

Heritage Choir Newsletter #3 – Rome, Italy

It's Wednesday, October 9th, during your 2019 Rome, Italy Performance Tour. During your Guided Tour of Piazza Navona you will visit Fountain of the Four Rivers.....



Bernini's triumphant Fountain of the Four Rivers, also known as The Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi, was commissioned in 1648 by Pope Innocent X and is located at Piazza Navona in Rome. The fountain was an important source of potable water for the locals before the days of indoor plumbing, but even more importantly it was a grandiose monument to the power and glory of the pope and his family. The fountain is built around a slender Egyptian obelisk surmounted by a dove, a symbol of both the church and the Pamphilij (the papal family). The surrounding sculptures represent the four major rivers of the four continents that were recognized at that time:

The Ganges in Asia: This apathetic river god looks away from the light of the Church, representing the spiritual Ignorance of this hedonistic land.

The Río de la Plata in America: Although he throws his hands back in surprise, this representative of the newly converted lands has begun to see the light.

The Danube in Europe: The most "civilized" and cultured of the figures, the Danube looks toward and embraces the light of the lord.

The Nile in Africa: Bernini depicts the Nile with its head covered because at that time, the source of the river was unknown. Symbolically, this also refers to what the Catholic world saw as the dark ignorance of the "pagan" world: the sculpture has not seen the light of Christianity.

Next, you will visit the **Fontana del Nettuno (fountain of Neptune)** at Piazza Navona.....

Rome "Fun Fact" - Rome has fifty monumental fountains and hundreds of smaller fountains, over **2000 fountains** in all, more than any other city in the world.