St. Mary Major
THE HOLY FAMILY



FIRST RESTORATION REPORT
JULY 2026

Description

Agostino Masucci, a painter of the Maratta school, made significant contributions to several prominent Roman churches, including San Marcello al Corso, Santa Maria del Popolo, and the Church of the Santissimo Nome di Maria. Masucci's style is characterized by his adherence to the classical traditions of his mentor, Carlo Maratta, which emphasized clarity, harmony, and elegance. The Holy Family captures the intimate moment within the Holy Family: Mary, portrayed with serene grace, holds the Christ Child; St. Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary, is depicted in the foreground with gentle affection; and Joseph, in the background, looks at Mary with an expression of deep love and reverence. Masucci's use of color enhances the emotional depth of the scene, the subtle interplay of light and shadow, and the soft, harmonious palette reflect the influence of his mentor Maratta.



The Restoration

The surface shows alterations due to varnishes and old repaintings, as well as problems of adhesion of the preparatory layers and the paint layer to the textile support. The surface of the painting shows phenomena of “craquelure” and “wrinkling” of the paint layer.

Restoration Procedures

• Removal of surface deposits and altered protective layers using mechanical and chemical methods
• Review of the relining
• Pre-consolidation and consolidation of detached portions
• Cleaning tests and surface cleaning
• Filling gaps with plaster and adhesive
• Pictorial reintegration with reversible colors and recognizable techniques (watercolor or varnish)
• Frame review and tension adjustment

The canvas has now been detached from its support and transferred to the restoration site







The gilded stucco frame (close-up)



Restorers at work on the frame after the removal of the canvas

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