

Christ the Redeemer

There are buildings and man-made structures in places around the world that tell you instantly where you are. We can immediately



recognise this structure and know that it is in Paris, France.

The Eiffel Tower was built for the World (Trade) Fair held by Paris in 1889 and was named after the engineer, Gustave Eiffel, who's company designed and constructed the massive iron tower. At the time of construction it was the tallest man-made structure in the world and today remains the tallest building in Paris. It is similar in height to the new Bank of China

building in Central designed by the SPC alumnus architect I.M. Pei.

One hundred and twenty five years later, the Eiffel Tower continues to attract more than 7 million visitors per year who take the elevators to one of the three observation decks on the way to the top and countless millions who snap photographs of the iconic building from gardens and vantage points around the city.

Another iconic monument is the Statue of Liberty in New York. Similar in age to the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty was also designed by a Frenchman and a gift to the United States from the people of France in 1886. Although smaller than the Eiffel Tower, the statue stands in a commanding position at the entrance to New York Harbour and for new migrants from Europe would have be their first view of the United States



when they arrived by ship. The statue represents Libertas, the

Roman Goddess of Freedom, who holds aloft a torch welcoming newcomers to the New World and carries a book representing the law and on which is carved the date of the American Declaration of Independence, 4 July 1776. The broken chain at her feet symbolises that the American people had been freed from slavery. A simple stone structure that sends out messages of hope for the millions of people who sail past to start a new life in North America.

One can find many other examples of statues and monuments that tell a story or convey messages to the people. One such example is the Great Pyramid of Giza, located in the north of Egypt not far from the modern city of Cairo. Built around 2500BC, the Great Pyramid was the tallest man-made structure in the world for almost 4,000 years. Built by slaves of the Egyptian Pharaoh Khufu it acted as his



burial place and storage of treasures and household items that he wished to take with him on his journey to the 'afterlife'.

The Great Pyramid was an elaborate structure that addressed the belief of the Pharaoh that there was life after death. It also served to remind the people of his wealth, power and connection to the Gods. This relationship between religion and man-made structures was continued with the construction of the building that entered the record books as the world's tallest building after it surpassed from the Great Pyramid of Giza some 3,800 years later.

In a small town set in a rich farming area of Eastern England a building of vast proportions was opened in 1311. The Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, more commonly called Lincoln Cathedral, dominated the rural landscape and the lives of the people that toiled in fields and worked in the shops. Yet the Cathedral also reached out to the wider community. Lincoln had been an important town during the Roman occupation situated on a road that linked London with the north of England. Lincoln was also an important centre of the Christian faith during the mediaeval period. The scale of the Cathedral was immense for that time and conveyed the message of the majesty of God and the importance he played in people's daily lives. The cathedral lost its claim as the world tallest building 238 years later when the central spire collapsed. Yet today it remains an iconic structure towering over the landscape in this part of Eastern England.



Lincoln Cathedral has served as a house of God for nine hundred years. Cathedrals are a familiar sight across Europe and in places around the world. However, there is one city that displays God's presence amongst its people in a most dramatic fashion. At the top of a hill overlooking the city of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil is the Statue of



Christ the Redeemer. Completed in 1931, Christ the Redeemer has become one of the most instantly recognisable landmarks in the world. Although only half the height

of the Statue of Liberty its situation and symbolism is undeniable. Made of concrete and white stone the outstretched arms of the Christ statue provides protection for the Roman Catholic population living and working in the bustling city of Rio de Janeiro.

The Great Pyramid of Giza was long considered to be one of the 7 Wonders of the World. In many lists of the 7 New Wonders of the World it is Christ the Redeemer that takes pride of place. A simple statue, only 30 metres tall and standing on a pedestal of 8 metres, Christ the Redeemer is not only the iconic landmark of a Brazilian city but a representation of the faith of its Christian population.

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Photographs from Google Images and Wikipedia