

Santissimi Nomi di Gesù e Maria in Via Lata



The church of the Most Holy Names of Jesus and Mary is a 17th century titular and former convent church located in the rione Campo Marzio. The full name of the church is **Santissimi Nomi di Gesù e Maria a Via Lata** and the Diocese officially recognizes both long and short versions. The church is one of the most beautiful churches of the Roman Baroque. [1] [4]

History

Originally, at this location there was a sixteenth-century villa that was owned by Cardinal Flavio Orsini. The land was purchased from the Orsini for a church and convent by the Discalced Agostinians in 1615. The church was built by the friars between 1633 and 1636, on a project by the Milanese architect **Carlo Buzio**. Left unfinished also due to lack of funds, the church was completely renovated, between 1671 and 1673, by **Carlo Rainaldi**, to whom we owe the extension of the nave, the construction of the façade and the presbytery including the high altar. [1] [3]

The rich decoration of the interior, made up of precious marbles and sculptural groups, was carried out between 1678 and 1690, owing to the generosity of Mgr. Giorgio Bolognetti, rich and influential bishop of Rieti, former nuncio to Louis XIII, and Camillo del Corno, two rich prelates, who made an important donation for the enlargement and embellishment of the church. In return they were authorized to build the funerary monuments for themselves and their relatives in the central nave rather than in a side chapel. For this reason the church is also known as the Cappellone. [1] [3]

In 1849, during the Roman Republic, this church was one of those sacked in an anti-clerical riot. [1]

The convent was both the Curia or general headquarters of the Order, and also the seminary where it trained its priests. It performed this function until 1873, when in common with almost all other convents in the city it was sequestered. The part nearest the church became a school, while the part fronting onto the Via del Balbuino (including the oratory) was given over for the building of All

Saints, the Anglican or English Protestant church. [1]

The church underwent another restoration in 2008.

The Mass of the Extraordinary Form (formerly known as the "Tridentine Mass") is celebrated here on occasion, and the Slovak expatriate community in Rome also worships here. The church was made titular in 1967 by St Pope Paul VI. [1]

Exterior

Layout and fabric

The church and adjacent monastery were built as one edifice at the same time. The church itself is a small rectangular structure, 27 by 15 meters. The church walls are in brick, rendered and painted orange, and the tiled roof has one pitch. There is no campanile, but a small bellcote (invisible from the street) is on the edge of the parapet of the flat-roofed block. [1]

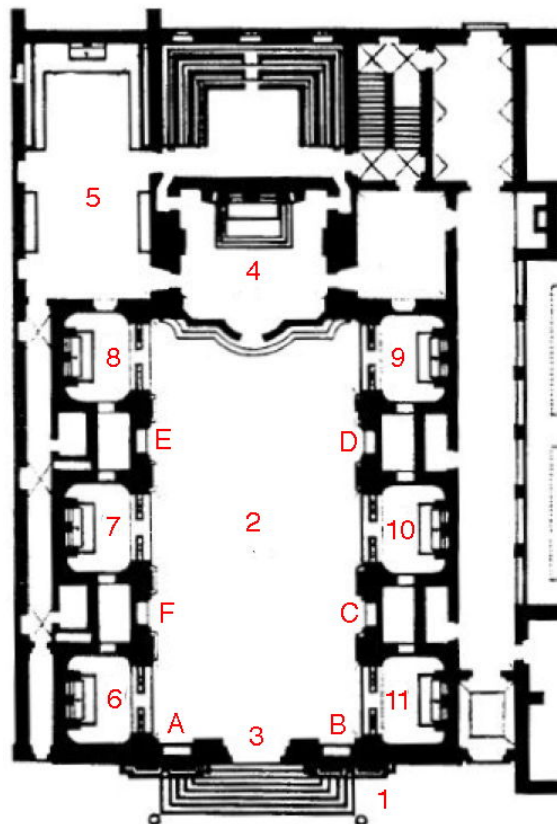
Façade

The façade (1), by Rainaldi, reflects the austerity of the mendicant order: in the tripartition the part corresponding to the nave, covered with travertine, has a prominence, with portal and window between pairs of Corinthian pilasters and triangular tympanum. The façade is in one order, with two pairs of Corinthian pilasters. Above the portal there is a curvilinear tympanum and a large rectangular window. [3]

The pilasters stand on a very high plinth, which reaches as high as more than halfway up the entrance, and which has a projecting cornice. The single entrance doorway has a raised segmental pediment with, again, a blank tympanum. Above this is a large rectangular window in a plain, slightly projecting frame. [1]

