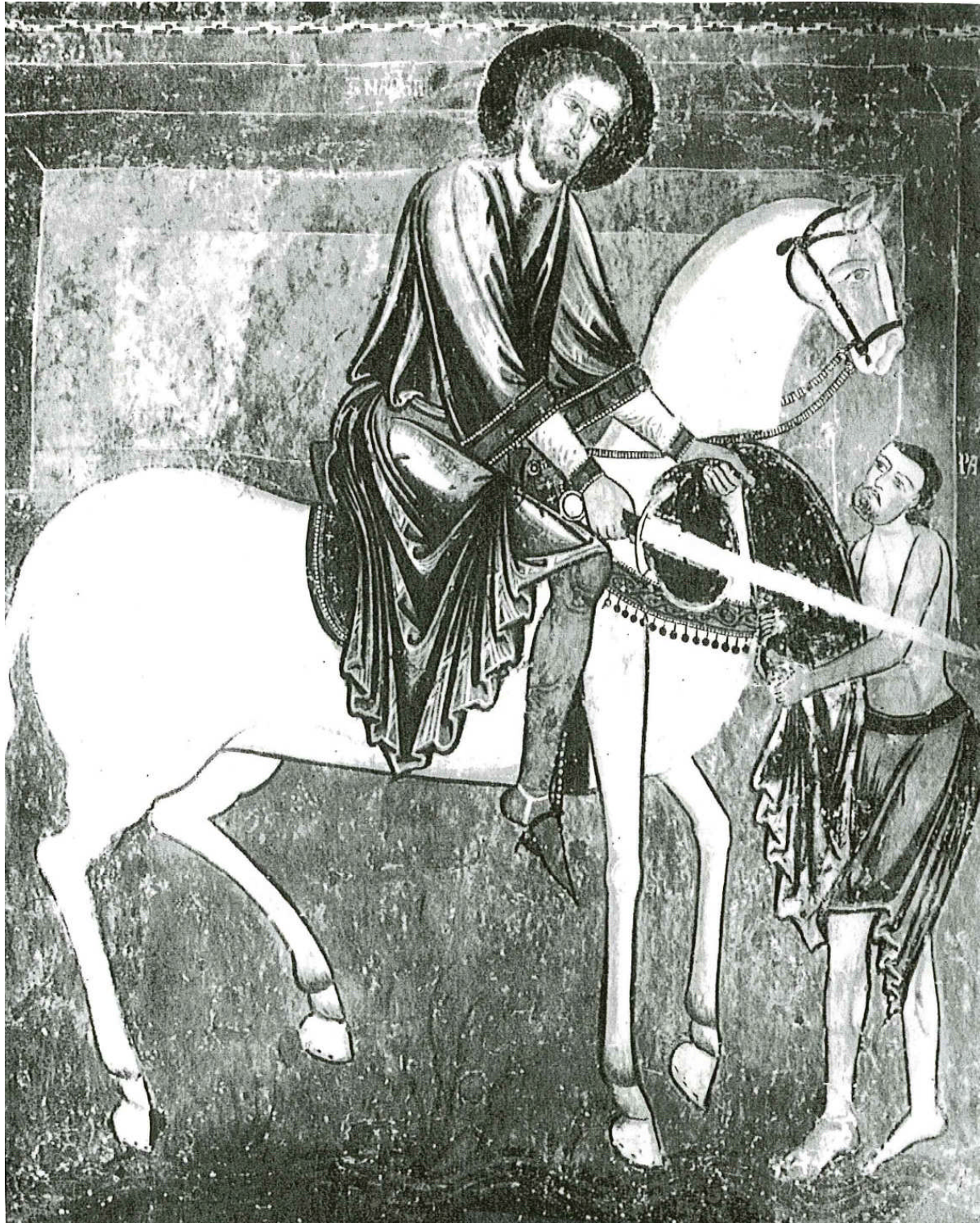


Figure 32. Bominaco – Saint Martin

Reprinted from Guglielmo Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese* (Milan: Electa, 1969), Fig. 57.





Figure 33. Fossa – Labors of the Months

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.

