

Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli

There were already a number of projects for the reconstruction of Diocletian's Baths, the largest such structure in ancient Rome, in existence when, in 1561, Pius IV gave Michelangelo the task of building a church dedicated to the angels inside it, preserving the old foundations intact. Michelangelo's design consisted in a roof with a groin vault over the main hall (originally the *tepidarium*), with a stucco facing on the inside. He also adapted the old structures to their new functions as chapels, apses, and vestibules; he constructed partition walls and added doorways. The first stone was laid that same year but work immediately slowed and was soon halted altogether, with the result that it was not until the eighteenth century, following an intervention by Vanvitelli, that the church assumed its present appearance.