

Hospital of St. Bartholomew (12th century)

via Milano, 161

The hospital was erected northwards the present St. Bartholomew's church on a piece of land donated in 1163 by *dominus* Giovanni Ficani from Como to a *frater conversus* (lay brother) of the Crutched Order to have a hospice built, but at least throughout the 13th century it was managed by a community of *fratres et sorores* (friars and nuns). In 1431 the Crutched Order commissioned a group of lay people to ensure all features connected to hospitality and assistance to the needy. The hospital was incorporated with St. Anne's in 1481 while the convent was suppressed in 1653; the church became a parish around 1780s.

What documents tell us...

From the donation charter, 1163

In the name of God, I, Giovanni, known as Ficani from Como, in compliance with Roman Law, donate to you, Bernardo, conversus of Crutched Friars, a plot of land with buildings purchased from Giovanni Bucca Plata. The above mentioned property extends outside the town, not far from the gate known as della Torre in a locality called foris de Curadia (...) and is being donated to you so that you and the other members of this order can build a hospital in honour of God and the Holy Trinity to host the poor, pilgrims and all suffering people.

From the agreements between the prior and the friars at St. Bartholomew's and the members of the *schola* of the hospital, 1440

...that the scholares can lay and keep a little table outside the door of the church (...) and that all handouts received at this table are to be owned, managed and spent on the rebuilding of the hospital. In this way, the needy can find hospitality and the scholares can celebrate Holy Mass at the altar of San Giovanni Pellegrini built in St. Bartholomew's each first Sunday of the month. Even on this occasion, the handouts gathered at this altar during the holy service belong and have to be administered by the scholares themselves. In case the hospital needs extra beds or any other items to accommodate the needy, the prior and the friars of that monastery will not, for any reason, be allowed to move any of those items.