



Artistic Guide

COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF SANTA MARÍA LA MAYOR OF SALAS



Fundación
VALDÉS-SALAS

Special thanks to the Archdiocese of Oviedo

First edition: 2025

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Legal Deposit: AS 01352-2025

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COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF SANTA MARÍA LA MAYOR OF SALAS

Declared a **historic-artistic monument in 1958**, the Collegiate Church of Santa María la Mayor has served as **the town's parish church** since **1894**, replacing the medieval Church of San Martín de Salas.

Founded by **Don Fernando de Valdés**, the church was endowed with a collegiate chapter and designed as an opulent pantheon for the most distinguished members of his lineage.

Although the exact date of construction remains uncertain due to a lack of records, it was completed before **1549**, the year Valdés had the remains of his parents, **Mencía de Valdés** and **Juan Fernández de Valdés**, transferred here. Their tombs are located on the Epistle and Gospel sides of the church, respectively.

The architecture reflects two distinct styles, indicating that the church **was built in two phases**. The first phase saw the construction of the main structure, featuring a rectangular floor plan with a single nave, a polygonal apse, and a choir, all in the **Late Gothic style**.

The second phase, commissioned in the late **16th** century by **Don Hernando de Valdés Osorio**, the founder's heir, introduced **Classical elements**. This stage added two side chapels, a bell tower, and two porticos – the main entrance on the north side and a secondary entrance to the west, at the foot of the church.

The exterior is characterised by its austere yet solid walls and buttresses, built from ashlar and rubble masonry. The imposing bell tower enhances the church's fortress-like appearance, creating a harmonious connection with the Valdés-Salas family palace opposite.

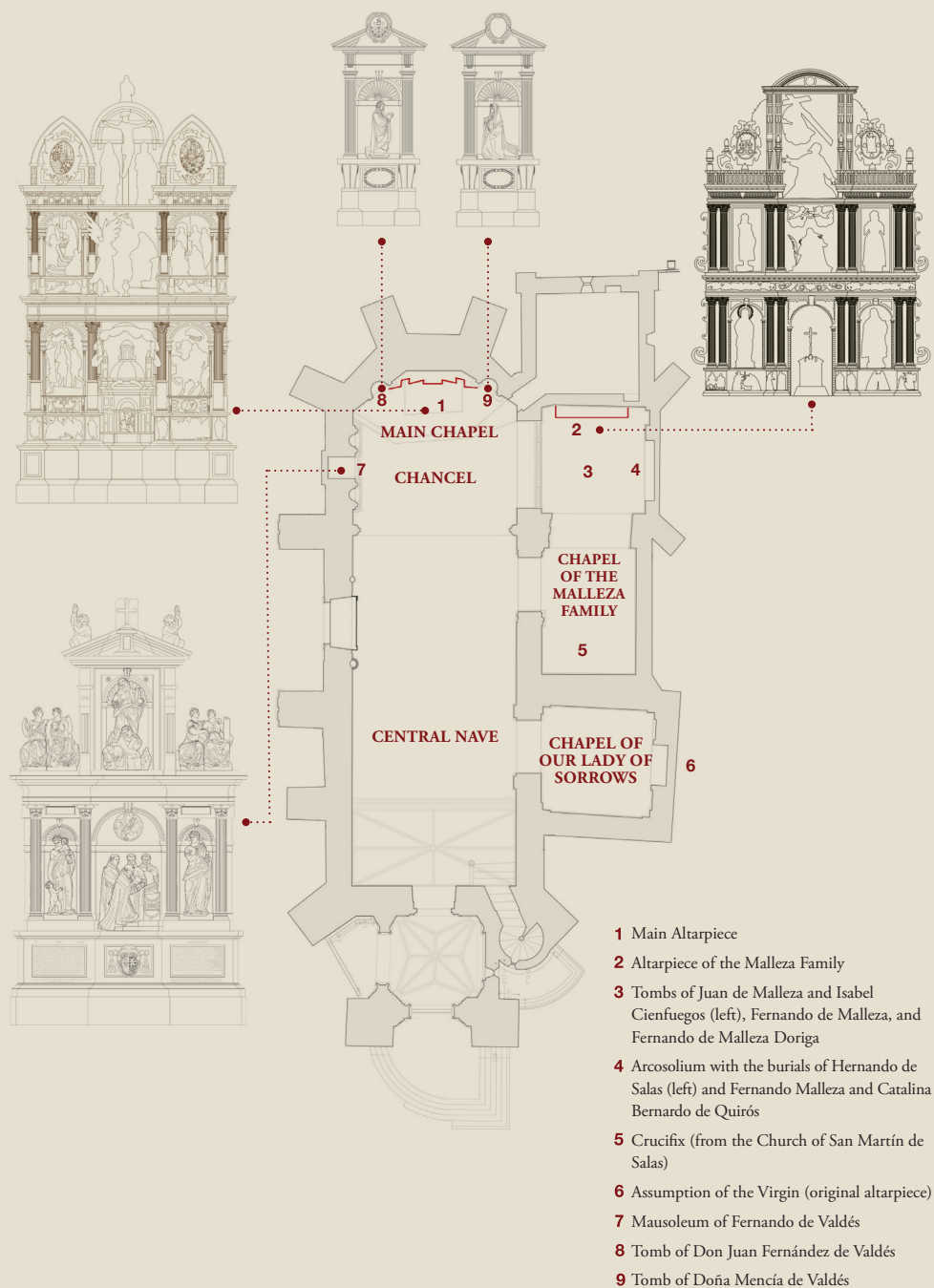
Inside, the church feels open and luminous. Elegant ribbed vaults rest on finely carved capitals and corbels adorned with delicate vegetal motifs. Natural light filters through a small oculus in the choir and semicircular arched windows along the nave, creating an airy sense of height and lightness that contrasts with the imposing solidity of the exterior.

Several theories have been proposed regarding the architects behind the Collegiate Church, but the lack of concrete records makes it difficult to determine with certainty. However, it is widely believed that the designer came from Castile.

Among the names suggested, **Rodrigo Gil de Hontañón** stands out. A close associate of Fernando de Valdés during his tenure at the Royal Chancellery of Valladolid, Gil de Hontañón also designed the cathedral tower and the founding building of the University in Oviedo.

