

Santi Fabiano e Venanzio



Santi Fabiano e Venanzio is a mid 20th century parish and titular church on the Piazza di Villa Fiorelli in the Tuscolano district. The dedication is jointly to Pope St Fabian and St Venantius of Camerino (both martyred in the persecution of the emperor Decius, c. 250).

History

The proposal for a new parish church, in this suburb located near Rome's main railway junction, originally intended it to be dedicated to Pope St Fabian alone. However, before construction started it was decided to make it the regional church for expatriates from Camerino also, replacing the historic church of Santi Venanzio e Ansovino which was demolished in 1928. St Venantius is the patron of this town, hence the unique joint dedication.

The parish of SS Fabian and Venantius was erected by Pope Pius XI in 1933. The church was designed by Clemente Busiri Vici and opened for worship in 1936, but not formally consecrated until 1959 by Monsignor Luigi Traglia.

Some rescued artworks from the demolished church were moved to here.

The church was made titular in 1973, and the first titular priest was Ján Chryzostom Korec S.J., Bishop of Nitra in Slovakia. He died in 2015, and was replaced by Aguiar Retes in the following year.

The cardinalate title is Santi Fabiano e Venanzio a Villa Fiorelli, which is not the name of the church -there is confusion online over this.

Exterior

The plan is basilical, without a transept. The church has a central nave of five bays, with aisles and a short sanctuary bay at a lower elevation leading into a three-sided apse. Attached to the near end of the right hand aisle is a large separate chapel on a perpendicular axis, and next to the far end of the same aisle is a tower campanile.

The roofs are pitched, and laid with brown tiles. Unusually, the aisle roofs are hipped at each end of the aisles. All the exterior walls of the church are rendered in a light purplish pink.

Façade

The entrance façade looks very odd, because the gable is actually false and is raised above the roofline with the support of sloping buttresses which rise above the lateral eaves of the nave. This allows for three large round-headed apertures to be inserted below the gable, the central one higher and containing a cross of thin metal rods. These apertures are each above a recessed rectangular panel of the same width.

The section of the nave frontage containing the entrance is recessed under a string course bearing a dedicatory inscription, this also forming the lintel of the doorway. The bronze door is decorated with symbols of air warfare, and the doorcase is framed by four wide stone upright molding strips which step inwards. To the left of the door is a stone plaque commemorating the visit of Pope Pius XII on 13 August 1943, the date of the second air bombardment of Rome which killed several parishioners. To the right is another one recording the names of these victims of the air-raid. The rest of the nave frontage, above the string course, is blank wall bearing the devices from coat-of-arms of Pope Pius below the tiara and crossed keys.

The aisle entrances, smaller than the main one but of the same style (except that they have their own lintels) are inserted into projecting three-sided enclosed porches with narrow round-headed windows on the other two sides. These contain geometric tracery. Above these porches, the aisle frontages bear a large round window each with stained glass in a Greek cross and have horizontal rooflines.

The external entrance to the Chapel of St Venantius is to the right, and has a round-headed doorway in the same style as the main entrance.

Campanile

The campanile is a blank-walled tower on a square plan, with a large round-headed sound-hole on each side and a flat cap.

Interior

Nave

The five-bay nave is separated from its aisles by tall columns in what looks like broccoli-green marble, with black bases and thin imposts but no proper capitals. They support a striking entablature on each side, consisting of an architrave which is a horizontal concrete beam and a cornice which is a diagonal strip curving out into a deep horizontal vane. Above the side cornices, the slightly curved and undecorated white ceiling vault has its side springers hidden by the projecting vanes mentioned.

The walls are in a beige color.

The aisles have three large round-headed windows each. The altars at the ends of the aisles come from the demolished predecessor church, and are in little side chapels created by inserting a blocking wall of half the depth of the far bay of the colonnade on each side. The left hand chapel is dedicated to the Sacred Heart, and the right hand one to Our Lady of Mercy (Madonna della Misericordia); her icon here was a popular

object of veneration in the former church, as well as here. The wall surrounds of the altars bear mosaics of saints.

Chapel of St Venantius

The external chapel of St Venantius is entered via the right hand aisle, and has a Baroque altar rescued from the demolished church. The weekday Masses are usually celebrated here.

Sanctuary

There is a sort-of triumphal arch, an almost square portal with a slightly curved top edge. The sanctuary consists of a very short bay and an apse, and has a flat ceiling bearing a recessed motif of a cross within an arch.

There is an arched window either side of the apse, and the three sides of the apse itself are entirely covered by a spectacular mosaic depicting Christ in Glory Blesses SS Fabian and Venantius. Two side panels bear images of saints.

Liturgy

Mass is celebrated:

Weekdays 7:00, (not summer), 9:00, 18:00 (in St Venantius's chapel, except Saturday evening);

Sundays and Solemnities 7:30, 9:00, 10:00 (not summer) 11:30, 18:00 (19:00 summer), 19:30 (not summer).

The Solemnity of St Fabian is celebrated on 20 January, and that of St Venantius on 18 May.

Location:

Address: Via Terni 92

Coord: [41°53′04.7″N 12°31′18.2″E](#)

External links

[Roman Churches Wiki](#)

[Official diocesan web-page](#)

[Wikimedia Commons photo index](#)

[Italian Wikipedia page](#)

[Parish website](#)

[Info.roma web-page](#)