

EXPERIENCE, FAITH AND PROFESSIONALISM FOR NEW EVANGELIZERS

#

APRA

2025

Magazine

ATENEO PONTIFICIO REGINA APOSTOLORUM



APRA

VERITATEM FACIENTES IN CARITATE



#APRA The Magazine
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Read here The Magazine in different languages

1 APRAFOCUS

Editorial *Innovate to serve, educate to transform*
Fr. José Enrique Oyarzún, L.C. 7

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

APRA numbers 2024-2025 8
Identity, Innovation, Mission: APRA towards 2029
Tiziana Santoro 9
The University's Educational Model 9
A theology as a bridge between faith and culture for the evangelization of today's world
Fr. José Fernández San Román, L.C. 10
A philosophy that thinks about the present
Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C. 12
Training to protect life
Fr. David Koonce, L.C. 14
25 Years of Service to Gospel Truth
Fr. Marcelo Bravo, L.C. 15
Formation itineraries for Pastoral Ministry
Fr. Edward McNamara, L.C. 16
Women: The ISSD's commitment between Research and Cultural Innovation
Anita Cadavid 17
UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights. Activities 24-25
Serenā Montefusco 18
APRA for the Jubilee 2025: faith, culture and witness at the heart of the Church
Mauro Bombardieri 19

INNOVATIVE AND DIGITAL TRAINING

APRA Distance Learning: a missionary project between digital innovation, evangelization and access to knowledge
Laura Dalfollo 20
#ebookAPRA
Academic innovation at the service of the ecclesial mission
Maria Selva Silvestri 22
APRA embraces the future with new social channels
Arianna Ricci 23

RESEARCH

Dialogue in a Postmodern Culture: A Line of Research Between Identity, Discernment and Academic Mission 24
Hildebrand Chair for Christian Personalism 25

EVENTS

Marco Arosio Chair
Final conference of the Thomistic three-year course 26
A day of study on the thought of Joseph Ratzinger at APRA
Laura Dalfollo 26
Philosophical Café
A comparison between AI and human sensitivity 27
#WebinarAPRA
The Heart of Jesus and the Saints: a spiritual itinerary to live devotion and holiness today
Angela Tagliafico 27

#WebinarAPRA
Brain health and longevity: an excellent course to understand one of the great challenges of our time
Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C. 28
Doctoral dissertations A.Y. 2024-2025 29

2 APRACOMMUNITY

THE "VOICE" OF OUR COMMUNITY

Banns

Publications 32
In the Library and Bookshop 32

Articles and Testimonials

Jubilee pilgrimage
Fr. Giovanni Malgaroli, L.C. 33
The transition from Pope Francis to Pope Leo
Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C. 34
Five cross-cutting orientations of Pope Francis for Catholic universities
Fr. José Enrique Oyarzún, L.C. 35
An exhibition on the Shroud, mirror of the Gospel in Rome
Maria Milvia Morciano 36
Consulenza filosofica al tempo dell'incertezza: risposte esistenziali a domande profonde
Caludio Bonito 37
Testimony from St. Peter's Square, election of Leo XIV
Fr. Patricio Bringas, L.C. and Fr. Edgar Henriquez, L.C. 38
The voice of the students 39

NETWORK #FACCIAMORETE

Catholic identity and international university collaboration
Fr. José Enrique Oyarzún, L.C. 40
Launch of the Medicine and Society Program A Journey Through Bioethics, Culture and Care in Rome 41
The Joint Diploma in Integral Ecology and the Shared Mission
Massimo Losito 41

NEWS

Nominees and Thank You Notes 42

APRA Solidarity

The Third APRA Mission Beyond the classroom, into society
Roberto Serafini 43
Testimonials
Supporting the future: scholarships as a lever for change
Roberto Serafini 43

ALUMNI

United in Mission: the journey of the APRA Alumni Community
Roberto Serafini 45
Testimonials 45
Msgr. Wilder Alberto Vasquez Saldaña appointed Bishop Prelate 46





Innovate to serve, educate to transform

by Fr. José Enrique Oyarzún, L.C. - Rector

Dear readers, teachers, students, friends and benefactors,

The inauguration of this new academic year acquires a special significance in the heart of the Jubilee Year. It is a time of grace that invites us to look to the future with new eyes, ready to welcome the challenges and opportunities that await us.

Precisely in this spirit, this issue of the *Magazine* aims to offer an attentive and grateful review at the path we are traveling together, highlighting initiatives, reflections and perspectives that shape APRA's mission in today's world.

The constant and renewed commitment of our Athenaeum testifies to a living, dynamic and growing academic reality, capable of combining tradition and innovation, fidelity to its identity and openness to the changes of the contemporary world, always at the service of the Church and society.

Innovating to Serve

The digital innovation that characterizes this year is not an end in itself: the launch of distance learning, new online programs and MOOC courses contribute to making quality education more accessible, without borders and rooted in Christian values.

Pope Leo's recent reminder, who underlined the urgency of wise discernment in the face of artificial intelligence, also fits strongly into this perspective: «Every technology, even the most advanced, must remain at the service of the human and not replace the heart and conscience». And he then added: «We need an integral anthropological vision that puts the human person – in his dignity and in his relationships – at the center of every technological choice» (quoted from Pope Leo XIV's inaugural address to the College of Cardinals, delivered on May 10, 2025).

This is an invitation we deeply embrace, as we develop digital tools designed to enhance training, without ever compromising its relational and ethical depth.

The entire **Academic Community** contributes to building a living and harmonious educational mosaic, capable of responding with depth and vision to the challenges of the present.

Each **Faculty and Institute** – from Theology to Philosophy, from Bioethics to ISSR (Higher Institute of Religious Studies) – offers its own specific contribution within a unitary and coherent educational project.

This contribution is expressed not only through ordinary academic life, but also through special initiatives, such as those promoted on the occasion of the Jubilee Year – sponsored by the competent Dicastery – which have strengthened our evangelizing mission at the service of the universal Church.

Research and Community

Research on postmodern culture and the **Hildebrand Chair** demonstrate our willingness to face the great questions of our time with courage and depth. The academic events of the year – the annual Conference of the Arosio Chair, the XII Latin American Conference of Science and Religion on the languages of creation, the Philosophical Cafés on artificial



intelligence, the exhibition on the Shroud, studies on Ratzinger – testify to the cultural and spiritual vitality of our community.

APRA identifies itself and strives to grow ever more as a true educating community. Events such as pilgrimages, solidarity initiatives and international collaborations testify that our University is a reality united by a passion for knowledge, a commitment to the common good and an open and responsible vision of education and culture at a global level.

Towards the Future

The Jubilee Year reminds us that every time is *kairòs*, a favourable time to grow in truth. Technological innovation, international expansion and numerical growth are precious means, but the goal remains unchanged: **to serve the truth through education, to prepare the new generations to face the challenges of the future with competence, responsibility and hope.**

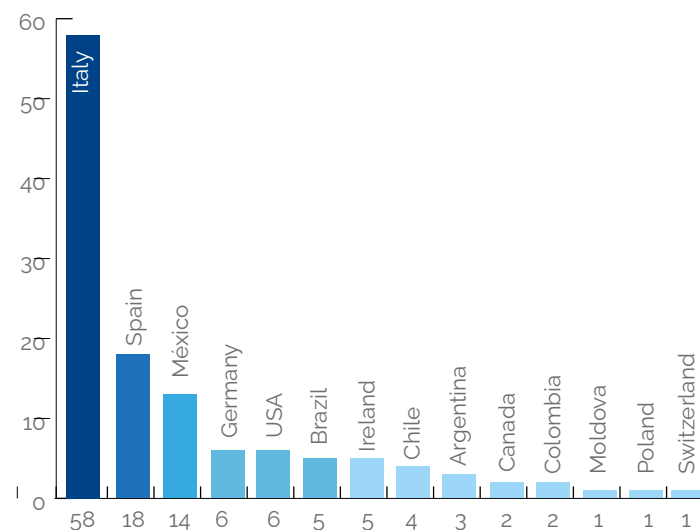
Happy reading everyone!

APRA numbers

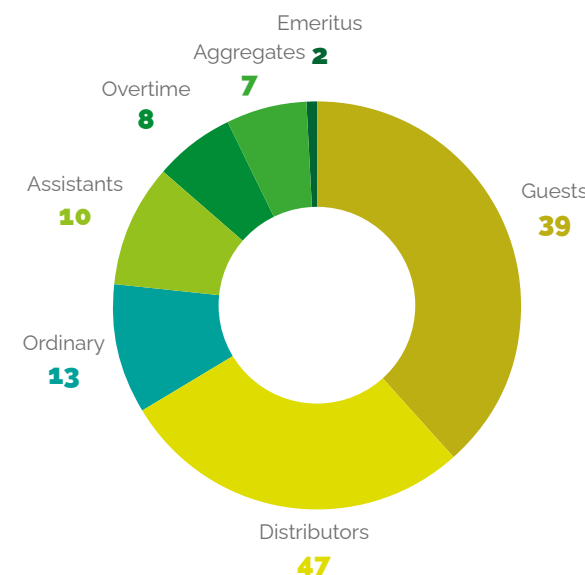
A.A. 2024-2025

126 lecturers from 14 countries

Teachers by nationality

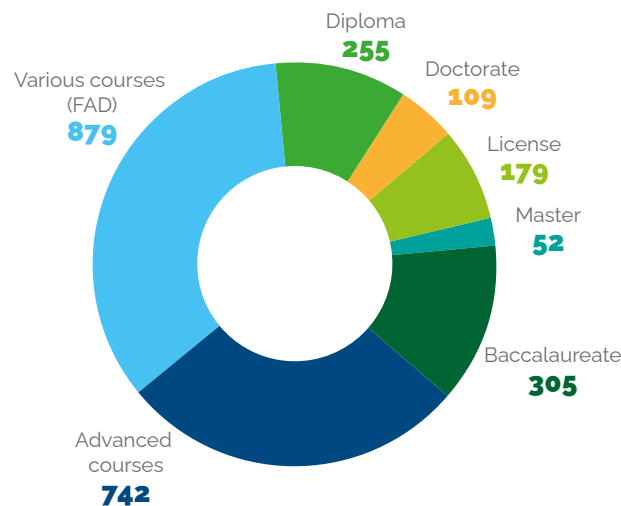


Teachers by category

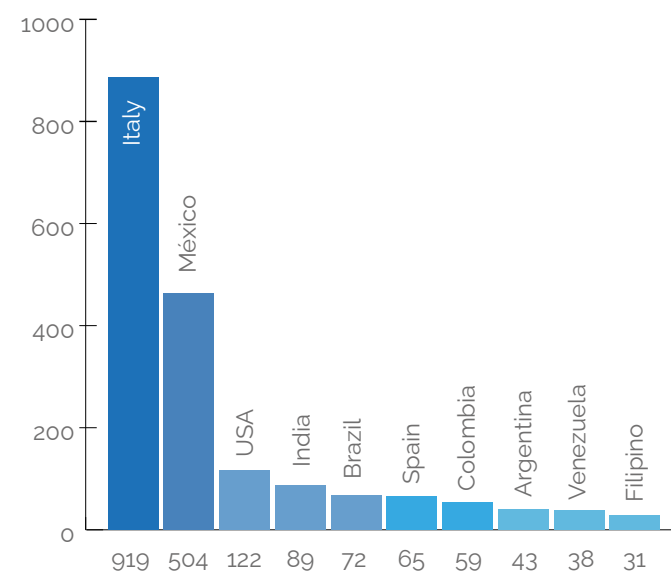


2521 students

Students by training cycle



Students by nationality (top 10)



Data 19/2025

Identity, Innovation, Mission:

APRA towards 2029

by Tiziana Santoro - Rector's Office

In a time marked by profound cultural and social changes, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum (APRA) is projecting itself towards the future with lucidity and confidence, renewing its commitment to evangelizing culture through formation, research and dialogue. The 2024-2029 strategic plan is part of a path already started and consolidated in the results achieved between 2019 and 2024. Strengthened by this experience, APRA launches a new shared and organic project, focusing on academic quality, innovation and sustainable development. The official document, published in the 2024-2025 academic year, is the result of collegial work involving the entire university community: a shared path that looks to the future rooted in the University's mission and aimed at consolidating its role as a center of academic excellence and training of people ready to serve society with competence, responsibility and an evangelical spirit. The central axis of APRA's strategy for the next five years is academic quality, pursued through the promotion of rigorous research and an educational offer capable of responding to cultural and social transformations. This is done by enhancing the interdisciplinarity, didactic innovation and professional development of the teaching staff, with a view to constant growth and international openness. This strategic line integrates with the other three fundamental dimensions: Community and University Spirit, Institutional Management and Institutional Development. Together they form the foundation of a plan that is not just a declaration of intent, but a concrete commitment to combine tradition and innovation, faith and culture, academia and society.

Particular attention is paid to the integral formation of the person, the promotion of integral development and digital transformation. These aspects manifest APRA's desire to respond proactively to the challenges of the present, making a qualified contribution through education, research, cultural and interreligious dialogue, with a view to sustainable growth inspired by its evangelizing mission.

The central role of teachers, researchers and students is an essential element of this process. Their active participation fosters a dynamic academic environment that is open to collaboration, professional growth, and the attraction of new talent. In this context, **academic quality** is not only an objective, but the **guiding principle** that guides every **strategic choice of the Athenaeum**.

The strategic plan thus integrates community, governance and development in support of academic quality. It promotes the integral growth of students, strengthening the sense of belonging and the bond with society. Effective institutional management, based on participatory leadership and digital innovation, ensures efficiency and consistency. Institutional development aims to consolidate the international visibility and economic sustainability of the Athenaeum, actively involving all members of the community. The synthesis between formation, Gospel values and innovation reflects the mission of APRA, called to illuminate the educational and cultural challenges of our time with wisdom and discernment, projecting itself with confidence towards 2029.

The University's Educational Model

Tradition and innovation at the service of education

In response to Pope Francis' invitation, in the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium*, to profoundly renew ecclesiastical studies, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum has embarked on a **journey of reflection and updating on its own educational model**. A path that has led to the definition of a guiding document designed to nourish, with renewed impetus, the formation of evangelizers for the world of today and tomorrow. The result of deep and collaborative work, the **educational model integrates ecclesiastical normative references and the experience gained over time**, enriched by comparison with initiatives of other institutions of the University Network of the Legion of Christ and Regnum Christi (RIU).

The Document is divided into four fundamental sections:

- **Identity and institutional mission**, which define our uniqueness and our formative commitment to the Church and society;

- **Pedagogical model**, based on an idea of service leadership, academic quality, collaborative learning and evangelizing dialogue, with constant accompaniment of students;
- **Teaching model**, which translates pedagogical principles into concrete strategies for university teaching and for coherent and meaningful evaluation;
- **Curricular design**, which organizes and structures the study plans in line with the general educational objectives of the University.

With this model, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum renews its commitment to an integral formation, which combines **academic excellence and Christian values**, preparing professionals capable of transforming the world in the light of the Gospel. We invite everyone to get to know and share this vision, the result of a living tradition that looks to the future with confidence.

A theology as a bridge between faith and culture for the evangelization of today's world

by Fr. José Fernández San Román, L.C. - Dean of the Faculty of Theology



Pope Leo XIV recalled Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum novarum* as one of the reasons for the choice of his name. We are facing a change of era, as Pope Francis already indicated. It is evident that the complex problems of today's world require updating and even rethinking on many issues. And this concerns us deeply. Let's think of the great **anthropological challenge** posed by Artificial Intelligence. Once again we must seek light in Sacred Scripture and in the perennial thought of the Church in order to answer many questions. But there's more. We are called to a great **"missionary journey"**, as Pope

Francis said, and creating a bridge between faith and current culture is precisely one of the tasks of theology. For this reason, the theological formation of new evangelizers is so important. Be "always ready to make an answer to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you" (1 Pt 3:15).

