

# Giuseppe Peroni

Italian painter

1710-1776

Peroni was born in Parma in the parish of St. Bartholomew on May 6, 1710 by Luigi, physician, and Maria Maddalena Remesini (or Ramesini), originally from Colorno.

At the age of fourteen, following the footsteps of his elder brother Giulio (1705-1784), parish priest of the same church of S. Bartolomeo and founder of the conservatory of the Vincenzine di Parma, he began his ecclesiastical career, receiving the first tonsure on April 10, 1724. His outstanding artistic qualities, since childhood, pushed his father to send him to the school of Pier Ilario Mercanti, known as Spolverini, a famous painter of battles and portraitist, and later to Giovanni Bolla, from whom he learned the technique of 'fresco. On the advice of Spolverini he left his hometown to move to Bologna (1731). In the upper town he attended the Clementine Academy, receiving architectural and perspective outlines from Ferdinando Galli Bibiena and following the teachings of the anatomist Ercole Lelli, Felice Torelli and Donato Creti, they competed to train him.

In 1733 he won the second-class award for a *Visitation*, drawing today lost and of which remains memory in the postcard kept in Parma at the heirs of the painter. The following year he left for Rome; in the papal city he was a pupil of Agostino Masucci, from whom he borrowed the "Marathon", and attended the Accademia di Francia and the Accademia di S. Luca for about a decade in the Campidoglio, and was also in love with Pier Leoni Ghezzi who in 1736 married her sister Maria Caterina. At this time belongs his first famous work, *The martyrdom of the seven Maccabee Brothers* (1738), blood-drawing with academic title with which he won the first-class painting award. On the occasion of the beatification ceremony of Camillo de Lellis he painted two medallions with *Stories of S Camillo de Lellis* (1742) for the apparatus set up in the Basilica of St. Peter. At the same time it may also belong to the Camillo de Lellis orante in front of the Crucifix in the church of the Visitation (or Madonnina) of Ferrara. In Rome he also came into contact with Sebastiano Conca, Corrado Giaquinto and Francesco Trevisani; however, his encounter with Marco Benefial, Raphael Mengs and Pompeo Batoni proved to be fundamental.

Artistic versatility did not hinder his ecclesiastical career: taking the four minor orders (April 13, 1743) in Rome and admitted to the Deceased in St. John Lateran (June 8, 1743), March 21, 1744 celebrated the first Mass in Parma in the church Cistercian of S. Basilide today destroyed, at whose monastery was his sibling Angela Maria. In 1744 belong the *Madonna of the Rosary* with the SS. Domenico and Rosa, a small piece surrounded by fifteen mysteries of the Rosary and frescoed medallions, heavily restored, representing the Virgin winner of Death and Temptation (St. Martin's Church, Chapel of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary) for whom he received a remuneration of twelve sneakers in Venice from the priory of the Compagnia del Rosario. Sooner is the canvas with the Holy Family with S. Giovannino (circa 1745), the fresco with the *Madonna with Child and S. Francesco da Paola* (1745 ca., San Vitale Baganza, Maestà del Borgo), oval tile with S. Vincenzo Ferreri (1748, Varano de 'Melegari, S. Martino church, chapel of S. Giuseppe), canvases with *Martyrdom of SS. Faustino and Giovita* (1748, Sorbolo, Parma, church of S.

Maria del Rosario) and *The Virgin and SS. Antonio Abate and Luigi Gonzaga* (1749, Redondesco, Mantova, St. Maurice's Church).

From 1750 to 1752 Peroni is documented again in Rome, a city where he carried out the altarpiece at this time with the *Preaching of St. Vincenzo de 'Paoli* (1751 ca., Piacenza, church of S. Lazzaro) commissioned by Cardinal Giulio Alberoni and the *Martyr of S. Bartholomew* (1752, Parma, church of S. Bartolomeo)

In 1756 for the Duchess of Parma Luisa Elisabetta of Bourbon-France he painted the Saint Louis of France giving the blessed Bartholomew of Breganze the relics of the Passion (Parma, Bishop); the canvas was originally placed in S. Lodovico's chapel in the church of S. Pietro Martire (destroyed) for which he had also realized the *Killing of s. Pietro Martire* (1751-1755, Parma, National Gallery). In 1757 the *Christ in the house of Marta and Maria Maddalena* (Pavia, Carthusian, Magdalene's Chapel), with strong Batonian flavor and paradigmatic work in the artist's production.

In 1758 he was appointed a professor of painting at the Academy of Fine Arts of his city, which he held until his death. This year, the canvas with *Our Lady of Suffrage* for the main altar of the church of S. Vitale with the frescoes on the sides of St. Vital. Between 1761 and 1766 he painted the *Stories of s. John the Baptist* and *Stories of St. Anthony Abate* on the vaults and the apse of the church of S. Antonio Abate and, for the same church, the canvas with *Jesus crucified between the Virgin Mary and the Maddalena*. From Parma's Chronicle by Antonio Sgavetti it turns out that the latter work was made by the painter in 1766 in Milan, where he probably stayed for a certain period, and then came to Parma in July of the same year. The work was very successful so that it could be reprinted as a front-end for some messengers for deceased editors in Parma already from the end of the eighteenth century.

The presence of Peroni in Lombardy is further confirmed by the fresco with the *Glory of S. Paolo* performed in Lodi in the palace of S. Filippo Neri.

Between 1762 and 1763, commissioned by the Confraternity of the Humiliates of Parma, he decorated in tempera, within stucco, the vault (*Glorification of the Most Holy Name of the Virgin*) and the walls of the oratory of the Madonna of Capodiponte today no longer exist ; of these last decorations remain five lacerti with *St. Bernard of Chiaravalle*, *St. Gregory the Great*, *St. Cyril*, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, *Trinity and angels crowning the Holy Name of Mary*, detached and carried on canvas (Parma , National Gallery); for the same building he also signed the canvases on the three altars: *Madonna with Child* and *S. Bonaventure writing on a book "Mariae nomen gloriosum"* (major altar), *St. Joseph with Child and SS. Antonio and Giovanni Nepomuceno* and *Condemnation of S. Lucia* (Parma, National Gallery).

Also in the seventh decade are the altarpiece with the *Christ and the Samaritan to the well* (1763 ca., Parma, Holy Sepulcher church), the *Spouse of the Virgin* (1764, Pontremoli, cathedral), the *Estasi of S. Filippo Neri* (1765-66 circa, Milan, St. Mary's Church at S. Satiro), *Our Lady and S. Francesco Saverio* (1767, Crema, Church of the Holy Trinity, the first chapel on the left), while the *Virgin with the SS. Anna and Giuseppe* and the *Immaculate Conception* (1771, Turin, S. Filippo church), the *Madonna of snow among the angels* (Casotto's casket, Gressio Cuneo, fresco in the cupola), *S. Domenico* (1773,

Garessio, Assumption), *the Madonna between ss. Gregorio and Vitale* and a *St. Lucia* (1774, San Vitale Baganza, Parma, St. Vitale Martire church) and the *Wedding di s. Catherine* (1775 ca., Parma, National Gallery).

His activity as a portraitist is reminiscent of the lively *Self-Portrait* (post 1758; Parma, National Gallery) and an interesting *Portrait of Woman* (1772, Florence, Bardini Museum and Gallery of Courses). Scarabelli Zunti (late 19th century, 234rd) appoints the uncharted portrait of the famous jurist Paolo Politi, then translated into an engraving for the cover of his famous *Dissertationes selectiores, et tractatus* published in Lucca between 1759 and 1762.

He died in Parma on September 22, 1776 and was buried in St. Bartholomew.

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