

# APRA<sup>30</sup> MAGAZINE

ATENEO PONTIFICIO REGINA APOSTOLORUM

30 YEARS OF EDUCATION  
FOR THE EVANGELIZERS OF YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

1993 / 2023



VERITATEM FACIENTES IN CARITATE



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#APRA The Magazine  
30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebratory Edition

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We thank all the authors and collaborators for  
drafting this celebratory edition.



It is with great joy and gratitude that today we are pleased to present our issue celebrating the 30th anniversary of our academic institution.

Ever since it was founded, the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum has embraced a unique and vital vision, rooted in the core values of Catholic faith and in the integral conception of the human being that derives from it. As an ecclesiastical institution, we have accepted the challenge of not only imparting academic knowledge, but also of cultivating an integral education promoting human development in all its dimensions.

One of the pillars which define our identity is the university experience in Rome, a city steeped in history, culture and spirituality. This privileged position not only enriches the educational environment, but also provides a unique opportunity for intercultural encounters and for experiencing Catholicity.

At the core of the Athenaeum lies the charisma of the Legion of Christ and the Regnum Christi, which inspires our mission to train servant leaders, both clergy and laity, with the goal of establishing the Kingdom of Christ in the world. This education is not limited to the academic field, but also extends to everyday life, inspiring our students to live their values in all spheres of society.

A view which has been constantly present over these years and that has guided our efforts, is that of making evangelical values present in culture, starting from an open reason, rooted in a religious and cultural tradition, but always committed to dialogue with our contemporary challenges. We acknowledge the importance of interdisciplinarity and promote exchange of ideas between different fields of knowledge, in order to address the complex problems of our time from an integrated perspective.

The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Magazine is more than a celebration; it is a testimony to our ongoing commitment to academic excellence, comprehensive education and the Evangelization of culture. Within its pages you will find insights, innovative proposals and inspiring testimonies that reflect the dynamic and vibrant spirit of our Academic Community.

Looking to the future, we renew our commitment to remain a relevant and significant voice in the dialogue between faith and culture, addressing the challenges presented to us by cultural, ecclesial and institutional circumstances.

May this Magazine serve as a beacon of light and hope, guiding us on our journey to a world more just, compassionate, and filled with the love of Christ.

In this context, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the Holy Father, for the honour of sending us a message of best wishes on the occasion of the Inauguration of this Academic Year and the beginning of our Anniversary, accompanied by his Blessing.

THIRTY YEARS OF COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR THE EVANGELIZATION OF CULTURE: THIS HAS BEEN THE CONSTANT MISSION OF THE ATENEO PONTIFICIO REGINA APOSTOLORUM EVER SINCE ITS FOUNDATION.

F. JOSÉ E. OYARZÚN, L.C.

# Celebrating and Remembering 30 Years of Service to the Church



The Holy Father's message represents a precious gift and significant encouragement, as it comes directly from the Vicar of Christ. Within it, we find elements of gratitude and food for thought on what we have achieved so far, as well as on the actions that we can still implement in the future.

Therefore, Happy 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary to the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum!

With the best wishes and prayers for our continuation of our journey, with faith, excellence and love at the service of the Gospel and humanity.

Enjoy the reading,

F José E. Oyarzún  
The Rector





## SECTION 1 Identity in history

From the Foundation  
to Today

SALVATORE LUCIANO BONVENTRE  
GENERAL HISTORICAL ARCHIVE LC-RC

# APRA: from project to reality

Even during the earliest years, members of the new Institute aspired to study in the best universities in the world, so in 1946, just five years after the foundation in 1941, a group of young people enrolled on an old-fashioned journey from Mexico and crossed the ocean on a transatlantic, in order to enroll at the University of Comillas, in Spain. Just four years later, in 1950, an already larger group went to Rome to begin attending classes at the Gregorian University. This aspiration was sanctioned by the first version of the Constitutions in force at the time, which prescribed how the Legionaries of Christ should study the courses of philosophy and theology «in their own centers or as much as possible in ecclesiastical universities of greater fame and prestige». As can be seen, the idea already emerges here of being able to study in an owned center of the same level as the best academic institutions. But the educational project that was being outlined did not stop there. Those same Constitutions provided that one could «take the direction of clerical seminaries», and that in the case of «diocesan seminaries, a clear agreement should be established with the Bishop, which the Holy See must approve».

The project was therefore clear, but obviously there was still a lack of men and resources for effectively putting it into practice. It was necessary to continue preparing and waiting, which the Legionaries did by studying for decades in the pontifical universities of Rome. However, In 1976, the issue was analysed further for the first time, and a «Situation for the creation of our own faculty of philosophy and theology» was drawn up, in which it was planned to open a faculty with legionary professors no earlier than in six years, and vice versa, to be able to open a Seminary in two or a maximum of three years. As the document says, the «Seminar» option «has the advantage of granting time for maturation to the professors. As soon as a sufficient number of

THE BIRTH OF THE ATENEO PONTIFICIO REGINA APOSTOLORUM IN 1993 BY THE CONGREGATION OF THE LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST, IS THE FRUIT OF A PROJECT THAT WENT A LONG WAY.

Doctors is reached, we could erect it as a Faculty». In truth, times were still too premature, but what is important to note here is that during the Seventies, the Congregation already knew where it wanted to go. These were the years immediately following the Second Vatican Council and many debates were ongoing, and the Congregation, which had



recently received the *Decretum laudis*, had chosen to follow a very specific path in the doctrinal field. Both the 1965 and 1970 Constitutions firmly established: «in higher studies, especially philosophy and theology, all the prescriptions of the sacred canons and of the Supreme Pontiffs regarding respect and full fidelity to the ecclesiastical Magisterium are to be inviolably observed, which must always and everywhere be professed, and instilled in the mind and heart of students with prudence and caution, as well as associate with the diligent and

recommended search for new issues which originate as time goes by». The Sapientia christiana Apostolic Constitution of 1979 regarding universities and ecclesiastical faculties reiterated that «the Doctorate is the academic degree which qualifies one to teach in a Faculty», and that «the Licentiate is the academic degree which qualifies one to teach in a major seminary or in a school equivalent».

In the Legion, those suitable for teaching were still few, and therefore, in the I Ordinary General Chapter of 1980, the Chapter Fathers set a prioritized «pedagogical challenge» to which

A new University would therefore serve to train apostles.

On the other hand, in order to make sure that all students were prepared in this sense, the Legionaries had been providing repetitions and complementary lessons for several years in the Center for Higher Studies in Rome, which were added to the university curriculum. They had started with summer courses in some disciplines and then gradually came to review all the main subjects, holding preparatory exams at home before those at the universities.

These were the years of the pontificate of John



they would be «sacrificing everything», namely the creation of a good cadre of legionary professors, indicating that the religious people selected for this purpose should be withdrawn from other occupations, avoiding to engage them with responsibilities that could distract them from their studies. This priority was confirmed in the 1983 Constitutions, approved by Saint John Paul II, which clarified that «those designated to the office of professors must be competent men in their respective fields and have adequate knowledge of disciplines related to their specialties. Therefore, they must have a solid preparation and possess academic qualifications, as well as a doctorate whenever possible». Increasing the number of doctors available was now an essential need because the 1983 Constitutions also revealed, without hesitation, that the Legion of Christ could «build universities and ecclesiastical faculties both for the exclusive training of our own and for the ecclesiastical training of other religious, clerics and seculars». Also, that same text provided the interesting concept of a study preordained for the apostolate, since intellectual formation «ultimately aims at the achievement of a broad and solid knowledge of sacred sciences, together with a general culture proportionate to the needs of our time, so that, after having nourished their faith with the sacred sciences, they are able to correctly announce the evangelical message to men and establish the Kingdom of Christ in society».

