

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH

Patron Saint of Christmas

St. Nicholas Church (Sint-Niklaaskerk) in Mesen (Messines), Belgium, is a historic site rebuilt in the 1930s after its near-total destruction in WWI. Located at Korte Mooiestraat 20-24, this site features a Romanesque crypt, acts as a center for peace, and sits on the site of an 11th-century Benedictine abbey.

Key Details About St. Nicholas Church, Mesen

- **WWI History:** The original church was largely destroyed in October 1914. During the war, the crypt was used as a German dressing station, where it is noted that a young Adolf Hitler was treated.
- **Architecture:** Known for its "Dikkop" (stubborn head) dome, the current church was rebuilt in a post-WWI, stripped-down, yet historically reflective style.
- **Historical Site:** The church was originally founded in the 11th century by Adela of France, Countess of Flanders.
- **Crypt:** The site features an old crypt, notable because it was once used for the burial of key historical figures, including the mother-in-law of William the Conqueror.
- **Location:** Situated in the heart of Mesen, a small town in the Westhoek region, close to Ypres (Ieper).

The church serves as a significant memorial site and a place of quiet reflection within the Ypres Salient.



