

The most sacred part
is the phoenix hall
with the sculpture of
the amida buddha e...

[Religion](#), [Buddhism](#)



Proportion and visual harmony have always been primary concerns in designing sacred buildings. Although both the Byodo-in in Japan and the Cathedral of Notre-Dame at Reims in France, are world-class examples of beautiful architecture, it is doubtful that the designer of each would appreciate the work of the other. What did these differing approaches consider important, and how are they successful? Where is the sacred in these buildings, how does a believer approach it?

The Cathedral of Notre-Dame at Reims was the coronation place of France. The process of building it began in 1211 and was completed in 1275. It is a Roman Catholic church and the architecture style is French Gothic. It contains many sculptures. The Virgin Mary is located in the central portal and there is a rose window in the arch shape around it. There are statues of Reims' bishops, the Last Judgment and Jesus in North part of the exterior. Apostles and prophets are represented in the south part of the exterior of the cathedral. There is also a lead timber bell.

In the interior there is the nave, there are aisles in the nave, in the transept and there are two aisles in the choir. There is also an apse and ambulatory with chapels. Stained glass is very significant as well as the main rose window under which is a gallery.

The transept separates the most sacred part of the church from the rest of the church and makes the shape of a Latin cross. The important parts of this church are the rose windows, the sculptures of the Virgin Mary and Jesus, and the apse with the altar where the priests are situated. The altar is the sanctuary. The bell is very important because it invites people for the mass and reminds them about significant parts of the day. Tapestries and stained

glass serve for decoration.

Byodoin was founded in 1053. It is a Buddhist temple in Japan. The exact location is Kyoto Prefecture. The Phoenix Hall is the most important building and there is a lake around it. Inside of it, there is a hall in the centre with the representation of Amida Buddha. The Buddha is made of cypress and decorated with gold. There are three passages, two at each side of the hall and one behind. The hall is called Phoenix hall because there are figures of phoenix (Chinese) on the roof.

The most sacred part of the temple is the location of the Amida Buddha which was made by Jocho who used joined-block technique, so that the wood would remain compact throughout time. The height of this sculpture is 3 meters and Buddha is in the Lotus position. There are paintings of the Amida Buddha on the doors made of wood as well. The temple has a bell.

Although the Reims Cathedral and the Byodoin serve different religions, both of these places are holy places and are meant to be sanctuaries for the believers. Each of these shrines has the purpose of connecting religious people with the deities they believe in.