The second phase of construction has been attributed to **Diego Vélez de Rada**, who had strong ties to the Valdés family through his work on the University, and to **Gonzalo de Güemes Bracamonte**, a key figure in introducing the Classical style to Asturias.

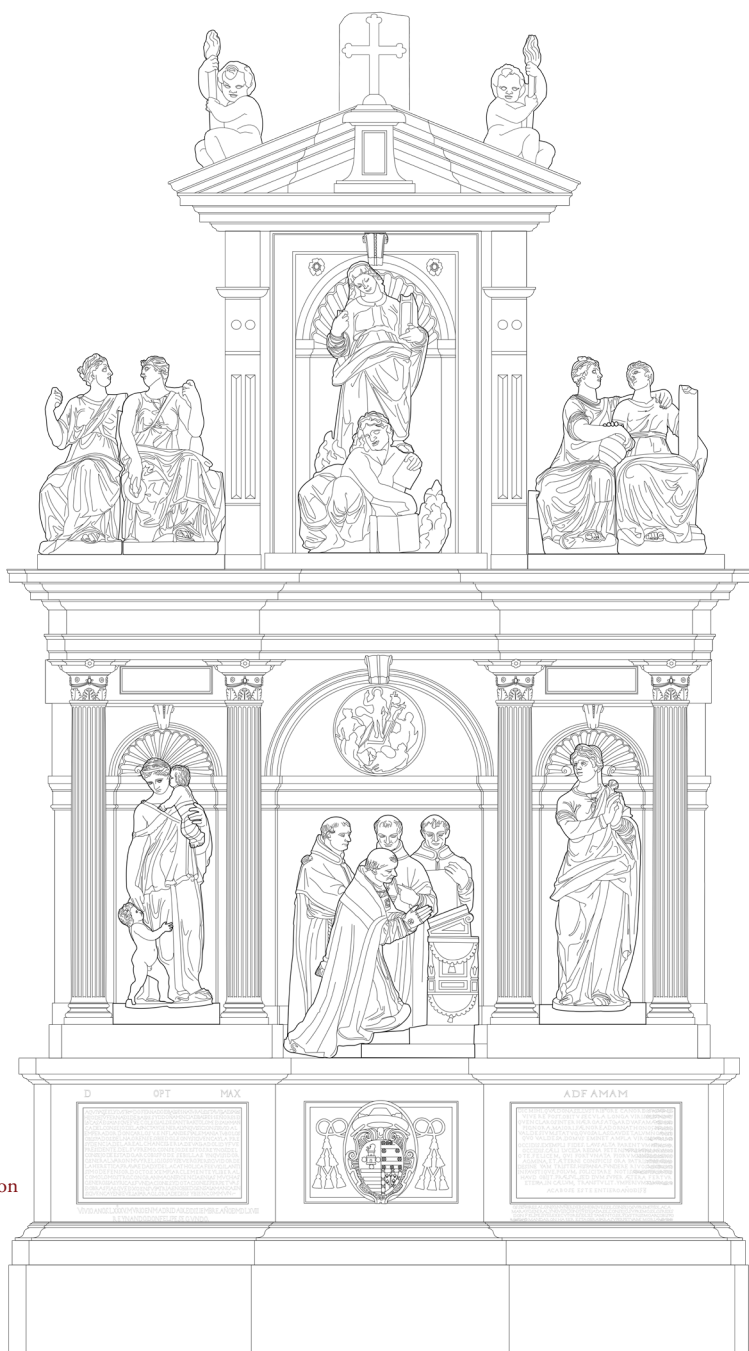
FLOOR PLAN
COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF SANTA MARÍA LA MAYOR



Attic

Central Section

Predella
and Lower Section



MAUSOLEUM OF FERNANDO DE VALDÉS

MAUSOLEUM OF FERNANDO DE VALDÉS

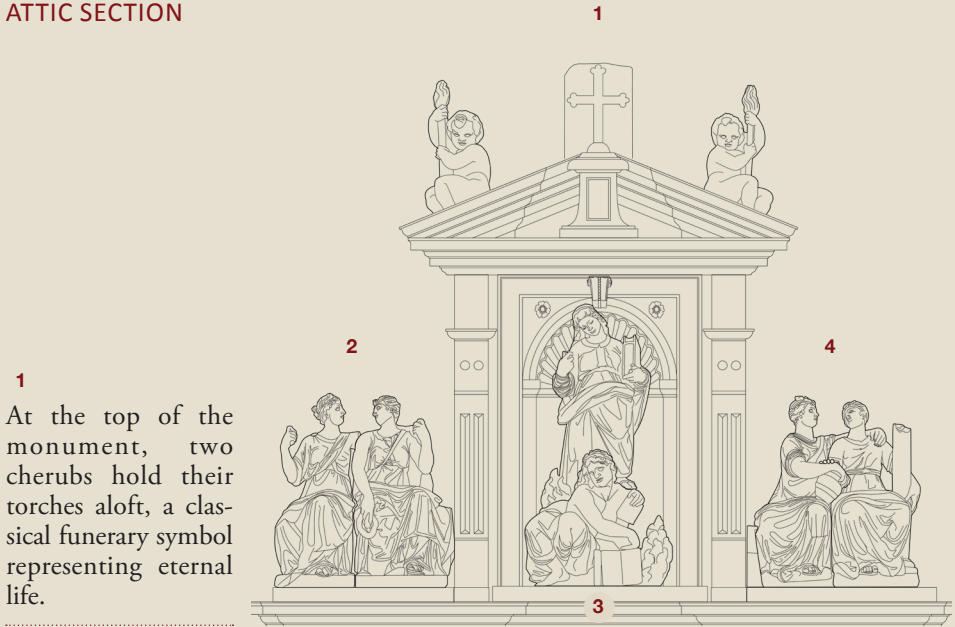
This monument honours Fernando de Valdés, a prominent political and religious figure and the founder of the University of Oviedo. It was sculpted by Pompeo Leoni, an Italian Renaissance artist who worked for the Spanish royal family, contributing to masterpieces such as the group of praying statues in the Basilica of the Monastery of El Escorial. Some of his finest works are housed in the Prado Museum.

