



*Italy*

*Part 8*

*Vatican City*

*June 19, 2015*



June 19, 2015 - We took a taxi over to the Vatican City side of Rome to meet up with the same tour guide we had the night before. There was one other couple that went on this tour with us. We began the tour by entering the Vatican through the strict security like they have at airports. Our guide gave us our tickets, and we entered the Vatican museum area up around a spiral ramp that seemed to spiral up and up for stories. We finally came to this roof where we could see St. Peter's Basilica dome.







Our guide began our orientation  
to the tour on this roof area.





We walked out to this garden area to see the pine cone fountain and gold sphere.







The Roman pine cone fountain was moved to this site in the middle ages.



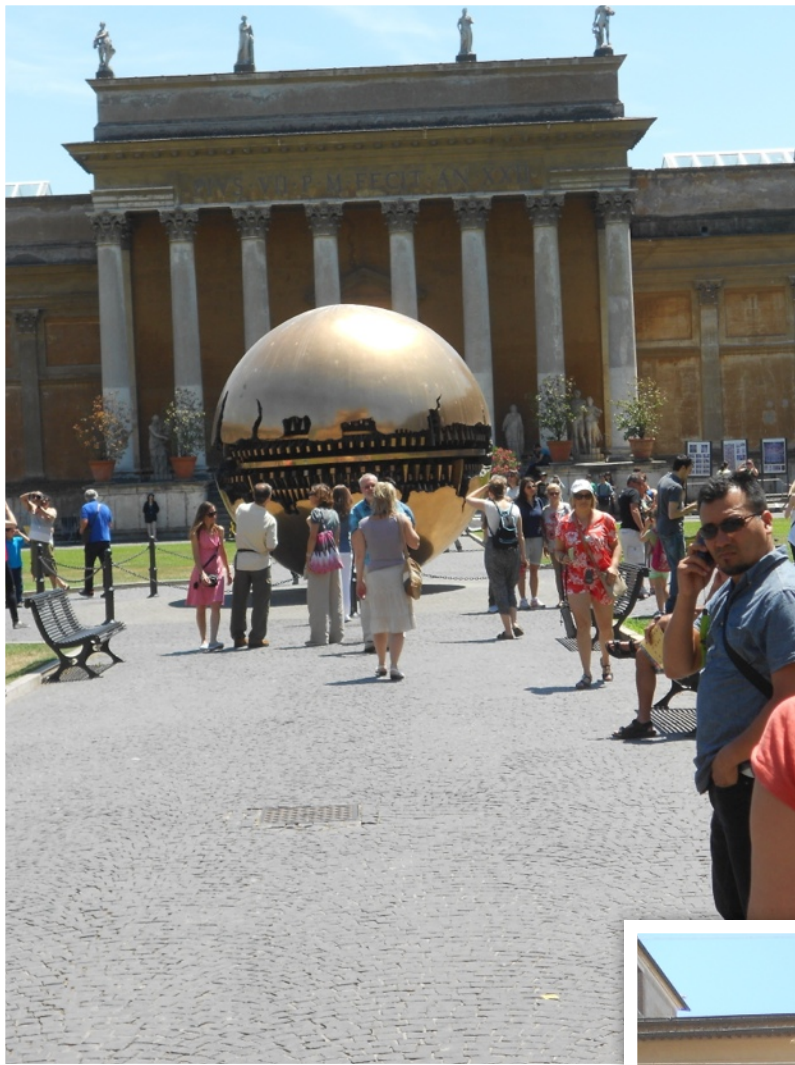




Close-ups of the pine cone fountain and statues.









We entered the first part of the Vatican museum, which consisted of a lot of sculptured heads or busts.







The ornate inner halls and domes of the Vatican museum.







Caught this glimpse of  
Rome through a  
window.











Beautiful mosaic tile floor in the  
Sala Rotunda area.



