

Santa Maria in Vallicella

Chiesa Nuova



Chiesa Nuova is one of the great Counter-Reformation preaching-churches of Rome, and is a parish, titular and convent church as well. It was built for St [Philip Neri](#), and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and Pope St Gregory the Great. It is the principal church of the Oratorians founded by St Philip Neri in 1561 at a time in the 16th century when the Counter Reformation saw the emergence of a number of new religious organisations such as the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), the Theatines and the Barnabites. (1)

History

When the foundations of the new church were being excavated in 1575, a large and wide stone wall running the length of the old church was found. This was surmised to have been the source of the name of the rione Parione (paries is one of the Latin words for "wall"), but what the wall was is unknown and the area is not very well investigated archaeologically. In the locality was the *Tarentum*, a very ancient open-air religious enclosure dedicated to the pair of gods Dis Pater and Proserpina. The sacred site was apparently marking some sort of entrance to Hades, perhaps a spring or well or wide-mouthed sinkhole. (1)

The church stand on the site of a small natural depression in the plain of Campo Marzio, considered by the Romans one of the gates of hell and place of worship of the god of hell.

By tradition, the first church on the site was built by Pope St [Gregory the Great](#) in the late 6th century, and later was given a subsidiary dedication to him. However, what is known from the archives of the Diocese is that there was a church here in 1179 which was made parochial seven years later. This earliest source already refer to it as Santa Maria in Vallicella, and this official name has never changed. (1)

The name Vallicella is usually translated as "little valley", but this is uncertain. In Latin it is literally "room (storeroom, shrine) of the stockade (vallum) or valley (vallis)". There may have been a small

stream here in the Dark Ages, but this is a surmise which cannot be supported by the present-day topography. (1)

In mediaeval times this was a typical little parish church, one of many in mediaeval Rome, and perhaps served about thirty families or so. Also typical of little mediaeval parish churches was that it was not kept in good repair, and by the time it was given to St Philip Neri it was allegedly ruinous. Also it apparently stood in a depression in the terrain (the "little valley"?), causing boggy ground and pools of water which made drainage a serious problem. (1)

In 1551, St Philip Neri founded the "Congregation of the Oratory", which was then recognized by Pope [Gregory XIII](#) in 1575. Neri lived next to the church and was in charge of it. The old dilapidated church stood in a depression in the ground, where bogs and ponds formed. A new church was needed, and St Philip Neri, with the help of Pope Gregory XIII, had it built and dedicated to both St Gregory and the Blessed Virgin. Construction started in 1575, led by Giovanni Matteo da Città di Castello, then by Giacomo della Porta. In 1577 the work passed to Martino Longhi the elder, trusted architect of the largest funder of the work, Cardinal Pier Donato Cesi. The church was consecrated in 1599. (1)

Angelo Cesi, Bishop of Todi and brother of the Cardinal, funded the work of the façade, which began in 1594 and designed by Fausto Rughesi and was completed in 1605 or 1606, while the front steps were completed in 1614. The church was modeled on the Gesù, regarded at the time as the foremost example of Counter-Reformation architecture and, as such, immensely influential architecturally in Catholic Europe. (1)

St Philip Neri's congregation moved to a nearby house in 1577, by which time the nave was completed. Philip preferred to stay at San Girolamo della Carità (# 312), until he was ordered by the Pope to move in 1583. (1)

In the first half of the 17th century, the enormous new convent next door was being built mostly under the supervision of Borromini from 1637 to 1652. It was only finally finished in 1666. (1)

The dome was modified in 1650 by Pietro da Cortona, who added a lantern surmounted by a dome to allow for better lighting. The bell tower was added in 1666 by Camillo Arcucci. The marble floor was completely rebuilt in 1895.

