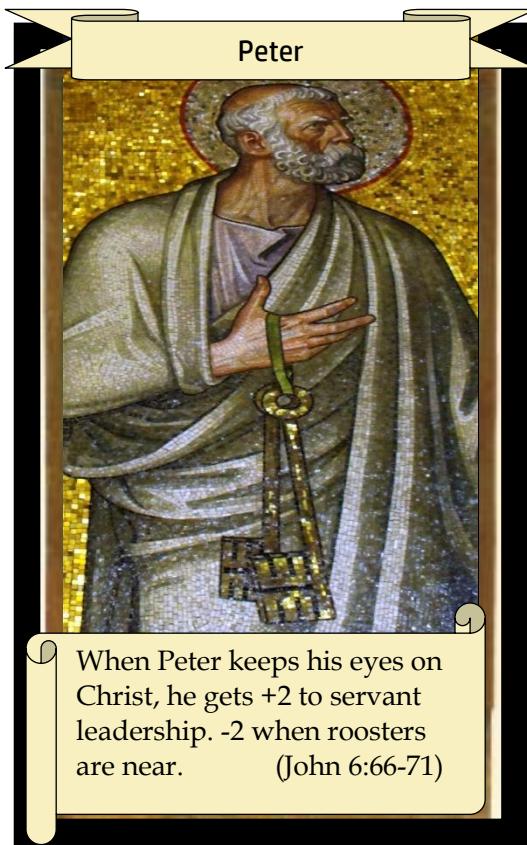


LEARNING TO FOLLOW JESUS WITH THE TWELVE APOSTLES

WHO ARE THE APOSTLES?

The word “apostle” means “one who is sent.” Some moments were shared by all the apostles. Other conversations and moments happened with specific Apostles. As we get to know the Twelve, we will be focusing more on their unique moments with Jesus.

Quick Glance with the Twelve Apostles Trading Cards



Born: c. 1 AD in Bethsaida, Galilee

Name(s): Peter means “rock” or “crag” in Greek. Cephas is Aramaic with the same meaning. Also called Simon, which means “listen” in Hebrew. Often called Simon Peter.

Major Moments: Call stories; Healing Peter’s Mother-in-Law; Walk on Water; Things that Defile; Words of Eternal Life; Raising Jairus’s Daughter; Bleeding Woman; Jesus as Messiah; Jesus Foretells his Passion; Transfiguration; Faithful/Unfaithful Slave; Temple Tax; Forgiveness; Reward; Anointing; Fig Tree; Jesus at Mount of Olives; Passover Prep; Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial and Betrayal; Gethsemane; Cut off Ear of Servant; Jesus’s Trial; Denied Jesus; Empty Tomb; Emmaus; Catch of 153 Fish; Pentecost; Evangelism & Healings; Trials; Simon Magus; Freed from Prison; Jerusalem Council

Death: c. 64-68 AD in Rome, Italy—by crucified upside down

See Him in Art: Often shown with keys of heaven, in papal vestment, with a rooster, with cross of St. Peter (✚), or holding a book or scroll.

BACKGROUND & CALLING

Simon Peter and the Apostle Andrew were sons of John or Jonah. They were all fishermen. Peter lived in Capernaum when he met Jesus. He owned a house there. We also know that Peter was married because Jesus heals his mother-in-law, but we don't have any other information about his wife and family.

-CALL STORIES

Mt 4:18-19/Mk 1:16-17

Jesus called James & John from their boats by the Sea of Galilee

Lk 5:1-11

Jesus got in Peter's boat and granted him a large catch of fish. Peter declared his own sinfulness. Peter, James, and John were amazed by the miracle, left everything, and followed Jesus.

Jn 1:35-42

Simon was a disciple of John the Baptist who followed Jesus after his baptism. Andrew told Simon that John the Baptist called Jesus the Lamb of God and that he was the Messiah. Jesus called him Cephas (Peter).

LIFE & TIMES WITH JESUS

Peter is part of a special group within the apostles (Peter, James, and John) who are there for important events like the Transfiguration, the miracle with Jairus's daughter, and Jesus's time of prayer in Gethsemane. Peter is the most prominent of the disciples – mentioned most often and always first in lists of apostles. So, buckle up! There's a lot of ground to cover 😊

Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-law

(Mk 1:29-31; Lk 4:38)

Jesus **Walks on Water** and Peter walks out to meet him, sinking when he becomes afraid.

