

Sant'Ignazio di Loyola a Campo



The **Church of Saint Ignatius of Loyola at Campus Martius** is Roman Catholic titular church dedicated to St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order, located in Rome. Built in Baroque style between 1626 and 1650, the church functioned originally as Rectory church to the adjacent Collegio Romano, that moved in 1584 to a new larger building and became the Pontifical Gregorian University. [1]

History

The Collegio Romano opened very humbly in 1551, with an inscription over the door summing up its simple purpose: "*School of Grammar, Humanity, and Christian Doctrine. Free.* Plagued by financial problems in the early years, the Collegio Romano had various provisional centers. In 1560, Vittoria della Tolfa, Marchesa della Valle, donated her family *isola*, an entire city block and its existing buildings, to the Society of Jesus in memory of her late husband the Marchese della Guardia Camillo Orsini, founding the Collegio Romano. [1]

Although the Jesuits got the Marchesa's land, they did not get any money from her for completing the church. Budgetary restraints compelled them to hire their own architect. Construction of the church was taken over by the Jesuit architect Giovanni Tristano. Built entirely by Jesuit labor, the church of the the Most Holy Annunciation was first used for worship in 1567. A three-aisled church dedicated to the Santissima Annunziata was built in the Collegio Romano between 1562 and 1567 on the foundations of the pre-existing construction. Since the earlier church had already been built to the height of the ground floor in 1555, there was no way for the Jesuits to expand the structure to

hold the increasing number of students attending the Collegio Romano. The facade was very similar to that of the contemporary Church of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, which was also designed by Giovanni Tristano. In accordance with the wishes of the Marchesa, the façade proudly displayed the Orsini arms. The Church of the Most Holy Annunciation was enlarged in 1580 when Pope Gregory XIII expanded the Collegio Romano itself, especially the side chapels. [1]

The old church became insufficient for over two thousand students of many nations who were attending the College at the beginning of the 17th century. Pope Gregory XV, who was an old pupil of the Collegio Romano, was strongly attached to the Church. Following the canonization Saint Ignatius of Loyola in 1622, he suggested to his nephew, Ludovico Cardinal Ludovisi, that a new church should be erected to the founder of the Society of Jesus, at the College itself. The young cardinal accepted the idea, asked several architects to draw plans, among which Carlo Maderno. Ludovisi finally chose that of the Jesuit mathematician Orazio Grassi, professor at the Collegio Romano itself. [1]

The foundation stone was laid only on August 2, 1626 by Cardinal Ludovisi, four years later, a delay which was caused by the fact that a section of the buildings belonging to the Roman College had to be dismantled. The old church was eventually demolished in 1650 to make way for the massive Church of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, which was finished only at the end of the century. In striking contrast to the Church of the Most Holy Annunciation, which occupied only a small section of the Collegio Romano, the Church of Saint Ignatius of Loyola took up a quarter of the entire block when it was completed. [1]

The church was opened for public worship only in 1650, at the occasion of the Jubilee of 1650. The final solemn consecration of the church was celebrated only in 1722 by Antonfelice Cardinal Zondadari. [1]

Exterior

The piazza in front of the church, with two palaces from 1727-1728 by Filippo Raguzzini framing it on the other side, is a good example of 18th century urban planning. [1]

Façade

The church's tripartite façade, entirely built of travertine, was designed by Orazio Grassi himself, although it is still being attributed to Alessandro Algardi. The influence of the façade of the Gesù is obvious. Grassi was careful to divide the plane of the façade into protruding and recessed vertical zones, hence avoiding the appearance of a cliff-face, and the chiaroscuro effect produced is strong and successful. [1]

The lower order is on a low plinth, and hence is approached by a flight of stairs which are brought forward in front of the central entrance to form a patio. This storey has ten Corinthian pilasters, two flanking the main entrance and the other eight in two pairs on either side. The two side entrances are between these pairs, and the pilasters facing these entrance are doubletted along their edges on that side. In between the pilaster capitals are floral swags. The entablature that these pilasters support is stepped vertically over their capitals, and the capital fragments of the doublet strips. It bears an inscription in honor of Cardinal Ludovisi:

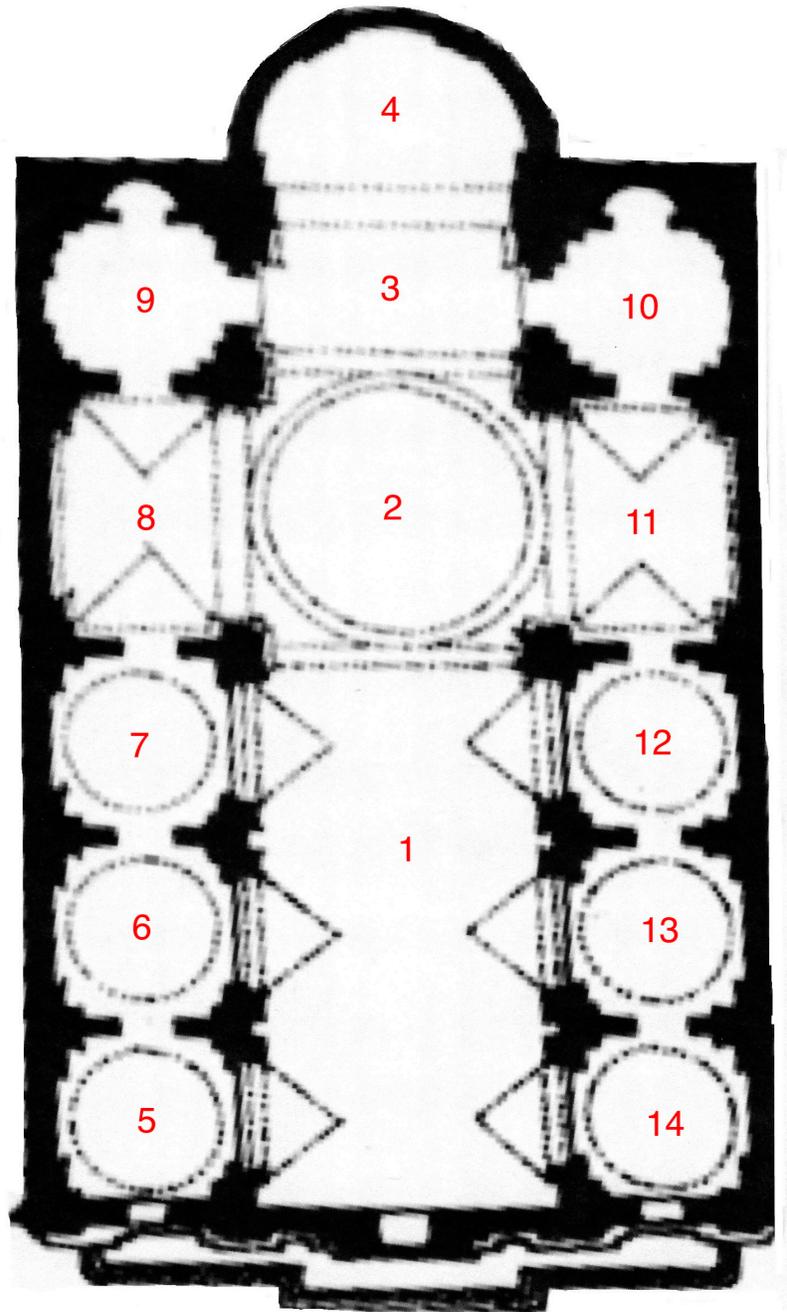
S[ancto] Ignatio, Soc[ietatis] Iesu fundatori, Lud[ovicus] Card[inalis] Ludovisius S[anctae]
R[omanae] E[cclesiae] Vice-Cancellar[ius], A[nno] Dom[ini] MDCXXVI.