The Faculty of Theology today

At present, our Faculty of Theology has about 260 students in the three academic cycles (baccalaureate, licentiate and doctorate). We also have **four affiliated theological**



institutes in Brazil, Italy, and Peru. Participation in non-grade courses is several hundred, about 600 students. We organized a day of in-depth study on the thought of Ratzinger and the Second Vatican Council with a large number of participants.

Lines of study

As lines of study in our licentiate program in dogmatic theology, in addition to studying the great doctors such as St. Thomas, we attach particular importance to the theological thought of J. Ratzinger as an example of dialogue between faith and current culture. In spiritual theology, in addition to studying the great masters of the spiritual life, we place particular emphasis on the skills to be spiritual directors, formators and directors of spiritual exercises.

Courses and initiatives

The first edition of an intensive course on the Spirituality of *Regnum Christi* was held. At a distance there were about 60 participants, in addition to those in attendance. We had the presence of over 20 speakers, true experts in the topics covered. As an example, we gathered five lecturers one afternoon to reflect on the charism. For a moment, when I listened to them, I thought that among all of them they had written more than ten books on the subject, both from the point of view of general theology and the specific charism of the Legion and *Regnum Christi*. The objective and contribution of this course is a theological study, even systematic, on the Spirituality of *Regnum Christi*. The reception of this course has been very positive and we are already organizing the second edition.

The course mentioned on the Spirituality of *Regnum Christi* was organized in the afternoon to allow our friends from the American continent to enrol as well. The same goes for another course on the Theology of Charisms and the Holy Spirit, coordinated by Salvatore Martinez, former Italian president of the Renewal in the Holy Spirit. We had about 400 remote participants and the course was simultaneously translated into Spanish. We are preparing a new edition, with translation into Portuguese as well.

Distance learning and future projects

Thinking also of the vast Spanish-speaking world, we launched the Licentiate in Dogmatic Theology and also the Licentiate in Spiritual Theology with the first year completely remote and in Spanish. This is a great opportunity for those who wish to study theology but cannot move to Rome for a long time. The second year of the Licentiate is offered in person in Rome, in Italian.

We also have other **plans for the future**: to launch a "Theology for University Students" and a Theology of the Body and Sacrament of Marriage, also at a distance and in Spanish. We will organize the presentation of a book by Cardinal Eijk on the marriage bond and sexual ethics. We are also giving continuity to the webinar on *Dilexit nos* in the light of the Theology of the Saints, which had more than 500 participants online, by organizing a future theological day on this spirituality called to give life to the world.

Conclusion

Theology nourishes the reason of the human being, always *homo viator* and seeker of truth, and for this reason it can also nourish the spiritual life. A theology like the one we are looking for, not merely on the desk, but which is carried out in an environment of prayer, undoubtedly changes and affects life. Von Balthasar urged the realization of a theology on one's knees or *Kniende Theologie*. And from a theology that brings us closer to the living God comes the communication of that fire of God's love in the apostolate and in the life of charity. "*Contemplata aliis tradere*," said St. Thomas. We need to be the first to become true disciples of Christ and his Gospel. Only in this way will we be able to "help others to see with new eyes", as the great Romano Guardini said.



Visit the Theology Faculty page

A philosophy that thinks about the present

by Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C. - Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy

In the green heart of Rome, among the pines and olive trees of the Via degli Aldobrandeschi *campus*, pulsates a **living, international, young and future-oriented intellectual laboratory**. It is the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum (APRA), where philosophical reflection is not a mere academic exercise for its own sake, but a cultural vocation at the service of man and the challenges of our time, a spiritual exercise that transforms the individual and a true and proper self-care, to use Pierre Hadot's words. For over thirty years, our Faculty has been offering a systematic and rigorous study of *philosophia perennis* in its dialogue with contemporary sciences, technologies and cultures. But today, more than ever, it is proposed as a *dynamic center of formation and research* capable of speaking to the intelligence and heart of students on every continent, of every vocation and of every age.

An Integral, Open, and Evolving Education

In an era characterized by increasing specialization and fragmentation of knowledge, philosophy must rediscover its **original function** as a discipline capable of offering existential orientation and support in the construction of a coherent and meaningful vision of the world. At the base of our performative proposal there is a clear intuition: to train lucid thinkers, capable of discerning, dialoguing and transforming the world, combining the depth of tradition with the courage of innovation.

The Faculty is structured on **three canonical cycles**: Baccalaureate in Philosophy, which introduces the organic study of reality, the person and knowledge; Licentiate, with increasingly targeted specializations (metaphysics and philosophy of man); PhD, advanced laboratory of creative thinking, often intertwined with international projects.

Alongside these classic courses, in recent years we have developed a **parallel training offer**, which includes: Thematic specialization courses; Bachelor's Degree (in particular in Philosophical Counseling and Existential Anthropology, carried out in collaboration with the European University of Rome); Cycles of conferences, *Summer Schools* and Third Mission activities.

Each course is designed to respond competently and deeply to contemporary challenges: neuroscience, artificial intelligence, *gender theory*, crisis of meaning, technical culture, ethical leadership.

A young, lively, international Faculty

A distinctive feature of our recent journey is the renewal of the teaching staff. Our team of professors is increasingly young, dynamic, international. It is not just a matter of personal data, but of a mentality: open to discussion, attentive to listening, capable of accompanying the new generations in the search for meaning.

Professors and researchers come from Europe, the United States, Latin America, but also Asia and Africa. Many are also involved in international networks, in leading ecclesial and cultural bodies, such as the Pontifical Academy for Life. Alongside them, a generation of doctoral students and young scholars is growing, motivated, prepared,

enterprising, often involved in transdisciplinary research projects, international publications, experimental laboratories.

Neuroethics, algorithmics, philosophical consultancy: thinking about the human today

In our era marked by polycrises, rapid technological and social transformations, philosophy emerges as a space for reflection capable of offering critical tools to understand and face the challenges of existence. We live in a context in which digital acceleration, hyper-connection and the fluidity of human relationships pose **unprecedented questions** about the meaning of identity, freedom and responsibility. In such a scenario, philosophy can be a beacon, a **compass capable of orienting the person** in the sea of uncertainty.

Among the flagships of our Faculty is the Neurobioethics Research Group (GdN), active since 2009. It is a unique space, internationally recognized, where neuroscience and philosophy, but also law, economics and theology dialogue on decisive themes: conscience, free will, moral responsibility, longevity, brain implants. In 2025, a new line of research on "brain health and longevity" was launched, with a launch webinar and an interdisciplinary specialization course. The dialogue with neuroscience also extends to reflection on algorithmics, that is, on the ethics of algorithms and on the algorithms of ethics: an avant-garde field, where philosophy once again has a **voice to orient technological society**.

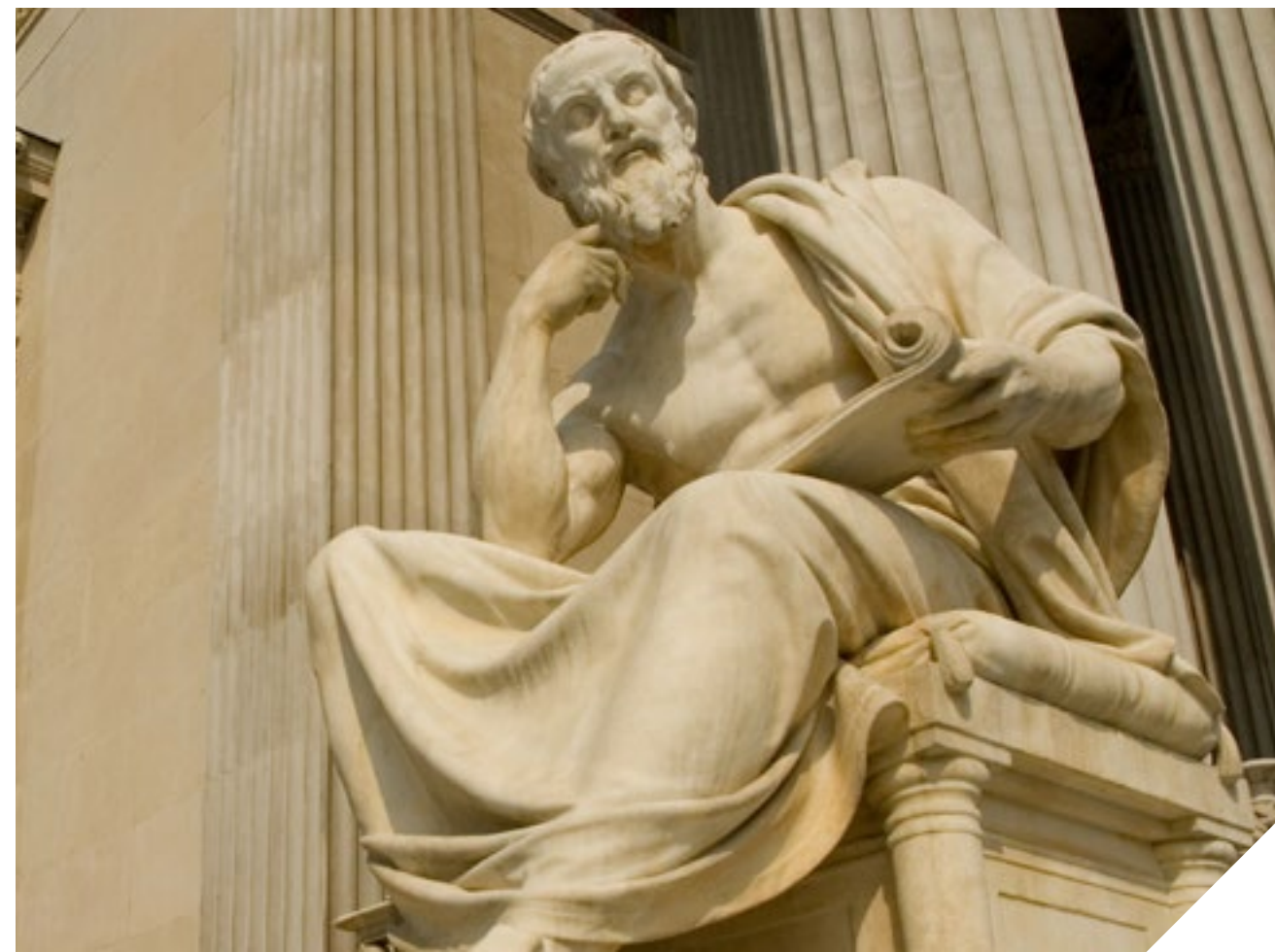
At the same time, thanks to the Master's Degree in Philosophical Counseling and Existential Anthropology, the Faculty promotes an embodied and relational philosophy. Philosophical counseling, already widespread in many countries, is proposed here in a personalist and integrated key.

Medieval Studies, Politics, Postmodern Culture

The philosophy of our Athenaeum does not live only in the future, but has **deep roots** in classical and medieval thought, interpreted in the light of contemporary challenges. It is in this spirit that the "Marco Arosio" Chair of Advanced Medieval Studies operates, dedicated to the enhancement of scholastic thought. Every year it organizes conferences, publications and training activities on authors such as Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, Bonaventure, but also lesser-known figures, in dialogue with modern science and cultural anthropology.

At the same time, the collaboration with the Acton Institute continues to develop paths in political ethics, economic philosophy and religious freedom. In a time marked by ideological conflicts and polarizations, we believe that philosophy can educate to think critically, to dialogue and to build the common good.

The Faculty is consolidating a line of research on dialogue and evangelization in a postmodern culture, addressing sensitive issues such as the deconstruction of the subject, the redefinition of sexual roles and the weakening of common narratives.



A growing identity: young, international, connected

In recent years, a **phase of renewal and revival** has begun, based on three key words: coordination, creativity, connections.

Canonical licenses have been rationalized, with clearer and more targeted paths. The dialogue with the students has been intensified, with listening tables, shared training proposals and community moments. The third cycle (doctorate) has grown in numbers, quality and internationalization. Digitization is favoring the construction of an online License in Spanish in collaboration with academic institutions including Anáhuac online and the IEST Anáhuac University of Tampico (Mexico).

In November 2025 we will host the World Congress of Metaphysics, and for 2026-2027 we are planning to launch a new Master's degree in Philosophy of Science together with the Francisco de Vitoria University of Madrid.

A welcoming community, a transforming learning experience

But in addition to the numbers and programs, what strikes those who enter our Faculty the most is the human environment. An atmosphere of welcome, mutual esteem, **authentic collaboration** between teachers, students, secretariat, bursar.

Not a few, at the end of the course, testify that they have found not only a solid academic preparation, but a community in which to grow as people, thinkers, Christians and citizens of the world.

Philosophy, in our country, is not a profession reserved for a few specialists, but a way to **understand and serve man** in his entirety: body, mind, spirit, relationships, history, faith. An embodied, living philosophy, passionate about reality.

Prospects and needs

The road is mapped out, but there is no shortage of challenges and needs. However, every obstacle is also an opportunity: for growth, for involvement, for collaboration with other ecclesial and academic realities.

A challenge for those who love to think

Our Faculty of Philosophy is not satisfied with repeating formulas, but tries to offer critical tools to **inhabit complexity**. It is a proposal aimed at young university students, seminarians, religious, lay people, professionals, enthusiasts of thought: to those who are not afraid of questions, to those who believe that the truth can be sought together, with rigor and freedom, to those who want to understand the world in order to transform it in depth.

Those who enter this path, do not leave it as before.



Visit the Philosophy Faculty page

Training to protect life

by Fr. David Koonce, L.C. - Pro-Dean of the Faculty of Bioethics

Entering the Faculty of Bioethics of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum is like crossing the threshold of a laboratory of thought and humanity, where **science meets conscience and formation becomes a vocation to the service of life.**

Founded in 2001, the Faculty was born as a response to the new ethical challenges posed by scientific and technological progress, in continuity with the mission of the Athenaeum, established in 1993, to train Christian leaders capable of **combining truth and charity.** In a time marked by rapid biotechnological transformations and increasingly complex ethical questions, it is proposed as a place of discernment, dialogue and proposal, rooted in the personalist vision and fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church.

From the beginning, the Faculty has been dedicated to promoting a culture of life that recognizes and safeguards the dignity of every human person, from conception to natural death. Over the years, it has also been able to open up to new cultural challenges, such as greater attention to the care of creation and integral ecology, longevity and the influence of artificial intelligence in medical decisions, to name just a few examples.

This commitment translates into an interdisciplinary formation that integrates life sciences, philosophy, theology, law and communication, to prepare experts capable of addressing bioethical questions with competence, depth and a spirit of service. The academic course is divided into the cycles of Licentiate and Doctorate in Bioethics.

The **Licentiate in Bioethics** is divided into a two-year course (four semesters) aimed at training specialists capable of facing contemporary bioethical challenges with scientific rigor, anthropological depth and fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church. The program includes a total of 120 ECTS credits, distributed between common courses, electives, practical activities, synthesis exams and the writing of a final dissertation.

The path can be followed **in two distinct ways.** The weekly mode includes lessons distributed regularly during the academic year. It is designed for those who reside permanently in Rome or can attend continuously. It requires a good knowledge of the Italian language. The intensive mode, on the other hand, is divided into four intensive weeks per year, two per semester, during which lessons and exams are concentrated. This formula is particularly suitable for professionals, religious, pastoral workers or international students who cannot reside permanently in Rome. Opting for the intensive mode means reconciling academic study with professional or pastoral commitments. It is an ideal choice for those who want high-level training without having to give up their daily mission. The concentration of lessons in dedicated weeks fosters thematic immersion and strong cohesion between students from different cultural and geographical backgrounds.