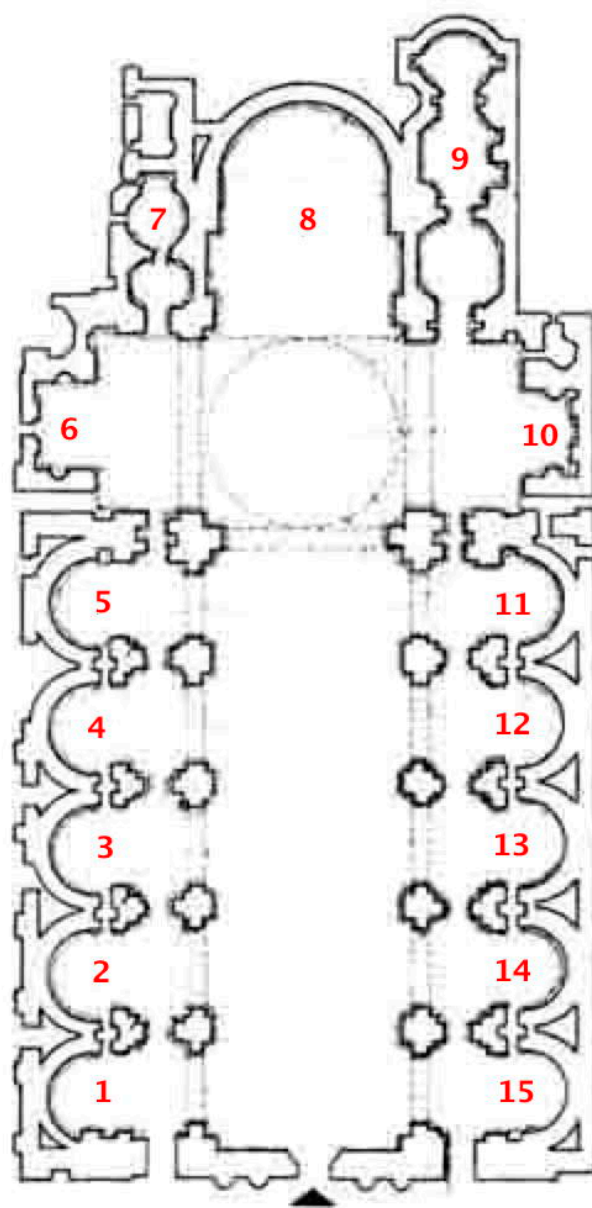
The Oratorians fell on hard times in the 19th century, and in the latter part of that century the church was in serious disrepair. Before the 1880's the church was on a piazza surrounded by a little grid of side streets, and was not easy to find. However, then the new trunk road from Piazza Venezia to the Vatican, Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, was built and this massively raised the church's civic profile. (1)

The church, adjacent to the Oratorio dei Filippini, overlooked a small inclosed square that was modified by the construction of the Corso Vittorio Emanuele in 1885. In the open space in front of the church is a monument to [Pietro Metastasio](#) (18th century Roman poet), and the Fountain of the Terrine, moved here from Campo de Fiori.

In 1905 it was decided that the local parish church of San Tommaso in Parione was too small for its parish, so the Chiesa Nuova was made the parish church instead. A major restoration was completed in 2006, but evidence for the previous disrepair can still be seen in damaged frescoes. (1)

Plan

The church is built on a plan of a Latin cross within a rectangle, and has a short and wide nave with two aisles and five enclosed chapels off each aisle. The transepts are short, and do not extend beyond the outer nave walls. There is a central dome, and the apse is three-sided and flanked by two large chapels. The roofs are pitched and tiled. (1)



Exterior

Santa Maria in Vallicella is very similar-inside and out -to other Counter Reformation churches in Rome. As the Jesuits' *Il Gesù* and *Sant'Ignazio* and the Theatines *Santi' Andrea della Valle*, it has a double-storied tripartite façade with scrolls. A statue and inscription of St. Gregory the Great decorate the church façade.

Rughesi's 17th century façade, in travertine limestone, has two stories and is crowned by a triangular pediment. The central vertical zone is brought forward slightly for its entire height, and the two corner strips recessed slightly; this feature of the design was so as to prevent the façade looking like a cliff. In the first storey, this central zone has four Corinthian half-columns supporting an entablature, the latter continuing across the façade on either side where it is supported by eight Corinthian pilasters. The frieze of the entablature has a rather bombastic and cheeky inscription reading "Angelus Caesius Episc[opus]. Tudertinus fecit Anno Dom[ini]. MDCV" (Angelo Cesi, Bishop of Todi, did this AD 1605). This implies he built the church, but what he actually did was to pay for the façade only. His brother Pier Donato Cesi paid for most of the rest. (1)

The doorway is flanked by a pair of Corinthian columns in the round, supporting a raised triangular pediment which is broken at the top in order to accommodate a large tablet bearing a dedicatory inscription. This latter is flanked by a pair of especially slinky double volutes looking like G-clefs from a piece of written music. The aisle entrances have raised segmental pediments supported by volute corbels, and above them is another pair of inscription tablets bearing praises addressed to Our Lady from the Biblical Song of Songs: (1)

"Tota pulcra es amica mea, and macula non est in te"

(You are completely beautiful, my girlfriend, and there is no blemish in you).

