

Sant'Omobono



Sant'Omobono is a guild church dedicated to St Homobonus of Cremona, patron of tailors, and is located on the Vico Jugario in the rione Ripa. It is a familiar landmark to the east of the Via Petrosa, looming over the excavated ancient ruins of the Area Sacra di Sant'Omobono, but its civic profile is limited. It has rarely been found open, and is now "closed awaiting repair".

History:

The church is located in the Forum Boario where were the temples of Fortuna and Mater Matuta and Porta Triumphalis. These structures have been excavated next to the church between the years 1930's (at the stage of "scraping" of the Capitol) and the 1960's and are still visible in the archaeological area of Sant'Omobono. Its foundations are set on the ruins of the temple of Mater Matuta.

The first Christian church dates from the sixth century and was originally called **San Salvatore in Portico** (referring to the near Portico of Octavia). Between the twelfth and thirteenth century it was restored and repaved with marquetry type Cosmati. Rebuilt in 1482, was given in 1575 to the "Università dei Sarti" (the association of tailors) and the church was dedicated to their patron saint, Saint Homobonus (see note). In the same church took residence Calzettai of the Brotherhood and those of Sartori and Giubbonari. The last restoration, with paving dates back to 1940.

The difference between the road to the archeological area and the plan of construction of the church - which today is raised a couple of meters compared to the modern road, which connects a scale recently - is an interesting example and plastic evidenza of how the walking surface of ancient Rome has been flooded, over the centuries, from four to five meters (in some cases even more) of rubble and debris, which has continued to build continuously, and then it was back to digging .

The area around the small church was widely excavated in the 1960s and many interesting remains were found dating back to the very early days of Rome. The stairs leading to the church show the

difference of the ground level. Today's level is higher than the level at the time of Ancient Rome, but is lower than the level at Vasi's time (this can be noticed also in S. Niccolò in Carcere).

A small Roman stela opposite the church is interesting for its two inscriptions: in the upper part two Roman consuls state that the area is public property; in the lower part Pope Paul IV in 1556 celebrates himself as preserver of the Roman heritage.

Exterior:

There is an unaisled rectangular nave with a pitched and tiled roof, and a presbyterium forming a five-sided apse with the walls slightly lower than those of the nave. The walls of these are in brick. On top of this apse is a small dome with a drum rendered in orange-pink, the dome itself being a tiled segment of a sphere with eight ribs in tile. The drum has five buttresses, rising from the corners of the apse, and unusually these are also tiled. To the sides are a pair of oculi or round windows, and there is another one at the back inset in a rectangular frame with a slightly curved top.

The church is raised above the level of the street on a crypt, and so is approached via two flights of transverse stairs. The balustrading of these and of the little landing in front of the entrance has vanished and been replaced by ugly steel bars. To the right side, facing the ruins, is an open loggia running along the nave with four brick arches and one at either end. These lack imposts.

The dignified but now scruffy façade is in brick with architectural details in travertine. Four gigantic Doric pilasters in brick rise from a pair of high plinths which reach halfway up the entrance doorway. These pilasters support an entablature with a crowning triangular pediment, and on the tympanum of the latter are decayed remnants of a fresco. The frieze of the entablature bears a dedicatory inscription, but the dirt makes this difficult to read.

Over the doorway is a raised triangular pediment supported by double volutes, and above this is a large oculus or round window enclosed in a square Baroque frame with the corners delineated. The four spaces between the window and the angles of the square are filled with winged putto's heads, the square is supported by two dumpy Doric pilasters and is embellished on the sides with a pair of little volutes with tassels. The doorway is flanked by a pair of large empty round-headed niches with oversize keystones, and above these are two square windows with frames in the same style as the oculus. The capitals of each pair of gigantic pilasters are connected by swags.

Interior:

The interior has a nave with a panelled ceiling.

In the apse is an early 16th century painting by Pietro Turini.

On the left there is the altar dedicated to Sant'Omobono besides the tomb of the Satri family, who financed the reconstruction of the church in 1482.

In the lunette of the third arch on the left in the nave is a charming depiction of God the Father as a tailor, clothing Adam in a fur-trimmed cloak after expelling him and Eve from the Garden of Eden.

Notes:

Although the church is closed, the Arciconfraternita of Sant'Omobono (called Masters Sarti) had a Primicerio in office until 1997, now has a home in Laterano in Via Aurelia.

Location:

Addr: Vico Jugario

Coordinates: [41°53'26"N 12°28'52"E](#)

Links:

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[Official diocesan web-page](#)

[English Wikipedia page](#)

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