The aisle frontages to each side are treated differently, so that the façade composition is not unified. Each has an enormous vertical rectangular panel with a wide stone frame, and above this is a very wide entablature with a pair of horizontal elliptical windows in the frieze. Above this is a horizontal balustrade. [1]

Plan



Interior

The interior, with a single nave (2) and barrel vault, has three chapels on each side, and shows rich decorations composed of polychrome marbles, stuccoes and sculptural grotesque. [3]

Each side has three chapels, in shallow high-arched niches and with the altars having similar designs. The chapels alternate between segmental and triangular pediments. In between each pair of chapels is a pair of Doric pilasters supporting a continuous entablature passing over the chapel arches, and this is decorated with gilded stucco scrollwork on both frieze and projecting cornice. In between the pilasters are four late 17th century funerary monuments for members of the Bolognetti family in the nave of the church, located between the chapels. [1] [2]

On the left hand side are, in turn, those to Ettore and Giovanni Luigi Bolognetti (F) together (1684-1687), and to Giorgio Bolognetti (E) (c. 1686) (by **Francesco Cavallini**) who was the benefactor who paid for all the rich decoration. The former were two brothers of the latter. [1] [2]

On the right hand side are, in turn, those to Pietro and Francesco Bolognetti (C) by Cavallini of 1681, and of Mario Bolognetti (D), brother of Giorgio and knight of Malta by **Francesco Aprile** (or Cavallini). [1] [2]

The Bolognetti family monuments are surmounted by stucco statues in niches of *St. Elizabeth* (Cavallini), *St. Joseph*, *St. Monica* (Ottoni), *St. Luke* (Maille). The series is completed by the statues of *St. Anna* and *St. Joachim*, in counterfaçade, sculpted by **Francesco Cavallini** and **Michèle Maille**. [2]

The ceiling is barrel-vaulted. There are three rectangular windows on each side, over the chapels, which are inserted into triangular lunettes in the vault. These are decorated with stucco statues of *Old Testament Prophets* by **Michèle Maille** and **Girolamo Gramignoli**. The paintings in the vault are by **Giacinto Brandi**, and depict *The Assumption of Our Lady* at the center, on the sides above and below are the *Four Evangelists*. [1] [2]

The background stucco work in the church was executed by **Girolamo Gramignoli** and **Monsù Michele**, who did some of the statues. Also involved with the stucco statuary were **Francesco Cavallini** and **Lorenzo Ottoni**. [1]

The confessionals in this are considered masterpieces of cabinetmaking, although the woodwork is late 19th century and replaced that destroyed in the 1849 riot. They are set in an aedicule with a complicated allegorical scheme in stucco displayed between the halves of a broken segmental pediment. [1]

By the entrance, there are two 17th century tombs of members of the Corno family, demonstrating the superb sense of humor that could be shown in Baroque funerary art. These two were executed by disciples of Bernini, and demonstrate the master's love both of skeletons doing odd things, and billowing cloth carved in stone. [3]

The one on the left of the entrance is to Giulio del Corno (A) (1682), by **Ercole Ferrata** and **Francesco Aprile**, and shows Old Father Time ripping a banner bearing the name of the deceased. The other monument, to Monsignor Camillo del Corno (B) by **Domenico Guidi** (1682), shows a skeleton seemingly dancing violently while wrapped in a shroud and looking at an hour-glass. The symbolism refers to the General Resurrection of all the dead. The impression of movement is accentuated by the jawbone dropping off the skull, giving the skeleton an air of astonishment. [1] [2]

The rich and majestic choir (3), created by **Giovanni Battista Testa**, dates back to 1750. The organ dates from the mid-18th century. [2]

The Christmas crib exhibited here at Christmas is one of the most popular in Rome.

Sanctuary (4)

The sanctuary amounts to a rectangular apse, narrower and lower than the nave. [1]

The church is dominated by the enormous semi-circular triumphal arch. Two pairs of massive ribbed Doric pilasters in black marble support an archivolt of several bands of gilded molding, richly executed. The outer two pilasters are much narrower than the inner, as if they are blending into the side walls. On top of the archivolt is a coat-of-arms supported by two angels. In the vault behind the arch is a representation of the *Triumph of the Just* by **Brandi**, surrounded by incredibly lush gilded stucco ornament. [1]

