



Discover your own Loreto treasure

Prague Loreto permanent exposition worksheet for older schoolchildren of 11 - 15 years of age

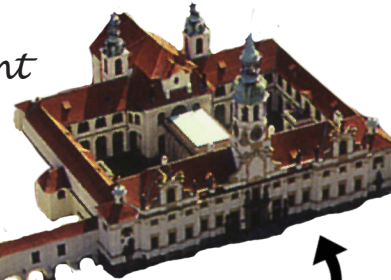
DEAR VISITOR, WELCOME TO PRAGUE LORETO. LORETO WAS FOUNDED IN 1626 AS A SITE OF PILGRIMAGE. PILGRIMAGE IS A JOURNEY TO A SACRED PLACE WHERE GOD SPEAKS TO PEOPLE. AND EVEN TODAY PILGRIMS COME HERE TO GATHER FOR WORSHIP. DURING THE DAY, LORETO IS OPEN TO VISITORS AS A MUSEUM. COME IN AND DISCOVER LORETO'S MANY TREASURES, BOTH THE ARTISTIC AND SPIRITUAL

Before we come to Loreto itself, the small ornate chapel, which is located in the middle of the courtyard, we will pass through an arcade corridor known as cloister. Apart from Loreto and the church, there are chapels altogether around the courtyard. Notice the large **WROUGHT-IRON DOOR** of the first Chapel of St. Anne. It leads to a roofed corridor connecting Loreto with the Capuchin convent on the opposite side of the square.

CAPUCHIN BRETHREN have been looking after Loreto since its foundation. They are Catholic Christians who committed their entire life to serving God and people and spend their days working and praying. You will recognise them by their brown hooded habits. Apart from Prague, you would also find them in Brno, Olomouc and Sušice... and in 108 other countries around the world.



Capuchin convent



Loreto

roofed corridor - bridge



Situated within the shortest distance from the convent is the chapel of a saint whose tenets the Capuchins follow:

THE CHAPEL OF ST. FRANCIS

On its main altar is a beautiful painting by a famous baroque painter Petr Brandl. The painting is shaped and is held by the statues of



But here is the main question:

What is Loreto?

It is the "heart" of a site of pilgrimage. A small house in the middle of a courtyard, completely covered with reliefs and statues - a kind of ornate casket. What is important, however, is hidden inside.

THE "CASNET" CONCEALS A PRECIOUS HOLY HOUSE.

Prior to entering, walk around Loreto and look at the reliefs showing the life of the Virgin Mary and young Jesus. In the niches, you will see statues - the Sibyls and the prophets who foretold the birth of the Messiah.



The female figures at the top are the Sibyls, fortune tellers.



Male figures at the bottom are the prophets.



The Virgin Mary and Baby Jesus have on their heads. They are usually made of precious materials: gold, silver and precious stones. There are several of them in the Loreto treasure, always a big one for the Virgin Mary and a smaller one for Baby Jesus. You will see them upstairs in the treasury. The Virgin Mary also used to be dressed. Do you know any other venerated statue in one of the Prague churches that is being dressed?

Inside Loreto is a statue of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus. This is because LORETO IS THE HOUSE OF THE VIRGIN MARY. The venerated building was once located in the city of Nazareth in the distant land of Palestine. In the Middle Ages there were wars on this territory and the precious house was in danger of being destroyed.

One legend says that the house was moved and hence saved by , just as it is shown in the painting at the entrance of Loreto.



Another story says that the Crusaders took the precious building apart and then transported all the individual stones on ships to Europe where they built the house again. The true Nazareth house of the Virgin Mary is now located in Italy, on a rock above the sea, in a small town of Loreto. Very soon, this place became well-known, and crowds of pilgrims started to visit it. Not everyone could afford to travel in those days and aristocrats therefore started founding new sites of pilgrimage within their manors and building copies of the Loreto house - our Loreto in Prague is one of the most beautiful and the best preserved houses of Loreto in Bohemia.

The house was built in a laurel grove. The laurel tree (Laurus Nobilis) gave Loreto its name.



ONE OF THE LORETO RELIEFS SHOWS THE THREE MAGI BRINGING YOUNG JESUS THREE GIFTS. WILL YOU FIND THEM WITH US IN LORETO? SEARCH FOR THREE CHESTS, LIKE THOSE IN THE PICTURE, UNLOCK THEM AND WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU SAW INSIDE INTO THE WHITE BOX. A CLUE WILL TELL YOU WHERE TO FIND THE NEXT CHEST.



F.....

IS A GIFT FOR JESUS - THE SON OF GOD. You will find the chest in The Archangel Gabriel visited the Virgin Mary here and told her that she will conceive and will give birth to a son. And for God so **LOVED** the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.



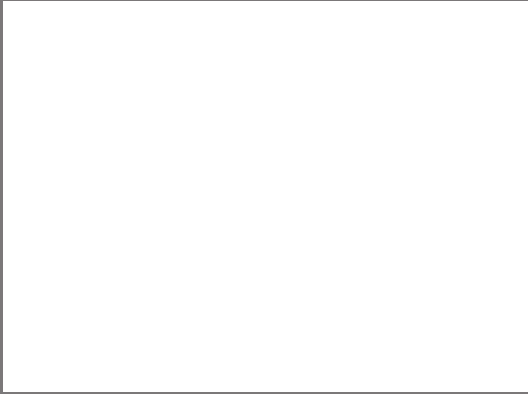
CLUE: in the Loreto Holy House.



G . . .

