EXPERIENCE, FAITH AND PROFESSIONALISM FOR NEW EVANGELIZERS

#APRA 2026

Magazine

ATENEO PONTIFICIO REGINA APOSTOLORUM



APRA

VERITATEM FACIENTES IN CARITATE

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We thank all authors and collaborators for drafting this edition.



Read here The Magazine in different languages

INDEX

1 APRAFOCUS

Editorial *Tradition and innovation: an integral perspective for the future*
Fr. José E. Oyarzún, L.C. 7

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

APRA numbers 2025-2026 8

APRA*online: An alliance between tradition and innovation for a global humanities education*
Laura Dalfollo 9

Canali digitali: our Voice in the Digital World APRA's Communication Innovation
Institutional Development Department 11

The Exhibition "Who is the Man of the Shroud?" Returns to Rome
Martina Accettola 12

Course on Exorcism and Prayer of Deliverance: a 20-year history
Francesco Spada 13

INNOVATION AS AN INTEGRAL VISION

Theology Faculty - *Innovative paths to relaunch an integral formation at the service of the mission*
Fr. José Fernández San Román, L.C. 14

Philosophy Faculty - *Thinking about the human, innovating culture: philosophy as an integral perspective*
Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C. 15

Bioethic Faculty - *Bioethics, a neologism that is one century old*
Massimo Losito 16

Higher Institute of Religious Sciences - *Innovation as an integral perspective: forming protagonists of change in the light of faith*
Fr. Óscar Missas, L.C. 17

Sacerdos Institute - *Innovating priestly formation to serve the Church and society*
Fr. Luis Ramírez Almanza, L.C. 18

Institute of Science and Faith - *Training and research for the challenges of our time*
Fr. Alex Yeung, L.C. 19

Institute for Higher Studies on Woman - *Innovation and looking to the future: the path that the Institute is taking*
Anita Cadavid 20

RESEARCH

Hildebrand Chair for Christian Personalism - *Innovating while preserving the human*
Elisa Grimi 21

The Neurobioethics Group and IINBE - *APRA and the new frontiers of neuroscience and AI* 22

Marco Arosio Chair of Advanced Medieval Studies - *An opportunity for training and human and professional growth*
Marco Martorana 23

Joseph Ratzinger Benedict XVI Chair - *Institution in 2027 and Fisrt Congress for the Centenary*
Fr. Sameer Advani, L.C. 24

EVENTS

Aperitivo Filosofico - *"The taste of longevity is the aroma of the future"* 25

«Dilexit nos»: Study day
Angela Tagliafico 26

Study day - *Marriage Spirituality as an Ecclesial subject: training to accompany*
Fr. Luca Frontali, L.C. 26

4th Prioritalia APRA Summer School - *The impact of algorithms on the individual and the socioeconomic fabric*
Adele Ercolano 27

Ad Excellentiam - Presentation of New Financial Aid Grants
Giampaolo Cerri 28

Study day - *"The Greatness of Metaphysics"* with Vittorio Possenti 29

Doctoral dissertations A.Y. 2025-2026 29

2 APRACOMMUNITY

THE "VOICE" OF OUR COMMUNITY

Banns

Publications 32

In the Library and Bookstore 32

Articles and Testimonials

Supporting education to shape the future
Fr. David Koonce, L.C. 33

The voice of the students 34

Close to the Holy Father 35

NETWORK #FACCIAMORETE

Joint Diploma "The Thought of Saint Thomas" - *Higher Education at APRA* 35

Presentation of Cardinal Eijk's Book - *A dialogue on marriage and sexual ethics* 36

Webinar - *Global Dialogue on Neuroethics: Walter Glannon Hosted at APRA* 36

NEWS

Nominees and Thank You Notes 37

THE THIRD APRA MISSION

APRA's Third Mission: Formation, Solidarity, and Culture in the Service of the Human Person
Roberto Serafini 38

Small gestures, great opportunities 39

Scholarship Testimonials 40

ALUMNI

Alumni Testimonials 41

1

APRAFOCUS





Tradition and innovation: an integral perspective for the future

by Fr. José E. Oyarzún, L.C. - Rector Magnificus



Each academic year tells a journey. The APRA 2026 Magazine collects some of the steps taken by the Athenaeum during this year and offers, at the same time, the opportunity to look at the direction we are taking.

The theme that runs through this issue is the relationship between tradition and innovation. For an ecclesiastical university, it is not a question of choosing between two opposing realities. **The Christian tradition is a living reality**, capable of generating the future; Innovation, when it is authentic, seeks new forms to achieve a mission that remains.

It is in this perspective that the University's journey and the implementation of the 2024-2029 Strategic Planning are placed. The renewal of the educational offer, the development of Faculties and Institutes and the search for new ways of learning express the desire to continue to offer a formation suited to the demands of the Church and contemporary society.

Among the most significant steps in this path is the development of ***APRAonline***, which expands the possibilities of access to the University's educational proposal and opens up new perspectives of presence and service. Research and numerous academic and cultural initiatives also bear witness to the desire to keep alive the dialogue between faith, reason and culture, rigorously addressing the great questions of our time.

The pages dedicated to the **life of the community** show, on the other hand, that the University is not only made up of programs and activities. It is a reality made up of people and relationships: students, teachers, researchers, collaborators, *alumni* and friends of the Athenaeum. Publications, testimonies, collaborations with other institutions and initiatives to support study express the vitality of a community that wishes to **share responsibilities** and **build new forms of participation**.

Particular importance is also given to the **commitment to students and society**. Supporting a person's training means investing in the future; putting one's skills at the service of society means making concrete the responsibility of the University towards the world in which it lives.