Paul II, and he too affirmed the need for an excellent academic education, so much so that in the Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis* of 1992 regarding the formation of priests in current circumstances, he wrote: «It is necessary to decisively counter the tendency to reduce the seriousness and commitment of studies, which manifests itself in some ecclesial contexts, also as a consequence of an insufficient and incomplete basic preparation of students who begin the philosophical and theological curriculum. It is our contemporary situation itself that increasingly requires teachers truly up to the complexity of the times and are capable to address, with competence, clarity and depth of argument, the questions of meaning of today's men, to which only the Gospel of Jesus Christ provides a full and definitive answer».

The concern expressed by the Congregation for a more systematic intellectual formation was consequently shared by the Holy Father.

In order to address the situation, a meeting was held in the General Directorate in 1986. It was highlighted that, in practice, two parallel courses were being held and this entailed the risk of splitting in the minds of students, who attended the university and also the college at the same time. All this also inevitably implied that a lot of time was taken away from personal study.

It was decided to go straight to starting studies at home. *Apud sedem nostram*, as was said. The academic year 1986-1987 was still too early, as



## SECTION 1 Identity in history

### From the Foundation to Today

the number of professors was lacking: namely, for the twelve theology subjects of the first year, five would not have been covered; for the ten of the second year there were no teachers for three subjects, and four out of the nine third year subjects were also without professors. We then proceeded to make a survey of the teaching staff and calculate a reliable projection over the years. But, at the same time, we continued to look further ahead and information was prepared on the «Legal aspects relating to the Academic Athenaeum». It took another four years of work. Plenty of meetings, memoranda and



prospectuses went by, and the project moved forward. Several legionnaires obtained their doctorates and others were called back to Rome to be able to obtain them, increasing the number of professors. In 1987, the Boletín Bibliográfico was born with the description of publications which could be useful in the academic, apostolic and pastoral fields. In 1988, it was decided to appoint an Academic Council of the Study Center. In March 1990, a commission was created to draw up regulations for professors and in the summer, an academic calendar was developed with times and days of lessons.

In Rome, a new building was built specifically, which was complete with auditorium, computer room, classrooms for lessons, seminar rooms, library suitable for scientific research with 40,000+ volumes, meeting hall and rooms for professors, and on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1990, sixty religious philosophers and sixteen theologians began the courses corresponding to the two years of baccalaureate under the direction of a teaching body made up of fifteen legionary professors. The community diary of the Center for Higher Studies noted: «Today is a special day, because the academic course has begun [...] The brothers of the first year in philosophy and theology begin what, with the grace of God, will be our Athenaeum». A few months later, in 1991, the

name of the new academic centre was chosen. The very first used was *Centrum Academicum Romanum Congregationi Legionariorum Christi*, which it was decided to abandon early as it was considered too long. A list of options was presented. *Aurelium* was discarded as a pagan name, *Legionarorum Studiorum* was not considered suitable because it could be confused with a centre where only legionary spirituality was studied, *Catholicum and Higher Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies* were not appreciated, perhaps due to being seen as too banal. Among the names proposed there was also *Regina Apostolorum*, which recalled that of a training academy for priest-trainers directed by the Congregation which had been holding summer courses for a few years in Northern Italy. It worked well, so this name migrated to the Athenaeum project.

By now, various elements contributed to the plan coming to fruition. Indeed, the *Centrum Academicum Regina Apostolorum* constituted an indispensable preparatory step for professors, some of whom were already teaching in other universities, in order to gain experience. The existence of a headquarters with rooms suitable for developing all study and teaching activities was associated with the consistency of a high and ever-increasing number of legionary students, and finally, in 1991, the Maria Mater Ecclesiae Pontifical International College was born in Rome. This was a priestly training center with the aim of helping diocesan bishops from all over the world, and in particular from Latin America, in the preparation of future priests. This was another important innovation which was fully included, as we have seen, in the educational purposes of the Legion of Christ.

The final outcome was starting to appear concretely on the horizon. The process was not easy: in order to present the application to the Congregation for Catholic Education, it was necessary to draw up statutes, regulations and adequate programs, appoint academic authorities, carefully describe the teaching staff, the premises of the chosen building and the sources of financing. For enriching the teaching staff, several external professors were involved with whom the Legionaries had long established a relationship of esteem and intellectual collaboration.

Finally, in November 1992, the dossier was ready. Or at least so it seemed, given that the Papal Dicastery rejected the request as programs for individual specializations of second and third cycles were missing, as well as because the number of teachers with all requirements had been judged insufficient to guarantee stability of teaching.

This was a bothersome setback. Time was pressing, because the Center for Higher Studies had reached its third year of lessons and the problem of issuing valid academic qualifications was now being raised very seriously.

As a precaution, the legionaries had submitted an application for affiliation to the Gregorian University, but they had always considered this possibility a fallback solution as it would have allowed only first-cycle qualifications to be granted to students which were members of the

Congregation and not diocesan seminarians. Furthermore, four years instead of three were required for the theology baccalaureate, and this was seen as an unacceptable matter for legionaries given the length of their training. It was also considered to request aggregation or to make the center of Via Aurelia a section of the Gregoriana.

But all this was just palliative because the objective was to be able to offer an alternative of its own as indicated in the 1983 Constitutions, and we went back to work to present a new request for erection. The Prefects of Studies quickly developed programs for the licentiate and doctorate and looked for new professors.

The updated request was submitted in May 1993. After the summer, the outcome was still unknown. The situation had become even more urgent because the Study Center was about to begin its fourth year of lessons, and dozens of legionaries and diocesan seminarians would have been left without qualifications.

The General Secretariat of the Legion was thinking of reactivating at least the affiliation process, when it became known that the Congregation for Catholic Education had signed the erection decree on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1993. What had happened? Upon closer inspection, the Papal Dicastery had every reason not to give its consent. It certainly could not ignore the relevant regulations contained in the *Sapientia christiana* and used to follow a consolidated practice based on a progressive advancement of the institutes involved, which started from affiliation, and after a suitable period, reached erection as soon as the conditions were right. Furthermore, many in the Curia thought that there were already too many academies and universities in Rome, and that another institute was superfluous.

However, the Legionaries had knocked on a higher door and it was opened. The Pope himself intervened to break the deadlock through the Secretariat of State.

The Dicastery could not deviate from the rules, but neither could it subtract itself to an express request from above.

The letter accompanying the deed says it in a rather not veiled way: «In this regard, as we make ourselves interpreters of the benevolent disposition of the Holy Father, who intends to encourage the aforementioned Athenaeum with his Paternal blessing since its foundation, we shall provide you with the relevant erection decree».

All in all, it wasn't bad for the *Regina Apostolorum* to be born with the seal of a Pope which is today a Saint of the Church.

