

Architecture, Façade and Bell Tower

San Pedro church was rebuilt during the first decades of the seventeenth century. The bishop of Cartagena at the time, Francisco Martínez, entrusted the new façade to master mason Diego de Ergueta paying him 1200 ducats.

The side of the church facing Plaza de las Flores is very simple. It is of renaissance style, composed of two Doric columns and lintels, which hold the image in stone of Saint Nicholas. The door in this façade remained closed since 1874 until it was restored and reopened on October 12, 2017.

The main façade of the church is influenced by renaissance themes of cut stone. In it one notices the careful work of the mouldings and jambs. The architecture is dominated by geometric shapes, which frame the door and windows. The work is enclosed by columns and triangular pediments. Beneath it one can notice the armorial bearing of the Holy See and the statues of St. Peter, sculpted in the XVII century, and of St. Paul, which was commissioned in 2011. The bell tower, which happens to be the third highest bell tower in the city, is not aligned to the main façade of the church; rather it is aligned with Jara Carrillo Street. The bell tower has three architectural bodies, each on top of the other: one made from stone, with the two others made built from brick. In the XVIII century a bells section was added. This latter part of the tower is a baroque work capped with white columns, lintels and a dome.

The inside of the church is a traditional design, which can be found in many churches in Murcia built in the XVII and XVIII centuries. The single nave design is flanked with chapels on each side. The side chapels open to the high altar and transept with a large half arch over two columns on which rests the dome of the church.

Part of the devotional life of the Parish from the second half of the twentieth century is dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima. Her chapel has the addition of the shepherd children Saint Francisco and Saint Jacinta. Within the altar steps one can notice the first class relics of the holy children from Cova de Iría.

Parish Church of Saint Peter

Plaza de San Pedro, 1 - 30004 Murcia

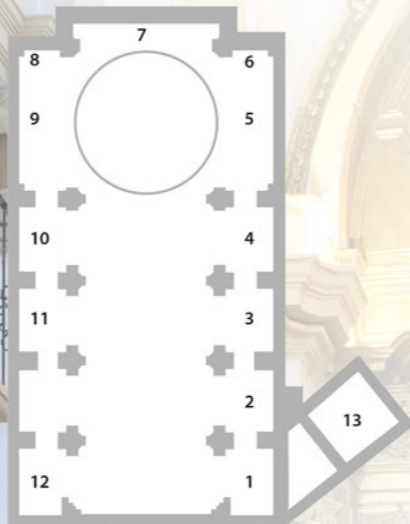
Telf. 968 210 081

Mass Times:

Weekdays: 10 AM, 8 PM

Anticipated Sunday Mass: 6 PM and 8 PM

Sundays and Feasts: 10 AM, 12 noon, 1 PM, 6 PM and 8 PM.



1. St. Joseph's Chapel
2. Chapel of Our Lady of Fatima
3. St. Caralampius' Chapel
4. St. Joachim's Chapel
5. Altar of St. Barbara
6. Altar of Our Father Christ and St. Nicholas
7. High Altar
8. Altar of Our Lady of Sorrows and St. Jerome
9. Altar of the Sacred Heart
10. Chapel of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
11. Chapel of the Immaculate Conception
12. St. Cajetan's Chapel
13. Bell Tower



PARISH CHURCH OF ST. PETER IN MURCIA



In the heart of the City

The Parish Church of San Pedro (Saint Peter), which can be found in the heart of the city, is built on top of a medieval church and a mosque. Information about the church can be found in the book of Repartimientos of King Alfonso X, the wise dating back to 1272. This would make the church alongside the neighbourhood of San Bartolomé-Santa María, the oldest building in the ancient city of Murcia.

During the fifteenth century, the aristocratic Saavedra family turned the church into a crypt for the family members. In 1482 and 1540 the church was modified and rebuilt. The primitive central nave was enlarged for the burial needs of the family. With the authorization of the guilds, burial permit was given to Diego de Saavedra Fajardo in 1641.

To the North the church borders the 'Plaza de las Flores', an open space which at one point was used as the marketplace for meat butchers. This square bordered the Plaza del Contraste, now known as Santa Catalina. These two were the economic heart and principal road of the medieval city of Murcia, uniting the city walls by the gates of 'Vidrieros' and 'Castilla' to the 'Plaza de los Apostoles.'

To the South, the church edges 'Jara Carrillo' street, originally known as the street of the Inquisition, since it was the main road to the Holy Office, until it was suppressed in 1820. To the East the church borders with 'Arzobispo Simón López' street, known as 'Bodegones' as it was the place where taverns and inns had their activity for over five centuries. This was the place where visitors and farmers would stay during the weekly markets and fairs celebrated around the neighbourhood.