The entrance doorways are similarly treated, although the central one is larger. Oversized segmental pediments are raised on block posts supported by strap corbels, with swag and curlicue embellishments. Above the side entrances are two blank square tablets with wide molded Baroque frames, and flanking the main entrance is a pair of empty round-headed niches with triangular pediments. The main entrance has a prothyrium formed by attaching a pair of Doric semi-columns to the two flanking pilasters. The entablature, with its inscription, is brought forward over their capitals and above is a large segmental pediment intruding into the second storey. [1]

The upper order sits on an attic plinth, vertically stepped to match the entablature below and with blank recessed panels. On this are six Corinthian pilasters, two matching those flanking the main

entrance and four in two pairs at the outer corners. The outer edges of the outermost pilasters are doubletted, and next to these is a pair of gigantic single volutes. Unusually, the tops of these are given Corinthian capital fragments as well. These pilasters support a second entablature, which again is vertically stepped over their capitals. On top is a triangular pediment, bearing six flaming torch finials and a central metal cross. There is a central round-headed window, within an aedicule formed by a triangular pediment supported by a pair of little Corinthian semi-columns. This is flanked by the inner two pilasters and, as with the entrance below, these have a pair of semi-columns attached. The entablature is brought forward over the capitals of these, and so is the section of pediment above. This bears the Ludovisi coat-of-arms in relief. In between the pilasters in this storey is another pair of empty round-headed niches, which have segmental pediments instead. [1]

Plan



Interior

The building was inspired by the Jesuit mother church, the Church of the Gesù in Rome (finished in the late 16th century). The church has a Latin cross plan with numerous side chapels. The dimensions of the church are 90m (300ft) in length, 50m (160ft) in width, and 25m (82ft) across the

nave. The nave is separated from the aisles by large pillars decorated with Ionic pilasters, and by arcades sustained by Ionic columns. [1] [a]

The imposing order of Corinthian pilasters that rings the entire interior, the theatrical focus on the high altar at the rear of the broad eastern apse, the church's colored marbles, animated stucco figural relief, richly ornamented altars, extensive gilding, and bold Tromp l'oeil (optical illusion) paintings in the 'dome' at its crossing and in the nave ceiling all produce a festive, sumptuous effect. [1]

The counterfaçade has a large dedicatory tablet over the main entrance, describing the foundation of the church by Cardinal Ludovisi. It is accompanied by stucco allegorical statues of *Glory* and *Religion*, and above is the cardinal's shield with a pair of putti looking as if they are trying to steal the hat. Two more putti are holding onto swags of flowers embellished with ribbons. All this is by Alessandro Algardi, 1650. [1] [4]

Each chapel arch has a molded archivolt springing from a pair of Ionic columns in pale brown and white mottled marble. Between the arches and the entablature are more stucco relief panels featuring heraldry of Cardinal Ludovisi and putti by Algardi. [1]

Frescoes of Andrea Pozzo

Andrea Pozzo, (1642-1709) a Jesuit brother, painted the grandiose fresco, the *Apotheosis of St Ignatius*, that stretches across the nave ceiling (after 1685). It celebrates the work of Saint Ignatius and the Society of Jesus in the world presenting the saint welcomed into paradise by Christ and the Virgin Mary and surrounded by allegorical representations of all four continents. Pozzo worked to open up, even dissolve the actual surface of the nave's barrel vault illusionistically, arranging a perspectival projection to make an observer see a huge and lofty cupola (of a sort), open to the bright sky, and filled with upward floating figures. This is one of the largest frescoes in the world (750m²) and was painted in three years. A marble disk set into the middle of the nave floor marks the ideal spot from which observers might fully experience the illusion. [1] [4]

A second marker in the nave floor further east provides the ideal vantage point for the trompe l'oeil painting on canvas that covers the crossing and depicts a tall, ribbed and coffered dome. The cupola one expects to see here was never built and in its place, in 1685, Andrea Pozzo supplied a painting on canvas with a perspectival projection of a cupola. Destroyed in 1891, the painting was subsequently replaced by a faithful copy in 1823 by Francesco Manno who had access to Pozzo's cartoons. There was a restoration of this in 1963 by Raffaele Lavagnino. Pozzo also frescoed the pendentives in the crossing decorating each with an Old Testament figure--*Judith*, *David*, *Samson*, and *Jael*. [1]

Sanctuary (4)