The **Doctorate in Bioethics** is a highly specialized course that trains researchers capable of offering original contributions to the discipline, integrating scientific rigor, interdisciplinary reflection and fidelity to the Magisterium. The program includes the preparation of a thesis under the guidance of a professor and participation in methodological seminars in Italian or English. It is aimed at those who wish to have an impact in the contemporary bioethical debate, in the academic, ecclesial or institutional spheres.



Alongside the university courses, the Faculty also offers flexible and international training programs: the **Master in Global Bioethics** (in English), the **Maestría en Bioética** (in Spanish), the **Magister in Social Doctrine of the Church**, and the **Postgraduate Course in Bioethics**, designed for professionals and pastoral workers. All these paths share a person-centered approach oriented towards social responsibility.

An important role is played by the **UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights**, which promotes intercultural and interreligious dialogue, research on topics such as neurobioethics, women's health, human ecology and the relationship between bioethics and art. Through international collaborations and dissemination activities, the Chair contributes to building bridges between personalist bioethics and global bioethics, capable of responding to the challenges of our time with an integral and inclusive outlook.

The 2025-2026 academic year marks the **twenty-fifth anniversary of the Faculty of Bioethics.** Celebrating a quarter of a century of commitment to education and research is an occasion for us to be grateful, but also for renewed momentum. We look to the future with hope, laying the foundations for the next generations today: with updated curricula, new teaching and learning methods, and the integration of emerging technologies. After twenty-five years, the adventure of Bioethics at APRA is only at the beginning.



Visit the Bioethic Faculty page

25 Years of Service to Gospel Truth

by Fr. Marcelo Bravo, L.C. - Director of the HIRS

Last year was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the Regina Apostolorum Higher Institute of Religious Sciences (HIRS). We would have liked to celebrate it as it deserved, but reasons of force majeure prevented us from doing so. Now, with a grateful heart, we take the opportunity to reread the path we have traveled, to remember what has been sown in recent years and to renew with determination our commitment to serve the Church and society through education in the faith. The anniversary remains a turning point for us: an invitation to recognize what we have received and to look with confidence to the future of our educational mission.

Since its foundation, the HIRS has placed itself at the service of those who wish to deepen the foundations of the Christian faith and learn to communicate it in a credible and passionate way in the cultural context in which they live. Hundreds of students — teachers of Catholic religion, permanent deacons, religious, consecrated persons and lay faithful — passed through the classrooms of the headquarters of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, in Via degli Aldobrandeschi 190. After completing their formation, many of them returned to their own environments, making a **significant contribution to ecclesial life and society**, carrying out the "specific tasks in ecclesial life" assigned to them and developing the "capacity to give an account of their faith in their own social spheres" (ISSR Statutes, 2.2).

In these twenty-five years the world has changed, and with it the Church has also experienced profound transformations. From the Jubilee of 2000 to the present day, we have witnessed an acceleration in cultural, social and communicative processes, which directly challenges us as an academic institution. The challenge is not only to "resist" change, but to be protagonists of a significant presence, capable of reading in depth the signs of the times and proposing responses that spring from evangelical wisdom. For this reason, our **formation programs** have **evolved**, maintaining **firm fidelity to the Gospel** and to the **Magisterium of the Church**, but also opening up to **dialogue with the human sciences**, with **contemporary philosophy** and with new **forms of communication**. We have updated our education system, **renewed teaching and assessment methodologies**, strengthened digital platforms and placed the student more and more at the center, in the concreteness of his existential situation. Forming prepared evangelizers means helping each one to integrate faith, reason and life, with a critical and constructive outlook on the world.

During this quarter of a century, the teaching staff has also experienced a natural renewal. Some teachers have accompanied us since our foundation, with a dedication that deserves gratitude and that, in some cases, now leads them towards the well-deserved title of emeritus. Others have been added over time, enriching the training offer with new skills and with a sensitivity attentive to the changes of the present. Our most sincere thanks go to all of you for your generous contribution for the good of the Church and of society.



The HIRS "Regina Apostolorum" is **affiliated to the Faculty of Theology** of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, from which it receives **academic recognition** and **constant cultural and spiritual lymph**. Inclusion in this **context** — modern, dynamic, faithful to the magisterium and attentive to the challenges of dialogue between faith, science and culture — is a **precious and stimulating resource** for us. In this framework, we offer solid and articulated study paths, such as the **Baccalaureate (bachelor's degree)** and the **Licentiate (master's degree)** in Religious Sciences, fully compliant with the apostolic constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* and the standards of **ecclesiastical higher education**. Alongside these academic degrees, we also offer a **Diploma in psychopedagogy and formation for consecrated life**, as well as **specific formation courses for religious, consecrated persons and lay people engaged in pastoral care and evangelization**, according to the charisms and concrete needs of ecclesial life.

But beyond the titles, what animates us is the conviction that **educating in the faith today is an authentic work of mercy: a service to the truth, to the intelligence, to the freedom of the person.** This is the heart of our mission. And for this reason, as we give thanks to God for the past twenty-five years, we commit ourselves to continue on the journey with renewed passion, in the confidence of participating in a work that is not only ours, but the Lord's.



Visit the ISSR page

Formation itineraries for Pastoral Ministry

Academic and Spiritual Initiatives for Priestly and Priestly Formation pastoral accompaniment.

by Fr. Edward McNamara, L.C. - former Director of the Sacerdos Institute

The Sacerdos Institute an international academic institution that promotes the ongoing formation of priests. To this end, it proposes the promotion of priestly spiritual renewal and various courses aimed at fostering aspects of pastoral charity such as the preparation of seminary formators, the accompaniment of couples, and any other activity that favors research in the pastoral, theological and philosophical fields. For some time now, the Formation Course for Seminary Formators has been famous, which every year sees the participation of numerous priests from all over the world, especially from Africa, to whom the Bishops will entrust the formation of future vocations. This magazine is also an opportunity to tell about other initiatives that are growing or consolidating.

Priests according to the Heart of Christ *Spiritual retreat for priests.*

Among the most significant proposals of the Sacerdos Institute is the spiritual retreat *Priests according to the Heart of Christ* Conceived as a strong time of prayer, listening and fraternity, this retreat was born from the desire to regenerate the priestly identity in the light of intimacy with Christ. The third edition will take place in January 2026.

Marriage, a new way of sanctification.

The couple and spiritual direction

Course for spiritual directors of married couples.

For a couple of years now, the educational offer has offered a course dedicated to the spiritual accompaniment of married couples - in collaboration with the *Mistero Grande* association. The course, entirely online, includes a theological, spiritual and practical study of the experience of faith lived in married life, with the contribution of couples who offer their testimony and reflection. After the first introductory year, it is possible to access a second module that allows one to further deepen the details of spiritual accompaniment, offering tools for authentic and fruitful conjugal discernment.

In the footsteps of St. Paul

Priestly pilgrimage to Turkey.

Looking to the future, the Sacerdos Institute proposes a new and evocative experience of spiritual renewal for priests: a formative pilgrimage in the footsteps of St. Paul in the lands evangelized by the Apostle to the Gentiles, today the territory of modern Turkey. The itinerary, in collaboration with the Opera Romana Pellegrinaggi, will wind through places full of Christian memory: Antioch, Tarsus, Cappadocia, Ephesus, the regions of Lycaonia and Pisidia, and again Nicaea, seat of the first great ecumenical council. This path, which will be held in September 2026, is configured as a precious opportunity to return to the



sources of one's vocation, in the light of the Word and in listening to the Spirit.

Let us entrust to the intercession of Saint Paul this new initiative, and the activities of the Institute, inspired by the words of Pope Leo XIV: "While we then thank the Lord for the call with which he transformed Saul's life, let us ask him to know how to respond to his invitations in the same way, making us witnesses of the love 'poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us' (Rom 5:5).» (Leo XIV, 20 May 2025)



Visit the Sacerdos page

Women: The ISSD's commitment between Research and Cultural Innovation

by Anita Cadavid - ISSD Director

The Athenaeum's Institute for Advanced Studies on Women (ISSD) is committed to promoting the contribution of women in all areas of society. This commitment has a particular focus on the dissemination of a new narrative on the feminine, which recognizes the contribution of women in the public and private sectors, especially starting from their identity and skills, without forgetting the alliance with the masculine. Transmitting these convictions requires research, new synergies and being able to translate all this into concrete initiatives.

The work that takes place daily in the Institute is oriented towards **2 macro-areas**. On the one hand, **Research** and on the other, **Dissemination and Academic Training**. This choice proves to be successful because it focuses on practical application. We have an interdisciplinary and inter-university research group together with the Universidad Francisco de Vitoria (Madrid) - one of the universities of our International Network of Regnum Christi Universities (RIU) - which focuses on issues related to the sexual body, love and culture. During this year we held online meetings and an Expert Meeting in Madrid in February. We are preparing the publication of a volume for next year, which will collect all the research carried out. The second research group is made up of entrepreneurs and industry associations, and deals with the impact of artificial intelligence in the world of work with a particular focus on women and young people. This research is supported by the Value@Work board, which has been working for ten years on issues that concern the person as the center of all organizational realities.

One of the most important projects belonging to the academic field of the ISSD is the Joint Diploma Women and Church. We are carrying out this initiative with seven other pontifical realities: the Pontifical Urbaniana University, the Pontifical Salesian University, the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, the Faculty of Educational Sciences, the Theological Institute for Consecrated Life and the Teresianum Faculty of Theology. The initiative has reached its fifth edition and we are preparing for the sixth. This training course, one hundred percent online, includes lectures with simultaneous translation from Italian to Spanish and English, in-depth material, videos recorded by our teachers, discussion forums, etc.

There is another new project that emerged from 2024 and continued into 2025: *Carrier Blossom*. A project dedicated to the many women who want to reinvent themselves for various reasons (e.g. finding a more satisfying job, starting their own business after maternity leave, etc.). The initiative consists of creating a space between these women and various recruiting companies, associations that are dedicated to image and career consulting. Throughout the day, participants engage in group sessions and many networking opportunities. The event was held in May as an opportunity to pay homage to the period dedicated to mothers.



The cultural area of the Institute has developed, in addition to the research path on AI, other initiatives that concern the changes in the world of work to adapt to the times of AI and the digital revolution. Together with the Prioritalia Foundation, we have been carrying out a Summer School since 2019 with university-age boys and girls to reflect on the role of the human in all these changes still taking place. The experience is always very rich because students come into contact with real questions such as "will robots replace humans?" "how to counter the biases that could develop in AI?" The course lasts three days in residential mode. It is only right to thank all the sponsors who make this Summer School possible.



Visit the ISSD page

UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights. Activities 24-25

by Serena Montefusco - Unesco Chair Project

Founded in 2009 on the joint initiative of the Faculty of Bioethics of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum and the European University of Rome, the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights was created as a meeting space between science, ethics and culture, with the aim of promoting a bioethical reflection anchored in the dignity of the person and respect for universal human rights. Included in the broader network of UNESCO - UNITWIN Chairs in the world, it aims to encourage an **intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue** that effectively combines the fundamental values of personalist bioethics with the challenges of global society. The mission of the Chair is twofold: on the one hand, to promote research, training and dissemination activities on the major issues of contemporary bioethics; on the other hand, to build bridges between different cultural, religious and scientific traditions, in the name of a global, inclusive and commons-good-oriented bioethics. His vision, deeply rooted in personalist anthropology, looks to the human person as the center and goal of all educational, scientific and political action.

During the academic year 2024-2025, the Chair has consolidated its international and multidisciplinary vocation through numerous research, education and cooperation initiatives.

In October 2024, in collaboration with EucA - The European Association of University Colleges and Social Warning Movimento Etico Digitale, the **IES** (Innovation, Education, Skills) project was launched, which saw the Chair engaged in the promotion of digital inclusion and educational innovation in the educational peripheries of Lazio. Through participatory workshops, teachers and students were able to rediscover education as a tool for social equity and human development.

From 17 to 19 December 2024, the international conference entitled *An Interreligious and Multicultural Perspective on The Nature of Medicine and the Role of Physicians*, part of the Bioethics Multiculturalism and Religions project, was held in Madrid, at the Universidad Francisco de Vitoria. The event brought together scholars, doctors, philosophers and religious leaders from various traditions to reflect together on the ethical and cultural dimension of the art of medicine. The heart of the dialogue focused on the figure of the doctor as a bridge between science and humanity, between technology and compassion, with a shared reference to the centrality of the therapeutic relationship. What emerged was a vision of medicine as a vocation to the integral service of the person, capable of crossing linguistic, religious and disciplinary barriers, and of offering human responses in globalized and complex contexts.

Between February and March 2025, the Chair received the **Seal of Merit** from the Italian UNESCO Chairs Network, on the occasion of World Education Day.

In May 2025, the *Medicine & Society* program, implemented in collaboration with the University of Houston, was



successfully implemented. This training course, set in the heart of Rome, allowed American students to explore the cultural, philosophical and bioethical dimensions of medicine, emphasizing the importance of an integral look at the patient and care.

These activities testify to the Chair's commitment to translating its vision into concrete actions capable of affecting the contemporary academic, social and political context. In a time marked by ideological polarization and rapid technological development, bioethics needs new languages and diverse perspectives, but also solid roots and far-sighted visions. The UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights is part of this **fruitful tension** between fidelity to principles and openness to the world, between the search for truth and intercultural dialogue.

Looking to the future, it intends to strengthen its role as a space for critical thinking and ethical formation, putting the person in his or her vulnerability and greatness at the center. The challenge is not just to understand new technologies. In this journey, the Chair will continue to be the voice of human dignity in the scientific community and in global society in the light of the Social Doctrine of the Church and the Universal Declaration of Bioethics and Human Rights (2005).



Visit the UNESCO Chair page

APRA for the Jubilee 2025: faith, culture and witness at the heart of the Church

by Mauro Bombardieri - Department of Institutional Development

The Jubilee is always an extraordinary time, which invites the Church to return to the source of her mission: to proclaim the Gospel, to renew hope, to walk together. For the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, 2025 represented a precious opportunity to live this call and enhance academic formation, cultural reflection, and ecclesial service.

Being part of the Jubilee did not simply mean "being there", but making one's identity, resources and relationships available to the Church and people.

In this spirit, APRA's Jubilee journey has developed, which has obtained the patronage of the Dicastery for Evangelization for a series of significant initiatives. Among these, the traveling exhibition *"Who is the Man of the Shroud?"*, hosted for three months in the Basilica of San Giovanni Battista dei Fiorentini, visited by over 65,000 people and enriched by a digital strategy capable of reaching tens of thousands of users. The spiritual, cultural and communicative impact was significant, also thanks to the Concert for the Shroud on Palm Sunday, an event that combined beauty, art and contemplation.

The Jubilee also taken shape in the pilgrimage and celebration of Mass at St. Peter's, lived as a community experience by APRA. The initiative was attended by academic authorities, teachers and administrative staff, in a shared gesture of faith, belonging and communion.

APRA also participated in the Jubilee of the World of Sport, involving students, teachers and religious in sporting events and solidarity initiatives. In preparation for the Jubilee of the Educational World, a special meeting dedicated to *Alumni* was promoted, with moments of dialogue and spiritual deepening to strengthen bonds and look ahead.

The Athenaeum's commitment has also extended to the digital space with participation in the Jubilee of Digital Missionaries and Catholic Influencers, held in Rome in conjunction with the Jubilee of Youth. APRA was present at the event in an atmosphere of deep communion and global involvement: a true experience of the universal Church, lived together with digital missionaries from all over the world, in all languages and cultures.

On this occasion, the four cardinal points of the digital mission, which can inspire our daily work, were also shared:

- humility as an attitude,
- communion as a duty,
- dynamism as style,
- creativity as a form of annunciation

These coordinates represent a precious compass also for those who, like APRA, are committed to bringing the Gospel into the digital world with responsibility and openness.

These initiatives were not just a sum of events, but an expression of a vision: the Catholic university can be a space of proclamation and a place of hope, inside and beyond the classrooms. The Jubilee offered the opportunity to live this identity in a visible, shared, ecclesial way.

