

Hospital of St. Mary Magdalene or “Colombetta” (14th century)

via Diaz, 40

The hospital was erected near the *domus* of *Colombetta*, which was seat of some Augustinian friars designated in 1313 by *domina Zenoa* as her husband's heirs, Giliotto Marini; its charitable functions were later practised by laic rectors nominated by the Marinis and at least from the 15th century by the noble city family Sanbenedetto. The main activity of the hospital was to give assistance to the sick and prisoners but from 1535 to 1551 it also housed a female orphanage established by Gerolamo Miani. In 1764, according to the will of Giacomo Sanbenedetto, Colombetta was incorporated with St. Anne's. The belfry and the church's façade, greatly reshaped during the centuries, are still visible.

What documents tell us...

From the donation charter, 1313

Since Giliotto Marini, son of Giovanni, citizen of Como, in his last will pointed as heirs those poor of the Convalle di Como (Como Valley) whom his wife Zenoa would choose, Zenoa will choose as Giliotto's heirs, being “Poor of Christ”, prior Giovanni de Nadigio and Pierino Serbelloni, Beltramino da Vedano and Filippo da Pavia, friars of Colombetta domus, who belong to the Augustinian order and live in Como, in a place called Canova.

From the statute, 1477

The minister of Colombetta hospital has to feed no longer than thirty days the prisoners detained in the prisons of Como for crimes punishable by death; this duty will be shared fifteen days each with the minister of the hospital of St. Leonard. They will also have to provide twenty ounces of bread, thirty of wine and a dish worth a coin and a half a day and nothing else.

From the report about the parish written on occasion of Bishop Francesco Bonesana's pastoral visitation, 1703

For God's sake, seven rooms in this hospital are reserved to poor women or men of good morality; handouts are given to them from time to time.