



**Cathedral of St. Sebastian**

Fortunately, when the first Latin American Pope visited Brazil he was smart enough to realise that Fonseca's creation would not be able to hold the crowds he would attract. So Pope Francis, an Argentinian, held the service on the 4km Copacabana beach, which drew 3 million of Rio's population of 6.5 million.

The surprise for us was near the Cathedral: at one end was a striking statue of Mother Teresa. And as we drove to our next destination, we came across an equally remarkable statue of Mahatma Gandhi with the square named after him. And we learnt that Marise's sister was a Sai Baba bhakt. Clearly India was alive and present in Brazil. Though surprisingly enough we did not see anyone from India there as we usually do in all the places we have travelled.

Amazing how many 'Third World' countries were drawn into World War II. We passed by a memorial

for Brazilian soldiers who died during the war. Germany bombed two Brazilian ships. Nudged by the US it joined the war against Germany and Italy.

As we passed the lagoon and its classy neighbourhood, we learnt that the rowing events in the Olympics were held on it. The Olympics were a high water mark for Brazil. The Petrobras building was pointed out, next to the big banks. Between them, the petroleum company and the banks have brought down the first lady President of Brazil, as well as the economy.



**Statue of Mother Teresa**

We had a meal at La Fiorentina, an Italian restaurant opposite Copacabana beach – after we had walked the length of it – ordering, yes, pizzas. Mine was called: Quatro Frios. It was loaded with sun dried tomatoes, mozzarella, salami and smoked prosciutto. The crust was wafer thin. It was the best pizza I have ever had, anywhere. Opposite Copacabana beach if you ever go.