A journey that does not end with the Jubilee year, but that strongly relaunches APRA's vocation: to form credible witnesses, capable of living in the present time with intelligence, faith and humanity.



APRA Distance Learning: a missionary project between digital innovation, evangelization and access to knowledge

by Laura Dalfollo - Distance Learning

Why choose our MOOCs?

Thanks to our courses, you will be able to delve into philosophical and theological topics and address debates in the field of bioethics, thus reconciling your education with your work and family commitments.



Universal Access

Fully online and accessible from anywhere, they remove physical barriers and offer a unique opportunity to those who cannot physically attend university classrooms.

Total Flexibility

Thanks to the LMS Canvas platform, each course is structured to be followed independently, adapting to your pace and commitments.

Academic Excellence

The contents are curated by our expert teachers, guaranteeing the academic quality which has always been the beating heart of our training proposal.

Integral Growth

The courses are not limited to transmitting knowledge, but aim to promote the integral development of the person, with particular attention to human, ethical and spiritual aspects.

The 2024-2025 academic year marked a fundamental step for the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum (APRA): the official launch of the **Distance Learning (FAD) project**, the activation of the new dedicated section on the institutional website and the launch of the **five MOOC courses** aimed at an international audience. A turning point that is not only technological, but profoundly missionary. At the heart of APRA's mission beats an urgency: to bring the light of the Gospel and the strength of Christian formation where access is most difficult, where the distance is not only geographical but also existential. This is the terrain from which the FAD project was born: a concrete and operational response to the call to evangelize the peripheries with **quality, hope and vision**.

An educational mission that becomes proximity

We live in a time of rapid and profound cultural, social and technological transformations. In this scenario, there is a growing need for **Christian leaders who are aware, rooted in faith and able to read the signs of the times**. APRA is

committed to training them through a solid, accessible and inclusive training proposal.

Distance Learning is not a fallback alternative. It is a **missionary choice**. It means breaking down physical, economic and cultural barriers to reach those who, due to personal conditions or geopolitical contexts, cannot access traditional formation courses: catechists in rural areas, seminarians in mission lands, lay people engaged in marginal communities, men and women religious in isolated contexts.

With this project, APRA builds **educational and spiritual bridges**, establishing relationships, guidance, and learning communities. The idea is not only to transmit content, but **to form consciences, nourish hope and strengthen communities** that in turn are leaven in the territories in which they operate.

The website: an open door to knowledge

At an operational level, the first major milestone was the launch of the **new web section dedicated to FAD**, carefully



designed to be a clear reference for anyone who wants to undertake a distance learning course with APRA. Each course has a dedicated page with all the essential information: syllabus, teacher biographies from which you can register in a few steps and thus access teaching materials, videos, self-assessment quizzes and tools for interaction with tutors and colleagues. The fruition is designed to be asynchronous, so as to respect the students' times and contexts.

But technology is not the end: it is the means. Behind every technical choice, there is the desire **to make quality a sign of Christian witness**. Offering online training does not mean lowering standards, but **relaunching the educational challenge on a new terrain**, which requires rigor, care, constant updating.

This academic year is distinct from the launch of the first **six MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) courses**, which are accessible to anyone, anywhere; they are courses designed with clear language, deep content and a modular structure suitable for users of different backgrounds.

The titles and themes covered reflect APRA's vocation to **unite faith, culture and mission**. Among the courses offered:

- **Introduction to the Catechism 1**
- **Introduction to Spiritual Theology**
- **Dante and the Divine Comedy**
- **Introduction to the Theology of the Body**
- **How to Read the Bible 1**
- **Introduction to spiritual accompaniment**

Each course has academic value in ects related to the workload divided into weekly modules, and concludes with a certificate of participation. Students had access to videos, written materials, tutorials, forums, and ongoing support.

The results: numbers, relationships and impact

The data collected in the first phase of the project confirm the effectiveness of the initiative. The five courses totaled **more than 200 registrations**, with users coming from **all five continents**.

But more than numbers, stories count. The final questionnaires show satisfaction with this type of training method and the request for further similar paths that APRA is committed to encouraging. It is **evangelization through formation**, which creates bonds, awakens questions, sows the future.

The platform has become a **space for dialogue and sharing**, where users of different languages, cultures and training levels meet and enrich each other. This is a tangible sign of **living catholicity**, which unites in diversity and forms a global learning community.

An educational challenge, an ecclesial response

Creating an online, free, multilingual and quality training offer requires a significant organizational and financial commitment. It means investing in **advanced technological platforms, original content production, translations, cultural adaptations**, and above all, in people who believe in the mission.

Looking ahead, APRA is already planning to expand its offering. New courses will be launched in the coming months, also in collaboration with international partners. The following are under development:

- Microlearning paths for rapid and thematic use.
- Most courses available in Spanish
- Blended initiatives that integrate distance learning with face-to-face meetings

The vision is clear: **a Church that teaches by walking, that accompanies by forming, that evangelizes by educating**. A Church that goes out, becomes close, becomes a network. Distance Learning is the tool, the Gospel is the reason, the person is the goal.

Conclusion: A Shared Call

APRA's FAD is a concrete, intelligent, ecclesial work. It is not just a matter of online teaching, but of **evangelization embodied** in the complex and globalized reality of our time. It is a work that grows in collaboration, in communion, in co-responsibility.

Distance learning means **reaching out to those who train, educating those who educate, serving those who serve**. It is a way to build a fairer, more aware, more human world. And, above all, it is an act of hope: because every person formed is a seed of transformation in the Church and in society.



Visit the FAD page

#ebookAPRA

Academic innovation at the service of the ecclesial mission

by Maria Selva Silvestri - Department of Institutional Development

At a time when the academic world is called upon to rethink its tools, languages and methods of disseminating knowledge, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum (APRA) wants to continue to stand out for its ability to combine fidelity to tradition and openness to innovation. The adoption of digital tools such as **ebooks** represents a desire to enhance and offer content of academic interest that is always current and an act consistent with the mission of the Athenaeum: to promote truth and dialogue in the light of the Gospel, reaching an increasingly vast and diversified audience.

An emblematic example of this commitment is the recent **Spanish-language ebook *Joseph Ratzinger en Ecclesia***, published on **March 11, 2025** and available free of charge on the University's official website.

This editorial project, edited directly by APRA, collects **significant contributions on the ecclesial thought of Joseph Ratzinger, Benedict XVI**, one of the greatest theologians of our time.

The work, **with a preface by Prof. Jesús Villagrasa**, is presented as a rich anthology of essays ranging from **systematic theological analyses to pastoral reflections**, passing through in-depth studies on the role of the Pope Emeritus in the contemporary ecclesial debate. The volume reflects APRA's intent to make **theology accessible beyond the classroom**, encouraging non-specialist readers to deepen their knowledge of issues of great ecclesial importance.



Request here the ebook
Joseph Ratzinger en Ecclesia



This is accompanied by another important and new ebook: ***Sono io più del mio cervello?*** by Prof. **Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C.**, also published as part of the series #ebookAPRA. It is an **in-depth study that offers** tools for philosophical and scientific reflection on issues that directly question human identity.

Prof. Carrara's ebook was born from a pedagogical intuition: **to provide extra content that stimulates personal in-depth study**, in continuity with the experience of courses, seminars and workshops. The title itself is provocative and suggestive: "Am I more than my brain?" is a question that questions contemporary consciousness, forcing us to reflect on the relationship between person, mind and neuroscience.

Both volumes – *Joseph Ratzinger en Ecclesia* and *Sono io più del mio cervello?* – follow an **editorial model oriented towards gratuitousness, accessibility and quality**, in full harmony with APRA's mission. These are publications that accompany and complement **academic training**, but at the same time offer themselves as **valuable resources for personal reading, independent reflection and daily in-depth study**.

The use of the digital format allows a **wide and widespread diffusion**, overcoming geographical, linguistic and economic limits. APRA ebooks represent an **"outgoing" theology and science**, which does not remain closed in academic circuits, but opens up to the intra-extra-university world as a service for those who **wish to continue to reflect, read and study in their daily lives**.

With the #ebookAPRA series, the Athenaeum renews its commitment to putting theological, philosophical and scientific knowledge at the service of the Church and society.



Request here the ebook
Sono io più del mio cervello?



APRA embraces the future with new social channels

by Arianna Ricci - Department of Institutional Development

The Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum in Rome, which has always been at the forefront of innovation for the dissemination of Gospel messages, has recently strengthened its commitment to the dissemination of faith and religious participation by opening two new social channels: **Spotify** and **TikTok**. This strategic choice underlines the forward-looking vision of the Athenaeum, which has already distinguished itself in the past for the adoption of cutting-edge tools such as interactive classrooms and distance learning.

The introduction of these channels is a significant step in reaching a wider and more diverse audience, especially the younger generation. The choice of Spotify for a series of **podcasts** allows the University to offer insights into issues of faith and current affairs, directly from the voice of its professors. These podcasts are not limited to purely academic content, but range over topics relevant to everyday life, offering food for thought and inspiration. It is a way to bring the richness of the University's theological and philosophical knowledge directly into the headphones of listeners, wherever they are.

Even bolder is the decision to land on **TikTok**. This social network, known for its short and dynamic videos, represents a fertile ground for contemporary and immediate communication. The Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum thus demonstrates that it is not afraid of the challenges of modernity, embracing a fresh and direct language to dialogue with a young audience that is often distant from the traditional circuits of faith. The goal is clear: to bring messages of hope and Christian values in an accessible and captivating format, taking advantage of the virality and engagement capacity of TikTok.

These new digital initiatives testify to the desire of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum to remain a point of reference not only for academic formation, but also for the promotion of a culture of dialogue and faith in the contemporary world. Through technological innovation, the University continues to play its fundamental role in the evangelical mission, demonstrating how tradition and modernity can go hand in hand.



Dialogue in a Postmodern Culture: A Line of Research Between Identity, Discernment and Academic Mission

The research line *Dialogue in a Postmodern Culture*, promoted by the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, stems from the desire to face the cultural challenges of our time with lucidity and commitment. In particular, it aims to explore and overcome the aporias produced by the disruptive effects of postmodern ideas, both in society and in academia. The heart of the proposal is a work of in-depth study, evaluating and promoting dialogical competence, understood as a way for the evangelization of contemporary culture and thought.

This line is not limited to theoretical reflection: it is a living and articulated project, which involves teachers, students, researchers and professionals in a shared action of study, teaching and dissemination. Its target audience is made up of cultural leaders, pastoral agents and educators who wish to be formed to dialogue effectively *with* and *in* today's culture, helping to regenerate it in the light of the Gospel. The main activities offered include diplomas, courses, conferences and publications, all designed as concrete tools to train people capable of a serious, deep and transformative dialogue.

The vision that animates this path recognizes that evangelizing culture today requires academic institutions to carry out a threefold exercise: discernment, purification and reform. In fact, we are living through a change of era that directly challenges the Christian thinker, called to a new *courage of truth*: freedom of spirit in facing emerging challenges, rejection both of the contamination of Christianity with incompatible philosophies, and of the ideological rejection of all external thought. It is urgent, therefore, to initiate a serious confrontation with postmodern thought, to elaborate an adequate synthesis and to identify reliable criteria of discernment.

One of the most widespread critical issues in the contemporary world is also part of this framework: growing polarization. The cultural transformations taking place generate insecurity and bewilderment, often resulting in radical attitudes, aggressive closures and the denial of dialogue. Among the most serious consequences, there is a worrying decline in freedom of expression, the foundation of any democratic society.

It is no coincidence that in 2023 the territorial conventions of Regnum Christi have indicated among the priorities the need for its members to learn a new way of dialoguing with the world, overcoming defensive barriers and adopting languages capable of communicating in the present. In the same year, this orientation was also shared by the rectors of the universities of the RIU, meeting in Madrid. The research line *Dialogue in a Postmodern Culture* thus stands as a response to this ecclesial and academic need, with the intention of generating a culture capable of facing the current crisis and forming leadership oriented towards the construction of shared paths.

The structure of the line provides for an interdisciplinary scientific committee and different forms of participation. The professors of the various faculties contribute with research, publication or teaching activities; APRA students can be involved as *fellows*, working alongside professors or carrying out tutoring activities; finally, undergraduates and doctoral students can dedicate their thesis to topics related to dialogue and evangelization in postmodern culture.

Among the research questions that guide this path, the following emerge in particular: how to promote the transition from a dialectical and polarized culture to a dialogical attitude of mutual purification and enrichment? What is the theological foundation of dialogue? What philosophical principles support its cultural dimension? And finally: what specific contribution can the Catholic worldview offer to the academic debate in postmodernity?

With this line of research, the Faculty of Philosophy of APRA aims not only to interpret the present, but to contribute to its transformation.



Hildebrand Chair for Christian Personalism

Inaugural meeting of the new chair of the Faculty of Philosophy

On June 10, 2025, with the event *The Past and Promise of Christian Personalism: a conversation with Rocco Buttiglione and John F. Crosby*, APRA inaugurated the new chair of the *Hildebrand Chair for Christian Personalism*, in collaboration with the *Dietrich von Hildebrand Legacy Project (USA)*. The meeting featured the **Honorable Rocco Buttiglione**, a prominent Italian author, academic and statesman; **Professor John F. Crosby**, internationally recognized for his studies on the thought of John Henry Newman, Max Scheler, Karol Wojtyła and Dietrich von Hildebrand; and **Dr. Elisa Grimi**, as the first Director of the Chair.

The conversation explored how the legacy of the great personalist thinkers of the twentieth century can still illuminate current philosophical and cultural issues, such as the challenges of postmodernity and radical autonomy.

Dr. Elisa Grimi

"But how can we speak today of freedom and dignity in a complete way by looking precisely at the person? We can do

this [...] looking at the person as if anchored in the sky, and therefore with a reflection [...] that takes into account all those factors that can then also lead to real social development".

Dr. John F. Crosby

"In the Hildebrand Project we discovered that there are many study centers on Dietrich von Hildebrand and many scholars read his work, but are not in contact with each other; Everyone works in isolation. [...] We are very pleased to collaborate closely with APRA here in Rome. We share the desire to create a community of thinkers who are dedicated to articulating and defending the philosophical position of Christian personalism."

Dr. Rocco Buttiglione

"The person is not determined only by himself; it is determined by the relationship with another. [...] This is the passage from I to we: we become community. And the problem of modernity is precisely this: modernity is born [...] as pure individualism. Well, in the face of this, Christian modernity must face two challenges. [...] Christian personalism offers a key to understanding the world of subjects, the world of man."



Marco Arosio Chair

Final conference of the Thomistic three-year course

Eight hundred years after the birth of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Marco Arosio Chair of Advanced Medieval Studies celebrated the conclusion of Thomas' three-year term with a wide-ranging and interdisciplinary conference. After delving into the theme of *the ipsum esse* in Thomas in 2023 and the dialogue between the Angelic Doctor and the Seraphic Doctor in 2024, this latest edition focused on the comparison between the theological method of St. Thomas and some of the main currents of twentieth-century theological thought. Among the authors examined: Journet, Fabro, Daniélou, de Lubac, Rahner and Balthasar. In addition to the heart of the conference, articulated thanks to the contributions of internationally renowned scholars – including Pedro Barrajón, Mauro Mantovani, Ilaria Morali, José Enrique Oyarzún, Antonio Suetta – there were several interventions on the Byzantine reception of Thomas Aquinas, on the pastoral relevance of his work and on its fruitfulness in dialogue with contemporary science. Established in 2010, the Chair, dedicated to Prof. Marco Arosio, supports young researchers in the field of medieval philosophy and theology, offering them scientific visibility, opportunities for discussion and concrete opportunities for experience and work. In this sense, the Marco Arosio Award is part of the Chair's mission to support emerging academic talents.

