

Baptismal font

“The baptismal font represents one of the most important scenes of Fidenza history”

- carved marble
- 12th century



Before being moved into the Museum, the baptismal font had its place in the Cathedral, where it was supported by a telamon.

It is carved in white marble, probably “biancone” from Verona. Six groups of characters are sculpted in relief. The one who stands out the most is Pope Alexander II.

In the first group the Pope holds in his hands a piece of paper with the inscription “*institucio Alexandri PP. II*” (institution of Pope Alexander the 2nd).



In the second group we see a cleric wearing the typical cotta and tonsured hair, with a bowl in his hand, and a beheaded priest with a book in his left hand, while his right hand is bestowing a blessing.



In the third group another cleric is holding a torch, while raising his left hand toward a woman dressed in a robe and a cape.

In the fourth group a woman holds a child. The fifth group depicts two women, one of them missing her head, and another cleric. In the last group a prelate wearing a miter on his head talks to a clergyman.

The whole scene may represent Pope Alexander giving Fidenza a baptismal font independent from Parma. According to a different interpretation, it might have been a fountain from which water poured on a larger basin, where a person was immersed during Baptism.

Telamon: Free standing or relief sculpture of a male figure used as a structural or decorative support, in place of a pillar or pilaster.