

Santa Maria Regina dei Minori



Santa Maria Regina dei Minori is an early 20th century convent church in the Ludovisi district. The dedication is to the Blessed Virgin Mary, under her title of Queen of Heaven. However, the church used to be dedicated to the Body of Christ, or **Corpus Christi**. (1)

History:

The church was designed by **Louis Senigallia**, and begun in 1904 as the church of a large Poor Clare Capuchiness nunnery. (1)

The community concerned used to have a convent at Santa Maria della Concezione delle Cappuccine, and were affiliated to the Capuchins of Santa Maria della Concezione dei Cappuccini. However their convent was sequestrated in 1873 and demolished for the Via Cavour, so the nuns built a new one. The complex was finished in 1910, with the church being dedicated in 1907. (1)

The nunnery was closed after the end of the Second World War, because the nuns decided to build a modern convent at Corpus Christi alla Garbatella. This left the complex empty, and the Capuchins at San Lorenzo da Brindisi nearby decided to move their headquarters to it. This transfer was finished in 1954, after a restoration. The friars abandoned their own church and convent entirely in 1968, when their College was also moved. (1)

Hence, the convent is now the Generalate of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin. The dedication was changed to Santa Maria Regina dei Minori, or "St Mary, Queen of the Minors (or Franciscans)".

This alludes to a venerated icon in one of the side chapels at the old Capuchin church of Santa Maria della Concezione dei Cappuccini. (1)

The whole complex has been shut down for a major restoration, and the church cannot be visited until this is finished (2014). (1)

Exterior:

The church is a short rectangular building tucked into the south-western corner of the convent site. The convent is arranged around four sides of a large courtyard, and takes up the greater part of the city block. (1)

Despite the gabled façade, the church has a flat roof (the rest of the convent has conventional pitched and tiled roofs). There is a very small campanile or bellcote for one bell over the right hand side wall, but this is invisible from the street. (1)

Façade

The stylized neo-Romanesque façade is in red brick with architectural details in yellow tufa, except the plinth which is in white travertine. It has two storeys. The entrance has a doorcase with a gabled top enclosing a tympanum containing a cross, all of this in tufa. The first storey has two pairs of Doric pilasters, the outer pair occupying the corners, and these have very shallow capitals with beading. Between the pilasters are two very thin arched windows. Above the entrance is a circular window in a recessed stone frame, and the thin string course separating the stories is arched over this. (1)

The second storey has a pair of thin arched windows sitting on top of the capitals of the inner pair of first storey pilasters, and these have gabled heads matching the entrance. The outer pilasters have no capitals, but are continued up and under the gabled roofline to form a relief brickwork frame for the upper façade. There is a decorative frieze of little pendant arches below the gable line of this. Finally, there is a little arched window in the center of the second storey. (1)

Interior:

The single-naved interior is very simply decorated. The fresco of *Our Lady, Regina Ordinis Minorum* was painted by Fra Ugolino da Belluno in 1953, after the church was re-dedicated. (1)

Location:

Address: Via Piemonte 70 (rione Ludovisi). The entrance is at Via Sardegna 151

Coord: [41° 54' 35.4" N, 12° 29' 33" E](#)

Links and sources:

1. [Roman Churches Wiki](#)
2. [Info Roma web site](#)
3. [gcatholic.org web site](#)

[Official diocesan web-page](#)

[Italian Wikipedia page](#)