Particularly significant are the words of Dr. Franco Arosio, founder of the Chair and father of the late Prof. Marco Arosio: *"The mission of the Chair is to keep Marco's cultural and spiritual heritage alive, promoting studies that make faith, reason and culture dialogue in a rigorous and passionate way"*.

The initiative is part of a broad vision of promoting Christian thought, in which Dr. Arosio recognizes a strong educational and civil value. As he pointed out in the interview, *"the collaboration with the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum represents a concrete sign of hope for the future of the cultural and philosophical debate"*.

At the end of the event, the winner of the Arosio 2025 Prize, Miriam Savarese, also underlined: *"I thank the Marco Arosio Chair, the Commission, the whole university for this result which is very important to me. I am truly honored to have won this award for a work, The Three Types of Interpersonal Forgiveness in Thomas Aquinas, which I care a lot about for the studies I am doing and also for my professional career. [...] I must say that [...] St. Thomas has always remained a point of reference. He is the author I love the most [...] and in whom I always find an inexhaustible source of inspiration even for the problems of the present."* Sharing her research path, Miriam is a witness to how the Chair continues to generate fruit in today's young scholars.

A day of study on the thought of Joseph Ratzinger at APRA

by Laura Dalfollo - Distance Learning

Rome, April 5, 2025 – On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council, the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum has organized a Study Day dedicated to the theme **60 years after the Council: Ratzinger's thought as a key to interpretation**, with the contribution of numerous professors and theologians from pontifical universities and international research centers.

The initiative was intended to reinterpret Vatican II in the light of the thought of **Joseph Ratzinger**, who participated as a young theologian and conciliar expert, and who in the following years continued to offer decisive interpretative keys to understanding its scope. **Cardinal Kurt Koch** opened the proceedings with a report on Ratzinger's role at the Council, followed by speeches by **Mauro Gagliardi** (*Dei Verbum*), **Leonardo Pelonara** (*Lumen Gentium*) and **Sameer Advani** (*Gaudium et Spes*). The program, particularly rich and articulated, also included seven parallel sessions dedicated to specific themes such as ecclesial communion, religious freedom, biblical hermeneutics, ethics, the relationship with Israel and religions, offering a space for discussion between young scholars and expert teachers.

During the day, the urgency of a non-ideological approach to the Council, capable of enhancing its spiritual and missionary dimension, was emphasized. It was highlighted how Ratzinger's thought continues to offer a sure compass for understanding the living Tradition of the Church, especially in an era marked by relativism, secularism and the crisis of Christian identity.

The initiative is part of the broader commitment of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum to promote the thought of Benedict XVI, through university courses, publishing projects and the development of the book heritage accessible to students and scholars from all over the world. The goal is to offer formative tools capable of combining theological rigor and spiritual depth, in fidelity to Tradition and in dialogue with the challenges of the present. The Study Day reaffirmed the role of APRA as a place of ecclesial and cultural reflection, attentive to forming new generations of theologians and pastoral workers who know how to speak to the heart of contemporary man, in the light of the Gospel and the Magisterium of the Church.

Philosophical Café

A comparison between AI and human sensitivity

This year, the cultural event **Philosophical Café**, promoted in collaboration with the **UCID** (Christian Union of Entrepreneurs Executives), was renewed. This edition proposed a theme that is as topical as it is provocative: *Can artificial intelligence ever equal a sommelier?*

The **sommelier**, an emblematic figure of experiential knowledge, sensitivity and intuition, was the **starting point for a broader reflection** on the potential and limits of artificial intelligence. Can an algorithm, however evolved, really replace the human ability to grasp nuances, emotions, traditions and relationships? The question opened a lively and engaging dialogue about what makes the human experience unique, **comparing the accuracy of data with the richness of intuition**.

The meeting took place on **14 November** at the **Pontifical**

Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, in an atmosphere of **open and convivial discussion**. The conversation, led by **Profs. Guido Traversa and Claudio Bonito**, involved over 60 people including students, teachers and external guests, offering concrete and current food for thought. All this was accompanied by the tasting of selected wines from the winery - partner of the event - **Casale del Giglio**, which enriched the sensory and symbolic experience of the event. The **Philosophical Café** thus confirms itself as a precious opportunity to **cultivate critical thinking and interdisciplinary dialogue**, relating philosophy, technology and everyday life. With this spirit and with the same enthusiasm, we are already preparing for the next meeting.

#WebinarAPRA

The Heart of Jesus and the Saints: a spiritual itinerary to live devotion and holiness today

by Angela Tagliafico - Extraordinary Professor of the Faculty of Theology



Through the **webinar *The Encyclical Dilexit nos on devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the light of the Theology of the Saints*** held on May 21 from 15:30 to 17:00, the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum highlighted the importance of devotion to the Heart of Christ, which has enriched

the spiritual lives of many masters, preachers, and founders and founders of Catholic religious congregations who have widely spread it in every corner of the earth.

This devotion, as recalled by Pope Francis' encyclical, connotes the spiritual journey of many Saints and in each one, it always takes on new aspects, which the webinar showed through the example of five of them, each treated by a professor expert in the subject: St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio presented by **Fr. Joseph Spence**, professor in charge of Spiritual Theology at APRA; St. Ignatius of Loyola,

which I personally dealt with as extraordinary professor of Theology at APRA St. John of the Cross presented by **Emilio Martinez Albasa**, extraordinary professor of Theology at APRA; St. Francis de Sales illustrated by **Fr. Pedro Barrajón**, full professor of Theology at APRA and St. Teresa of Lisieux elucidated by **Fr. François-Marie Léthel**, professor emeritus of Theology of the Teresianum Theological Faculty in Rome. The event was held in **Italian** with **simultaneous translation into English and Spanish** and was **attended by 500 people**, priests, consecrated persons, lay men and women, **connected from Italy, Europe, Asia and America**, who were able to acquire, in an increasingly connected world, basic **theological knowledge and formation**, in a simple but in-depth way, on the subject of the meeting.

The webinar fostered **interaction** between participants and speakers, and **the full involvement of the** participants, through a **truly dynamic** space for dialogue and learning. What emerged most from the webinar is that each Saint embodies, in a given historical moment, a detail of the Gospel, lived totally in the service of the Love of the Heart of Jesus. And this was a call for everyone to live their vocation to holiness in the Church and in the world today.

#WebinarAPRA

Brain health and longevity: an excellent course to understand one of the great challenges of our time

by Fr, Alberto Carrara, L.C. - Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy

Imagine a man who, every morning, wakes up at dawn, undergoes cognitive tests, monitors every vital parameter, takes over a hundred pills a day, physically trains like an Olympic athlete and plans every meal according to a personalized scientific protocol. It is not a dystopian experiment from a cyberpunk novel, but the routine of **Bryan Johnson**, a visionary entrepreneur from Silicon Valley who, with his Blueprint project, invests millions of dollars every year in an attempt to reverse the aging process and prolong life indefinitely.

Johnson is the protagonist of the Netflix documentary *Don't Die – The Man Who Wants to Live Forever*, an extreme and controversial symbol of a cultural movement that sees radical longevity as the new horizon of technology. But beyond the media effect, his story poses crucial questions: is it really possible to live longer and better? What are the ethical, medical, and social implications of this approach? And above all: what role does the brain, a key organ of

human identity, play in determining the quality of our aging? These and other questions are answered by the ninth edition of the Postgraduate Course in Neurobioethics entitled **Brain Health and Longevity**, promoted by the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, in collaboration with the Institute of Science and Faith, the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights and the International Institute of Neurobioethics (IINBE). The training course will start on 26 September 2025 and will end on 19 June 2026, consisting of ten monthly meetings that can be used online, even asynchronously, or in person.

Brain Health and Longevity: An Integral View

The course is part of the broader international project for the development of integral human longevity, supported by the International Institute of Neurobioethics sponsored by the Pontifical Academy for Life, and launched on the occasion of the First Vatican Summit on Longevity held on March 24, 2025 in the framework of the Jubilee of Hope.

Pope Francis sent his personal greetings and encouragement for the occasion just the day after his discharge from the Gemelli Hospital. This project, which provides a platform for research, training and dissemination, aims to integrate science, ethics and anthropology to guide innovations on longevity in the service of human dignity and global solidarity.

The **Brain Health and Longevity** course is therefore proposed as a strategic educational tool, within the first phase (2025-2028) of this plan, to promote a culture of care, inclusion and cognitive resilience.

Contents: neuroscience, ethics, epigenetics

Among the topics addressed in the various meetings:

- the definition and promotion of brain health in an integral way;
- epigenetics applied to neuroprotection and the regenerative potential of stem cells;
- ovarian renewal, active longevity and prevention of cognitive decline;
- the ethical implications of assistive technologies and predictive models of artificial intelligence for aging;
- the influence of spirituality and relational care in the processes of happy aging, with reference to the studies on Sardinian centenarians and the concept of the "blue zone";
- the impact of neuroscience on health policies and equity in access to treatments.

Alongside the media figure of Bryan Johnson, there are other examples that more embody the search for a healthy and humanly sustainable longevity. Like that of **Howard Tucker**, an American neurologist who, at 102 years old, still practices medicine with lucidity and passion. His recipe? Walking every day, keeping your mind active, cultivating authentic relationships. Or the story of **Saturnino De La**

Fuente, who died in 2022, entered the Guinness Book of Records as the oldest man in the world, who attributed his longevity to a simple, regular life, and the value of family. Experiences that confirm how **cognitive, affective and spiritual factors** are decisive in living well for a long time.

Method and structure

The course includes 10 meetings from September 2025 to June 2026 (approximately every fourth Friday of the month), in face-to-face, synchronous and asynchronous online mode, with seminars and round tables. It also includes a special event during World Brain Week (13 March 2026) and the chance to attend the Second Vatican Longevity Summit in person scheduled for May 2026.

Students enrolled will be able to obtain 3 ECTS university credits upon completion of the training activities, including a written paper. The course is open to high school graduates, professionals and scholars.

Towards a long-lived humanism

This initiative is not limited to theoretical learning: it is part of a global network of educational and cultural projects that aims to transform the way we think about aging, overcoming stereotypes and promoting friendly, inclusive and technologically aware community models.

The brain, with its plasticity and vulnerability, thus becomes a symbol and thermometer of the human future. A future that we want to build on solidarity, justice, dignity, and on a knowledge that does not separate but integrates. Longevity 4.0 is not science fiction. It is a shared challenge. And the answer begins with training.

Doctoral dissertations A.Y. 2024-2025

Philosophy

- **Delgado Luis Horacio** with the dissertation *El modelo semiótico aristotélico como principio de inteligibilidad de la I S.Th. q. 13. La semántica in divinis de la filosofía tomista*;
- **Torres Andrés Francisco** with the dissertation *Las raíces de la contingencia según la "Expositio Libri Peryermeneias" IX de Santo Tomás de Aquino*.

Theology

- **Haist Eduardo Mariano** with the dissertation *Los apóstoles Pedro y Pablo y el Obispo del Roma en los escritos de Martín de Barcos. Una relectura de las fuentes patristicas que originaron la controversia del dúplice primado*;
- **Maliyeckal Sanal Thomas** with the dissertation *Hermeneutics of An Authentic Inculturation in the Context of India: A Study of the Documents (1970-2020) of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC)*;
- **Mathew Rajeesh** with the dissertation *Liturgical Commemoration of the Dead in the East Syriac Tradition. A Textual and Theological Analysis Towards a Theology of Resurrection*;
- **Wood Philip John** with the dissertation *A Study on John Henry Newman's New Exodus Theology*;
- **Thomas Taison** with the dissertation *Can the Church be both a Faithful Spouse and a Merciful Mother in the service of conscience? A critical reflection on the implications of Veritatis Splendor and of Christus Vivit*.

Bioethics

- **Baek Jong Ho** with the dissertation *La CRISPR sulla linea germinale maschile a fini terapeutici: riflessione bioetica secondo il Magistero cattolico*;
- **Badr Maroun** with the dissertation *L'autonomie de la femme entre liberté, personnelle et santé publique. Application sur l'avortement e la contraception, en enjeux bioéthiques dans le contexte français des Objectifs de Développement Durable*;
- **Gavlik Mendes Mairon Wesley** with the dissertation *Atualidade da bioética personalista ontologicamente fundada*.







Esercizi ignaziani col Vangelo di San Matteo

Ready to immerse ourselves, with this new volume dedicated to the experience of the *Ignatian Exercises with the Gospel of St. Matthew*, in the overwhelming river of the Father's Grace to order the heart and purify the gaze. In this introduction, the author explores the theme of the 'journey' through two biblical questions: Where are you? What's your name? God asks these questions not because he does not know the answer, but to involve us in dynamism: enter into yourself, know yourself in order to know the One who created you. There is a great theme that unifies the entire Gospel of Matthew: the logic of the Father.



Philosophical Consultancy: A Guide to Living the Contemporary

Philosophical Counseling is a discipline created to put philosophy at the service of concrete life. Inspired by the thought of Gerd Achenbach, it aims to guide the individual in understanding himself and the world, improving the quality of existence through dialogue and reflection. This volume is the result of the experience of the Master's Degree in Philosophical Counselling and Existential Anthropology of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, in agreement with the European University of Rome. Three former students — a manager, a doctor and a high school teacher — show, through their theses, how philosophy can act in work, health and educational contexts, offering tools to face daily challenges in a more conscious and human way. Enriched by the contributions of Prof. Guido Traversa, academic coordinator of the Master, Prof. P. Alberto Carrara and Dr. Alfredo Sostero, the book represents a living and rigorous testimony of the effectiveness of Philosophical Counseling in different areas of contemporary society.



Ratzinger on religious pluralism

What can Christian theology claim about the place of other religions in God's providential plan for humanity? How can it reconcile the universality of God's saving plan and the particularity of Christ and the Church? What meaning is left to Christian existence and mission in a religiously pluralist world? In *Ratzinger on Religious Pluralism*, Sameer Advani assembles and synthesizes these reflections and answers of the late pontiff, providing a systematic study of Ratzinger's theology of religions that attends to the scope of his larger historical, philosophical, and theological concerns. The first part analyzes Ratzinger's critical engagement with various paradigms of religious pluralism, whose accounts of religion, Christianity, and non-Christian religions he found both phenomenologically and theologically wanting. The second part, in turn, explores Ratzinger's positive proposal for a theology of religions, which locates both Christianity and non-Christian religions against the larger backgrounds of anthropological unity, the human search for truth, and divine providence.



Tra l'eternità e il tempo. L'ufficio del teologo nella vita e nella proposta metodologica di Jean Daniélou

«The function of the theologian is to move, like the angels on Jacob's ladder, between eternity and time and to weave ever new bonds between them» (Jean Daniélou). The present volume does not aim so much to outline an intellectual biography of Jean Daniélou, as to present his theological proposal and his theological commitment as a source of inspiration for those who wish to undertake the study of Sacred Doctrine. Jean Daniélou is counted among the great theologians of the twentieth century and played a prominent role in the Second Vatican Council, contributing to the theological renewal and promoting what has been called the Nouvelle Théologie. The latter sought, through a return to the sources, to give a new theological impetus to face contemporary ecclesial and cultural challenges. After a brief biography, the fundamental principles of his theological method are presented, which, without neglecting the essence of faith and in full fidelity to the revealed datum and to the magisterium, opens up to the broad horizon of the intellect, philosophy and scientific progress. There are four moments in Jean Daniélou's theological work: the metaphysical moment, the typological moment, the historical moment and the hermeneutical moment. In this way, the theologian will be able to ascend and descend between eternity and time, making the Christian mystery accessible to man of every age and culture.

Jubilee pilgrimage

by Fr. Giovanni Malgaroli, L.C.

