

## San Giovanni Battista dei Fiorentini



**San Giovanni Battista dei Fiorentini** is a 17<sup>th</sup> century minor basilica, parish and titular church dedicated to St John the Baptist, and situated at Via Acciaiuoli 2, which is at the north end of the Via Giulia in the rione Ponte. It is also the regional church for expatriates from Florence. It is more commonly known as *San Giovanni dei Fiorentini*. (1)

### History

Pope Julius II ordered the Via Giulia to be cut through the network of filthy alleys between Via di Monserrat and the river in order to relieve dangerous congestion caused by crowds of pilgrims, and this was opened in 1508. A group of Florentine expatriates, including the Florentine Pope Leo X de Medici, decided to build a magnificent church on a prime site at the north end of the new street. **Jacopo Sansovino** won the competition to design it, against competitors like Raphael, Giuliano da Sangallo and Baldassare Peruzzi. He started building in 1519, but ran into serious trouble with the foundations at the river end. He was trying to build on an old sandbank, and the logistics overwhelmed him. He was dismissed in favor of **Antonio da Sangallo the Younger**, a military engineer as well as an architect, who succeeded with the foundations but did not manage to complete the church. Construction ground to a halt by the time of the Sack of Rome in 1527.

(1) (g)

Attempts to build a church on the designs of Michelangelo were carried out 1559-62 but failed. Vasari in 1568 reported that the fabric stood only “long arm above the water”. During 1569-78 minor building activity went on, its exact nature unknown. In 1583 Cardinal Ferdinando de’Medici assigned the church to

**Giacomo della Porta** who built the nave between 1583-92 on the extant substructure, based on the Latin cross arrangement. After his death in 1602, the building passed to **Carlo Maderno** took over from 1602 during which time the dome was constructed and the main body of the church completed in 1620. (1) (5) (a)

The sanctuary project was actually begun by **Orazio Falconieri** in 1634, when he asked **Pietro da Cortona** to prepare drawings. **Cortona** laid a base for the altar, but for some reason work stopped and a temporary altar was then used until 1665. In that year **Francesco Borromini** took over and worked on the project until he committed suicide in 1667. **Carlo Fontana** added finishing touches over the next two years, and then **Ciro Ferri** worked here from 1673 for three years. (1)

The last part to be completed was the travertine façade, by **Alessandro Galilei** from a commission by Pope Clement XII. This was begun in 1733 and was finished in 1738. He died the year before it was completed. Several sculptors were involved in its decoration. (1)

One of the Florentine expatriates in Rome in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century was the young St Philip Neri who was a parish priest here from 1564 to 1575. It was here that he founded the Congregation of the Oratory. A chapel is dedicated to him. (1)

The Florentine expatriate community that ran the church founded a hospital and hospice next door in 1607, which became the *Ospedale della Nazione Fiorentina*. For most of its history, the church was reserved for the use of Florentine expatriates. (1)

An extensive restoration took place in 1853, including floor, under the direction of **Gaspar Salvi**. (3)

However, in 1906 it was made parochial, by taking over the former parish of Santi Celso e Giuliano. In 1918 it was made a minor basilica. In 1939 the old hospice to the north of the church was demolished to make way for the eastern approach road of the Ponte Principe Amedeo Savoia Aosta. Pope John XXIII established the church as a cardinalite title in 1960. In 2001, a new museum was opened. In 2006 a copy of the icon of Our Lady of Altagracia, venerated in the Dominican Republic, was blessed for the church. This copy was by **Leon Bosch**, 1936. (1)

In 2001, a new museum was opened. (1)

In 2006 a copy of the icon of Our Lady of Altagracia, venerated in the Dominican Republic, was blessed for the church. This copy was by **Leon Bosch**, 1936. (1)

Pope John XXIII established the church as a cardinalite title in 1960. (1)

## Exterior

The church plan is based on a Latin cross and the short sanctuary is square-ended. The dome is in lead, slightly elliptical and ribbed, and is on an octagonal drum. Alternate sides of the drum have a rectangular window and an arched niche. There is a stone lantern, with arched slit windows. (1)

### Façade (1)

The present two-storey façade is the last part that was completed, in 1738. It was cleaned and restored a few years ago. The first storey has four pairs of half-round Corinthian columns, the inner two pairs flanking the main entrance and supporting an entablature the frieze of which has a memorial inscription to Pope Clement XII and the year 1734. The smaller aisle entrances are between these inner pairs and the two outer pairs; they have segmental pediments, whereas the nave entrance has a triangular one. Above the central entrance is the coat-of-arms of Clement XII accompanied by statues of *Charity* and *Fortitude* above the tympanum by **Filippo della Valle** (1749). The corners of this storey are occupied by a pair of rectangular Corinthian pilasters, and the sections of the entablature supported by the columns are brought forward.

Over the four empty niches at the sides of the three doors there were placed in 1735 bas-reliefs to commemorate the life of St. John the Baptist. Beginning from the left these are as follows: (1) (3) (h)

- *Visitation of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth* by **Paolo Benaglia**,
- *Baptism of Jesus* by **Pietro Bracci**,
- *Preaching of St. John* by **Filippo Della Valle** and t
- *Beheading of the Baptist* by **Domenico Scaramuccia**.

The second storey has four Corinthian half-round columns with high plinths and supporting an entablature with a crowning triangular pediment. At the center is a large arched window with a segmental pediment but no pilasters, and at the bottom of this is a balustraded balcony. The line of the top of the latter is continued by a thin string course over the tops of the pilaster plinths to two other balustrades over the outer end of the first storey. In between each pair of columns is a round-headed niche with a Greek cross motif above and a lion mask below. This frontage is bounded by swooping curves without volutes, and on these is a pair of crowned fleur-de-lys. The ends of the façade, above the balustrade, is decorated with six statues of saints. (1)

During this same year (1735) the statues on the right and left over the lower section of the facade were also completed. Beginning again from the left, these are as follows: (1) (f) (h)

- *St. Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi* by **Salvatore Sanni**,
- *St. Philip Benizi* by **Francesco Queiroio**,
- *St. Peter Igneo* by **Simone Martinez**,
- *St. Bernard degli Uberti* by **Gaetano Altobelli**,
- *Bd. Eugene the Deacon* by **Carlo Pacilli**, and
- *St. Catherine De' Ricci* by **Joseph Canard**.