This issue of *The Journal*, therefore, tells the story of **an Athenaeum that continues to grow and renew itself**. It does this through planning and daily work, research and training, innovation and collaboration. But, above all, it does so by trying to keep its identity united with its openness to the future.

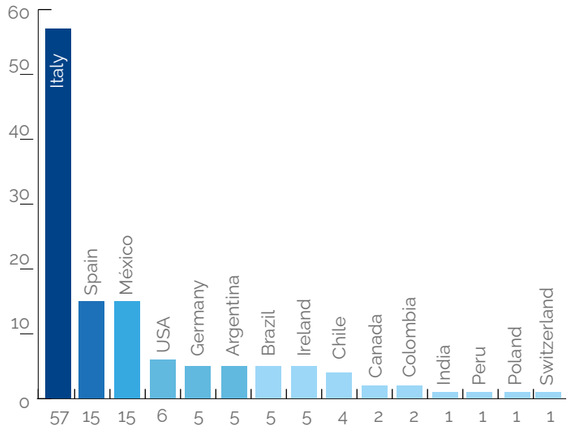
The challenge is not to choose between tradition and innovation. It consists in making them dialogue. Tradition offers **depth** and **orientation**; Innovation opens up new possibilities for **service**. When both are placed at the service of the person and the mission of the University, they become an integral perspective for the future.

Enjoy the reading.

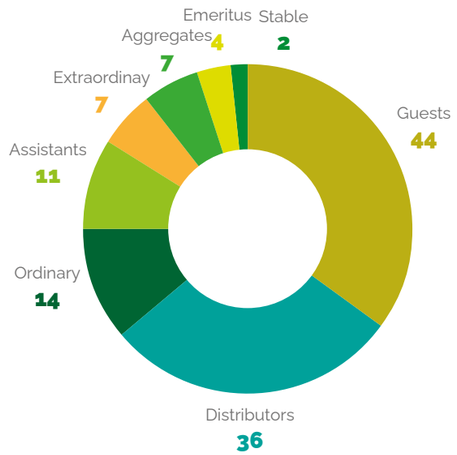
APRA numbers
A.A. 2025-2026

125 lecturers from 15 countries

Teachers by nationality

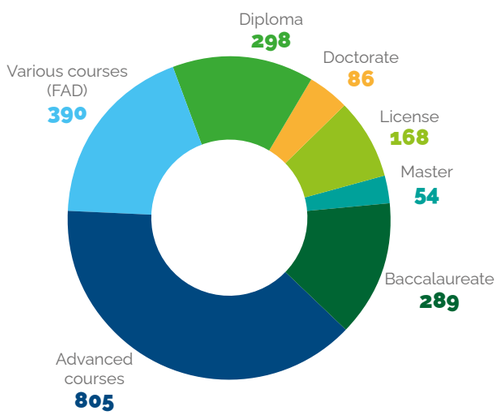


Teachers by category

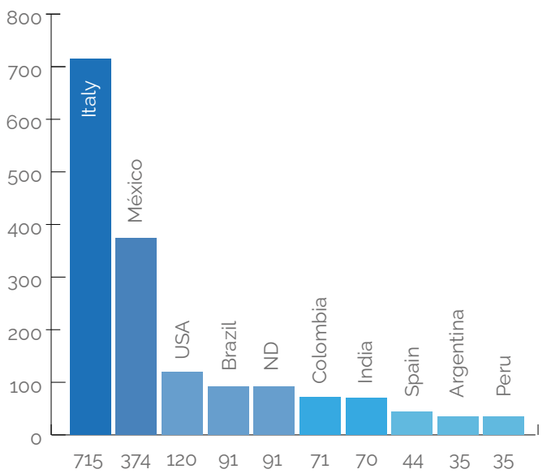


2090 students

Students by training cycle



Students by nationality (top 10)



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APRA*online*

An alliance between tradition and innovation for a global humanities education

by Laura Dalfollo - Distance and Online Learning

From February 27 to July 14, 2026, the institutional and academic path that led to the official birth of **APRAonline**, the academic alliance between APRA and Anáhuac Online, developed.



Over the past few months, the initiative has taken on an increasingly defined structure, transforming an initial intuition into a concrete and stable form of collaboration. The journey made was not limited to the preparation of a formal agreement, but allowed the two institutions to focus on their aims, priorities and operating methods, while respecting their respective identities and missions.

APRA*online* thus fits into a precise horizon: that of a education capable of crossing geographical and cultural boundaries, placing the individual at the center, the quality of the academic proposal and the value of the encounter between different educational traditions at the center. In this perspective, the digital dimension is not a simple technical tool, but becomes a new space in which to build educational relationships, encourage the circulation of knowledge and promote an authentically international university presence.

It is precisely the sharing of this vision that has guided the entire design process. **APRAonline** is in fact the result of a path based on dialogue, joint work and the **exchange of specific skills**. This process culminated in the signing of the collaboration agreement, which took place **on 14 July 2026** in Rome, at the APRA headquarters, in the presence of the academic authorities. The signing represented the culmination of a first phase of work and, at the same time, the **beginning** of a **new season of cooperation between the two institutions**. This transition was symbolically prepared by the **international webinar** on 7 July, dedicated to Artificial Intelligence, one of the most relevant cultural and educational challenges of our time. The event drew broad international participation, with a record number of participants and over a thousand participants from more than thirty countries. The decision to place this **initiative** in the start-up process of **APRA*online*** was not accidental, but highlighted from the beginning the intention to address **technological innovation** through a **critical**, **interdisciplinary** and **person-oriented gaze**.

