

Sant'Eustachio in Campo Marzio



Sant'Eustachio is a 18th century titular, collegiate and former parochial church dedicated to the Roman martyr St Eustace. The church is located in rioni St Eustachio, a block west of the Pantheon and via della Rotonda, and a block east of Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza.

History

The early history of the church is unknown, and the first documentary reference dates to the reign of Pope Gregory II (715-31). It was founded as a deaconate, a centre for helping the poor. Its early history is largely unknown. However, according to tradition, the church was founded on the site of the house of Saint Eustace and his martyrdom. St Eustace was noble Roman who converted to Christianity. The stag with a cross between its horns became the symbol of St. Eustace and *rioni* S. Eustachio.

In 1196, Pope Celestine III ordered a major restoration/rebuilding involving the provision of the present campanile, and the enshrinement of the relics of the saint. A surviving epigraph relates that the pope performed the latter with his own hands. Apparently, the restoration involved the provision of a "circular" (semi-circular?) confessio or crypt where pilgrims could venerate the relics. This was mentioned in a document of 1406.

In the 16th century, St Philip Neri used to pray here.

Being built on the river's floodplain took its toll, and damp penetration seriously damaged the fabric in the 17th century. A campaign of rebuilding was begun in 1650, under the architect Cesare Crovara. In 1706 Giovan Battista Contini took over and designed the side chapels and portico. After a pause in the work, from 1724 to 1727 the apse and transept was constructed firstly by Antonio Canevari, and then by Nicola Salvi. In 1736 Giovanni Domenico Navone was appointed

chief architect and he applied finishing touches in the following year. Around 1724, artist **Giacomo Zoboli** was hired to paint the transepts. In 1734, the new church was consecrated. However, work continued on the sacristy and the choir chapel by **Giovanni Moscati**, from a design by **Canevari**. **Melchiorre Passalacqua** supervised further work on the interior decoration in the second half of the century.

The deaconry was established around the year 600. Among its titulars were the popes Gregory IX, Alexander IV, Antipope John XXIII, Pius III and Paul III. The current titular deacon of the church is H.E. Cardinal Sergio Sebastiani, who was appointed on February 21, 2001.

Restorations had to continue, as the problem with damp has never been solved. Work in 1855 by **Filippo Martinucci** involved re-laying the floor and consolidating the crypt (which is inaccessible to visitors).

In 1861, **Filippo Cretoni** restored stucco work in the interior, and **Carlo Ruspi** gave attention to some of the paintings.

From 1930 to 1940 there was a long campaign of restoration, the most notable result of which was the decoration of the Chapel of the Sacred Heart by **Corrado Mezzana**. The same artist also executed the woodwork of the confessionals in the transept.

Finally, there has been a recent restoration of the campanile which restored its original appearance.

The ancient parish was suppressed in the later 20th century, as part of the consolidation of the many small parishes in this area which could not support their churches.

Exterior

Layout and fabric

Before the 18th century the edifice had a straightforward basilical plan with a nave, side aisles and apse. As a result of the rebuilding, the plan is not so straightforward.

The fabric is brick, rendered in white. You can see some of the right hand side walling if you go round to the Via di Sant'Eustachio, but most of the church is hemmed in by other buildings. The roofing is rather complicated, partly because there is a range of second-storey rooms on both sides of the transept. The nave has one tiled roof, and the transept (with its false dome) and apse is under another, slightly higher one.

Campanile

The church's campanile or bell-tower is all that remains of the original early medieval church. It is located behind a domestic building to the left of the façade, between that and the Chapel of St Michael.

It is in red brick, and the two storeys above the roofline of the aisle used to have two pairs of tall, narrow soundholes on each of their sides. Each pair is separated by an ancient marble Corinthian column. At some stage the openings in the lower storey were completely blocked up, while the top storey ones had half their height blocked. The recent restoration has removed the latter blocking. The top storey is also embellished with pottery dishes glazed in different colors. There is a tiled pyramidal cap.

Façade (1)

As it now is, the façade (by **Crovara**) is dominated by a two-storey block of ancillary accommodation around the loggia, looking rather like a Palladian villa with a flat roof and a balustraded parapet.