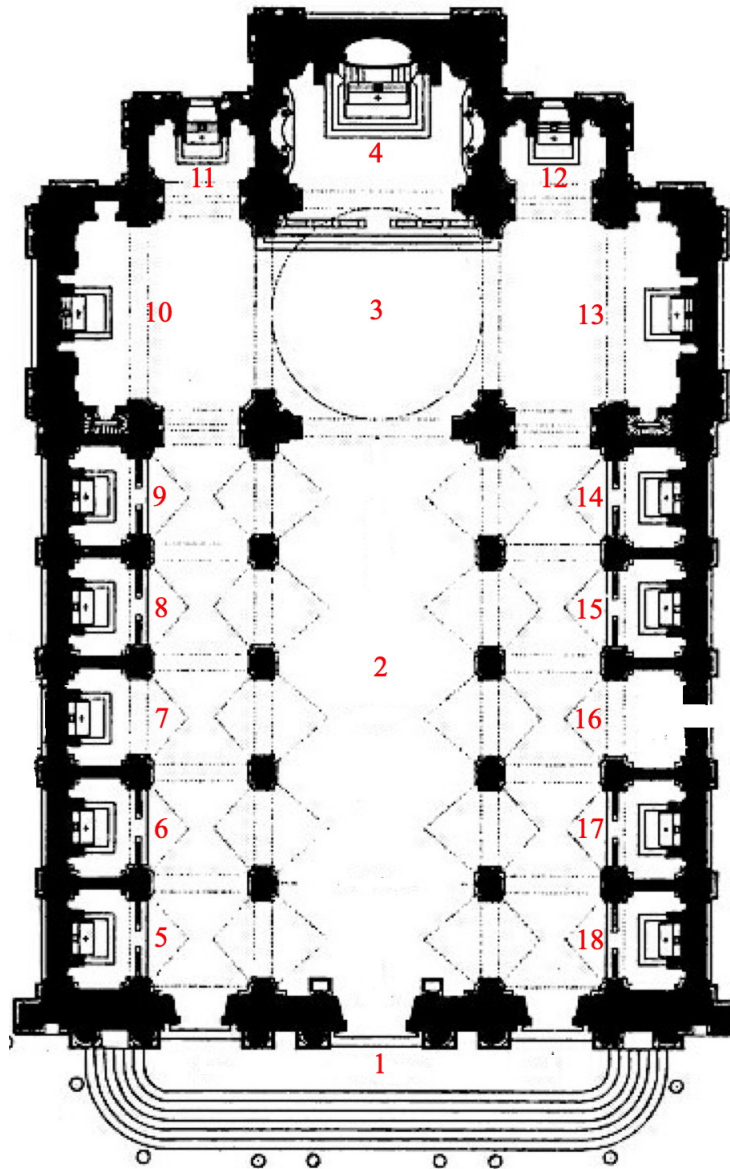
### Dome

The cupola is supported by a lofty, octagonal drum of Tuscan style, designed by **Carlo Maderno**, who completed it in 1614. The four large windows, alternating with four niches framed by twin jambs in the drum, provide an abundance of light Dome for the interior of the church. (h)

### Campanile

On the right side of the church there is a vertical extension of a portion of the outer wall with four exposed bells. The smallest of these, which was replaced because of the detachment of its iron cuff, is now in the chapel of St. Francis. It is one of the most ancient bells existing in Rome. The inscription upon it indicates that it was cast by Master Peter, O.F.M., during the time of Brother Elias (d. 1253). The other three bells were acquired in November, 1585, for 918 scudi. They came from England, having been taken from churches and monasteries during the suppression of Queen Elizabeth (1571). Two of these bells have been recast. (h)

## Plan



## Interior

There is a central nave of five bays with side aisles, and five identical self-contained chapels on either side off the aisles (one of these on the right is a side entrance). Then comes a transept, with a dome over the crossing. The sanctuary is a single bay. At each end of the transept is a further chapel, and two more flank the sanctuary. (1)

The interior of the church, a veritable museum of Tuscan art of the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, contains an interesting collection of monuments. Saints who were specially venerated in Florence are also commemorated here, since the various chapels were dedicated to the patron saints of those who furnished them. (h)

The decorative scheme is mostly white tricked out in light grey, including the inside of the dome which has very simple and non-figurative monochrome decoration. The side chapels are much more richly decorated, but the observant visitor will notice disquieting signs that the chapel roofs are not weathertight in places. There is a balcony above the high altar, and this is accessible to visitors who can thus enjoy an unusual viewpoint. (1)



Nave (2)

The nave arcades have rectangular piers, with Doric impostes supporting the arches and Corinthian pilasters on their inner faces rising up to support an entablature with a projecting cornice having modillions (small corbels). This entablature is painted to resemble grey-veined marble. The central nave side walls, above this and below the ceiling, are unusually low and are in the style of two attic plinths having slightly recessed panels separated by posts. The panels look as if they were meant to have been frescoed. (1)

The barrel-vaulted ceiling has window lunettes over the arcade arches. It lacks decoration, except for a small central fresco of a heraldic shield. (1)

The church organ in its gilded case is in a floating balustraded gallery which is on corbels over the entrance. The organ was installed in 1673. (1) (h)

The floor of the church, composed of slabs of grey and white marble set in various geometric designs, was restored in 1852 and again in 1893 because of damage done to it by the flooding of the Tiber.. (1). (h)

**Borromini** is buried under the cupola, on the right, in the tomb by **Carlo Maderno**, but you will find a commemorative plaque on the left, because the pavement was changed in 1853. In 1955 a wall epitaph was installed on on the third pier on the left hand side of the nave. It has a little portrait of the architect above it. (1)

On the pillars of the nave are monuments to Francesca Riccardi Calderini Pecori by **Antonio Raggi** (1655), to Alessandro Gregorio Capponi, designed by **Ferdinando Fuga** and sculpted by **Michelangelo Slodtz** (1746), a monument to Girolamo Samminiati by **Filippo della Valle** (1733), and the bust of Pope Clement XII Corsini.