The handles of the entrance doors are decorated with flaming hearts, since the cor flammigerum is St Philip's emblem. (1)

In the center of the upper storey, there is a round-headed window with a balustrade. This is flanked by a pair of Ionic columns with swagged capitals and supporting a segmental pediment. Below this, on top of the entablature above the four entrance columns, is a large segmental pediment containing a relief of the Madonna and Child, the *Madonna Vallicelliana*. She is seated on a throne with water gushing out on either side, this throne being on a bank of clouds and accompanied by a pair of angels. Either side of the window is a round-headed niche containing a statue and with a triangular pediment, the statues being of SS *Gregory the Great* and *Phillip Neri*. These statues have empty inscription tablets above them, and there is a pair of gigantic volutes flanking the upper storey. The pediment's tympanum is empty except for a small coat-of-arms in its apex. (1)

The dome is externally low and unobtrusive, having a lead saucer on a very low drum, and was finished in 1650 by Pietro da Cortona. The disproportionately tall lantern has a cog-wheel entablature supporting a lead cupola which itself has a ball finial. (1)

In the archives of the Oratorians, in the convent adjacent to the church, there is a wooden model of the façade as it was originally intended to be; some changes were made at a later point. It has been suggested that it was Carlo Maderno who introduced the changes. (1)

By the far corner of the right hand transept is the campanile, designed in 1666 by Camillo Arcucci. There are two storeys containing bells, the first with Doric pilasters supporting an exaggerated cornice. Between these on each side is squeezed an arched sound-hole with its own little balustrade. The top storey has bell-holes with ogee curved tops flanked by outward-facing double volutes, and the corners of the parapet have stone pineapples topped by rather spiky bronze three-dimensional stars. (1)

To the left of the church is the Institute of the Oratory of St.Filippo Neri. Initially an Oratorian monastery. St. Neri moved his order there in 1588, died there in 1595.), The oratory is extensive and contains two cloisters separated by the church's large sacristy. The latter is, unusually, detached from the church itself. (1)

Interior

The church, about 266 ft. long and 110 ft. wide, is shaped as a Latin cross and consists of a nave and two aisles divided by pillars and arcades. Di Castello's original design had only one nave and four chapels on each side. Giacomo della Porta changed it, making the side chapels deeper and the nave consequently more narrow, and adding two side aisles with five communicating chapels in each aisle. At the ends of each transept are two chapels, and the apse is flanked by two other chapels. Originally, the church had very little decoration, but against St Philip's wishes it was decorated after his death. His original plan was to have only depictions of the Blessed Virgin, and they were meant to be rather discrete. The rest of the surfaces were to have been whitewashed. (1) (a)

A painting of the church as it was when new can be seen in the Vatican Pinacoteca, namely Andrea Sacchi's *The Interior of S Maria in Vallicella during the Festivities of 13 March 1602*. It depicts the church as it looked when St Philip Neri was canonized. (1)

Nave, apse, dome

The nave has five bays, and the arcades have massive pillars. Since the church was built in one campaign, the side chapels are all of identical architectural design, being on a square plan with chamfered far corners. Each is entered through a doorway in a screen wall, and narrow passages connect adjacent chapels. (1)

The interior is richly decorated and gilded, and is embellished by polychrome stonework such as the red jasper pilasters attached to the arcade piers. The nave ceiling is barrel-vaulted, over a spacious area which was designed to accommodate the congregations attracted to the sermons of the Oratorians.

The fresco in the main vault is by Pietro da Cortona, painted in 1664-1665. It depicts the *Miracle of the Blessed Virgin*: St Philip was warned in a dream that the roof of the church would collapse, and had it repaired. The roof was in bad shape, and many would have been killed if it had collapsed during Mass. This vault fresco is clearly set within an elaborate gold frame, a *quadro riportato*, and is painted with a Venetian influenced view of *di sotto in su* (from below to above). His designs for the vault decoration around the painting with elaborate white and gilt stucco work incorporating figuration, geometric and naturalistic elements, were carried out by Cosimo Fancelli and Ercole Ferrata.

The saucer dome has no drum, but is placed directly on its cornice with four little round-headed windows. The entire surface is taken up by the fresco by Da Cortona again, the *Triumph of the Trinity* (1647-51) showing the Father and the Son in the main dome and the Holy Spirit in the oculus. The prophets *Isiah, Jeremiah, Daniel* and *Ezechiel* in the four pendentives were painted in 1655-6 and 1559-60, along with his fresco of the *Assumption of Mary* in the apse and *Angels with the Instruments of the Passion of Our Lord* in the ceiling of the sacristy. There is an implied visual continuum between the dome and the apse frescoes; The assuming Virgin (in the apse) raised her eyes towards Heaven and the Father (in the dome) extends His hand as if bestowing His blessing upon her.

