

Santa Maria dell'Anima



Santa Maria dell'Anima (Our Lady of the Souls) is a 16th Catholic church in central Rome dedicated to the Blessed Virgin as patroness of the souls of the departed in purgatory, located just west of the Piazza Navona and near the Santa Maria della Pace church. It was the church of the Holy Roman Empire and is now the church of the German and Austrian community in Rome.

History

14th and 15th century

Santa Maria dell'Anima is one of the many medieval charity institutions built for pilgrims in Rome. The church found its origin in 1350, when Johannes (Jan) and Katharina Peters of Dordrecht bought three houses and turned it into a pilgrims hostel, at the occasion of the Jubilee of 1350. Jan Peters may have been a Dutch merchant or papal soldier. A marble group was discovered here, so they named the hostel "Beatae Mariae Animarum" ("Saint Mary of the Souls"). A copy of this group is on the tympanium over the main doorway. (5) (8) (b)

The hostel was first mentioned in 1398 in a bull of Pope Boniface IX, and on May 21, 1406 Pope Innocent VII in his bull *Piae Postulatio* declared the hostel protected by the Holy See. In 1431 a full-sized church was built to replace the former small chapel, which was made possible because of a large legacy provided by the famous German mediaeval historian Diedrich of Niem. The new church was consecrated by Pope Eugene IV in 1444. In the 15th century Santa Maria dell'Anima

expanded to be a hostel for visitors from the entire Holy Roman Empire, though initially the occupants were primarily from the Low Countries and (from the middle 15th century) the Rhineland. (1) (4) (5) (8)

16th -17th century

Johann Burchard from Strasbourg joined the Confraternity of Santa Maria dell'Anima and rose to be its provost at the end of the 15th century. While he held this office, the decision was made to rebuild the church for the Jubilee of 1500. The building period was from 1499 to 1522. The church was built in the style of a hall church that was typical for Northern Europe, but which sits awkwardly amid the Italianate churches of Rome. **Andrea Sansovino** was retained as architect. The facade was completed by **Giuliano da Sangallo**. The new church was consecrated only on Nov 25, 1542. (1) (5)

18th -20th century

When the French occupied Rome in 1795 during the Revolutionary Wars they sacked and desecrated the church, turning the complex into a cavalry barracks. After the definitive restoration of Papal government in 1815, trouble began over the exact national identity of the restored church. It was restored again in 1843, but the following year the Belgian Flemish expatriates abandoned it for San Giuliano dei Fiamminghi. The confraternity was renamed the Collegio Teutonico di Santa Maria dell'Anima as a nationalist gesture to the Germans, and it still exists under this title. The Dutch finally abandoned the church in 1939 because nationalist disputes between them and the Germans had become intolerable. (1) (4) (5)

In 2012, they were in the process of restoring the frescoes in some of the chapels. In 2014 work was still in progress in the St. Benno chapel. The Present church is the third located on the site and finds itself an immediate neighbour of the church of Santa Maria della Pace. (4) (5) (7)

Exterior

The façade is often, but probably erroneously, attributed to Giuliano da Sangallo. Recently, scholars have attributed the three doors to Sansovino, while earlier studies have attributed them to Peruzzi. The windows may be the work of Bramante.

The exterior walls are in yellow brick, with architectural details in white limestone. As a result of the overall design, the nave and aisles shelter under one wide pitched and tiled roof. (1)

The three-storey rectangular façade is rather simple, and the top storey is actually false (a look from an oblique angle down the street will reveal this). It is often, but probably erroneously, attributed to Sangallo. Recently, scholars have attributed the three doors to Sansovino, including the sculpture, while earlier studies have attributed them to Peruzzi. The windows may be the work of Bramante. (1)

The first storey has stone Corinthian pilasters on each corner. A pair of narrower pilasters are placed near these, and another pair is between the three entrance doors. These pilasters support an entablature with a deep dentillate cornice and a frieze bearing a dedicatory inscription:

Templum Beatae Mariae de anima hospitalis teutonicorum MDXIII

(Temple of Blessed Mary of the soul and of the hospice of the Germans 1514).