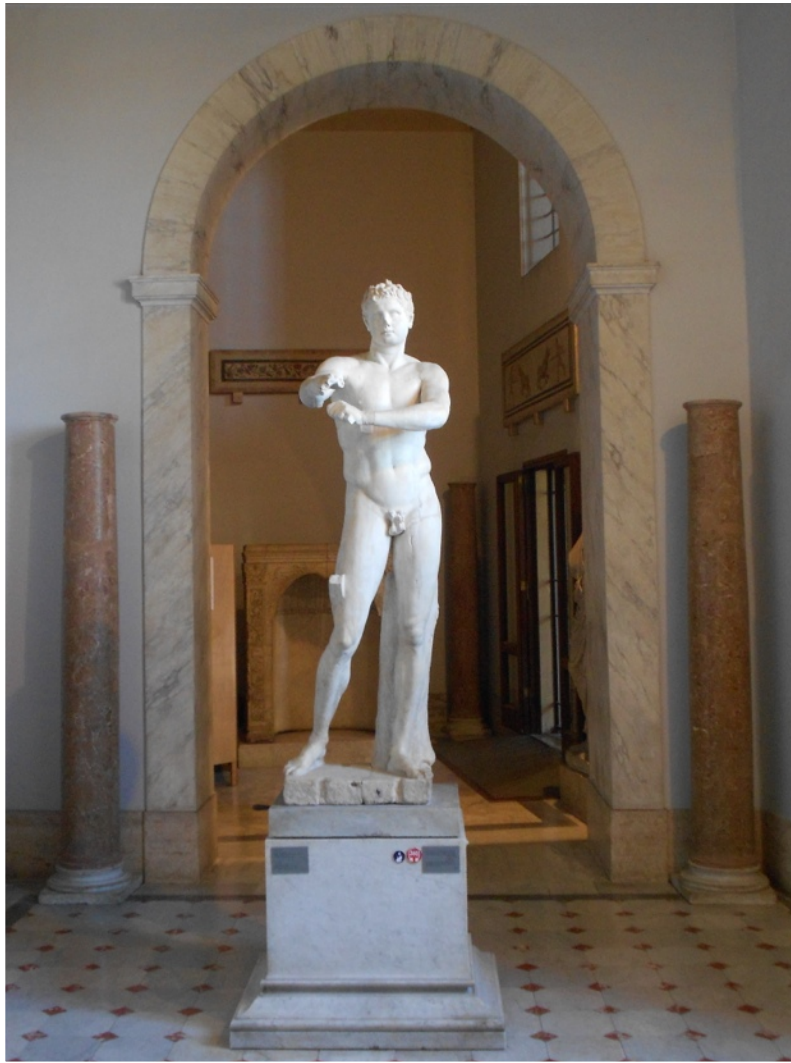




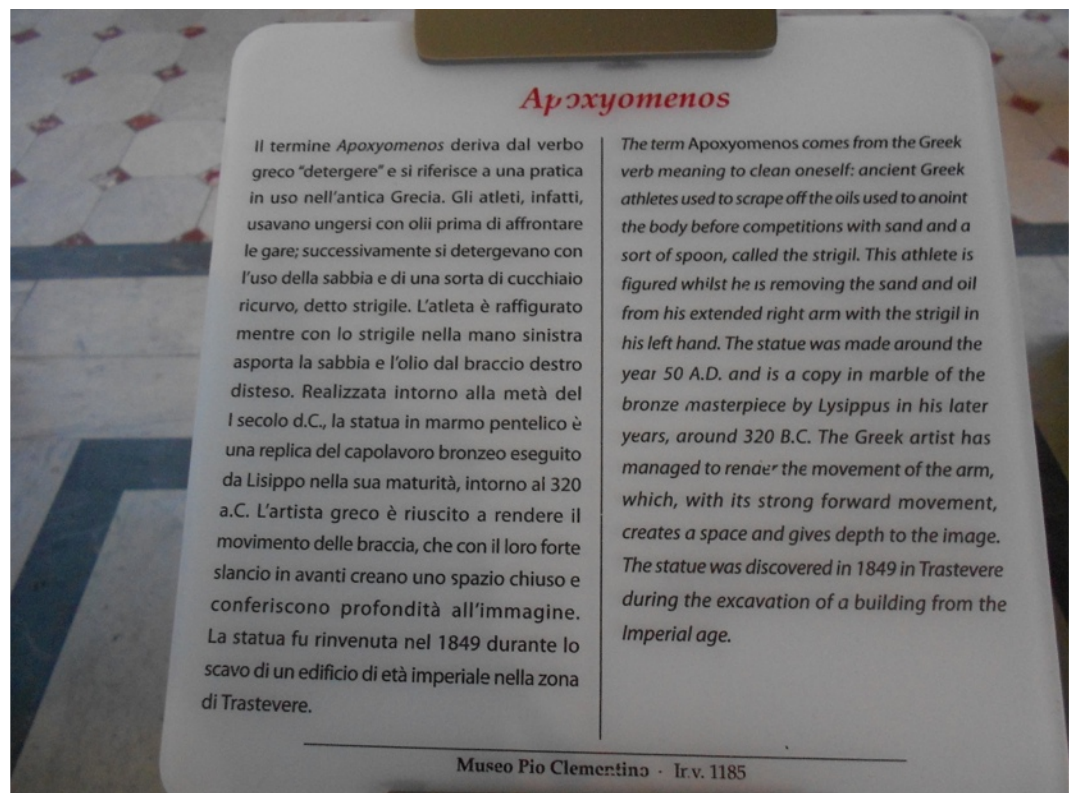
Our guide pointed out that this dome was the same style as the dome in The Pantheon.







