

Old St. Remigio Abbey in Parodi Ligure

Historical outline

On the 10th June 1033 Marquis Adalberto, of the noble Obertenghi family signed a donation act for land and estates in the territory of Parodi in favour of the cistercian abbey of St. Maria of Castiglione in Parma, the foundation of this monastic settlement gave origin to the monastery of St. Remigio.

Role and influence of the monastery grew rapidly; in 1188 it incorporated the nearby Church of St. Stefano and around it rose many agricultural communities.

During the 13th century the relationship to the Mother Church of St. of Maria of Castiglione moved apart whereas the ties with Genoa improved considerably, as it is proved from the fact that in 1378 the Genoese Aleramo Spinola Luccoli was appointed Rector of St. Remigio Abbey and he would be followed by many other Genoese patricians as leaders of the monastery.

Today's visitors cannot easily understand its whole historical meaning: for several centuries St. Remigio has been a religious, economic and cultural landmark for the whole territory of Parodi, that stretched then from Castagnola, beyond Mount Tobbio to the sea and had in its inland many rural communities such as Bosio, Spessa, Ponassi, St. Stefano, Costa, Cadepiaggio, Tramontana, Capanne and Benedicta.

The original unit of the abbey development went lost during its ten centuries life. In the 16th century, when the monastery became a parish, the old coenoby was turned into the parson's house and many resources were alienated.

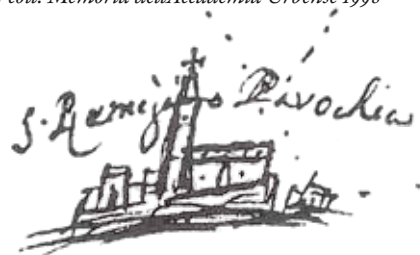
At the beginning of the 19th century the Church was once more the heart of the local religious life and it was widened with the two aisles; some years later the oratory of the Confraternita of SS. Annunziata was built in the small hamlet.

St. Remigio has been parish of Cadepiaggio until 1959 and when a new parish church was built within the small village, the abbey was abandoned. At the end of the 70s many signals of the impending fall were visible, such as the collapse of the nave vault.

The awareness that one of the most important witnesses of the Benedictine activity in the surroundings was going missing awakened the sensibility of some people and the institutional responsibilities. In 1982 the Abbey was donated to the municipality of Parodi and restoration works began.

In September 2010 the centuries-old monument was reopened to the public.

Bibliographical references "Storia di Parodi Ligure e dei suoi statuti"
by E. Podestà-coll. Memoria dell'Accademia Urbense 1998



Parish of St. Remigio. Drawing of the beginning of the 18th century.

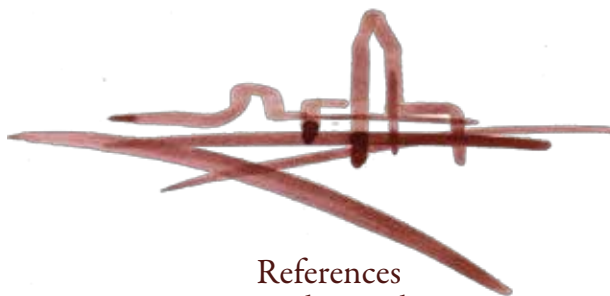
How to reach Parodi Ligure



Loc. San Remigio 44°40'14"52 N - 08°45'34"92 E

Motorway A26 exit Ovada

Motorway A7 exit Vignole Borbera
or Serravalle Scrivia. Follow direction Gavi



References

For tours and records contact
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Municipality of Parodi Ligure



St. Remigio Abbey

St. Remigio Parodi Ligure

Semicylindrical apse with central niche, half-bowl vault

Original position of the high altar dedicated to Signora della Salute in 1862

Aisle added in 1825, made of 5 cap vaulted spans

Altar dedicated to Madonna del Rosario

Nave, originally with 5 cross vaults, collapsed in 1982

Cross-shaped pillars in alternate blocks of local stone and bricks

Main entrance

More ancient vestry

Presbytery with elliptical dome on pendentives with lantern

Architectural detail dating back to the foundation period

Square plan tower with details dating back to the foundation period

Altar dedicated to Madonna della Salute

Aisle added in 1825, made of 5 cap vaulted spans

Side entrance

Women's gallery of marquis Nicolò D'oria

Today unhallowed and property of the Municipality of Parodi Ligure, the abbey presents a nave and two aisles: the nave is larger and divided from the aisles by cross-shaped pillars.

The portion beneath the tower is undoubtedly the most ancient, on the walls appear some architectural shapes that date back to the foundation period of the architectural plant (12th century). The nave is ended through a semicircular apse laying behind a deep presbytery; on the lengthwise walls of the presbytery open up the accesses to the two vestries, a more recent on the left and a more ancient on the right.

The aisles are lighted by multicurved windows and next to the biggest archway there are two square-planside chapels. Traces of the five cross vaults of the nave, which went lost in the 1982 collapse, are still evident in the internal walls.

The semicylindrical apse presents a central niche lighted by two side windows.

The original floor was made of square fired brick elements with a 46 cm. side length; in the restoration it was possible to rebuild just a small part of it at the top of the left aisle.

This monument was restored and opened up thanks to the contribution of Regione Piemonte and the co-funding of the Municipality of Parodi Ligure.

The works started in September 2008 and ended in summer 2010. The internal strengthening, that took many months, has been carried out employing natural materials, consistent with the historical architecture. Where possible a conservative restoration was carried out in order to keep the whole original plaster where the colours of the finish can still be appreciated. Its cracks have been sealed with natural cement so that the scars of time and events are evident. All systems have been carried out without crannies in the original masonry, which has been preserved according to the historical value of this architecture: the electrical system runs both along the upper side of the roof and under the floor, the heating system runs under the floor.

After the restoration intervention the Abbey is enjoyable both for institutional and artistic-cultural purposes linked to the enhancement of this territory.