"*Spes non confundit*", "hope does not disappoint" (*Rom* 5:5). With these words of the Apostle Paul, Pope Francis inaugurated the Jubilee of Hope, inviting the faithful to pass through the Holy Door to renew their encounter with God's merciful love. We felt challenged by this invitation, not only personally, but also as an academic community committed to proclaiming and witnessing to Christ's Redemption. In the Bull of Indiction *Spes non confundit*, the Pope recalled how it is precisely from the pierced Heart of Christ that the love that founds hope flows (n. 3). It is this love that also sustains our desire to seek and bear witness to the truth (*Veritate facientes in caritate*), for Christ himself is the Truth (Cfr. *Jn* 14:6) and our hope (cf. *1 Tim* 1:1). And hope is necessary for reason, to sustain it and direct it to the good (*Caritas in Veritate*, 34). Animated by these sentiments and eager to renew our entrustment to Christ, on Saturday 29 March we set out on pilgrimage to the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, as an academic community: authorities, teachers, students, administrative staff. Pilgrims of hope, we prepared ourselves with prayer and walked in prayer, accompanied by the Rosary and the words of the Pope, thus disposing our hearts to receive the grace of the Jubilee.

Along the way we were not alone; many volunteers marked the route and prepared for our arrival at the Holy Door. Numerous other pilgrims preceded and followed us. We found ourselves in communion with so many people, coming from all over the world and yet sisters in faith, unanimous in prayer. The cross that guided the group was carried with great devotion by several pilgrims of the University, thus signifying the union of hearts in the journey of faith. On reaching the Holy Door, prayer became silence, to welcome the jubilation of grace and the joy of hope. In prayerful silence, we reached the tomb of the Apostle Peter, where we fervently renewed our profession of faith. In order to receive the fruits of the Jubilee with greater intensity and fullness, we wanted to conclude the pilgrimage with participation in the Holy Mass, which we had the privilege of celebrating at the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Santo Spirito in Sassia. The ceremony was presided over by the Rector, Fr. José Enrique Oyarzún, L.C., with the assistance of other priests of the Regina Apostolorum. The communion of hearts was thus strengthened in Eucharistic Communion, the source and summit of our hope in the Risen Christ.



In the Library and Bookshop

- BOOKS**

HRVOJE RELJA, *Philosophia perennis. Sintesi tomista*, Roma 2024;

FRANCESCA LONGO, «A conoscere la prima radice...», *Dante e l'intellettualismo etico medievale*, Roma 2024;

Aa.Vv., *Atti della Summer School, La sfida umana nell'epoca della trasformazione digitale* (Collana ISSD Atti e documenti, 12), APRA, Roma 2024.

THESIS

RAJEEESH MATHEW, *Liturgical commemoration of the dead in the east syriac tradition. A Textual and Theological analysis Towards a Theology of Resurrection* (Tesi Teologia 50), Roma 2024;
- SANAL THOMAS MALIYECKAL**, *Hermeneutics of An Authentic Inculturation in the Context of India: A Study of the Documents (1970-2020) of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC)* (Tesi Teologia 51), Roma 2025;

LUIS HORACIO DELGADO, *El modelo semiótico aristotélico como principio de inteligibilidad de la I S.Th. q. 13. La semántica in divinis de la filosofía tomista* (Tesi Filosofía 27), Roma 2025.

MAGAZINES

Alpha Omega 27 1 (2024); 27 2 (2024); 27 3 (2024). *Ecclesia* 39.1 (2025); 39.2 (2025).

The transition from Pope Francis to Pope Leo

by Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C. - Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy



Pope Leo XIV: continuity and novelty in the name of Tradition and social openness

The election of Pope Leo XIV, born Robert Francis Prevost, represents a moment of great significance for the Catholic Church, tracing a line of **continuity** and, at the same time, introducing elements of **novelty** with respect to the pontificate of Pope Francis. The name chosen, Leo, immediately evokes powerful and symbolic historical memories: **Leo XIII**, the great pontiff of the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, and **Leo the Great**, the pope of the fifth century who, in a period of doctrinal confusion, was able to illuminate the Catholic faith with such clarity that the bishops of the time affirmed: "Peter spoke through the mouth of Leo."

1. Continuity in social sensitivity

Just as Pope Francis has placed attention to the poor, the marginalized and the protection of creation at the center of his pontificate, weaving a bridge between integral human ecology and the care of creation, so the name Leo seems to want to evoke the same social sensitivity expressed by Leo XIII. *Rerum Novarum*, in fact, marked the beginning of the Social Doctrine of the Church, emphasizing workers' rights, social justice and the importance of workers' associations. It is plausible to expect that Pope Leo XIV will continue along this line, strengthening dialogue with social and political realities, as moreover testified by the overcoming of the *non expedit* which, under Leo XIII, allowed Italian Catholics to return to participate actively in the political life of the country.

2. Novelty in the name of doctrinal clarity

Leo the Great, the first pope of this name, is remembered for his firmness and doctrinal clarity in an era of deep theological divisions. In a time marked by doctrinal complexities linked to the challenges of technology, bioethics, neuroscience and artificial intelligence – themes

already addressed by Pope Francis with great pastoral sensitivity – Pope Leo XIV could accelerate the definition of clear and unambiguous guidelines, recovering that ability to "speak like Peter" in the context of new global challenges.

3. The call to Franciscan fraternity

An aspect of particular importance is the implicit reference to **Brother Leo**, a close friend of St. Francis of Assisi. **The transition from a Pope Francis to a Leo Pope** seems to suggest a path of **spiritual and symbolic continuity**. St. Francis' blessing of Brother Leo, as well as the letter full of affection and spirituality, evoke a sense of simplicity and service that could also characterize the pontificate of Leo XIV. This bond emphasizes the importance of fraternity, evangelical poverty and humility as distinctive traits of the successor of Peter.

4. An Augustinian in the sign of Thomism

Finally, the historical curiosity that an Augustinian like Pope Leo XIV takes the name of Leo, linked to the **great promoter of Thomism, Leo XIII**, does not go unnoticed. This could suggest a desire to integrate Augustine's profound reflection with the rational and systematic clarity of Thomas Aquinas, offering a synthesis capable of responding to the needs of contemporary thought, especially in complex areas such as **neuroethics, roboethics and algorithmics**.

Conclusion

Pope Leo XIV presents himself as a pontiff capable of embodying the historical memory of the Church, projecting it towards new challenges with clarity and determination. His election could mark a return to doctrinal rigor combined with a strong social focus, renewing the spirit of service and fraternity that has characterized Pope Francis. The dialogue between tradition and innovation thus appears as the distinctive feature of this new pontificate, where the memory of Leo XIII and Leo the Great is intertwined with the freshness and boldness of a Church on its way to the future.

Five cross-cutting orientations of Pope Francis for Catholic universities

A proposal for integral renewal starting from the Gospel

by Fr. José Enrique Oyarzún, L.C. - Rector

The pontificate of Pope Francis has been a constant reminder to rethink ecclesial structures in the light of the Gospel and contemporary cultural challenges. Within this renewal, the Catholic university – and in particular the ecclesiastical university – occupies a strategic place. It is not only a matter of preserving a heritage, but of actualizing its mission as a space for integral formation, for fruitful dialogue between faith and reason, for the irradiation of the Gospel in culture.

Through documents such as *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Veritatis Gaudium*, the promotion of the Global Compact on Education, and the many interventions in university assemblies, Francis offered an articulated and provocative

This integral pedagogy not only responds to a complete Christian anthropology, but is a condition for a true cultural transformation. The Catholic university cannot be satisfied with training technicians or limiting itself to specialists: it is called to form wise people, capable of combining contemplation and action, study and service.

1. Knowledge as a service: a university on the move

From *Evangelii Gaudium* to his message to the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum (30 October 2023), the Pope invited us not to close knowledge in "specialized circles", but to be at the service of the Church and the common good. This orientation implies a missionary conversion of the university: going out of itself, reading the signs of the times, facing cultural and social challenges with evangelical creativity. The Catholic university, when it experiences this dynamic, becomes a laboratory of cultural evangelization.

2. Educating to transform: sowing in fertile soil

In the context of the Global Compact on Education (2019), the Pope emphasized that every change of era needs a profound educational process. Along these lines, on several occasions he has described the educational mission with the image of the sower (cf. Jn 12:24): sowing with hope, in dialogue with concrete reality, forming people capable of recomposing the social fabric on the basis of an integral vision of the human being. The university cannot limit itself to preserving knowledge or reproducing models; it must be a prophetic instance, capable of generating new syntheses between faith, science, culture and ethics.

Conclusion: An open and communal task

These five orientations constitute a common horizon that does not impose uniformity, but requires evangelical authenticity, institutional courage and creative fidelity to the mission. The Catholic university is called to renew itself from the center: the living Christ. But also from its margins: dialogue with the world, care for our common home, the encounter with diversity, attention to the existential peripheries.

This legacy of Francis raises questions that can guide a profound community discernment: how can we guarantee that the proclamation of Christ is the true center – and not just rhetorical – of our university projects? Are we generating real spaces for collaboration between disciplines, people and institutions? Does our structure train people or produce specialists? What place do prayer, fraternity and service occupy in daily academic life? Are we sowing the seeds of the future or repeating models that no longer respond to current challenges?

Answering these questions is not the task of a single actor, nor of a specific moment. It presupposes a permanent attitude of institutional conversion, nourished by the Gospel and sustained by a living academic community. Only in this way can the Catholic university be, in the twenty-first century, a place where truth is sought with passion, lived with humility and offered with joy.



vision of higher education. The article proposes five major transversal orientations of this magisterium, not as a closed scheme, but as an open invitation to institutional discernment and hopeful renewal.

1. Kerygma as the heart of the university mission

In the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium*, Francis proposes as the first criterion for renewal "contemplation and spiritual, intellectual and existential introduction into the heart of the Kerygma" (VG 4). It is not a question of adding a religious veneer to a neutral academic structure, but of placing the proclamation of Jesus Christ dead and risen as the formative principle, intellectual horizon and vital center of the university. From this key, knowledge becomes a path of conversion and study an ecclesial act.

1. The university as a "choir": communion in diversity

In an address to the Roman pontifical universities (February 25, 2023), Francis evoked the image of the choir to speak of university life: "It is not the school of uniformity, but of agreement and consonance between different voices and instruments." This musical image expresses a theology of communion applied to education: knowledge, disciplines, charisms, cultures and people, all called to be refined in a common project. This requires structures that foster interdisciplinarity, joint work and overcoming institutional fragmentation.

2. A complete education: mind, heart and hands

Francis insisted on a formation that integrates the three dimensions of the person: the intelligence of the mind (rigorous knowledge), that of the heart (the interior and affective life) and that of the hands (practical commitment).

An exhibition on the Shroud, mirror of the Gospel in Rome

by Maria Milvia Morciano - Journalist Vatican City

What is the Shroud? Some children answered this question, with their intelligent candor, in an icaastic, simple way: *"It's a selfie, a flash."* The little ones often arrive, deeper and faster, at conclusions that often, for us adults, are difficult and difficult. On March 10, in the jubilee basilica of San Giovanni dei Fiorentini, the traveling exhibition *Who is the man of the Shroud?* Cardinal Baldassarre Reina, vicar general of the Diocese of Rome, expressed the hope that those who approach this exhibition will arrive at a full profession of faith. *"As you make the passage from the Holy Door to St. Peter's, you feel introduced into the grace of a new life."*

The exhibition consists of panels, photographs, works of art and philological reproductions of the instruments used for the Passion of Christ, as well as a perfect copy of the Shroud.

The Power of the Cross

Cardinal Reina then underlined that *"we all see the great effort of carrying on the experience of faith. Many, sometimes for different reasons, such as the great trial of illness, bereavement or other, distance themselves from faith in Christ Jesus."* To see the man of sorrows who knew suffering well means *"to return to the truth of the One whose face was so disfigured as to become a cause of shame";* he himself *"is the treasure of our faith"*. A faith that is not anchored to *"a powerful man from the human point of view, who was placed on a golden throne, who asserted himself with the power of his word: our faith is born from a crucifix, from a person*

humiliated, spat on, crowned with thorns, abandoned, finally put on the scaffold, a reason for shame, buried and then the final outcome of the resurrection". To return to this theme of suffering, pain, passion. As Paul said, writing to the Corinthians, *"some seek wisdom, some seek glory, we seek the power of the cross"*. *"What is a cause of shame for others is for us a reason for wisdom, a reason for strength."*

Research and truth

After the greetings of Professor Father José Enrique Oyarzún, Rector of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, it was time for the reports of Professor Emanuela Marinelli, visiting professor of the Higher Institute of Religious Sciences (APRA) and expert sindonologist - author of over twenty books on the subject - and Professor Rafael Pascual, director of the *Othonia* Research Group and full professor of the Faculty of Philosophy. They retraced the extraordinary characteristics of the precious relic of Turin and placed at the center of the discourse what is the most long-standing debate, the veracity of the Shroud.



Read more on Vatican News



Philosophical counseling in the time of uncertainty: existential answers to deep questions

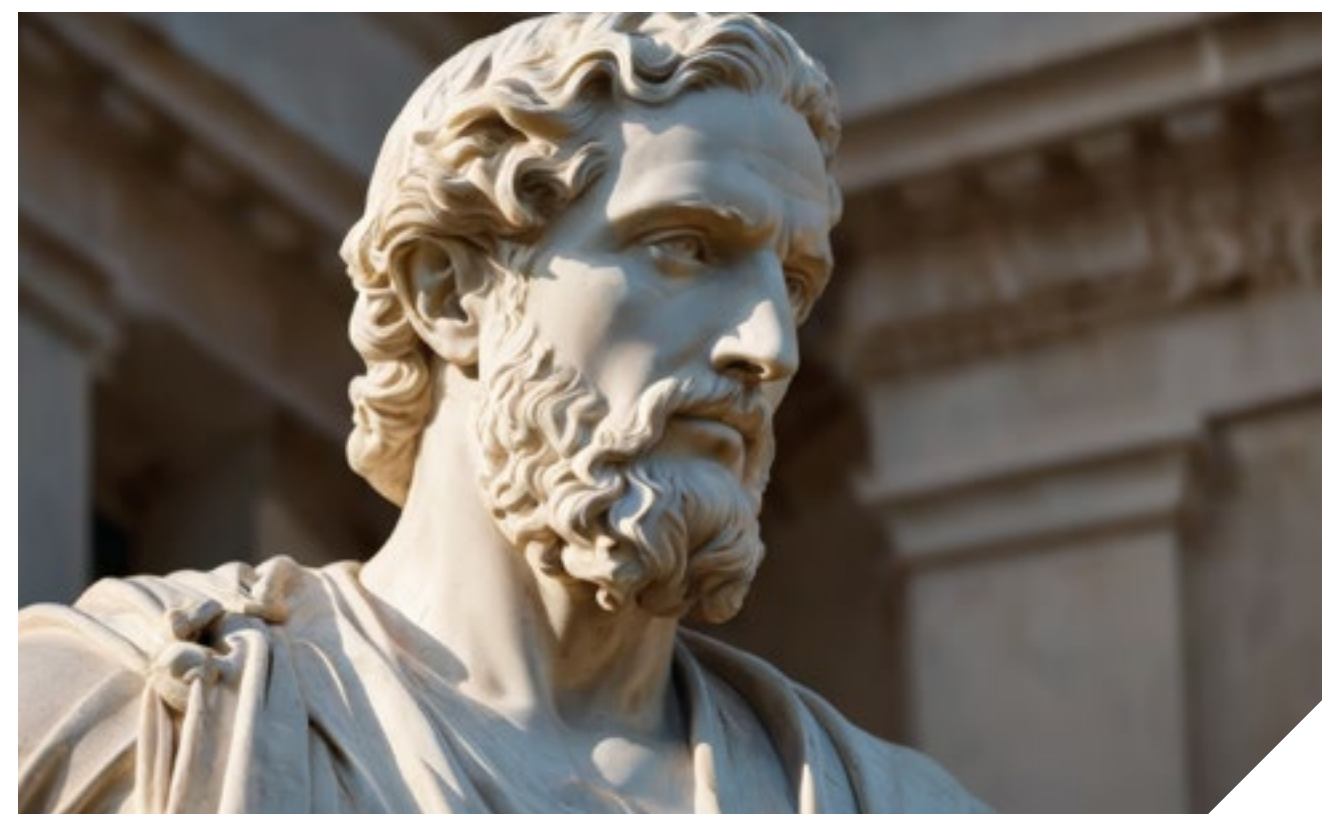
by Claudio Bonito - Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy

Philosophical Counseling is configured as a practice, a dialogic modality that uses tools of philosophical thought, mostly derived from classical philosophy, to deal with the complexity, and often the discomfort, given by everyday life. It is not proposed as a therapy in the clinical sense, but as a **space for reflection and expression of the thinking Self**. In this perspective, ancient philosophical knowledge returns to being a vital and pragmatic resource aimed at improving the quality of our existence.