The sanctuary is embellished by two ribbed Corinthian semi-columns in the apse. The high altar, fronted with verde antico, is against the far wall of the apse between the columns. Above the altarpiece is a gilded stucco relief featuring a scallop shell, and on the posts above the columns are two allegorical figures. Between them is a pair of angels holding a tablet that reads: Ego vobis Romae propitius ero, which Christ said to St Ignatius in the vision depicted below. ("I will be propitius to you in Rome".) [1] [a]

Again by Pozzo, the frescoes in the eastern apse present the life and apotheosis of St. Ignatius. *St. Ignatius Receiving Francesco Borgia* in the tall panel on the right recalls the recruitment of the Spanish noble who would become General of the Company of Jesuits. The panel over the high altar with *The Vision of St. Ignatius at the Chapel of La Storta* commemorates the place where the saint received his divine calling. The tall panel on the left, *St. Ignatius sends St. Francis Xavier to India* recalls the aggressive Jesuit missionary work in foreign countries. The triumphal arch fresco, *The Siege of Pamplona* commemorates the wounding of St. Ignatius, which led to the convalescence that transformed his life, and finally, Pozzo is also responsible for the fresco in the conch depicting *St. Ignatius Healing the Pestilent*. [1] [a] [c]

Sacristy (9)

The chamber to the left of the sanctuary is the antechamber to the sacristy. It contains a large stucco statue of *St Ignatius* by Camillo Rusconi, 1728. It is the model of a marble statue in St Peter's. The sacristy is well furnished with a sacred wardrobe. In the center of its ceiling is *S. Ignatius saying Mass*,

when a globe of light was seen to settle resplendent on his head; over the altar is a portrait of the Saint; in the large lunette above the altar is the *Flight into Egypt*; and in the opposite one is the *Annunciation*, with *Adam and Eve* at its sides, all by Pierre de Lattre S. J., who also painted *S. Ignatius exorcising a possessed person*, over the sacristy door. The allegorical statues in the corners are by different sculptors: [1] [a]

Faith, by Simone Giorgini;
Hope, by Giovanni Antonio Lavaggi;
Charity, by Francesco Nuvolone; and
Religion, by Francesco Rainaldi.

Left side chapels

Chapel of the Immaculate Conception (5)

The first chapel from the back is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. The altar was built after the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate by Pope Pius IX in 1854. The altarpiece is an oil on canvas *St. Francis Xavier and St. Francis Borgia*, by Pierre De Lattre, S.J. The altar is adorned with two columns of giallo antico with bronze capitals and bases. [a]

Chapel of St. Gregory (6)

The altarpiece in the next chapel, also by the Jesuit painter Pierre de Lattre, is *St. Gregory the Great and St. Gregory Thaumaturgus*, in honor of Gregory XV, benefactor of the church. On the altar is a 17th century picture of *Our Lady of Sorrows*. This altar is also adorned with two columns of giallo antico. On the sides are two monumental Baroque candlesticks of the second half from the 17th century. [a]

Chapel of the Crucifixion / Sacred Heart (7)

The third chapel on the left is dedicated to the Crucifixion, and was re-fitted in 1893. The chapel is adorned with two fluted columns of giallo antico with gold covered Corinthian capitals and architrave. In the center over the altar is a large 17th century Crucifix of gilded wood, surrounded by numerous reliquaries with ornamentation that has phytomorphic motifs; and beneath which repose the bodies of nine Saints. On the altar is a picture of the *Sacret Heart*. Giovanni Capranesi and Domenico De Angelis carried out the pictorial decoration in 1893. [1] [a] [b]

Lunettes:

- * Giovanni Capranesi and Domenico De Angelis. (1893)
on the right: *The Visions of Bl. Margherite Alacoque*
on the left: *and Nicolo Celestino*

Pendentives:

- * Giovanni Capranesi and Domenico De Angelis. (1893)
The Four Evangelists

Vault reliefs:

- * Giovanni Capranesi and Domenico De Angelis. (1893)
Angels with the Instruments of the Passion

Chapel of St. John (8)

