

Catacomb of St. Thecla



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This funerary area is located along the Via Ostiense. Nowadays, there is still much debate and mystery surrounding the identity of Thecla; to begin with, she is completely unknown and undocumented in ancient liturgical and topographical sources.

However, the beginning of the original underground burial site is believed to date to the third century AC. Topographically, the catacomb of St Thecla has developed simply. It consists of a small subterranean basilica, built in the fourth century AC following the deposition of the martyr. The basilica was the result of a restructuring and monumentalisation project undertaken on the small hypogeum that had been excavated on the same site in the third century BC. The galleries are spread out across three large ambulacra (walkways), arranged in an isosceles-shaped triangle, and onto which twenty-two burial chambers open. Similar to those found at the Commodilla complex, some of these chambers feature tombs dug out in the form of a well.

Nowadays, thanks to recent restorations carried out with the latest modern laser technologies, it is possible to admire and appreciate the vivid tones of the numerous fresco decorations, covering the cubicles almost completely.