There were so many statues that I just snapped photos of the signs that went along with them to remember what they were.







## Apollo del Belvedere *The Belvedere Apollo*

La statua faceva parte della collezione che il Cardinale Giuliano della Rovere possedeva nel suo palazzo a Santi Apostoli. Divenuto papa con il nome di Giulio II (1503-1513), la scultura fu trasferita in Vaticano, dove è attestata almeno fin dal 1508. Il dio Apollo incide regale e sembra aver appena vibrato un colpo con il suo arco che, originariamente, doveva impugnare con la mano sinistra. L'opera, databile entro la metà del II secolo d.C., è oggi considerata la replica di un bronzo eseguito tra il 330 e il 320 a.C. da Leochares, uno degli artisti che lavorarono al Mausoleo di Alicarnasso. Molto ammirata fin dalla sua collocazione nel Cortile delle Statue, deve la sua consacrazione alle ispirate pagine di Johann Joachim Winckelmann che la considerava una sublime espressione dell'arte greca, "il più alto ideale dell'arte tra le opere

*This statue was part of the collection which Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere held in his palace in Rome. When he was elected Pope as Julius II (1503-1513) the statue was transferred to the Vatican, where it has remained since at least 1508. The god, Apollo, moves forward majestically and seems to have just released an arrow from the bow which he originally held in his left hand. The work has been dated mid-way through the 2nd century A.D. It is considered to be a copy of an original bronze statue of 330-320 B.C. by Leochares, one of the artists who worked on the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus. The statue has always been greatly admired, but owes its fame primarily to Johann Joachim Winckelmann who considered it the sublime expression of Greek art, "of all the works of antiquity which have escaped destruction, the statue*





## Laocoonte

Il gruppo statuario venne ritrovato nel 1506 a Roma sull'Esquilino e subito identificato con il Laocoonte descritto da Plinio come il capolavoro degli scultori di Rodi Agesandros, Athanodoros e Polydoros. Durante la guerra di Troia, Laocoonte, sacerdote troiano del dio Apollo, si era opposto all'ingresso del cavallo di legno entro le mura della città. Atena e Poseidone, favorevoli ai Greci, inviarono dal mare due mostruosi serpenti che avvolsero con le loro spire Laocoonte e i suoi due figli. In una prospettiva romana della vicenda, la morte di questi innocenti è funzionale alla fuga di Enea e dunque alla fondazione di Roma. Una scultura di tale importanza non poteva sfuggire a Giulio II (1503-1513) che subito la acquistò per il Cortile delle Statue, rendendone il fulcro ideologico del programma decorativo. Molto dibattuta è la cronologia del capolavoro marmoreo, per il quale sembra essere stato realizzato nel 1506.

