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People are seen inside Rome's Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere June 5, 2020, before a prayer vigil for peaceful coexistence in the United States. (CNS/Junno Arocho Esteves)



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All of today's links focus on Rome's titular churches assigned to American clerics. All cardinals are assigned a titular church as an honorary symbol of the cardinal's ties to the pope as bishop of Rome.

The last cardinal from the great state of California, Cardinal William Levada, was given the titular church of Santa Maria in Domnica when he was elevated to the cardinalate as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 2007. Here is a video tour of the church on the Coelian hill from The Catholic Traveler. It is now the titular church of Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints.



Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston gives Communion as he celebrates Mass at his titular church, Santa Maria della Vittoria, March 10, 2013, in Rome. (CNS/Reuters/Chris Helgren)

At Regions of Italy, an article about the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria, which is the titular church of Boston's Cardinal Sean O'Malley. This baroque gem of a church houses what may be Bernini's finest masterpiece, the sculpture "The Ecstasy of St. Teresa." The article also contains a link to the scene from the movie "Angels and Demons" that takes place in the church, the scene when a cardinal is put to death by burning him above the main altar. Glad that was fiction!



Detail of "The Ecstasy of St. Teresa" (1646) by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, in Santa Maria della Vittoria Church in Rome (Wikimedia Commons/Vassil)

From CatholicTV, then-Fr. Robert Reed, now an auxiliary bishop of Boston, gives a tour of Santa Maria in Trastevere. It was the titular church of Cardinal James Gibbons, the archbishop of Baltimore, who was the American primate in fact, though

not in title, from his appointment to Baltimore in 1877 until his death in 1921. It is now the titular church of Cardinal Carlos Osoro Sierra, the archbishop of Madrid. Before Osoro, it was the titular church of Cardinal Loris Capovilla, who had been the personal secretary of Pope John XXIII.



The Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere and the public square named after it are seen May 8, 2020. (CNS/Cindy Wooden)

From the Archdiocese of Washington, video of Cardinal Donald Wuerl taking possession of his titular church, San Pietro in Vincoli, St. Peter in Chains, on May 8, 2011. You can spot Michelangelo’s great Moses to the right of the main altar during both the processional and the recessional. After the Mass but before the recessional, you can see the church's great relic, the chains that bound Peter in both the Roman and Jerusalem prisons, as the cardinal venerates them underneath the main altar.

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One of the titular churches that is available to be assigned on Saturday is the Basilica of San Clemente, which is home to the Irish Dominicans. The late 11th-century church is magnificent: a beautiful schola cantorum with dual ambos, Cosmatesque floors and an apse mosaic of the cross as the tree of life. It sits atop the remains of a fourth-century basilica, which, in turn, sits atop a pre-Christian home, including a temple to pagan gods. The most recent cardinal to hold its title was the Dutch Cardinal Adrianus Simonis, but two Americans have held the title previously, William Henry O'Connell, the archbishop of Boston in the early 20th century, and Lawrence Shehan, the archbishop of Baltimore during the Second Vatican Council. Here is a video tour from Underground Rome.

Another titular church with Boston connections that is available is Santa Susanna, one of the oldest titles in Rome, a house church in the late third century, the current basilica floor plan dating to the early ninth century and the present structure the work of Carlo Maderno in the early 17th century. Many American pilgrims know the church because it served as the American national church, administered by the Paulist Fathers, from 1921 until 2017. It served as the titular church to three archbishops of Boston: Cardinal Richard Cushing, Cardinal Humberto Madeiros, and Cardinal Bernard Law. Alchetron has two videos about the church, as well as additional information.

Related: Pope Francis names 16 new cardinal electors, including San Diego's Bishop McElroy

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