Amongst those buried in the church are: Cardinal Luigi Maria Torrigiani, Cardinal Giulio Cesare Sacchetti, the Baroque architects Carlo Maderno and Francesco Borromini, Ludovico Cardi, known as Cigoli, Onofrio del Grillo, the inspiration of the main character in the Italian movie *Il Marchese del Grillo*, and the architect Carlo Murena.

Sanctuary (4)

The sanctuary is a barrel-vaulted single bay, with the vault decorated richly in gilded stucco with a geometric pattern.

The High Altar, made of French red marble and Cottanello marble, was designed by **Francesco Borromini** on a commission by the Florentine nobleman, Orazio Falconieri. The altar aedicule counts as Borromini's last work, although his death left it unfinished. It has four ribbed Corinthian columns arranged on outward diagonals either side of the marble bas-relief altarpiece. This impressive piece depicts the *Baptism of Christ*, and is by **Antonio Raggi**, 1665. The figures of the Baptist and Christ are free-standing, while behind them a white marble cameo on a grey background incorporates depictions of *God the Father* and the *Dove of the Holy Spirit*. (1)

The aedicule columns stand on high double plinths in another kind of red marble, this one from France (rosso di Francia), and support a triangular pediment with the side corners brought forward. On these corners sit a statue of *Justice* by **Michel Anguier**, and one of *Fortitude* by **Leonardo Retti** who was of the school of Ercole Ferrata. (1)

Below the altar are enshrined some relics of SS Protus and Hyacinth. (1)

The tympanum of the pediment contains a window, a typical Borromini touch, and above in the lunette is a second window. These contain heraldic stained glass of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (1)

Architect **Carlo Maderno** is buried in the pavement to the left of the high altar. (1)

To either side are tombs of the Falconieri family, enriched with stucco and marble portraits of family members in polychrome medallions supported by putti. (1)

To the right is the neoclassical monument to Orazio Falconieri, 1669 and designed by Ercole Ferrata with a good statue of *Faith*. She is holding a medallion with a likeness of Orazio with his wife, Ottavia Sacchetti. (1)

To the left is that to Cardinal Lelio Falconieri, 1648 with a memorial to Cardinal Alessandro Falconieri, 1734 added. The original work was by **Domenico Guidi**, including the statue of *Charity*. This monument had one of its medallion-holders replaced in 1845 by a very good neo-Classical statue of a girl weeper putting a wreath on a pagan altar. (1) (h)

The small monument to Alessandro Falconieri Mellini and his wife Marianno Lante (placed there in 1815) is the work of **Paolo Benaglia**, a disciple of Canova. (1) (h)

### Cripta Falconieri

There is a burial vault for the Falconieri family below the sanctuary, designed by **Borromini**, but this proved unusable because of the incursion of river water. It is an elliptical room, with a flat stucco ceiling on an entablature supported by Doric columns. The ceiling has ribs focusing on a central elliptical tondo containing a stucco relief featuring crossed palm branches with a flower-sweg and ribbon. The color scheme is creamy white. There is an apse niche containing an altar, and four doorways in the wall with elliptical apertures (oculi) above and columns to the sides. One is for the staircase, and the others lead into loculi for coffins. (1)

### Side chapels

The chapels will be described in a clockwise fashion from the left rear of the church.

#### Chapel of St Sebastian (Cappella Montauti) (5)

The first chapel at the left rear is dedicated to St. Sebastian, Martyr in Rome and protector of Rome together with Peter and Paul. From 1590 it was the family chapel of Sebastiano Montauti (d. 1595). His coat of arms is on the entrance arch and on the pedestals of the altar columns. The aedicule above the altar has two columns of bigio brecciato marble. It was the Baptistery from 1603 until 1853. (d)

Architect: 1583-1588 – **Giacomo della Porta**

Altarpiece: *St. Sebastian being tended to by Three Pious Women*, oil on canvas by **Giovanni Battista Vanni**

Left side: *St. Stephen I, Pope and Martyr*, Oil on canvas, by an unknown 17th century Roman artist

Memorials: Two funerary inscriptions, dated 1549 and 1580, originally in the oratory of Sant'Orsola (demolished)

Floor: 11 coats-of-arms of different Florentine families originally part of the tombs on the floor of the church and put in this chapel when the floor was renewed in 1853. From left to right:

Bracciolini, Ferrini, Rogeri, Serristori, Lapaccini, Benini, Rinaldi, Falconieri, Franceschi, Chellini, Lippi e Paribeni.

#### Chapel of St Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi (Cappella Cavalcanti) (6)

Previously dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin, now to St. Mary Magdalen de'Pazzi, Carmelitan mystic saint (Florence 1566-1607). Since 1590 it is the family chapel of the Luca Cavalcanti (Rome 1558-1598), and Pandolfini chapel from 1660-1823. (d)

Architect: 1583-1588 – **Giacomo della Porta**

Altarpiece: *Saint Mary Maddalen de'Pazzi before the Virgin Mary*, oil on canvas (ca.1600) by **Francesco**

**Corradi**, official painter of the Florentine saint. On the sides of the altar painting, originally dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin and now lost, by **Agostino Ciampelli**: *St. Anne* (right) and *St. Joseph* (left).

