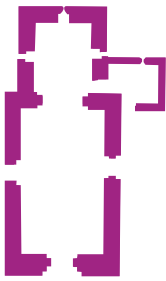




45.

**CHURCH  
OF SAINT  
MARY OF  
JAZENTE**



Rua da Igreja  
Jazente  
Amarante



41° 14' 37.93" N  
8° 3' 28.72" W



+351 918 116 488



Saturday, 5.30 pm  
(winter) or 6.30 (summer)  
Sunday, 8 am



Saint Mary  
15<sup>th</sup> August



Public Interest Building  
1977



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Like in many of the region's medieval churches, the origin of the Church of Saint Mary of Jazente, which was built within the old limits of the diocese of Porto, is associated with a monastic institution, whose nuns and abbesses were still mentioned in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Saint Mary, the patron saint, highlights its medieval nature; this hagionym remained as a sign of an invocation associated with certain orders that defended the Marian invocation - which, in some cases, was replaced in the Modern Period by vocatives that were more in line with the status of Mother of God as man.

Its transformation into a parish church should have taken place soon after the construction of this modest building, which was probably made at the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Considering its late chronology and the implication it had in the structure of the Church that we are currently able to see, we fit Saint Mary into the "resistance Romanesque" style. This building, which was not subject to many transformations over time, stands out for its homogeneity. Creating a characteristic difference in volumes, its single nave and rectangular chancel were built using a type of masonry work that,



despite featuring ashlar with different sizes, defines rows with similar heights. The walls are interrupted by narrow crevices that, much to the Romanesque style, illuminate the interior; on the south side, the presence of corbels and an eave halfway up the façade tells us that there was once a porch-like structure here. The modillions that support the cornice are mostly plain with a square profile and, therefore, indicate a late chronology.

The Church's main façade is dominated by the portal, one of the elements that better suggest its late nature. Composed of two slightly broken archivolt that rest directly on the wall in which they are embedded, its greatest originality is associ-

ated with its tympanum, where we find a hollow cross pattée overlapping a similar shape carved on the lintel supporting it. In Jazente, the composition of the tympana is a sign that this small Church was built already during the final Romanesque period, a time when there was a tendency to pierce the tympanum, not only with hollow crosses, but also with other orifices. Therefore, in the south portal, we find five circular openings placed in the form of a cross surrounded by a double circle carved in the granite. On the opposite side, the straight-lintel portal is more recent and, inside, it corresponds to a niche where the image of the Virgin of the Rosary of Fátima is displayed.



Inside Jazente simplicity reigns. The granite on the walls is only interrupted by narrow crevices that, much to the Romanesque taste, illuminate it in a subtle way. The difference between the volumes of the chancel and the nave is emphasised here by the opening of the triumphal arch. Despite broken, it looks more like a three-centred arch. However, we should note the existence of two pilasters with Tuscan capitals, one on each side of arch's intradorsum, which lead us to believe that, at some point during the Modern Period,

sometime between the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, there was an intention to transform this arch, ennobling it and increasing the size of its opening. However, the works were interrupted. The believer's look is directed to the east-facing back crevice, which is preceded by an altar table whose frontal includes a composition of Mudéjar tiles that repeat a stylized floral pattern. The collateral altars are recent and display the images of Saint Mary, Saint Anne, the Infant Jesus Saviour of the World and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.





## THE VIRGIN AND CHILD

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The image of the Virgin and Child, which dates back to the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, is also worth mentioning. It is a polychrome limestone sculpture produced according to the Gothic models and still attached to a lack of expression of which the faces of Mother and Son are good examples; the artist (certainly close to or influenced by a reputable workshop with foreign craftsmen) intended to liberate it from the medieval formalisms by treating the pleats of the clothes more freely and emphasizing the movement of the body by using a counterpoint.

Moreover, humanism and, in some ways, the sentimental realism are expressed to the devotee not through the richness of the ornamentation and the weak naturalism in the treatment of the faces and limbs, but through the loving act of the Child touching His Mother's face, thus demonstrating affection and filial love.

With her right hand, Mary is holding a rose, a symbol of purity and virginity that the Marian devotion - which had been growing since the 14<sup>th</sup> century in Europe - intended to emphasize.



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## PAULINO CABRAL, THE ABBOT OF JAZENTE

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The history of this Church is especially marked by its connection to Paulino Cabral (1719-1789), known by the pen name of abbot of Jazente, a position he held between 1752 and 1784. Despite being somewhat distant in body and mind (he was a constant presence in parties and get-togethers held in Porto), he belonged to the "Arcádia Portuense" movement, which criticized and satirized the crucial elements of poetry, based on classical precepts. But his absences were temporary and the fondness he had for the quietness of his rural abbey was often shown in his poetry, like in the following poem published in 1786:

"I, who near the Cabin where I lived, / Had a rich Hermitage: and lucky me / So many sheep, that the pasture / Turned joyfully white because of them: / I, who had the pleasure, had the joy, / I had a name among the highest; I, the wretched, / Of what I had I am now deprived, / I have nothing more than the night and the day: / I myself left it all: and only, / The longing in the vaults of memory / Have I kept with care, but imprudently; / For by reading in it my sad story, / Make this present harm seem ever harder / Sweet memories of a past glory."

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