

Track 6. PARISH CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION.

We are in front of the Parish Church of the Assumption, initially dedicated to the Nativity of the Virgin. It consists of a single nave, of four sections plus the presbytery, transept and chapels between buttresses joined by semi-circular arches. There is also a bell tower attached, of three bodies plus the end.

Construction began en 1594. The floor was designed by the master of the cathedral in Tortosa, the architect Martín García de Mendoza, and the realization of the work was directed by Juan Palacios.

During the construction of the church, half of which was being built outside the wall, it was necessary to add on a large terrace in front of the church. This is called the “Planet”, where we are standing now. This was an important work of engineering that would permit access to the interior of the church. To achieve this and to lighten the burden on the lateral walls of the plaza, the plaza itself is hollow. What bears the weight of the pavement is a combination of strategically placed arches.

If this church was originally built at the end of the 16th century due to the increase in the population of the town, which made the old Church of la Sangre insufficient, the same occurred during the 18th century. Again the parish church did not provide enough space for all of the faithful, so in 1786 the City Council agreed to enlarge the church. This consisted of amplifying the transept with the

construction of the Communion Chapel and a new presbytery, as well as the archive and other spaces.

In 1806 the dome of the church, in danger of falling, was removed and rebuilt.

Among the pieces of art we find in the church, of particular interest is the main altarpiece, from the beginning of the 17th century, designed by Agustín Sanz and executed by the sculptor Bernardo Monfort. Of interest, too, is the decorative fresco in the Communion Chapel and the scallops of the dome, work of the painter Joaquín Oliet, as well as the colorful baseboard of Valencian ceramics from the 18th century and the ornaments of precious metals and silk.

The organ, inscribed with the year 1775, is of an Iberian baroque style, and was the work of the master organist Fermin Usarralde. In 1987 it was restored and moved to its present location. During the restoration it was found that some of the pipes, in order to prevent air from escaping, were covered with sheet music from the 17th and 18th centuries.

This ends the Parish Church of the Assumption. You can proceed to point 7 QR, the Church of la Sangre and surroundings.