



## The Secret Language of Churches & Cathedrals: Decoding the Sacred Symbolism of Christianity's Holy Buildings

By Richard Stemp

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Thanks to books and films like *The Da Vinci Code* and its sequel, *Angels and Demons*, interest in secret religious symbols has never been greater. This carefully researched guide takes the reader into some of the world's most famous churches, decoding messages that are hidden in plain sight—in stained-glass windows, statuary, patterned flooring, ornamentation, and even the buildings' architectural design: Why do fierce beasts and grotesque faces peer from the walls? Who chose to depict one particular saint and not another? What's the significance of an eagle? A dragon? A pelican? No one who reads this book will ever again experience a visit to a cathedral in quite the same way.

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#### About the Author

Richard Stemp lectures at the National Gallery, Tate Modern and Tate Britain. He wrote and presented the TV series "Art in the National Gallery" for Channel 4.

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