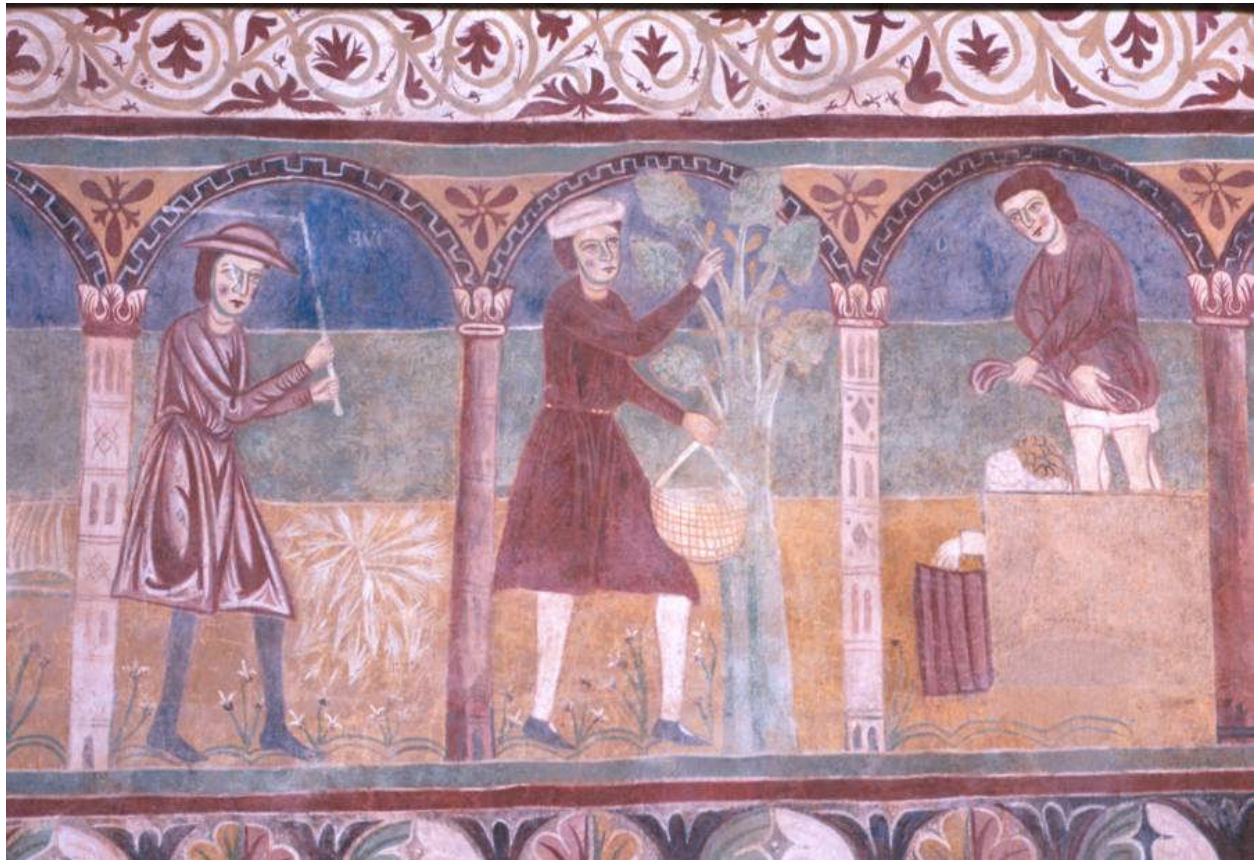


Figure 34. Fossa – Labors of the Months, August to October

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 35. Fossa – Labors of the Months, December

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 36. Fossa – Patriarchs

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 37. Moissac, Parable

Photograph from Romanesque Sculpture, [www.flickr.com/search/groups](http://www.flickr.com/search/groups), October 7, 2009.



Figure 38. Fossa – Last Judgment, Christ in Majesty

Photograph from [www.santamariaadcryptas.com](http://www.santamariaadcryptas.com), October 7, 2009.



Figure 39. Fossa – Last Judgment, Apostles, left

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 40. Fossa – Last Judgment, Apostles, right

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 41. Fossa – Last Judgment, Angels

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 42. Fossa – Last Judgment, Angel and Elect

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 43. Fossa – Last Judgment, Angel and Damned

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 44. Fossa – Last Judgment, Dead Rising

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



Figure 45. Fossa – Last Judgment, Saint Michael

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.