Finally, facing West we find the main façade of the church, facing the 'Plaza de San Pedro.' Early on this was the square for the guilds of shoemakers, stonemasons, hat-makers and other craftsmen. In the long history of the parish many confraternities were established. The Confraternity of the Most Holy Sacrament, the Confraternity of the Blind, under the auspices of King Philip II, the Confraternity of St. Barbara, and the Confraternity of Christ of Good Hope for the Salvation of Souls, founded in 1754. This last confraternity endures to this day. In 1953 it was rebranded when it was given Holy Week processional privileges. This confraternity is now known as 'Pontificia, Real y Muy Ilustre Cofradía del Santísimo Cristo de la Esperanza, María Santísima de los Dolores, y del Santo Celo por la Salvación de las Almas' (Pontifical, Royal and Illustrious Confraternity of Christ of Good Hope, and Our Lady of Sorrows for the Salvation of Souls). Known shortly as *Cofradía de la Esperanza* (Confraternity of Good Hope), it holds a yearly procession on Palm Sunday. To date the confraternity has 1500 members and eight processional images, which makes it one of the largest ones in the city.





The High Altar

Nicolas de Rueda was commissioned on April 29, 1766 to carve the current backdrop to the High Altar. He was paid 41 350 reales to do this. This reredos is the third one to be built. Rueda's work replaced an existing Renaissance High Altar carved by Antonio Caro in 1702. The current High Altar went through some alterations in the last 100 years, however, this backdrop is considered one of the greatest works of sacred art of Murcia, not only for its typology which mirrors the façade of the church, but also for the decorative elements used in its design.

The main part of the reredos (back drop) of the High Altar is carved in black pine wood with two columns and two angels holding Corinthian lintels. In the same axis of the angels one sees the Saints Crispin and Crispinianus, patron saints of the guilds of shoe-makers, and saddle-makers. These statues are attributed to A. Dupar, F. Salzillo and Roque Lopez. On the sides of the altarpiece, there are woodcarvings of Saint Paul and Saint Andrew. These were carved by Francisco Liza, from Murcia towards the second part of the XX century. On top of the images one can notice the carvings of oval floral vases, which are similar to those found in the front of the city's cathedral. The woodwork done in smooth lines is interrupted by the room for the image of the patron of the church, the impressive statue of 'Apostol San Pedro Arrepentido' (St. Peter in regret), carved by Francisco Salzillo. This image was placed in the High Altar on June 25, 1780. The famous sculptor charged 6000 reales for it. Above the image is a crowned eagle with the coat-of-arms of the Saavedra family, who paid for the High Altar. Finally, in the highest level of the altarpiece is the representation of the Keys of St. Peter and a papal tiara held by cherub angels, all carved by Francisco Salzillo in 1765. The whole piece is brought together by flower garlands.

Above the High Altar, and underneath the patronal image we have the tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament; above it we notice the image of the 'Santisimo Cristo de la Ezperanza' (Most holy Christ of Good Hope). This wood car-



San Crispín

San Joaquín



Cristo de la Esperanza

Virgen de las Maravillas



San Damián

Santa Bárbara

ving is a work by the Francisco Salzillo dated back to July 6, 1755. The statue is a depiction of Our Blessed Lord at the moment of His crucifixion moments before his death. With this image measuring 150 centimetres, the sculptor shows us his great knowledge of the anatomy of the human body, but also his deep faith and devotion.

Imagery and Art of the Church

Much of the patrimony of the church of San Pedro was destroyed in the lootings and fires of 1931 and 1936. The side altars were all destroyed. Fortunately, the high altar and most of the images were saved from the flames and violence. The 'Cristo de la Esperanza', (Christ of good hope), 'San Pedro Arrepentido' (St. Peter in sorrow) and Saints Crispin and Crispinianus were all saved. The church keeps many great works of art of important historical, artistic and devotional value.

In the altar dedicated to Saint Caralampius, flanking the main statue we see the images of the holy medics St. Cosmas and St. Damian carved by Sanchez Lozano. These two are the only wood carvings that survived the reconstruction of the current building in 1611.

On the left side of the altarpiece we see the image of Saint Joachim, traditionally attributed to Nicolas Salzillo, with the exception of the child Mary, which was carved by Francisco Liza in the twentieth century. The sanctuary of the church is adorned with the image of Nuestra Senora de las Maravillas (Our Lady of the Miracles), which was carved in the



San Nicolás

XVIII century. This beautiful image of the mother of the saviour is of Neapolitan origin. The apse altars are dedicated to Saint Barbara, on the right, from 1730 and to Our Lady of Sorrows on the left, from 1756. Both these works were done by Francisco Salzillo

The lateral altars of the apse are dedicated to 'Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno de Penitencia' (Our Lord Jesus Christ the Penitent from Nazareth) carved by Santiago Baglietto in 1817. This image is a rare academic image preserved in this region. On top of the lateral altars in the apse that flank the High Altar, we can see paintings of Saint Nicholas and Saint Jerome, painted by the disciple of Diego de Velazques, Nicolas Villacis, in the seventeenth century. Villacis remains one of the greatest painters of the baroque in Murcia.

San Pedro Apóstol