Sides: frescoes by **Giovanni Balducci** known as **Cosci**.

Right: *The Virgin tells St. Luke and St. Paul Episodes in the Life of Jesus*.

Left: *St. Egidio and the King of France*.

Vault: center, *The Birth of Mary* and scenes from St. Egidio's life, also by **Balducci**

Here is a memorial to Luigi Valentini, a physician, 1827.

### Baptistry Chapel (7)

Originally side door to the church. In 1853, it was walled in and the passage was converted into the baptistry. Baptismal font from the XV century, brought to this chapel from the first chapel on the left. On the wall, two small 15th century ciboria in white marble from the near by church of Sant'Orsola "Della Pieta", which was demolished in 1889, now in the museum of this church. (d)

Architect: 1583-1588 – **Giacomo della Porta**.

Front Wall: over the walled door, oil on canvas *St. John the Baptist Preaching*, signed **Salvio Savini**.

Vault: decorated with a painted coffer ceiling with the *Holy Spirit* the center, painted in 1853 when the chapel was made into the baptistry.

### Chapel of St Anthony Abbot and St. Lawrence (Cappella Baccelli) (8)

Dedicated to St. Anthony Abbot, Egyptian hermit monk (251-359). From 1590 it was the family chapel of Antonio Francesco Benozzi (died in Rome 1592). In 1592 it passed to Lorenzo Benozzi. In 1600 to the Cresci and in 1679 to the Baccelli family (coat-of-arms on the altar and on the entrance arch and funerary monuments on each side wall). Chapel was restored in 2011. (1) (8) (d)

Architect: 1583-1588 – **Giacomo della Porta**

Altarpiece: *The death of St. Anthony*, oil on wood dated 1612 and signed **Agostino Ciampelli**

Sides: oil on canvas by **Giovanni Angelo Canini** (1650)

Right: *The Conversion of St. Paul*.

Left: *The Apparition of Jesus to the Apostles by the lake of Tiberias*.

Vault: frescoes by **Antonio Tempesta**

Left: *St. Lawrence with Pope Sixtus II*.

Right: *St. Lawrence and the Judge*.

Center: *St. Lawrence in Glory*.

Funerary monuments: to Marco Panivini Rosati, 1817 by **Pietro Tenerani** and also to Adelaide Leonori 1903. The fat little cherubs on the monuments are carved by **François Duquesnoy**.

### Chapel of St Francis of Assisi (Cappella Scarlatti)(9)

The fifth chapel on the left is dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi, Founder of the Franciscan Order. From 1586 the family chapel of Francesco Scarlatti (d. 1585). In 1684 it passed to the family of Girolamo Palazzeschi (died in 1702); and in 1786 to the family of the Card. Giovanni Rinuccini (d. 1801). (1) (10) (d)

Architect: 1583-1588 – **Giacomo della Porta**

Altarpiece: *St. Francis Praying in La Verna*, oil on canvas attributed to **Ludovico Cardi**.

Sides: 1590 ca. frescoes signed by **Niccolò Circignani**

Right: *St. Francis before the Sultan*,

Left: *St. Francis Asking to approve of the Rule from Honorius III*. On the sides, by the same author of the canvas, *St. Paul* (right) and *St. Peter* (left).

Vault: 1684,

Right: *St. Francis asking Honorius III to grant the Porziuncote Indulgence*,

Left: *St. Francis Preaching*, by **Giuseppe Ghezzi**.

### Chapel of St Mary Magdalene (Cappella Capponi) (10)

The left hand end of the transept contains an altar dedicated to St Mary Magdalene, with two impressive Corinthian columns in alabaster. From 1622 it belonged to the family of Mons. Giovanni Angelo Capponi (died in 1622). From 1746 Cardelli family chapel.

Architecture: from 1622, works by **Carlo Maderno**

Altarpiece: *Penitent St. Mary Magdalen with Angels*, oil on canvas (1620) by **Astolfo Petrazzi**.

Also there are commemorative busts of Antonio Barberini, after Bernini, and of Pietro de' Rossi di Foglia, (d. 1673). (1) (d)

In front of the chapel on the right pillar: 1781 memorial of Alessandro Gregorio Capponi (died in 1746) by **Ferdinando Fuga**, and sculpture by **Michelange Slodtz**.

In front of the chapel on left pillar: 1733 memorial and tomb of Girolamo Sanminiati dei Bandi (died in 1733) by **Filippo della Valle**. (f)

### Chapel of the Crucifix (Sacchetti Chapel) (11)

To the left of the sanctuary is the Cappella del Crocefisso. The Sacchetti family, who owned a nearby palazzo, commissioned **Giovanni Lanfranco** to decorate the chapel with frescoes, paintings and stucco work in 1623. Sacchetti coat-of-arms on the entrance arch and family funerary inscriptions on the sides of the chapel. Between two dark alabaster columns there is a bronze crucifix attached to a black slab of African marble. The figure of Christ is cast from a model made by **Prospero Antichi**. (1) (d) (h)

Altarpiece: Bronze Crucifix in natural dimensions, by **Prospero Antichi** and **Paolo Sanquirico**

Sides: oil on wood paintings by **Giovanni Lanfranco** (considered to be masterpieces)

Left: *Ascent of Mount Calvary*

Right: *Christ in Gethsemane*

Vault: frescoes by **Lanfranco**, *The Resurrection of Christ* and *the Four Evangelists*.

Right lunette: *Crowning with Thorns*.

Left lunette: *Juda's Betrayal*.

Stuccoes on pillars of unknown author.

