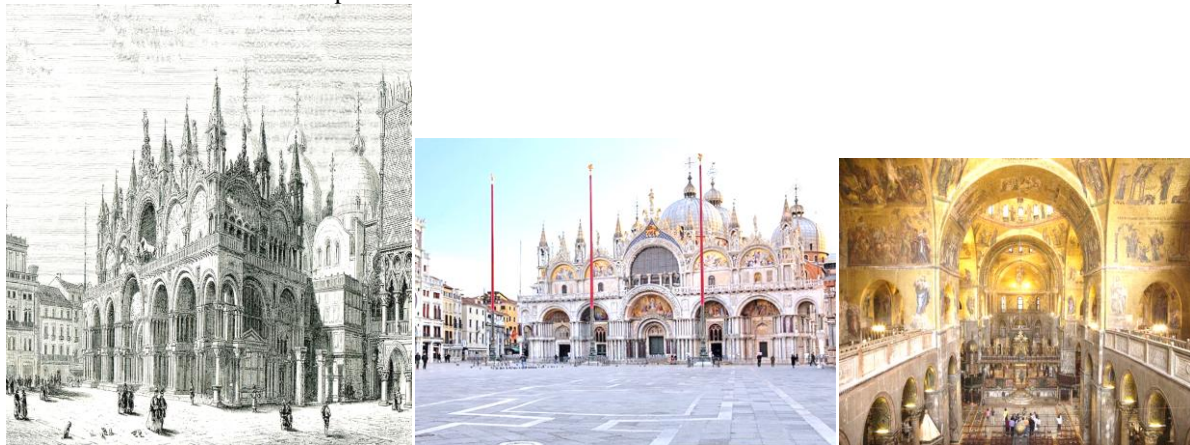


The Patriarchal Cathedral Basilica of Saint Mark, is the cathedral church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Venice, northern Italy. It is the most famous of the city's churches and one of the best-known examples of Italo-Byzantine architecture. It lies at the eastern end of the Piazza San Marco, adjacent and connected to the Doge's Palace. Originally it was the chapel of the Doge, and has been the city's cathedral only since 1807, when it became the seat of the Patriarch of Venice, archbishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Venice, formerly at San Pietro di Castello. The first St. Mark's was a building next to the Doge's Palace, ordered by the doge in 828. With a profusion of domes and more than 86, 111 square feet of luminous mosaics, Venice's basilica is unforgettable. It was founded in the 9th century to house the corpse of St. Mark after wily Venetian merchants stole it from Alexandria in Egypt by smuggling it out in a barrel of pork fat.

When the original building burned down, Venice rebuilt the basilica in its own cosmopolitan image St Mark's Campanile (bell tower). The church was burned in a rebellion in 976, when the populace locked Pietro IV Candiano inside to kill him, and restored or rebuilt in 978. Nothing certain is known of the form of these early churches. From perhaps 1063, the present basilica was constructed. The consecration is variously recorded as being in 1084–85, 1093 (the date most often taken), 1102 and 1117, probably reflecting a series of consecrations of different parts. The size of the church was increased in all directions, especially to the north and south, and the wooden domes replaced by brick, which required thickening such walls as were retained. In 1094 the body considered traditionally to be that of Saint Mark was rediscovered in a pillar by Vitale Faliero, doge at the time. The building also incorporates a low tower (now housing St Mark's Treasure), believed by some to have been part of the original Doge's Palace. The Pala d'Oro ordered from Constantinople was installed on the high altar in 1105. In 1106 the church, and especially its mosaics, were damaged by a serious fire in that part of the city; it is not entirely clear whether any surviving mosaics in the interior predate this, though there is some 11th-century work surviving in the main porch. The main features of the present structure were all in place by then, except for the narthex or porch, and the facade. One of the most well-known and widely cited papers in biology is "The Spandrels of San Marco and the Panglossian Paradigm: A Critique of the Adaptationist Programme". It is based on an analogy between the beautifully decorated spandrels spaced around the domes in the basilica, which sit on four arches (technically, the structures are pendentives rather than spandrels), and various biological traits and features. The authors, Stephen Jay Gould and Richard Lewontin, argue that the spandrels are the inevitable spaces that exist when a dome is placed above arches rather than design elements and that many biological traits are similarly the side effects of functional traits rather than adaptive traits in themselves.



God
WITH God ALL
things are
Possible