We live in a historical time characterized by widespread uncertainty experienced as an effect of a precariousness of existence and a loss of shared value references that represented solid points of reference and without which we feel lost and unable to find an existential direction. We feel like we are in the waves of a stormy sea, just to use a very happy metaphor by Seneca. The practice of Philosophical Counseling emerges as a discipline in its own right capable of offering orientation, critical reflection and meaning, exploring and using affinities with ancient philosophy as a starting point for all the development of subsequent thought, up to the present day. All Stoicism (especially that defined as "Roman": Seneca, Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus), represent a perspective often inhabited by Philosophical Consultancy and this also contains a fascinating aspect: what was true for man almost 2300 years ago remains valid even today. A hope that shows us, among other things, that

man remains man through history and his becoming, and that emphasizes the permanence of the human essence and the actuality of the *logos*. Epictetus' exhortation to take care only of the things that depend on us, and on which we can intervene, leaving out what does not depend on us and which represent, therefore, a source of anguish and frustration, describes a clear example of how to face, today as then, complexity through the use of **logos, ratio, speculation**, in short, of **philosophical praxis**. Philosophical thought, in fact, translates into praxis when dialogue with oneself and with others generates awareness. The *logos* becomes not only a speculative tool, but a method for "taking care" of someone, of discernment and planning. In this context, Philosophical Counseling is configured as a **generative place** in which the human being can reintegrate meaning and direction.

In essence, Philosophical Consultancy, in its **recovery of ancient knowledge and application to the present**, offers an answer to the need for orientation and authenticity of contemporary man. The persistence of human nature through the centuries and the relevance of Stoic intuitions testify to the power of thought as an existential guide. Ultimately, philosophy returns to being "art of living and self-care", reaffirming that man remains man, in his tension towards truth and freedom.



Testimony from St. Peter's Square, election of Leo XIV

by Fr. Patricio Bringas Iturrioz, L.C. and fr. Edgar Henríquez, L.C.

I arrived at St. Peter's Square at eleven o'clock in the morning. There was something in the air... like a joyful tension. We were waiting. Was there a long way to go? Would it be today? Nobody knew, but we all wanted to be there if it happened.

There was no phone signal. Nothing. You couldn't send a photo, or a message. But that was also providential. Because I had to live it. To be present, truly, without distractions.

And right in the middle of a joke with a brother who was having a birthday—we were singing "Happy Birthday" to him—white smoke! The moment. Suddenly, the entire square became a single voice, a single emotion. People hugging strangers. Tears, screams, pure joy. We didn't know who he was, but we already loved him.

Eternal minutes passed. The curtains are opened, the protodeacon comes out: *"Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum..."* Habemus Papam! Everyone screaming, jumping... and suddenly, silence. You had to listen to the name. When he said "Robertum...", my soul fell to the ground. I thought of several Roberts I knew... Sarah? McElroy? Prevost?

And yes: Robert Prevost, Leo XIV.

At first, many did not know who he was. But it was enough for them to say the name for the square to explode again. *"Leone! Leone! Leone!"* A unanimous cry. I don't know how our eardrums didn't rupture.

And then watch it come out. The white skullcap. His face. Its simplicity. And his first words: "Peace be with you." My legs trembled. My eyes filled with tears. It was real. We already had a Pope. We were no longer orphans.

He spoke from the heart. Christ at the center. He greeted in Spanish, he mentioned his diocese in Peru. And the *urbi et orbi* blessing. Flags from all over the world were flying in the square. It was the universal Church, alive, gathered, loving a man I didn't even know, but whom we already felt like our father.

And I thought: this is how the Holy Spirit works. No one expected it. But there it was. Leo XIV. The Pope with whom I will begin my priestly ministry. I will never forget it. On that day, the entire Church cried out: *Long live the Pope!*

Covering a conclave is not only a journalistic challenge: it is an event of grace, of profound spiritual and ecclesial resonance. As a religious and student of Theology at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, I had the opportunity to collaborate in the media coverage of the election of Pope Leo XIV, a moment that marked the recent history of the Church and that also became a privileged space to put into practice what we study in the classrooms: the dialogue between faith, reason and communication.

I was accompanying the coverage for various international media: *Radio Reforma* and *ADN40* in Mexico, with some interventions in *Rai1* in Italy, and collaborations with *Canal 13* and *Meganoticias* in Chile. Each media space implied a different language, a specific audience and its own approach to the Conclave. However, they all agreed on a common need: to understand a process that, for many, remains a mystery.

For us, as seminarians, this is precisely one of our tasks: to help interpret the life of the Church with spiritual, theological and pastoral keys, avoiding ideological or political reductions. The Conclave is not a parliamentary election or an ecclesial plebiscite; it is not a question of "conservative" or "progressive" blocs, but of an election guided by the Holy Spirit who acts in the hearts of the cardinal electors and in the very history of the Church.

The atmosphere in Rome was a living manifestation of Catholicity: thousands of pilgrims from all continents, languages and cultures, walking through the streets waiting for the signal: the white smoke. The press, for its part, lived in a mixture of expectation and exhaustion. Many colleagues did not rest, attentive to every detail that could indicate the progress of the votes. Meanwhile, St. Peter's Square remained open to hope, with visitors wishing to witness a once-in-a-lifetime moment. When the white smoke finally appeared, the entire city was transformed. I was broadcasting live near one of the screens showing the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. He was about to return home when the smoke began to come out, and in a matter of seconds confusion gave way to certainty: there was a Pope! People were running, looking for the best angles, getting excited without reservation. Everyone wanted to be around when Cardinal Protodeacon announced the long-awaited *Habemus Papam*.

Upon hearing the name Leo XIV, many journalists and attendees looked at each other with some surprise. However, it was enough for the new pope to speak for his first words to set the tone of his pontificate: *«Peace be with you»*, the greeting of the Risen One to his disciples. It was not just a liturgical or protocol gesture, but a message to the whole world at a time in need of reconciliation, serenity and truth.

This pontificate, we have sensed from the beginning, will bring a strong call to spiritual life, to deep prayer, to mysticism and mystagogy. Leo XIV reminds us that the Church must not lose her centre: Christ himself, the mystery of love and redemption. As seminarians, this is a direct challenge to our formation: to be men of prayer, but also capable of clearly communicating the beauty of faith in the digital and media environments that often simplify or distort the Christian message.

Participating in this process confirmed to me the importance of forming evangelizers who know how to read the signs of the times with a believing gaze and with accessible language. The Theology we learn at the university is not a knowledge reserved for specialists; it must be translated into concrete service, into bridges between the Church and society. The media are a great public square that we must not abandon, but inhabit with responsibility, with joy and with the certainty that, as St. Peter says, we must always be *«ready to give an account of our hope»* (1 Pt 3:15).

Because in the end, communicating the faith is also an act of charity. And as Leo XIV taught us in his first message: everything begins with the peace that comes from the Risen Christ, that which we are called to proclaim in all media and to all people.

The voice of the students

Ján Sedlický

Bachelor's Degree in Theology

My name is Ján, I come from Slovakia, and coming to study at the University from another congregation, different from that of the Legionaries, what immediately struck us, even with our confreres, when we arrived, was the spirit of friendship with which we were welcomed, both by the teachers and by the Legionary brothers.

What I bring to the mission is what characterized the teaching here at APRA: for me, a great emphasis on current issues in Church theology, which will naturally be very useful in dialogue with today's culture in today's world.



Emmanuel Mocha Obinna

Bachelor's Degree in Theology

I am truly very happy to have spent these years here at APRA, especially because of the excellent theological training I received. It was a great opportunity to grow in theology and then in spiritual life, because theology must inform not only our intellect but also our faith. I am very happy to have received this intellectual, spiritual, and human formation. This is what I will bring to my diocese, where I will teach my brothers what I have learned. Thank you very much.

Alice Fernandes Bresolin

Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy

During these two years of studying philosophy, I have had the joy of walking alongside many brothers and sisters in this search for knowledge. Many times I have been asked, "Do you like studying?" And my answer is: I don't like studying, rather, I like learning; and I think that's very different. What I take away from these two years is precisely this experience of searching, sharing, and always listening to others, seeking answers and trying to make philosophy something that truly brings joy, richness, and meaning to the lives of the many people we work with and meet every day.



Jonathan Fuhr

Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy

Hi, I'm Jonathan from Germany, and I finished my Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy today. The University has been part of my life for five years. I lived here in Rome for four years and then, in the last year, I was able to study remotely. It was hard work studying online, but I always enjoyed it. Academically, the first year of my bachelor's degree involved a lot of interaction with other students, which I really enjoyed; always searching for the truth. Then, the last year was more like studying at home and connecting online, which I really liked because the teachers really tried to involve me, even though I was more than 1,000 kilometers away. And on a personal level, well, my time here at the University has shaped me a lot. It has made me a person who always seeks to understand where things come from, who seeks to understand the world, to communicate, to be a witness to the truth: the truth of God and the truth of his love and mercy.

Catholic identity and international university collaboration

by Fr. José Enrique Oyarzún, L.C. - Rector

Collaboration between Catholic-inspired universities goes far beyond an operational solution: it is a concrete expression of communion and mission. The Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* emphasizes that one of the most promising ways for ecclesiastical institutions of higher education is the articulation of living and effective networks, animated by creative fidelity to their own identity and by a courageous openness to today's challenges. As Pope Francis states: «It is urgent without delay that a network of effective relations between institutions be consolidated, also with a view to greater and better academic cooperation» (VG, Proemio, 4d).

In this perspective, the **International Network of Regnum Christi Universities (RIU) was born as a concrete and hopeful response** to this call. More than a simple organizational structure, it represents a living manifestation of ecclesial communion and of the common cultural mission. Thanks to this network, Catholic universities find new opportunities to renew their identity, strengthen their educational processes, align their lines of research, innovate in meaning and, above all, evangelize culture with greater depth and scope.

In the framework of the Jubilee of 2025 and in fidelity to their evangelizing vocation, the universities that make up the RIU have reaffirmed their commitment to a living and functioning Catholic identity. This impulse does not respond to a merely institutional concern, but to the awareness that the Catholic university, in order to be faithful to itself, must be a place where people are formed in their entirety, the truth is sought with freedom, and a fruitful dialogue between faith and culture is promoted.

On the basis of this conviction, the RIU has defined **seven lines of collaboration**, which are not simply technical areas of work, but living dimensions of a shared identity that is increasingly aware, solid and fruitful.

The first of these lines is **Catholic identity**, understood not as an addition or a label, but as the vital principle that inspires all dimensions of university life. It is not a question of superimposing religious content on a neutral structure, but of conceiving the university on the basis of a Christian vision of the world, in which faith and reason, culture and evangelization, truth and charity are integrated into a harmonious unity.

From this root comes the profound meaning of **integral formation**, which implies a full understanding of the human person in all his dimensions: intellectual, volitional, affective, spiritual and relational. In this context, proposals such as formation for Christian *leadership* are not conceived as optional complements, but as coherent expressions of a Christian anthropology that recognizes in each person the vocation to service, to the transformation of the environment and to the construction of meaning.

The line of **open reason** reflects the commitment to an intelligence that is not limited to what is empirically



demonstrable, but is open to mystery, to the ultimate meaning of existence and to interdisciplinary dialogue. It is a reason that is not afraid of faith, but dialogues with it, and that promotes convergence between the sciences, the human sciences and theology in the search for a fuller and more unified understanding of reality.

In this perspective, **research** acquires an essential character. The university cannot limit itself to transmitting knowledge, but is called to generate critical thinking, to interpret culture and to propose, from a Catholic perspective, significant responses to contemporary challenges. For this reason, the RIU promotes joint research of an international nature, with cultural impact and ecclesial projection.

Another strategic axis is **educational and managerial innovation**, understood not as simple technical updating, but as transformation at the service of the person. Innovating means adapting structures, processes and methodologies with a clear orientation towards integral human development, in line with the educational and evangelizing mission of the university.

The dimension of **personal accompaniment** is presented as a concrete expression of this person-centered vision. We cannot speak of a Catholic university without a culture of presence, listening, orientation and care. Accompanying students, teachers and collaborators means living intellectual and pastoral charity in the university context, fostering an authentically Christian educational community. These seven lines of collaboration respond to a profound spiritual and academic concern: to be faithful to the charism and mission that the Church entrusts to Catholic universities. In this shared journey, the RIU institutions discover in communion a source of growth, mutual learning and common mission. A mission that seeks to offer the world a university presence capable of witnessing, with intelligence and hope, to the joy of the Gospel.

Launch of the Medicine and Society Program

A Journey Through Bioethics, Culture and Care in Rome

Last May, the **University of Houston's Honors College** launched an impactful study abroad opportunity: the *Medicine and Society Program*, in partnership with the **UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights**. Hosted in the eternal city of Rome, this unique, week-long program invited students to explore the ethical, cultural, and philosophical dimensions of medicine through a global lens.

In an age of rapid scientific advances and global interconnectedness, the practice of medicine requires more than clinical skill: it requires a deep understanding of the human condition. The *Medicine and Society* program responds to this need by interweaving philosophy, neuroscience, bioethics, and art to promote an interdisciplinary and intercultural approach to health care. Students delved into essential questions such as:

- Are they something or someone?
- What makes a doctor or assistant a good doctor?
- Are we just our brain?
- What beauty will save the world?

These are not just academic inquiries: they are the foundations of a more human, reflective and ethical approach to medicine.

Structured over 5 engaging days (12-16 May 2025), the program combined morning seminars with afternoon learning on site, where Rome itself became the classroom. From exploring the Colosseum and the Vatican Museums to reflecting on art and science at the Church of San Girolamo della Carità, the rooms of San Filippo Neri and the Academy of the History of Health Art, the students encountered living history and ideas at every step.

Highlights of the course included:

- **Conferences** of world experts in bioethics, neuroscience and medical humanities
- **Collaborative seminars** hosted at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum
- **Cultural visits** to Rome's iconic landmarks and lesser-known spiritual sites
- **Daily dialogue** on intercultural medicine, personality and human rights

This experience is anchored in the Honors College's *HON3397H: Global Bioethics* course, which offers academic credit and lays the foundation for further study, research, or careers in medicine, law, ethics, public health, and the humanities. Students will also be introduced to international degree opportunities and research networks supported by the UNESCO Chair.

From *Laudato si'*

The Joint Diploma in Integral Ecology and the Shared Mission

by Massimo Losito - Professor at the Faculty of Bioethics

If we think of ecology, what images come to mind? Streams in the mountains, woods, the vineyards with their scent where our grandfather took us as children. Pope Francis, in the encyclical *Laudato si'*, states that **ecology recalls "feeling at home"**. The document is precisely addressed to the care of our common home, our earth, which is wounded. Immediately after the publication of the magisterial text, in an inter-university conference, we had an **intuition: care for the common home** implies a community of care and this requires an alliance also in the academic world. It was an almost prophetic intuition, anticipating the request to **"create a choir"** that the same pontiff addressed a few years later to the university world. Thus was born the **Joint Diploma in Integral Ecology**, the **first joint degree between the Roman pontifical universities and universities, with the collaboration of the Dicastery for Integral Human Development**.

