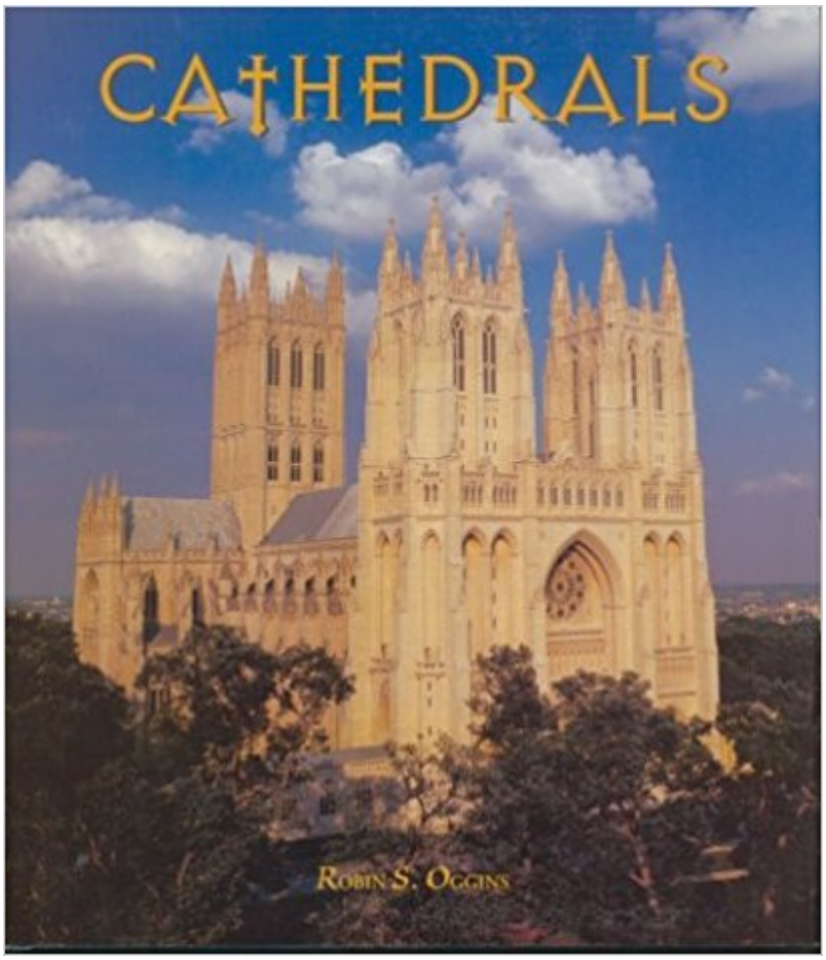
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Cathedrals



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Synopsis

Beautiful and imposing, cathedrals were designed as monuments to the greater glory of God. They are important not only for spiritual reasons, but for their often splendid architecture. A medievalist leads an extraordinary photographic tour through the most magnificent examples, from Notre Dame in Paris to the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Nairobi, Kenya. Through engaging commentary, the history and evolution of these buildings unfold, beginning in the early Christian era and Emperor Constantine’s conversion to Christianity in the 4th century, up through the Reformation, and right into the 20th century. Among the most spectacular: in the ruins of St. Andrews in Fife, Scotland; Manila Cathedral in the Philippines, rebuilt five times; and St. Patrick’s in New York City.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I bought this book because Professor Oggins was a favorite of mine at SUNY-Binghamton. I was certainly not let down by this book. The text is clear and concise. It is laid out into introductory chapters explaning the evolution of the cathedral and its place in the life of the population of the times. This is followed by chapters reviewing prominent cathedrals, grouped geographically. These descriptions note historic as well as contemporary items of interest, for example the English cathedrals damaged by the Nazi blitz. Very well written and easy to read. The photography is exceptional, with both external and internal views, along with items of architectural interest. All in all an asset to anyone interested in medieval history, cathedrals, architecture, or just a well written book with good pictures. A plus is the geographic maps and the internal floor plans supplied with some of the cathedral descriptions.

Very good book. Excellent text, nice color photos, fine paper and good price. If you are interested in this theme I recommend it.

Beautiful photos from around the world. Wish it were bigger. There is so much out there that has survived that is a real treasury of the Church.

So many bad things have been done under the guise of religion that it is wonderful to see these fabulous buildings built worldwide to honor deity. It probably wasn't a picnic to build them, but the finished products are heart-stoppingly amazing. Mr. Oggins is on top of the subject matter, and knows just what to say about these astounding structures.

Having recently re-read Follett's _Pillars of the Earth,_ I've been reacquainting myself with the details of medieval cathedral-building. Being an historian, but not an architect, I've been interested especially in heavily pictorial volumes, and this is a pretty good one, by a British academic specialist in medieval architecture. Following two informative chapters on the ecclesiastical evolution of the cathedral and the construction process, the main body of the book is geographical in organization: the British Isles, French and Spanish-speaking Europe, the Germanic countries, a whole chapter on Italy, and a closing chapter on non-European cathedrals. The volume is oversized so most of the high-quality photos show plenty of detail, both exterior and interior. Etchings and engineering drawings are scattered throughout, as are quotations from monastic contemporaries. I especially like being able to turn pages and compare one west front to another, one sanctuary to another, and note the evolution of styles. And even though this is mostly a "picture book," there's a great deal of useful text.

This book looks beautiful, but the selection of photographs is uneven, since they came from all different sources. The cover picture is very flat lit, (taken at the wrong time of day) and suffers from converging verticals. There is a major error at the beginning where the picture of Salisbury Cathedral on page 6 is captioned Winchester Cathedral. York Minster is never called York Cathedral as in this book. Such an otherwise well-written book should not be foisted with uneven quality photographs. Time for a new edition with some new (high-end digital) photography. I'd like to do that! Nick Servian [...]

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