

# Art of the Middle Ages

Romanesque and Gothic  
Art & Architecture

# What You Will Learn:

- By the end of this presentation you should be able to create a comparison chart that explains how buildings (Cathedrals) created in the Romanesque Style look different than those created in the Gothic style.

# TIMELINE

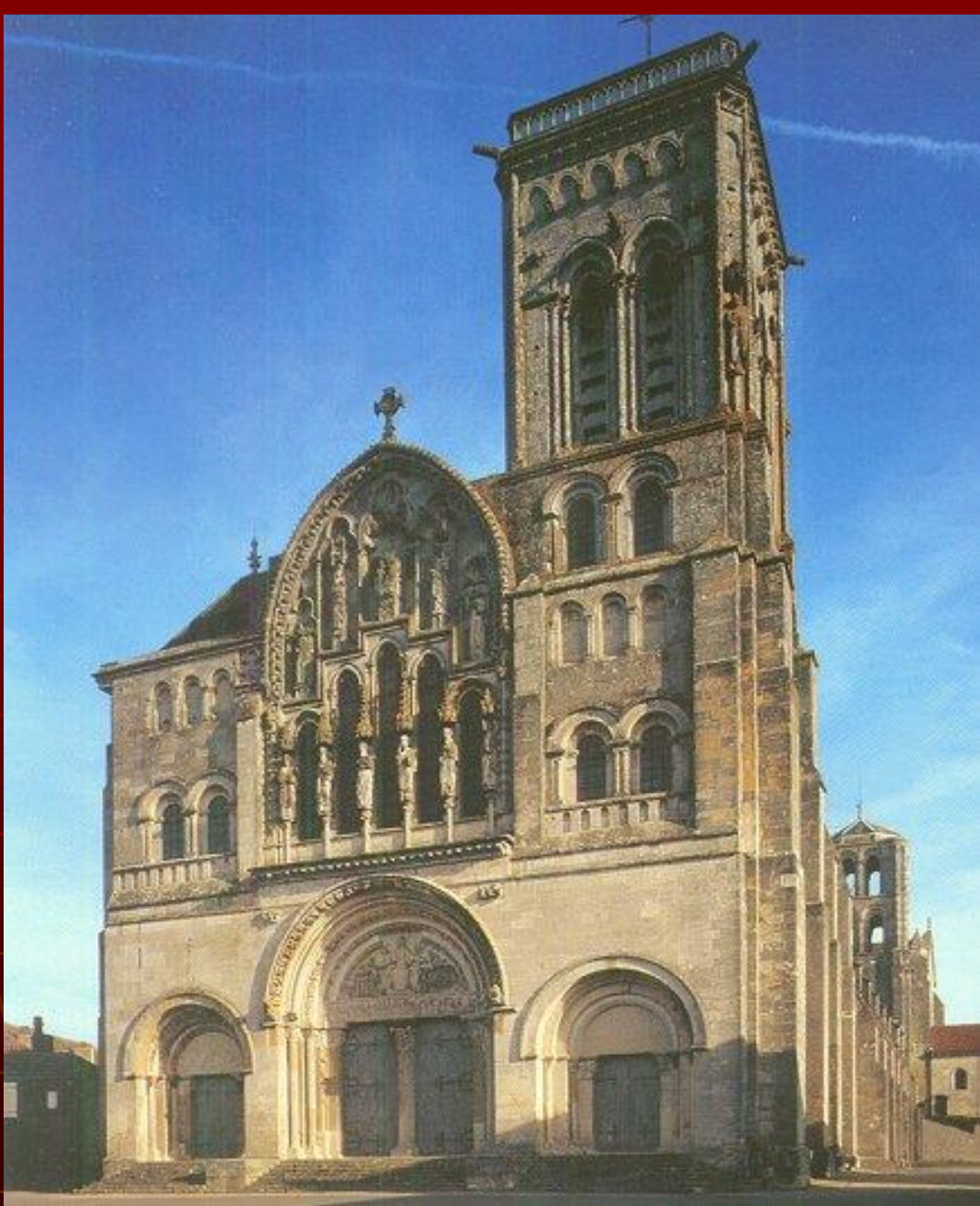
Romanesque: 1000s - 1100s

Gothic: Late 1100s - 1400s

Renaissance: 1400s - 1600s

# Romanesque

- The Romanesque style is called that because it is a little like Roman architecture, but it is made around 1000-1200 AD instead of during the Roman Empire.



# Romanesque

The Romanesque cathedral at Vézelay

# Romanesque

- Romanesque buildings were made of stone, but often had wooden roofs because people were still not very good at building stone roofs yet.
- If they did have stone roofs, the walls had to be very thick in order to hold up the roofs, and there couldn't be very many windows either, so Romanesque buildings were often very heavy and dark inside.

# Gothic

- After the Romanesque period in architecture, around 1200 AD, most people in western Europe began to build churches and palaces in the Gothic style.





