

San Simone Profeta

(Deconsecrated and ruined)



The church of **St. Simeon the Prophet** is a ruined former parochial and confraternity church of Rome, the Ponte district, located in Piazza Lancellotti. It is dedicated to St [Simeon Senex](#), the old man who embraced the baby Jesus during his presentation at the Temple in Jerusalem. (1) (4)

HISTORY

It is first mentioned as a parish church in a document of Regestum Farfense of 23 January 1017, under the name *San Simeone de Ponte*, but was probably much older than that. In the *Catalogus Cencii Camerarii* of 1192 it is listed as *San Simone de Posterula*. (1) (4)

It was made titular by Pope Sixtus V (1585-90) in 1551, after a restoration. The cardinalate only lasted until 1587, when it was suppressed. The last titular was Scipione Lancellotti. However, a relative of his named Orazio Lancellotti rebuilt the church in 1610, as the family palace was nearby, and provided the altars with paintings. It remained a parish church until 1824. The upper storey of the façade was remodelled in 1741. (1)

Then, when the parish was suppressed, the church was entrusted to the Archconfraternity of Saint Margaret of Cortona, which rededicated it as *Santa Margherita da Cortona*. (There is some doubt as to whether it was formally rededicated, or whether this was just a nickname.) (1)

This confraternity seems to have had little success here. At the end of the 19th century the church had no serving priest and was closed. The church was abandoned completely after the collapse of the roof in 1929. There is still a *Confraternita di Santa Margherita da Cortona* in Rome, but it is based at the Lateran.

Only the façade remains, which was recently restored and is in good condition. (1)

EXTERIOR

The pretty little two-storey façade remains in good condition. The first storey is in pale brown brick with limestone architectural details, and the second storey is rendered in white. The corners of the former are occupied by a pair of Doric pilasters supporting an entablature, the thin frieze of which had an inscription which it is now difficult to make out. The cornice of this entablature is strongly projecting, and rather out of proportion. (1)

The former entrance has a stone doorcase which is molded, and over the lintel of this is an inscription: *S[ancto] Simeoni Prophetæ H[orati] Lancelottus* ("Orazio Lancelotti (gives this to) St. Simeon the Prophet"). This inscription looks as if it had been covered up when the church was dedicated to St Margaret. On either side of it is a carved triglyph, and over it is an oversized segmental pediment. (1)

The second storey has another pair of Doric pilasters with oversized capitals, directly over the first pair and supporting a triangular pediment. Into this is inserted a rectangular window with a bowed wrought iron balcony, which breaks the line of the pediment's cornice. In the middle of the storey is a large oeil-de-boeuf window with a raised frame topped by a scallop shell motif. There is a winged putto's head in the top angle of the pediment. (1)

INTERIOR

The church behind the façade no longer exists. The narrow façade gives the impression of a very small church, but this was not so. The entrance led into a small narthex, which widened out into the nave which was basilical in plan. There were side aisles separated by arcades having four pillars each, and a pair of pilasters framed the main altar. There was no transept, presbyterium or apse. The Nolle map of 1748 shows two side altars on each side, but descriptions of the church layout mention only two in total. (1)

The main altar had an altarpiece of *The Circumcision* by Ventura Salimbeni. The right hand altar had an important painting by Carlo Saraceni showing *Our Lady and Child with St Anne*, and the left hand altar had an anonymous 17th century work. There was a tomb of Lorenzo Genusino dating from 1498, and one of Ludovico Vestarini of 1820. (1)

The Saraceni is now in the *Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica*. (1)

Location:

Addr: Piazza Lancelotti

Coord: [41° 54' 3.9"N, 12° 28' 14.3"E](#)

Links and References:

1. http://romanchurches.wikia.com/wiki/San_Simeone_Profeta
2. http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&u=http://www.romaspqr.it/ROMA/CHIESE/Chiese%2520Sconsacrate/s_simeone_profeta.htm
3. [http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&u=http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_di_San_Simeone_profeta_\(Roma\)&prev=/search%3Fq%3Dsan%2Bsimeone%2Bprofeta%2Broma%26biw%3D1159%26bih%3D1034](http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&u=http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_di_San_Simeone_profeta_(Roma)&prev=/search%3Fq%3Dsan%2Bsimeone%2Bprofeta%2Broma%26biw%3D1159%26bih%3D1034)

4. <http://romafelix.com/ssimeone.htm>
5. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dealvariis/sets/72157615563728298/with/3364483437/>
6. <http://www.romeartlover.it/Vasi108.htm>