

## **Turda – Roman Catholic church**

1. The building is located in the northern side of the center, and it was dedicated to Szent Miklós in the Middle Ages. It is one of the biggest gothic churches in Transylvania. The interior and the western front was radically changed by the rebuilding in the 19th century. Some parts of the inside and outside of the church kept the medieval design.

### **The history of the church:**

2- 3. The church was mentioned for the first time in 1274. From 1320 the church houses the parliament's meetings of Transylvania. This data refer to the church which was standing in the same place where the present-day church is. The archeological excavations and the historical data tell us little about the church's predecessor. The present-day church's layout has several irregularities, because the old church was practically built around with the present-day building, because they didn't want to interrupt the masses.

4. The new church was built in the second half of 15<sup>th</sup> century, and have a large nave, polygonal apse and tiered sacristy. Gothic and renaissance architectural elements remind to this time.

After Mohács Hungary's internal conditions radically changed.

In the middle of the 16th century Reformation started in Transylvania as well and because of this Turda's population became Reformed.

In the 1560s the population underwent yet another type of Reformation and became Unitarian. //The polemics and the synods took place in the church, like the parliament's meetings, which voted for the liberty of conscience.

In the 16-17th century Transylvania became the country of religious tolerance. The church was used by the Unitarian community. The Habsburg authorities handed the building over to the Catholics in 1721.

The renovations began in the 18th century; whereupon the today's church internal and external image had been formed. The constructions were paid for by Batthyány Ignác bishop and realized by the famous master builder of the town, Kövecsi János and Winkler György.

The church's interior decoration is the work of Vitkai Janos. He gilded the high altar, designed a new organ, and covered the lateral walls with marble imitating painting.

The church interior and west façade, built during 1465- 1504 in late Gothic style, were altered to the late classicizing Baroque in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The side elevations of the church still preserve their medieval appearance, and the nave has Gothic portal on the south and north side. The upper area of the nave pointed – arch windows was built in because of the lower vault built in 19th century.

When we enter the church, a 19th century modified interior welcomes us, and the monumental nave vault catches the visitor's breath. In the eastern part of the nave is a brick set balcony with a huge organ, which was extended over the years.

The white gold colored pulpit built of wood is near one of the northern offsets. In front of the triumphal arch-shaped wall are the repainted baroque side-altars and the statues. The main altar is in the centre of the sanctuary. The sanctuary is formed by three parts.

In the history of Transylvania's architecture this church is a very important monument. It was also a national place, for the parliament's meetings, and the building was one of the Transylvanian-born Unitarian Church's central places.

**HORVÁTH LEILLA**

**X A.**