The high altar is bowed (that is, convex). Four Corinthian columns in red marble support an entablature in white marble with a red marble frieze. This in turn supports two little red marble Doric pillars holding up a segmental pediment without a cornice. In between the pillars are two angels holding a black globe with golden rays, and on the globe in gold are the initials IMAS for the names Jesus and Maria. Two more angels flank this composition, and two putti sit on the pediment. The angels holding the globe are by **Pietro Paolo Naldini**, for whom angels were a speciality, and the others are by **Francesco Cavellini**. [1]

The altarpiece painting of the *Coronation of Our Lady* is also by **Brandi**. To either side of the altar are statues of *SS John the Baptist* and *John the Evangelist*, and these are by **Giuseppe Mazzuoli** from Siena. [1]

Sacristy (5)

The sacristy has an altarpiece depicting the *Immaculate Conception* and three other paintings by **Giovanni Lanfranco**. The rest of the fresco work here is by **Palermitano**, who was a friar here and whose real name was **Father Matthew of Palermo**. [1]

The former friars' choir, which was behind the apse, had a depiction of *Our Lady with St Augustine* by **Giovanni Antonio Lelli**. [1]

The side chapels are taken in a clockwise order, starting from the left hand side by the entrance.

Chapel of St. Thomas of Villanova (6)

The first chapel on the left is a simple chapel and of good taste. Granted on 15 July 1678 to Maddalena Ferrini, it was decorated by **Felice Ottini**, author of the frescoes on the vault, lateral paintings. [2] [a]

The Spanish altarpiece is a painting which portrays the *Saint handing out bread to the poor*, signed **C. Garofoli** and dated 1879. The beautiful paintings on the side are of the 17th century and are attributed to **Felice Ottini**, disciple of **Brandi**. To the right is *Mary Magdalene in the Desert*; to the left is *St. Francis of Assisi in Ecstasy*. The lunettes have reliefs of scenes from the saint's life. The altar front is of polychrome marble. [1] [a]

Chapel of the Holy Family (7)

At the center of the altar is an oil painting by **Giacinto Brandi** (1660). On the clouds, carried by Cherubim, is the group of the Holy Family. In the middle, the Virgin holding the child Jesus with a look full of love. To the left is St. Joseph, facing paternally towards the child Jesus. The altar front is of polychrome marble, the columns are of jasper with architraves surmounted by angels. On the lateral walls are stucco angels with sacred trophies, a work of **Giuseppe Valadier** (1824). [1] [a]

Chapel of the Madonna of the Divine Help (8)

The chapel was decorated between 1791 and 1783 following a design by **Giacomo Paticchio**, thanks to financing by the Cavaliere Francesco Romolini. The altar, with polychrome marbles and the tabernacle, in the form of a small temple, are by **Paticchio**. [a]

The altarpiece, of the Naples school, has a venerated image of the *Madonna of the Divine Aid* (*Madre del Divino Aiuto*). The icon, originally a copy of **Lucas Cranach**, has been in Bavaria since the 1600s.

This icon was donated to an Augustinian Father Scalzo of Germany, residing in Jesus and Mary, by a German pilgrim who came to Rome after the liberation of Vienna from the siege of the Turks. The icon is in a canvas attributed to **Pietro Labruzzi** (ca. 1793), with *St. Augustine and St. Monica*. [1] [2] [4]

In 1805 Pope Pius VII erected the altar in perpetual privileged and this fact is commemorated in the marble plaque on the left wall of the chapel. [4]

The side lunettes show *The Adoration of the Shepherds* by **Pietro Labruzzi** 1793 to the right, and an anonymous *Escape to Egypt* on the left. The vault has a fresco of the *Dove of the Holy Spirit*, with putti in the pendentives. [1]

To the right is the funeral monument of Flavia Bonelli, princess of Altomare, of 1691 by **Carlo Bizzaccheri**. To the left is a monument to Cavalier Francesco Romolini of 1795, by a disciple of Raggi. There is also a funeral monument for Andrea Giorgi of 1818. [2] [a]

Chapel of St. Anne (9)

The third chapel on the right was dedicated to St Anthony of Egypt, in memory of the former mediaeval church, but is now dedicated to St Anne, the mother of Our Lady. It has an altarpiece of *St Anne with Our Lady* as a little girl by **Ermenegildo Costantini**, signed and dated 1765. The kneeling figure in the foreground is St Anthony Abbot. [1] [2] [a]

The side walls have two anonymous 19th century works, one showing *The Presentation of Our Lady* and the other, *The Birth of Our Lady*. [1] [a]

Chapel of San Nicola da Tolentino (10)