(Mt 14:22-33)

Jesus teaches that **Things That Defile** are words and deeds and not foods. Peter asks Jesus to explain.

(Mt 15:10-20)

Words of Eternal Life (John 6:66-71)

66 Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. **67** So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?"

68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. **69** We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

70 Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve? Yet one of you is a devil." **71** He was speaking of Judas son of Simon Iscariot, for he, though one of the twelve, was going to betray him.

Reflection Questions:

1. Before this passage, Jesus fed 5,000 people with only 5 loaves of bread and two fish. The next day, he taught them that he is the bread of heaven and the bread of life. Those who ate manna eventually died, but those who eat the bread of Jesus's flesh and drink the wine of his blood will have eternal life. Many who knew him objected, saying that he was not from heaven and they would not eat his flesh. Jesus told a truth that some of his early followers could not understand so they left him. Jesus then asks his closest followers, "Do you also wish to go away?" Jesus does not promise us an easy life and there are many teachings of our faith that can be difficult. Are there times when you wish to go away? How do we work through the times when faith is strained and we, like Jesus's early followers, just can't understand what Jesus means or what he wants from us?
2. Peter answers Jesus's question with a rhetorical question: "Lord, to whom can we go?" It is a simple and honest statement of faith – we know that you are the Holy One of God, there's nowhere else for us to go. What does Peter mean when he says, "you have the words of eternal life"? If someone asked you "What are Jesus's words of eternal life?", what would you tell them?
3. When many are falling short and running away from Jesus, Peter finds his center of faith and stands firm. Maybe the other apostles thought about leaving with the crowd, but Peter's commitment gave them heart. What does it mean to stand firm in faith? How can our faith make each other stronger?

Jesus Restores Jairus's Daughter to Life, witnessed only by Peter, James, and John
(Mk 5:21-43; Lk 8:40-56)

Jesus Heals the Bleeding Woman when she touches his garment. Peter marvels that Jesus noticed since they were in a crowd.
(Lk 8:42b-48)

Jesus Foretells his Passion and Peter says that must never happen. Jesus says, "Get behind me, Satan."
(Mt 16:21-23; Mk 8:31-33)

Jesus is **Anointed** by a sinner. Jesus asks if a creditor canceled one large and one small debt, who would be more grateful? Peter said the larger and Jesus said he was right.

(Lk 7:36-50)

Jesus asked, “**Who do you say I am?**” Peter says the Messiah and Son of the Living God. **Jesus Names him Peter** and says, “on this rock I will build my church I will give you the **Keys to the Kingdom of Heaven.**”

(Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30; Lk 9:18-20)

Transfiguration, witnessed only by Peter, James, and John
(Mt 17:1-13; Mk 9:2-8; Lk 9:28-36)

Jesus preaches that all should be watchful because we don't know when the Son of Man will return. Peter asks if the parable is for all. Jesus tells the parable of the **Faithful or the Unfaithful Slave**. Jesus says, “Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives.”
(Lk 12:41-48)

Peter is asked if his teacher pays the **Temple Tax**. Jesus tells him to go fishing. The fish has a coin for the tax in its mouth.
(Mt 17:24-27)

Peter asks Jesus how many times to forgive a member of the church. Seven? Jesus says he should **Forgive 77 Times**.

(Mt 18:21-22)