The three entrances are flanked by half-round Corinthian columns, and the side pair are smaller than the main one. The former have blank segmental pediments, whereas the latter has a triangular pediment the tip of which touches the architrave. It contains a copy relief carving of *Madonna and Two Souls in Purgatory* (the original is now kept in the sacristy), which has recently been attributed to **Andrea Sansovino**. Below this is an inscription *Speciosa facta es* (you were made beautiful). (1)

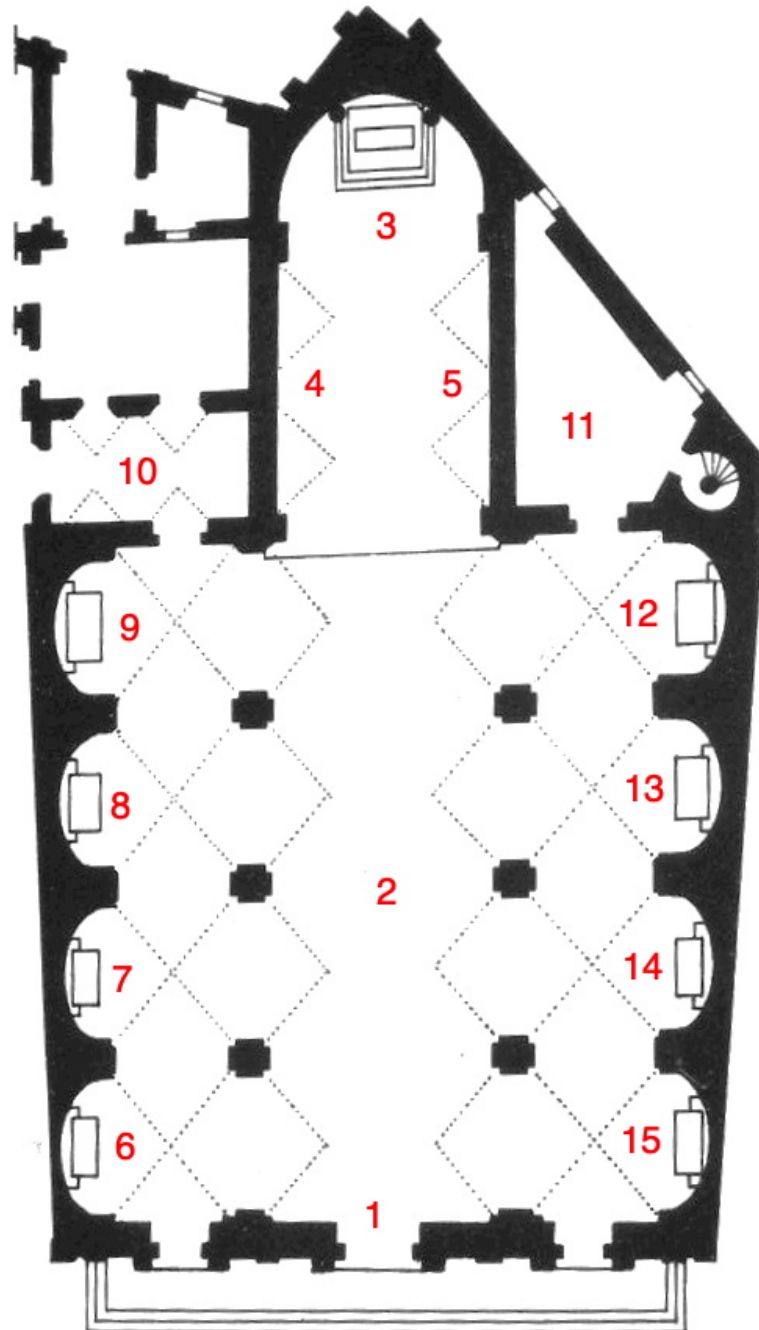
The second storey has pilasters and entablature in the same style as the first storey. In between them are three very large round-headed windows, the middle one being slightly larger than the other two. Their frames are stone arches without imposts. The cornice of this storey continues along the rooflines of the side walls. (1)