Artificial Intelligence, in fact, calls into question not only technical skills, but also philosophy, ethics, anthropology, law, communication and education. Its applications are transforming work, relationships, knowledge production and decision-making, raising questions that cannot be addressed solely in terms of efficiency or technological development. In this scenario, humanistic education is called to offer criteria for understanding and discernment, helping students and professionals to interpret transformations that profoundly affect personal and social life. The webinar therefore took on the value of a statement of intent: innovating means welcoming the possibilities of the present without renouncing fundamental questions about meaning, responsibility and human dignity.

It is from this approach that **APRA*online***'s mission takes shape. The project was created with the aim of **expanding** and **strengthening APRA**'s **educational offering**, making **online humanities courses** characterized by high **academic quality** available. The initiative intends to address in particular those who, for geographical, professional or economic reasons, do not have the opportunity to attend courses in person.

The online mode makes it possible to reach students in very different contexts, people engaged in the world of work, members of educational communities and professionals interested in deepening their preparation without interrupting daily activities. Accessibility, however, is not understood as a reduction in training needs, but as the ability to offer rigorous paths through languages, times and tools suitable for digital teaching. **APRA*online*** therefore intends to combine **flexibility** and **solidity**, personal accompaniment and autonomy in studying, international dimension and attention to local contexts. In this way, the university can extend its presence and share a heritage of research and teaching capable of contributing to the growth of people and institutions in different areas of the world.

The breadth of this mission also explains the **strategic value** attached to cooperation within the **RIU network**. "This project has a strategic value for our RIU network, because it stems from the **sharing of common objectives** and the desire to **network skills**, **experience** and **resources**. Working together allows us to **broaden the impact** of our educational **mission** and to bring humanistic education to

contexts and territories that, operating individually, would be more difficult to achieve," said the Rector, **Fr. José Enrique Oyarzún**.
His words recall an essential dimension of the initiative: cooperation as a necessary condition for generating a broader and more lasting impact. The network is not just a sum of institutions, but a place of exchange in which skills are mutually enriched, experiences are shared and resources can be directed towards common goals. In a historical phase marked by rapid social and cultural changes, the ability to work together allows us to develop more articulated responses to emerging training needs. APRA***online*** enhances this logic of alliance and translates it into a project capable of uniting academic communities, teachers and students, promoting a culture of collaboration that overcomes geographical distances and national affiliations.
Within this framework, the collaboration with Anáhuac Online is based on the complementarity of the expertise, experience and international perspectives of the two institutions. **APRA** makes available its **academic tradition**, the expertise gained in the field of humanities and a training proposal oriented towards the search for truth and the integral formation of the person. **Anáhuac Online** contributes, for its part, with the experience developed in **digital education**, in the design of learning environments and in the management of programs aimed at an international audience.



From the meeting of these two realities comes the possibility of creating courses that are at the same time solid in content, effective in methodology and open to students from different cultures. "Anáhuac chose APRA because it combines academic solidity and international vision. Together we can build a reality that each of our institutions, individually, could not achieve," said **Dr. Rafael Estrada,** general manager of Anahuac online. Collaboration thus takes on the value of a strategic choice based on mutual trust and on the awareness that authentic internationalization comes from the sharing of responsibilities, and not from the simple extension of the educational offer.
The complementarity between the two institutions already finds a first concrete translation in the **program** in **Online Philosophy**, the **first academic path** developed jointly and one of the most significant expressions of APRA***online***'s cultural and educational mission. The choice of philosophy as a starting point manifests the desire to place at the center of the project the questions that have always accompanied the human experience: who is the person, what does it mean to know, how to orient freedom and what criteria can guide individual and social action.



In a context marked by the speed of information, the fragmentation of knowledge and the growing influence of technologies, philosophy offers tools for arguing, distinguishing, interpreting and dialoguing. It makes it possible to go beyond immediate responses and to reconstruct a unitary framework in which scientific and social innovations can also be understood in the light of their effects on man. "Studying philosophy today is essential to understand and consciously face the challenges of contemporary society; we want to give access to the treasure of philosophy that we have been guarding at APRA for decades," emphasized **Fr. Gabriel Von Wendt**, Academic Director of the program. The online course aims to make this study experience accessible to a wider community, without losing the rigor of the investigation and the dialogical dimension of the discipline.
In order for this proposal to fully develop, APRA***online*** will be configured as a real **international training ecosystem**, supported by new digital channels, a dedicated website and a monthly newsletter. These tools will have the task of presenting the programs, promoting orientation, maintaining contact with the academic community and offering opportunities for updating on the topics addressed. Therefore, reference will not only be made to a collection of courses, but to an environment in which to share content, build relationships and offer services and forms of accompaniment designed to make the online experience coherent and participatory. In fact, the quality of a digital path depends not only on the availability of materials, but also on the clarity of the structure, the presence of teachers, the possibilities for discussion and the ability to create a learning community. Technology thus acquires a properly educational value to the extent that it facilitates encounters, supports the continuity of study and makes active participation possible.
The **2026-2027 academic year** will mark the **launch** of the **first joint programs** under the APRA***online*** brand, concretely implementing the collaboration between APRA and Anáhuac Online. This will not be a point of arrival, but the start of a process destined to develop gradually, through the verification of experiences, listening to students and the progressive consolidation of teaching models suitable for the different types of proposals.
Starting from this first nucleus, the offer will include different paths, from MOOC courses to short-term diplomas, up to complete academic programs, and will be developed through the progressive involvement of all APRA faculties and institutes. This articulation will make it possible to