### The Holy Virgin's Mercy Chapel (12)

The chapel to the right of the sanctuary is the Chapel of the Archiconfraternity of "San Giovanni dei Fiorentini". The chapel is dedicated to Our Lady, and is spectacularly frescoed. Unfortunately, the rain getting in has caused serious damage. (1) (d) (h)

Marble Altar: from 1612-1614 with elaborately inlaid marble, works by **Matteo Castelli da Melide**.

Altarpiece: a fresco fragment, much restored and now faded, of *Virgin and Child*, taken for this chapel from the wall of a nearby street in 1640, attributed to **Filippino Lippi**. The story attached to it is that a man playing boules lost badly, threw a boule at the image in fury and was paralyzed as a result for forty days. The ornate bronze frame of the icon is by **Marco Gamberucci**.

Architect: from 1612, works by **Carlo Maderno**.

Sides: oil paintings on wall.

Left: *Nativity of the Virgin*, by **Agostino Ciampelli**

Right: *The Dormition of the Virgin*, by **Anastasio Fontebuoni**

Frames: stucco sculptures by **Pietro da Siena**

Lunettes and vault: frescoes by **Agostino Ciampelli**.

Left: *The Annunciation*

Right: *The Visitation*

Vault: *The Coronation of Mary*

Pier Pilasters: *Portraits of prophets*

On the bottom of the right hand side wall: Funerary monument dedicated to architect **Gaspare Salvi** who was responsible for the church works from 1846-1853.

Floor: a marble *fleur-de-lis*, symbol of Florence.

### Chapel of SS Cosmas and Damian (Cappella Nerli) (13)

The chapel in the end of the right transept is dedicated to SS Cosmas and Damian. Two martyred 3<sup>rd</sup> century medical doctors, patrons of the Medici family. From 1667 it was the chapel of the family of the Florentine Senator Pietro Nerli (died in 1669), whose tomb and coat-of-arms are in the center of the floor outside of the chapel. Cardinal Francesco Nerli (d. 1670) is also buried here. (1) (10) (d)

Architect: from 1612, works by **Carlo Maderno**

Altarpiece: *Martyrdom of Sts. Cosmas and Damian*, oil on wood commissioned for this chapel in 1669, by **Salvator Rosa**. On this painting, **Salvator Rosa** said according to his contemporary Passery: "have Michelangelo come, and have him design this nude better than I have done it, if he will be able to!"

Relic: Inside the altar, remains the Saints Proto and Giacinto, donated to the church by Clemente VIII in 1592, and in this chapel since 1656. In 1845 archaeologist Giuseppe Marchi discovered the real



burial of the saints and the remains were taken to the Collegio di Propaganda Fide. In 1881 a portion of these remains was brought to this chapel.

Memorials: The side walls here have two memorials with portrait busts. The one on the right is to Ottaviano Acciaiuoli 1659 by **Ercole Ferrata**, and the other to Mons Ottavio Corsini 1641 by **Alessandro Algardi**.

#### Chapel of Our Lady of Altigracia

In a small alcove on the right wall of the chapel of SS Cosmas and Damian. In 2006 a copy of the icon of *Our Lady of Altigracia* was blessed for the church. She is the Protector of the Dominican Republic. Between 1997 and 2005 the chapel was dedicated to the Chapel of Mercy. (1) (d)

Painting: *Nuestra Señora de la Altigracia*, oil on canvas by Dominican painter **León Bosch**, copy of the anonymous original painting, brought from Extremadure (Spain) to Santo Domingo (early XVI century), now in the Basilica Higuey, Dominican Rep., Mahognay frame by **Joyeria Brador** of Santo Domingo, with amber and larimar inserts from the Dominican Amber Museum's collection, all materials are native to the Dominican Rep.

Architect: from 1612, works by **Carlo Maderno**

Exterior: Carsini Memorial, second of four memorials built in the transept, with design based on the model of the Barberini memorial (1629 left transept), attributed to **Gian Lorenzo Bernini**.

On the next pier is a very fine memorial to Francesca Calderini Pecori Riccardi, 1655 by **Antonio Raggi**. The sculpture of her is accompanied by a pair of very realistic weeping putti. Also here is a memorial to Gaetano Forti, 1771. This has an unusual and very good cameo portrait. (1)

#### Chapel of St Philip Neri (Cappella Torrigiani) (14)

The fifth chapel on the right is dedicated to St Philip Neri, Florentine saint (1515-1595) canonized the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 1622. Originally the old sacristy entrance and home of the first church organ until 1679. From 1672, Zanobi Baldinotti's family chapel dedicated to St. Zanobi, Archbishop of Florence. Then the sacresty entrance was moved to the door under the Acciaiuoli Funerary monument in the right transept. In 1770 it became Card. Luigi Torrigiani's family chapel, dedicated to St. Philip Neri, who was rector of the church many years. The chapel differs from the other nave chapels in that there is a little cupola with a lantern instead of a barrel vault. The aedicule above the altar has four columns of Sicilian jasper. Above the cornices of the side walls are two low bas-reliefs representing episodes from the life of the saint. The altar itself is made of precious marbles..

(1) (d) (h)

Architect: chapel remodeled in 1770 by architect **Ferdinando Fuga**.

Altarpiece: *The Virgin Mary Appears to St. Philip Neri*, oil on canvas copy from original (now in Florence, Palazzo Pitti), by **Carlo Maratta**. (not there in 2014)

Sculpture on altar: 1999 bronze statue of S. Philip Neri by Sculptor **Giuseppe Ducrot**, with a wooden crucifix that belonged to the saint.

#### Chapel of St Jerome (Cappella Mancini) (15)

The next chapel on the right hand side is dedicated to St. Jerome, Dalmatian saint (342-420), Presbyter and Doctor of the Holy Church. Since 1590 the chapel belonged to the family of Girolamo Mancini (Florence 1512-Rome 1589), his memorial inscription is on the floor. (1) (d) (h)

Architect: 1583-1588 - **Giacomo della Porta**

Altarpiece: *A Penitent St. Jerome with Two Virtues*, oil on wood dated 1599 and signed by **Santi di Tito**.