Figure 46. Castel Castagna – Last Judgment, Saint Michael and Saint Peter

Reprinted from Guglielmo Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese* (Milan: Electa, 1969), Fig. 21.



Figure 47. Castel Castagna – Last Judgment, Saint Peter and Patriarchs

Reprinted from Guglielmo Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese* (Milan: Electa, 1969), Fig. 20





Figure 48. Bominaco – Last Judgment, Saint Michael and Saint Peter

Reprinted from Guglielmo Matthiae, *Pittura Medioevale Abruzzese* (Milan: Electa, 1969), Fig. 72.



Figure 49. Fossa – Last Judgment, Hell

Photograph courtesy of Giovanni Lattanzi.



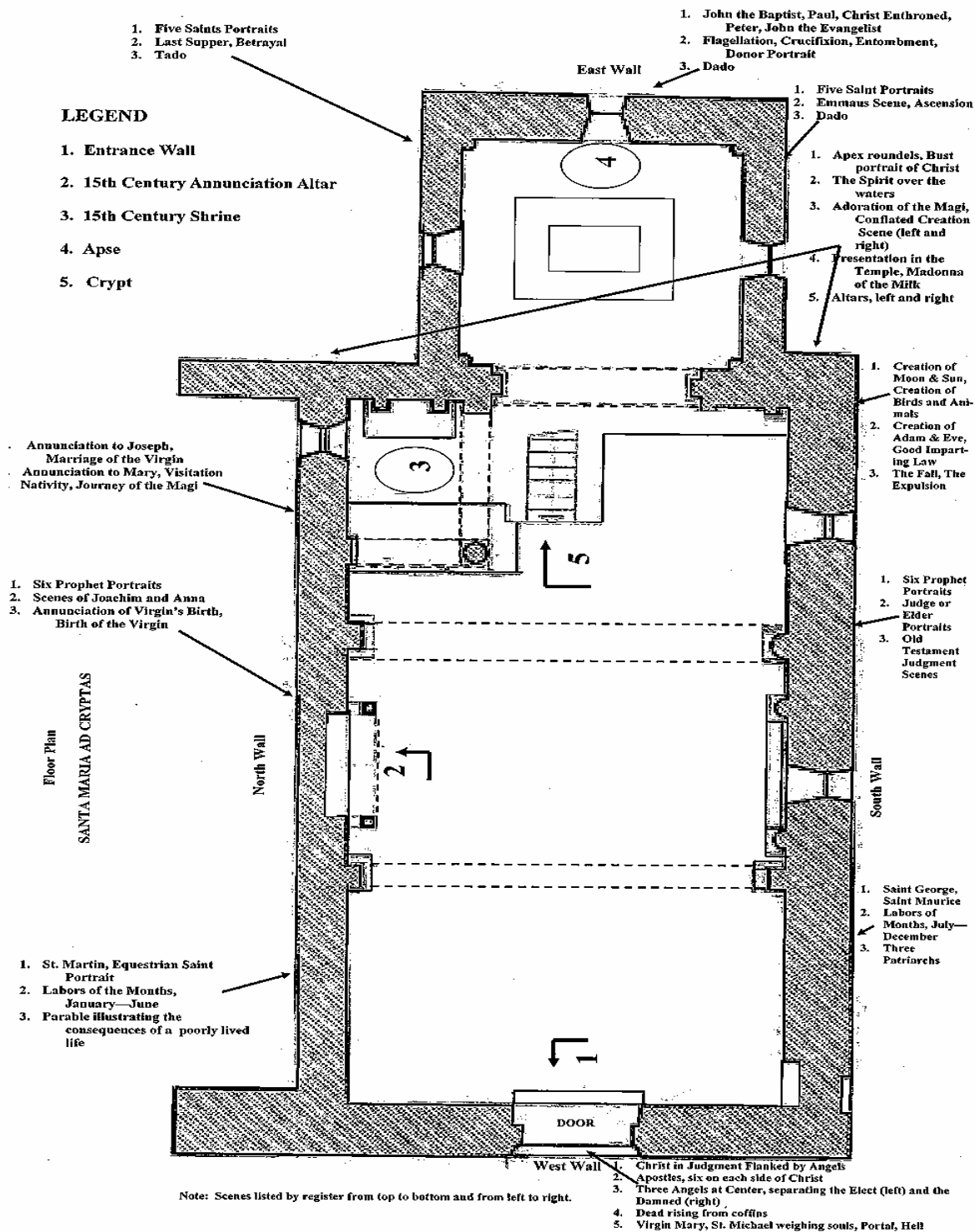


Figure 50. Fossa – Diagram

Plan from [www.santamariaadcryptas.com](http://www.santamariaadcryptas.com). October 7, 2009.



Figure 51. Sant' Angelo in Formis – Crucifixion

Photograph from Pittura Medievale. [www.flickr.com/search/groups](http://www.flickr.com/search/groups), October 7, 2009.

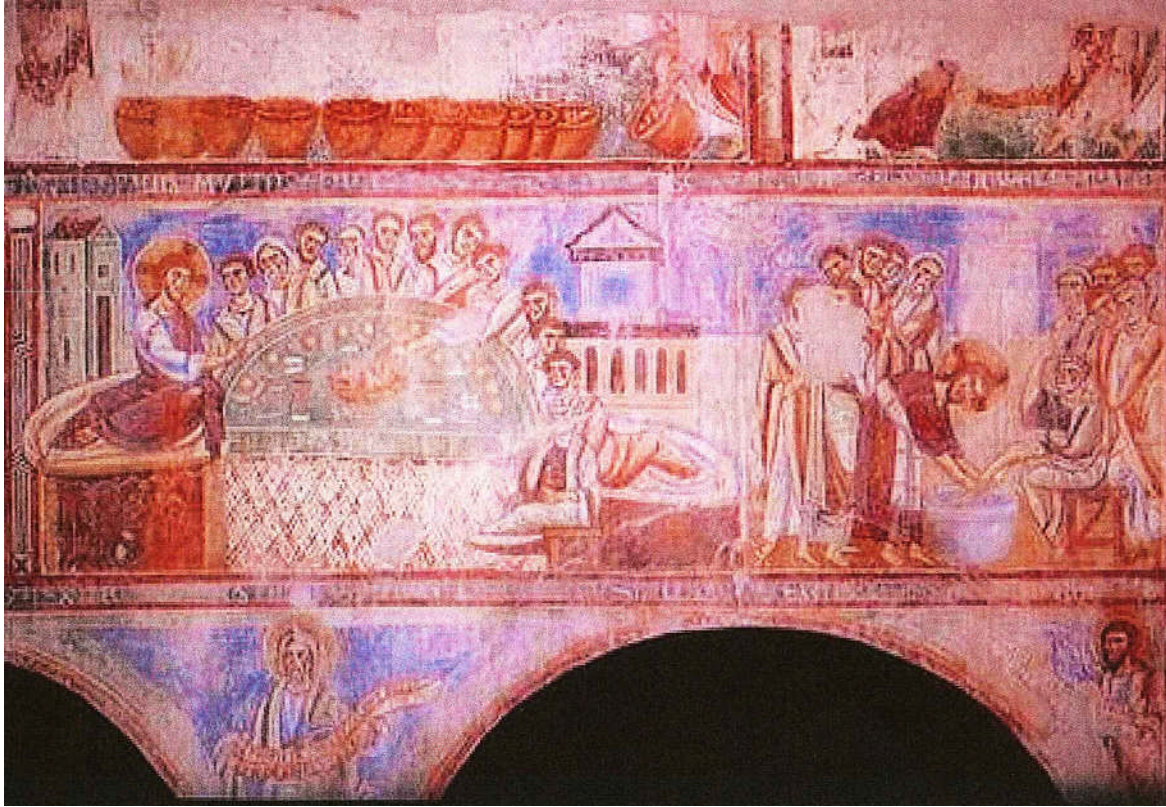


Figure 52. Sant' Angelo in Formis – Last Supper and Washing of the Feet

Photograph from Pittura Medievale. [www.flickr.com/search/groups](http://www.flickr.com/search/groups), October 7, 2009.