Carved from alabaster sourced from the Aleas quarries in Guadalajara, the mausoleum was completed between 1576 and 1582. It is composed of three sections:

- Lower section: Designed as a pedestal, it bears inscriptions detailing Valdés' biography, his epitaph, and his episcopal coat of arms.
- Central section: Inspired by a triumphal arch, it features sculptures of Charity and Hope (two of the three theological virtues, alongside Faith) and a vaulted arch framing the Archbishop in prayer, surrounded by his clerical relatives. The relief of Christ's Resurrection serves as the dramatic backdrop.
- Upper section: Topped with a split pediment, it symbolises Faith conquering Heresy. On the left, the figures of Justice and Prudence are represented, while Temperance and Fortitude stand on the right –these cardinal virtues date back to classical antiquity.

The monument is flanked by the tombs of Valdés' parents, positioned on either side of the altar. To the left rests his father, Juan Fernández de Valdés, and to the right, his mother, Mencía de Valdés. Both are portrayed in a posture of devotion – kneeling, hands clasped in prayer, immersed in solemn reflection.

ATTIC SECTION



1
At the top of the monument, two cherubs hold their torches aloft, a classical funerary symbol representing eternal life.

2 *Justice and Prudence*

The attribute of Justice – traditionally represented by a balance or a sword – has not survived to the present day.

Prudence is portrayed holding a serpent in her right arm, referencing the Gospel of Matthew: “*Be wise as serpents.*” In her other hand, she likely once held a mirror, symbolising self-awareness: “*One cannot be prudent without knowing oneself and seeing oneself as one truly is.*”

3 *Faith*

Faith appears with a book in her left hand, representing religious belief, while she likely once held a cross in her now-empty right hand. At her feet lies Heresy, symbolised by a fallen figure with a burning book, representing heretical writings. This imagery highlights Fernando de Valdés’ role as an Inquisitor.

4 *Temperance and Fortitude*

Temperance holds a jug, symbolising moderation, self-control, and the balance between thought and action.

Fortitude is portrayed holding the shaft of a column, a symbol of strength and resilience in the face of adversity.

SECOND SECTION



5

The central section is designed like a triumphal arch, framed by fluted columns. It features two niche-like recesses, each crowned with a shell-shaped canopy, housing statues of Charity and Hope. At the centre, a vaulted arch frames the figure of the Archbishop in prayer, kneeling before a prie-dieu, dressed in full pontifical robes. He is accompanied by his clerical relatives, including a deacon, a subdeacon, and an acolyte. Behind them, the relief of Christ's Resurrection serves as the backdrop – a common theme in funerary art, symbolising Christ's victory over death and a reminder of eternal life.

Pompeo Leoni and Fernando de Valdés were both present at the court of Philip II, allowing the sculptor to create an exceptionally realistic portrait of the Archbishop. His face conveys an expression of deep contemplation and serenity.

6

Charity

Appears as a woman with two children, symbolising love for others. This representation is inspired by the tomb of Doge Veniero, sculpted by Sandovino in Venice.

7

Hope

Shown as a woman with hands clasped in prayer, a depiction rooted in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The sculpture takes inspiration from Michelangelo's statue of Rachel in the Tomb of Pope Julius II.

PREDELLA
AND LOWER SECTION



8

A coat of arms of episcopal rank (though as an archbishop, he would have been entitled to ten tassels on each side). Set within an oval frame, it features a galero (ecclesiastical hat) above a leather-like border enclosing the shield. The shield itself is divided into four sections, representing the emblems of the Salas, Valdés, Llano Ponte, and Doña Palla families.

9

"D.OPT.MAX

AQUÍ YAZE.EL YLUSTR^{MO}. D^O FERNÁNDO D BAL^{ES}. NAT^{AL}. D^{STA} VIL^A. D SALAS.
HIJO. DE J^U. FERNÁNDEZ D BAL^{ES} Y D DOÑA MENCIA D BAL^{ES} SEÑORES D
L^A CASA D SAL^S, QUE FVE COLEGIAL DE SANT. BARTOLOMÉ D SAL^{MAN}
CA. DEL CONSEJ^O DE LA SANCTA Y GENERAL INQUISICION SIRVIO AL
EMPERADOR DON CARLOS V EN FLANDES Y ALEMANIA T^{BO} LOS
OBISPADOS D ELNA, ORENSE OBIEDO LEÓN Y SIGUENÇA Y LA PRE
SYDENCIA DE LA REAL CHANCILLERIA DE VALADOLIZ Y FVE
PRESIDENTE DEL SVPREMO CONSEJO DE ESTOS: REYNOS DEL
CONSEJO DE ESTADO ARCOBISPO DE SEBILLA E INQUISIDOR
GENERAL VARON MUY RELIGIOSO Y SEVERO PERSEGUIDOR DE
LA HERETICA PRAVAEDAD. Y DE LA CATHOLICA FEE VIGILANTI
SIMO DEFENSOR DOCTO EXEMPLAR CLEMENTE Y LIBER AL
COMO LO MOSTRO CON GRAN MAGNIFICENCIA EN L^S MVCHAS
GENEROSSAS Y RICAS FVNDACIONES Y DOTACIONES. PERPETVAS
D OBRASPIAS QUE D XO EN SV PATRIA EN OBIEDO EN SAL^{MANCA} EN
SIGVENÇA Y EN SEVIL^A PARA GLORIA DE DIOS Y BIEN COMMuni^{ti}.
VIVIO ANOS: LXXXV MURIÓ EN MADRID A IX DE DIZIEMBRE AÑO D MD LXI^{ti} ij.
REYNANDO DON FELIPE SEGUNDO."

D.OPT.MAX:

*Deo Optimo Maximo (To God, the Best
and Greatest).*

10

Translation of the First Part of the Epi-
taph:

*"To Fame. You, who with resounding
echoes grant illustrious men the gift of li-
ving on for centuries beyond death, tell me:
whom does honour exalt with greater me-
rit among renowned heroes and the lofty
rewards of glory? Valdés – joy of his home-
land, Salas, and pride of the great house
that bears his name.*

*You die, model of faith, the highest praise
of your ancestors; you die, and your soul
soars to the radiant realms of heaven. Bles-
sed are you, for you are granted the vision
of the blessed legions of Saints and the pre-
sence of the Eternal Father!"*

TOMBS OF DON JUAN FERNÁNDEZ DE VALDÉS AND DOÑA MENCÍA DE VALDÉS

In 1549, following Fernando de Valdés' commission for the construction of the Collegiate Church of Santa María la Mayor, the remains of his parents were solemnly laid to rest in the church's main chapel.