On September 30<sup>th</sup>, the announcement was made to the community of the Study Center who, as a sign of thanks, spent three days in permanent Eucharistic adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, the news was made public by an article in the *Osservatore Romano* which explained the meaning of the chosen Marian invocation: «The reference to Mary, Queen of the Apostles, chosen as the name of the institution, intends to underline on one hand, the trust in the protection of the mother of God, and on the other, the very meaning of the Athenaeum and all its activities: that of helping, through

academic training, the preparation of generations of apostles wishing and knowing how to collaborate effectively in the urgent task of the new Evangelization».

On October 11<sup>th</sup>, lessons began with 50 professors and 364 students, of which 264 legionaries, 29 Diocesan seminarians, 4 religious and 3 lay people from 27 nations and 5 continents.

A report from December 1993 reveals a nice background story. Everything had been thought of, but there was still a small gap: there was no photocopier and this generated confusion every time a freshman had to reproduce a book. It also



lacked a coffee machine, so a purchasing manager was hastily appointed in order to purchase these and other equipment. The academic journey otherwise began in an intense way, and in 1998, the Congregation for Catholic Education granted the title of Pontifical «in consideration of the merits acquired in recent years».

A new academic institute had taken its place within the Church.



**SECTION 1**  
Identity in history

*Testimonials*

RAMÓN LUCAS LUCAS, L.C. WAS INVOLVED IN THE BIRTH OF THE ATENEO PONTIFICIO REGINA APOSTOLORUM EVER SINCE ITS EARLIEST MOMENTS. WE ASKED HIM FOR SOME ANECDOTES ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION PHASES AND HIS EXPERIENCE AS A TEACHER.

F. RAMÓN LUCAS LUCAS, L.C.

## From physical stones to “living stones”

**You are among those who saw the birth of our current campus ever since its foundations. What do you tell us about its earliest moments?**

The Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum has been part of my life from the beginning; as a matter of fact, the place where we are, the land where it was built, I was the one who found it. I acted as an intermediary for the sale, and then I also followed the planning with the architect in the Garden. I saw the Athenaeum rise from its foundations: I know where the first stone was placed... the initial stone. I may dare say this Athenaeum began with physical stones, then it was further built with human stones and continues to develop today. So, a part of my life was definitely spent here.

**You are one of APRA's decades-long faculty members. Can you tell us a little about your experience, what pushed you to dedicate yourself to teaching, or what motivates you to continue this work?**

For me, teaching at the Athenaeum is an apostolic mission. It always has been, and I consider the apostolate of culture and teaching to be one of the most effective. It is a bit like with physics: when a person is shot in the head, they get killed instantly; however, when one forms a person's mind, they are strengthening it for the apostolate. To have well educated priests, lay people, consecrated men and women which are also formed in their minds effectively means having apostles; this is what my mission in the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum meant to me.

My teaching was oriented towards anthropology, but immediately opened up to bioethics and current issues. As a member of the Pontifical Academy for Life, I also had to specialize in medical topics, and this opened up many horizons for me and also many challenges such as those posed by bioethics, especially from 2000 until today. Not only concerning the topic of the human embryo, but also genetic editing, transhumanism,

and model embryos of human passing from female and male germ cells, therefore created in a laboratory without this contribution. These are issues that require research and also invite dialogue with different positions.

**Apart from the vocational aspect of conceiving teaching as a mission, is there something else that stimulates you?**

A teacher teaches every day, but a teacher also learns every day. Teaching not only makes you learn because you see the students' reactions, the questions they ask you... but also because you are always driven to research beings without new, without settling on a pattern of repetition year after year. You must be challenged to learn more, present in new ways, and enrich yourself in order to enrich others.

**What do you hope for the future of the Athenaeum, what do you wish for it?**

The Athenaeum has certainly developed a lot since ninety-three, when it was founded, until today. At the beginning it had much more of a familiar feeling, it was less institutional, and like all things that grow, there is a need for further greater organisation. The Athenaeum has



certainly developed a lot in this; today we have a consolidated organic structure, although it has not lost the familiarity it always had. I hope it does not lose it and that this family character, certainly enriched by a coherent and demanding academic professional structure, will also continue to grow.





## SECTION 1 Identity in history

APRA Sustainability

MANY PEOPLE HAVE SUPPORTED, BELIEVED AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ATENEO PONTIFICIO REGINA APOSTOLORUM OVER THE LAST THIRTY YEARS. FIRST AND FOREMOST, IN THIS

REGARD, WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONGREGATION OF THE LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST, WITHOUT WHICH THE REGINA APOSTOLORUM WOULD NOT EXIST.

F. THOMAS MONTANARO, L.C.

# Who believed in us

I would like to thank the countless anonymous friends and others whose stories can be told by colleagues, professors, and former students. I am grateful for the opportunity to highlight some of the people and institutional partners I have had the grace to know and serve during my service to APRA, both as a student, alumnus, and in my many professional roles over the years, most recently as executive Chairman of the Regina Apostolorum Foundations of the East and the West and consultant to the Rector for international development. APRA's identity is tied to many of these people and institutions, and the more we acknowledge this history and make it our own, the more APRA can fully flourish and become what it is called to be.

From the first donor I visited in 2004 in Milan, who gave me an envelope with 20 euros inside, explicitly offering everything he had with the trust that God would provide for his needs, up to the most recent magnanimous commitment of over \$1,000,000 from a dear friend who wishes to remain anonymous, I was struck by the generosity and trust that so many had in the Legion and in our mission to educate saints, apostles, leaders towards service. This financial support has allowed APRA to not only continue to be at the forefront of various academic disciplines over the years, but also to grow and develop into what it is today. In 2020, the Regina Apostolorum Foundation in the West was established in the United States and joined the Foundation of the same name in the East based in Hong Kong: the common objective is to support the Pontifical Athenaeum, together with projects and causes that share its values and mission. The work of development for these young yet rapidly growing foundations was one so much love and grace, thanks to the *alumni* who serve on our Board of Directors and to a professional group of hired and pro-bono staff.

I have had the grace of witnessing many generous people who responded by adopting professionally

prepared projects presented in the many editions of the Wishbook. One of the earliest donations, of over 125,000 euros, from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous and is in love with the Word of God, served to finance the biblical software Verbum for several generations of APRA theology students, which many *alumni* they continue to use today. Another substantial donation came to us from spouses Ben and Kim Chang, who together with some friends, adopted the Science and Faith project for over 250,000 euros, transforming the Diploma of Shroud Studies and the Master in Science and Faith into online programs in both English and Spanish. It is such a visionary project, and one of great support in our ever-growing digital world!

So many friends from around the world have supported us over the years in ways that at first seemed small and large, yet God, who truly sees into our hearts, knows who donated the most. More than 200,000 euros were donated anonymously for starting the scholarship fund of Perpetual Help Scholarship Fund for priestly renewal in the Holy Land, with another promise of donation for the same purpose, both made by someone who felt a deeper love for Christ in the Holy Land and who acknowledges the leadership that priests are called to exercise in Church by bringing souls to holiness. Since 2020, many other scholarship funds have been launched thanks to our generous friends, including the Sacred Heart Scholarship Fund, the Pontifical Scholarship Fund, the Good Samaritan Fund, the Hopes and Dreams scholarships, etc. In recent years, over 400,000 euros have been raised for the Pontifical Endowment, which offers hope for the future of our Athenaeum. Added to this are the donations and commitments for the projects of the Institute for Higher Studies on Women, which exceed 100,000 euros, and the support of the Farrell Family Foundation for the Faculty of Bioethics, which has been constant and growing. More and more

friends continue to support the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights or participate in the annual charity concerts organized by Ms. Margery Au in Hong Kong. Additionally, the regalia have been given through the numerous publications and art exhibitions curated by Mr. Terrance and Mrs. Joan Foo Mahony. Together with many other supports not mentioned here, just conceiving the impact achieved together becomes an arduous yet perennial task.