respond to different needs: from introduction to a specific topic to professional updating, from interdisciplinary in-depth study to the construction of an organic academic itinerary.
Open courses will be able to bring a wide audience closer to humanistic content; diplomas will offer focused paths compatible with personal and work commitments; complete programs will instead allow systematic and continuous training. In this perspective, **APRAonline** represents a **strategic project** for the entire academic community, called upon to enhance and make accessible, even in digital mode, the richness of its disciplinary, training and research skills. The involvement of faculties and institutes will also encourage the emergence of proposals capable of bringing together different areas, promoting that unitary vision of knowledge that constitutes one of the most significant features of humanistic education.
As a whole, the initiative expresses the desire of APRA and **Anáhuac Online** to put **tradition** and **innovation** in dialogue, enhancing the opportunities offered by digital technologies to make humanistic education increasingly accessible, international and capable of contributing to the integral growth of the person and the transformation of society.
Tradition, in this framework, is not understood as an immovable conservation, but as a living heritage of questions, knowledge and methods that continues to illuminate the present. Innovation, in turn, is not taken as an automatic value, but as a possibility to be oriented with competence and responsibility. APRAonline was born precisely from the meeting of these two dimensions: preserving the depth of the academic proposal and, at the same time, identifying new ways to communicate and share it.
The project thus expresses a conception of technology placed at the service of education and education placed at the service of the person. Its global perspective does not cancel out differences, but creates a space in which cultures, traditions and experiences can meet and enrich each other. In this sense, APRAonline represents not only an expansion of the educational offer, but a significant step in building a more open, connected and aware academic community of the challenges of the future.

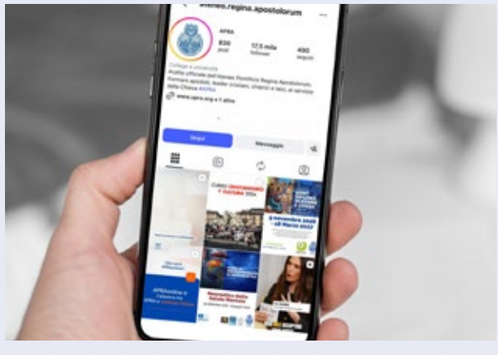
Visit the APRAonline page

Digital channels: our Voice in the Digital World

APRA's Communication Innovation

Institutional Development Department

In the contemporary academic and cultural landscape, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum continues to **renew** *its* **communication strategies** *to carry its educational mission beyond the physical boundaries of the campus. The primary goal, shared across our digital channels, remains constant: to inform and form Christian leaders capable of making a positive impact on society through faith, reason, and culture.*
The Athenaeum's digital ecosystem thrives through a widespread and diversified presence. The META channels, **Facebook** *and* **Instagram**, *stand strong as fundamental pillars of the community, recording an extraordinary* **average growth rate of 25%**. *On these platforms, images, videos, and academic events foster daily* **engagement** *and* **interest** *among students, alumni, and supporters. At the same time, LinkedIn consolidates its position as the premier space for institutional positioning, showcasing research, and facilitating professional networking for our faculty and future leaders.*
The presence on **Spotify** *with the official channel* ***APRA On Air*** *carries particular significance. Through the strategic planning of academic and educational content—ranging from bitesized insights on theology, philosophy, and bioethics to informal conversations on current affairs—audio broadcasting allows us to accompany listeners in their daily lives. The content thus becomes an additional*



tool for sharing knowledge aimed at a deep, always-accessible evangelization capable of bringing a diverse audience closer to the Athenaeum's values and vision.
Finally, the project launched last year on **TikTok** *looks toward the future. Envisioned as a medium-to-long-term initiative, the channel represents our* **laboratory** *for* **contemporary,** *fresh, and dynamic* **communication**. *Through short videos and direct language, TikTok allows us to engage younger generations, bridging distances and demonstrating that Christian leadership formation knows how to speak the language of the present.*

The Exhibition "*Who is the Man of the Shroud?*" Returns to Rome

by Martina Accettola – Vatican News





Inaugurated at the Basilica of Sant'Andrea della Valle, the traveling exhibition dedicated to the Shroud of Turin has returned. The central feature of the display is a full-scale replica of the Shroud, providing an in-depth exploration that merges cultural, scientific, and religious perspectives—offering visitors tools for reflection and analysis on one of the most debated relics in Christian history and an object of devotion for centuries. "*It is a gift that the Lord wanted to leave us*", recalls Father Rafael Pascual.

Since the 1300s, the Shroud of Turin has challenged faith, history, and science, standing at the crossroads of research, religion, and cultural reflection. Within this context, the exhibition "*Who is the Man of the Shroud?*" is on display at the Basilica of Sant'Andrea della Valle in Rome through mid-May. The exhibition guides visitors through the discovery of the sacred linen using explanatory panels, photographs, reproductions of the instruments of the Passion, and a **faithful full-size replica of the Shroud**. Sponsored by the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum (APRA), the exhibition opened on March 3 accompanied by the conference "*The Shroud Between Science and Faith*"—an occasion for academic reflection featuring experts such as Father Rafael Pascual (Director of the Othonia Research Group and Professor in APRA's Faculty of Philosophy) and Emanuela Marinelli (Visiting Professor at APRA's Higher Institute of Religious Sciences and an internationally recognized Shroud expert), both of whom have been researching the subject for years.

The Linen Cloth

As is well known, the Shroud of Turin—so named because it is preserved in the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist in the Piedmontese capital—is a blood-stained linen cloth bearing the imprinted image of a crucified man, traditionally identified as Jesus of Nazareth: a faint yet detailed impression. The cloth features a unique diagonal weave, known as a herringbone pattern, of Middle Eastern and Egyptian origin, dating back approximately to the 1st century. All four Gospels recount that Jesus, at the time of His burial, was wrapped in a linen shroud provided by Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin and His secret disciple. Due to its unique characteristics, the Shroud is one of the most studied archaeological artifacts in the world, woven with questions stemming from a "who," an "if," and a "when." From this perspective, Father Rafael Pascual defined the Shroud as "*the most important relic of our existence; and it is a gift that the Lord wanted to leave us*".