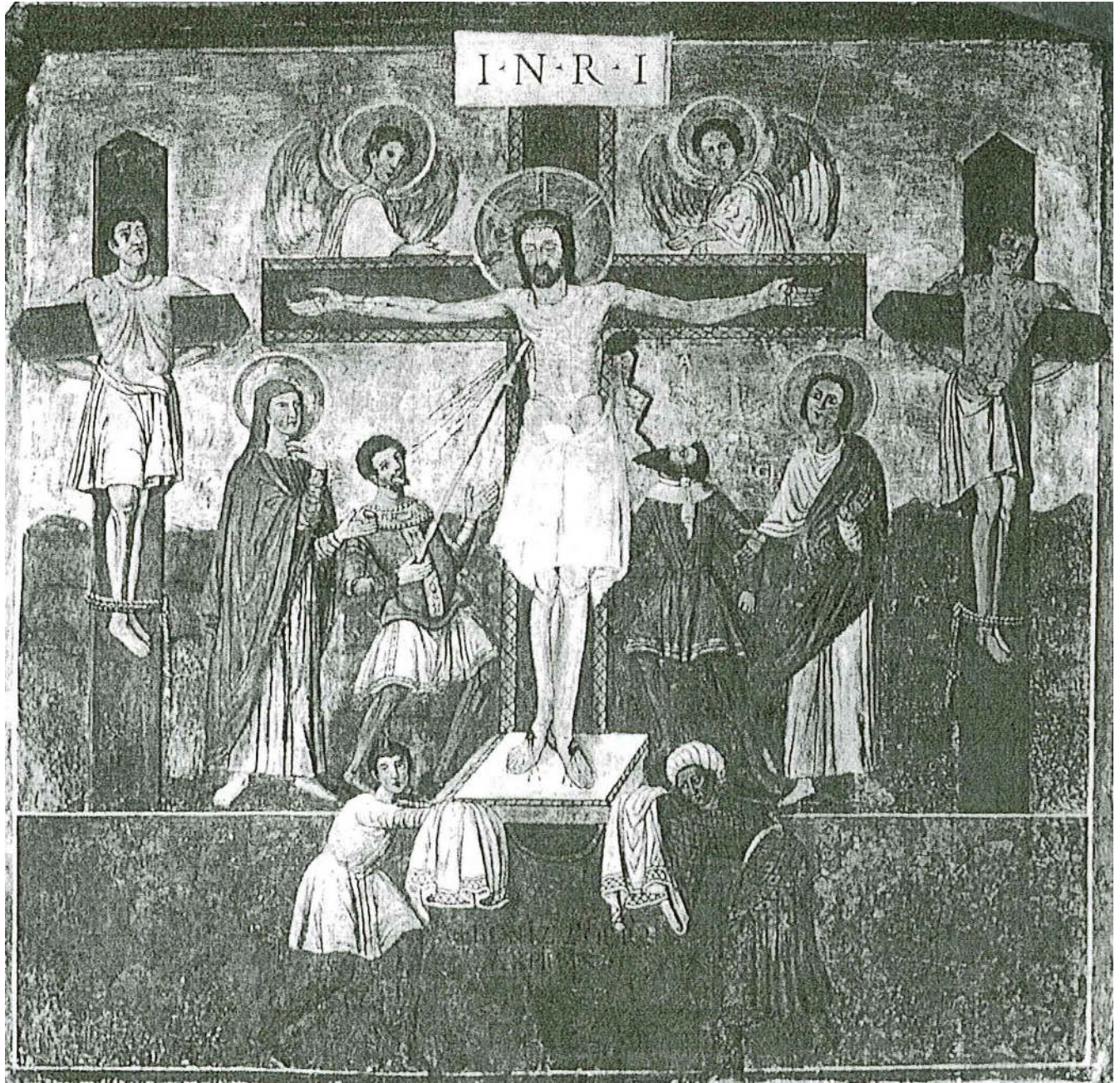


Figure 53. Rome – Sant' Urbano alla Caffarella, Crucifixion

Reprinted from Kristin Noreen, "Lay Patronage and the Creation of Papal Sanctity during the Gregorian Reform: The Case of Sant' Urban alla Caffarella, Rome," *Gesta* 40, no. 1 (2001), Fig. 5.