Gothic

The Gothic Cathedral of Notre Dame



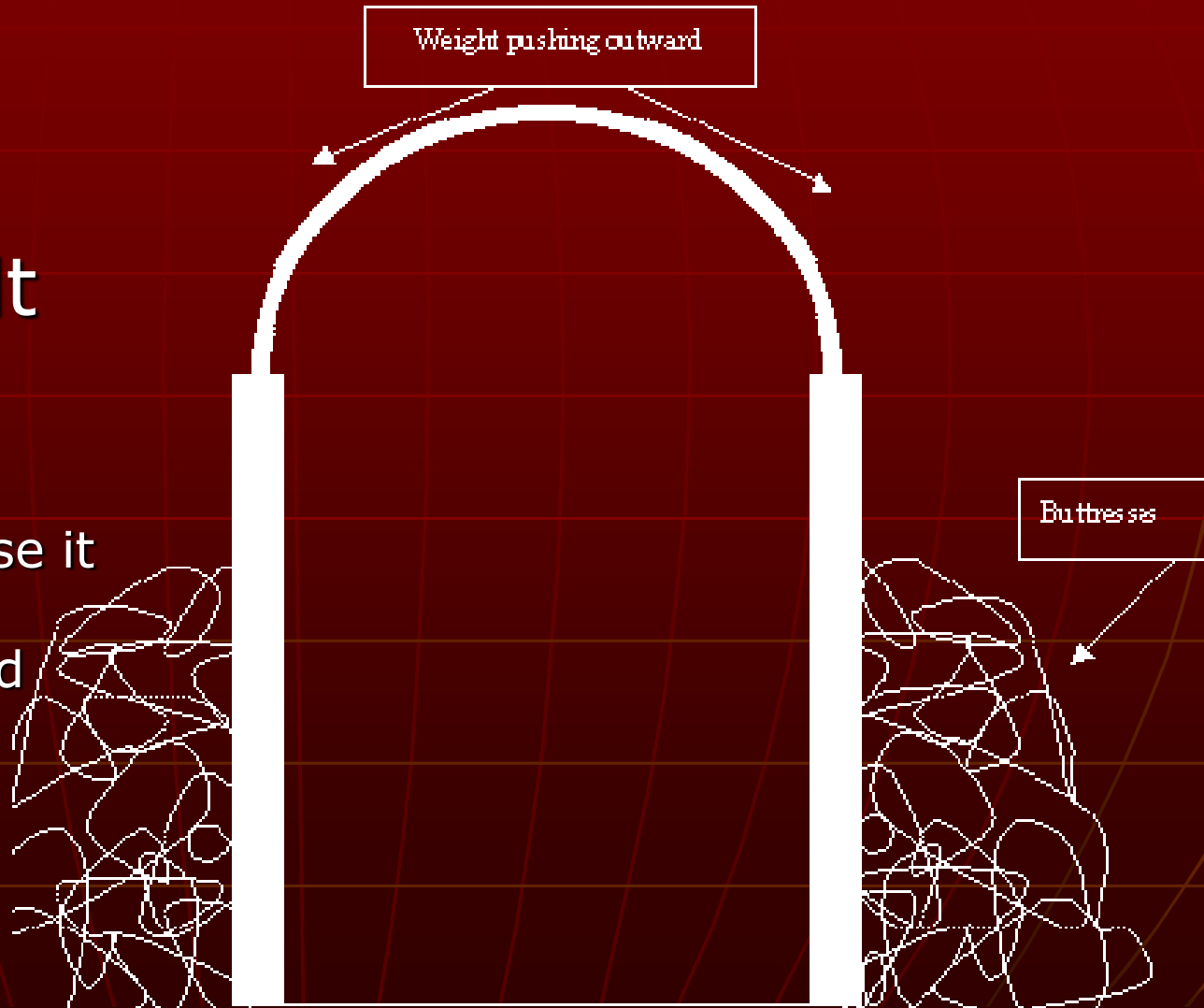
# Gothic

- The easiest difference to see between the two styles is that while Romanesque churches have round arches, Gothic churches have pointed arches

# ARCHES - Romanesque

- Rounded Top
- Created a "Barrel" or "Groin" Vault

(this was a big development because it meant roofs did not have to be wood and could be made of stone!)

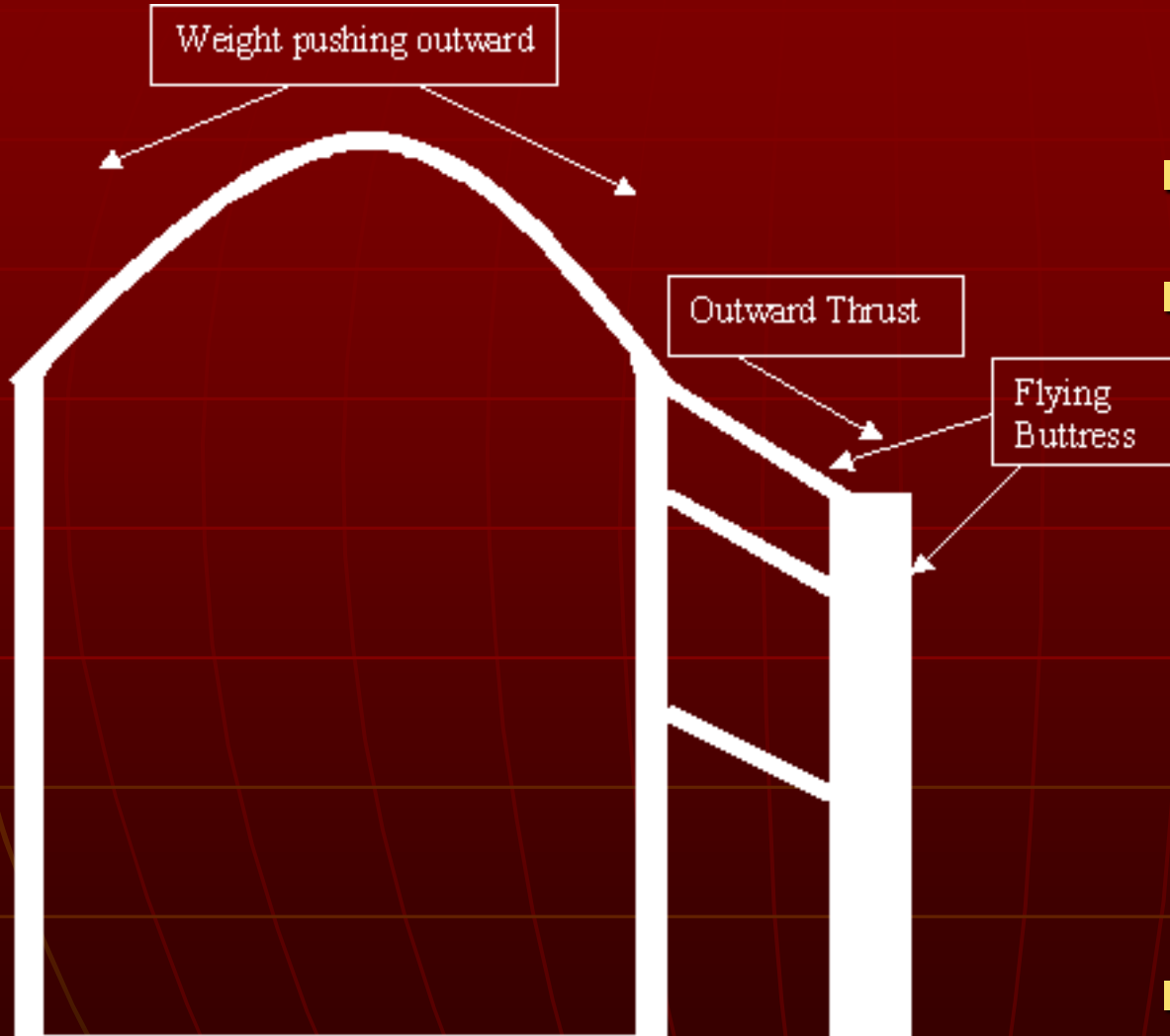


# ROMANESQUE

- Rounded Arch



# ARCHES- Gothic



- Pointed Top
- Supported by "Flying Buttress"

(a big development because it allowed taller buildings and the pointed arches and spiers)