Sides: Oil on wood paintings

Right: *St. Jerome Writing the Vulgate and Three Virtues*, dated 1599 and signed **Ludovico Cardi**.

Left: *St. Jerome Supervising the Building of a Monastery*, dated 1599 and signed **Domenico Cresti**.

Vault and Pilasters: frescoes are by the Florentine artist **Stefano Pieri**.

#### Side entrance (16)

The next nave bay does not have a chapel, but instead a vestibule for the sacristy. Over the sacristy door used to be a statue of a young St John the Baptist in 15<sup>th</sup> century Florentine style. It had been attributed to

Donatello, which seemed likely because of both the style and the subject, but is now attributed to Michelangelo. This ascription relies on documentary evidence. This statue is now on display in the church's museum, with other masterpieces from the church such as two busts by the young Gian Lorenzo Bernini. (1) (h)

Here is a monument commemorating Pope Clement XII, with a good portrait bust by **Filippo Della Valle**. (1) (f)

#### Chapel of St Philip Benizi (Cappella Firenzuola) (17)

Originally dedicated to the Sts. Simon and Jude, and now to St. Philip Benizi, Florentine saint (1233-1585), canonized in 1671. The chapel belonged to the Firenzuola family, Florentine textile merchants living in Rome during the 16th century, from 1593 and since 1822, to the family of Ferdinando Guicciardini (died in 1822). The altarpiece is framed by two columns of coralline breccia. (d) (e) (h)

Architect: 1583-1588 - **Giacomo della Porta**

Altarpiece: *St. Filippo Benizi*, oil on canvas by an unknown Florentine artist from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Sides: frescoes by **Orazio Gentileschi**:

Right: *The Deacon Eufrosinos Forgiven by the Son of the Girl from Babylon*

Left: *Simon and Jude Baptising the King of Persia and General Barbadach*.

Entrance arch: frescoes of the *Firenzuola brothers between two Sibyls with an Angel*

Pilasters: in chiaroscuro, by **Giovanni de San Giovanni**

Floor: 10 coats-of-arms of different Florentine families originally part of the tombs on the floor of the church and put in this chapel when the floor was renewed in 1853. From left to right: Roti, Mazzinghi, Strozzi, Ranerio, Carlo Maderno (Francesco Borromini's design), Coppola, Mignajo, Acciaiuoli, Carpiani, and Filicaia.

There is a copy of the icon of *Our Lady of Pompei* on the altar; this is a popular devotion in Rome, brought by immigrants from the Naples area since the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (1)

#### Chapel of St Vincent Ferrer (Cappella Fantoni) (18)

The first chapel on the right is dedicated to St. Vincent Ferrer, Spanish saint (Valence 1350-1418) from the Dominican Order. The aedicule has a pair of Corinthian columns in black marble supporting a segmental pediment with modillions. The walls have lost their decoration. The chapel from 1603 belonged to the family of Vincent Fantoni (died in 1602), funerary inscription on right hand wall. The chapel later passed to the family of the Marchise Cosimo del Grillo (funerary inscription on the center of the floor). (1) (d) (h)

Architect: 1583-1588 - **Giacomo della Porta**

Altarpiece: *St. Vincent Ferrer Preaching*, oil on canvas is attributed to **Domenico Cresti**.

Right wall: 1603 Vincenzo Fantoni's funerary inscription, first patron of the chapel.

Floor: 13 coats-of-arms of different Florentine families originally part of the tombs on the floor of the church and put in this chapel when the floor was renewed in 1853. From left to right: Rapetti, Gallinelli, Ricasoli, Meliori, Rocchi, De Cepparello, Medici, Gella, Vannini, Soleti, Molinari, Alberici and Sellori. Also the entrance to the vault of the Grillo family.

### **Special notes**

The faithful are allowed to bring their pets here to be blessed, and at Easter an annual ceremony where lambs are blessed takes place here.

### **Museo di Arte Sacra**

The parish has created a small museum to display the various treasures of sacred art formerly kept locked away in the sacristy. It is a small collection, but an impressive one, and is kept in a purpose-built structure opened in 2001. The museum's collection includes 48 works on display, and 20 in storage:

- A marble statue of San Giovanni Battista, attributed to **Michelangelo Buonarroti**;
- An oval marble tondo of the *Madonna and Child with St. Anne*, by **Pierino da Vinci**;
- A marble bust of Antonio Cepparello by **Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini**;
- A marble bust of Antonio Coppola, by **Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini**;

- A marble bust of Pier Cambi by **Pompeo Ferrucci**;
- A Bronze crucifix by **Antonio Raggi**;
- A fresco of a seated *Madonna and Child*, attributed to **Daniele da Volterra**;
- An oil painting of *The preaching of John the Baptist* by **Giovanni Maria Bottala** aka **Rafaellino**;
- An English bronze bell inscribed "Magister Petrus", twelfth century ;
- An oil painting of *Madonna and Child*, attributed to **Pompeo Girolamo Batoni** and school;
- A large silver monstrance by **Luigi Valadier**, second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century;
- A wooden wall tabernacle, first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century;
- An oil painting of *St. Philip Neri and St. Charles Borromeo*, 17<sup>th</sup> century;
- A reliquary in silver and gilded bronze containing the foot of Santa Maria Maddalena, base attributed to **Benvenuto Cellini**, of the 17<sup>th</sup> century;
- A selection of reliquaries (arm, urn, torso) from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century;
- A selection of mixed media monstrances polychrome from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century;
- An icon of the *Crucifixion*, 19<sup>th</sup> century, a gift of Giulio [Andreotti](#) .

