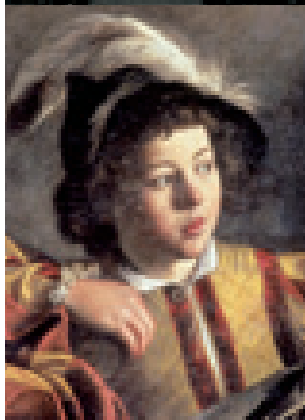
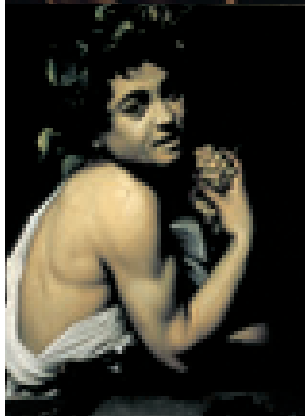
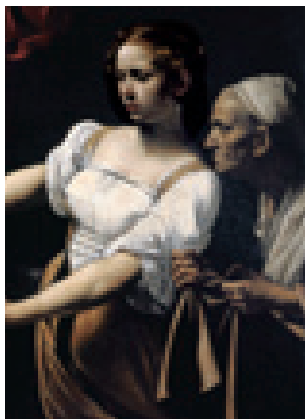




Comune
di Roma
turismo

*A tour around the
sights of Rome to dis-
cover the Masterpieces
of Michelangelo Merisi
da Caravaggio.*

1. BORGHESE GALLERY
2. LUDOVISI LODGE
3. CONVENT AND CHURCH
OF SANTA MARIA DELLA
CONCEZIONE
4. BARBERINI PALACE
5. DORIA PAMPHILJ
GALLERY
6. THE CAPITOLINE ART
GALLERY
7. CHURCH OF SAN LUIGI
DEI FRANCESI
8. CHURCH OF
SANT'AGOSTINO
9. CHURCH OF SANTA
MARIA DEL POPOLO
10. VATICAN ART GALLERY
11. CORSINI GALLERY



Caravaggio
in Rome

Roma for you
Collection of information by the Roma City Council

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A series of specialistic guides aim to prolong one's stay in Rome; a suggestion for people who have "a few extra" days and desire to deepen the knowledge of our city.

Carefully studied itineraries to accompany the visitor in the discovery of the great patrimony of the Renaissance in Rome through the testimonies of great artists such as Caravaggio, Raffaello, Michelangelo.

Walks through baroque art, to admire the splendid architectures by Bernini and Borromini.

Advice for everyone, alike tourists and Romans, in order to quietly discover and enjoy the testimonies of ages that played a major part in constructing the extraordinary present image of our city.

*Tourism Office
Municipality of Rome*

1. BORGHESE GALLERY
2. LUDOVISI LODGE
3. MONASTERY AND CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DELLA CONCEZIONE
4. BARBERINI PALACE
5. DORIA PAMPHILJ GALLERY
6. THE CAPITOLINE ART GALLERY
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9. CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DEL POPOLO



10. VATICAN ART GALLERY
11. CORSINI GALLERY



Borghese Gallery

The Villa was built for Cardinal Scipione Borghese, nephew of Pope Paul V. It was conceived as a centre of entertainment and cultural enjoyment by the architect Flaminio Ponzio at the beginning of the 17th century. Later decorated by Giovanni Vasanzio, the interior was completely re-arranged by Antonio Asprucci in 1770. The decorations of the saloons belonging to that period were completely restored during the course of the last work of preservation completed in 1997. The villa holds the splendid family collection started by Scipione Borghese, connoisseur of both classic and modern art.

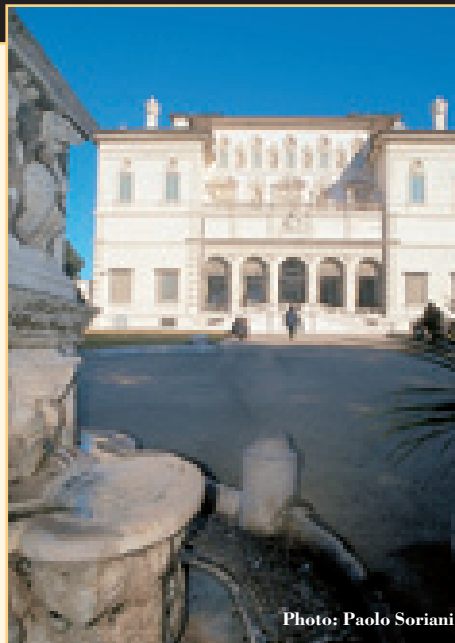
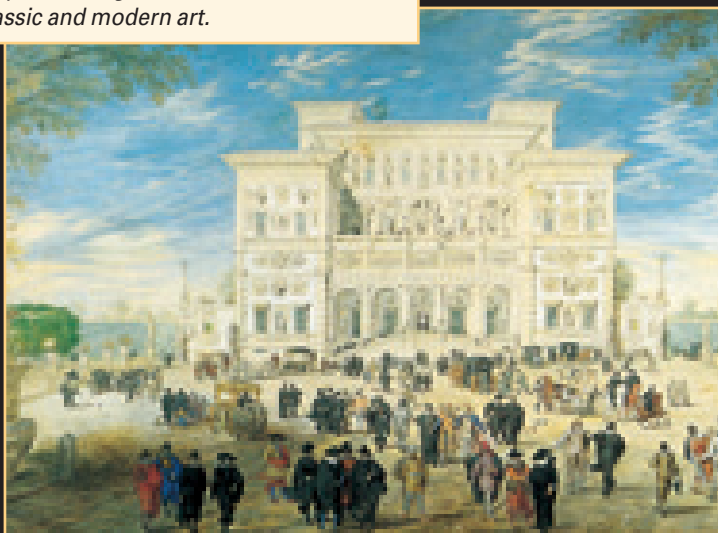


Photo: Paolo Soriani



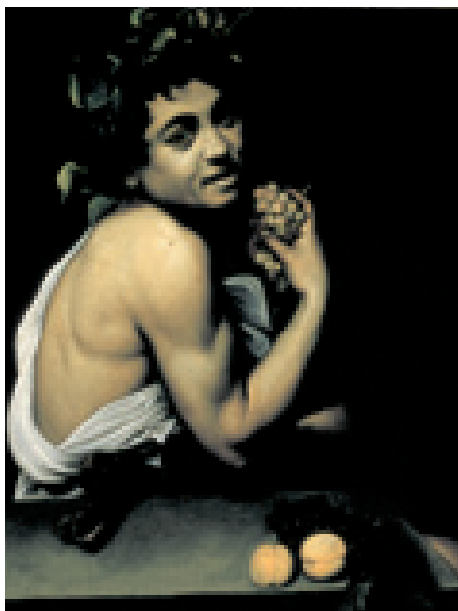
J.W. Baur, *View of Villa Borghese* (1636)



Young girl with basket of fruit (photo SBAS)

The Borghese Gallery enjoys the record of having the most number of Caravaggio's works. No other museum in the world holds six canvasses by the famous Lombard Maestro and up to the Napoleonic period there were double the number of which, what is more, demonstrated a whole life dedicated to painting: from a young age up to the last stage of his stormy life.