At the extremity of the left transept. The altar similar to the one in the opposite side of the transept, also designed by Fr. Pozzo. The chapel has a white marble relief altarpiece of the *Annunciation* by Filippo della Valle, with allegorical figures and angels (1649) by Pietro Bracci, and a frescoed ceiling with *The Assumption* by Luigi Mazzanti, who also executed the *Nativity* to the left, and the *Purification* to the right of the window. Its balustrade is adorned with angels, similar to those opposite, of which those in marble are by Pietro Bracci; and the chapel is also, like the opposite one, is adorned with four spiral columns cased in verde antico. Under the altar, in the urn of lapis lazuli, is the remains of St. John Berchmans (1599-1621), the Belgian Jesuit student. [1] [a] [b]

Altarpiece:

- * Filippo della Valle
The Annunciation - white marble sculptured relief

Architrave:

- * Pietro Bracci
Allegorical figures and angels - statues

Balustrade:

- * Pietro Bracci
Angels - marble statues

Ceiling:

- * Luigi Mazzanti
The Assumption - center fresco
The Nativity - left fresco
The Purification - right fresco

Right side chapels

The Ludovisi Chapel (10)

The chapel just to the right of the church's presbytery (at the south-east corner) houses the funeral monuments of Pope [Gregory XV](#) and his nephew, Cardinal Ludovisi, the church's founder. Pierre Le Gros the Younger and Pierre-Étienne Monnot made Gregory XV's monument some sixty years after Gregory's death. The two Fames are by Monnot; and the four statues in the niches, of *Prudence* to the right, *Justice* to the left, *Temperance* opposite Prudence, and *Fortitude* opposite Justice, are by Camillo Rusconi. The depiction of Christ the King is by Cesare Fracassini. The half bust, in the medallion over the porphyry urn, in front of the monument, is that of Card. Ludovisi, nephew to the Pope, who died, in 1623, aged 37 years. [1] [a] [b]

Aloysius. [1] [4]

- * Pierre Legros (1709-1717)
Funeral monument of Gregory XV and his nephews, cardinal Ludovico, with Religion and Munificence
 - * Pierre Étienne Monnot (1657-1733)
The two allegorical figures of the Fame
- Corner niches of the chapel:
- * Camille Rusconi (1686)
stucco statues - *The Four Cardinal Virtues*

Between the two chapels is a fresco fragment of *Our Lady*, thought to be part of a Annunciation scene. It is the only item preserved from the old church on the site. As the tablet below states, it was an object of devotion on the part of the first students of the Collegio Romano.

Chapel of St. Aloysius Gonzaga (11)

The large chapel in the right transept, dedicated to St. [Aloysius Gonzaga](#), was erected by the Lancellotti family after the design of Fr. Andrea Pozzo. The chapel, also known as Cappella Lancellotti, is adorned with rich marbles, gilt bronzes and lapis lazuli; it is rich in material and elegant in execution. Above the altar is a large marble high-relief depicting *St. Aloysius Gonzaga in Glory* (1697-99) by the French sculptor Pierre Le Gros the Younger, who also executed the two statues in plaster over the corners of the pediment. [1] [a]

Beneath the altar, in a beautiful urn of lapis lazuli, reposes the body of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga (d. 1621). This has fittings of gilded bronze, and a central sculptural relief in silver. A pair of imprisoned marble putti accompany it, which are by Pierre Le Gros. [1]

At the sides of the altar rise four curious spiral Corinthian columns, incrusting with verde antico, and enriched with gilt bronze; and to their pedestals of verde antique, with bases of giallo antico, are affixed the Lancellotti arms, of gilt bronze on a beautiful field of lapis lazuli. On the beautiful balustrade in front are two large marble statues of *Angels bearing Lilies*, by Bernardino Ludovisi (c. 1748), and four small bronze angels bearing lamps. The vault showing the saint's *Apotheosis* is by Pozzo. The work also features St Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, since the two saints knew each other in Florence. [1] [a] [b]

Altarpiece:

- * Pierre Le Gros

St. Aloysius Gonzaga in Glory - white marble sculptured relief

Architrave:

* Pierre Le Gros

Allegorical figures and angels - statues

Balustrade:

* Bernardino Ludovisi

Angels - marble statues

Ceiling:

* Andrea Pozzo

The Saint in Glory - fresco

Chapel of St. Joachim (12)