Doña Mencía de Llano Valdés, mother of the Archbishop, was buried on the Epistle side, to the right of the altar – traditionally the place where liturgical readings of the epistles were performed. Meanwhile, **Don Juan Fernández de Valdés**, his father, was interred on the **Gospel side**, where the evangelical texts were recited.

This placement was not incidental but was personally chosen by Don Fernando himself, who reserved the most prestigious area of the church for his parents, the **Lords of the House of Salas**.

At the time, eschatological beliefs, deeply connected to the doctrine of Purgatory, held that burial in a prominent place within a church allowed prayers recited during Mass and the proximity to the tabernacle to aid in the forgiveness of sins and the attainment of eternal glory.

Naturally, burial location was also a means of displaying noble power and ensuring posthumous remembrance.

In 1576, after the Archbishop's death, his heirs commissioned the renowned sculptor **Pompeo Leoni** to create a magnificent **alabaster** funerary ensemble. This comprised the Mausoleum of Fernando de Valdés, placed in the presbytery, and the tombs of his parents, positioned on either side of the main altarpiece, where their remains had lain for over thirty years.

Finalised in 1586, the tombs are housed within two scallop-shaped niches, supported by intricately carved corbels. Each tomb features a full-length sculptural effigy, resting on a pedestal from which rise two pilasters, supporting an entablature crowned by a split pediment bearing the heraldic insignia of the deceased. The entire ensemble is executed in the **Mannerist style**.

Although by this period there was a growing desire to depict the deceased with lifelike accuracy through portraiture or funerary masks, the effigies of Valdés' parents – owing to the much earlier date of their passing – follow idealised models rather than true likenesses.

The individuality of the praying figures is conveyed through their attire, which had served as a marker of social distinction since the late Middle Ages

TOMBS OF DON JUAN FERNÁNDEZ DE VALDÉS AND DOÑA MENCÍA DE VALDÉS

Tomb of Don Juan Fernández de Valdés

The paternal coat of arms is set within an oval shield, divided into two sections: the upper band represents the House of Salas, while the lower section features the lineage of Doña Palla.

Don Juan is portrayed reclining on a cushion, hands clasped in prayer, symbolising humility before Christ. His closed eyes convey deep spiritual reflection.

While not a precise portrait, his short hair and neatly trimmed beard reflect the fashion of noblemen during the reign of Charles I of Spain, inspired by the monarch's own style.

His attire exudes the elegance of a Renaissance nobleman. A woollen cloak drapes gracefully over his arms, partially revealing a doublet worn over a shirt, further covered by a sleeveless, finely buttoned jerkin. He also wears hose, stockings, and knightly boots (*borceguíes*), reinforcing his noble status.





Tomb of Doña Mencía de Valdés

The coat of arms of Doña Mencía is a later reconstruction in lime mortar, completed during the 2021-2023 restoration of the mausoleum. This project was led by the Valdés Salas Foundation, with sponsorship from CMC XXI (Cosmen-Menéndez Castañedo) and Fundación Cajastur, in collaboration with the Archbishopric of Oviedo, the Salas Town Council, and the University of Oviedo. The reconstruction faithfully follows the heraldry of the Valdés family.

Doña Mencía appears kneeling on a cushion, hands joined in prayer. Her serene expression, with slightly open eyes, conveys spiritual elevation and inner peace.

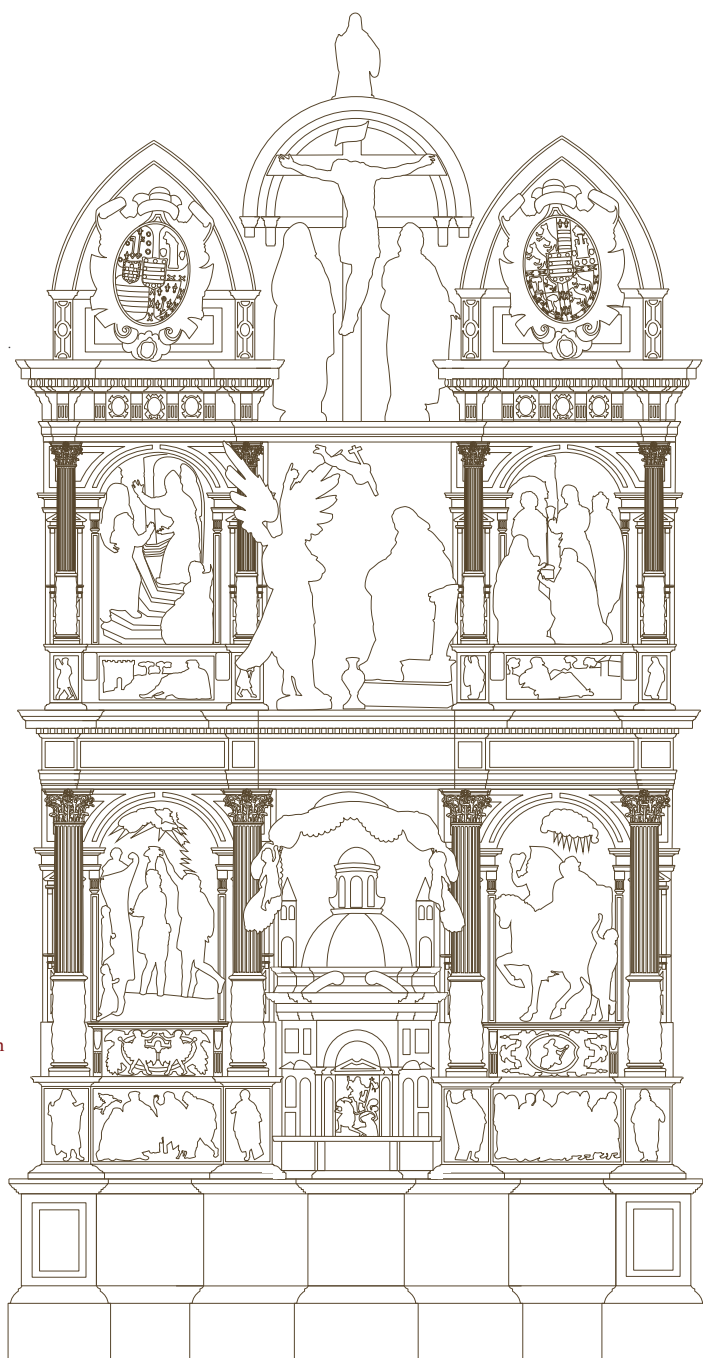
Her face, sculpted with timeless classical refinement, evokes representations of the Virgin Mary, the ultimate model of maternal grace and piety.