- Ribbed Vault

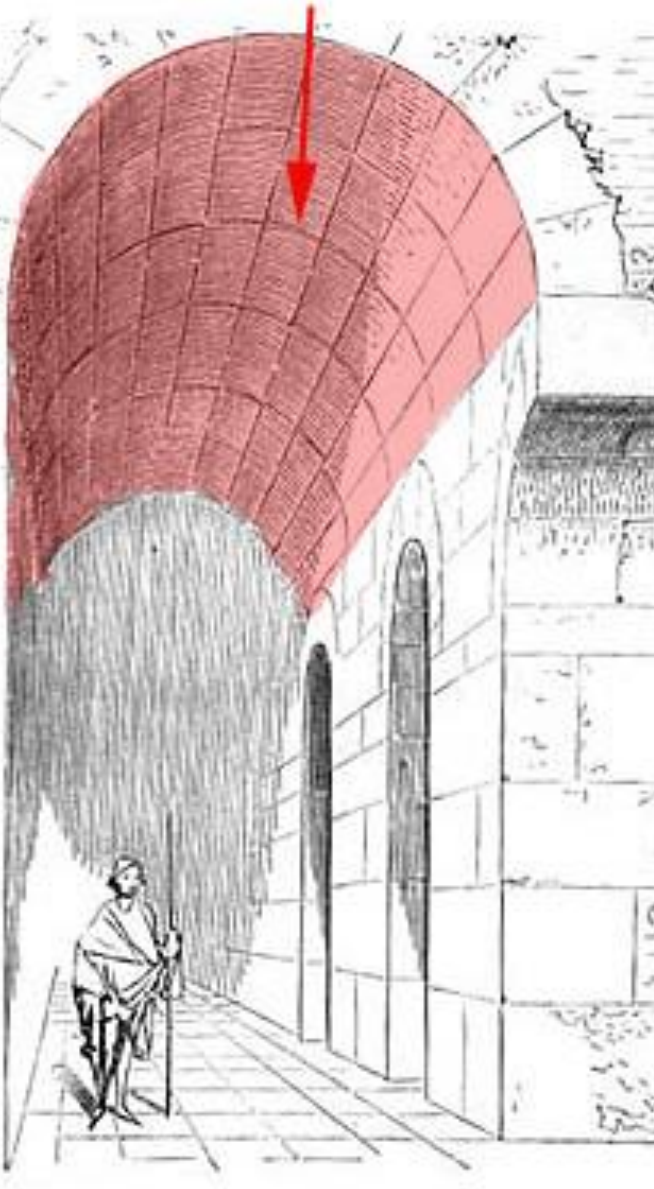


# GOTHIC



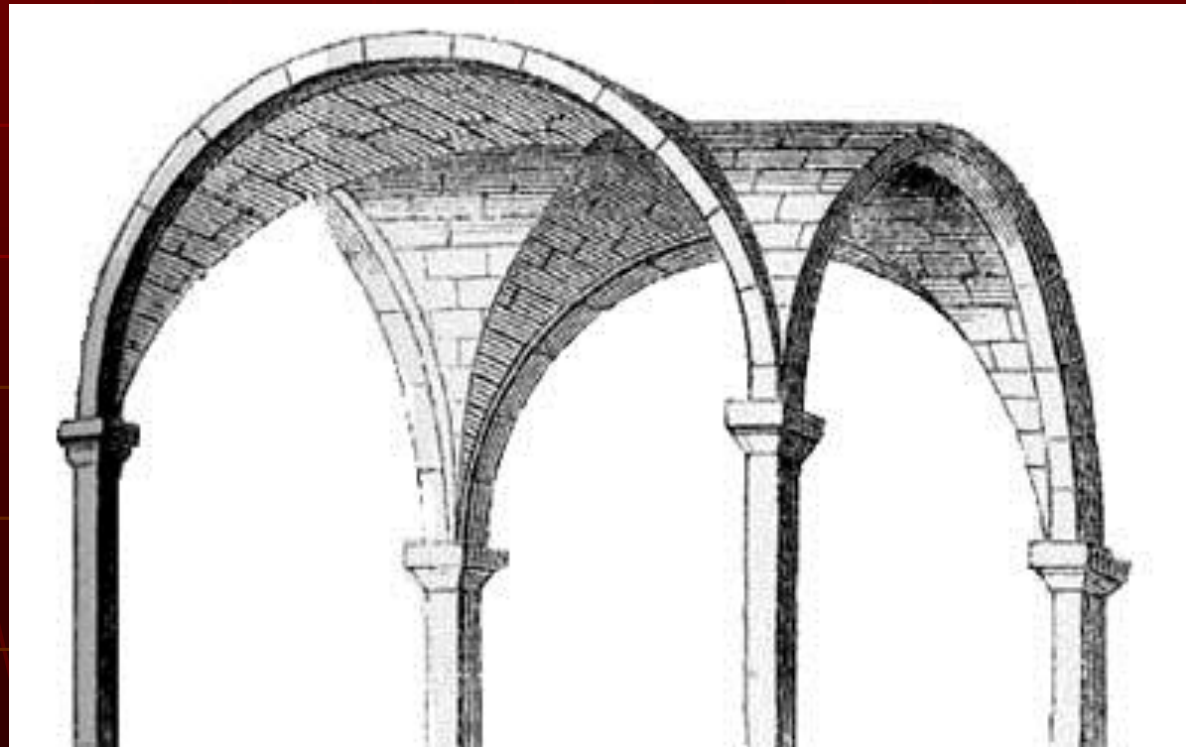
- Pointed Arch

**barrel vault  
or  
tunnel vault**

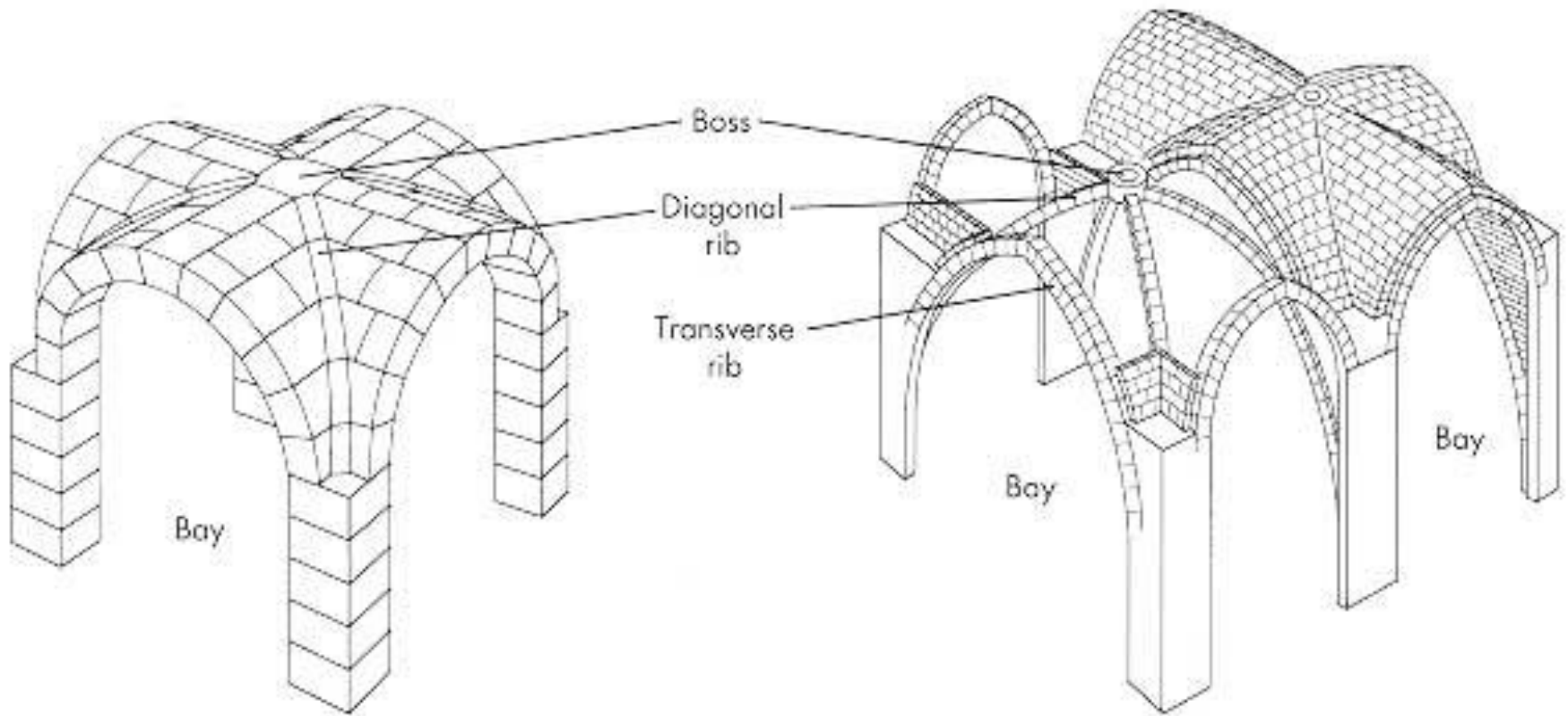


**barrel vault or tunnel vault:** The simplest form of a vault, consisting of a continuous surface of semicircular sections. It resembles a barrel or tunnel which has been cut in half lengthwise

**groin vault:** A vault produced by the intersection at right angles of two barrel (tunnel) vaults. Sometimes the arches of groin vaults may be pointed instead of round.