The second chapel on the right is dedicated to St Nicholas of Tolentino. It was decorated by **Fr. Raffaele Minossi "Cappuccino"** from 1794 to 95. On the side walls are paintings of *Miracles of St. Nicola da Tolentina* (1794-95), by **Minossi**. On the ceiling is *Glory of St. Nicola da Tolentina*, by **Minossi**. The altarpiece is the *Madonna and Child and St. Nicholas of Tolentino*, by an unknown artist. [1] [a]

The tomb of Nereo dei Burdi, in fluted marbles, is in the floor in front of the chapel. The tomb on the outer pillar is dedicated to Fra' Mario Bolognetti, the brother of Giorgio; he was a Knight of Jerusalem in 1630 and 1666, and, as the captain of a Papal galley, took part in the Battle of Candia. [a]

Chapel of the Crucifix (11)

The first chapel on the right is dedicated to the Most Holy Crucifix, with statuary by **Francesco Aprile** again.

On the right is the funeral monument of Count Giuseppe Cini, signed by **Rinaldo Rinaldi** (1842). Here also is the monument to the Fichelli brothers, of 1849. There is an anonymous 17th century depiction of *Noli Me Tangere*.

Tomb of the Venerable Aloysius Mary Chmel

Through this chapel is a little room containing the sarcophagus tomb of the Venerable Aloysius Mary Chmel, a Slovak friar and student of theology at the convent who died in the odor of sanctity of thyroid cancer in 1939, aged twenty. The triptych painting over the tomb, featuring *The Resurrection* between portraits of the deceased, is by **Moreno Bondi** who is a very interesting contemporary artist. [1]

Artists and Architects:

C. Garofoli (19th cent), Italian painter

Carlo Buzio (17th cent.), Italian architect

Carlo [Rinaldi](#) (1611-1691), Italian architect of the Baroque period

Carlo Francesco [Bizzaccheri](#) (1656-1721), Italian architect early Baroque and Rococo style

Domenico [Guidi](#) (1625-1701), Italian sculptor of the Baroque period
Ercole [Ferrata](#) (1610-1686), Italian sculptor of the Baroque period
Ermenegildo [Costantini](#) (1731-1791), Italian painter of the late-Baroque
Felice Ottini (17th cent.), Italian painter
Fr. Matthew of Palermo [aka *Palermitano*] (17th cent), Italian painter
Francesco [Aprile](#) (1657-1710), Italian sculptor
Francesco [Cavallini](#) (17th cent), Italian sculptor
Giacinto [Brandi](#) (1621-1691), Italian painter of the Baroque period
Giacomo Patricchio (17th cent.), Italian architect
Giovanni Antonio [Lelli](#) (1591-1640), Italian painter of the Baroque period
Giovanni Battista Testa (18th cent)
Giovanni [Lanfranco](#) (1582-1647), Italian Baroque painter
Girolamo Gramignoli (17th cent.), Italian sculptore
Girolamo [Pesci](#) (1684-1759), Italian painter
Giuseppe [Mazzuoli](#) (1644-1725), Italian sculptor of the Baroque
Giuseppe [Valadier](#) (1762-1839), Italian architect and designer, sculptor, urban planner
and archeologist, a chief exponent of Neoclassicism in Italy
Lorenzo [Ottoni](#) [aka *Il Lorenzone*] (1658-1736), Italian sculptor
Lucas [Cranach](#) (c.1472-1553), German Renaissance painter and printmaker
Michel [Maille](#) [aka *Michele Maglia*] (1643-1703), French sculptor
Moreno [Bondi](#) (21st cent), Italian painter [also see [here](#)]
Pietro [Labruzzi](#) (1739-1805), Italian painter
Pietro Paolo [Naldini](#) (1619-1691), Italian painter, sculptor
Raffaele Minossi (1732-1805), Italian painter [a Capuchin friar]
Rinaldo [Rinaldi](#) (1793-1873), Italian sculptor of the Neoclassic period

Burials:

Mario Cardinal [BOLOGNETTI](#), (1690-1756)
buried in the tomb of his family without any funeral memorial
Luigi Rossi (1597-1653)
<Composer>
Donna Flavia Bonelli (d. 1691)
Princess of Altomare
Cavalier Francesco Romolino (d. end of 18th cent.)

Location:

Addr: Via del Corso 45, 00186 Roma
Coordinates: [41°54'29"N 12°28'40"E](#)

Links:

1. [Roman Churches Wiki](#)
 2. [PoloRomano web site](#) (no longer online)
 3. [Roma Città delle Meraviglie web site](#)
 4. [Parricchia Santuario Madonna della Neve web site](#)
- a. Information plaques in the church

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