The third chapel on the right hand side is dedicated to St Joachim, the father of Our Lady. The 18th-century altarpiece showing *The Virgin Presented by Joachim to God the Father* is by Stefano Pozzi. On the altar is a portrait of St. Robert Bellarmino. The chapel is further adorned with two columns of giallo antico and other marbles. The floor was rebuilt at the beginning of the 20th century. In the crystal sarcophagus under the altar is the body of St. Roberto Bellarmino. [1] [b]

Altarpiece:

* Stefano Pozzi (1708-68)

The Virgin Presented by Joachim to God the Father

On the altar:

* Roman artist (17th century)

Portrait of St. Robert Bellarmino

Side lunettes:

* Pupil of Stefano Pozzi (first half of the 18th century)

The Offering in the Temple and *The Appearance of the Angel*

Pendentives of the Dome:

* Stefano Pozzi

The Theological Virtues and Religion

Chapel of St. Joseph / Sacripanti Chapel (13)

The second chapel on the left is dedicated to St. Joseph. It is the most impressive of the nave side chapels. The Marquis Scipione Lancellotti acquired the patronage of the chapel in 1629 and the remains of St. [Luige Gonzaga](#) were brought here. In 1709 the chapel was granted to Cardinal Giuseppe Sacripanti. The task of restoration was given to one of the most brilliant pupils of Carlo Fontana, Nicola Michetti (d. 1759), and various artists were called upon to tend to the pictorial decoration. The works were completed in 1713. The family coat of arms turns about the column plinths and the base of the bronze candelabras placed on the altar. [1] [b]

Over the altar the concave aedicule is revetted with alabaster and lilac marble, and has a pair of Corinthian columns in verde antico. The frame of the altarpiece is in yellow marble. Two stucco angels at the top are on the fragmented and curlicued pediment. The altarpiece depicting *The Death of St Joseph* is by Francesco Trevisani, who also executed the frescoes on the pendentives and the right hand lunette fresco showing *The Last Communion of St Aloysius Gonzaga*. The cupola fresco is by Luigi Garzi. The left hand lunette is by Giuseppe Chiari. On the altar is a mosaic of the *Madonna of Divine Love*. [1] [a] [b]

Altarpiece:

* Francesco Trevisani - painting

The Death of St. Joseph

Right lunette:

* Francesco Trevisani - fresco

The Last Communion of St. Luigi Gonzaga

Right lunette:

* Giuseppe Chiari - fresco

Stigmas of St. Lucas da Narni

Dome:

- * Luigi Garzi - fresco
The Glory of St. Joseph

Pendentives:

- * Luigi Garzi - fresco
The Marriage of the Virgin,
Christ among the Doctors
The Adoration of the Shepherds
The Dream of St. Joseph

Chapel of St. Stanislaus (14)

The last chapel on the right at the back is dedicated to Polish Jesuit novice St. [Stanislaus Kostka](#) (1550-1568) and the apostle of France St. [Francisco Regis](#) (1597-1640). The 18th-century altarpiece showing *Saints Stanislaus Kostka and John Francis Regis Worshipping the Virgin and Child* is by an anonymous artist. The chapel is further adorned with two columns of giallo antico and other marbles. The two stucco angels are by [Filippo Della Valle](#), 1763. [1] [a]

In front of the chapel is a wooden model of the "*Temple of Christ the King*," the design and construction by the Neapolitan cabinetmaker Vincenzo Pandolfi. He begun at the age of 70 years and finished at the age of 98, shortly before his death, a 1:200 scale project in various fine woods. The concept of the temple is to bring together, to welcome, orient and unify all people of every faith and religion of the world into one great church, towards Christ, the only "Way Truth and Life". [b]

Special notes

The rooms of St Aloysius can be visited. The staircase leading to them is found close by his altar. There are also other rooms of interest there. At times, the door to the staircase is open, but the rooms are shut. If you find yourself on the roof in front of a closed door, taking in the view of Rome might appease you.