In December of 2023, I was overwhelmed by the leadership and support of Messrs. Russ and Lori Scaramella of the Scaramella Faith Foundation,

The sacrifice of so many generous people challenges me to follow their example, to better educate myself, to make better use of my time and talents, investing them for and in others. I pray that their sacrifice and investment in APRA, along with the support of the Regina Apostolorum Foundation, will provide each of you with a challenge that will not fall on barren ground. May your commitment to be saints, professional apostles, magnanimous servants and administrators also be your sincere thanks to those who believed in you and still encourage you today. I hope that each of us can bring into our prayers the intentions of those who



who hosted the first Donor Appreciation Dinner in Puerto Rico. Their continued and generous stewardship provided a \$100,000 check to the RA Foundation, which paved the way for an equivalent donation from anonymous friends and other friends and donors who collaborated to support the academic training of the Legionaries of Christ in the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum. I was honoured to convey to P. Oyarzún, the Rector, this good news on behalf of our council, with 250,000+ euros available already at the beginning of 2024 for academic scholarships for legionnaires.

We had and will keep on having great friends who believe and invest in the Regina Apostolorum and hope for its fruits. These people want leaders who are servants dedicated to engaging with contemporary society, meeting others where they are at, effectively instilling everlasting values while spreading the truth. There is still a lot of work to do and we are just getting started.

supported us, offering sincere and heartfelt thanks combined with magnanimous professional work. You can be certain of my prayers for the sustained growth and success of the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum, and I offer my blessing to each of the Regina Apostolorum Foundation's donors, staff and their families.



## SECTION 1

### Identity in history

Academic  
Direction

EVANGELIZING CULTURE ALSO MEANS  
STRUCTURING AND IMPLEMENTING THE  
ACADEMIC POTENTIAL THAT APRA CAN OFFER.

## RECTORATE

# Leading APRA

APRA's Academic Management is divided into a structure presided over by the Rector Magnificus, coordinated by the Academic Vice-Rector, and organized by the Faculty Deans and Institute Directors. In addition to the Faculties of Philosophy, Theology and Bioethics, the Athenaeum benefits from the academic offer of Institutes: Regina Apostolorum Higher Institute of Religious Sciences (Institute ad instar facultatis), for the training of lay people and religious people in the teaching of religion in schools; Sacerdos Institute, for the ongoing training of the clergy; Science and Faith Institute, for critical and intellectual training on current and transversal themes; Institute of Higher Studies on Women, for the research and promotion of the female genius in the world and within the Church; UNESCO Chair of Bioethics

and Human Rights, for the international study of current issues in these areas; Institute of Economic and Social Ethics Fidelis, for economic ethics. Over these 30 years, there have been many priests and lay people who have taken turns leading these multiple areas of expertise. We remember them all.

#### Rectors Magnificent:

- F. Álvaro Corcuera del Río, L.C.
- F. Paolo Scarafoni, L.C.
- F. Amador Pedro Barrajón, L.C.
- F. Jesús Villagrasa, L.C.
- F. José Enrique Oyarzún, L.C. – Currently in office

#### Academic Vice-Rectors:

- F. David Koonce, L.C. – Currently in office
- F. José E. Oyarzún, L.C.



#### Administrative Vice Rectors:

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- F. Thomas Montanaro, L.C.

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- F. José E. Oyarzún, L.C.
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- F. Héctor Guerra, L.C.
- F. Pedro Barrajón, L.C.
- F. Edward McNamara, L.C.
- F. José E. Oyarzún, L.C.
- F. Luis Ramírez, L.C.
- F. Vincenz Heereman, L.C.

#### Directors of the Science and Faith Institute:

- F. Rafael Pascual, L.C.

#### Institute of Higher Studies on Women:

- Marta Rodríguez
- Anita Cadavid

#### Directors of the UNESCO Chair of Bioethics and Human Rights:

- Alberto García Gómez

#### Directors of the Fidelis Institute of Economic and Social Ethics:

- F. Michael Ryan, L.C.

#### Director of the John Paul II Study Center:

- F. Marcelo Bravo Pereira, L.C.

## SECTION 2

## Mission in history

History of Faculties  
and Institutes

APRA WAS FOUNDED ON 15 SEPTEMBER 1993 WITH THE NAME «ATENEO REGINA APOSTOLORUM» AND EVER SINCE ITS BEGINNING, IT WAS ALREADY MORE THAN A SIMPLE STUDENT RESIDENCE FOR THE LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST.

THAT OF THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY IS AN EVOLUTIONARY PATH, SYMBOLIZING THE SIMILAR DEVELOPMENT OCCURRED OVER THE LAST 30 YEARS FOR ALL FACULTIES AND INSTITUTES. A STORY OF GROWTH, ACADEMIC SERIOUSNESS, PERSONAL ATTENTION TO STUDENTS AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, IN VIEW OF A MISSION COMMON TO LAY AND CONSECRATED PEOPLE.

F. DAVID KOONCE, L.C.

## APRA: History, Development, Mission

Everything had a true feeling of innovation. In 1990, the headquarters of the legionnaires' college moved from Via Aurelia 677 to a new structure with an entrance on Via Aurelia Antica. Within the lower floors of that very college, APRA was born, but ever since its beginning, our Athenaeum was more than just a student hall of the Legionaries of Christ. The Maria Mater Ecclesiae International College had already been founded before our Athenaeum was, and the earliest groups of APRA students consisted of legionary religious and diocesan seminarians, as a prophecy of what was to come.

The first year only had two active programs, the Baccalaureate in Philosophy and the Baccalaureate in Theology, serving for the training of seminarians. Today, APRA consists of the three ecclesiastical faculties of Theology, Philosophy and Bioethics, the Higher Institute of Religious Sciences; four institutes affiliated to the faculty of Theology and one institute affiliated to the faculty of Philosophy; four APRA own institutes for specialized research and studies; two chairs. In the 2023/2024 academic year, there are 21 academic degree courses active, 5 programs with university degrees and 33 other courses, including diplomas and various courses.