She wears a habit covered by a flowing mantle, symbolising humility. The most distinctive element of her attire is the tight-fitting headdress, framing her face in the style traditionally worn by married noblewomen of the time.

Attic

Central Section

Predella
and Lower Section



ALTARPIECE OF THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF SANTA MARÍA LA MAYOR

ALTARPIECE OF THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF SANTA MARÍA LA MAYOR

Introduction

The main altarpiece of the Collegiate Church is a central element of the funerary ensemble of Fernando de Valdés and his parents. It replaced an earlier altarpiece by the Florentine sculptor Juan Bautista Portigiani, of which only a single image – the Assumption, now housed in the Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows – has survived.

Dedicated to *the Virgin Mary*, the church's patron saint, the current altarpiece was commissioned in **1606** by **Alonso Núñez de Bohorques** and **Juan de Tejada**, executors of Fernando de Valdés' will, to honour his memory and final wishes, as recorded in the inscription on the frieze of the central panel.

The altarpiece is attributed to Zamorano sculptor **Juan Ducete Díez** (1549–1613) and his workshop in Toro, as its style closely resembles the foundational altarpiece of the University of Oviedo, a documented work by the artist.

Executed in the **Mannerist** style, it stands out for its intricate sculptural details and rich ornamentation. The freestanding figures, though somewhat stylised, maintain graceful and controlled gestures. The reliefs, with their carefully rendered architectural and landscape backgrounds, add depth and narrative to the composition.

Structure and Iconography

The altarpiece is structured into three vertical panels, with the central one being the widest. Horizontally, it is divided into two main sections, a predella supported by a stone plinth, and an attic that crowns the entire ensemble.

PREDELLA AND LOWER SECTION

The predella features a series of narrative reliefs depicting scenes from the New Testament. To the left of the tabernacle, **the Adoration of the Shepherds** is represented, while to the right, **the Circumcision of Christ** is depicted. The plinths supporting the Corinthian columns contain a complete set of **the Apostles**.

The lower section consists of three niches, separated by Corinthian columns, whose shafts display the figures of **Adam** and **Eve**. Below the side niches, two reliefs of uncertain interpretation appear: on the left, **cherubs holding garlands**, and on the right, a nude woman gazing into a mirror, possibly symbolising **Vanity**.

CENTRAL SECTION

The second level, also structured with three niches separated by Composite order columns, features lower reliefs depicting figures of the Prophets.

ATTIC

The attic consists of a semi-circular niche that crowns the ensemble, along with two family coats of arms set within pointed arch recesses.

PREDELLA AND LOWER SECTION



1

Baptism of Jesus

Jesus traveled from Galilee to be baptized by Saint John in the Jordan River. As He emerged from the water, the heavens opened, the Holy Spirit descended, and the voice of God proclaimed Him as His beloved Son, marking the beginning of His public ministry. The relief depicts Christ receiving baptism, assisted by three angels holding a cloth. The celestial background alludes to the rapture of Glory, as described in the Gospels.

The inclusion of Saint John the Baptist pays tribute to Juan Fernández de Valdés, father of Fernando de Valdés.

2

Tabernacle

This large tabernacle is designed in the form of a temple, accessed via a grand staircase. It features a classical entablature and is crowned by a semi-spherical dome topped with a lantern. On either side, slender towers frame the structure.

The iconography of the tabernacle is closely linked to its Eucharistic function: the portico depicts the Resurrection of Christ; above the pediment, two angels hold the Holy Grail and the Sacred Host; inside the intrados of the arch, a relief illustrates the Coronation of the Virgin.

Rich in ornamental details, the composition has a strong theatrical effect, further heightened by two angels dramatically drawing back a curtain, enhancing the sense of divine revelation.

3

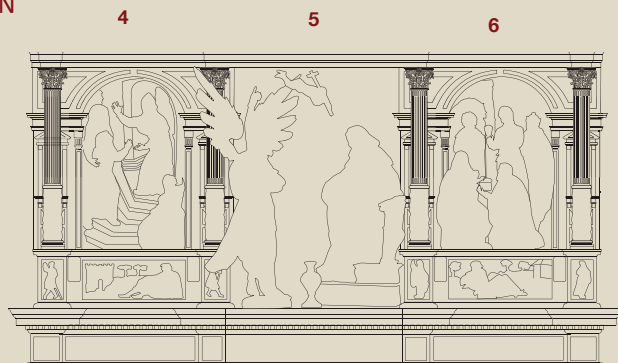
Saint Martin of Tours and the Beggar

According to his hagiography, in 337, Saint Martin of Tours encountered a beggar freezing in the city of Amiens. Moved by compassion, he tore his soldier's cloak in half and gave part of it to the man. That night, he had a vision of Christ wrapped in the same cloak, revealing the divine significance of his act.

The relief captures the moment when Martin, on horseback beneath a stormy sky, tears his cloak to share it with the poor man.

This iconography is particularly significant, as the old parish church of Salas was dedicated to Saint Martin of Tours.

CENTRAL SECTION



4

Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple

This episode is not found in the canonical Gospels but originates from an apocryphal legend.

At the age of three, the Virgin Mary was taken by her parents to the Temple of Jerusalem. Accompanied by other young maidens and illuminated by votive lamps, she ascended the steps and was blessed by the High Priest.

The relief depicts the Virgin's ascent to the temple, where she is joyfully received by the priest, accompanied by her parents, Saint Joachim and Saint Anne.

This iconography was especially popular in Gothic art and held great significance in the context of Marian devotion.

5

Annunciation

According to the Gospel of Luke, the Archangel Gabriel appeared before Mary to announce that she would conceive the Son of God.

The relief captures the angel's greeting, his wings unfurled, as he delivers his divine message. Mary, seated at an ornately decorated prie-dieu, interrupts her reading of the prophet Isaiah. Filled with divine grace, she rests her hand on her chest in a gesture of acceptance.

Above, a small cherub descends from heaven, holding a cross, foreshadowing the redemption of humanity.