The loggia is entered through three rectangular apertures, the middle one wider, which are separated by a pair of Ionic columns in travertine with oversized volutes on their capitals (rather like the proboscis of a butterfly). The style of these is echoed by a pair of pilasters flanking the entrance, and another pair at the outer corners of the block. Columns and pilasters support a horizontal

entablature, and over the entrance is a triangular pediment with a blank tympanum.

Peeping over this block is the frontage of the central nave, dominated by a large central window with a slightly bowed top and cornice. This is flanked by four Corinthian pilasters supporting an entablature and pediment. In the pediment is an oculus or round opening, and you can see the sky through it. The actual roof ridge of the nave only reaches the pediment. On top of the pediment you can see St Eustace's stag peering over, with the cross on its head.

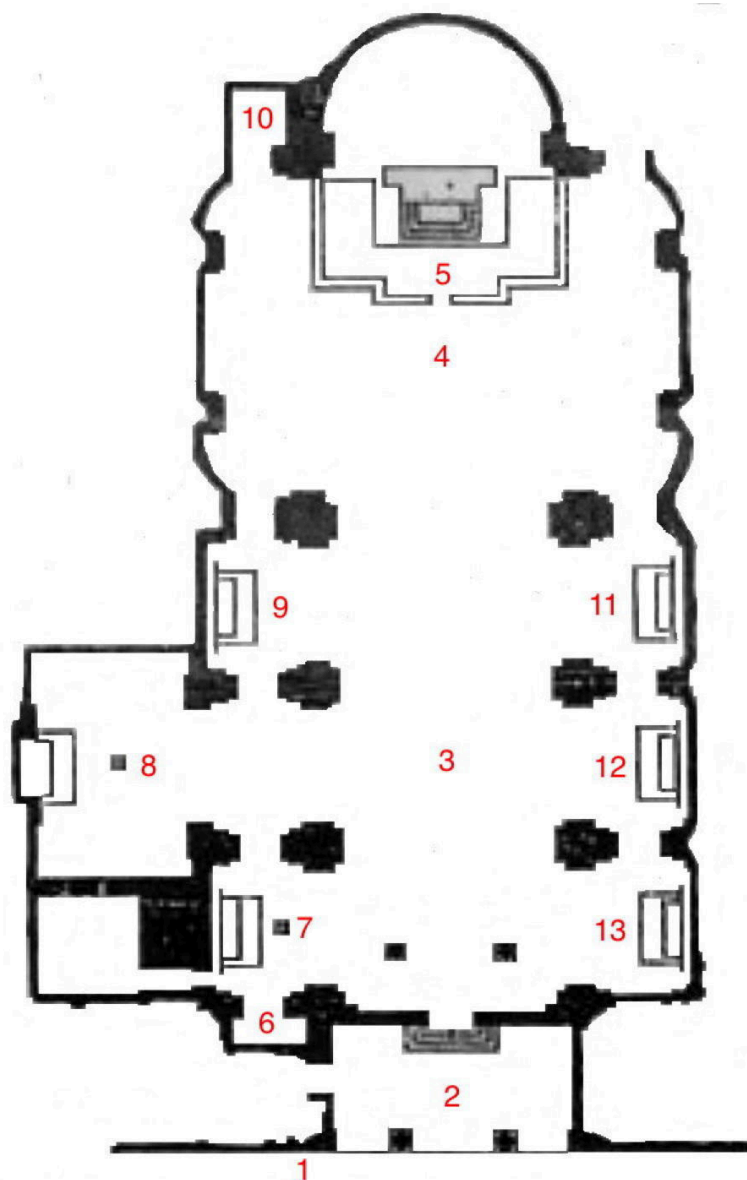
A pair of empty round-headed niches with scallop decorations is in between the pilasters. The sides of this storey sport two enormous volutes, with exaggerated spirals echoing the capitals of the entrance columns.

Loggia (2)

The original iron railings of the loggia are worth examining, they were installed by **Contini**. The loggia itself contains several memorial tablets mostly of the 19th century,

To the left is an inscription from the old church recording that in this church were baptised, in 1547, the two twin brothers Alessandro and Carlo Farnese, sons of Octavius Farnese and Margaret of Austria, born in the Governo palace, where she resided, and which is thence called the palazzo Madama. Alexander Faruese, Duke of Parma, commanded in the war of Flanders.