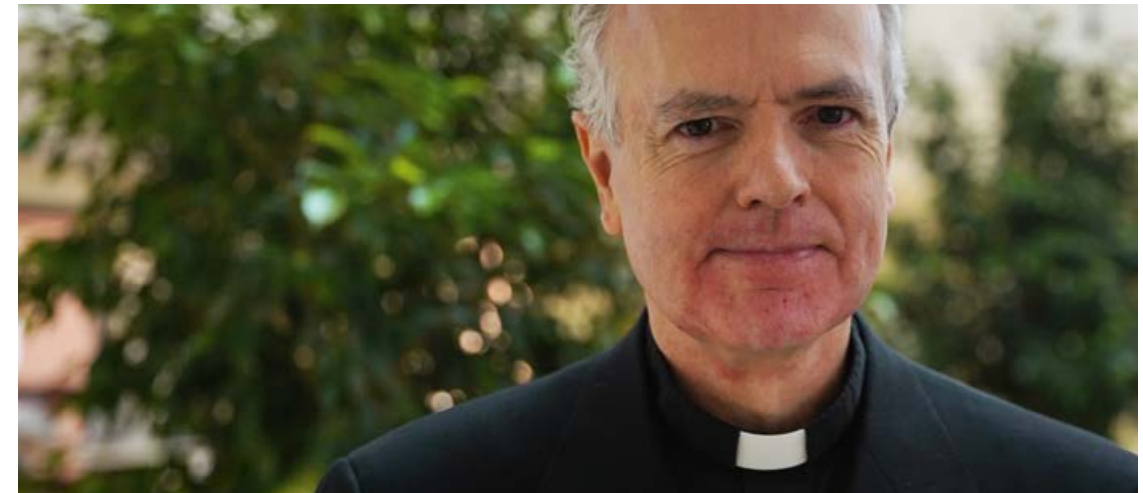
This diversification of the educational offer has changed the composition of students. At the beginning, the Regina Apostolorum mainly served the seminarians of the Legionaries of Christ and the Maria Mater Ecclesiae College. Today, these two groups represent only 19% of all members. During our 30 years of history, APRA has experienced a wonderful development of its potential, with the diversification of its programs and its students. We are still preparing for the future, as we design new ways for allowing students to access ecclesiastical studies with new programs, including remote learning courses. It is our ambition to acquire the best methodologies for putting technology at the service of students, for



strengthening the bonds between students and teachers, and renew our academic community year after year, making it a place capable of welcoming people and accompany them in the preparation for their mission in the 21st century. APRA's transformation doesn't stop with its thirtieth anniversary; as a living organism, our roots in the past orient the spirit that drives our future growth.

F. JOSÉ FERNÁNDEZ SAN ROMÁN, L.C.

## Growing on par with the Church and current challenges



The Faculty of Theology of the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum was born together with the Faculty of Philosophy in 1993, when the Athenaeum received approval from the Congregation for Catholic Education, presided over by Cardinal Pio Laghi.

Ever since its beginning, we wanted to give the Faculty a strong characterization of fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church, a solid rooting in the Sacred Scripture in the wake of great ecclesiastical Tradition, and also and education with a clear pastoral imprint, in order to provide the Church with priests, religious and lay people taking on the great challenge of the evangelization of culture, with competence and passion. Progressively, the Faculty developed further specializations such as, i.e., the programs of Licentiate in Dogmatic Theology and Licentiate in Spiritual Theology.

The Baccalaureate program has recently been renewed, expanding the possibility of optional courses and underlining the importance of seminars, towards engaging and participatory teaching methodologies. Over recent years, several international conferences have been

organised, such as that on Body Theology, or on the occasion of the anniversaries of papal encyclicals *Humanae vitae* and *Veritatis splendor*. In the history of our Faculty, the origin of students has gone from a Latin American and European majority to a more extensive presence which includes many American, African and Indian groups.

In the path of dogmatic theology, in addition to the study of great masters such as St. Thomas, particular importance is given to the in-depth study of the theological thought of J. Ratzinger as an example of dialogue between faith and current culture, with multiple initiatives for the future. Concerning theology, starting from the great masters of spiritual life, particular importance is given to the skills needed to cover the role of spiritual director, trainer and director of spiritual exercises.

The Faculty is currently promoting several online programs, particularly in Spanish for Latin America, with the aim of providing tools for the training of apostles for the New Evangelization.



## SECTION 2

Mission in history

Acknowledgements

F. GIOVANNI MALGAROLI, L.C.

## Ecclesiastical Approvals and Affiliations

The Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum, promoted by the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ, was founded as a basic study institute in 1991 in Rome. On September 15th, 1993, it received canonical approval from the Congregation for Catholic Education, with the Faculties of Theology and Philosophy.

In 1998, Saint John Paul II granted the "Pontifical" title to the Regina Apostolorum Athenaeum, thus recognizing the profitable progress of the institute, stimulating it towards further developments of its mission.

In 1999 and 2001, the Congregation for Catholic Education erected respectively the Higher Institute of Religious Sciences, connected to the Faculty of Theology, and the Faculty of Bioethics, with the faculties of awarding relevant academic degrees.

Between 2010 and 2011, other institutes were created within the Athenaeum, dedicated to the study, research and teaching of particular knowledge and professional skills, in order to specify the evangelizing work of the Athenaeum. These are: the Institute of Bioethics and Human Rights, the Institute of Science and Faith, the Fidelis Institute of Economic and Social Ethics, the Institute of Higher Studies on Women, the Sacerdos Institute.

Over the years, this educational mission has expanded to include the affiliations of some centres or seminaries to support the preparation of future priests. The following have been affiliated with the Faculty of Theology: in 2002, the San Carlos y San Marcelo Major Seminary of the archdiocese of Trujillo (Peru); in 2017, the Maria Mater Ecclesiae Institute of Philosophy and Theology of Itapeceirica da Serra (São Paulo, diocese of Campo Limpo, Brazil); in 2019, the Pius XI Seminary of San Remo (Italy). In 2020, the Maria Mater Ecclesiae Institute mentioned above also received affiliation to the Faculty of Philosophy. In 2024, the San José Theological Institute of

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PONTIFICAL ACADEMIC INSTITUTION IMPLIES SEVERAL APPROVALS BY THE COMPETENT ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY, WHICH ACKNOWLEDGES THE BENEFIT FOR THE MISSION.



Huacho (Peru) was affiliated to the Faculty of Theology.

In the two instances of external evaluation performed by the Holy See Agency for the Evaluation and Promotion of the Quality of Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (AVEPRO) (2014 and 2021), in addition to a general positive outcome, the dynamism of the Regina Apostolorum was underlined in its varied cultural action and strategic importance of the relationships it maintains with the remaining universities belonging to the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ and others *Regnum Christi* (RIU).





## SECTION 2

### Mission in history

Agreements and  
Collaborations

GENERAL SECRETARY

# Educating by “networking”

THE EDUCATIONAL EFFORT IS ENHANCED  
BY COLLABORATIONS AND AGREEMENTS

The Athenaeum can boast numerous and varied collaborations during its first thirty years of activity. In Italy, training projects have been carried out in several instances with various universities and institutions, such as the Catholic University of Rome, the Sapienza University, the Pius V University (now called UNINT, University of International Studies of Rome), the University of Cassino, the Skinner Institute of Rome. Furthermore, joint projects have been stipulated with state bodies such as the Ministry of the Environment and the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers. There are many other collaborations, specific or prolonged, with research or training institutes. Mentioning the most stable ones over time, relationships exist in the field of science and faith with participation in the STOQ (Science, Theology and the Ontological Quest) project and the

cooperations with the Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro Foundation – Istituto Veritatis Splendor, the National Autonomous Union of Religious Teachers (SNADIR), the International Center of Sindonology of Turin and the Giulio Ricci Diocesan Center of Sindonology of Rome.

In the context of the training of priests, it is worth mentioning collaborations first and foremost with the Pontifical College Maria Mater Ecclesiae, then with the GRIS (Socio-Religious Research and Information Group), with the Casa della Spiritualità P. Pio Bruno Lanteri, with Kirche in Not (Aid to the Church in Need) and with the Pontifical Institute Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center.