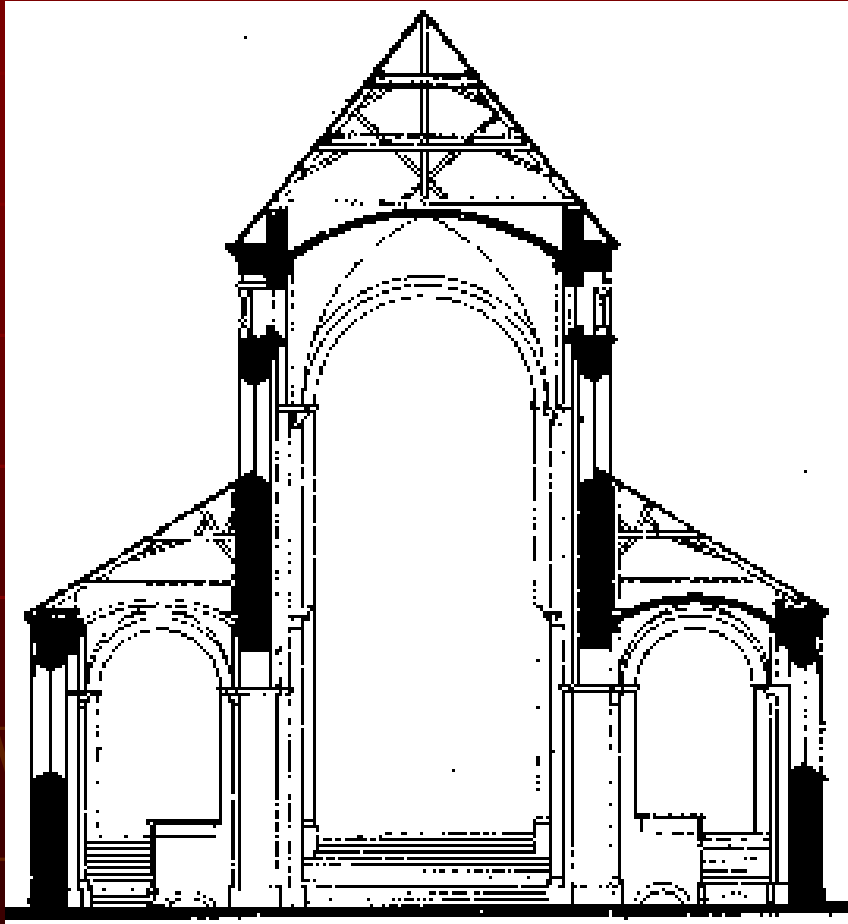


- Here's a comparison between a regular groin vault and a rib vault. The rib vault's only difference is that there is a rib going across the top of each vault. While the difference is slight, the look is totally different.....giving the structure a lighter feel. .

# Gothic

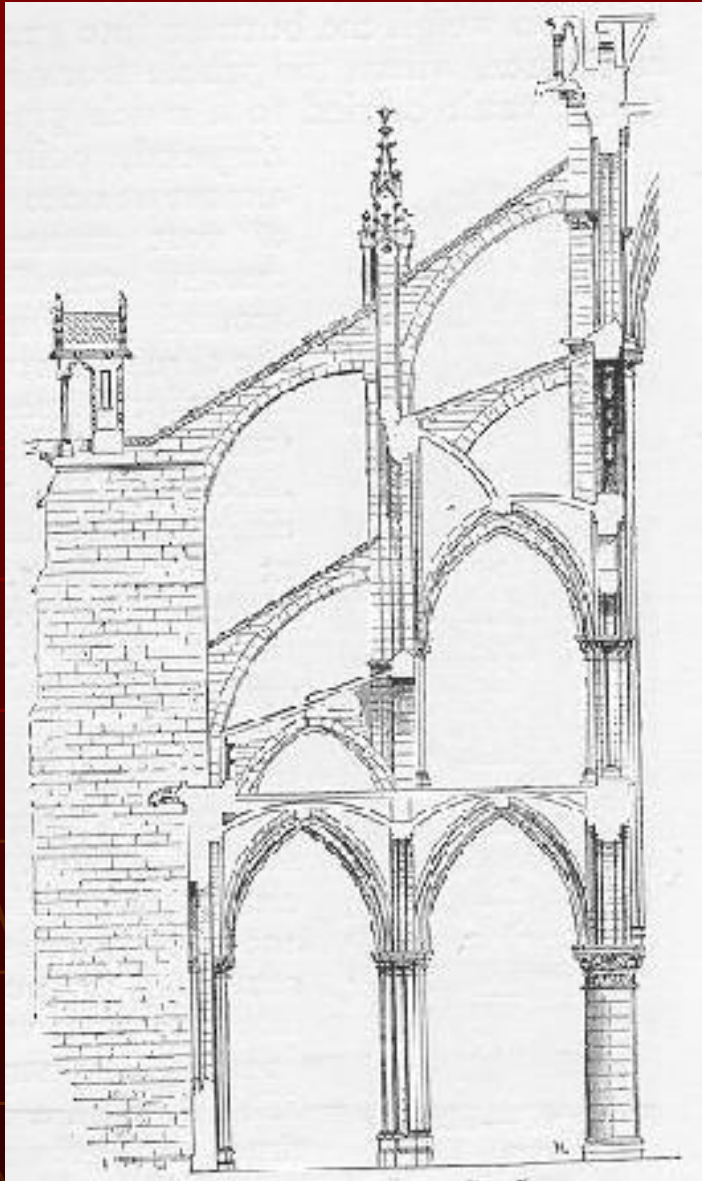
- But there are a lot of other differences as well. Gothic churches have many more windows, and much bigger windows, and so they are not dark like Romanesque churches. This is because the architects have learned some new ways of making roofs and of supporting walls

# STRUCTURE - Romanesque



- The image on the left, shows the profile of Spyer Dom, or Cathedral. Its arches are typical of the rounded Romanesque style. Note the way all the weight of the building is carried by the external and internal walls.
- The windows and doorways are created with a rounded arch.

# STRUCTURE - Gothic



Gothic architects sought to redistribute the weight of buildings using weight bearing structures known as buttresses.

