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FUTURE AND HOPE: MARKING THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF J. RATZINGER'S BIRTH, COMMEMORATING ESCHATOLOGY AND SPE SALVI

CALL FOR PAPERS

«We need the greater and lesser hopes that keep us going day by day. But these are not enough without the great hope, which must surpass everything else. This great hope can only be God, who encompasses the whole of reality and who can bestow upon us what we, by ourselves, cannot attain... God is the foundation of hope: not any god, but the God who has a human face and who has loved us to the end... His love is at the same time our guarantee of the existence of what we only vaguely sense and which nevertheless, in our deepest self, we await: a life that is "truly" life.» *Spe salvi* n. 31

PRESENTATION

The year 2027 marks a significant milestone: the centenary of the birth of J. Ratzinger. Over the course of a two-day conference, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum in Rome wishes to commemorate this occasion by reflecting on two works that themselves celebrate important anniversaries: *Eschatology*, fifty years after its publication, and the encyclical *Spe salvi*, twenty years after its promulgation. Both texts open compelling perspectives on the future—eschatological as well as intrahistorical—and remain strikingly relevant today.

Call for Papers

We invite professors, researchers, and doctoral students to submit proposals that move beyond isolated themes in either work and instead place *Eschatology* and *Spe Salvi* in constructive dialogue. Contributions should examine the theological motifs that run through both texts and illuminate the continuity, development, and contemporary relevance of Joseph Ratzinger's thought.

The abstract—no more than 500 words—and a brief curriculum vitae may be submitted in either Italian or English and should be sent to ratzinger@upra.org by **25 September 2026**. If accepted, the author will be invited to participate in the conference's parallel sessions, with a 20-minute presentation. Selected contributions will also be published in the Studi **Ratzingeriani** series of **Cantagalli**. Notification of acceptance will be sent by **13 November 2026**, after which the final program of the conference will be released.

Editorial and Organizing committee

Profs. Sameer Advani and Leonardo Pelonara

Relevant themes include:

- 1. Christology and eschatology.** The role of the Risen Christ in understanding the ultimate destiny of the human person and in grounding Christian hope. The Christological center of the two works.
- 2. Judgment, freedom, and responsibility.** Judgment as the meeting place of justice and mercy; purgatory understood as a relational and Christological process; the question of universal salvation and Ratzinger's dialogue with Balthasar.
- 3. The Church and eschatology.** The Church as "the place of eschatological anticipation" and "the community of hope"; the relationship between personal destiny and the destiny of the Church.
- 4. The resurrection of the body and the transformation of creation.** Ratzinger's critique of dualistic tendencies and his reaffirmation of the bodily and historical dimensions of salvation.
- 5. The four 'settings' for learning and practicing hope in *Spe Salvi* (nn. 32–48):** prayer, action, suffering, and judgment.
- 6. Discerning the future of humanity: a critique of secular hopes.** Intramundane reductions of eschatology; Ratzinger's contribution to contemporary cultural and anthropological discernment.
- 7. The unity of Ratzinger's theological vision.** Eschatology as the "inner form" of Ratzinger's entire theological project, in which Christology, anthropology, and soteriology mutually illuminate one another.

KEY DATES

- **25th September 2026:** submission of proposals
- **13th November 2026:** notification of acceptance
- **11th-12th March 2027:** theological conference



INFORMATION AND APPLICATION

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