Figure 54. Sant' Angelo in Formis – Last Judgment

Reprinted from Edgar Waterman, *Romanesque Frescoes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), Fig. 136.





Figure 55. The Vatican Last Judgment Panel

Photograph from Vatican Museums. [www.flickr.com/search/groups](http://www.flickr.com/search/groups). October 30, 2009.



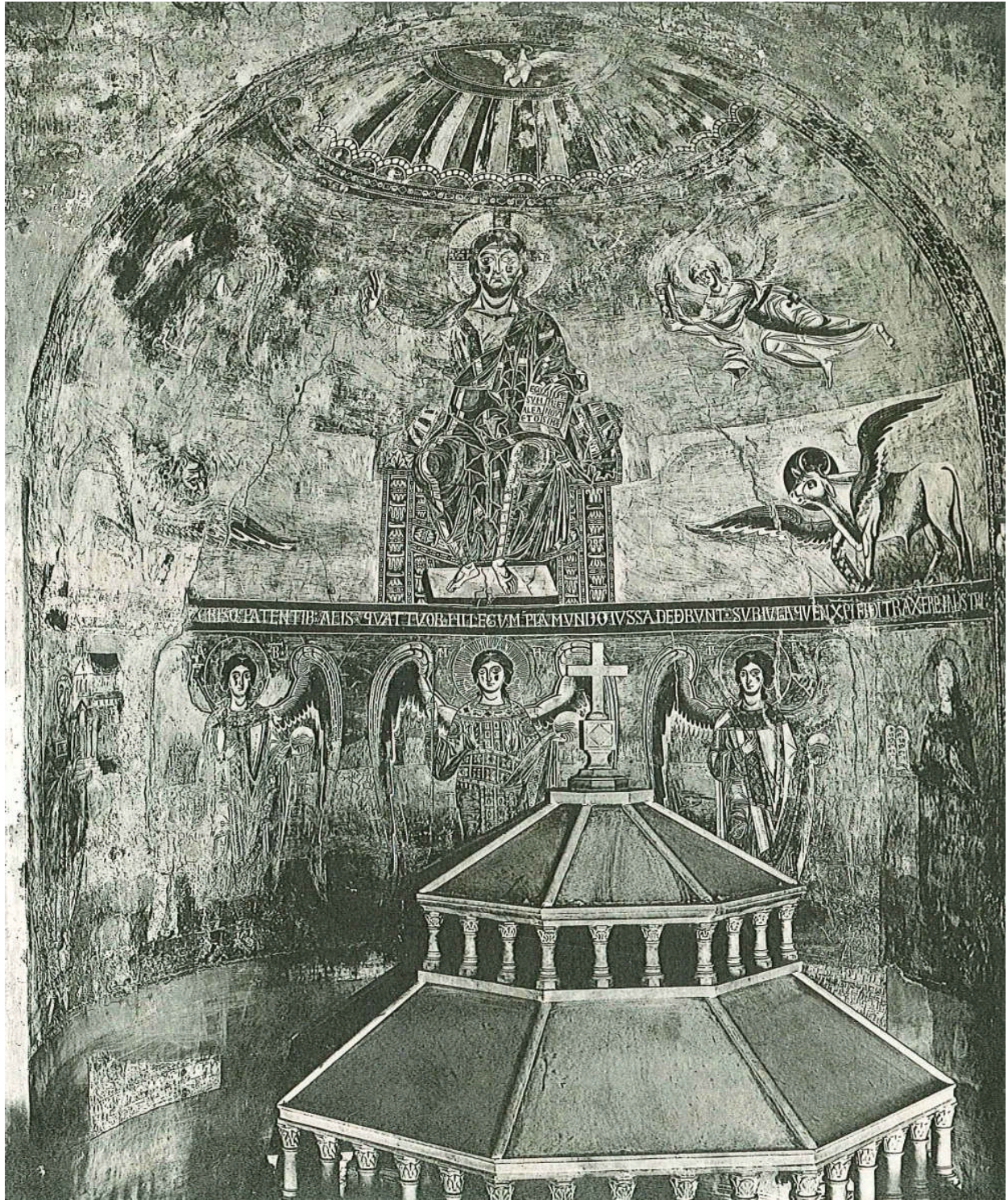


Figure 56. Sant' Angelo in Formis – Apse

Reprinted from Edgar Anthony, *Romanesque Frescoes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), Fig. 128.