Plan



Interior

Firstly, there is an entrance loggia as wide as the central nave, and this is embedded in a block of ancillary accommodation. Then comes the short nave with aisles, of three bays. The aisles are divided into side chapels, three on the right but only two on the left because the central bay here opens into a large external chapel on a rectangular plan (Chapel of St Michael). Then comes the transept, on the plan of a transverse rectangle as wide as the nave with chamfered corners. Finally, there is the large semi-circular apse. Its construction was carried out in mature Baroque style under the supervision of the architects **Cesare Crovara** and **Antonio Canevari**.

Nave (3)

On entering, you will be struck by the rich, intricate and gilded stucco work of the interior, which is slightly unusual in containing no vault frescoes. The side arcade arches have garlands on their intradoses, and are separated by gigantic ribbed Corinthian pilasters which support an entablature that runs round the church. The frieze of this has a dedicatory inscription on a gold background, and the cornice is embellished with strap modillions and rosettes. The entablature supports a barrel vault. There are three window lunettes on each side, and these lunettes are exaggerated so that each pair is only separated by a garland rosette. This gives the impression of a false cross vault. The rib vault is stuccoed with flowers and leaves. The crossing is covered with a dome with a representation of the *Holy Spirit* in its middle.

Over the entrance is a gallery almost completely covered with the organ. The instrument was erected in 1749 by **Celestino Testa** and **Giuseppe Noghel**, and enlarged in 1767 by **Johann Werle**. The gilded balustrade and the wooden front of the organ were executed in Rococo style by **Bernardino Mammucari**, **Francesco Michetti** and **Carlo Pacilli**. Above the organ stands a glass window representing *The Penitent Magdalene*, realized in the last decade of the 19th century by **Gabriel** and **Louis Gesta di Tolosa**.

Either side of the entrance are the memorials to Costantino Karkeriuk, 1718 (left), and Giovanni Angelo Magnoni, 1705 (right).

The polychrome marble pulpit attached to the last pier on the left is a late addition, of 1937.

Many charitable confraternities chose St Eustace as their patron in the Middle Ages, and dedicated chapels in the church.

Transept (4)

The transept has a shallow elliptical saucer cupola, the pendentives of which are cut into by arches over windows set diagonally. The dome itself sports a swirling design of rosetted coffering around the *Dove of the Holy Spirit*.

The pendentives are actually undersized, and their ribs don't quite meet. If you look at the triumphal arch of the apse, you will see why. It is actually double, the upper arch being pointed and the lower circular, with more scrollwork in the panel in between. The curtailed pendentives themselves have the *Chi-Rho* symbol within garlands.

Below the diagonally set windows are four cantorias, or opera boxes for solo singer and musicians. They are attractively designed, with circular balustrades and acanthus sprays in the arched niches behind.

The transept contains the paintings made by **Giacomo Zoboli** in 1737. On the left wall hangs the large painting of *Saint Jerome in the Desert*; he is depicted as a hermit in a cave. The stone that he is holding is for hitting himself in penance, the result being that an angel is giving the Devil a beating.

Over the altar in the left transept is *The Meeting between the Holy Virgin and Elisabeth (The Visitation)* by **Zoboli**.

The large wooden confessionals were made by **Corrado Mezzana**.

Sanctuary (5)

The sanctuary is divided from the nave by a low balustrade in polychrome marble sporting the coat-of-arms of Cardinal Neri Maria Corsini.

The sanctuary itself is a large apse with conch, flanked by a pair of doubletted pilasters in the same style as the nave ones and containing a further pair tripletted. The latter flank the enormous altarpiece painted in 1727 by **Francesco Fernandi**, called **Imperiali**, depicting *The Martyrdom of St Eustace*. The family is being loaded into the bronze bull.

Below it, following the curve of the apse, are the stalls of the canons, carved in walnut from Sorrento by **Giovanni Moscati** in 1726.

The apse conch has a white stucco relief depicting *The Adoration of the Cross* by **Galileo Parisini**.

The top of the altar rests on an urn in porphyry rosso antico, with an opening covered by an ornate bronze grating behind which are the relics of St Eustace and his wife Theopista, with their sons Agapitus and Theopistus. The altar is backed by a low screen in polychrome marble, upon which are a set of matching bronze candlesticks and a crucifix. A pair of impressive bronze candelabra featuring angels flank the steps.