Still at a national level, the Regina Apostolorum actively collaborates with the network of Roman Pontifical Universities. Among activities, we have to mention the Joint Diploma in *Integral ecology and the thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas Doctor Humanitatis* in which APRA is present. To these

Christ. There are many synergies in place in this network; without trying to be exhaustive, we will now mention several First of all, APRA offers academic qualifications together with other universities: the *Master in Philosophical Counseling and Existential Anthropology* with the European University of Rome and the Institute of Philosophy Applied to Ethical Consultancy, Research and Training Center (IFACE); The *Master in Global Bioethics* online with the Anáhuac University of Mexico City. It also collaborates in other academic programs such as *Magister* in Social Doctrine of the Church from the Finis Terrae University of Santiago de Chile.

Recently, the Regina Apostolorum has promoted activities for the entire RIU such as: the course *Christianity and Culture in Rome*, aimed at training RIU teachers and managers; the design of the courses of the Humanities Module (*Cursos de formación integral, Ser universitario, Persona*



are added two more Joint Diplomas of which our Athenaeum is the first promoter: *Women and Church and Leadership: Service Through Virtues*. The latter also counts on the collaboration of the Francisco de Vitoria University of Madrid and the Joseph Ratzinger – Benedict XVI Vatican Foundation. At an international level, apart from agreements with individual universities such as the Pontifical University of Salamanca and the Popular Autónoma University of the State of Puebla, the Regina Apostolorum is a member of the International Federation of Catholic Universities (FIUC), of the Federation of Catholic Universities European Union (FUCE) and has relations with the International Council of Universities of Saint Thomas Aquinas (ICUSTA).

Most importantly, it is a member of the Regnum Christi University Network (RIU), belonging to the promoting body of the Regina Apostolorum, namely the Congregation of the Legionaries of

*humana*) for the online first cycle degree of the Anáhuac Online University; the promotion of projects and courses *Gender, Sex and Education; Dialogue with Postmodernity; Intergenerational dialogue on gender theories*, with several RIU universities.

We shall mention the presence of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights in our Athenaeum for more than a decade, promoted in synergy with the European University of Rome (UER).



**SECTION 2**  
Mission in history

Events and  
Conferences

BRINGING TOGETHER THOUGHTS AND  
THINKERS ON SHARED, CONTROVERSIAL OR  
CURRENT ISSUES

F. GIOVANNI MALGAROLI, L.C.

## Meeting of philosophical and theological thought



Plenty of academic and institutional events are held annually in the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum, promoted by one or more Faculties. In addition to their academic activities, faculties and Institutes present at least one conference linked to the research carried out every year. To these are added the celebratory moments of the entire Athenaeum, in which we had the honour of hosting many important pastors of the Church, among whom we remember with special gratitude: H.E. Most Card. Angelo Sodano as His Holiness's Secretary of State, who blessed the current APRA headquarters; H.E. Most Card. Joseph Ratzinger, H.E. Most Card. Gerhard Müller and H.E. Most Card. Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, SJ, who visited us when they served as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; H.E. Most Card. Pio Laghi and H.E. Most Card. Zenon Grocholewski, who visited us in their ministry as Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education. Listing all the events and illustrious guests of APRA's thirty years of existence is not the purpose of this magazine. Even sticking to the number of the most important conferences would mean presenting a rather broad list. Here we will mention only some of the most important international conferences held at the Athenaeum.

- 1997 - *International Congress on the fifth anniversary of the promulgation of the encyclical Centesimus Annus*, organized by the Athenaeum and The Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty.
- 2001 - International Congress *The stem cell dilemma*, organized by the Athenaeum's Faculty of Bioethics.
- 2001 - International conference *Woman and cultures*.
- 2003 - Conference *The Christian roots of Europe*, organized by the Athenaeum and the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, with the patronage of the Presidency of the Italian Republic and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.
- 2007 - International Congress *Octogenesis and Human Life*, organized by the Faculty of Philosophy and STOQ Project.
- 2007 - International Congress *The Shroud, between science and faith*, organized by the Faculty of Philosophy and the Instituto Veritatis Splendor of Bologna.
- 2009 - Interdisciplinary conference *Renewing philosophy in the light of faith. Ten years of the encyclical Fides et Ratio*, organized by the Faculties of Philosophy and Theology.
- 2011 - *International Conference on the Theology of the Body*, organized by the Faculties of Theology, Philosophy and Bioethics.
- 2014 - *The Filioque Conference. A thousand years after its inclusion in the Creed in Rome*, organized by the Faculty of Theology.
- 2015 - Conference *The Kingdom of Christ*, organized by the Faculty of Theology.
- 2016 - International Conference *He saw and believed*, organized by the Science and Faith Institute.
- 2018 - International Conference *Natural Law in Medieval Philosophy: Traditions, Convergences and Divergences*, organized by the Marco Arosio Chair of Higher Medieval Studies.
- 2019 - International Conference *The onto-theological difference*, organized by the Faculty of Philosophy.
- 2019 - International Conference *Evangelizing Culture. A renewed commitment to the light of the Constitution Veritatis Gaudium*, on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of APRA.
- 2021 - Conference *Dante Alighieri on the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death*, organized by the Marco Arosio Chair of Higher Medieval Studies.
- 2022 - International Conference *Divine omnipotence in medieval thought*, organized by the Marco Arosio Chair of Higher Medieval Studies.



## SECTION 2

### Mission in history

#### Testimonials

A PRECIOUS COLLABORATION MADE OF FAITH, SCIENCE, PASSION, PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND A GREAT DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO FORM HEARTS AND MINDS BY ADAPTING TO CHANGING SOCIAL MEDIA AND LANGUAGE.

PROFESSOR EMANUELA MARINELLI

## In the University for the Shroud

It was 2010, the year of the Exposition of the Shroud, when I met Fr. Rafael Pascual, L.C. during a conference on Shroud themes at the Italian Geographical Society. Father Rafael invited me to the Athenaeum and proposed that I hold lessons on the iconography of Christ and the Shroud as part of the Specialization Diploma in Shroud Studies. At that time, another expert on the Shroud was also in full swing, the unforgettable Father Héctor Guerra, L.C. After that first experience, which dates back to AA 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, when Maria Chiara Petrosillo was a precious presence



in the Diploma secretariat, I collaborated on various initiatives relating to the Shroud in the Athenaeum: conferences, book presentations. The most moving event was undoubtedly the reception of the sculpture by the blind artist Andrea Bianco *Ecce Homo according to the Shroud*, on 11 December 2021, on the occasion of the XV Anniversary of the inauguration of the Permanent Exhibition *Who is the Man of the Shroud?*

And here we are now with our current events. I can define the current academic year as truly "overwhelming". Father Marcelo Bravo, L.C. entrusted me with a course on the Shroud at the Athenaeum's ISSR, which saw the enrollment of over 200 people. Honestly, without the constant help of Father Rafael Pascual, Father Marcelo Bravo and Miriam Conoci, I would not have made it to the end of the semester. Immediately afterwards I was entrusted with

another task: to be the virtual guide for the creation of a video presentation of the Shroud Exhibition. Even in this case, I would not have been able to do anything without the professionalism of Diego Zanforlin. Thanks to him, the result was excellent and the success of the video is evident: 65,500 views in the first two weeks.

A new initiative that involves me is already in the works. I am now at home in the Athenaeum, or rather, I feel at home. Daniela, Laura, Maria Selva, Carlo, Mauro, are familiar names. The Rector and the Vice-Rector are not institutional figures who inspire fear but friendly coordinators of activities with whom you can even joke. This is why I always enter the Athenaeum with pleasure, because you can breathe the air of Christian joy, of constructive collaboration, of authentic faith. Thus, my experience is super positive!