This complex design transfers downward weight from the main structure to supporting structures thus allowing architects to build higher while giving the impression that the heavy stone walls are light and lofty

It added both external grandeur and an internal sense of space creating the illusion that the stone soars to the heavens giving a feeling of unbelievable lightness that is totally missing from the Romanesque.





**Gothic:  
the flying buttress**

# SIZE

- Gothic churches are also usually bigger than Romanesque churches. By 1200 AD, people had more money available, and they could afford to spend more on building great churches.
- Romanesque Cathedrals are best described as “horizontal and modest in height”
- Gothic Cathedrals are best described as “vertical and soaring”



# SIZE



ROMANESQUE



GOTHIC



# THE EXTERIOR

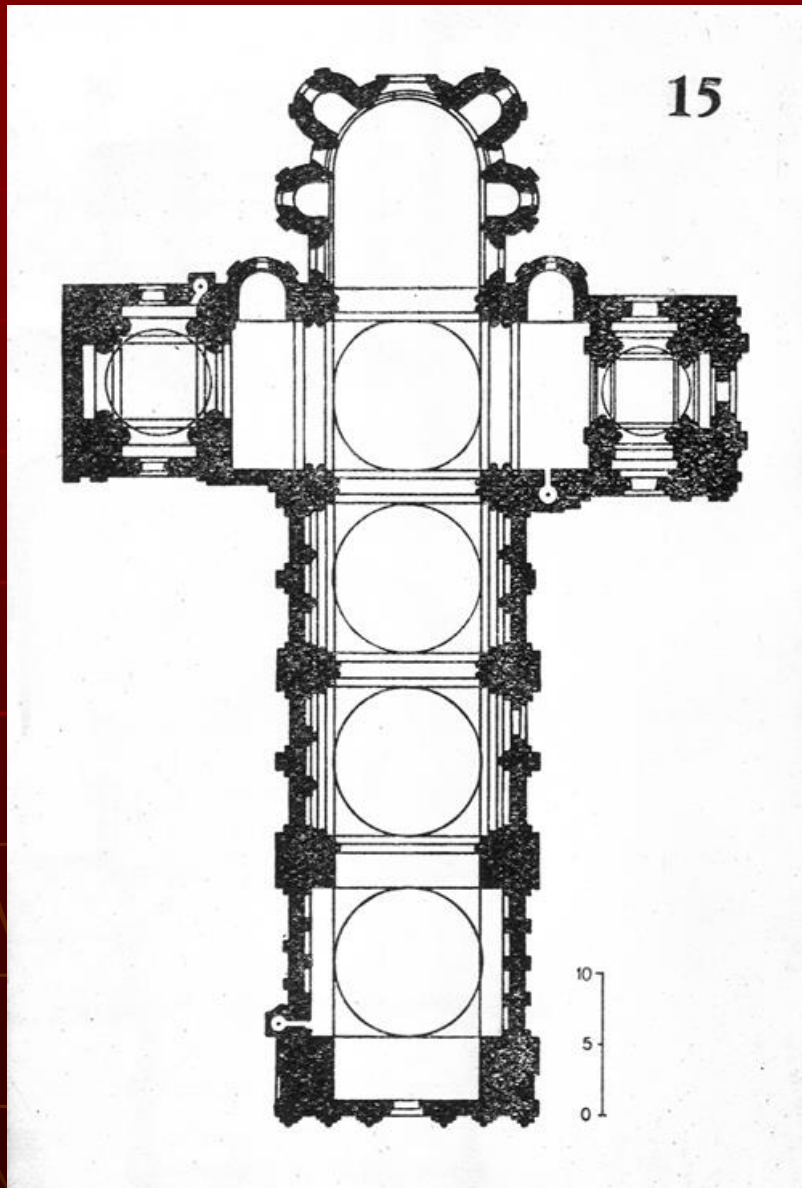
**ROMANESQUE:**  
Plain, little  
decoration, solid.



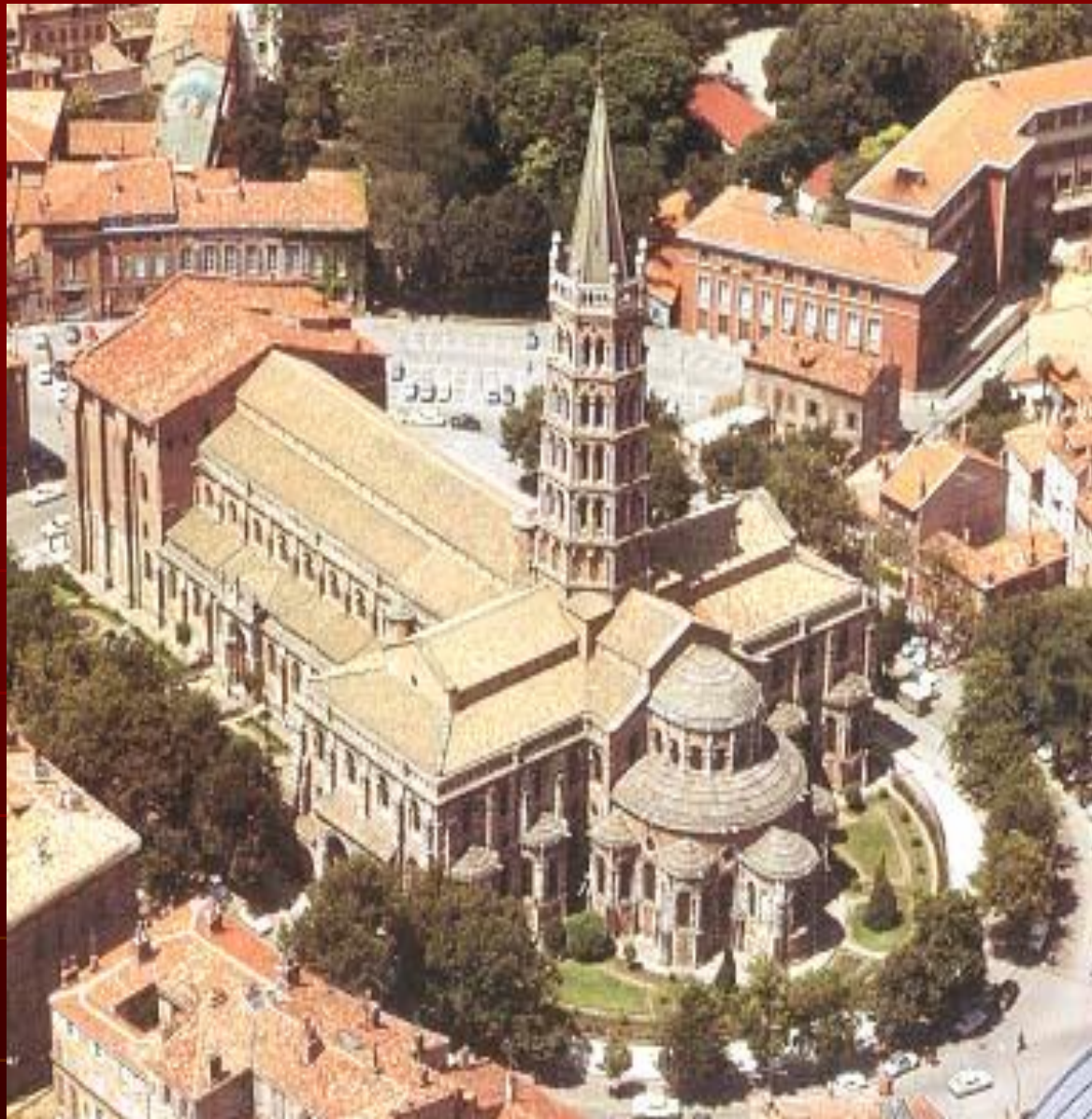
**GOTHIC:** Ornate,  
lots of sculpture,  
delicate.