The Paschal Candlestick is a column of green marble with the coat-of-arms of Cardinal Basilio Pompilj, its donor.

Left side chapels

Baptistery (6)

The baptismal font is in a tiny room at the bottom end of the left hand aisle, and is a reminder that the church used to be parochial. The baptismal font dates from the 16th century. The stain-glass window represents *The Baptism of Jesus* and is another collaboration by **Mezzana** and **Picchiarini**.

Chapel of Saint Julian the Hospitaller (7)

The first chapel on the left is dedicated to St Julian the Hospitaller, and is richly decorated in polychrome marble. The work was done in 1706 by the Confraternity of Hotel-Keepers, who also commissioned **Biagio Puccini** to paint the altarpiece featuring the saint. The fresco on the ceiling represents *The Eternal Father* by **Corrado Mezzana** from 1930. Over the left side passageway between chapels is an inscription stating that Caitano Moroni is the patron of the chapel and is buried here.

Chapel of the Archangel Michael (8)

This chapel is the largest chapel of this church; it is not part of the actual church fabric, but is an external room tucked away behind the campanile. It was finished between 1716 and 1719 by **Alessandro Speroni**. The 1818 altarpiece by **Giovanni Bigatti** of *Archangel Michael triumphing over Satan* is a copy of the famous painting of Guido Reni from 1636 that is in the church of Santa Maria della Concezione dei Capuccini. It is flanked by a pair of ribbed Corinthian columns, and on the other side of these are two paintings: *St Raymond Nonnatus* and *St Francesca Romana*.

The side walls have Corinthian pilasters revetted in alabaster. To the left is a monument to Teresa Tognoli Canale (1807), and on the right wall the funeral monument by **Lorenzo Ottoni** of Silvio Cavalleri (d. 1717), private secretary to the popes Innocent XII and Clement XI. The neo-Classical design of the former makes an interesting contrast to the Baroque style of the latter.

The entrance is flanked by a pair of monuments. To the left is that to Alessandro Card. Lante Montefeltro della Rovere (d. 1818) titular of the church, by the **Antonio D'Este**, a distinguished pupil of Canova. On the right is that to Angelo Maria Locatelli, 1730.

Chapel of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (9)

The second chapel on the left was renovated in 1771 by the architect **Melchiorre Passalacqua** and around 1800 with the stucco work done by **Agostino Penna**. The fine Baroque altar has two Corinthian columns of verde antico marble, supporting a triangular pediment into which a wreathed tondo is inserted. This contains the monogram of Our Lady, and is venerated by a pair of stucco angels.

There are two altarpieces, the major one being an icon of the *Immaculate Heart* which is a copy of a work by **Giovanni Battista Casanova** installed in 1848. It is in a Baroque glory inhabited by stucco putti. Below it is a statue of the *Blessed Virgin*. Alabaster is used as panelling for the sides, and for the altar frontal.

On the left wall hangs a painting by **Étienne de La Vallée Poussin** (1774) representing *The Flight to Egypt*. The painting on the right is *The Holy Family* (1774) by **Tommaso Conca**. The fresco on the ceiling renders *The Assumption*.

Chapel of the Crucifix (10)

To the left of the sanctuary a little chapel is tucked away which is dedicated to the Crucifix. The chapel contains the tomb of Fr. Pirro Scavizzi, the parish priest of this church between 1919 and 1932, whose beatification is under consideration.

Right side chapels

Chapel of the Sacred Heart (11)

The third chapel on the right was restored between 1934 and 1937 by **Corrado Mezzana**, who also painted the altarpiece representing the *Sacred Heart of Jesus*, in a realistic style. On the left wall, the painting *The Last Supper* and on the right wall the painting *Christ on the Cross and Saint Longinus piercing his Heart*, both also by **Mezzana**. The vault shows *God the Father*. The stained glass window depicts *The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, and was executed by **Cesare Picchiarini** to a design by **Mezzana**.

Chapel of the Annunciation (12)

The second chapel on the right became the Ciogni family funerary chapel in 1874. Above the 17th-century altar stand two columns of coralline breccia that support a broken pediment with a bass-relief in stucco representing the *Virgin and Child*. The altarpiece by **Ottavio Leoni** represents the *Annunciation*, from about 1620. The style is rather archaic for the period.