**SECTION 2**  
Mission in history

Testimonials

STAYING IN APRA IS AN EXPERIENCE WHICH LEAVES ITS MARK AND TRULY OPENS YOUR MIND TOWARDS ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES WITH A REMARKABLE APOSTOLIC PROJECTION. WE ASKED PROF. GUIDO TRAVERSA TO GIVE US A TESTIMONY.

PROF. GUIDO TRAVERSA

## Educating is Apostleship of Thought

**Prof. Guido, you have been teaching History of Philosophy since the beginning. This discipline is often accused of being useless. Is that so? Does learning to think have any purpose beyond scholarship?**

Teaching philosophy at the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum was important for me in order to prove to myself, students and colleagues that philosophy is a form of practical thinking.

It indeed means to talk about the history of philosophy, although while doing philosophy, and therefore acting in reality, whether small or large, with actions that derive from it. Therefore, this a true philosophical practice, a term which is seen as more fashionable today, and due to this Athenaeum being Pontifical, we had baptized that philosophical practice so many years ago as the Apostolate of Thought.



COMMITMENT, PREPARATION, APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE FOR THE TRAINING RECEIVED. ACADEMIC CONTENT AND LIVING EXPERIENCE MATCHING THE REQUIRED APOSTOLIC NEEDS.

F. AARON SMITH, L.C.

## We continue bringing Christ into Culture and Society

During the nine years of study at the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum, I was able to appreciate its academic depth, both philosophical and theological. We could see the commitment of both the professors and the students, my classmates whom I appreciate very much. Almost 13 years have passed since my priestly ordination and I have become increasingly aware

prepared I was. I am therefore very grateful for the opportunity to express my appreciation to the academic community, for its great commitment, for its daily sacrifice and for its example over the years which has borne so much fruit for the good of the Church.

I also encourage current students to work hard so that during their years of study Christ may reign



of the fruits of my studies. I was able to see this as soon as I could offer with simplicity and depth not only academic content, but also a living experience of Christ himself to many people. In the United States, Italy and London, where I have worked for the past few years, I realized how well

more and more in their hearts, as they pass with simplicity and depth that living and experiential Christ that people so desire.



**SECTION 2**  
Mission in history

Our fruits

THE RESULTS WE ACHIEVED TO DATE  
DEMONSTRATE OUR COMMITMENT TO  
EDUCATING EVANGELIZERS IN THE WORLD.

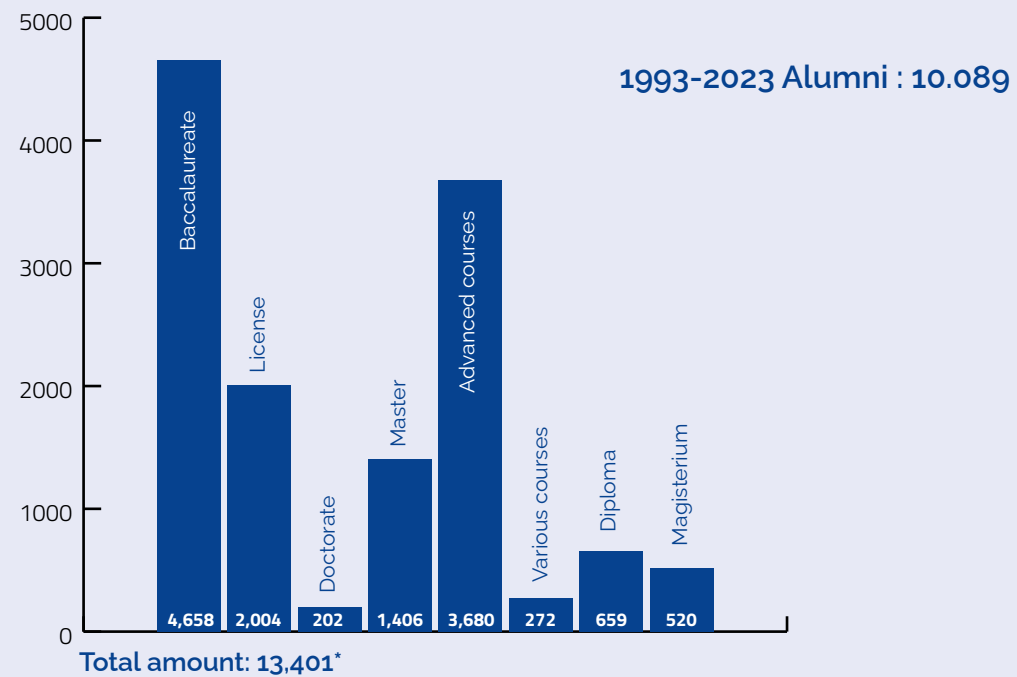
ACADEMIC SECRETARIAT

## Bearing fruit in every corner of the world

The numbers of the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum in the Academic Year 2022-2023 speak of a teaching body made up of 122 professors from 12 countries, and a total of 1267 students distributed in the various educational cycles, also coming from dozens of different countries. This data was published in THE 2023 APRA Magazine. On the occasion of our 30th anniversary, we were asked to retrieve from our registers the total count of *Alumni* we had over the last 30 years; 30 years

of people who enrolled have "experienced" APRA both academically and communally, and who have returned to their countries, communities, schools and homes, full of what they learned here. The overall data have left us amazed and in awe. We know that some of our *alumni* are seminary trainers, priests, bishops, teachers, committed lay people. All this reminds us that our commitment is not an end in itself, but is aimed at an evangelizing mission that surpasses us and reaches the whole world.

Qualifications awarded between 1993 and 2023, distributed



\* the discrepancy in overall totals (Alumni-Qualifications awarded) is due to the fact that some students have obtained multiple degrees of the same degree or higher.





## SECTION 3

A view to the future

Celebrations

DEPARTMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

# A year of Celebrations and Gratitude

It almost feels like yesterday when the APRA Community was informed of the imminence of the 30th Anniversary of its foundation, and of the desire to make the 2023-2024 Academic Year special with dedicated activities. These 30 years not only represented the age of the Athenaeum, but also the long service that some teachers, priests and lay people have provided in our educational institution. And this is so typical of our "style": the interweaving of professional functions with the social dynamics of the people who make up the APRA Community, and which is part of the mission and challenge of evangelizing culture. Indeed, we are the first to be evangelized, always in need of rediscovering our identity as believers at the service of the Church through APRA. All of us, from authorities to teachers, and all the way to employees and students, need to remember this simple truth: we must live the Gospel if we want to pass it on to others, in our profession and in our personal relationships.

So, how should we celebrate a 30th Anniversary in "APRA Style"? We do so by combining Identity, Mission, and Community.

In this spirit, the Volunteer Days of December 2023 were held, from the food collection to the Christmas lunch for the needy. These activities were not new, although they were animated by the awareness of creating a family at the service of others.

In order to celebrate teachers who reached their thirty years of service, a day was organized that combined heartfelt thanks, praise for academic professionalism, sorrow for those who were leaving us, and human sharing.

2024 opened with a Philosophical Café that took wine as a metaphor for the beauty and flavor of life; of the ability to know with wisdom and to flavor our own and others' existence: the ability to spread the fragrance of beautiful and good thinking and living.