## Laocoön

This statue group was found in 1506 on the Esquiline Hill in Rome and immediately identified as the Laocoön described by Pliny the Elder as a masterpiece of the sculptors of Rhodes. The story is that during the Trojan War, Laocoön, a priest of Apollo in the city of Troy, warned his fellow Trojans against taking in the wooden horse left by the Greeks outside the city gates. Athena and Poseidon, who were favouring the Greeks, sent two great sea-serpents which have wrapped their coils around Laocoön and his two sons and are killing them. From the Roman point of view, the death of these innocents was crucial to the decision of Aeneas, who heeded Laocoön's warning, to flee Troy, and this led to the eventual founding of Rome. Such an important sculpture could not escape the notice of Pope Julius II (1503-1513) who bought it immediately and had it displayed in the Statues Courtyard (Cortile delle Statue), making it the centrepiece of the collection.





Anna and I were thinking the same thing....that we would have loved to soak in a nice hot bath in this tub since we did so much walking and standing through tours and most of our hotels in Italy up to this point only had stand-in showers without tubs.







This was “the room of the animals” with statues of all kinds of animals. Another room just across the hall was filled with “fantasy” animal statues like gryphons and other things.







More animal statues and more ornate ceiling art and columns.















Then we went through The Hall of  
Tapestries lined with huge tapestries.  
That is a tapestry below.











Then into the Hall of Maps with walls lined with hand painted maps depicting the changing landscape over a span of time.















Then we entered the famous Sistine Chapel. But...no photos or video allowed....no talking...and we were all corralled into the center of the room where we had to lean our heads back uncomfortably to view the magnificent ceiling painted by Michelangelo. I noticed a blank area missing any artwork on the ceiling. The guide explained afterward it was due to an earthquake, and they decided to leave it blank and true to its original nature rather than try to repaint what was once there.

I think I took this photo on the right of a ceiling in a waiting area adjacent to the Sistine Chapel.



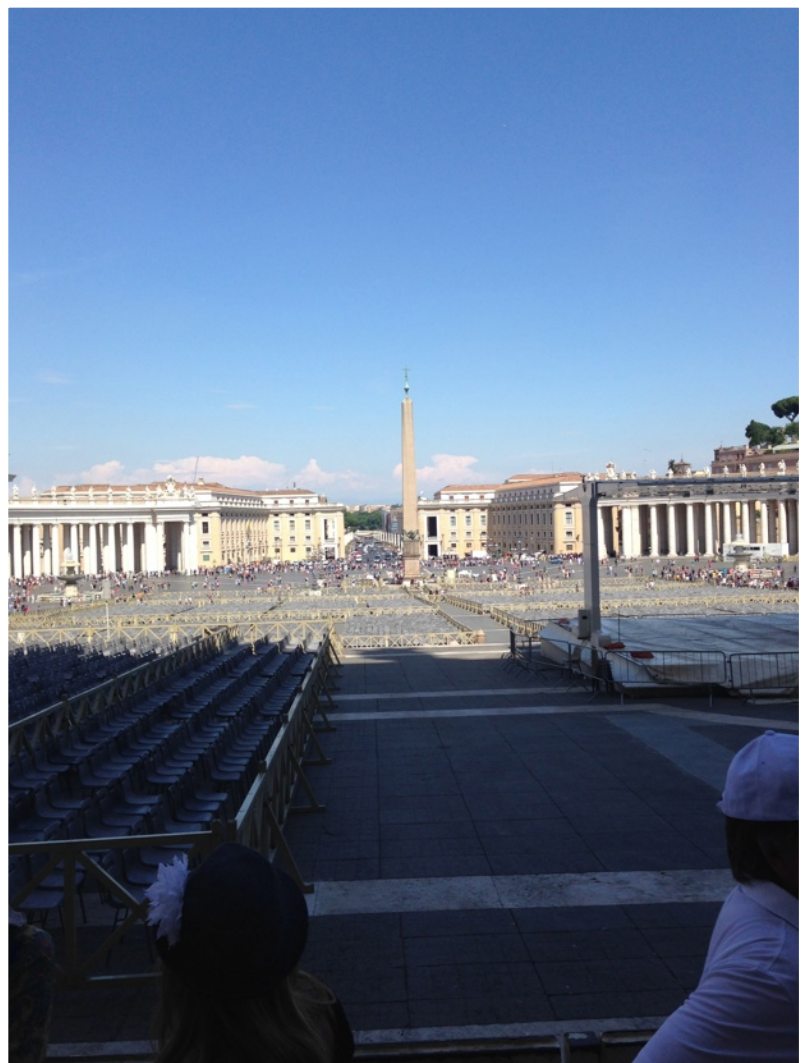








As we exited the Vatican museum area and the Sistine Chapel, we saw the exterior of St. Peter's Basilica and St. Peter's square.