The course, which over the years has trained **hundreds of students**, of **international origin** and varied backgrounds, deepens the chapters of the encyclical with mixed modules (online and face-to-face) and with workshops; each lesson takes place in a different university and precisely for this reason it is enriched with a specific and characterizing

perspective: for example, our university analyzes chapter IV dedicated to integral ecology from a bioethical perspective. In recent years, the environmental issue has imposed itself strongly, given the evident imbalances caused to ecosystems by the pervasive technocratic mentality. The solution, however, does not consist in despising man, exalting erroneous biocentric ideologies. The perspective of the magisterium is that of **ecological conversion**, which recalls, as **Benedict XVI said**, the **imperative need for an authentic human ecology**. It is the heart of integral ecology: if ecological consciousness reminds us that *"everything is related, everything is connected"*, every **relationship** must be **healed**, that of **man with the ecosystem**, that with himself and with other men and that with God. As Pope Leo XIV reminded young people: *"What is the object of our hope [...] Is it the earth? Something that comes from the earth, such as gold, silver, the tree, the harvest, the water [...] These things are liked, these things are beautiful, these things are good. [...] Look for those who made them, He is your hope."* In this sense, *Laudato si'* says, the **whole material universe is "God's caress" for each of us**: feeling loved in this way, **man** rediscovers his place in nature and can take on the role of **responsible guardian**.

Nominees and Thank You Notes

APRA Appointments

October 31, 2024 - Fr. Vincenz Heereman, L.C., Fr. Pierre Salabert, L.C., Fr. Dain Scherber, L.C.: Members of the Sacerdos Institute Council. Fr. Gonzalo Monzón, L.C. and Fr. Alex Yeung, L.C.: Reconfirmed in the same position.

December 13, 2024 - appointment of the members of the Bioethics Commission: Fr. David Koonce, L.C., Prof. Alberto Garcia; Prof. Massimo Losito; permanent professor of the Faculty of Bioethics; Prof. Giorgia Brambilla; Prof. Claudia Navarini (UER); Dr. Emanuele Bova, Dr. Óscar Sastré (RUA); Abraham Cárdenas González (Anáhuac Online).

January 24, 2025 - Prof. Fr. José Enrique Oyarzún, L.C.: Reconfirmed as Rector for a third three-year term.

February 6, 2025 - Prof. Fr. David Scott Koonce, L.C.: Extraordinary Permanent Lecturer of the Faculty of Theology.

March 20, 2025 - Fr. Luis Eduardo Rodríguez L.C.; Fr. Alejandro Mora L.C.; Br. Darius Lawrence; Br. Roberto Allison Coronado L.C.: Assistant Professors (Courses 2024-2025) in the Research Line Dialogue and Evangelization in a Post-Modern Culture.

March 27, 2025 - Prof. P. Gabriel Wendt, L.C.: Coordinator of the Distance Licentiate Program of the Faculty of Philosophy.

April 10, 2025 - Prof. Fr. David Koonce, L.C.: Pro-Dean of the Faculty of Bioethics.

May 5, 2025 - Br. Gilbert Pozholiparambil Johny: Member of the Student Coordination.

May 8, 2025 - Prof. P. Alex Yeung, L.C.: Full Professor of the Faculty of Philosophy.

May 9, 2025 - Prof. P. Sameer Advani, L.C.: Permanent Adjunct Professor of the Faculty of Theology.

9 May 2025 - Prof. P. David Scott Koonce, L.C.: Confirmation as Academic Vice-Rector of the University for a third three-year term.

May 12, 2025 - Br. Juan Pablo Alarcón, L.C.: Member of the Student Office for APC.

26 June 2025 - Prof. Massimo Losito: Coordinator of the Postgraduate Course in Bioethics.

27 June 2025 - Dr. Anita Cadavid Calle: Director of the Higher Institute of Women's Studies for a third three-year term.

June 27, 2025 - Fr. Luis Ramírez Almanza L.C.: Director of the Sacerdos Institute for a period of three years.

July 21, 2025 - Prof. P. Alberto Carrara, L.C.: Extraordinary Professor of the Faculty of Philosophy.

July 21, 2025 - Prof. P. Eamonn O'Higgins, L.C.: Associate Professor of the Faculty of Philosophy.

July 21, 2025 - Prof. Fr. José Fernández San Román, L.C.: Reconfirmed Dean of the Faculty of Theology for a three-year term.

July 23, 2025 - Prof. Marta Rodríguez: Permanent Adjunct Professor of the Faculty of Philosophy.

External Appointments and Acknowledgments

The new Ethics Committee for Clinical Practice at the "Burlo Garofolo" Children's Hospital in Trieste, on 10 December 2024, unanimously appointed **Fabiano Nigris**, a doctoral student at the Faculty of Bioethics, as President. His activity as a bioethicist began at the same hospital in July 2021 as a contact member for communication and training; in November 2022 he became its Vice President.

The Board of Directors of the National Catholic Center for Bioethics has appointed our former student **John A. Di Camillo**, PhD, BeL as the next President of NCBC.

Fr. Marcelo Bravo, L.C., Extraordinary Professor of the Faculty of Theology and Director of the Higher Institute of Religious Sciences, and **Prof. Sister Daniela del Gaudio, S.F.I.**, Professor in charge of the Faculty of Theology, have been appointed **Corresponding Members of the Pontifical Academy of Theology**.

Awards

During the last academic year, we had the pleasure of honoring two professors, appointed Emeritus Professors for their significant contribution to the education of our students:

Fr. Gonzalo Miranda, L.C., former Dean of the Faculty of Bioethics, on 12 December 2024.

Fr. Miguel Paz, L.C., Professor of the Faculty of Theology, on 26 June 2025.



The Third APRA Mission

Beyond the classroom, into society

by Roberto Serafini - Department of Institutional Development

A few weeks ago it also came to life online, with a dedicated page on the official website, but the **APRA Third Mission** is much more than a digital section: it is the concrete face of a University that believes in an education capable of leaving the classroom to become a living presence in society, as a daily practice active especially towards those who are most in difficulty.

The Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum thus confirms itself not only as an academic center of excellence, but as an ecclesiastical community committed to translating the evangelical values of Christian humanism into tangible gestures of solidarity. Through Social Responsibility and Solidarity Sport initiatives, APRA builds a path of hope alongside the most vulnerable, offering its students an experience of Integral Formation that combines study, commitment and community spirit.

As Pope Francis recalled on the VII Day of the Poor on June 13, 2023: *"Delegating to others is easy, offering money for others to do charity is generous, but getting involved personally is the vocation of every Christian."*

This is how **APRA Solidale** was born and, during the year 2024, we first organized the collection of foodstuffs and hygiene products called, at the suggestion of Fr. Ryan, **Kilo Amico** then donated to the *Caritas Solidarity Emporium*; then, we invited almost 100 people in a state of hardship from the *Caritas Hostel at Termini Station* to serve them, with the Academic Authorities and many students and APR employees, a peaceful and also copious Christmas lunch

thanks to the support of our Pellegrini Cafeteria.

Always with the same spirit, in March a splendid team of students led by Br. Sebastian participated in the **Run4Good** of the 30th Rome Marathon, launching a fundraising campaign (never enough) to support students with economic difficulties.

For this reason, finally, a selected team of cyclists, led by Fr. Clemens, left for the new edition of the **Tour To France** directly from St. Peter's Square on the occasion of the Jubilee of Sport after the Holy Father's Mass, launching the *Pedaling for Scholarship* campaign to offer scholarships to deserving students with economic difficulties.

For this reason, for years now, Fr. Eamon has been involved in **the St. Peter's Cricket Club** which, under the patronage of the Pontifical Council for Culture, is made up of priests, seminarians and supporters of this sport, who wish to bring the voice of the Church into contemporary culture, promoting the integration of the cultural values dear to the cricket lifestyle through intercultural and ecumenical occasions and charitable initiatives.



Read more

Testimonials

Supporting the future: scholarships as a lever for change

by Roberto Serafini - Department of Institutional Development

In our quest for excellence, we intend to support students through the Scholarships of the **Study Support program** as a tool at the service of the University's Mission.

Supporting students through Scholarships is one of the most significant ways to have an **impact on society**, one person at a time and, for this reason, they can be requested by students already admitted as full professors to programs that award academic degrees of the Faculties (Baccalaureate, Licentiate, Doctorate) and evaluated within the Study Support Committee, presided over by Fr. David Koonce, L.C., according to the Norms for the Support of Study.

For this academic year, we have awarded 39 scholarships,

41% of which in favor of students of Bioethics, which is the Faculty that has therefore obtained the highest number, for 23% to students of the Institute of Religious Sciences, and to students of the Faculties of Philosophy and Theology for 18% each.

We thank all our Donors, the *Regina Apostolorum Foundation HK Ltd and USA inc.* and charities including, in particular, *ACN (Kirche in Not)* which also provides scholarships to support the training of seminar trainers for the international course organized annually by the Sacerdos Institute, *The Friendly Hand* and *Farrell Family Foundation* which every year offer scholarships respectively for the Course of Priestly Renewal and the Summer Course of Bioethics, *The*

Papal Foundation which offers annual scholarships, the Arosio Foundation which offers support for the Arosio Chair and Securiport LLC to support the development of our Institute of Higher Women's Studies.

In the last year we have received many valuable testimonials from our fellows attesting to **the social impact of the donations received** and, among these, we like to mention:



«I am **Sister Carina Marin** from the Religious Studies area, and I currently collaborate in the Parish in the catechetical apostolate where I have highlighted how relevant it is to receive the necessary training and tools to practically implement what has been learned at the Athenaeum (or Pontifical University/Athenaeum).

We, the Eucharistic Missionary Sisters, manage a family-home in Colombia for girls and boys in conditions of extreme poverty. They stay at our house for a specific time until their relatives are able to overcome their psychosocial and work-related difficulties, and can take them back. During their stay at our house, a team of religious educational experts takes care of them, helping them grow with the support of catechism and evangelization, thanks also to the involvement of their family of origin. The Parish and the School help these children regain their dignity by instilling the values of Christianity in their minds and hearts.

All the knowledge and skills I am receiving at the Athenaeum will have a positive impact on all these areas. For this, I thank all of you for the reduction in tuition fees received through the APRA Study Support (Sostegno allo Studio APRA), a period of collaboration and support that will be a source of joy for continuing my future mission.»



«I am **Angelo Licameli**, a manager at a multinational company in the chemical-pharmaceutical sector. I made the decision to continue my studies by enrolling in the Licentiate in Bioethics in 2024, choosing the intensive mode. After these first few months of the Licentiate program, I have only one regret: that I didn't make this choice sooner!

The preparation and availability of the professors, the use of every type of technology to support the lessons, the interaction with students—who have now become friends—from all over the world, and the personalist perspective applied in every area are just some of the elements that are making this

experience truly unique and valuable. Finally, after years of searching, I have arrived at the place where I can find that unifying and synthesizing element, so that, increasingly, my education and my experiences can be integrated and directed toward the service of truth and the human person.»



«I am **Fr. Rafael Spagiari Giron**, a Brazilian priest and student of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum. I chose to specialize in Bioethics because I believe it is a very interesting topic and that it is discussed daily; I am in the last semester of the Licentiate and I have certainly learned a lot during my academic career. I chose the University for the variety of topics and for a totally differentiated program with philosophical, theological, medical and legal issues on bioethics; I was able to learn a lot in medical and legal areas that I did not know before and which therefore contributed a lot to my intellectual and professional growth. I would like to thank the University and our Benefactors for the opportunity to receive financial support that helped me in my studies; It is thanks to this opportunity that I was able to undertake this wonderful study abroad experience. Thank you, God bless you.»



Fr. Hermel Ruperto González Calderón, «We are happy and grateful for the help given to so many students, priests, seminarians and religious who belong to dioceses outside Rome, often even outside Europe. We have thus had, thanks to the Study Support program of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, the opportunity to study the Licentiate of Theology and we thank God for your generosity, to help us with this economic support to know God so much and then to serve the people that God has entrusted to us. Let us pray to God that he may grant everyone the grace of a new life, of a renewed life. Thank you for your generous heart and for the help you give to all of us students, I am a priest of the diocese of Loja in Ecuador and I am very happy to return to Rome after 18 years to continue my studies. God bless you, always.»

United in Mission: the journey of the APRA Alumni Community

by Roberto Serafini - Department of Institutional Development

Those who have lived their study experience at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum are well aware of the great educational and human value that our University Institution offers. Joining the **Alumni Community** means **strengthening the mutual exchange of experiences, preserving and nurturing that sense of belonging** that arises during the academic career.

To keep alive the link with our Alumni, true evangelizers of culture and promoters of a shared Catholic experience, the Alumni Office is constantly engaged in involvement and communication activities. These include the dedicated monthly Newsletter, which informs about news, events and initiatives of our community, and invitations to participate in Conferences, Webinars and Institutional Events, such as the Inaugurations of the Academic Year, the **Art For God Exhibition** by P. Tham, L.C., and the Traveling Exhibition of the Holy Shroud as part of the Jubilee events.

A bond also confirmed by the numerous testimonies of Alumni that reach us and that we share publicly on our institutional website, on social channels and in articles published in *Avvenire*, our Media Partner – as in the case of the Alumni of the Diploma in Shroud Studies and the Institute of Religious Sciences.

During 2025, we also launched the **“Help us improve” Survey**, a valuable tool for collecting updated information

on our Alumni and **outlining the next steps towards new initiatives together**. The high number of responses received allowed us to better understand the expectations and indications of our former students, opening up concrete prospects for the development of further spaces for collaboration.

On the occasion of the **Jubilee of the Educational World**, which will be held from 31 October to 2 November, we are organizing the APR Alumni Jubilee: an exclusive three-day event, full of Jubilee activities, to which we wish to give the utmost attention, hoping for significant participation.

Looking at the medium term, our goal is to consolidate the path taken so far and develop new activities thanks also to a periodic discussion within a dedicated Focus Group. This will allow us to map the social activities, services and agreements already in place, but also to systematically define new opportunities, with the aim of reaching, by 2026, the official establishment of an **APR Alumni Association**. This Association will make it possible to institutionalize a specific Alumni Recognition, designed for those who, after completing their studies at our University, have distinguished themselves as evangelizers of culture.

Testimonials

Carolina Miquel

I am Chilean and I currently carry out my pastoral work in Argentina. I carry with me a legacy of faith, reason, humanism and service. As an alumna of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, I am deeply grateful for the knowledge and values that have been transmitted to me.

They gave me the tools to grow as a person and professionally, always from an integral perspective that allowed me to develop my mission in Brazil, Argentina and Mexico.



Monica de Mattos

I am Monica de Mattos, consecrated member of Regnum Christi, Brazilian. My training in Religious Studies at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum is a milestone in my academic life. The training I received allowed me to develop a deep understanding of the faith and encouraged me to serve others. Today, working with young university students, I realize the importance of conveying to them a clear and hopeful message. I thank the University for the legacy it has left us and wish it much success for the future.



Msgr. Wilder Alberto Vasquez Saldaña appointed Bishop Prelate of the Territorial Prelature of Chuquibambilla in Peru

We wish to extend our sincere congratulations to **Bishop Wilder Alberto Vasquez Saldaña**, who received our Baccalaureate in Theology through our affiliation with Trujillo, on his recent appointment as Bishop Prelate of the Territorial Prelature of Chuquibambilla in Peru.

This recognition is a testimony to your dedication and service in the Church and we are sure that your pastoral work will be a great blessing for the community entrusted to you.

We wish him much success in this new mission and that the Lord will always accompany him on his journey.



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