The **Young Girl with basket of fruit** and **The Sick Bacchus** are the works of a young man. They come from the seizure of the Cavalier d'Arpino's collection. The latter was a well-established painter but had the misfortune to come up against the greedy



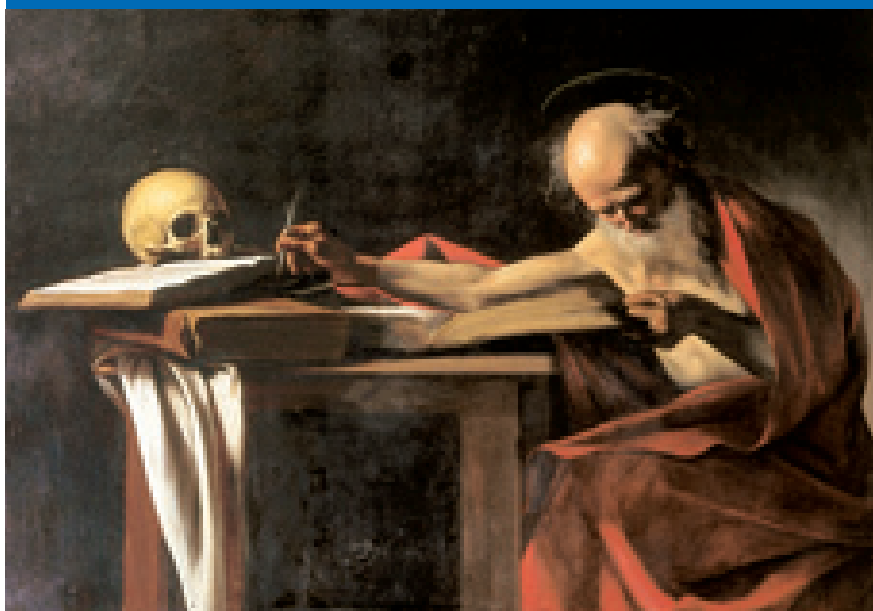
The Sick Bacchus (photo SBAS)

Scipione Borghese.

In 1607, the painter from Arpino was imprisoned for reasons that are still not clear. Cardinal Borghese, with the excuse of a collection of arquebuses owned by the unfortunate artist, blackmailed him in order to gain possession of his outstanding collection of paintings. Cavalier d'Arpino was, in fact, released after having left the collection at the Apostolic Chamber from which, it seems, it passed as a papal donation to Scipione Borghese. **The Young**

Girl with basket of fruit, dated between 1593 and 1595, interpreted, in a new way,

St. Jerome (photo SBAS)

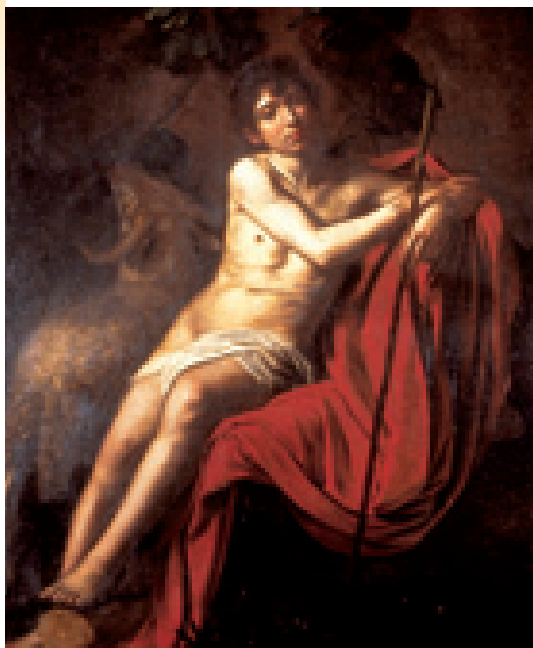




Madonna dei Palafrenieri (photo SBAS)

Lombard, Venetian, Tuscan and Flemish ideas. There are many naturalistic details that attract the observer to the minute detail of the fruit in the basket held by the girl with a masculine face.

In the **Sick Bacchus**, painted between 1593 and 1595, Caravaggio, only a short while before leaving the Hospital of the Con-



San Giovanni (photo SBAS)

solazione - where he had been admitted after being kicked by a horse - wanted to portray a votive offering, through the livid lips and the pallid flesh, for having escaped death.

The **Madonna dei Palafrenieri**, painted between November 1605 and March 1606, was commissioned by the Arch-Confraternity of Papal Grooms for their altar in the Basilica of St. Peter's. It was refused by the first

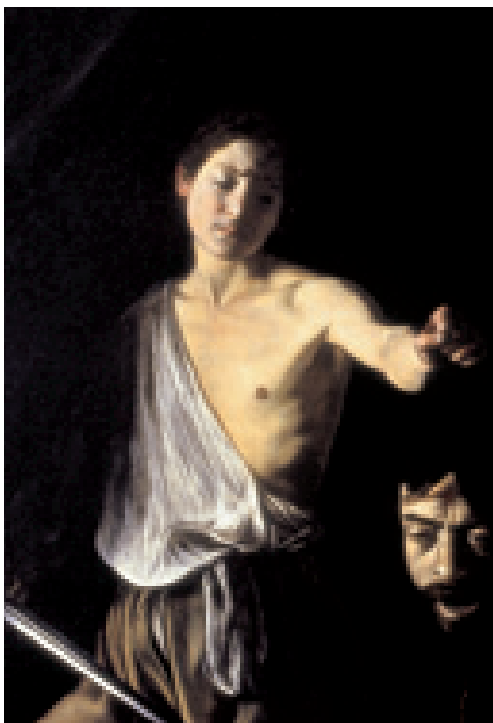
clients because of the lack of decorum and of the crude realism of the figures of the Virgin, of the Child and of St. Anne, or perhaps, on the suggestion of Paolo V Borghese, who thus allowed his nephew a quick acquisition of the painting. The altar-piece shows the theme of the Immaculate Conception.