The scene is enriched with a painted canopy in the background and a vase, which originally contained lilies, a traditional symbol of Marian purity.

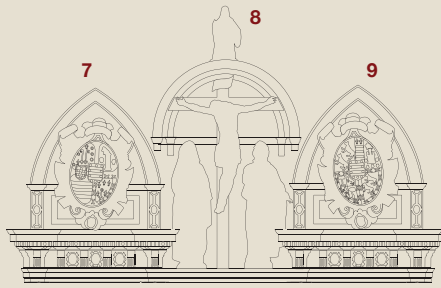
6

Epiphany

As recounted in the Gospel of Matthew, after Jesus' birth, Magi from the East followed a guiding star to the Messiah and offered Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

While the Gospels do not specify their number or names, early Christian and Byzantine tradition identified them as three Magi: Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthazar.

The relief depicts Jesus seated on His mother's lap, being adored by the Magi. The infant plays with the coins offered by Melchior, adding a tender, human touch. The architectural elements frame the Magi and the young Saint Joseph, positioned beneath an arch. Above, the guiding star shines in the sky.



7

Coat of Arms of Don Fernando de Valdés

The first quarter features two keys, three fleur-de-lis, and six crescents, representing the House of Quirós. The second quarter, belonging to the Salas lineage, displays a castle with a lion emerging from its battlements and three scallop shells. The third quarter, linked to the Llano family, consists of three blue bands framed in gold. The fourth quarter, enclosed by eight golden saltires, presents a blue field with five fleur-de-lis and a silver and gold sword, crowned by a crescent from the Doña Palla family.

At the centre of the shield, the Valdés coat of arms appears on a golden background, featuring three blue fesses and ten roundels adorned with silver and gold crosses.

The exterior is crowned by a galero (ecclesiastical hat) with six bishop's tassels, signifying Fernando de Valdés' high rank within the Church.

8

Calvary

According to the Gospel of John, when Christ was crucified on Mount Calvary (the "Place of the Skull"), He was accompanied by His mother and His beloved disciple, identified as John, the youngest of the apostles.

The relief depicts Christ nailed to the cross with three nails, His slender figure draped in a loincloth and crowned with thorns. From His side, blood and water flow, while His serene expression embodies the ideal of a holy death.

The Virgin Mary, standing with hands clasped in supplication, remains upright, lifting her gaze in reverence for her deceased Son.

Meanwhile, Saint John, portrayed as a youth without a beard, places his hand on his chest in a gesture of compassion, looking toward his Master, whom he will soon witness resurrected.

9

Coat of Arms of Fernando Valdés de Osorio

This coat of arms belongs to Fernando Valdés de Osorio, nephew and principal heir of Don Fernando de Valdés.

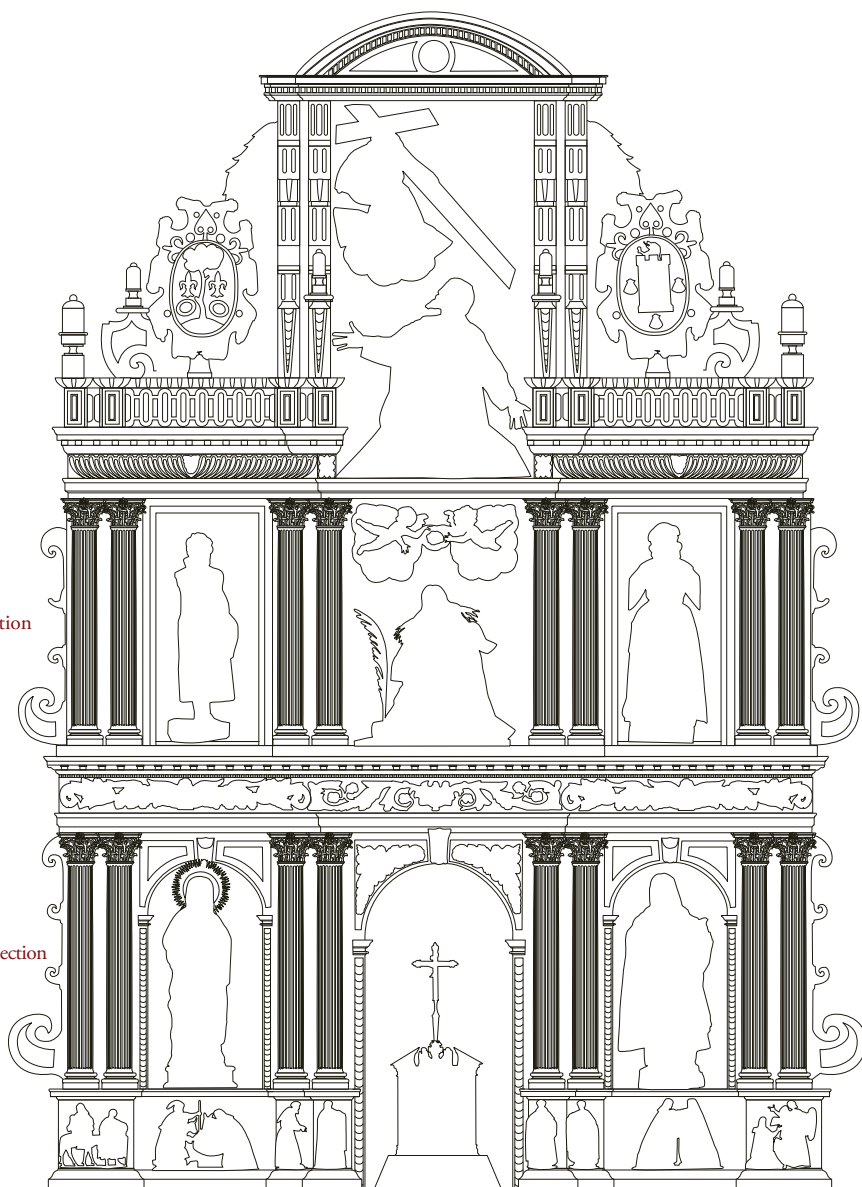
The first quarter, on a golden background, features two wolves, symbolising the Osorio family from his mother's lineage. The second quarter is divided into two sections: the upper half represents the Llano family, while the lower half belongs to the Salas lineage. The third quarter, enclosed by eight golden saltires, is divided into four sections containing two holly branches and two wolves, representing the Acevedo family. The fourth quarter, also framed by golden saltires, displays two wolves, denoting the Ayala family.