The walls of the nave and transept, as well as the presbytery ceiling have canvases from the 17th century of *Episodes of the Old and New Testament* :

Left wall	Right wall	Author
<i>The creation of the angels</i>	<i>The Fall of the Rebel Angels</i>	Lazzaro Baldi
<i>The resurrection of the dead</i>	<i>Adam and Eve in the sight of God after the original sin</i>	Giuseppe Ghezzi
<i>The Communion of the Apostles</i>	<i>The fall of the manna</i>	Daniel Seiter
<i>The Penitent Magdalene</i>	<i>Rebecca and Eleazar at the Well</i>	Giuseppe Ghezzi
<i>Christ giving the keys to St. Peter</i>	<i>Moses breaks the tablets of the law</i>	Giuseppe Passeri
<i>The Immaculate Conception</i>	<i>Judith and Holofernes</i>	Daniel Seiter
<i>Christ driving the Traders from the Temple</i>	<i>The elect of Israel with the Ark of the Covenant</i>	Domenico Parodi
Counter: <i>Preaching of Saint John the Baptist</i>		Daniel Seiter

The main altar is very imposing, and is adorned with four columns of giallo antico. The altar itself was completed in 1608. The carved Crucifix above is by Guillaume Berthelot, a French sculptor. The bronze tabernacle, with two large bronze angels, was designed by Ciro Ferri, cast by Benincasa of Gubbio, and added in 1681. (1) (a)

A 13th century icon of the Blessed Virgin is enshrined above the high altar. The *Vallecellian Madonna and Child*, frescoed on a hovel across the street (site of present apse), had been venerated throughout the Middle Ages. In 1535, after losing out in a hotly-contested street competition, a resentful ball-player hurled (or kicked) a stone at the revered image, which began to bleed from the cheek and neck. The picture was removed and placed inside the sacristy, where it continued to work miracles. The ancient icon can be revealed through a system of strings and pulleys. (1)

The canvas covering the icon is by Peter Paul Rubens, who also painted the canvases on either side of the sanctuary between 1606 and 1608. On the left is *St. Gregory and SS. Maurus and Papias*. The mail-clad figures are St Papias and St Maurus, whose relics lie beneath the high altar. On the right, *The Coronation of martyrs Neuenus, Achilleus and Domitilla*. (1)

The church has a pair of spectacular Baroque organ cases, and the one on the left hand side is unusual because some of the pipes have decorative spirals. (1)

The side chapels were made available to wealthy families. They were given a letter of concession, and were then expected to decorate and maintain the chapel. This is common in many churches in Rome, but this is a rare example of the process being planned from the start. Memorial plaques in the chapels name the families.

The ten side chapels are decorated with a cycle of scenes from the life of Our Lady, according to St Philip Neri's requests. Some of them, such as Federico Barocci's *Visitation*, were ordered by the saint.

In the transept are decorations in stucco of Cosimo Fancelli and Ercole Ferrata, with allegories of Faith and Hope (left arm) and of Charity and Religion (right arm).

Left side chapels and transept

Chapel of the Purification of Our Lady (1)

Granted to Fabrizio and Cesar Mezzabarba of Pavia. It had been initially destined to the exposure of the ancient miraculous image of the *Madonna Vallicelliana*. With the reconstruction intense activities the patronage passed to the Cardinal Augustin Cusani, and in 1854 to the Polidori accounts.

The paintings are by the Cavaliere d'Arpino. The altarpiece, *The Presentation*, is of 1627, and the damaged vault frescoes of 1620 depict SS *Ambrose*, *Monica* and *Augustine*. They were restored in the 19th century. The stucco work is by Stefano Longo. (1)

Chapel of the Magi or the Epiphany (2)

Granted in patronage in 1578 to Porzio Ceva, notary public of the Apostolic Room.

The altarpiece, by Cesare Nebbia in 1578, represents the *Adoration of the Magi*. After the reconstruction, the new decoration with polychrome marbles and stucco decorations on the vault by Stefano Longo, was completed in 1619, resuming the theme of the chapel of the Purification. The frescoes on the vault probably were completed in 1625 from Baccio Ciarpi. The altarpiece painting looks as if it has only partially been cleaned. (1)

Chapel of the Nativity (3)

Granted in patronage to Silvio Antoniano, future cardinal, in 1580, and who is buried here.

The altarpiece is *Adoration by the Shepherds* by Durante Alberti (before 1590) and the vault frescoed with a *Saint* by Cristofano Roncalli (known as il Pomarancio), and stucco decorations by Giovanni Guerra. (1)

Chapel of the Visitation of Our Lady (4)

Granted in patronage to Francisco Pizzamiglio, in 1582. In the 18th century it passed to Filippo Sicurani.

