

San Francesco di Paola ai Monti



San Francesco da Paola ai Monti is a 17th century titular church in Rome. It is dedicated to St Francis of Paola (the 15th century founder of the Minim Friars, whose friars serve this church and whose Generalate is attached to it), and is located in the Monti rione , perched on the raised corner above the Via Cavour. (1)

History

It was built 1645-50 with funds given by Princess [Olimpia Aldobrandini Pamphili](#), who (like St Francis) had roots in Calabria. It was designed by Orazio Torriano, then Giovanni Pietro Morandi, given to the Minim Friars, and became the national church of the Calabrians. The late Baroque high altar was made by Giovanni Antonio de Rossi c. 1655 (who is also credited with the church's wooden tabernacle, set into a sculptured entrance of a military pavilion). No new bell tower was built for the church - instead the 12th century Torre dei Margani was used, preserving its medieval coat-of-arms on the tower has been preserved. (1) (4)

However, the church as a whole was not consecrated until 10 July 1728, by Pope Benedict XIII. The lower part of the façade was refinished in plaster in the 18th century, and the whole church was then restored about a century later by Pope Leo XII. The church is now often closed, but you may ask to be admitted at the monastery. (1)

It is the conventual church of the Generalate of the Order of Minims next door, and is served by priests from that order. The present titular deacon of the church is Renato Raffaele Cardinal Martino, who was created Cardinal on 21 October 2003. (1)

Exterior

The rather severe façade is not very easy to appreciate because there is a drop to the Via Cavour below on the other side of the narrow street. It is in two storeys, with travertine limestone for the first and pale orange render for the second. The lower part was refinished with stucco detailing in the 18th century. (1)

The entrance is flanked by a pair of semi-round Composite columns supporting a triangular pediment containing a relief of a virgin's face in Classical mode. The tall lintel has a winged putto's head decorated with swags. The nave section of the frontage is slightly brought forward, and is flanked by two pairs of rectangular Ionic pilasters with the capitals decorated with swags and putto's heads. The aisle sections have no entrances, but each has a blank arched and conched niche flanked by half-round Composite columns supporting an entablature and segmental pediment with a scallop shell, and with swags between their capitals. There is another pair of Ionic pilasters on the corners. These six pilasters support an entablature with a blank frieze, and above this the gabled second storey has a rectangular window with a small round one above, no pediment but with a pair of sunburst symbols flanking the former. (1)

The 12th century Torre dei Margani was transformed into a bell-tower for the church, and is attached to its top left-hand corner. It can be glimpsed from the walkway on the other side of the Via degli Annibaldi. The medieval coat-of-arms on the tower has been preserved. (1)

Interior

The late Baroque high altar was made by Giovanni Antonio de Rossi c. 1655. The altarpiece is of exceptional beauty. A wooden tabernacle, of great workmanship, is set in a sculptured entrance of a military pavilion. The pavilion is a reference to the original meaning of tabernacle, a tent. It also refers to God's presence among the Jews when they carried the Ark of the Covenant with them and kept it in a tent. (1)

The icon of St. [Francis of Paola](#) is said to be a copy of a portrait. Scenes from the life and miracles of the saint can be seen in the sacristy; please ask before entering. (1)

The ceiling was redecorated with cassettes in 1953 by Cesare Minestra. (1)

By the door to the presbytery are the tombs of Lazzarro Pallavicini (tomb designed by Fuga), and Giovanni Pizzullo, both with busts by Agostino Corsini. (1)

The first chapel on the right side is dedicated to St Anne, St Joachim and the Madonna. The altarpiece is by Filippo Luzi. The frescoes in the ceiling are by Onofrio Avellino. (1)

The second chapel on the right has two paintings of miracles of St Francis of Paola by Giuseppe Chiari. (1)

The third chapel on the right is frescoed by Antonio Grecolini, and has a depiction of Sts Francis of Paola and Francis of Sales, patrons of the Order. (1)

On the left side, the first chapel has a painting of *St Michael the Archangel* by Giacomo Triga. The mortal remains of Blessed [Nicola da Langobardi](#), a Minims saint, are preserved in a porphyry urn. (1)

The ceiling of the sacristy was painted by Sassoferrato. The motif is *The Blessed Virgin appearing to St Francis of Paola*. On the side wall is the *Crucifixion and St Francis of Paola* by Francesco Cozza. (1)

Note

The church is often closed, but you may ask to be admitted at the monastery. Feasts that are celebrated with special solemnity are those of Blessed Nicola da Langobardi on 3 February and of St Francis of Paola on 2 April. (1)

Artists and Architects: (1) (4)

Agostino [Corsini](#) (1688-1772), Italian sculptor
 Cesare Minestra (20th cent), Italian painter
 Ferdinando [Fuga](#) (1699-1781), Italian architect in the Baroque style
 Filippo Luzzi (1665-1720), Italian painter
 Francesco [Cozza](#) (1605-1682), Italian painter of the Baroque period.
 Giacomo [Triga](#) (1674-1746), Italian painter of the Late Baroque period
 Giovanni Antonio [de Rossi](#) (1616-1695), Italian architect of the Baroque period
 Giovanni Antonio Grecolini (1675-1725), Italian painter
 Giovanni Battista Salvi da [Sassoferrato](#) (1609-1685), Italian Baroque painter
 Giovanni Lucenti, Italian architect
 Giovanni Pietro Morandi, Italian architect
 Giuseppe Bartolomeo [Chiari](#) (1654-1727), Italian painter of the late-Baroque
 Luigi Barattone (Berrettoni), Italian architect
 Onofrio [Avellino](#) (1674-1741), Italian painter of the Baroque period
 Orazio [Torriani](#) (or Torrigiani) (1602-1657), Italian **architect** and sculptor
 Pio Della Piana, Italian painter
 Stefano [Pozzi](#) (1707?-1768), Italian painter, designer, draughtsman and decorator

Buried (1) (5)

Bl. Nicola da Langobardi (1650-1709)
 Bishop Lazzarro [PALLAVICINI](#) (1686-1744)
 Giovanni Pizzullo

Location:

Addr: 10 Piazza di San Francesco a Paola, 00184 Roma

Coord: [41° 53' 37.8"N 12° 29' 29.3"E](#)

Info: (3)

Telephone: 0039 06 4880250

Links and sources:

1. http://romanchurches.wikia.com/wiki/San_Francesco_a_Paola
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francesco_di_Paola_ai_Monti
3. <http://www.060608.it/en/cultura-e-svago/luoghi-di-culto-di-interesse-storico-artistico/chiese-cattoliche/san-francesco-di-paola-ai-monti.html>
4. http://www.info.roma.it/monumenti_dettaglio.asp?ID_schede=395
5. <http://www2.fiu.edu/~mirandas/494-2013-a-z-all.htm>