### Burials:

Giulio Cesare Cardinal [SACCHETTI](#), (1586-1663)

Lelio Cardinal [FALCONIERI](#), (1585-1648)

Francesco Cardinal [NERLI](#), *seniore*, (1594-1670)

Buried in the chapel of Ss. Cosma e Damiano

Urbano Cardinal [SACCHETTI](#), (1640-1705)

Buried in the tomb of his ancestors in the chapel of *SS. Crocifisso*

Alessandro Cardinal [FALCONIERI](#), (1657-1734)

Buried to the left of the main altar, in an urn of black marble with a simple epitaph that he had composed, under the mausoleum of Cardinal Lelio Falconieri.

Filippo Cardinal [BUONDELMONTE](#), (1691-1741)

Died *alla vigilia* of his promotion to the cardinalate

Luigi Maria Cardinal [TORRIGIANI](#), (1697-1777)

Buried in the tomb he had built for himself

Giovanni Cardinal [RINUCCINI](#), (1743-1801)

Buried in the family chapel, dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi

Bishop Ottavio [Corsini](#) (1588–1641)

Buried in Our Lady Chapel

Carlo [Maderno](#) (1556-1629)

Architect of the high Roman Baroque

Buried in the family tomb

Francesco [Borromini](#) (1599-1667)

Architect of the high Roman Baroque

Buried in the family tomb of Carlo Maderno

Orazio [Falconieri](#) (d. 1664), and his wife Ottavia Sacchetti (1590–1645)

Pietro Nerli (died in 1669), Florentine Senator

Buried in Our Lady Chapel, his family chapel

Alessandro Gregorio [Capponi](#) (1683-1746)

Privy Chamberlain to the Pope, and president for life of the Vatican Museum

Gaspare [Salvi](#) (1800-1853)

Architect of the church

### Artists and Architects:

Agostino [Ciampelli](#) (1565-1630), Italian painter of the Baroque period, from Florence

Alessandro [Algardi](#) (1598-1654), Italian high- Baroque sculptor, architect

Alessandro [Galilei](#) (1691-1737), Florentine mathematician, architect and theorist

Anastasio [Fontebuoni](#) (1571-1626), Italian (Florence) painter of the Baroque period

Antonio [Circignani](#) [aka *il Pomarancio*] (1567-1630), Italian painter of the late-Renaissance/  
Mannerism period

Antonio da [Sangallo the Younger](#) (1484-1546), Italian Renaissance architect from Florence

Antonio [Raggi](#) [aka *Il Lombardo*] (1624-1686), Italian sculptor of the Baroque

Antonio [Tempesta](#) [aka *Tempesti*] (1555-1630), Italian painter and cartographer

Astolfo [Petrazzi](#) (1583-1653), Italian Baroque painter from Siena

Baccio [Ciampi](#) (1574-1654), Italian painter of the late-Mannerism and early-Baroque style

Benvenuto [Cellini](#) (1500-1571), Italian goldsmith, sculptor, draftsman, soldier and musician, one of the most important artists of Mannerism

Carlo [Fontana](#) (1634-1714), Italian architect of the Late Baroque period

Carlo [Maderno](#) (1556-1629), Swiss-Italian architect [also see [here](#)]

Carlo [Maratta](#) (1625-1713), Italian Late Baroque Classical painter

Carlo [Pacilli](#) (1720-1772), Italian sculptor

Ciro [Ferri](#) (1634-1689), Italian Baroque painter and sculptor

Daniele Ricciarelli [da Volterra](#) (1509-1566), Italian Mannerist painter, sculptor and architect

Domenico [Crespi](#) (or Cresti) [aka *Il Passignano*] (1559-1638), Italian painter of a late-Renaissance or Contra-Maniera (Counter-Mannerism) style

Domenico [Guidi](#) (1625-1701), Italian sculptor of the Baroque period

Domenico [Scaramuccia](#) (18<sup>th</sup> cent), Italian sculptor

Ercole [Ferrata](#) (1610-1686), Italian sculptor of the Baroque period

Ferdinando [Fuga](#) (1699-1781), Italian architect in the Baroque style

Ferruccio [Ferrazzi](#) (1891-1978), Italian painter

Filippino [Lippi](#) (1457-1504), Italian painter during the High Renaissance period

Filippo [Carcani](#) [aka *Filippone*] (17<sup>th</sup> century), Italian sculptor

Filippo [della Valle](#) (1698-1768), Italian late-Baroque or early Neoclassic sculptor

Francesco [Borromini](#) (1599-1667), leading figure in the emergence of Roman Baroque architecture

Francesco Corradi (1570-1661), Italian painter from Florence

Francesco [Queirolo](#) (1704-1762), Italian sculptor, from Genova

François [Duquesnoy](#) [aka Francesco Fiammingo] (1597-643), a Flemish Baroque sculptor

Gaetano Altobelli (18<sup>th</sup> cent), Italian painter

Gaspere [Salvi](#) (1786-1849), Italian architect

Giacomo [della Porta](#) (c.1533-1602), Italian sculptor and architect

Gian Lorenzo [Bernini](#) (1598-1680), Italian Baroque sculptor and architect [also see [here](#)]

Giovanni Angelo [Canini](#) (1609-1666), Italian painter and engraver of the Baroque period

Giovanni [Balducci](#) [aka *Il Cosci*] (1560-1631), Italian painter, from Florence

Giovanni Battista [Vanni](#) (1599-1660), Italian painter and engraver of the Baroque period

Giovanni [da San Giovanni](#) [aka Giovanni [Mannozi](#)] (1592-1636), Italian painter of the early Baroque period.