The altarpiece is the *Visitation* by Federico Barocci in 1586, which was particularly beloved by St. Filippo Neri. The ceiling frescoes of Saints were executed in 1617 by Carlo Saraceni (*St. Matthew*, *St. John the Evangelist* and *St. John the Baptist*. The last one is now lost). (1)

Chapel of the Annunciation to Our Lady (5)

Granted in patronage to the Ruspoli family, Florentine Bankers, in 1589.

The altarpiece, the *Annunciation*, was the work of Domenico Cresti (called Passignano). The chapel was originally covered with frescoes by Andrea Lilio, but due to their deterioration, in 1662 they were covered by polychrome marbles and stucco decorations.

Chapel of the Presentation of the Virgin (6)

It was constructed in 1589 at the expense of Bishop Angelo Cesi, and decorated on the design of Martino Longhi the elder in 1591 with polychrome marbles and two ancient columns in green marble at the altar.

In 1592 the statues of *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* were placed in the appropriate niches, work of Giovanni Antonio Paracca, called il Valsoldo, and in 1603 the *Presentation of Maria to the Temple* (1593-4) by Federico Barocci de Urbino was mounted as the altarpiece. The frescoes, *History of Anna, Elcana and Samuel* on the vault, is the work of Alessandro Salucci.

The door to the left of the transept opens into a corridor that leads to the interior of the convent and to the sacristy. The door to the right, as we enter the corridor, opens into a room in which is preserved the original coffin in which was deposited the body of S. Philip Neri; and also into a small chapel in which are kept the chair of the Saint, part of the wall of his cell, and his portrait over the altar, said to be by Guercino. (a)

Sacristy

The sacristy, which as mentioned before has ceiling painted by da Cortona, was designed by Paolo Marucelli in 1629. In the sacristy is a marble sculptural group of *S. Filippo with an Angel* by Alessandro Algardi, and bronze Bust of Pope Gregory. The wall frescoes are by Francesco Trevisani and the *Benediction by Christ* by Cerrini with the ceiling frescoed with *Angels carrying the instruments of the Passion* (1633-34) by Pietro da Cortona. Over the arch, as we entered, is a portrait of S. Philip Neri, when a youth; and above it is a half figure of the B. Virgin in glory, painted by Cerrini. (1) (a)

The sacristy is considered one of the finest in Rome and is usually open to the public. Also, Chiesa Nuova has some of the finest vestments in the City (which are still used). (1)

Chapel of San Filippo Neri (7)

Off the left transept, to the left of the apse, the Chapel of St Philip is especially sumptuous since the saint is enshrined here. The decoration in the Baroque style, employing mother-of-pearl, coral, onyx, lapis lazuli, agate, gold, marble, bronze and stucco, was constructed between 1600 and 1606 at the expense of a relative of St. Philip Neri (1515-1595) on the plan of Onorio Longhi. The dome is by Pietro da Cortona. (1)

The chapel is in two parts. The first octagonal part of the chapel has a central vault and the inner and more removed part of the chapel, Pietro da Cortona added a lantern to let in more light and the dome was redecorated, perhaps by Ciro Ferri (1650). (1)

On the walls and the vault are frescos by Cristoforo Roncalli, painted between 1596 and 1599 (but perhaps replaced by a second series of the same painter in 1620) and representing scenes of the life of the saint:

Filippo hear to sing the angels
Filippo recovers Clement VIII from the gout
Filippo save a spiritual son from drowning
Filippo in ecstasy while he assists illnes
Filippo fall in the foundation and saved by an angel
Filippo in ecstasy in sacerdotal dresses
Death of Filippo
Elemosina di Filippo to the angel
Filippo resurrects Paul the Great
San Giovanni Batiste appears to Filippo

The altarpiece was completed by Guido Reni representing *San Filippo and the Madonna of the Vallicella*, which was then moved in the rooms of the convent and replaced with a mosaic copy by Vincenzo Castellani (1765-1774). (1)

Under the altar is a crystal urn that contains the body of St. Philip, with a silver mask, while the decorations are fruit of successive modifications and renewals that are from the 19th century.

Right side chapels and transept:

Spada Chapel (9)

Off the right transept, to the right of the apse, is the Cappella Spada, dedicated to St [Charles Borromeo](#). The idea of a chapel dedicated to St. Charles Borromeo was discussed since 1604, with

the support of the Cardinal Federico Borromeo, but it was possible to realize the plan only beginning in 1663, with the sponsorship of the Marquis Orazio Spada. The plan of Camillo Arcucci was for three successive rooms, lavishly adorned, and was completed in 1679.

The first room is an octagonal vestibule with paintings of the life of St. Charles.

The central room of elliptical plan and a vaulted roof, was built by Giuseppe Brusa Arcucci, grandson of the original designer, with the help of Carlo Rainaldi. and has memorial tablets of black marble, placed in 1733, celebrating the principal members of the Spada family.