Read the full article in Italian on Vatican News

Course on Exorcism and Prayer of Deliverance: a 20-year history

by Francesco Spada - Journalist, Director of TV BOLOGNA

The Course on Exorcism and Prayer of Deliverance marks twenty years of history and achieves a particularly significant milestone in its 2026 edition: 231 participants hailing from 38 countries around the world.



Organized by the Sacerdos Institute of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum and GRIS (Socio-Religious Research and Information Group), the course received extensive national and international media coverage again this year, gaining remarkable global reach and resonance.

The twentieth edition stood out not only for its high number of international participants, but also for its ability to respond to the needs of the Church and contemporary society on a delicate, complex, and ever-relevant topic.

"*After twenty years of journeying together, the Course on Exorcism and Prayer of Deliverance presents itself as a school of discernment and mercy. It is a laboratory of study and faith, where the Church and academia meet to better understand the mystery of evil and the redemptive power of Christ. It is not merely about training exorcists, but about educating in prudence, respect for the human person, and spiritual responsibility*", emphasizes Fr. Luis Ramírez, L.C., Director of the Course.

Great satisfaction was also expressed by Giuseppe Ferrari, Secretary of GRIS: "*The course was highly appreciated for both its academic caliber and the effectiveness of the training provided to bishops, priests, religious, and laity. It addressed not only theoretical aspects, but also more concrete dimensions, such as observing actual exorcisms accompanied by firsthand testimonies. Also of note was the ecumenical and interreligious panel discussion, featuring a Jewish rabbi, a Greek Orthodox priest, an Evangelical pastor, and a Muslim*".

Over these twenty years, the course has trained thousands of participants from more than 40 countries: priests, religious, physicians, psychologists, educators, social workers, and laity interested in exploring the phenomenon in all its complexity.

Among this year's speakers was Fr. François Dermine, President of GRIS and an exorcist, who called attention to the risks associated with occultism and magical rites: "*These are situations that allow the devil to make contact with us. Satan is strong, but he cannot win; however, we must do our part, and the responsibility for certain choices lies with us*". Fr. Dermine also recalled how, historically, specific training for exorcists was often lacking—which is why the course sponsored by the Athenaeum and GRIS has served as a benchmark for years.

Particularly intense was the testimony of Ania Goledzinowska, who recounted her transition from a life marked by fashion and success to a journey of faith that began after an experience in Medjugorje. Along with her conversion, she explained, came fears, voices, and a long internal battle. Yet, as she stated herself, "*evil is fought together and can be overcome*".

The 2026 edition also tackled several particularly current challenges, including the relationship between technology, new forms of distorted spirituality, and Artificial Intelligence, confirming the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to exorcism and spiritual discernment. In this light, Msgr. Rubens Miraglia Zani, an exorcist and speaker at the course, highlighted the value of the initiative in creating a dialogue between faith, science, and experiences from diverse international contexts.

According to David Murgia, journalist and President of GRIS for the Diocese of Rome, one of the new critical issues is the phenomenon of "do-it-yourself" exorcisms, which in several cases can degenerate into actual physical violence against those involved. For this reason, he stressed, promoting accurate information is vital.

The testimonies of the speakers clearly demonstrate that the Course on Exorcism and Prayer of Deliverance continues to be a unique forum for in-depth international study and discussion, capable of offering rigorous, expert tools for spiritual discernment and pastoral care.

The success of the course is the fruit not only of the speakers' preparation, but also of the intensive study, organization, and prayer that precede the definition of the program—a shared commitment between the Sacerdos Institute of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum and GRIS, spearheaded in particular by Fr. Luis Ramírez, L.C., and Giuseppe Ferrari.

Communication also played a vital role. National and international media coverage helped bring visibility to the initiative, thanks to the work of a communications team coordinated by Maria Selva Silvestri.

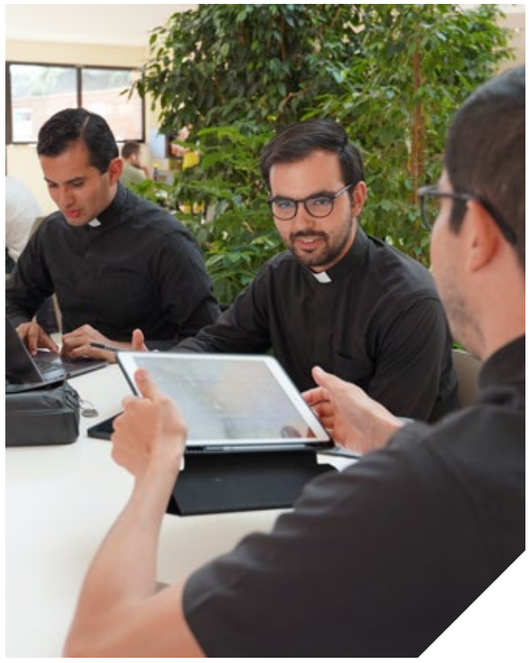
With the twentieth edition now concluded, eyes are already turned toward the future and the upcoming 2027 edition.

Visit the official webpage for the 2027 Edition

Theology Faculty

Innovative paths to relaunch an integral formation at the service of the mission

by Fr. José Fernández San Román, L.C., Dean



In the context of the new Academic Year 2026-2027, the Faculty of Theology presents with renewed impetus its commitment to constantly rethink teaching methods, promote interdisciplinarity and integrate new technologies, without ever losing sight of the centrality of the person and the evangelizing mission, particularly in its cultural impact.

