

ITALY

# Behind the Sacred scenes



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Ministers preparing to deliver mass during a baptism celebration, S. Giovanni Battista Parish Church, Rezzato (Brescia).



A small statue of baby Jesus left at the entrance to the Parish Church in Pezzaze (Brescia).

## **Inside the vestries, the church control rooms**

Vestries are areas that are closed to the public, places we know very little about and where we can fully appreciate the hierarchical system on which the Catholic Church is built.

Places that serve the rituals of daily celebration, where a considerable amount of energy is concentrated: rooms of the before and after, almost never photographed as they're very difficult to access, and are often devoid of any artistic qualities. And yet they're steeped in a secret charm similar to that you might find backstage in a theatre, where all the magic is created.

They're home to all the archives, preparation rooms and storage spaces: rigorously well organised areas alongside closets bursting with ceremonial objects, works of art and ancient registers that document the parish church's liturgical history.

All the photos were taken in Brescia, the diocese which – with 473 parish churches and 661 priests – has, along with Milan and Bergamo, the greatest number of priests and bishops in Italy. Hence why the province of Brescia is known as one of the three “vestries of Italy”.



Musicians during a wedding celebration in the San Bernardo Parish Church in Brescia.



A sacristan at the entrance to the vestry of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



Ministers preparing for mass, the Sacro Cuore di Gesù Parish Church, Ponte San Marco (Brescia).



A celebrant just after a wedding, Santa Maria dell'Oglio Church, Orzinuovi (Brescia).





Liturgical garments in the vestry of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



Photographs of the Pope and some Bishops in the vestry of the Parish Church in the San Polo district of Brescia.



Ministers leaving the vestry to deliver mass, the Sacro Cuore di Gesù Parish Church, Ponte San Marco (Brescia).



The vestry of the Parish Church in Villachiara (Brescia).



The storage room of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



A celebrant preparing to deliver mass in the vestry of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



AMITTI BIANCHI  
AMITTI COLOR PANNA  
CINGOLI BIANCHI

CASSETTO  
5.1.1.2.3

VESCOVO

CASSE  
5.1.1.2.4

The Bishop's drawer in the vestry of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



The vestry of the S. Bartolomeo Apostolo Parish Church, Castenedolo (Brescia).





A child before the celebration of the sacrament of confirmation, S. Giovanni Church, Brescia.



Relics preserved in the archive room of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



Screens and equipment used by the choir of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



Ministers preparing to deliver mass, the Sacro Cuore di Gesù Parish Church, Ponte San Marco (Brescia).



The archive room of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



The chapter house of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



A sacristan lighting candles on the high altar of the Duomo Nuovo (New Cathedral) in Brescia.



The vestry of the Parish Church in Pompiano (Brescia).





The vestry of the San Francesco Church in Brescia.



The vestry of the S. Bartolomeo Apostolo Parish Church, Castenedolo (Brescia).



The Parish Church in Pompiano (Brescia) being sanitised after a series of confirmation celebrations.

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