The **St. Jerome** was probably done directly for cardinal Scipione Borghese between 1605 and 1606 as a mark of gratitude of the artist who had been helped out of trouble with the Law. It could well be the first painting by Caravaggio to enter the Borghese collection.

Caravaggio painted **David with the head of Goliath** between 1609 and 1610, during his second stay in Naples, and probably sent it to cardinal Scipione Borghese to obtain favour in view of a return to Rome, the city he had run away from after a serious episode with the Law. Caravaggio depicted

the cut off head of Goliath, that is, of the sinner; the painter admitted his guilt and asked for grace.

The event with the **San Giovannino** is perhaps tied to the last hours of life of the artist. It mustn't be forgotten that the painting was aboard the ship on which Caravaggio left Naples to return to Rome, taking with him the work to give to the cardinal. The Baptist was one of Caravaggio's favourite subjects.



David with the Head of Goliath (photo SBAS)

Galleria Borghese, piazzale del Museo Borghese, 5 - 00197 Roma
Phone 06 32.810 • 199 75.75.10 (register tickets) Fax 06 32651329 • www.galleriaborghese.it • info@galleriaborghese.it.

Times of opening: every day except Mondays, 1st January and the 25th December from 9 am to 7 pm. The ticket-office closed before 1 hour.

Entrance: complete € 8,50, reduced € 5,25, free for under 18's and over 65's; € 2,00 for booking; € 5,00 guided tours.

Services: The museum has special access facilities for handicapped people.

The museum, with entrance every two hours, is by limited numbers; for bookings Tel 06 32810. There is a guided tour with art historians for each time slot. For bookings for guided tours in foreign languages and groups of a maximum of 25 people, Phone 06 8555952.

Ludovisi Lodge



Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto (detail) (photo Boncompagni Ludovisi)



Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto (photo Boncompagni Ludovisi)

The lodge, in required at the Administration of the Prince Boncompagni Ludovisi, fax 06 42010745, price € 5,16 visitable in appointment Friday 11.00 am and 12.00 am is situated along Via Lombardia, 46 is - together with the palace the present home of the Embassy of the United States of America - the only remaining part of the splendid Ludovisi Villa, built by cardinal Ludovico on the Horti Sallustiani in the first half of the 1600's and completely destroyed at the end of the last century. The 16th century building is in the form of a cross; projections were added to each wing in 1858. The Lodge is also called dell'Aurora from the masterpiece by Guercino who also painted the Allegories of day and night, in tempera on the wall. The rooms also have splendid decorations done by Agostino Tassi, Paul Brill and Domenichino.

According to old information by Bellori, biographer of many 17th century artists, Caravaggio painted the gods **Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto**, sons of Chronos, Lord of the Universe in oil on the wall, here, in the small vault of the lavatory of the Alchemy laboratory. The work has been dated to the end of the last decade of the 1500's, when the lodge was owned by cardinal Francesco Maria Del Monte, a very influential person and interested in, among other things, Alchemy. The sun is in the centre and above it is Jupiter with an eagle. To the sides, below, are the foreshortened figures of Neptune with trident and sea-horse with webbed feet, and Pluto with Cerberus.

Monastery and Church of Santa Maria della Concezione

The Church and monastery of the Capuchins, the name with which the two buildings are better known, rise at the beginning of Via Veneto, immediately after Piazza Barberini. The church (the first in Rome to be dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of Mary) was built at the beginning of the 1600's by cardinal Antonio Barberini and designed by Antonio Casoni. With almost all built by the Capuchin brothers, the building has a single nave and five side chapels, the altars are all made of wood, to recall the poverty of the Franciscans. It holds famous works as well as the celebrated cemetery below, united to the large monastery, the provincial Curia of the order.



(Photo Roma Sacra)



St. Francis meditating

**Church of Santa Maria della Concezione, Via Veneto, 27
00187 Rome • Phone 06 4871185**

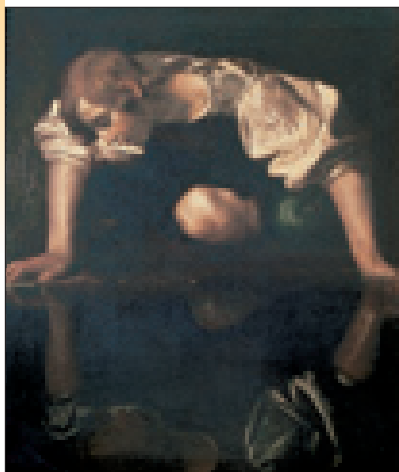
Times of opening: every day from 7 am to 12 am and from 3 pm to 7 pm.

Barberini Palace

Built in the park of Cardinal Pio da Carpi, the palace was planned by Carlo Maderno after ownership passed to Francesco Barberini in 1625. Planned as a residence for the papal family, the building was provided with splendid gardens, making a true and proper town house. The later intervention by Bernini saw the construction of the central saloon (decorated with the famous fresco by Pietro da Cortona), of the loggia with porch below and the great staircase with squared stairwell. The design of the windows of the central part and the plan for the great winding staircase can be attributed to Francesco Borromini. Bought by the State in 1949, the palace holds the National Gallery of Classic Art that, formed in 1895 and recently inaugurated, collects works dating from the 12th to the 18th Centuries, belonging to noble families (Torlonia, Barberini, Chigi, Sciarra, etc.)



(photo Paolo Soriani)



Narcissus (photo SBAS)

The **Decapitation of Holofernes**, dated between 1595 and 1600, coming from the Coppi collection, can be identified with the Judith painted by Caravaggio for the banker, Ottaviano Costa. The work, closely tied to the traditionally important Biblical story of the triumph of good over evil, of virtue over vice, is noted for the severity of the scene. The decisive action of the heroine, who appears cold and determined; with a slight note of reaction on her face, as on

the other hand the ancient servant, with staring eyes, contrast with Holofernes' cry, his contracted body stretched out on the bed in the last seconds of life. The light emphasises the horrifying wound from which a violent jet of blood spurts. The representation of a non-Hebrew Holofernes, the opposite of the Bible story, but completely aware of his end, is new in Caravaggio. The famed sensuality of Judith was originally highlighted by the artist with the naked breast, later concealed by

the bodice. An admirer, and also model, of Caravaggio's, Girolama Giustiniani, can be recognised in the Judith.