In this context, one of the **most significant initiatives** of recent years is placed: the development of an **international training offer** that is **also delivered at a distance**. It is a proposal that fully embodies the idea of integral innovation, overcoming geographical barriers thanks to online programs in Spanish and making it possible for students from all over Latin America and beyond to access quality theological studies.

Among the **well-established paths**, the Licentiates in Dogmatic Theology and Spiritual Theology stand out, structured according to an innovative format: the **first year** takes place entirely **online**, **in Spanish** and at times compatible with Latin American time zones, while the **second year** is held **in person** in Rome, in Italian. Alongside these Licentiates, the Faculty also offers **two-year Diplomas** in Dogmatic and Spiritual Theology, online and in Spanish.

As a novelty, there is also the **new online Diploma in Moral Theology**, in Spanish, with specialization in the field of marriage, particularly relevant for addressing, in the light of the Magisterium, the contemporary challenges related to family ministry.

Among the further innovations of the educational offer are two courses in Italian dedicated to the **Theology of the Sacrament of Marriage**: a basic one in online mode and an advanced one in presence, with the aim of relaunching the pastoral care of marriage. The Proceedings of the course will also be published on some themes of the Spirituality of *Regnum Christi* and of the Study Day dedicated to the encyclical *Dilexit nos* and the Sacred Heart of Jesus, read in the light of the Theology of the Saints.

Courses on the Theology of the Holy Spirit and the **International Study Conference on the Theological Thought of Joseph Ratzinger – Benedict XVI** (11–12 March 2027), on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, will also take on particular importance. As has already happened for previous initiatives, the publication of the Acts is also planned in this case, thus contributing to contemporary theological reflection.

In all three cycles of the Faculty (Baccalaureate, Licentiate and Doctorate), the quality of the offer is guaranteed by a teaching staff composed of scholars of recognized prestige, many of whom are members of important international institutions and also of the Pontifical Academies. The profile of our students increasingly reflects the richness and diversity of the contemporary Church: priests, religious and laity, men and women engaged in different ecclesial and social contexts. Of particular importance is the growing presence of students from Latin America, Africa and India. Educational opportunities include teaching – especially in seminaries and faculties of theology – the formation of future priests, pastoral care (especially that of the family and spiritual accompaniment), communication and cultural and charitable commitment.

This proposal represents a concrete response to the need to form prepared evangelizers, capable of thinking about the faith in depth and communicating it effectively in a world in constant change.

These paths, although sometimes beginning at a distance, lead successively to the heart of the universal Church, Rome, offering a concrete opportunity to grow in faith and contribute to the evangelical transformation of society. This is because "mission is not one of the many tasks of the Church. It is its reason for being," as Pope Leo XIV recalled on the occasion of the opening of the Extraordinary Consistory (June 26, 2026). So we come to study in Rome and from Rome we leave for the mission.

Visit the Theology Faculty page

Philosophy Faculty

Thinking about the human, innovating culture: philosophy as an integral perspective

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

In a time of great cultural, scientific and technological transformations, philosophy is called to rediscover its original vocation: to understand man, to interpret reality and to offer criteria of discernment to guide change. It is in this perspective that the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum continues its development path, in harmony with the University's 2024-2029 Strategic Planning, making its own the perspective of "innovation as an integral perspective". Innovation, in fact, does not only mean introducing new tools or new technologies, but safeguarding what is essential about the human, forming people capable of combining intellectual rigor, interdisciplinary openness and cultural responsibility.

This vision finds concrete expression today in the expansion of our educational offer. Starting from **January 2027**, the Faculty will inaugurate the **Bachelor's Degree (Licenciatura) in Philosophy online in Spanish**, developed within the **APRA Online** platform. This is a strategic project that will make the University's philosophical education accessible to students from Latin America, Spain and numerous other international contexts, combining the academic quality of our philosophical tradition with innovative digital teaching methodologies. The goal is to train a new generation of philosophers, educators, leaders and cultural operators capable of addressing the great questions of our time without sacrificing the depth of metaphysical and anthropological reflection.



Alongside the growth of the teaching offer, the Faculty is investing decisively in the consolidation of its research activity and the international profile of the teaching staff. The increasingly significant participation of our professors in **the International Network of Regnum Christi Universities (RIU)** fosters the emergence of joint research projects, shared publications, academic mobility and the development of new interdisciplinary collaborations. This international dimension strengthens the scientific positioning of the Faculty and contributes to creating an increasingly integrated academic community, capable of influencing the contemporary philosophical debate through a reflection faithful to tradition and open to the challenges of global culture.

The development of research is also reflected in the evolution of post-graduate courses. In the **2026-2027** academic year, a new edition of the **Postgraduate Course in Neurobioethics will start**, the tenth edition, dedicated to the theme of **mental health**, one of the great emerging priorities of contemporary society. Through the dialogue between philosophy, neuroscience, bioethics, medicine, psychology and law, the course will offer tools to understand the anthropological and ethical implications of the new knowledge on the brain and the growing attention to the prevention, treatment and promotion of mental well-being.

At the same time, the new edition of the Master's **Degree in Philosophical Counseling** will continue to train professionals capable of accompanying people, organizations and institutions in decision-making processes, leveraging philosophical dialogue as a resource for personal, educational and professional growth.

The identity of the Faculty thus continues to develop along a well-defined axis: to preserve the solidity of the **philosophical tradition**, represented in a particular way by metaphysical realism and the **legacy of Saint Thomas Aquinas**, opening it up to the great emerging questions of the twenty-first century. The **Hildebrand Chair for Christian Personalism**, dedicated to **the research and dissemination of Dietrich von Hildebrand's thought**, in dialogue with other authors of Christian personalism, also fits into this perspective. Artificial intelligence, neurotechnology, philosophy of technology, ethics of algorithms, philosophy of mind, bioethics, philosophical anthropology, dialogue between science and faith and with postmodern culture, political philosophy and philosophical consultancy are today some of the main areas in which our academic community is engaged in research and training

Studying philosophy at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum means entering an international community that considers thought not as an abstract exercise, but as a service to the Church, culture and society. At a time when innovation sometimes risks losing its focus on the human person, philosophy is called to remember that all authentic progress is born of the truth about man. This is the mission that our Faculty continues to pursue: to train thinkers capable of preserving the human, interpreting the present and contributing with intelligence, competence and hope to the construction of the future.