Chapel of the Holy Family (13)

The first chapel on the right dates from 1854. The altarpiece by **Pietro Gagliardi** represent the *Holy Family in Jerusalem*. On the right wall is a white marble funeral monument with the bust of Luigi Greppi (d. 1673), an illustrious member of the Confraternity of the Holy Sacrament. On the right side of the altar stands a small statue of Saint Raymond Nonnatus, who, according to his hagiography, was nominated Cardinal-Deacon of Sant' Eustachio by pope Gregory IX in 1239, but died en route to Rome. On the left is a small statue of St. Francis.

Burials:

Domenico Cardinal [GIACOBAZZI](#), (1444-1528)

Francesco Cardinal [MAIDALCHINI](#), (1621-1700)

Curzio Cardinal [ORIGO](#), (1661-1737)

Buried in his family's sepulcher in the chapel of S. Girolamo

Giovanni Costanzio Cardinal [CARACCIOLO](#), (1715-1780)

Silvio Cavalleri (d. 1717)

private secretary to the popes Innocent XII and Clement XI.

Teresa Tognoli Canale

Fr. Pirro Scavizzi (1884-1964)

parish priest of this church between 1919 and 1932

Artists and Architects:

Agostino [Penna](#) (1730-1800), Italian sculptor
Alessandro [Speroni](#) (1680-1740), Italian architect
Antonio [Canevari](#) (1681-1764), Italian architect of the Rococo and Neoclassical periods
Antonio [d'Este](#) (1754-1837), Italian sculptor
Bernardino Mammucari (18th cent), woodwork sculptor
Biagio [Puccini](#) (1675-1721), Italian painter
Carlo [Pacilli](#) (1720-1772), Italian woodcarver and sculptor
Carlo [Ruspi](#) (1798-1863), Italian painter
Celestino Testa (18th cent.), Italian organmaker
Cesare [Crovvara](#) († 1703), Italian architect
Cesare [Picchiarini](#) (1871-1943), master glassmaker
Corrado [Mezzana](#) (1890-1952), Italian painter
Étienne de La Vallée [Poussin](#) (1735-1802), French history painter
Ferdinando [Fuga](#) (1699-1781), Italian architect in the Baroque style
Filippo Cretoni (19th cent.), Italian sculptor
Filippo Martinucci (19th cent), Italian architect
Francesco [Fernandi](#) [aka *Imperiali*] (1679-1740), Italian painter of the late-Baroque or Rococo period
Francesco Michetti (18th cent), woodwork sculptor
Gabriel Gesta di Tolosa (19th cent), stained glass windows
Galileo Parisini, Italian sculptor
Giacomo [Zoboli](#) (1681-1767), Italian painter
Giovanni Battista [Casanova](#) (1730-1795), Italian painter
Giovanni Battista [Contini](#) (1641-1723), Italian architect of the Late Baroque period
Giovanni [Bigatti](#) (1774-1817), Italian painter
Giovanni Domenico [Navone](#) (1698-1770), Italian architect
Giovanni Moscati (18th cent.), Italian architect
Giuseppe Noghel (18th cent.), Italian organmaker
Johann Werle (18th cent.), Italian organmaker
Lorenzo [Ottoni](#) [aka *Il Lorenzone*] (1658-1736), Italian sculptor
Louis Gesta di Tolosa (19th cent), stained glass windows
Melchiorre Passalacqua (18th cent), Italian architect
Nicola [Salvi](#) (1697-1751), Italian architect
Ottavio [Leoni](#) (1578-1630), Italian painter and printmaker of the early-Baroque
Pietro [Gagliardi](#) (1809-1890), Italian painter
Tommaso [Conca](#) (1734-1822), Italian painter

Location:

Address: Piazza Sant'Eustachio 19, 00186 Rome

Coordinates: [41°53'55"N 12°28'32"E](#)

Info:

Telephone: 0039 06 6865334

Open times:

Open 09:00 am-12: 00pm 4:00 pm-07: 30pm

Mass schedule:

Holidays :12.00-19 .00

Weekdays: 19.00

During the celebration of the Holy Mass is not possible to visit the church.

Links and References:

[English Wikipedia page](#)

[Roman Churches Wiki](#)

[060608 web page](#)

[Info Roma web page](#)

[The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church](#)

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