Giovanni [Lanfranco](#) (1582-1647), Italian Baroque painter [also see [here](#)]

Giovanni Maria [Bottala](#) [aka *Rafaellino*] (1613-1644), Italian painter of the Baroque period

Giuseppe [Ducrot](#) (b. 1966), Italian sculptor

Giuseppe [Ghezzi](#) (1634-1721), Italian painter of the Baroque period

Jacopo [Sansovino](#) (1486-1570), Italian sculptor and architect

Joseph Canard (18<sup>th</sup> cent), sculptor

Joyeria Brador (20<sup>th</sup> cent), Dominican jeweler

León [Bosch](#) (b. 1936), Dominican painter

Leonardo [Retti](#) (1670-1709), Italian sculptor

Ludovico [Cardi](#) [aka *Cigoli*] (1559-1613), Italian painter and architect of the late Mannerist and early Baroque period

Luigi [Valadier](#) (1726-1785), Italian sculptor and goldsmith

Marco Gamberucci (17<sup>th</sup> cent), Italian silversmith

Matteo [Castelli](#) de Melide (1555-1632), Swiss architect

Michel [Anguier](#) (1612-1686), French sculptor

Michel [Maille](#) [aka *Michele Maglià*] (1643-1703), French sculptor

Michelangelo di Lodovico [Buonarroti](#) Simoni [aka Michelangelo] (1475-1564), Italian sculptor, painter, architect, poet, and engineer of the High Renaissance who exerted an unparalleled influence on the development of Western art



Niccolò [Circignani](#) [aka *Il Pomarancio*] (1520-1597), Italian late-Renaissance / Mannerist painter  
 Orazio Lomi [Gentileschi](#) (1563-1639), Italian late-Mannerist/early-Baroque painter  
 Paolo [Benaglia](#) (d. 1739), Italian sculptor  
 Paolo [Sanquirico](#) (1565-1630), Italian sculptor and medallist  
 Pierino [da Vinci](#) (1529-1553), Italian sculptor, nephew of Leonardo da Vinci  
 Pietro [Bernini](#) (1562-1629), Italian sculptor  
 Pietro Berrettini [da Cortona](#) (1597-1669), Italian Baroque painter and architect  
 Pietro [Bracci](#) (1700-1773), Italian sculptor of the Late Baroque  
 Pietro da Siena (17<sup>th</sup> cent.), Italian stucco sculptor  
 Pietro [Tenerani](#) (1789-1869), Italian sculptor of the **Neoclassic** style  
 Pompeo Girolamo [Batoni](#) (1708 -1787), Italian painter of the Rococo/ Neoclassical period  
 Prospero [Antichi](#) [aka *il Bresciano*], (c. 1555/1565-1592), Italian sculptor  
 René-Michel [Slodtz](#) [aka *Michelangelo Slodtz*] (1705-1764), French sculptor from Paris  
 Salvator [Rosa](#) (1615-1673), Italian painter  
 Salvatore Sanni (18<sup>th</sup> cent), Italian sculptor  
 Salvio Savini (16<sup>th</sup> cent.), Italian painter from Florence  
 Santi [di Tito](#) (1536-1603), Italian painter of the proto-Baroque style  
 Simone [Martinez](#) (1689-1768), Italian sculptor, from Messina  
 Stefano Pieri (1542-1629), Italian painter

**Location:**

Addr: Via Acciaiuoli 2 (Via Giulia), 00186 Roma  
 Coord: [41° 53' 59" N, 12° 27' 54" E](#)

**Info:**

**Telephone:** 0039 06-68.89.20.59

**Fax:** 0039 06 68892059

**Email:** [s.giovedefiorentini@libero.it](mailto:s.giovedefiorentini@libero.it)

Open every day 7.30am-1.00pm, 4.00pm-7.00pm

**Masses**

Weekdays 7.25am 8.00am 6.30pm

Holidays 8.00am 10.30am 12.00am 6.00pm(English) 7.00pm

Days before a Holiday 7.00pm

**Notes: The art collection:**

Mon-Wed-Fri 9.30am-12.00am

during the other days upon request calling the Tel. 0039 06 6869892 or 0039 06 68892059

During the mass is not allowed to visit the church

Guided tours for groups upon request calling the Tel. 0039 06 6869892-06 68892059

**Links and References:**

1. [Roman Churches Wiki](#)
2. [English Wikipedia page](#)
3. [Info Roma web site](#)
4. [060608.it web site](#)
5. [Tesori di Roma web site](#)
6. [Wikimedia Commons photo catalogue](#)

7. [Wikimedia Commons photo catalogue \(tombs\)](#)
8. [Church web page](#) (no longer online)
9. [Italian Wikipedia web page](#) (translated)
10. [Cardinals of the Catholic Church](#)
  - a. Lewine, Milton; THE ROMAN CHURCH INTERIOR, 1527-1580; 1963
  - b. Donovan, Jeremiah; ROME ANCIENT AND MODERN AND ITS ENVIRONS; 1842
  - c. Sharp, Mary; A GUIDE TO THE CHURCHES OF ROME; 1966
  - d. Descriptive plaques in church
  - e. Germond, Suzan Major; "**Orazio Gentileschi and S. Giovanni dei Fiorentini**"; *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 135, No. 1088 (Nov., 1993), pp. 754-759 (885819.pdf)
  - f. Hyde Minor, Vernon; "**Passive Tranquility: The Sculpture of Filippo Della Valle**"; Vol. 87, part 5, pg 143 (jstor 1006652)
  - g. Lotz, Wolfgang; "**The Roman Legacy in Sansovino's Venetian Buildings**"; *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Mar., 1963), pp. 3-12 (jstor 988206)
  - h. Rezza, Dario, Msgr.; "**The Basilica of Saint John the Baptist of the Florentines: An Illustrated Guide of Her History and Art**"; 2002

Other external links:

Italian Wikipedia page on museum ([here](#))

"De Alvariis" gallery on Flickr –exterior ([here](#))

"De Alvariis" gallery on Flickr –interior ([here](#))

[CoR page](#)