Then we went into St. Peter's  
Basilica where we were  
allowed to take photos.







This long walkway  
curtained off is where only  
the Popes are allowed to  
walk into the basilica.















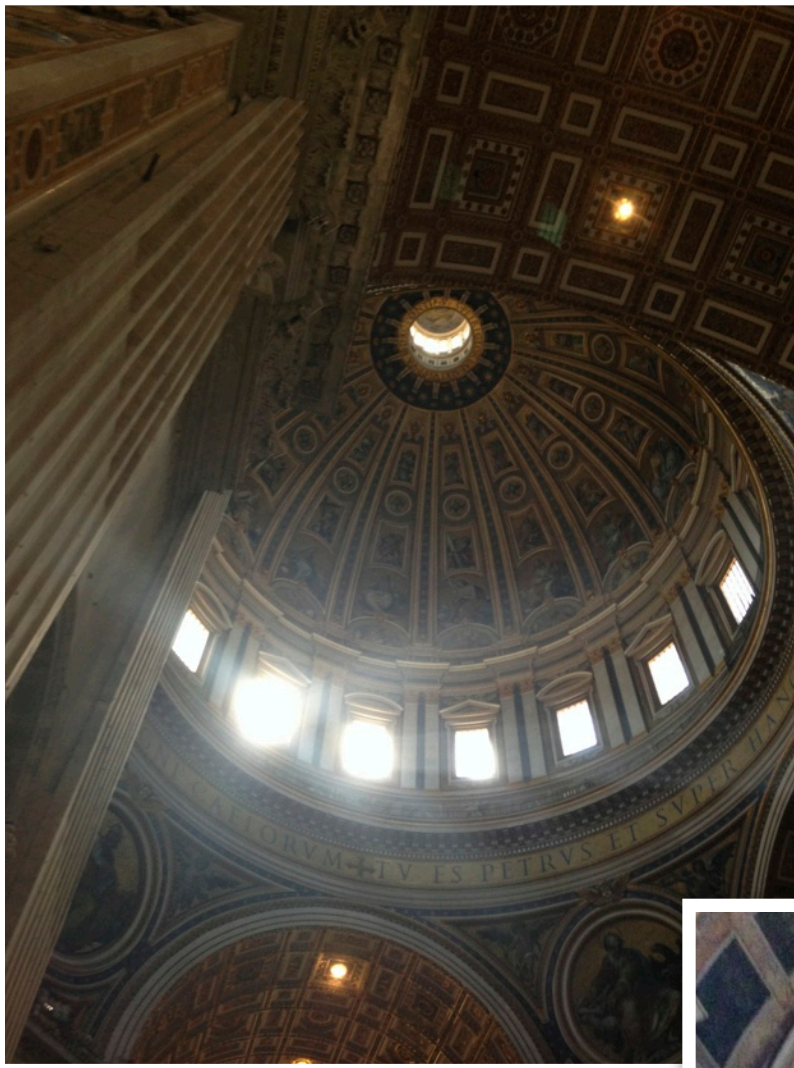




The main altar.







More domes and more artwork.