The third, lower storey has the pilaster motif repeated. It has a horizontal top, concealing the roof gable. The central round window is in the top of the latter. A pair of sculptures flanks it. (1)

On the far right hand corner is attached the campanile, at an angle to the main axis of the church so that one side faces the wall of Santa Maria della Pace on the other side of the narrow street there. The bell-tower was built in 1502. This bell-tower is among the most beautiful ones of the city. A square tower in yellow brick, it has a very deep cornice both above and below the bellchamber. The latter has two pairs of brick Ionic pilasters on each corner, holding up a stone entablature below the upper cornice, and the soundholes are two narrow double arches separated by a thin column and with a little round window above each pair. Unusually for Rome, there is a spire. This sits on four gables, has a crocket at each corner and is conical with the tip truncated. It is covered in polychrome tilework arranged geometrically in an Austrian idiom (the style is known in Italy as a squame), and has a ball finial with a bronze Habsburg double-headed eagle sitting on top. The last is 19th century. (1) (4)

The church has an idyllic little garden courtyard containing fragments of ancient sculpture, including a finely carved sarcophagus depicting the god Apollo. (1)

Plan



Interior

The church is built as a Hallenkirche, a type common in northern Europe. A hall church is built to be as wide as possible, with a lofty roof held by rows of columns. Churches of this type often doubled as municipal assemblies. Each side has four apses with chapels, which is unusual for a hall church. (1)

A particular symbol also to be mentioned in the interior is the double-headed eagle of the Holy Roman Empire, which expresses the attempt to place the church under the protection of the Roman Empire of the German nation. In the 18th century the imperial protectorate passed to the house of Habsburg.

The interior surfaces are richly decorated, including the painted main barrel-vaulted ceiling, and this decoration and the stained glass is of 1875-82 by **Ludovico Seitz**. There is an attached apse with an ornate gilded stucco ceiling patterned geometrically, and this is lit by an oddly-shaped stained glass window over the high altar, like a vertical drug capsule. The decoration of this presbyterium is 18th century, by **Paolo Posi**. (1)

By the entrance (1) are two tombs:

- On the right side is the tomb of Cardinal Willem van Enckenvoirt (died 1534) by **Baldassare Peruzzi** (the cardinal was his patron), and commissioned the tomb of Pope Adrian VI, the Chapel of St Barbara and the high altar. (1)

- On the left side is the funeral monument of Cardinal Andreas of Austria (1558-1600), created a cardinal in 1576 at the age of 18, bishop of both Constance (1589-1600) and Brixen (1591-1600), Margrave of Burgau, and in 1598-1599 governor of Flanders. Oldest child of Ferdinand II, Archduke of Austria and his morganatic wife Philippine Welser. The tomb is by **Egidio da Riviera**.

Sanctuary (3)

The tribune is richly decorated in colored marbles, stuccos and gilding. The high altar was created by **Giulio Romano** in 1521-1522 and was commissioned by Jakob Fugger, who originally intended that it for the Fugger Chapel.

The altarpiece depicts *The Holy Family and Saints* by **Giulio Romano**, who painted it in 1522. It is a masterpiece, and is considered one of his best works. It was actually painted for the Chapel of St Mark, but was moved here in 1750. Beforehand, it was seriously damaged by a flood in 1598 and the bottom part had to be re-painted by Carlo Saraceni. The Holy Family is shown accompanied by the infant St John the Baptist, St James the Great with a scallop shell and pilgrim's satchel to the left (the allusion is to the pilgrimage to his shrine at Compostela) and St Mark with his lion in the foreground and holding a book with quill-pen. St Joseph is looking pensive, which is an ancient iconographic tradition. These saints are the patrons of Jakob Fugger and the two Marcus Fuggers who find their final resting places in the "Fugger Chapel". Oddly, in the half-ruined Classical building in the background is a woman with a spinning-distaff and a hen with chicks. (1) (4) (7)