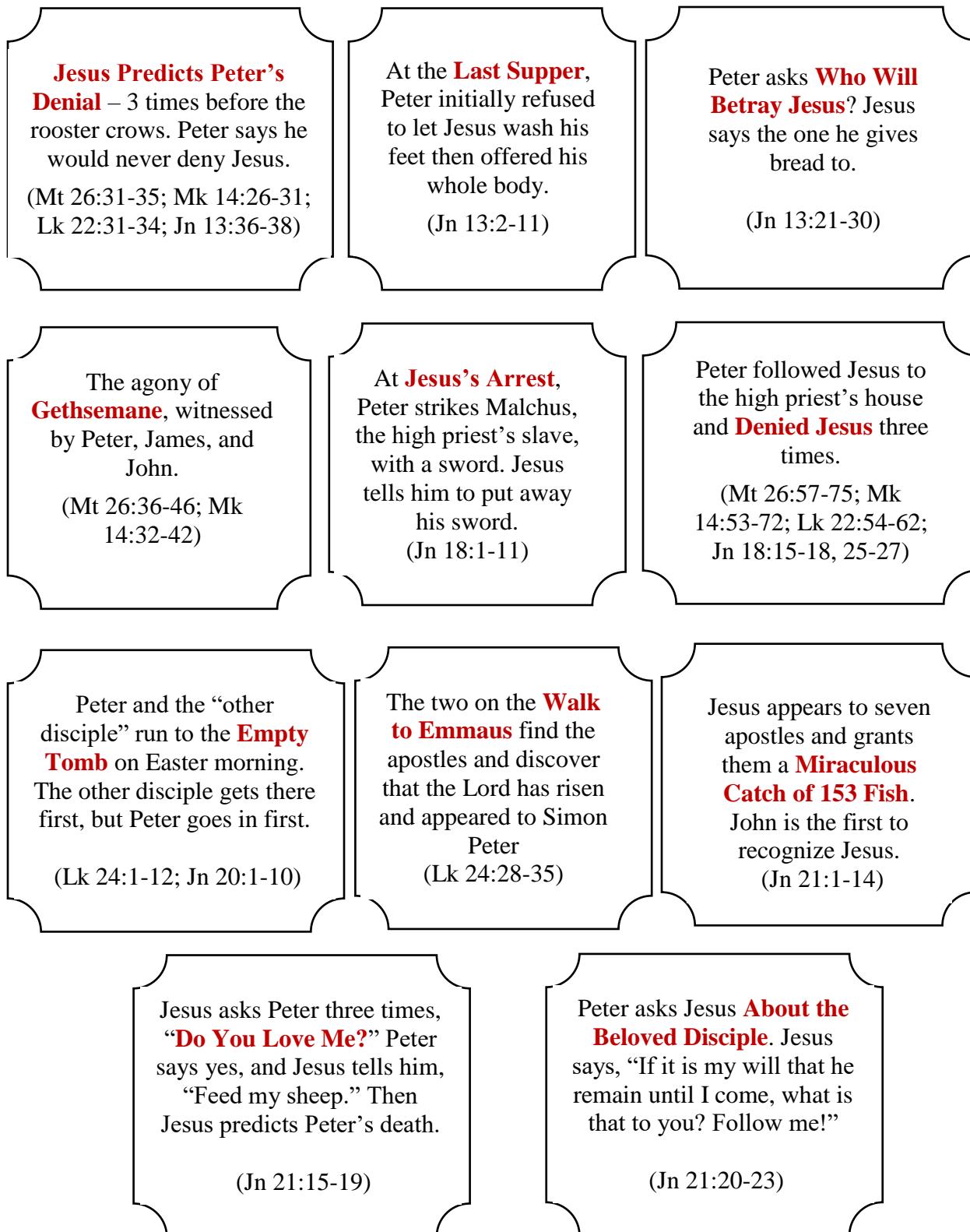
Since the disciples have left everything to follow Jesus, Peter asks what they will get? Jesus says when all things are renewed, the Apostles will sit on 12 thrones judging the tribes of Israel. Everyone who has left homes, family, and fields behind will **Receive a Hundredfold and Eternal Life.**

(Mt 19:27-30; Mk 10:28-31; Lk 18:28-30)

Jesus wants a fig, but the **Fig Tree** is bare so he curses it. Peter notes that it is withered and Jesus says to have faith.
(Mk 11:12-14, 20-25)

On **Mount of Olives**, Peter, James, John, and Andrew ask Jesus when the buildings of the Temple will be thrown down. Jesus warns them of things to come.
(Mk 13:3-8)

Jesus sends John and Peter ahead to Jerusalem to make **Preparations for the Passover meal.**



THE EARLY CHURCH

The book of Acts mentions that Peter was there for the Ascension and for the meeting to find a replacement apostle for Judas Iscariot. He was also very active in the early church! In Galatians 2:9, Paul says that Peter, James, and John are “acknowledged pillars” of the church.



Peter preaches on Pentecost and many convert.

(Acts 2:14-42)



Peter Heals a Crippled Beggar and Preaches in Solomon's Portico

Peter and John were at the Temple and saw a beggar, lame from birth. The beggar expected alms, but Peter healed him in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

(Acts 3:1-26)

Peter and John Before the Sanhedrin



Peter and John preached about Jesus in the Temple. The priests arrested them. At their trial, they said that the man was healed through Jesus. The court ordered them to tell no one about the healed man or about Jesus. Peter and John said they would follow God's commands and not theirs. The court sent them away.