Artists and Architects

- Alessandro [Algardi](#) (1598-1654), Italian high- Baroque sculptor, architect
- Andrea [Pozzo](#), S. J.(1645-1709), Italian Jesuit Brother, Baroque painter and architect, decorator, stage designer, and art theoretician
- Bernardino [Ludovisi](#) (1694-1749), Italian sculptor
- Camillo [Rusconi](#) (1658-1728), Italian sculptor of the late Baroque
- Cesare [Fracassini](#) (1838-1868), Italian painter
- Domenico De Angelis (1852-1904), Italian painter
- Filippo [della Valle](#) (1698-1768), Italian late-Baroque or early Neoclassic sculptor
- Francesco [Manno](#) (1754-1831), Italian painter and architect
- Francesco [Nuvolone](#) (17th cent), Italian sculptor
- Francesco Rainaldi (17th cent), Italian sculptor
- Francesco [Trevisani](#) (1656-1746), Italian painter of the early Rococo or late Baroque
- Giovanni Antonio [Lavaggi](#), († 1718), Italian sculptor
- Giovanni [Capranesi](#) (1852-1921), Italian painter
- Giuseppe Bartolomeo [Chiari](#) (1654-1727), Italian painter of the late-Baroque
- Luigi [Garzi](#) (1638-1721), Italian painter of the Baroque period
- Luigi Mazzanti, Italian painter
- Nicola [Michetti](#) (1675-1758), Italian architect of the late Baroque
- Orazio [Grassi](#), S.J. (17th cent), architect, mathematician
- Pierre [Le Gros](#) the Younger (1666-1719), French sculptor from Paris
- Pierre-Étienne [Monnot](#) (1657-1733), French sculptor in a late-Baroque period
- Pietro [Bracci](#) (1700-1773), Italian sculptor of the Late Baroque
- Raffaele Lavagnino (20th cent), Italian painter
- Simone [Giorgini](#) (18th cent), sculptor
- Stefano [Pozzi](#) (1707?-1768), Italian painter, designer, draughtsman and decorator
- Vincenzo Pandolfi (1905-2005), Neapolitan cabinetmaker

Burials:

St. Aloysius Gonzaga (1568-1591)

St. Roberto Cardinal BELLARMINO, S.J., (1542-1621)

Buried at the feet of his "ghostly child", St. Aloysius Gonzaga

St. John Berchmans (1599-1621)

Pope [Gregory XV](#) {Alessandro [LUDOVISI](#), (1554-1623)}

Alessandro Cardinal [ORSINI](#), (1592-1626)

Buried next to the tomb of Cardinal St. Roberto Bellarmino

Ludovico Cardinal [LUDOVISI](#), (1595-1632) [also see [here](#)]

Giuseppe Cardinal [SACRIPANTE](#), (1642-1727)

Buried in the tomb he had built for himself

Giovanni Battista Cardinal [TOLOMEI](#), S.J., (1653-1726)

Buried in front the main altar according to his will.

Giovanni Battista Cardinal [SALERNI](#), S.J., (1671-1729)

Buried near the main altar

Giuseppe Cardinal [ACCORAMBONI](#), (1672-1747)

Ignazio Cardinal [BONCOMPAGNI-LUDOVISI](#) (1743-1790)

Pietro Cardinal [CAPRANO](#), (1759-1834)

Paolo Cardinal [POLIDORI](#), (1778-1847)

Paolo Cardinal [DEZZA](#), S.J., (1901-1999)

Location:

Address: 8/a Via del Caravita, Piazza di Sant'Ignazio

Coordinates: [41°53'56.4"N 12°28'47"E](#)

Info:

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Opening times

Daily:

- from 7.30am to 12.20 pm

- from 3.00 pm to 7.20 pm

Mass Schedule:

8.00 am; 11.30 am; 6.00 pm.

Links and References:

1. [Roman Churches Wiki](#)
2. [Borgato.be web page](#)
3. [English Wikipedia page](#)
4. [I Viaggi di Raffaella blog](#)

[060608.it web page](#)

[Web Art Gallery page](#)

a. Donovan, Jeremiah; ROME ANCIENT AND MODERN AND ITS ENVIRONS; 1847

b. Information from plaques in the church

c. Information provided by Bernard Barrois

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