Visit the Philosophy Faculty page

Bioethic Faculty

Bioethics, a neologism that is one century old

by Massimo Losito - Pro-Dean and Faculty Professor



In 1927 a German author, Fritz Jahr, emphasized in a scientific article the need to **rethink the ethical relationship between all living beings**: in the title of the work appears, it seems for the first time, the term "**bioethics**", a word that etymologically unites moral values to the world of life. 2027 will therefore see this word turn one hundred years old: it will be an opportunity to **look back**, observing all the paths that bioethics, as a discipline, has taken, moving away first but then returning to the original ecological dimension and in the meantime becoming a fundamental component for anyone involved in science and technology, philosophy, theology, law, education, politics... At the same time, it will be time to **look towards the horizon**, asking ourselves how to ensure that the great scientific and technological enterprise can continue its journey without losing its compass, that is, the integral custody of the human.

When the Faculty of Bioethics of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum was born in 2001, the first in the world, scientific progress was already posing questions that society was not entirely ready to face: Father Gonzalo Miranda, L.C., had the prophetic intuition that **to answer those questions an interdisciplinary formation** in biomedicine, law, philosophy, theology would be needed; that is, an **entire** university **course** was needed, **demanding** but **exciting**.

Today, while artificial intelligence, biotechnology and neuroscience are continuously redrawing the **boundaries of human action**, that original intuition is confirmed as relevant as ever: innovating without losing man means having a sort of navigator that indicates the route, with maps that are always updated, respecting an authentic integral human ecology. The Faculty of Bioethics has always interpreted this mission as its raison d'être, combining **scientific rigor**, **anthropological depth** and fidelity to the **Magisterium of the Church**.

Consistently, the Faculty has made **interdisciplinarity** and the **integration of emerging technologies** two pillars of its educational offer. The course of study is divided into the Licentiate and Doctoral cycles, flanked by more flexible proposals such as Masters (with our UNESCO Chair in Bioethics and Human Rights) and the Postgraduate Course in Bioethics, designed for those who want targeted training without undertaking the entire academic path. Some courses are available via distance learning, or rather, from far-away places, without ever truly being 'distant': a discipline that is understood as a bridge between distant worlds, can only **tear down walls**.

Consequently, it becomes an asset to have students of extremely varied geographical origin and academic background. A network that remains solid over time, even when our former students apply the knowledge and skills acquired in their professions, for example in hospital and institutional ethics committees, in bioethical consultancy for health and legislative bodies, in teaching, communication and pastoral accompaniment: areas in which the ability to read the challenges of the present in the light of the dignity of the human person makes the difference.

Looking to the future, the Faculty has already begun a reflection to **renew its program** with a view to a **significant internationality**, with the aim of responding even more promptly to the challenges posed by new technologies, **without ever losing sight of its center of gravity**: the human person, from conception to natural death and the entire human family as an ally for the care of the common home, in the service of the universal Church.

This is the most authentic synthesis of innovation as an integral perspective: the adjective '**integral**' means possessing a **constant attitude to seek the good of all men and of the whole man**.

And it is precisely in this search for goodness that we must recognize that **bioethics today cannot be ignored**. Its issues arise daily, everywhere, often we don't even realize it: "an elderly man listening, bewildered, to an automated phone voice that should make him a medical appointment; a teenage girl who asks her AI how to lose weight quickly because thinks she is unattractive; a priest who has a lonely woman in the confessional who does not know what to do and how to do with the child that grows inside her...

With all due respect to astronomy, asking about bioethics is not the same as asking whether or not a celestial body at the edge of our solar system can be classified as a planet. After all, it is asking ourselves if we ourselves are only bodies, clusters of cells, sentenced from the newborn's first cry to the sorrow of the grave; or rather we are the true 'celestial bodies', that is, fragile lives but destined for eternity. The questions of bioethics, as we said, arise everywhere with the rapid progress of biomedicine and technoscience, with the restlessness that we perceive inside and that makes it clear to us that not everything that is technically feasible is ethically right. The problem, therefore, is not in the question, but in having **solid principles integrated** into science and conscience to **find the answers**.

Visit the Bioethic Faculty page

Higher Institute of Religious Sciences - ISSR

Innovation as an integral perspective: forming protagonists of change in the light of faith

by Fr. Óscar Missas, L.C. - Pro-Directos of Institute

In a world undergoing profound cultural, educational and technological transformations, innovation cannot be reduced to the simple introduction of new tools or methodologies. It requires an integral vision of the person, capable of combining knowledge, experience, discernment and responsibility. It is in this perspective that the educational offer of the Higher Institute of Religious Sciences (HIRS) of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum is placed, proposing paths capable of responding to contemporary challenges through a fruitful dialogue between faith, culture and society.

The concept of "Innovation as an integral perspective" shapes all programs across the board of the HIRS and is directly linked to the evangelizing mission of the Church, to her presence in the world of culture and to the conviction, today more than ever, that every authentic innovation must preserve and enhance the human.

The HIRS was in fact created with the aim of forming lay people, consecrated men and women and ordained ministers so that they can assume significant responsibilities in ecclesial life and contemporary society, offering a solid theological, philosophical, pedagogical and pastoral preparation. The goal is not only to transmit knowledge, but to develop the ability to interpret the questions of our time in the light of Revelation, fostering a competent and credible Christian presence in the various professional and cultural spheres.