APRA'S 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION BEGAN ON OCTOBER 31<sup>ST</sup> 2023, WITH THE INAUGURATION OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR AND EMBRACES 2024. ALL ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN DESIGNED IN 'APRA STYLE', COMBINING IDENTITY AND MISSION.

Upon our return from the Easter holidays, other activities await us which involve the "extended" APRA community: these are collaborators and benefactors who help us to sustain our educational offer over time and make it effective. An art exhibition was organized for showcasing the talents of many and seek a universal means of communication for conveying our values. Another monographic exhibition will accompany the "Amici APRA" Institutional Dinner, and the "We are APRA" event will conclude the social celebration of this thirty-year anniversary. Finally, the community il *Sale della Terra* will take us to Subiaco, on a pilgrimage in the footsteps



of first monastic evangelization that reached all of Europe. We too, like Saint Benedict, continue that work of spreading the Gospel in society with an academic declination, to transform culture through universal values that faith exalts without replacing.

It is with gratitude and trust that we treasure these 30 years of life and look towards the future.

THE REDISCOVERY OF THE SYMBOLIC CONTENT OF OUR LOGO AND THE PERENNIAL VALUES WHICH IDENTIFY APRA.

MARIA SELVA SILVESTRI

## Pentecost; an inspirational source for our University

Our institution has its roots in Pentecost, because it is part of the «river of new life that comes from the origins, from Christ to us, and involves us in the history of God with humanity»<sup>1</sup>. More specifically, it is placed in the rich tradition of academic institutions born ex corde Ecclesiae to evangelize culture.

A task that remains more relevant than ever, because, as Pope Francis has indicated to us, universities play a fundamental role in evangelization. Facilitating the meeting between faith, reason and science contributes to the development of a new discourse of credibility and an original apologetics that allows the message of the Gospel to be accessible to today's world. Even in adverse situations, these educational institutions can employ their creativity to find effective ways of transmitting Christian faith and values in an ever-changing academic and cultural context<sup>2</sup>.

Pentecost is the inspirational source of our Institution and therefore a "living representation" also of our Logotype. *Mary Regina Apostolorum*,

with its apostles is a light that protects and guides our Athenaeum yesterday, today and tomorrow. Pentecost marks an important moment in the life of the Church, an event in which the Apostles, gathered in prayer with Mary, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is an essential event for understanding the nature and mission of the Church and, by extension, the mission of the Athenaeum in today's world.

At Pentecost we find ourselves faced with a mystery which, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, «it constitutes the baptism of the Church, it is an event that gave it, so to speak, the initial form and the impetus for its mission»<sup>3</sup>. The apostles, called and trained by Christ to continue his mission in the world, upon receiving the Holy Spirit are sanctified, enlightened, strengthened and sent to evangelize. This is demonstrated by Peter's first preaching on the day of Pentecost, full of divine wisdom, clairvoyance and parrhesia.

In this context, the mission of the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum finds its reason to be. «It is





## SECTION 3

## A view to the future

## Strategic planning

ACADEMIC QUALITY, COMMUNITY AND UNIVERSITY SPIRIT, MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT. THE FOUR KEY GUIDELINES OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN UNTIL 2029

## ACADEMIC AUTHORITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

## Looking to the future: 2024-2029 Strategic Plan

essential to continue to fully train people, clerics and lay people, who assume the new leadership that society needs<sup>4</sup>. We must train people with an attitude of service and with the necessary skills to ensure that the values of the Gospel express their richness and become a point of reference for the development of all individuals and for society. The same can be said of the creation and promotion of currents of thought which, inspired by the perennial truth of the Gospel, respond to the new theoretical and existential questions of contemporary man.

The reference to Pentecost reminds us that this mission cannot be carried out simply with human resources alone. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost gave the apostles the courage and wisdom to carry out their mission. At the in the

same way, those who currently collaborate in the evangelization of culture must be aware of depending on the action of the Holy Spirit because it is He who touches the minds of the recipients of Christ's message.

The fact that the apostles were gathered in prayer with Mary helps us to be aware that philosophical and theological reflection must not be a purely intellectual exercise, but a search for truth together with the community of believers and all the men and women who follow this path<sup>5</sup>.

Men, women and our entire Academic Community who, on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary, urge Pentecost by organizing a Collective Art Exhibition. An artistic journey inspired by the values linked to each graphic element depicted in the Pentecost of the Athenaeum Logo.

## NOTES/CIT.

1. BENEDICT XVI, General Audience (3 May 2006).
2. Cf. POPE FRANCIS, *Evangelii gaudium*, nn. 132-134.
3. BENEDICT XVI, Homily (27 May 2012).
4. Speech by the Rector on the occasion of the inauguration of the 30th Academic Year, 2023-2024.
5. Cf. POPE FRANCIS (23 October 2017).



**Catholicism:** the Church manifests itself, opens up. She is sent to «announce and establish the kingdom among all people of Christ and of God, and constitutes the seed and beginning of this kingdom on earth» (*Lumen Gentium*, 5).



**Multiculturality:** the apostles represent the different people who, starting from their own identity and "microcosm", can meet, dialogue and walk together.



**Truth and Charity:** the Virgin Mary personifies the parrhesia of truth and charity in the Catholic Church, characterized by boldness, determination and love.



**Communion:** unity in diversity. The Holy Spirit «distributes the variety of his gifts with magnificence proportionate to his richness and the needs of the ministries» (*Lumen Gentium*, 7) to carry out their vocation and mission in the world.

This year the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum concludes the strategic work period outlined for 2019-2024. There have been five years of commitment to achieving greater institutionalization in the various processes, offering a rich and updated educational offering, involving students more and carrying out various initiatives to create a lively community. The strategic plan for the next five years will still be divided into four fundamental guidelines: Academic Quality, Community and University Spirit, Institutional Management and Institutional Development. Academic Quality focuses on strengthening research through coordinated and transversal lines and interdisciplinary working groups. The aim is to offer a distinctive, attractive and characterizing training offer with innovative programs capable of training apostles and evangelizers of current culture with

qualified professionals according to a well-defined final profile and APRA's pedagogical vision. The teaching staff will be strengthened through initiatives aimed at developing professional skills, involving new talent and stimulating the contributions of our professors to APRA's mission. Community and Campus Spirit will seek to actively engage students in meaningful extracurricular experiences, creating a more vibrant, inclusive and community-oriented campus environment. The accompaniment and tutoring will offer strategies for integral formation that can stimulate the development of initiatives with a cultural, social and apostolic impact.

Institutional Management seeks to increase the sense of proactive co-responsibility, collaboration and participation in the common mission, exercising servant leadership and allowing fluid and efficient internal communication. This implies the training of competent and motivated staff, identified with the mission, equipped with adequate management and transversal skills as to ensure efficient management



and institutional growth. Technology is strategically integrated into teaching and management, impacting the experience of all members. Institutional Development aims for sustainable and meaningful growth by increasing APRA's visibility and actively involving all *alumni*. The diversification of funding sources and the building of solid institutional relationships are part of this path. The strategic plan is presented as a guide towards the fulfillment of our mission in the Church, as established in our Statutes: to train apostles and Christian leaders, both clerics and lay people, to serve the Church to bear witness to the mystery of Christ. We offer professors, spiritual directors, seminar trainers, priests, religious and lay people qualified to dedicate themselves to teaching and training.





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