

## Santa Maria Immacolata e San Giuseppe Benedetto Labre



**Santa Maria Immacolata e San Giuseppe Benedetto Labre** is an early 20th century convent church, near the Piazza dei Rei di Roma in the Tuscolano quarter. The joint dedication is to the Blessed Virgin Mary under the aspect of her Immaculate Conception, and St Benedict Joseph Labre.

### History

The church is part of a convent and school complex run by the Sisters of the Immaculate of Genoa, nicknamed the Immacolatine. This was completed in 1928, the architect being Gino Benigni.

### Exterior

The church is situated so that the façade looks out diagonally over a crossroads. Of the external walls of the church, only it is visible from the street. This façade is in white limestone ashlar, of one storey having a nave frontage and very narrow side aisle frontages which are undifferentiated but have short single-pitched roofs. The ashlar blocks around the entire border, including the gabled roofline, are in slight relief which gives a crenellated pattern of long-and-short blocks up the sides and a step motif at the roofline.

There is an external entrance loggia with three arches, and a single-pitched roof that occupies the entire width of the central nave part of the façade. The arches are of different sizes, the central one being larger, and these are supported on four limestone Corinthian columns.

The loggia is approached by stairs. It contains three doorways, of the same height but the central one being larger. They are set into a screen wall, and around the doors the ashlar work is treated in the same way as at the corners of the façade.

Above the loggia is an arched frame enclosing a row of three round-headed windows. These have transennae or pierced stone mullion-screens. Above them in the arched frame is a mosaic of the head of Christ adored by angels.

There is a low Romanesque campanile in brick to the right side of the body of the church, with the bell-storey delineated by stone cornices with modillions above and below. This storey has an arcade of three arches separated by stone Doric columns, and in the arcade facing the street is a statue of Our Lady in the central arch. Between the bell-storey's top cornice and the tiled pyramidal cap is a low plinth decorated with three recessed quatrefoils on each side.

### **Interior**

The church is one of the series of great new neo-Romanesque churches put up in the seventy years after 1870, when the city's first suburbs were laid out.

The plan is basilical, with a central nave and side aisles. The former is very tall for its width, giving an impression of grandeur. There are no arcades, but large limestone Corinthian columns support an entablature on each side (this arrangement is known as a trabeation). Above these entablatures are galleries or matronia, which have a low arch over each nave bay. These galleries have fretwork balustrades. Above the galleries in turn is a second entablature which runs round the entire interior, and finally the actual central nave walls containing narrow round-headed windows.

The ceiling is in wood, and is flat.

The sanctuary apse is also very tall, and has a conch. The altarpiece represents Mary Immaculate, in a large and tall round-headed frame. The apse wall either side of this is frescoed in red panels with gold highlights and a green dado, which is imitation ancient Roman decoration. Flanking the top of the altarpiece and above the entablature is a mosaic of saints and angels venerating the altarpiece. Above this, in the conch, is a second mosaic of the Crucifixion and above this in turn is a third mosaic around the top of the triumphal arch, of Mary Immaculate in glory.

The side aisle walls have mosaic representations of the Stations of the Cross.

### **Location:**

Address: Via Taranto 51

Coord: [41°53′04.8″N 12°30′55.1″E](#)

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