The **Narcissus** is a work dating back to 1599 - 1600. The debated attribution to Caravaggio has now been recognised once and for all after the restoration. The theme of Narcissus who is looking at his reflection in the water, was considered symbolic of the moral exhortation "know thyself".



Decapitation of Holofernes (photo SBAS)

National Gallery of Classic Art, via Barberini, 18 • 00184 Roma
Phone 06 4814591 • Fax 06 32651329 • info@galleriaborghese.it
www.galleriaborghese.it/barberini/it

Times of opening: from tuesday to sunday from 8.30 am to 7 pm except Mondays, 1st January and 25th December from 9 am to 7 pm.

Entrance: complete € 5,00, reduced € 2,50, free of charge for under 18's and over 65's.

Services: The museum has special access facilities for handicapped people.

For bookings of guided tours with art historians in foreign languages and for groups of a maximum of 25 people, Phone 06 8555952 (€ 80 in Italian, € 104 in a foreign language)

Doria Pamphilj Gallery

The gallery is situated in the splendid palace facing onto the Piazza del Collegio Romano. Rising on an earlier centre dating back to the 16th century, the building was erected in the early 1600's by the Aldobrandini family. It passed as a gift to the young Olympia, widow of her first husband Paolo Borghe-se. It entered the Pamphilj family after the second wedding of the noblewoman to Camillo, nepotic cardinal of his uncle, Innocent X. From the second half of the century, the palace was enlarged according to the design by Antonio Del Grande, who also took charge of the later work at the end of the 1600's. In 1731, Gabriele Valvassori modernised the building, constructing the famous façade in Via del Corso.



(photo Paolo Soriani)



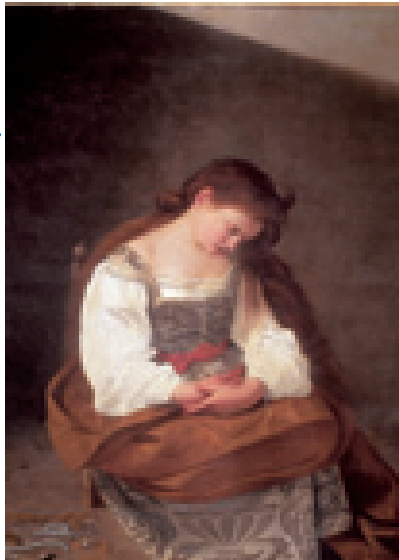
Rest on the Flight into Egypt (photo Doria Pamphilj)

The **Rest on the Flight into Egypt**, a work dating back to 1595, summarises to perfection the period of development of the artist; the Lombard experience and the influence of the Venetian school, particularly evident in the softness of the landscape on the right. A novelty in this portrayal of a sacred theme is the rear-view of an angel-musician, in the centre of the painting, playing a violin and following the score held up by St. Joseph. On the score is part of the *cantus* of the motet *Quam pulchra es et quam decora* by the Flemish, Noël Baulduin (1519), inspired by the Song of Songs in the Old Testament where it is the poetic dialogue between bride and groom, and refers to the presence of the newly-weds, both true, Joseph and Mary, and symbolical, the Virgin and Christ.

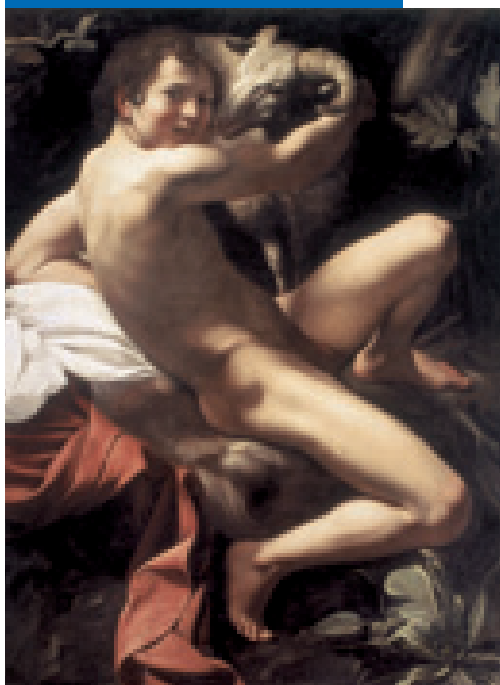
The client is not known for certainty, but some scholars have recently claimed him to be cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini.

The **Maddalena** is depicted asleep like Mary in the *Rest*, in a very similar pose. The rich dress she is wearing is still courtly, but the jewellery lies on the floor. Her vigilant sleep, on a chair, is a theme also said to be inspired by the Song of Songs and therefore interpreted as amorous languor, a love of God. The figure of the ex-sinner is lighted by Caravaggio with a light that, besides being a constructive element of figure and scene, is significative of the grace that bursts into the darkness of the sin. The painting has been dated to between 1593 and 1597.

The **St. John the Baptist** is a signed and contemporaneous copy of the canvass commissioned by Ciriaco Mattei, held in the Campidoglio.



Maddalena (photo Doria Pamphilj)



St. John the Baptist
(photo Doria Pamphilj)

Doria Pamphilj Gallery, Piazza del Collegio Romano, 2
00186 Rome • Phone 06 6797323 • Fax 06 6780939
www.doriapamphilj.it • arti.rm@doriapamphilj.it

Times of opening: every day except Thursdays, the 25th December, the 1st January, Easter, the 1st May the 15th August and the 1st November from 10 am to 5 pm.

Entrance: complete € 8,00; reduced for the elderly and students, and groups; private apartments is restoration; A service of audio-guide in Italian, English and French is included in the entrance ticket. The Gallery is open for the whole of August, except for the 15th.

Services: The gallery has special access facilities for handicapped people.

The Capitoline Art Gallery

Was founded by Benedict XIV in 1748 and contains, for the most part, paintings (from the Middle Ages to the 1700's) belonging to the Sacchetti and Pio di Savoia families. The Gallery is in the Capitoline Museums (which have the oldest public collections not only in Rome but also in the world), housed in the Campidoglio and in the two palaces designed by Michelangelo. Notably enriched thanks to the arrival of works through purchases, inheritances and donations, the Capitoline Art Gallery has been in the care of the Rome City Council since 1847.