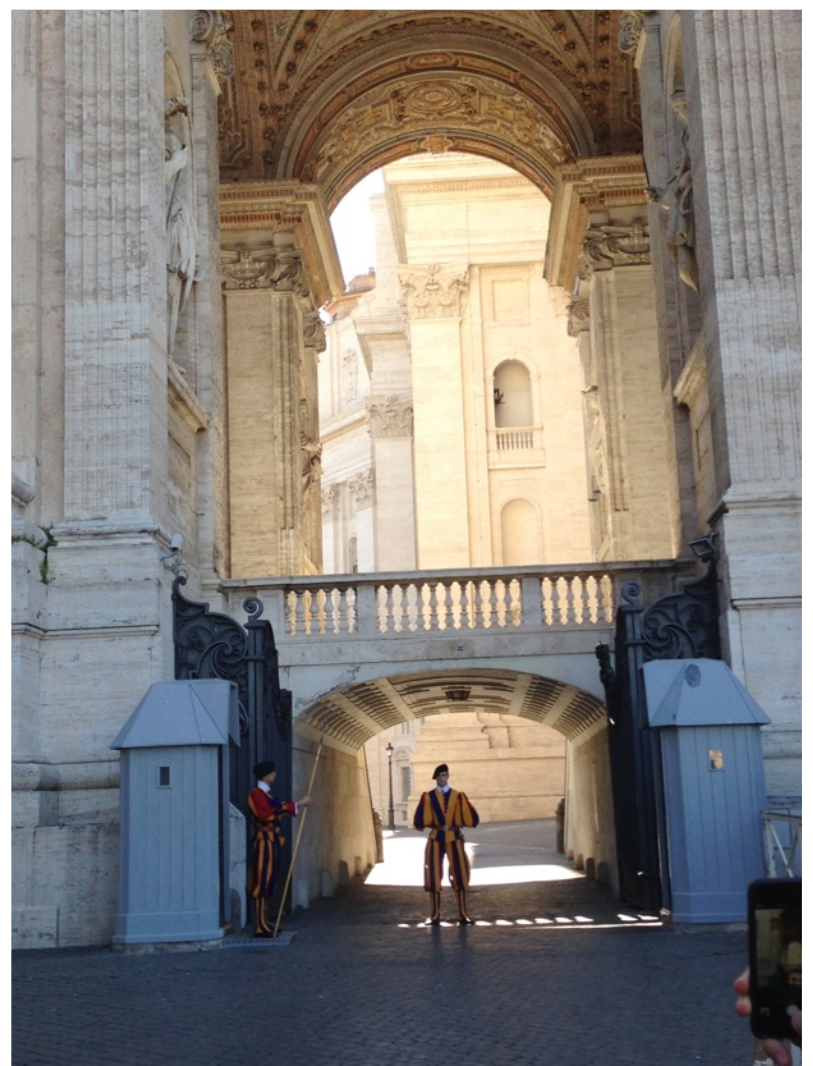








Upon exiting St. Peter's Basilica  
we saw the famous Swiss Guard.







I look as stern and serious  
as they do!!







More of the exterior of St. Peter's square and the obelisk.







Outside the entrance to St.  
Peter's Basilica.











All those chairs are lined up and cordoned off for people who come to listen to the Pope speak.



After a bit of confused speaking to Italian taxi drivers, we found one that took us back to Venezia Piazza right near our hotel. This is me in the alleyway outside the Dolce Vita hotel. The alley opened up to a very busy main street.



Anna got a restaurant suggestion from our hotel receptionist. We walked and walked along more cobblestone streets and finally found it tucked in an alleyway.











Exterior and interior of the restaurant Piccolo Arancio.







Anna got the orange ravioli made with orange zest in the sauce. I tasted it, and it was good but I think it was too rich for me to eat the whole plate of it. I ordered regular pasta pomodoro.

This little old Italian man sat at our table and serenaded us with his version of "The Godfather" theme, which hardly sounded like it. When standing and walking, he was so bent over in his stature just like he is sitting probably from years of stooping over his mandolin. We tipped him, and he went on his way to serenade the next group of people at another table.







After we ate we were so close to the Trevi Fountain that even though it was closed for renovations I told Anna I just wanted to see it at night. It was actually less crowded and did have some lighting...but maybe some day I'll get back to see it in full fountain action. It is quite large.

We walked back towards our hotel, and when we got to Piazza Venezia, there were riot police everywhere and a protest was going on. By asking people on the street we somehow gathered that they were protesting in favor of the refugee immigrants to get them housing. Walked the short block to our hotel for the end of another day and to rest my aching feet!