(Acts 4:1-22)



Ananias and Sapphira

Ananias sold property and kept some of the proceeds back when he told the church that he had donated all. Peter asked why he lied to God. He denied it and God struck him down. His wife Sapphira did the same and was also struck down.

(Acts 5:1-11)



Peter's Shadow Heals

The Apostles did many signs and wonders so that many became believers. People would bring their sick to the streets so that Peter's shadow would fall on them and heal them.

(Acts 5:12-16)



Apostles are Persecuted

The high priest arrested all the apostles and put them in prison, but an angel freed them. At trial, the high priest asked them why they continued preaching when it had been forbidden. Peter said, "We must obey God rather than any human authority." Rabbi Gamaliel convinces the Sanhedrin to let the apostles go.

(Acts 5:17-42)



Peter and John in Samaria

The apostles in Jerusalem sent Peter and John to Samaria so that the Samaritans could receive the Holy Spirit. Simon the Magician tried to purchase the power with silver. Peter rebuked him and continued spreading the Gospel in Samaria. (Acts 8:14-25)



Healing of Aeneas

Peter goes to Lydda and meets Aeneas who has been bedridden for eight years because he is paralyzed. Peter said, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; get up and make your bed!" and he was healed.

(Acts 9:32-35)



Healing of Tabitha

Tabitha was a disciple living in Joppa who became ill and died. The faithful called Peter to come to them where they were mourning Tabitha. Peter prayed for her and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she lived. (Acts 9:36-42)



Peter and Cornelius

Cornelius received a vision to send for Peter. Peter came and had a vision that there is no unclean food. The Spirit told Peter to go with the delegation to Caesarea to meet Cornelius. Cornelius worshiped him, but Peter told him that he was mortal and not to be worshiped. Peter preached and many were baptized. (Acts 10:1-33)



Peter Reports Back to the Church in Jerusalem

Some in the Church heard about Gentiles being baptized and criticized Peter for eating with the uncircumcised. Peter told them about the vision and Cornelius. The Church was convinced that God granted repentance and life to Gentiles, too. (Acts 11:1-18)



Peter Imprisoned and Freed

King Herod Agrippa began arresting and killing Christians. Peter was imprisoned, but an angel released him. He went to the house church and knocked at the door, but no one believed the maid, Rhoda, that it was really Peter. He came in and prayed with them. (Acts 12:1-18)



Council at Jerusalem

This was the great debate in the early church of whether believers needed to be circumcised to be saved (c. 48AD). Paul and Barnabas reported many converts who were Gentiles. Peter said he was chosen by God to preach to the Gentiles. He said they received the same Holy Spirit and the same cleansing of their hearts. The meeting was led by James, brother of Jesus, who said Gentiles would not need to observe the full law, but should not eat food offered to idols, avoid fornication, and not eat meat that has been strangled. (Acts 15:1-21)

Did you make it through all of that? I told you Peter was active in the early church!

There is a church tradition that Peter and John Mark (perhaps the writer of the Gospel of Mark) evangelized together after this. You're probably also familiar with the Catholic tradition that says that Peter was the first bishop of Rome (that is to say, the first pope). They trace his ordination to the time that Jesus said that Peter was the rock of the church (Mt 16:18).

Eastern Orthodox Christians, on the other hand, believe that Peter was the first Patriarch of Antioch. There is a 9th century historian who claims that Peter was Bishop of Antioch for 7 years and then left his family behind when he went to Rome. Ignatius of Antioch, a 1st Century church father, asserts that Peter was in Rome. However, there is no historical evidence that Peter was the bishop in Rome.

The epistles 1 Peter and 2 Peter are traditionally attributed to Peter. If he wrote them, it was from Rome in the late 50s, early 60s. Others say that John Mark (or someone else) wrote the letters since he was one of Peter's traveling companions. The Greek in both of the letters is very stylish and cultured so it seems somewhat less likely that they were written by a fisherman who grew up speaking Aramaic and had Greek as a second or third language. Some say that 2 Peter was written as late as 150 or 160 AD.

There is a church legend from the second half of the 1st century that says that Peter once fled from Rome so that he would not be executed, but he met the risen Christ on the road. In Latin, Peter asked Jesus, "Quo vadis?" (meaning "where are you going?"). Jesus told him, "I am going to Rome to be crucified again." Peter's faith and courage were strengthened by this encounter and he returned to Rome to continue preaching and teaching before being martyred.