Figure 57. Byzantine Octateuchs – Naming of the Animals

Reprinted from Kurt Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), Fig. 101.

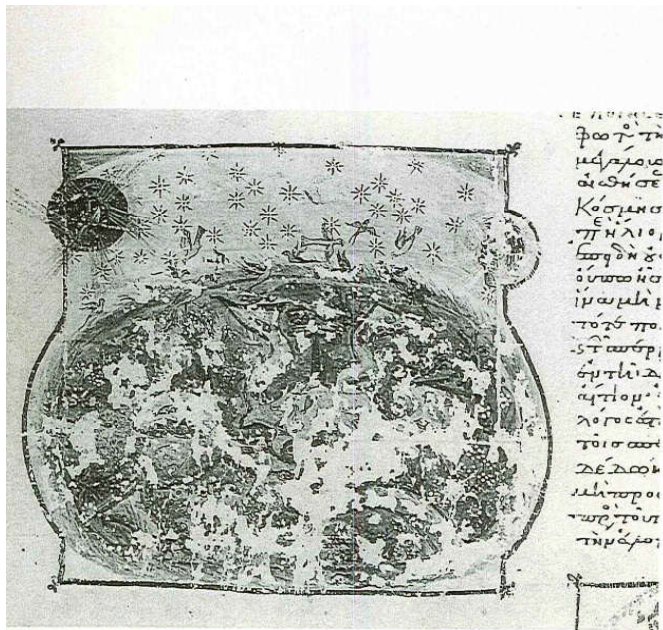




Figure 58. Byzantine Octateuchs – Naming of the Animals

Reprinted from Kurt Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), Fig.102.





7. Vat. 747, fol. 17r: Creation of the Birds and Marine Creatures



39. Sm., fol. 6v: Creation of the Birds and Marine Creatures



38. Ser., fol. 32r: Creation of the Birds and Marine Creatures

Figure 59. Byzantine Octateuchs – Personifications of Moon and Sun

Reprinted from Kurt Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), Figs. 37, 38, 29.

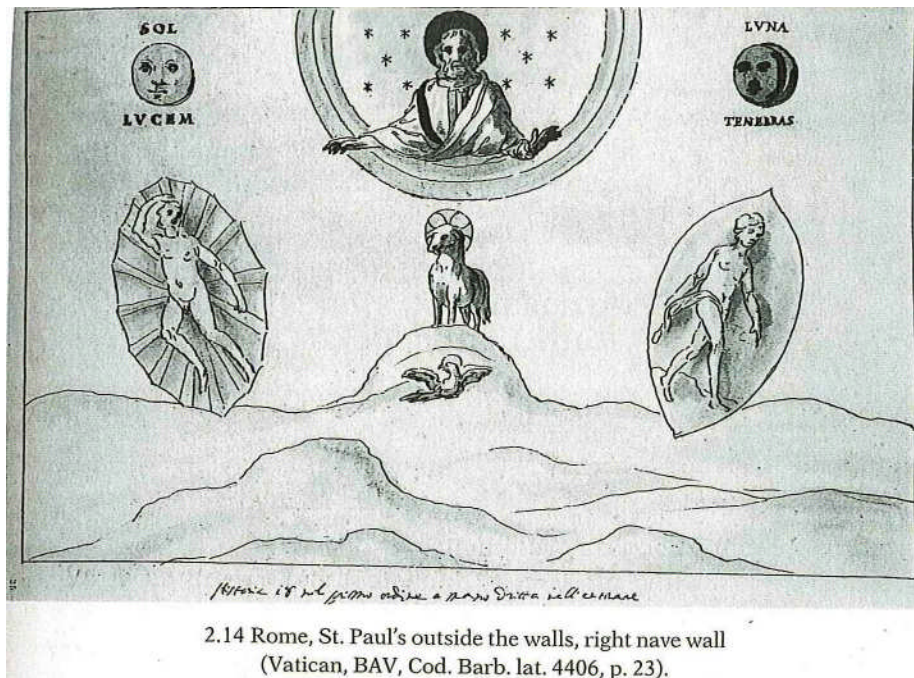


Figure 60. Drawing of Creation Scene from St. Paul's Outside the Walls

Reprinted from Herbert Kessler, *Old St. Peter's and Church Decoration in Medieval Italy* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi Sull' Alto Medioevo. 2002), Fig. 2.14.