# FLOOR PLAN - Romanesque



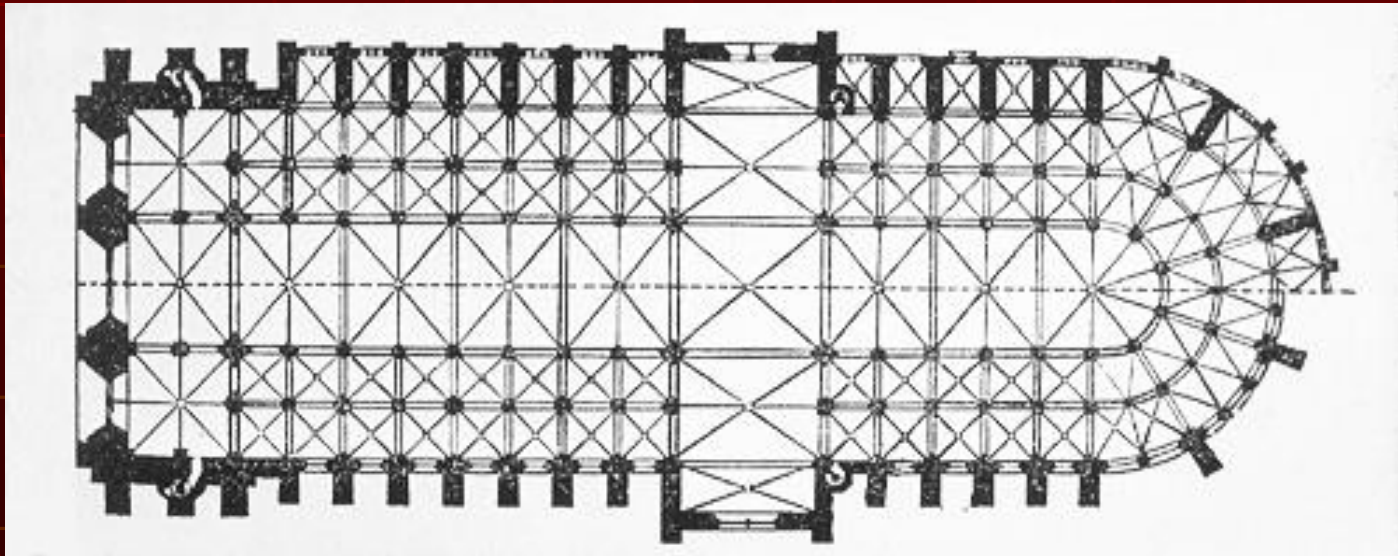
- CRUCIFORM PLAN
- Spaces divided into separate "compartments"
- All had similar components in the same places



Cruiciform - Romanesque

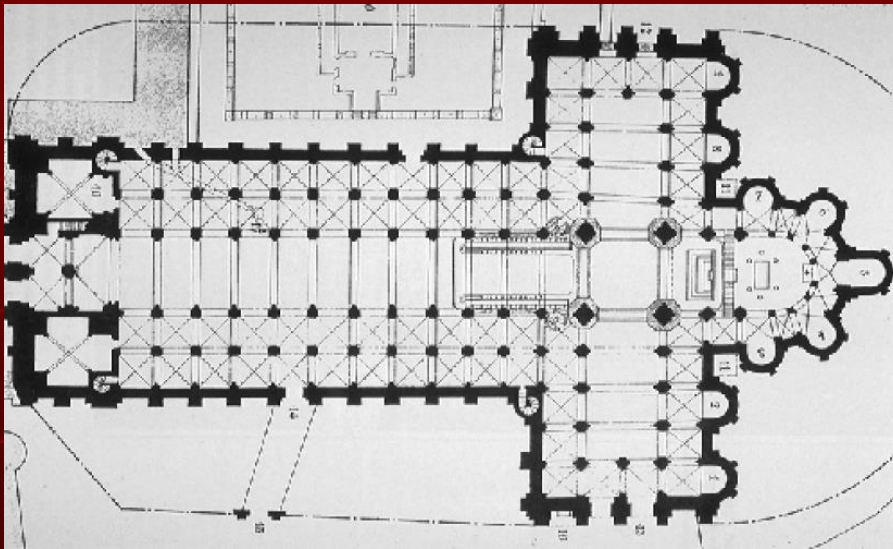
# PLAN - Gothic

- CRUIIFORM PLAN
- More unified floor plan and use of space.
- Spaces were less segregated from each other – less broken up.