The last room has four niches framed by columns intended for statues. The altar is set into a small apse. The altarpiece by Carlo Maratta (*Madonna and the Child Jesus between the Saints Carl Borromeo and Ignazio di Loyola*), (1672-1679). The fresco on the vault over the altar of the *Holy Spirit* is inserted in a mixtilinear frame, was painted by an unknown artist in 1729. In the pavement is represented the coat of arms of the Spada family. The wall frescoes of St Charles are by Luigi Scaramuccia from 1673:

Charity of San Carlo
San Carlo with victims of the Plague

The vault is spectacular, having ribs with stucco clouds and putti. The four gilded reliefs in tondi in this vault are by Giovan Francesco di Rossi, and depict scenes from the life of St Charles. Three concern his friendship with St Philip, and one shows the failed assassination attempt on him. The niche to the right of the sanctuary contains the monument of Cardinal Caesar Baronius, 1607 with his portrait in oils above an ancient grey marble urn.

Chapel of the Coronation of the Virgin (10)

It was granted in 1591 to Alessandro Glorieri, Apostolic Nunzio to Naples.

The chapel was built in 1592 and was consecrated in 1594. It is elaborately decorated in polychrome marbles with ancient columns in green marble at the altar analogous to those of the opposite Chapel of the Presentation. The niches accommodate two statues of *San Giovanni Batiste* and *San Giovanni Evangelista*, by Flaminio Vacca of 1594. The stucco allegory of *Charity* and *Religion* is again by Fancelli and Ferrata. (1)

The altarpiece, representing the *Coronation of the Virgin*, was painted by the Cavalier d'Arpino, and completed in 1615 but modified by the same artist two years later, upon request of the Congregation. The wooden pulpit or ambo is by Borromini, and does not belong here since it was designed for the convent. (1)

Pinelli Chapel (11)

Granted in patronage to the Genovese banker Giovanni Augustin Pinelli, treasurer of the pope.

The Altarpiece, *Assumption* is by Giovanni Domenico Cerrini. The original decorations in stucco, finished in 1587, on design of Giacomo della Porta. The frescoes by Aurelio Lomi with *History of Maria* and *History of Infancy of Jesus* in the arch, with *Dormitio Virginis*, *Incoronazione di Maria* and *Funeral of the Madonna* on the vault, and on the walls *Rebecca and Eleazar* and *Ciaele and Sisara*.

The altarpiece caused a great stir in 1796, when the Virgin miraculously moved her eyes. The phenomenon was noted by almost all the Oratorians in residence. With pomp and processions they declared a month-long festival, during which the miracle repeated itself, to the delight of Roman devotees.

Chapel of the Pentecost (12)

Granted in patronage in 1579 to Vincenzo Lavaiana, Pisano banker, then to Diego del Campo, fiammingo, 'secret waiter' of the pope. In 1728 the patronage passed to Conte Pietro Giraud.

The altarpiece *Pentecost* (1689) by Giovanni Maria Morandi. The decorations of the vault (*The Seven Candelabras*, *The Baptism of Christ* and *Moses with the Tablets of the Law*), completed in 1602, by Egidio della Riviera.

Chapel of the Ascension (13)

Granted in patronage in 1581 to Tiberio Ceuli, Roman banker. In 1868 the patronage passed to the De Villanova Castellacci family.

The altarpiece is the *Ascension* by Girolamo Muziano, before 1587. The frescoes were executed by Benedetto Piccioli, from 1624 (*St. Coprete*, *St. Alessandro* and *St. Paternuzio*)

Chapel of the Pietá (14)

Granted in patronage to Pietro Vittrici, 'guardaroba' of Pope Gregory XIII and close follower of St. Philip Neri. It passed thereafter to Ermete Cavalletti.

One painting that did not stay in its intended chapel is worth mentioning: Caravaggio's altarpiece of the *Entombment of Christ* (1604) was commissioned by Girolamo Vittrici, nephew of the founder of the chapel, and depicted the entombment in a radically naturalistic format, foreign to the grand manner found in the remaining altarpieces. The original was taken by the French in 1797. After it was returned it was taken to the Vatican Pinacoteca and replaced above the altar by a copy by Michele Koeck, a Tyrolese artist.

The Chapel is decorated with polychrome marbles and stucco and with frescoes by Angelo Caroselli (*Sindone* in the arch, and a *Pietá* between *David* and *Isaia* in the vault)

Chapel of the Crucifixion (15)

Granted in patronage to Camillo Caetani, patriarch of Alexandria. Later on it passed to Paolo Paganino of Modena. Still later to the Rossi family, and in 1746 to the Marquis Giacomo Carriers.