The altar is flanked by a pair of pedimented niches containing allegorical stucco figures, *Religion* (with the Eucharistic elements) and *Piety* (with a church). Above these are two paintings by Seitz, depicting the *Birth of Our Lady* and her *Death*. (1)

There are tombs on either side of the sanctuary:

- Pope **Adrian VI** (1522-1523), who was born in Utrecht, had been the tutor of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, and would be the last non-Italian pope until John Paul II, 456 years later. He is buried on the right side, (4) in a tomb designed by **Baldassare Peruzzi** and with sculptures by **Michelangelo Senese** and **Niccolò Tribolo**, commissioned by Cardinal van Enckenvoirt. (4)

- Opposite, on the left wall, is the tomb of Charles Frederick of Jülich-Cleves-Berg (5) (d. 1575), grandson of Emperor Ferdinand I, unexpected death of smallpox at the age of 19 in Rome during a pilgrimage and Grand Tour. Pope Gregory XIII personally paid the cost of a royal funeral and an enormous funeral procession. His magnificent grave monument was designed by his tutor **Stephanus Winandus Pighius**, and executed by the sculptors **Nicolas Mostaert** and **Gillis van den**

Mliete. It shows, among other things, a resurrection scene that alludes to the statue of Laocoön and His Sons found in 1506. A second part of the monument, with the presentation of the consecrated sword and hat, now hangs in the vestibule of the church. The inscription there states that Charles Frederick had a precocious sense of piety and was brilliant despite his youth and knew many things and many languages. (6)

The sacristy (10) was decorated by **Paolo Martuscelli** in 1635. In the sacristy, the two paintings to the right of the altar are the *Nativity* and *Visitation*, by **Giovanni Maria Morandi**; and the two opposite are the *Espousals* and *Annunciation*, one by **Giuseppe Bonatti**, the other by Mons. Alet of Liege. The *Assumption*, on the ceiling, is by **Giovanni Francesco Romanelli**. To the right, as we return by the sacristy door, is the monument of Luke Holstein of Holland, an eminent scholar of the 16th century, a convert from Protestantism to Catholicity, Canon of St. Peter's, and Vatican Librarian. (1) (a)

Side Chapels

Architecturally the eight side chapels have the forms of tall semi-cylinders. They are described here in a clockwise direction from the left rear:

Chapel of St. Lambert (6) (see info on saint [here](#))

The first chapel on the left from the entrance is dedicated to St. Lambert. The altarpiece, *The Martyrdom of St. Lambert*, is by **Carlo Saraceni** from 1618. The frescoes on the ceiling are by **Jan Miel** of Antwerp, a pupil of Van Dyke, depicting the life of the saint. The two lateral busts are from the master-hand of **François Duquesnoy**. (4) (a)

Memorials here are to Lamberto Orsini de Vivariis 1619, Egidio Orsini de Vivariis with a bust by **Giuliano Finelli** 1647 and Antonio Ohms 1843. (1)

Chapel of St. John Nepumuk (7) (see info on saint [here](#))

The frescoes in the next chapel are by **Girolamo Nanni** representing scenes from the life of the saint; as confessor of the queen of Bohemia, then martyred by King Wenceslaus by being thrown off the Charles Bridge in Prague for refusing to break the seal of confession. There are two notable monuments here by **Ercole Ferrata**, a pupil of Bernini. (1) (a)

Chapel of St. Barbara (8) (see info on saint [here](#))

The altarpiece is *St. Barbara introduces Card. Nicolfort to the Blessed Trinity*, by a Flemish artist, who also executed the frescoes. (a)

Chapel of the Cross (Margrave Chapel) (9)