(Photo Paolo Soriani)



Good luck (photo Rome City Council)

The **Good Luck** (there is another version in the Louvre) was painted for cardinal Del Monte and can be dated to 1594; contemporary to the *Maddalena* (Doria Pamphilj) and to the *Narcissus* (Barberini Palace), with whom the male figure has the damask fabric, visible under the jacket, in common. A gypsy is portrayed with the elegant young man. While reading his hand to predict the future, she is removing his ring. The subject is an allegory on the idea of deceit, or a moralistic invitation to not lose oneself in vanity, alluding to the richness of the young man's clothes, to not give in to the devil's temptations, astute and thieving, and of the flesh, aspect almost summarised, according to tradition, by the intriguing figure of the gypsy.

Good luck (detail)
(photo Rome City Council)





St. John the Baptist (photo Rome City Council)

The **St. John the Baptist** was an almost forgotten painting until it was rediscovered with clamour in 1953 in the Mayor's Office. It was probably the painting that Caravaggio was paid for by the nobleman, Ciriaco Mattei in 1602 and which was commissioned in relation to the name of his first born son, Giovanni Battista, who inherited it.

Capitoline Art Gallery • Piazza del Campidoglio • 00186 Roma

Phone 06 67102475 • Fax 06 6785488 • pren. 06 39967800

www.museicapitolini.org • info.museicapitolini@comune.roma.it

Times of opening: every day except Mondays, 25th December, 1st January and 1st May from 9 am to 8 pm.

Entrance: complete € 6,20; free of charge for under 18's and over 65's;
singol prenotation € 1,50, school € 6,00, groups € 25,00;
€ 3,50 guided tours.

San Luigi dei Francesi

Begun in 1518 for the future Clement VII, the church was completed at the end of the same century by Domenico Fontana on the design by Giacomo Della Porta. The building, national church of the French, rises at the back of Piazza Navona, next to the Senate House. The ample façade in travertine stone is decorated with figures of French Saints and of Charlemagne. The interior with three naves was arranged during the course of the 18th century. Besides the famous St. Matthew's chapel, the church houses Domenichino's masterpiece; the fresco of St. Cecilia in the second chapel on the right (1616 - 17).



(Photo Roma Sacra)



The Martyrdom of St. Matthew (photo Roma Sacra)

In the Contarelli chapel, there are the **Stories of St. Matthew**. From 1565, the chapel belonged to the French ecclesiastic, Mathieu Cointrel, who dedicated it to his patron saint with the intention of starting the decorations; the work, however, began only after his death, on the commission of the executor of his will, Virgilio Crescenzi. In 1591, Cavalier d'Arpino was given the commission of frescoing the chapel, but eight

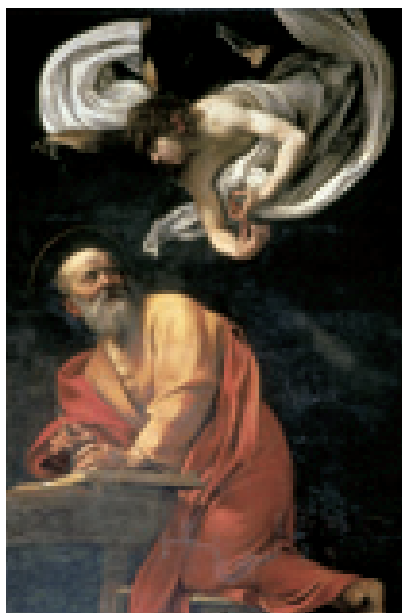
years later still lacked the two side paintings which were entrusted to Caravaggio.

The painter completed them between July 1599 and July 1600. On the left is the **Vocation of St. Matthew** and on the right is the **Martyrdom of St. Matthew**.

The realism of the portrayal emphasises the harshness of the killing of the saint. The artist interprets with originality, the trend of the style of the Counter-reform, which insisted on the celebration of martyred saints. After having renounced the Sculptors' group of Jacob Cobaert (in the church of the Trinità dei Pellegrini), the clergyman of San Luigi entrusted Caravaggio with the first version of the altar-piece with **St. Matthew and the Angel**, of doubtful date, wavering between 1593 and 1602. The work, quickly rejected because of the reduced size and for reasons of decorum, was acquired by the Marquis, Vincenzo Giustiniani (destroyed in Berlin during the last conflict) and substituted by the one which can now be seen on the altar, with the saint turned towards the angel and leaning with his legs on the stool precariously balanced on the steps.



The vocation of St. Matthew (detail)
(photo Roma Sacra)



St. Matthew and the Angel
(photo Roma Sacra)

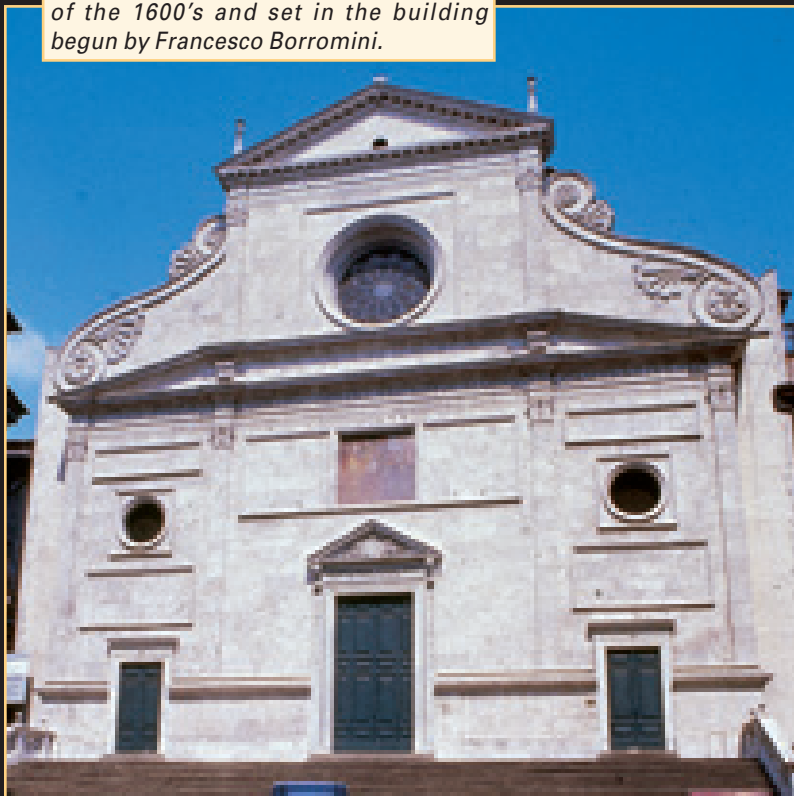
Church of San Luigi dei Francesi, Piazza San Luigi dei Francesi, 5 00186 Rome • Phone 06 688271 • Fax 06 68827228

Times of opening: every day except Thursday afternoons, from 8.30 am to 12.30 am and from 3.30 pm to 7 pm.