Figure 61. San Marco, Creation Scene

Reprinted from Otto Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988). Fig. 64.





Figure 62. Ferentillo, San Pietro, Nave, Creation of Eve

Reprinted from Edgar Anthony, *Romanesque Frescoes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), Fig. 84.



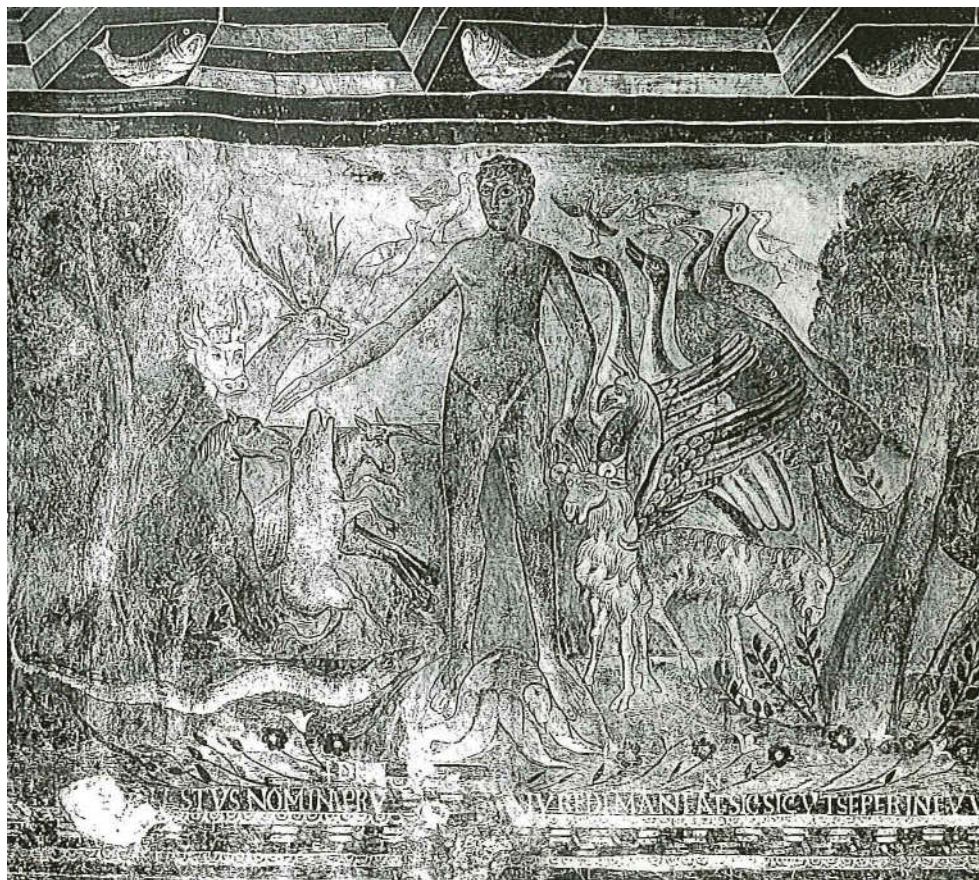


Figure 63. Ferentillo, San Pietro, Nave, Adam Naming the Animals

Reprinted from Edgar Anthony, *Romanesque Frescoes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), Fig. 85.



Figure 64. Byzantine Octateuchs – Expulsion

Reprinted from Kurt Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), Fig. 80.





Figure 65. Byzantine Octateuchs – Expulsion

Reprinted from Kurt Weitzmann, *The Byzantine Octateuchs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), Fig. 81.



Figure 66. Sant' Angelo in Formis – Expulsion

Photograph from Middle Age, [www.flickr.com/search/groups](http://www.flickr.com/search/groups), October 7, 2009.