The patron was Johann Albrecht of Magdeburg, bishop of Halberstadt and Archbishop of Magdeburg. The chapel was also partially financed by Jacob Fugger. The altarpiece, painted in oil on plastered wall, is the *Deposition from the Cross* (1550), and the frescoes, which are inspired by the ancient ones at the Domus Aurea, are by **Il Salviati**. Above the altarpiece is the *Resurrection*, with *St. Stephen* (patron saint of Halberstadt Cathedral) and St. John the Almoner, on the right, and *St. Mauritius* (patron saint of Magdeburg Cathedral) and St. Albert the Carmelite, on the left. The artist painted only the *Pentecost* in the vault of the chapel and the *Christ of the Resurrection*, around 1544. On the left wall is a portrait of *Quirinus Galler*, the agent of the Fugger in Rome (died in 1543) flanked by *Faith* and *Hope*. The portrait on the right has not been positively identified, flanked by *Justice* and *Charity*. Salviati finished this cycle of frescoes and the altarpiece by 13th August 1550. The chapel was restored in 2012 (1) (4) (a) (c)

Chapel of the Pietà (12)

In the chapel on the right of the tribune has a copy of Michelangelo's Pietà by **Lorenzetto** (1532). It is not an exact copy, as the artist has made a few changes such as the position of Christ's head. It has a spectacular red jasper surround. The work adorned the high altar until 1560. (1) (4) (a)

The Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament (Fugger Chapel) (13)

This chapel was commissioned by Jakob Fugger, who was from a wealthy German banker family. The

chapel has a 16th century crucifix. There is also a reproduction of the *Madonna of Altötting*, given by Pope Pius XII. The frescos, relating to the Bl. Virgin, are by **Sermoneta**. (1) (a)

Chapel of St. Anna (14)

Over the altar of the next chapel is *St. Anne receiving into her arms the Infant Savior*, by **Ludovico Gimignani**. The frescos above are by **Grimaldi**. The bust of Card. Sluse, to the left, a distinguished scholar of the 17th century, is by **Ercole Ferrata**. (a)

Chapel of St. Benno of Meissen (15) (see info on saint [here](#))

The altarpiece, *Miracle of St Benno and the Keys of Meissen Cathedral*, painted in 1618 by **Carlo Saraceni**, illustrates an event from German Church history. The saint was bishop of Meissen during the Investiture Controversy, and threw the keys of the cathedral into the river to prevent Emperor Henry IV from entering it. A miracle then occurred, depicted here, by which a fisherman caught a fish which had swallowed the key and was able to return them. (1) (4) (a)

Artists and Architects

- Andrea [Sansovino](#) (1467-1529), Italian architect of the High Renaissance
- Baldassare Tommaso [Peruzzi](#) (1481-1536), Italian **architect** and painter
- Bartolomeo [Lippi](#) aka *Nanni di Baccio Bigi* (1513-1568), Italian architect from Florence
- Carlo [Saraceni](#) (1579-1620), Italian early-Baroque painter
- Egidio [della Riviera](#) (Gillis van den Vliete) aka *Fiammingo* (d. 1602), Flemish sculptor
- Ercole [Ferrata](#) (1610-1686), Italian sculptor of the Baroque period
- Fra Alet of Liege, (17th cent), Belgian painter
- Francesco de' Rossi aka [Il Salviati](#) (1510-1563), Italian Mannerist painter and stucco artist
- François [Duquesnoy](#) aka *Francesco Fiammingo* (1597-1643), Flemish sculptor from the Baroque period
- Giovanni Battista [Montano](#) aka *Milano* (1534-1621), Italian **architect**, designer, woodcarver and engraver
- Giovanni Francesco [Grimaldi](#), aka *Il Bolognese* (1606-1680), Italian architect and painter
- Giovanni Francesco [Romanelli](#) (1610-1662), Italian Baroque painter from Viterbo
- Giovanni [Lippi](#), aka Nanni di Baccio Bigio (d. 1559), Italian architect and sculptor
- Giovanni Maria [Morandi](#) (1622-1717), Italian painter
- Girolamo [Nanni](#) (17th century), Italian painter of the Baroque period
- Girolamo Sicoliante da [Sermoneta](#) (1521-c. 1580), Italian Mannerist painter
- Giuliano da [Sangallo](#) (c. 1443-1516), Italian sculptor & architect during the Italian Renaissance.
- Giuliano [Finelli](#) (1601-1653), Italian sculptor of the Baroque period from Tuscany
- Giulio [Romano](#) (c. 1499-1546), Italian painter and architect.
- Giuseppe [Bonati](#) (Bonatti) aka *Giovannino del Pio* (1635-1681), Italian painter of the Baroque period
- Jan [Miel](#) d' Anversa (1599-1663), Flemish painter
- Johann Michael Wittmer (1802-1880), painter
- Lorenzo Lotti, aka [Lorenzetto](#), (1490-1541), Italian Renaissance sculptor and architect in the circle of Raphael
- Ludovico [Gimignani](#) (1643–1697) was an Italian painter during the Baroque period
- [Ludovico Stern](#) (1708-1777), Italian painter from Rome
- Ludwig (Ludovico) [Seitz](#) (1844-1908), Italian painter
- Michelangelo Senese (16th cent), Italian sculptor from Siena
- Michele [Coxie](#) [aka *Coscia*] (1499-1592) Flemish painter
- Nicolas [Mostaert](#) [aka *Nicolò Pippi D'Arras*] (d. 1604), Flemish sculptor from Arras
- Nicolò [Pericoli](#) [aka *Tribolo*] (1500-1550), Italian Mannerist sculptor from Florence
- Paolo Martuscelli (17th cent) , Italian painter
- Paolo [Posi](#) (1708-1776), Italian architect from Siena