Peter is said to have died under sweeping persecutions under Emperor Nero Augustus Caesar. He is thought to have been crucified upside down. Peter requested that he be crucified upside down because he did not feel worthy to die in the same manner that Jesus did. Some say he died during the Great Fire of Rome in 64AD, while others say that it was sometime between 64-68AD.



PRAYER

God of the bold, we pray to you as people who walk with your Apostle Peter. In Peter, we see yet another example of you choosing leaders who are not perfect, who are not always right, who are not always righteous. Yet, you are able to shape and direct those whom you choose to become what is needed in the world. Help us to remember that you are always there, equipping the saints to lead. Remind us that, though Peter performed great works and rallied the church in his day, he also sank in the sea and betrayed you and argued with everyone and cried in shame. As we grow in faith, let us learn from you that we are the leaders that we have been waiting for. Take us each by the hand and help us to stand and move forward in your holy way. Amen.

Quick Glance with the Twelve Apostles Trading Cards



Born: late 1st century BC in Galilee

Name(s): James is a form of Jacob, which means “heel grabber” and “usurper.” He is also called James the Less, James the Lesser, and James the Younger to distinguish him from James, son of Zebedee, and James the Just (the brother of Jesus).

Major Moments: In Lists

Death: Died c. 62 AD in Jerusalem by stoning or crucified in Ostrakine, Egypt

See Him in Art: He is often shown with a carpenter’s saw or a fuller’s club

BACKGROUND & CALLING

James might have been Matthew’s brother since he is also called son of Alphaeus. However, scripture specifies that Peter and Andrew as well as James the Greater and John are brothers. The Bible doesn’t say that Matthew and James the Lesser are brothers. It is possible that their mother was called Mary, though not the Virgin Mary. Some believe they were sisters, making him Jesus’s cousin. Others suggest that his mother Mary was called Mary of Clopas. There is a legend that he is from the tribe of Gad. His call story is not recorded in scripture.

LIFE & TIMES WITH JESUS

James was present for the major events with Jesus like the feeding miracles, the Last Supper, and some Resurrection appearances. Beyond that, he is only mentioned in lists. He occurs 9th both times.

THE EARLY CHURCH

The book of Acts mentions that James was there for the Ascension and for the meeting to find a replacement apostle for Judas Iscariot.

The Church has traditionally held that each of the Apostles had their own mission field. They came together and drew lots to find out where God wanted each of them to go. In one tradition, James stayed in Jerusalem to do his mission work. There is another that has him preaching in Lower Egypt.

James was said to have died c. 62 AD in Jerusalem. Legend has it that he was preaching in Jerusalem and some zealots stoned him to death. However, this is the way that James the Just (brother of Jesus) died so it's possible that this is a historical confusion of the two people. The other tradition is that he was crucified in Ostrakine, Egypt for preaching the Gospel.

PRAYER

God of the silence, we pray to you as people who walk with your Apostle James. We know that we are easily distracted by big names and hectic activity. It's hard for us to remember the virtue of quiet presence. Yet, so often we only hear your voice when we seek you in silence. Help us to be quiet, loving God, so that we can see what you are doing while we've been distracted. Let our inner calm become a safe harbor for our own sorrows and for those who struggle around us. Lead us to places of quiet so that we can refocus and reengage in your holy name. Amen.

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- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simeon>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Peter
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_of_Jerusalem
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- “The Miracle of Pentecost,” miniature from the *Berthold Sacramentary* (c. 1215-127, German)
- Illustration in the Ottheinrich Bible, page 228v, “St. Peter Healing the Crippled Beggar, Acts 3:1-10” (c. 1530-1532, German)
- “Dispute Before Sanhedrin” by Fra Angelico at the Niccoline Chapel in the Apostolic Palace in Vatican City (c. 1447-1449, Italian)
- “The Death of Saphira and Ananias” by Aubin Vouet (1632, French)
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- “Tabitha Raised from the Dead by St. Peter in the Palatine Chapel of the Palermo Cathedral (late 12th century, Italian)
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- “Peter Baptizing the Centurion Cornelius” by Francesco Trevisani (1709, Italian)
- “The Liberation of St. Peter” by a follower of Hendrick Terbrugghen (early 17th century, Dutch)
- “The Holy Apostle James the brother of the Lord,” an Orthodox icon (date uncertain, Croatian)
- “Quo Vadis” stained glass window in the catholic church of St. Peter in Westum (1923, German)
- “Saint James the Less” in a fresco on the ceiling of the nave of the Niederaltaich Abbey church (1700-1739, German)