Services: The church has special access facilities for handicapped people.

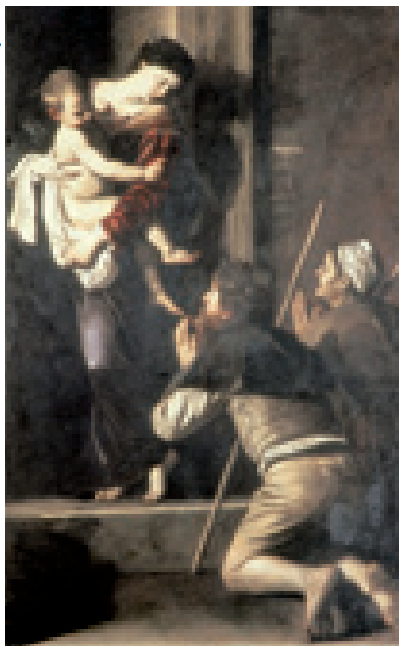
The church of Sant'Agostino

Was erected in 1420, enlarged at the end of the same century and transformed by Luigi Vanvitelli halfway through the 1700's. The monumental steps at the entrance connect the church to the city. The three nave interior holds many famous works, besides the famous Caravaggio and Raphael: the "Madonna del Parto" by Jacopo Sansovino (1521), the decoration of the right transept by Guercino and the tomb of Santa Monica di Isaia by Pisa. Next door is the Angelica Library, the first public one in the city, founded at the beginning of the 1600's and set in the building begun by Francesco Borromini.



The **Madonna dei Pellegrini** is on the altar of the first chapel on the left, it belonged to the Cavalletti family, and can be dated to between 1603 and 1606. Two wretched figures of pilgrims, the man with muddy feet and the woman with a dirty bonnet on her head, kneel in front of the Virgin and Child. The details, so crudely real, provoke criticism and derision from the public.

It is an interpretation of the Madonna di Loreto: The Virgin welcomes two travellers leaning on the jamb of the door of her humble but noble house, a symbol of the church. The light illuminating the Virgin and Child indicates the grace that also illuminates the two pilgrims who haven't lost the way of faith. According to Baglione (1642), their portrayal had caused a lively reaction, not necessarily negative as is usually thought.



Madonna dei Pellegrini
(photo Roma Sacra)

Madonna dei Pellegrini (detail)
(photo Roma Sacra)



Church of Sant'Agostino, Via della Scrofa, 80
00186 Rome • Phone 06 68801562 • Fax 06 68215193 • 06 6833547 • agostiniani@infinito.it

Times of opening: every day from 7.40am to 11am and from 4pm to 7.30 pm

Services: The church does not have special access facilities for handicapped people.

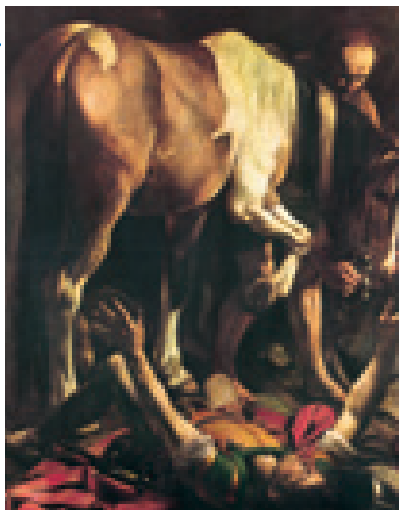
Santa Maria del Popolo

The church was founded on the site of a small chapel built by Pasquale II at the expense of the Roman people, the reason for the later name. Completely re-built halfway through the 15th century by an unknown architect, the church was fitted out with a splendid choir made by Donato Bramante at the beginning of the 1500's. The simple façade in travertine stone, erected on the wishes of Sextus IV della Rovere, was installed by Gianlorenzo Bernini. The three nave interior has side chapels which hold some exceptional works, among which are the funeral monuments by Andrea Sansovino, the frescoes by Pinturicchio and the precious fire-glazed stain-glass windows, the only ones in Rome, by Guillaume de Marcillat.

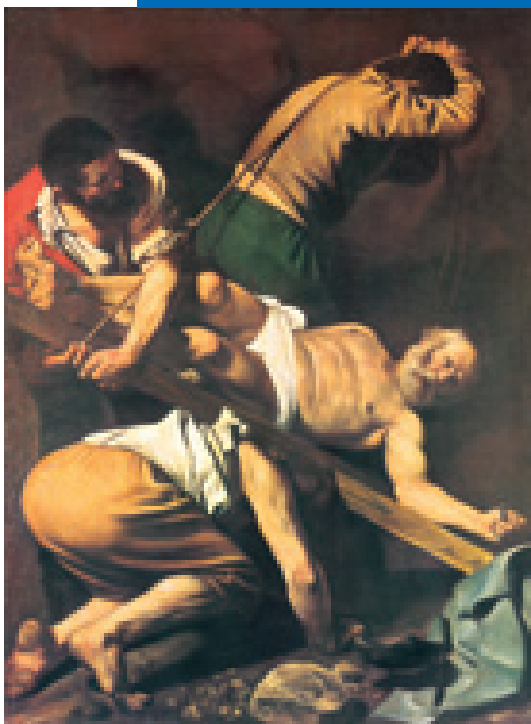


The Cerasi chapel is to the left of the high altar. Here we can find two of the main artists of the time together: the altar-piece is by Annibale Carracci, with the Assumption, while the two side paintings portraying the **Conversion of St. Paul** and the **Crucifixion of St. Peter** are by Caravaggio. In the *Conversion*, dominated by the figure of the horse, Saul is on the ground taken at the moment when the divine light blinded him on the road to Damascus. In the *Martyrdom of St. Peter* the executioners are raising the cross on to which the apostle is already nailed.

The two canvasses currently *on site* are the second versions painted by the same artist after the first paintings on panel (one, *The Conversion of St. Paul* is in the Odescalchi collection) were rejected by Tiberio Cerasi, client of the decoration.