As in his uncle's coat of arms, the Valdés emblem is positioned at the centre.

Attic

Central Section

Predella and Lower Section



ALTARPIECE OF THE MALLEZA CHAPEL

ALTARPIECE OF THE MALLEZA CHAPEL

Introducción

The Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, also dedicated to the Holy Rosary, was commissioned by **Don Hernando de Salas**, half-brother of Archbishop Fernando de Valdés, as his final resting place. Popularly known as the “**Chapel of the Malleza**”, it became the burial site of distinguished members of the Malleza family, who were related to the Salas lineage through marriage.

The altarpiece was commissioned by the Malleza family from the Asturian sculptor **Luis Fernández de la Vega** (Gijón, 1601–1675), at some point between **1640** and **1650**. Fernández de la Vega was one of the most renowned sculptors of his time. Trained in Valladolid, he later returned to Asturias to establish his own workshop.

His vast body of work, found across Asturias, León, and Valladolid, reflects the strong influence of the Castilian School of Sculpture, whose most notable master was Gregorio Fernández.

The Malleza altarpiece introduced in Asturias the **Counter-Reformation** altarpiece style, characterised by structural simplicity and restrained ornamentation and iconography, aimed at effectively conveying the spiritual values of its era.

Structure and Iconography

The altarpiece is horizontally structured into a predella, two main bodies, and an attic. Vertically, it is divided into three sections, with the central panel being the widest.

PREDELLA AND LOWER SECTION

The lower section, known as the predella or base, features a combination of four bas-reliefs depicting scenes from the New Testament and four statues of the founders of medieval and early modern religious orders.

To the left of the tabernacle, the reliefs depict **the Flight into Egypt** and the **Nativity of Christ**, while to the right, they illustrate **the Visitation** and **the Annunciation**. Accompanying these scenes are statues of **Saint Francis of Assisi** and **Saint Benedict of Nursia** on the left, and **Saint Dominic of Guzmán** and **Saint Ignatius of Loyola** on the right.

The first body consists of three semi-circular niches, separated by pairs of Corinthian columns. These niches house two freestanding sculptures, while the central niche contains a modern tabernacle.

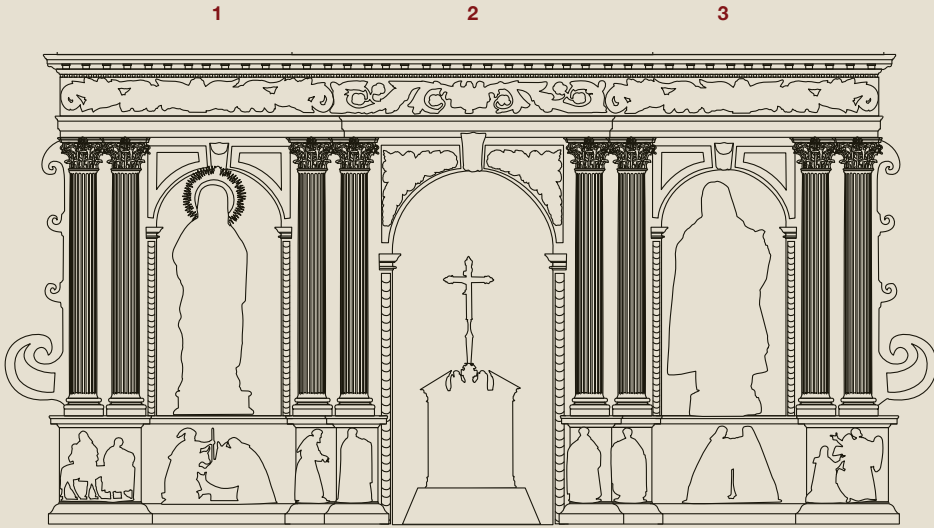
CENTRAL SECTION

The central section consists of three rectangular niches, also separated by Corinthian columns. Within these niches, freestanding sculptures alternate with a central bas-relief, creating a balanced composition.

ATTIC

The attic features a bas-relief, flanked by family heraldry and crowned by a circular pediment.

PREDELLA AND LOWER SECTION



1

Virgin of the Rosary

The Virgin of the Rosary is the patron and protector of the chapel. However, this figure is not the original, as it replaced an earlier statue of Saint Lucy. Of modern craftsmanship, the Virgin holds the Holy Rosary, a devotion dating back to the 9th century, commemorating the mysteries of Christ and the Virgin Mary.

2

Modern Tabernacle

The central niche, now occupied by a modern tabernacle, originally housed an image of the Virgin of the Rosary with the Christ Child, as described by Jovellanos in his *Diaries* (1795).

3

Saint Teresa of Jesus (1515-1582)

Teresa of Ávila, founder of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, dedicated her life to establishing convents and writing about mystical experiences.

This statue follows the Counter-Reformation iconographic model of a saint. She is depicted wearing the golden habit of her order, holding writing instruments -a book and what was once a quill, now lost. Her uplifted gaze and slightly parted lips evoke a state of mystical ecstasy.

CENTRAL SECTION



4

Saint John the Baptist

A preacher and baptizer in the desert, John the Baptist played a pivotal role in salvation history, foreshadowing Christ's redemption. He baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, proclaiming Him as the Messiah.

This statue depicts John with a beard, dressed in a camel-hair garment, as described in the Gospels. It is possible that he originally held a small figure of the *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God).

5

Saint Leocricia of Córdoba (9th Century)

According to her hagiography, Leocricia was a young Christian martyr, born into a Muslim family. She was secretly converted to Christianity by her governess and later renounced her ancestral faith. With the help of Saint Eulogius, she fled her home but was captured by the soldiers of Emir Muhammad I and beheaded. It is said that her body was thrown into the Guadalquivir River but later recovered by Christians and placed in the Holy Chamber of Oviedo.