Burials:

Pope [Adrian VI](#) {Adriaan Florenszoon [DEDEL](#), (1459-1523)}

Buried in the monument built by Cardinal Willem van Enckenvoirt, work of Baldassarre Peruzzi and other Italian artists.

Matthäus Cardinal [SCHINER](#), (ca. 1465-1522)

Without a monument erected in his memory

Died of the plague

Willem Cardinal van [ENCKENVOIRT](#), (1464-1534)

Front wall next to the main entrance aisle

Johann Cardinal [GROPPER](#), (1503-1559)

Buried at the feet of the tomb of Pope Hadrian VI

Otto Cardinal von [TRUCHSESS VON WALDBURG](#), (1514-1573)

Andreas Cardinal von [AUSTRIA](#), (1558-1600) [also see [here](#)]

Francesco Cardinal [SACRATI](#), (1567-1623)

Johannes Walter Cardinal [SLUSE](#), (1628-1687)

Buried on the right side of his family's chapel of S. Anna

Hendricus Gravius (1536-1591)

<theologian of the Leuven University and prefect of the Vatican Library>

Christiaan van der Ameyden (d. 1605)

<papal singer and composer>

Fugger family memters

<buried in their family chapel>

[Charles Frederick of Jülich-Cleves-Berg](#) (1555- 1575)

<Hereditary Prince of the United Duchies of Jülich-Cleves-Berg>

Location:

Address: Via di Santa Maria dell'Anima 66, 00186 Roma

Coordinates: [41° 53' 59"N 12° 28' 19"E](#)

Info:

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Web site: www.santa-maria-anima.it

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Opening times

Open 07:30am-01:00pm 02:00pm-06:00pm

Mass schedule: (All in German)

Monday-Saturday: 18.00.

Sunday: 10.00.

Links and References:

1. [Roman Churches Wiki](#)
2. [Info Roma web site](#)
3. [060608.it web site](#)
4. [Church history from church web site](#)
5. [English Wikipedia page](#)
6. [Charles Frederick of Jülich Cleves Berg article from Wikipedia](#)
7. [Church web site](#)
8. [Church info from NewAdvent Catholic encyclopedia](#)

[YouTube vider](#)

- a. Donovan, Jeremiah; ROME ANCIENT AND MODERN AND ITS ENVIRONS; 1842
- b. Sharp, Mary; A GUIDE TO THE CHURCHES OF ROME; 1966; pg. 124
- c. Nova, Alessandro; "Francesco Salviati and the 'Markgrafen' Chapel in S. Maria dell'Anima"; *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 25. Bd., H. 3 (1981), pp. 355-372
- d. Lansford, Tyler; THE LATIN INSCRIPTIONS OF ROME; 2009, Pg 419