

## Romanesque art

In the **Middle Ages**, lots of people travelled on **pilgrimages** and **crusades**, which helped to spread ideas. This led to a similar **style of art** being established in much of Europe. This style was called **Romanesque**, and it was the first consistent style to appear since Roman times. The Romanesque style was widely used until the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when the **Gothic style** started to take over.

### Architecture

There were not many towns, so most Romanesque buildings were churches, monasteries and castles in the countryside. They were built from **stone**. Most **churches** had a **cruciform plan** as a symbol of Christ's crucifixion, the name of this plan is **Latin cross**, because one arm of the cross is longer than the others. Other features are:

- Very **thick walls** for defence. People sheltered in churches, **monasteries and castles** if they were attacked.
- Not **many (and mainly small) windows**. This was also for defence, and it makes the buildings very dark inside.
- Semi-circular arches** on windows and doors.

### Painting and sculpture

Romanesque **paintings** were simple in style. Most people could not read or write, so churches were decorated with **murals** showing **scenes from the Bible**. The walls of the church were like a "picture Bible". These scenes used very **strong colours**, which means that the picture looks very **flat or two-dimensional**.

**Sculptures** and **reliefs** on church buildings also showed scenes from the Bible.

Answer these questions:

1-What helped Romanesque art spread throughout Europe?

2-At what historical stage did Romanesque art take place? When did this kind of art disappear?

3-Which were the more important Romanesque buildings? Explain their characteristics.

4-Which are the characteristics of the Romanesque painting and sculpture?