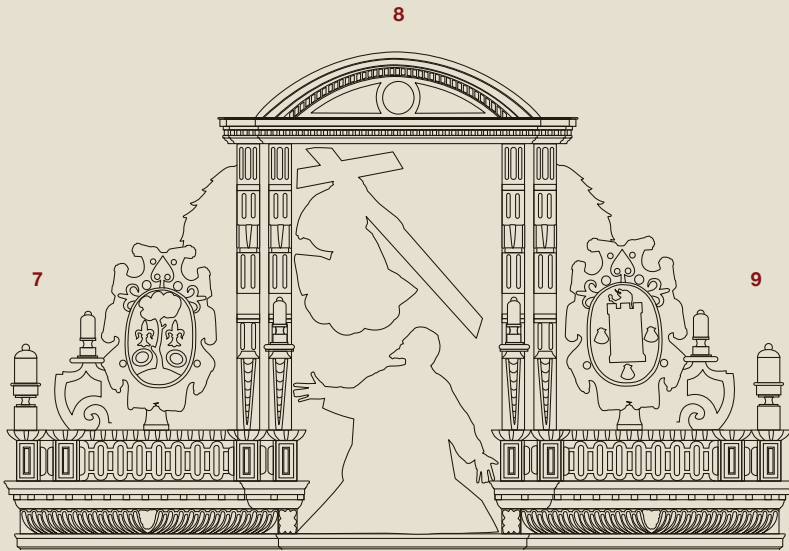
The statue, once mistakenly identified as the Virgin Mary, depicts Leocricia crowned by two angels, holding the palm of martyrdom. Small suture marks on her neck symbolize her decapitation.

6

Saint Anthony of Padua (1195-1231)

A renowned Franciscan preacher and theologian, Saint Anthony became one of the most venerated saints of the Late Middle Ages, known for his miraculous powers.

This statue portrays him in a Franciscan habit, cinched at the waist with the traditional knotted cord. However, due to its fragmentary condition, his usual attributes – the lily branch and the Christ Child – are missing.



7

Coat of Arms of the Malleza Family

The coat of arms of the Malleza family, patrons of the altarpiece, features an oval shield displaying a pine tree rooted in the ground, flanked by two fleur-de-lis and two laurel crowns. The perimeter border is adorned with spirals, decorated with saltires and fleur-de-lis from the Cross of Santiago.

8

Christ's Prayer in the Garden

After the Last Supper, Christ withdrew to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. Separated from His disciples, He prayed in anguish, asking His Father to fulfill His will.

This depiction follows the Gospel of Luke (22:41-46), which describes an angel descending from heaven. As is common in religious iconography, the angel carries the *Arma Christi* (Instruments of the Passion) -in this case, the cross of His crucifixion, emphasizing that this moment foreshadows Christ's Passion.

Rendered without additional elements, the relief focuses entirely on the sorrow of the *Salvator Mundi* (Saviour of the World).

9

Coat of Arms of the Salas Family

The coat of arms of the Salas family, who became related to the House of Malleza in the 16th century, also has an oval shield, depicting a castle with a lion emerging from its battlements. Three scallop shells are arranged on either side and at the base of the shield. The border follows the same shape and decorative elements as that of the Malleza family.

GLOSSARY

- A Semi-circular Arch (Arco de medio punto):** An arch that forms a perfect half-circle.
Arcosolium (Arcosolio): A recessed, arched niche in a wall designed to house a tomb.
Attic (Ático): The uppermost part of the central section of an altarpiece.
- B Buskin (Borceguí):** Footwear that extended above the ankle, open at the front, and fastened with straps or laces.
Vault (Bóveda): A curved architectural structure, supported by walls or columns, designed to cover a space.
- C Field (Campo):** In heraldry, this term refers to the background of a coat of arms.
Capital (Capitel): The uppermost part of a column, often decorated with motifs that vary according to the architectural order.
Collegiate Church (Colegiata): A Catholic church that, despite not having cathedral status, is governed by a chapter of canons (a collegiate ecclesiastical community).
Column (Columna): A vertical support with a circular cross-section, composed of a capital, shaft, and base.
Composite Order Column (Columna de orden compuesto): A Roman architectural order characterized by a capital that blends Corinthian acanthus leaves with Ionic volutes.
Corinthian Order Column (Columna de orden corintio): A column whose capitals are intricately carved using a trepan (drill tool) and adorned with acanthus leaves and other vegetal motifs.
Buttress (Contrafuerte): Also called a strut, this external architectural element reinforces walls by counteracting the lateral thrust of vaults.
Dome (Cúpula): A semi-spherical vault.
- E Pointed Arch Recess (Encasamiento ojival):** A compartment of an altarpiece shaped like a pointed arch.
Entablature (Entablamento): The upper section of a classical building, composed of an architrave, frieze, and cornice.
Freestanding Sculpture (Escultura de bulto redondo): Also called an **exempt sculpture**, this three-dimensional work can be viewed from multiple angles as it is not attached to a background or architectural element.
- F Frieze (Friso):** A wide, horizontal band located in the central section of an entablature.
Pediment (Frontón): A triangular or curved architectural feature used to crown a structure.
- G Grotesque Decoration (Grutesco):** Ornamentation consisting of fantastical creatures, human figures, or animals intertwined with vegetal motifs, forming a highly elaborate decorative style.
- H Niche (Hornacina):** Also called an alcove, this is an arched recess in a wall or altarpiece, used to house religious statues or images.
- I Intrados (Intradós):** The inner curve or surface of an arch or vault.
- L Lantern (Linterna):** A small tubular structure that crowns a dome, often allowing light to enter.
Lunel (Lunel): In heraldry, this term refers to floral shapes formed by four half-moons joined at their points.
- O Oculus (Óculo):** A circular or oval window or opening, typically found in domes or façades.
- P Plinth (Plinto):** A square molding at the base of a column, providing support.

Predella (Predela): Also called a banco, this is the lower horizontal section of an altarpiece.

R Relief (Relieve): A sculpted image integrated into a wall. Depending on its depth, it can be classified as low, medium, or high relief.

Roundel (Roel): In heraldry, this term refers to circular shapes decorating a coat of arms.

Glory Breakthrough (Rompimiento de Gloria): A term used in painting to depict two planes—the celestial and the earthly—often featuring a sky filled with clouds from which beatific figures emerge.

S Ashlar Block (Sillar): Rectangular stones used in the construction of external walls.

Small Ashlar (Sillarejo): A smaller, roughly cut version of an ashlar block.

Lower Section of an Altarpiece (Sotabanco): The lower part of an altarpiece featuring a double predella or banco.

T Shaft (Talle): Commonly referred to as the fuste, it is the middle section of a column, connecting the capital and base.

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