The Conversion of St. Paul
(Photo Roma Sacra)



The Crucifixion of St. Peter (Photo Roma Sacra)

**Church of Santa Maria del Popolo, piazza del Popolo, 12
00187 Roma • Phone 06 3610836 • Fax 06 3203155**

Times of opening: ferials 7 am to 12 am and from 4 pm to 7 pm
festives 8 am to 1.30 pm and from 4.30 pm to 7.30 pm

Services: The museum does not have special access facilities for handicapped people

The Vatican Art Gallery

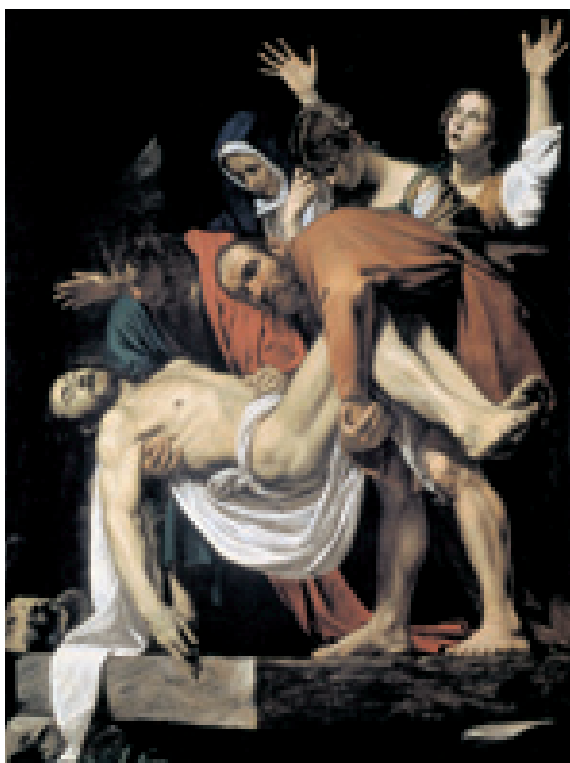
The first nucleus of the Vatican Palaces was built halfway through the 15th century, after the popes, the Avignonese Captivity at an end, decided to transfer their residence from the Lateran to the Vatican. The first residence, of square design, had a quadrangular central courtyard (the courtyard of the parrot) to which the other buildings were slowly added.

The Vatican Museums; which, besides the art gallery, hold priceless works; were built from the 1700's on, arranging the papal collections started in the Renaissance period.



The Deposition of Christ,

painted between 1602 and 1604 was originally housed in the church of St. Mary in Vallicella, headquarters of the Congregation of the Oratorio founded by San Filippo Neri. Here, it was placed on the second altar of the right hand nave, in the chapel dedicated to the Pietà (where there is, now, a copy by the Tyrolese painter, Michele Koeck), in relation to the rest



The Deposition of Christ (photo Musei Vaticani)

of the still existing decoration of the chapel, glorifying the Holy Shroud. The client of the painting was Girolamo Vittrici. The foreshortened stone, besides being an important part of the composition, can be interpreted as “angular stone”, a metaphor for Christ himself.

Vatican Museums, Viale Vaticano, 100 • 00165 Roma

Phone 06 69884947 • 06 69884676 (guided tours)

Times of opening: from november to february: from monday to friday from 8.45 am to 12.20 am (1.45 pm); from march to october: from monday to friday from 8.45 am to 3.20 pm (4.45 pm); Every Saturdays and the last Sunday's month from 8.45 to 12.20 am (1.45 pm)

Entrance: complete € 12,00; under 14 years, schools and students up to 26 years € 8,00.

Services: The museums have special access facilities for handicapped people.

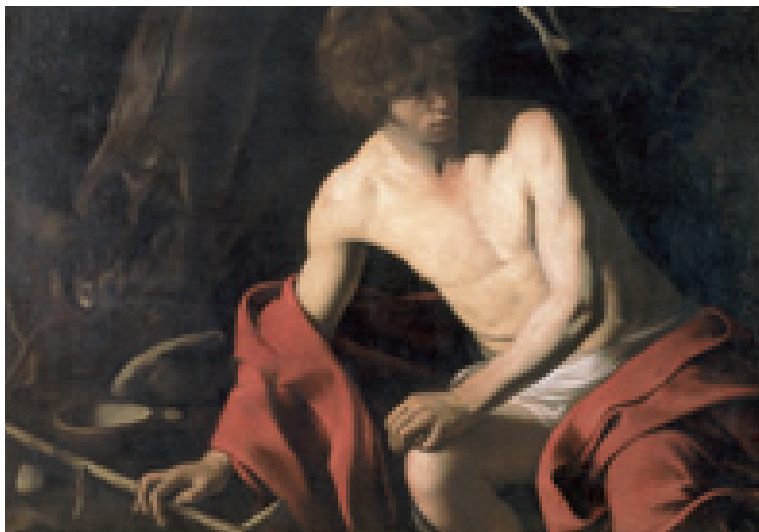
Corsini Gallery

Has its headquarters in the monumental Corsini Palace, situated in Via della Lungara, opposite Villa Farnesina. The building rises on the site of the old Riario Palace of the early 1500's, where the Queen Christina of Sweden also lived, who founded an academy from which came the Arcadia.

Bought by the Corsini in 1736, the building was notably enlarged by Ferdinando Fuga, architect to the noble Florentine family. The Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei also has its headquarters here, with an important library. The collection records the taste of cardinal Neri Corsini, nephew of Clement XII. The 18th century collection has the prize of having remained mainly intact. The splendid park, already part of the palace, from 1883 was used as home of the Botanical Gardens. It extends towards the Janiculum.



(Photo Paolo Soriani)



St. John the Baptist in the Desert (photo SBAS)

The **St. John the Baptist in the desert** can be dated to the end of the Roman period (1606), because of the intense and directional use of light. The painting is perhaps identifiable with that of identical subject owned by the widow of Onorio Longhi, architect friend of the artist. The portrayal of the Baptist is one of Caravaggio's favourites, which he did in many different versions, who maybe identified himself with the surly character of the saint, who left everything to retreat into the desert.

The painting is recorded, in 1784, in the collection of Bartolomeo Corsini in Florence where it probably arrived for the wedding between the noble and Maria Felice Colonna-Barberini.