The altarpiece is *Crucifixion* by Scipione Pulzone of Gaeta with ceiling frescoes (*Crowning with Thorns*, *Scourging* and *Agony in the Garden*) painted by Giovanni Lanfranco. The Stucco decorations executed by Stefano Longo with the allegories of *Justice* and *Strength*.

Oratorio di San Filippo Neri

The Oratorio di San Filippo Neri is attached to the church. It was built for St Philip Neri in 1572 by Pope Gregory XIII and Cardinal Cesi, and was designed by Martino Longhi the elder. The oratory was meant as a monastery for the Oratorians, a religious order whose members continued their careers in the secular world. It was restored in 1637 by Borromini. It was here that St Philip organized the first sacred performances of music for soloists and choir, which is the reason for the name 'oratory'. It houses the Vallicelliana Library, which was established by St Philip Neri in 1581 and is the oldest public library in Rome, the Institute for Roman Studies including the Capitoline Historical Archives, the Roman Newspaper Archives with copies of almost all newspapers published in Rome since the 18th century, as well as the monastery of the Oratorian brothers.

St Philip Neri's room and chapel is upstairs. You have to make an appointment to see them. The room is reconstructed, but the furniture is original, and there are several relics. The need for reconstruction was caused by a fire started by a stray rocket from a fireworks display at Castel Sant' Angelo. One of the items in the room is a Nottingham alabaster of the head of St John the Baptist on a plate and the Lamb of God, It was given to St Philip from among the loot of a captured turkish ship.

Location:

134 Via del Governo Vecchi
(Piazza della Chiesa Nuova)
Coordinates: [41° 53' 54"N](#) [12° 28' 8"E](#)

Info:

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Artists and Architects:

Alessandro [Algarði](#) (1598-1654), Italian high- Baroque sculptor
Alessandro [Salucci](#) (1590-1660), Italian painter
Angelo [Caroselli](#) (1585–1653), Italian painter of the Baroque period
Aurelio [Lomi](#) (1556-1622), Italian painter of the late-Renaissance and early-Baroque periods
Baccio [Ciampi](#) (1574-1654), Italian painter of the late-Mannerism and early-Baroque style
Benedetto Piccioli (17th Cent), Italian painter
Camillo Arcucci (†1667), Italian architect
Carlo [Maratta](#) (1625-1713), Italian Late Baroque Classical painter
Carlo [Rainaldi](#) (1611-1691), Italian architect of the Baroque period
Carlo [Saraceni](#) aka *Veneziano* (1579-1620), Italian painter of the early-Baroque
Cesare [Nebbia](#) (1536-1614), Italian Mannerist painter
Ciro [Ferri](#) (1634-1689), Italian Baroque **painter** and sculptor
Cosimo [Fancelli](#) (c.1620-1688), Italian sculptor of the Baroque period
Cristoforo [Roncalli](#) aka *Il Pomerancio* (1552-1626), Italian Mannerist painter
Daniele [Seiter](#) (1642-1705), Italian Baroque painter
Domenico [Cresti](#) [aka *Il Passignano*] (1559-1638), Italian painter of a late-Renaissance or Contra-Maniera (Counter-Mannerism) style
Domenico [Parodi](#) (1672-1742), Italian **painter**, sculptor and architect
Durante [Alberti](#) (1538-1613), Italian painter of the late-Renaissance period.
Egidio [della Riviera](#) (Gillis van den Vliete) aka *Fiammingo* (17th cent), Flemish sculptor
Ercole [Ferrata](#) (1610-1686), Italian sculptor of the Baroque period
Fausto Rughesi (17th cent), Italian architect
Federico [Fiori](#), known as *Il Baroccio* (1526-1612), Italian Renaissance painter and printmaker from Urbino
Flaminio [Vacca](#) or Vacchi (1538-1605), Italian sculptor
Francesco [Borromini](#) (1599-1667), leading figure in the emergence of Roman Baroque architecture
Francesco [Trevisani](#) (1656-1746), Italian painter of the early Rococo or late Baroque
Giacomo [della Porta](#) (1540-1602), Italian **architect** and sculptor
Giovanni Antonio [Paracca](#) [aka *Valsoldino*] (†1584), Italian sculptor
Giovanni Domenico [Cerrini](#) [aka *il Cavalier Perugino*] (1609–1681), Italian painter of the Baroque period
Giovanni Francesco [de Rossi](#) aka *La Vecchietta* (d. 1677), Italian sculptor
Giovanni [Guerra](#) (1544–1618), Italian draughtsman, painter and **stucco** artist
Giovanni [Lanfranco](#) (1582-1647), Italian Baroque painter
Giovanni Maria [Morandi](#) (1622-1717), Italian painter
Giovanni Matteo da Città di Castello (16th cent), Italian architect
Giolamo [Muziano](#) (1532-1592), Italian painter, active in a late-Renaissance or Mannerism style.
Giuseppe Brusa Arcucci (17th cent), Italian architect
Giuseppe [Cesari](#) [aka *Cavaliere d'Arpino*] (1568-1640), Italian Mannerist painter
Giuseppe [Ghezzi](#) (1634–1721), Italian painter of the Baroque period
Giuseppe [Passeri](#) (1654-1714), Italian **painter** and architect of the Baroque period
Guido [Reni](#) (1575-1642), Italian painter of high-Baroque
Guillaume [Berthelot](#) (1580-1648), French sculptor
Lazzaro [Baldi](#) (1624-1703), Italian painter of the Baroque period
Luigi [Pellegrini](#) aka *Scaramuccia*, (1616-1680) , Italian **painter**, sculptor
Martino [Longhi](#) the Elder (1534-1591), Italian architect
Michele Koeck (1760-1825), Tyrolese painter
Onorio [Longhi](#) (1568-1619), Italian architect
Paolo [Marucelli](#) (1596-1649), Italian Baroque architect
Peter Paul [Rubens](#) (1577-1640), Flemish Baroque painter
Pietro Berrettini [da Cortona](#) (1597-1669), Italian Baroque painter
Scipione [Pulzone](#) of Gaeta, aka *il Gaetano* (1550-1598), Italian late Renaissance-Mannerist painter
Stefano Longo (17th cent), Italian sculptor