IS A GIFT FOR JESUS - THE KING. You will find the chest in

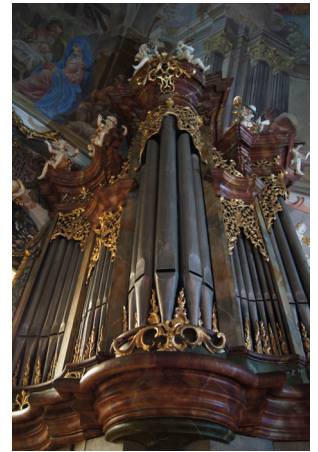
.....
 The precious gold things were brought here as gifts by people as an expression of gratitude. The prayed and **BELIEVED**, that God will help them and their prayers were answered.



You will find a CLUE on the floor, under Amos the prophet who has a dog.

The Loreto Church of the Nativity of our Lord was originally also a small chapel. Gradually, with the growing fame of the Prague Loreto, a larger building for greater number of pilgrims was needed. The church was beautifully decorated during the period of Rococo. Look at the organ, adorned with the statues of angels playing musical instruments. Can you tell what is painted on the vault above the organ? For whom is the angelic orchestra playing?

The fresco scene depicting and the angels are therefore playing to who was just born.



When you finish viewing the church and the other three chapels, go to the first floor where you will find the TREASURY. It is a place where the real **LORETO TREASURE** is kept. It consists of precious gifts brought here by people to express gratitude to God - to Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary. Such gifts are known as: 1) creative

- 2) votive
- 3) credit

Find the most precious work of art of the Loreto treasure: the Diamond monstrance.

It is made of gilded silver and embellished with 6 222 diamonds.



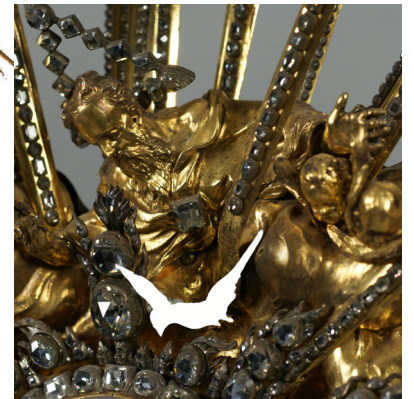
The precious diamonds were donated as gifts to the Virgin Mary by Ludmila Eva Františka, the Countess

of
 Find five differences between the photograph and the portrait of the Countess hanging before the entrance to the treasury.



Monstrance is a precious receptacle into which is placed the Sacramental bread transformed into the Body of Christ. Owing to its shape, the Diamond monstrance is also called the of Prague.

Find the figure of God the Father (the bearded old man) at the top.



God sends the Holy Ghost to the world in the form of a white creature. It is a Will you be able to find it?



Did you hear the Loreto carillon? It is also a gift that was once presented by a merchant from Prague. His daughter was very ill and he was very worried about her. He was begging God and the Virgin Mary for her to get well again. His daughter had a dream. She was dreaming about Loreto. She saw its tower and angels around it, playing a beautiful melody on the bells. When she recovered, her father had bells made in faraway Amsterdam to show his gratitude. And these bells play for us to this day. The Loreto carillon is the only one in the country that can be played like a musical instrument. Most interesting is that, while played, the bells are not moving at all. So how does it actually work?



Who is playing the bells?

Every hour, an automatic clock machine plays a song for the Virgin Mary. How? There are external hammers that start to hit the bells.



The bells, however, can also be played by a real person. There is a small booth in the tower and inside it a keyboard by means of which the musician controls the clappers of the bells.

Recently, we discovered a **CRYPT** in the Loreto church where nobody set foot in for over 200 years. When we entered we were all surprised and excited about the beautiful paintings decorating the walls. Enter the model of the crypt with us and see for yourselves!

Find the main scene of the crypt - The Raising of Lazarus: it depicts Jesus raising his hand and miraculously bringing dead Lazarus back to life, who is getting out of his grave. It was painted after an art work executed by a famous Dutch painter **REMBRANDT**.

Compare the painting in the crypt with Rembrandt's model and write down what is the same and what is, by contrast, different.

.....

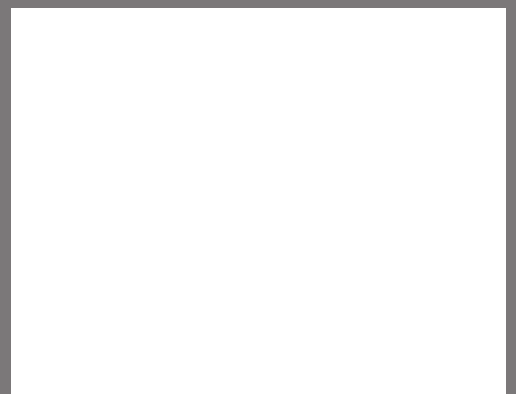


AS WELL AS THE GIFTS OF THE THREE MAGI, YOU ALSO FOUND IN THE CHESTS THE SYMBOLS OF HOPE, LOVE AND FAITH - THE THREE DIVINE VIRTUES THAT ARE GREAT GIFTS OF OUR LIVES. Let them give us strength to be good, kind people. This way we will place and keep our own treasure in heaven.



M

IS A GIFT FOR JESUS WHO DEFEATED DEATH. You will find the chest in Here lie the bodies of the deceased Loreto donors. Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead and so we too may **HOPE** for eternal life. He who believes in him, even if he dies, will live forever.



You will find a CLUE beneath the window next to the portrait of Countess of Koloirat.