

## Oratorio dell'Angelo Custode



**Oratorio dell'Angelo Custode** is an 18th century Baroque oratory of the Confraternity of the Most Holy Sacrament. This edifice used to be called Oratorio del Santissimo Sacramento al Tritone. However recently it has been renamed Oratorio dell'Angelo Custode, in reference of the lost church of Angelo Custode which used to be nearby. Hence, the dedication is now to the Guardian Angel.

### History:

The early church on the site was constructed during the pontificate of Gregory XIII (1572–1585), but was not completed until 1681.

It was completely rebuilt between 1727 and 1728 for the confraternity of SS. Sacramento di S.Maria in Via by Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, the protector of the confraternity and a patron of the arts during the pontificate of Benedict XIII. Domenico Gregorini was commissioned as the architect of the Oratory. Francesco Trevisani was commissioned to paint the alterpiece while Giovan Domenico Piastrine was given over to decorate the walls.

This was rebuilt in the years 1841-42 based on designs by Maria Luigi Valadier, architect of the confraternity. New renovations were also made in the church between 1865 and 1866. The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century renovation of the interior was completed by Tito Armellini. The original brick floor was replaced with marble slabs.

The sacred furnishings from the church were requisitioned at the end of the 18th century to pay the taxes levied by the French.

Recently it has been renamed *Oratorio dell'Angelo Custode*, in memory of the lost church of Angelo Custode which used to be nearby but was demolished in 1929 for the enlargement of Via del Tritone.

### **Exterior:**

The Roman Baroque façade, completed in 1681, is by Carlo Rainaldi in the style of Borromini. The beautiful portal is flanked by twin columns supporting a curved pediment are statues representing the virtues *Faith* and *Hope* by Paul Benaglia carried out in 1728.

The second storey has a round-headed central window topped by a winged putto's head below a complex ogee curve, and having two pairs of flanking pilasters, one round and one rectangular. The inner, round ones are in grey marble. Either side of the window are two pairs of conjoined rectangular pilasters with capitals, supporting a fanciful pediment formed of two halves of a segmental pediment joined onto a central triangular one. The outer elements of the second storey have vertical windows formed from a rectangle with a semicircle at either end, and these have short sections of balustrade below them. Finally, there is another pair of pilasters flanking the composition like those of the first storey.

### **Interior:**

The interior plan is elliptical and the architectural surfaces are richly decorated, with ribbed Composite rectangular pilasters in grey and gold.

Luigi Martinori replaced the pictorial decoration between 1856 and 1857. The whole decoration of the interior, with the Angels in the Mirror of the time, coat of arms of Pope Pius IX and Cardinal Costantino Patrizi (protector of the confraternity at the time of restoration) in lunettes, and figures of the Evangelists in the boxes on the walls, were completed by Martinori.

The main altar (which was rebuilt in 1842 by Valdier (?)) now holds the relics of SS Cyriac, Ilaria and Lea, fragments of a Virgins veil and St Joseph's Mantle. The large painting over the altar depicting the *Holy Family with St Anne and St Joachim* is by Francesco Trevisani, dated 1729.

The frescoes of the main chapel of *David* (right) and *Aaron* (left) were painted by Pietro Gagliardi in 1854/1855.

The left wall is decorated with the figures of the Evangelists *Mark* and *Matthew*, of Martinori; in the middle of the two plaques: one recalls the laying of foundation stone, the other activity carried on by Msg. Valeriano Sebastiani (which was the confraternity Primicerio) in defense of Canobi.

Above the door the counterfaçade is decorated with a massive 18<sup>th</sup> century choir, supported by corbels and communicating with two side choirs.

To the right of the entrance is a shrine of the Virgin painted by Perin del Vaga.

**Artists and Architects:**

Carlo [Rainaldi](#) (1611-1691), Italian architect of the Baroque period  
 Domenico [Gregorini](#) (1692-1777), Italian architect  
 Francesco [Trevisani](#) (1656-1746), Italian painter of the early Rococo or late Baroque  
 Luigi [Martinori](#) (1828-1895, Italian painter and architect  
 Maria Luigi Valadier (19<sup>th</sup> cent), Italian architect  
 Paolo [Benaglia](#) (d. 1739), Italian sculptor  
 Piero Bonaccorsi aka Perin [del Vaga](#) (1501-1547), Italian painter of the Late Renaissance/  
 Mannerism  
 Pietro [Gagliardi](#) (1809-1890), Italian painter  
 Tito Armellini (19<sup>th</sup> cent), Italian architect

**Location:**

Address: Piazza Poli 11, 00187 Roma

Coordinates: [41°54'6"N 12°28'56"E](#)

**Info:**

Open:  
 Every day from 7.30 to 23.00.  
 Mass time:  
 Sundays and holidays 17:00

**Links & References:**

[Roman Churches Wiki](#)

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

[Official diocesan web-page](#)

[Italian Wikipedia page](#)

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Donovan, Jeremiah; ROME ANCIENT AND MODERN AND ITS ENVIRONS; 1842