Relics:

St Papias and St Maurus
Buried beneath the main altar

Burials:

St. Philip Neri (1515-1595)
Buried beneath the altar in the chapel dedicated to him

Teodoro Cardinal [LELLI](#), (1428-1466)

Pier Donato Cardinal [CESI](#), *seniore*, (1521-1586) [also see [here](#)]

Silvio Cardinal [ANTONIANO](#), (1540-1603) [also see [here](#)]
Buried in the tomb he had built in the chapel of *Natività*

Cesare Cardinal [BARONIO](#), Orat. (1538-1607) [also see [here](#)]
Buried in Spada chapel

Francesco Maria Cardinal [TARUGI](#), Orat., (1525-1608)
Buried under the presbytery, to the left of the main altar

Girolamo Cardinal [PAMPILJ](#), (1544-1610)

Pier Paolo Cardinal [CRESCENZI](#), (1572-1645) [also see [here](#)]

Orazio Cardinal [GIUSTINIANI](#), Orat., (1578-1649) [also see [here](#)]
Buried in the tomb of the priests of his congregation

Francesco Cardinal [PAOLUCCI](#), (1581-1661)
Buried in front of the main altar

Bernardino Cardinal [SPADA](#), (1594-1661) [also see [here](#)]
Monument only, built in his memory in the chapel of S. Carlo Borromeo by his nephew Cardinal Fabrizio Spada. Buried in S. Girolamo della Carità

Stefano Cardinal [AGOSTINI](#), (1614-1683)
Buried in front of the main altar

Alessandro Cardinal [CRESCENZI](#), C.R.S., (1607-1688) [also see [here](#)]

Decio Cardinal [AZZOLINI](#), *iunior*, (1623-1689) [also see [here](#)]
Buried in the tomb of the Fathers of the Oratory

Giacomo Cardinal [FRANZONI](#), (1612-1697)

Leandro Cardinal [COLLOREDO](#), Orat., (1639-1709)

Gasparo Cardinal [CARPEGNA](#), (1625-1714)
Buried in the tomb of his family in the chapel dell'Incoronazione

Fabrizio Cardinal [SPADA](#), (1643-1717) [also see [here](#)]
Buried in the Spada chapel

Luis Antonio Cardinal [BELLUGA Y MONCADA](#), Orat., (1662-1743) [also see [here](#)]
Buried in the chapel of S. Carlo

Filippo Maria Cardinal [PIRELLI](#), (1708-1771)

Benedetto Cardinal [VETERANI](#), (1703-1776)

Bernardino Cardinal [GIRAUD](#), (1721-1782) [also see [here](#)]
Buried in front of the chapel of his family, the Chapel of the Pentecost

Alessandro Cardinal [SPADA](#), (1787-1843)

Gregorio [Allegri](#) (1582-1652)
Singer, composer
Buried in the Chapel of St. Philip Neri

Stefano [Landi](#) (1587-1639)
Composer

Alessandro [Moreschi](#) (1858-1922)
Castrato Singer

Links and References:

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6. [Italian Wikipedia page](#)
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8. [Gallery on Flickr](#)
9. Parish website in English (no longer online)
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