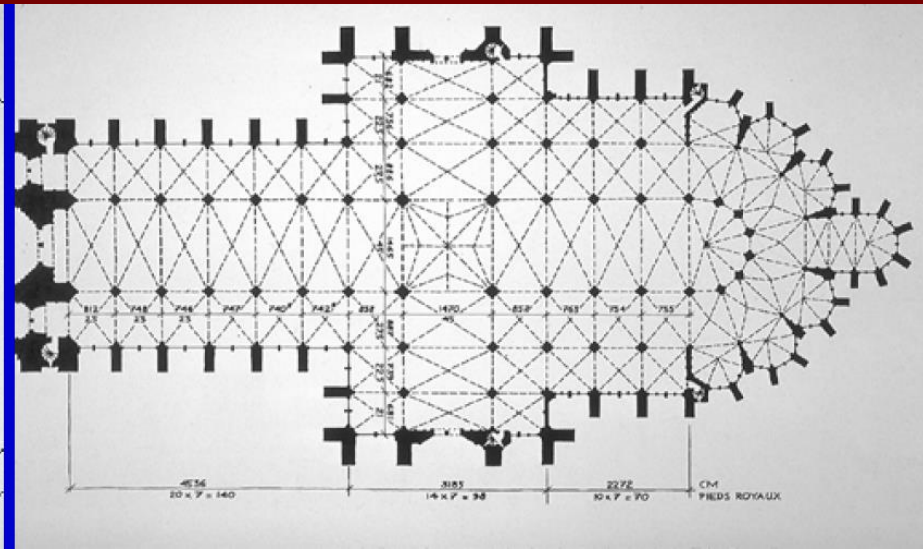




# FLOOR PLAN - Comparison



ROMANESQUE

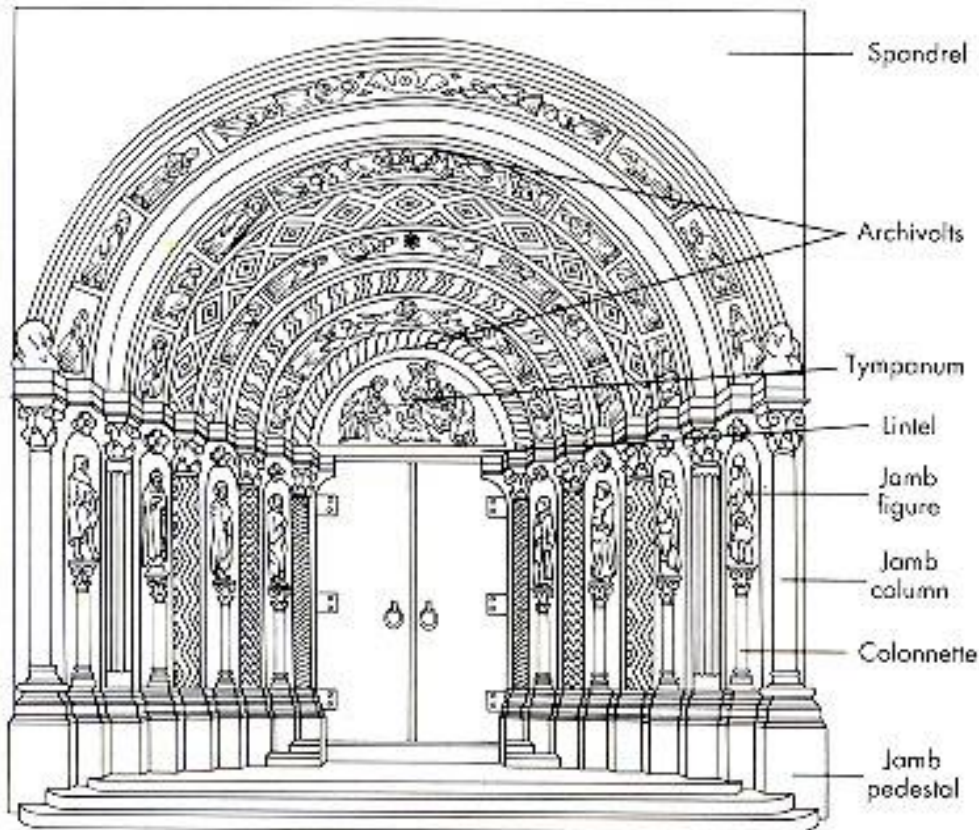


GOTHIC

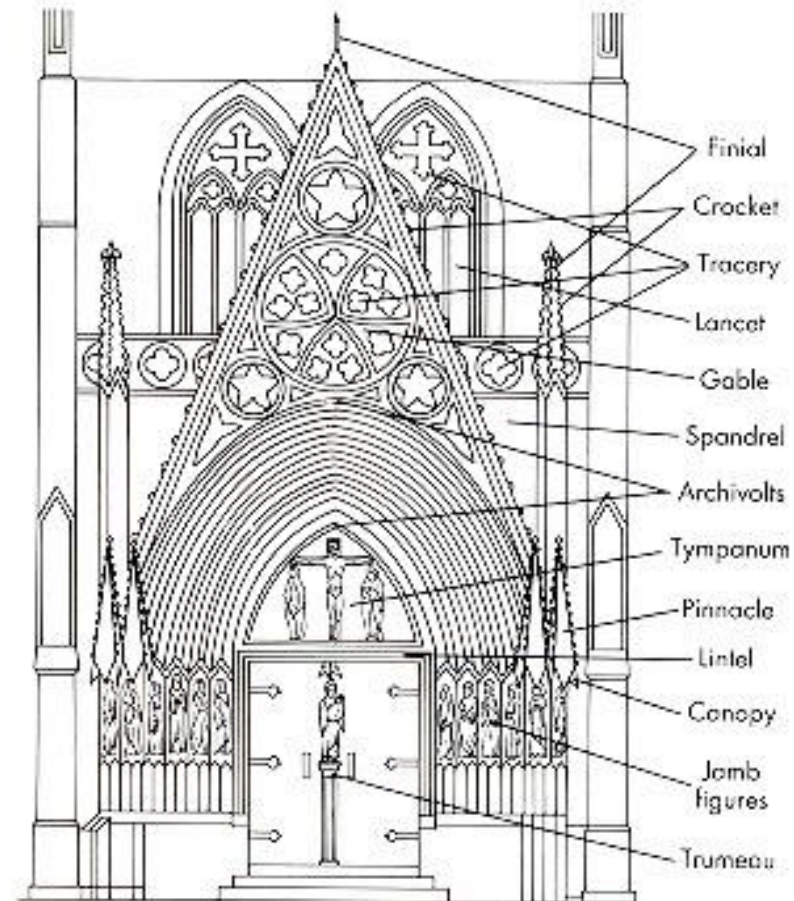


# THE ENTRYWAYS

Pictured below is a comparison between a typical Romanesque portal and a Gothic portal. Notice how the Gothic design seems to pull the viewer's eyes upward with a more vertically oriented layout. Also, notice the extreme decorative embellishments on the facade of the Gothic design.



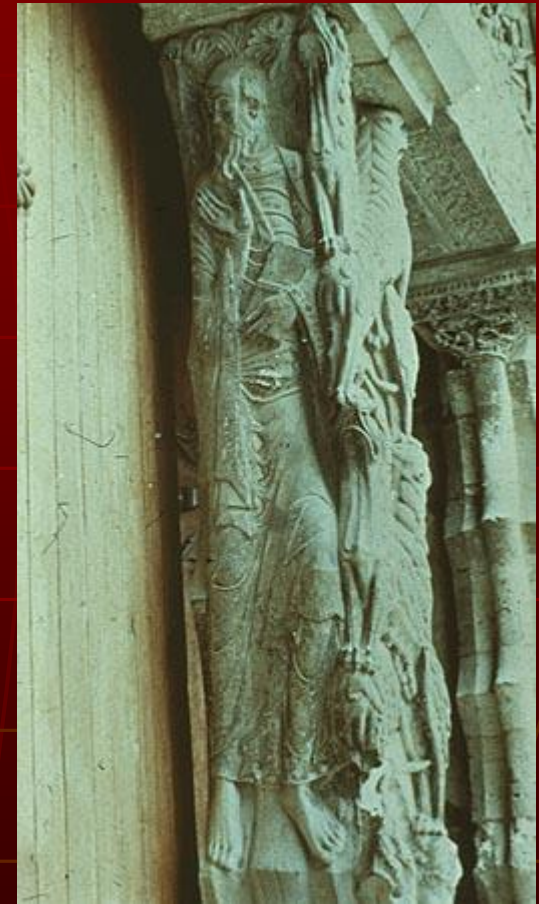
Romanesque Portal



Gothic Portal

# SCULPTURE - Romanesque

- Thin, elongated, abstract figures.
- “Jamb Figures”
- Low to Medium Relief

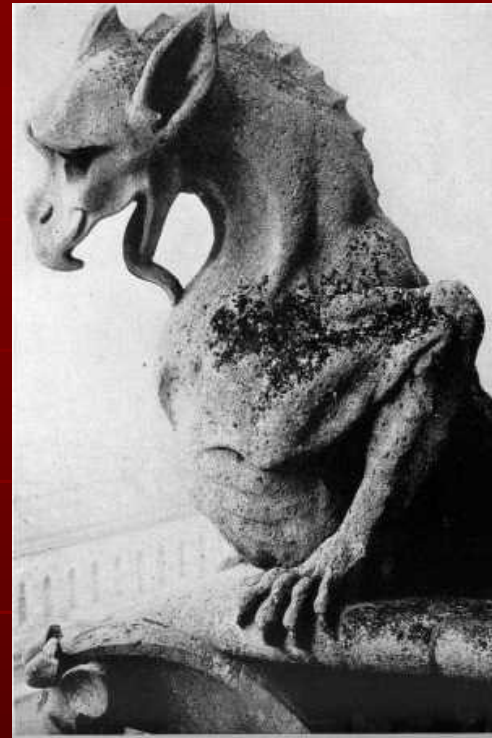




# SCULPTURE - Gothic



Detail of portal from  
Reims Cathedral



- More realistic proportions and individualized features.
- Gargoyles and Grotesques
- Medium to High relief

