

San Filippo Neri in Via Giulia

(Deconsecrated)



San Filippo Neri a Via Giulia was a small 18th century confraternity and conventual church on the Via Giulia, just south of the *Carceri Nuove* (new prison). The dedication was to St Philip Neri. (1)

History:

The small church of San Filippo Neri, commonly called San Filippino owing to its small dimensions, was erected in 1623 and originally dedicated to St. Trophimus (d. c. 280), first bishop of Arles in Gaul. Since the founder of the church, Rutilio Brandi, a Florentine glovemaking and perfumer, suffered from gout, he dedicated it to this particular saint, who is patron saint of the gouty. Brandi was a devout follower of St. Filippo Neri (1515-1595), who with his Congregation of the Oratory constituted the centre of religious life in Rome. Brandi was inspired to found the Confraternity of the Holy Wounds of Our Lord (*Confraternita delle Piaghe di Nostro Signore Gesù Cristo*), and the Conservatory of spinsters. The conservatory had the care of 100 poor girls, whom they brought up until they either married or embraced religion. Brandi also instituted a hostel for infirm priests. A small oratory was erected on Via del Malpasso, adjacent to the church proper.

The church was completely rebuilt in 1767-1768 by the architect Giovanni Francesco Fiori (1709-1784).

In 1853 the church was severely damaged, when the Tiber flooded. It was restored at the request of Pope Pius IX (1846-1878), and the interior was embellished with lavish decorations and pictures.

In the late 1930's the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini ordered some large-scale demolitions in the area with a view to building a road, dedicated to St. Filippo Neri, connecting Ponte Mazzini with Piazza della Chiesa Nuova along Corso Vittorio Emanuele II. The church was partly demolished and abandoned.

After World War II the project was postponed, and the church, which had been at the risk of being completely razed to the ground, was saved. Abandoned and semi-demolished, the church was desecrated, and the windows were all smashed in. For a time the interior served as a warehouse.

Finally, in 1993, a construction company was commissioned to restore the church of San Filippo Neri and the adjacent buildings. Unfortunately the project was halted at some stages due to lack of funds, but by 1999 the restoration was well under way.

At last, in 2000, the church of San Filippo Neri greeted the new millennium with a restored and cleaned façade! You may admire this fine example of 18th century ecclesiastical. The little oratory next door is long gone.

Exterior:

The two-storied façade has a colossal order of pilasters. The capitals are decorated with shells and hanging festoons. The central bay has a rectangular porch with an empty segmental pediment. Above this is an oval stucco medallion with a relief *depicting The Apparition of the Virgin and Child to St. Filippo Neri*. The medallion is crowned by floral garlands and a mussel-shell. The lateral bays have richly ornamented rectangular windows with segmental pediments and, underneath these, plain panels. The façade is crowned by a protruding triangular pediment with the coat-of-arms of the Confraternity of the Holy Wounds of Our Lord adorned with a cherub's head and floral garlands. Beneath the crowning pediment is the entablature with the dedicatory inscription of the church:

DEO IN HONOREM S PHILIPPI NERII DICATUM

Interior:

The paintings and other works of art of the interior were removed in the 1930's. The high altar painting of *St. Filippo Neri* is by the 19th century artist Cesare Dies. The right side altar had a medieval relief depicting *The Crucifixion*, which originated from the Grotte Vaticane. Above the left side altar was Filippo Zucchetti's painting *St. Trophimus healing the gouty* (c. 1720). Other paintings adorning the interior were a *Pietà* and four canvases depicting *The Passion of Christ*. The small oratory housed the painting *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, attributed to Federico Zucchari (1542-1609).

The remaining interior space is now part of the apartment building, and is private.

Location:

Via Giulia 134

Coordinates: [41°53'49"N](#) [12°28'2"E](#)

Links:

http://romanchurches.wikia.com/wiki/San_Filippo_Neri_a_Via_Giulia

[Italian Wikipedia entry](#)

<http://web.comhem.se/%7Eu13117202/sfilineri.htm>

[http://74.125.45.132/translate_c?hl=en&sl=it&u=http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_di_San_Filippo_Neri_\(Roma\)](http://74.125.45.132/translate_c?hl=en&sl=it&u=http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_di_San_Filippo_Neri_(Roma))