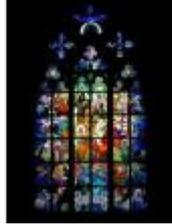


San Agustin Church: The Oldest Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines



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Located in the Walled City of Intramuros, San Agustin Church is now 437 years old and going stronger as time goes by. This Roman Catholic Church symbolizes the Spanish colonization of the Philippines, being the first Church built in Manila during the Spanish regime.

The San Agustin Church is a national landmark of the Philippines and recently designated as a UNESCO world heritage site and classified as one of the baroque churches of the Philippines. This Roman Catholic Church was completed in 1571 but was later destroyed twice by fire in 1574 and 1583. It was later rebuilt in 1586 using adobe and other stone materials and was finally completed in 1607. The stone-designed church was made by Juan Macias. This church withstood several strong earthquakes and calamities for almost 200 years. It was renovated again in 1854 under the supervision of Architect Luciano Oliver. During the Japanese occupation, the church was used as a concentration camp by the Japanese imperial army where many Filipinos were made hostage and eventually killed by the Japanese army. Some of the famous Spanish conquistadores' remains, including those of Miguel Lopez de Legaspi, Juan Salcedo and Martin Goiti are buried inside the church.

The Church Façade

The façade of the church is very simple and unassuming and even criticized as lacking in grace and charm but it definitely has a baroque touch or influence as may be seen from its ornately carved main door.



The Church Main Door

The main door of San Agustin Church is intricately designed and preserved in its original form for many years.



The Church Interiors

The interior of the church is beautiful art creation highlighted by a trompe-loeil ceiling painted by Italian artists Cesare Alberoni and Giovanni Dibella in 1875. In the quire area, there are hand-carved 17th century church pews made of Molave, one of the tropical Philippine hardwood species.



The Jesuit churches in the 16th and 17th century often include a trompe l'oeil ceiling paintings which optically open the ceiling or dome to the heavens for Jesus ascension.



Wedding Venue for the Elite

San Agustin Church is now a popular venue for weddings where the elite members of Philippine society including movie celebrities have their wedding ceremonies. It has also been used as venue for numerous movies by local and international film producers.



Ref.: <http://leo-reyes.quazen.com/arts/architecture/san-agustin-church-the-oldest-roman-catholic-church-in-the-philippines/>

Look more here: www.catholicchurch.philippineculture.ph