Corsini Gallery, Via della Lungara, 10 - 00165 Rome

Phone 06 68802323

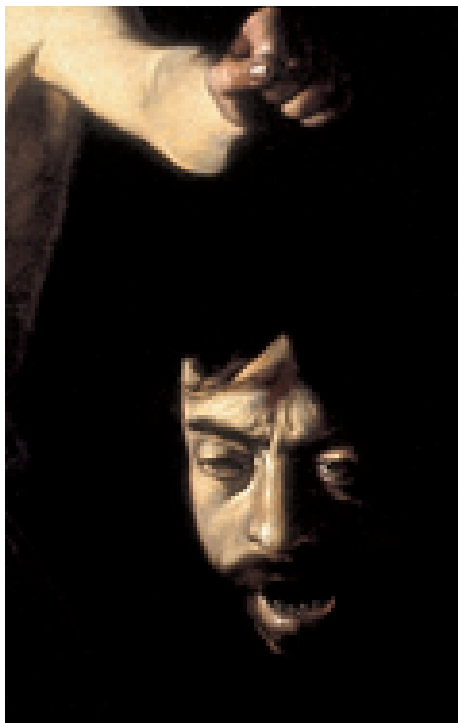
Times of opening: every day except Mondays, the 25th December, 1st January and 1st May from 8.30 am to 7.30 pm; July and August every day except Mondays from 8.30 am to 2 pm.

Entrance: complete € 4,00; reduced € 2,00 free of charge for under 18's and over over 65's.

Services: The gallery has special access facilities for handicapped people.

For bookings of guided tours with art historians in foreign languages and for groups of a maximum of 25 people, fax 06 8555952 (€ 92,00) for students of school € 2,58

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio



David with the Head of Goliath (photo SBAS)

The Life of the Artist

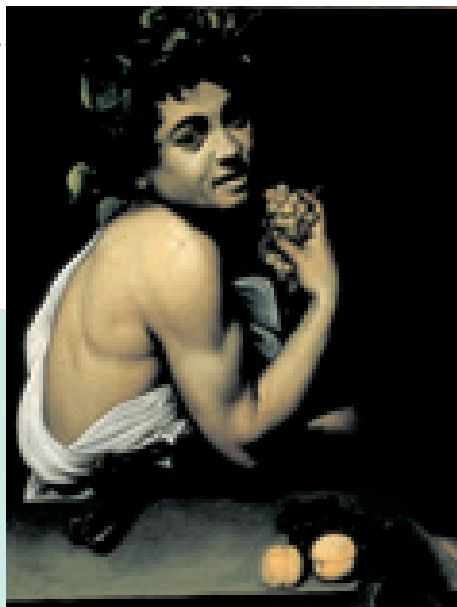
Michelangelo Merisi was born in Caravaggio near Bergamo in 1571 of a family linked to a branch of the Sforza family, to the Colonna's and to the Borromeo's.

After a childhood spent between Milan and Caravaggio, he entered, as an adolescent in 1584, the workshop of Simone Peterzano in Milan where he remained until 1587 - 88; he returned to his home town but in 1592 he was already in Rome. Here, he began to go around with people in the artistic field. Biographers of the 1600's described the first artistic meetings of the young Michelangelo: Lorenzo Siciliano, Antiveduto Gramatica, and above all Cavalier d'Arpino, in whose workshop Caravaggio was put to work "painting

flowers and fruit, beautifully imitated". He left the workshop of the maestro and began to live a muddled life. He was admitted to the Hospital of the Consolazione, maybe because of malaria - or because of being kicked by a horse. He often changed lodgings. During his wanderings he found hospitality with Monsignor Pandolfo Pucci, where he wouldn't have had an easy life because a salad served Caravaggio "for starters, main course and sweet" (hence the nickname of "Monsignor Salad" given to the prelate). In 1594 he appeared among the employees of the influential and refined cardinal Del Monte, in whose house he stayed until 1600. Del Monte introduced him to a refined and select public of Roman collectors: Vincenzo Giustiniani, Ciriaco Mattei, the Barberini's and the Massimo's. He painted easel works, masterpieces such as: *The Sick Bacchus* and *The Young Girl with basket of fruit*.

Then came his first public commission, the decoration of the Contarelli chapel in the church of San Luigi dei Francesi.

Michelangelo often found himself in trouble with the Law (brawls and violent arguments with soldiers and functionaries, labourers, fellow painters and landlords). In 1605, he escaped to Genoa



The Sick Bacchus (photo SBAS)

after having wounded the scribe, Mariano Pasqualone to defend Lena, one of his favourite models with whom he had a relationship. One particularly serious episode was the killing of Ranuccio Tomasoni on the 25th May 1606, during a "ball" match; it forced Caravaggio to run away. After taking refuge in the Colonna's Latian estate, he went to Naples where he painted works such as *The Seven works of Mercy* and *The Madonna del Rosario*.

Still a fugitive, because he could have been captured and executed anywhere, he went to Malta between 1607 and 1608, guest of the Grand Master of the Order of the Cavaliers of Malta, Alof de Wignacourt. Though when fate seemed to favour him, his painting became gloomy: the backgrounds became darker and darker and the brushstrokes more rapid. The *Beheading of the Baptist*, for the Cathedral of St. John on Malta, is the only work signed by Caravaggio but in a particularly dramatic way: the name is painted in red, with the blood of the Baptist. It was accepted in the order of Malta as "cavalier of grace", but a short while after, because of the crime committed in Rome or for a new event, he was imprisoned. He escaped and went to Sicily where he stayed for about a year. In October of 1609, he was back in Naples. He was assaulted and seriously wounded in a tavern. He convalesced for a long time, but then he received notice of an imminent pardon by the pope and embarked for Rome, but was still persecuted by his tragic destiny. He died during the voyage, in Porto Ercole, on the 18th July 1610 for reasons which are still unknown.

The troubles of every type which happened to Caravaggio reveal, however, a complex and sensitive personality: it is not surprising, therefore, that in the Rome of the Counter-reform he had placed his painting, so innovative, at the service of new religious ideals as those supported by the Oratorians and Capuchins.

The main works of Caravaggio in the great museums and churches of the world.

- **Florence**, The Uffizi
The sacrifice of Isaac, The Head of Medusa, Bacchus
- **London**, The National Gallery
The Supper at Emmaus
- **Lugano**, von Thyssen collection
St. Catherine of Alessandria
- **Malta**, St. John's Cathedral
The Beheading of the Baptist, St. Jerome
- **Messina**, National Museum
Resurrection of Lazarus, The adoration of the shepherds
- **Milan**, Ambrosian Art Gallery
Basket of fruit
- **Naples**, Church of Pio Monte della Misericordia
The seven works of Mercy
- **Palermo**, Church of St. Lawrence
Nativity with St. Francis and St. Lawrence
- **Paris**, Louvre
Good Luck, The Death of the Virgin
- **Siracusa**, Church of Santa Lucia
The burial of Santa Lucia
- **Vienna**, Kunsthistorisches Museum
Madonna del Rosario