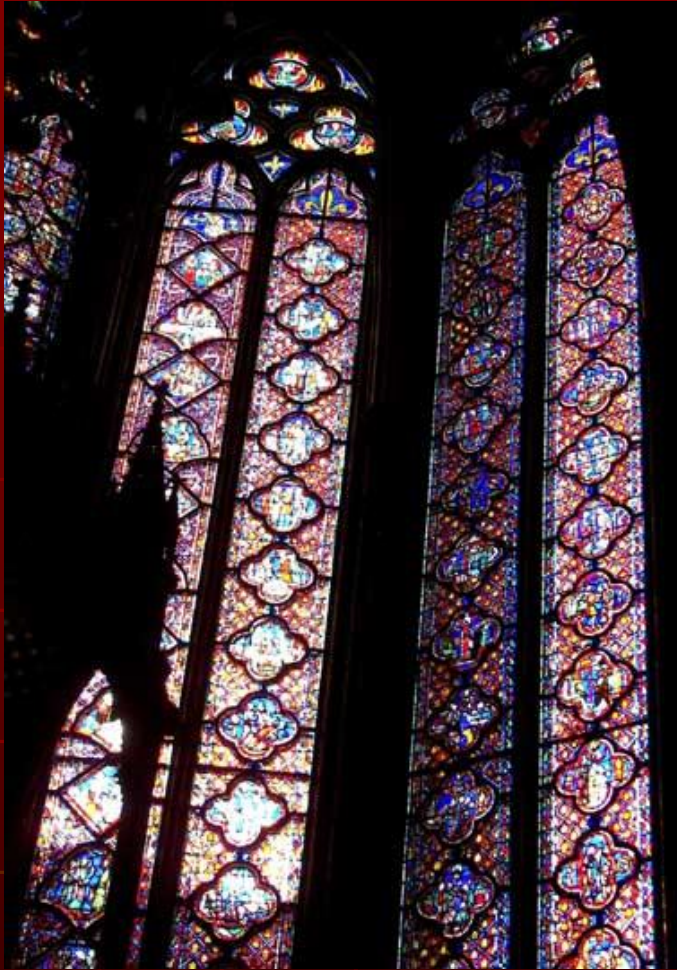
# WINDOWS - Romanesque



- Small, insignificant windows
- Resulted in dark, cold interiors
- Very few examples of these Romanesque windows remain today.



# WINDOWS - Gothic



The pointed arch allowed for large stained glass windows. Many, ornate, colourful windows were used throughout the churches creating bright interiors



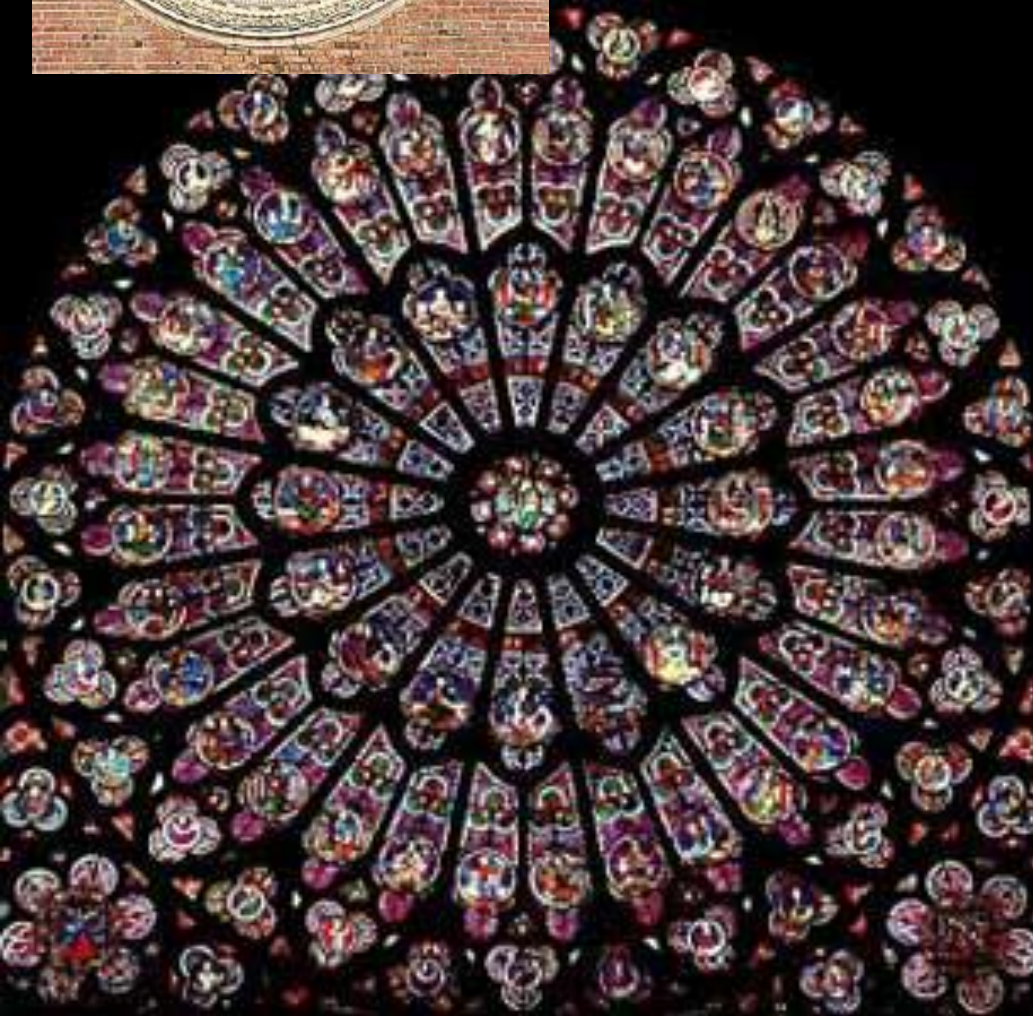


# WINDOWS - Gothic





# WINDOWS - Gothic



- **The Rose Windows** of the Gothic era exemplify the radiance of spirit perceived by medieval architects.
- Among the grandest developments of the times, these elaborate craft works represent a sacred concept of completeness and balance.

# REFERENCES

- <http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/medieval/architecture/romanesque.htm>
- [http://www.historylink101.com/lessons/art\\_history\\_lessons/ma/gothic\\_cathedral\\_slides.htm](http://www.historylink101.com/lessons/art_history_lessons/ma/gothic_cathedral_slides.htm)
- [http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mxb/med\\_gothic\\_architec.html](http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mxb/med_gothic_architec.html)