

Church and Dominican Convent of *Santa Maria delle Grazie* (Milan)

Historical background - Engineering geological conditions and problems:

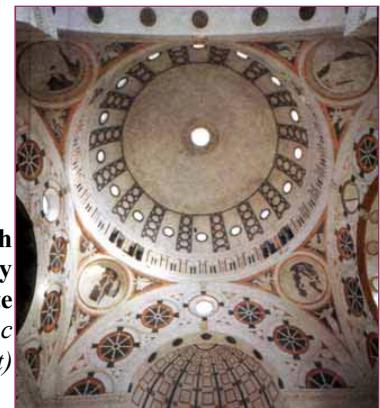
Originally constructed in austere Gothic style in 1490, the church and its adjoining convent are now a symbol of the glory of Renaissance Milan. Ludovico il Moro, in his quest to turn Milan into a beautiful rival of Florence, directed the architect Bramante (Donato di Pascuccio) to reconstruct, at the end of 15th century, the apse and lantern of his favourite church, St. Mary of Grace.

Leonardo da Vinci was commissioned to paint the frescos - the most famous being the “*Cenacolo*” or Last Supper, which graces the far wall of the adjacent Dominican dining hall. The Last Supper was painted between 1494 and 1498.

The Church does not present any geological problem.



The church and Dominican Convent of *Santa Maria delle Grazie*
(www.leonardoamilano.org)



The church dome, by Bramante
(www.provincia.milano.it)

Investigations and protection measures already realized:

The Last Supper is a tempera painting: a very fragile material in a humid climate. The signs of degradation of the painting started to be evident twenty years later the end of the work of Leonardo. In 1726 started the first picture restorer. Between 1901 and 1908 there was only a consolidation of the picture.

The last restoration began in 1978 and finished in 1999. The purposes were:

- Recover the original picture by Leonardo;
- Protect the picture from dust, steam and damp, the main reasons of degradation.

In order to reach the second purpose, in the Refectory it has been placed a filtering plant for the polluting substance.



The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci
(www.leonardoamilano.org)

Supplementary information:

The Church and the Dominican Convent of *Santa Maria delle Grazie* was inserted in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1980. The Committee decided to inscribe this property because it represents an example of human creative talent.