The proposed **academic and research tracks** clearly highlight **this attention to emerging challenges**. Alongside the **fundamental studies** in Sacred Scripture, Theology, Philosophy and Church History, there is space for **highly topical issues** such as integral ecology, religious pluralism, bioethics, the relationship between transhumanism and religion, the impact of the mass media on young people, educational dynamics and formation processes. Particular importance is also given to the **focused studies** dedicated to the family, leadership, spiritual accompaniment, the psychology of formation and the promotion of safe environments, areas in which Christian reflection is called to confront decisive questions for the present and future of society.

The offer is aimed at a wide and diverse audience: religion teachers, pastoral workers, men and women religious, priests, professionals, educators and committed lay people who wish to integrate academic competence and Christian witness. This plurality of recipients fosters an authentically interdisciplinary environment, in which different perspectives meet and enrich each other, generating a culture of dialogue and collaboration.

The teaching methods also reflect this innovative vision. Alongside academic lessons, the courses include seminars, experiential workshops, group activities, internships and the possibility of online participation, promoting **dynamic learning oriented towards the development of concrete**



skills. Personal research, the drafting of papers and constant dialogue with teachers also contribute to forming professionals and pastoral agents capable of critical analysis, planning and leadership.

The **professional and apostolic outlets** are many: from the teaching of the Catholic religion to formation in seminaries and religious communities, from pastoral animation to educational accompaniment, up to the areas of cultural consultancy, formation planning and the promotion of safe environments. In all these contexts, the HIRS intends to prepare people capable of being **protagonists of change**, not by chasing the fashions of the moment, but by contributing to the construction of a more human, supportive and open society to transcendence.

In this sense, innovation as an integral perspective is not only a methodological criterion, but a a genuine educational vision: a proposal that unites faith and reason, tradition and future, evangelization and culture, so that academic formation becomes an authentic service to the Church and to the world.

Visit the HIRS page

Sacerdos Institute

Innovating priestly formation to serve the Church and society

by Fr. Luis Ramírez Almanza, L.C. - Institute Director



At a time when the Church is called to face increasingly complex pastoral, cultural and social challenges, the ongoing formation of priests takes on a decisive role. It is not only a matter of updating knowledge or acquiring new skills, but of accompanying the priest on a journey of integral growth that involves the spiritual life, human maturity and the ability to respond wisely to the needs of the People of God.

This is the mission of the Sacerdos Institute of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, which for years has been promoting ongoing formation courses aimed at priests from all over the world. Through an interdisciplinary approach, the Institute combines theological reflection, pastoral experience and spiritual accompaniment, offering concrete tools to live the ministry with renewed evangelical zeal.

The Institute's formational programs responds to the different dimensions of priestly life. The preparation of future educators finds expression in the **International Course for Seminary Formators**, which supports priests called to accompany the discernment and growth of new vocations. The care of the spiritual life is also carried out through the retreat for priests organized in partnership with **Monastero Wi-Fi**, an experience of silence, prayer and fraternity that favors the inner renewal of the ordained minister.

Of particular importance is the **International Course on the Ministry of Exorcism and the Prayer of Deliverance**, carried out together with **GRIS** (Socio-religious Research and Information Group). Internationally recognized, the course proposes a rigorous study of the ministry of exorcism according to the teaching of the Church, integrating theological, canonical, medical, psychological and pastoral contributions, with the aim of offering serious preparation to those who are called to this delicate ecclesial service.

Alongside these initiatives, the Institute promotes paths dedicated to family ministry, such as the course of **Spiritual Direction for Married Couples**, and proposes the **Pilgrimage of Priestly Renewal to the Holy Land**, which invites participants to reread their vocation in the places of Christ's life. Great attention is also paid to human formation through the path "**Taking care of oneself to better face the pastoral mission**", created to help priests to preserve their personal balance and to live the ministry with greater serenity and fruitfulness.

What characterizes the Sacerdos Institute is a conception of ongoing **formation as an authentic accompaniment of the person**. Lectures, seminars, workshops, testimonies and moments of sharing encourage learning that is not limited to the academic sphere, but becomes a concrete experience of **human**, **spiritual** and **pastoral growth**.

The presence of participants from many countries makes each initiative a privileged place of encounter between different cultures and ecclesial experiences. In this international dialogue, the Institute **contributes to creating a network of priests** who share good pastoral practices and face together the challenges of contemporary evangelization.

At a time when the priestly ministry is called to confront rapid changes and new demands, the Sacerdos Institute continues to invest in the formation of priests capable of combining spiritual depth, doctrinal solidity and pastoral sensitivity. A service to the universal Church that, through ongoing formation, contributes to preparing priests who are increasingly aware of their mission and ready to proclaim the Gospel with competence, hope and charity.

Visit the Sacerdos page

The Institute of Science and Faith

Training and research for the challenges of our time

by Fr. Alex Yeung, L.C. - Institute Director

In his encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*, Pope Leo XIV challenges Christians and all men and women of our generation to put the Social Doctrine of the Church and contemporary sciences and culture into dialogue. What are the new realities – the *Rerum novarum* – of today? What are the promises for humanity that the scientific and technological revolutions offer? And what are the aspects that risk compromising the integral dignity of the human person? The Institute of Science and Faith has at heart the mission of offering high-level interdisciplinary studies on the sciences and culture of our time. They include not only an obligatory reflection on the relationship between the sciences, philosophy, theology and history, but they stimulate our students to critically confront the dominant cultural currents, often ideologically and economically driven by the giants of technology. It might seem inevitable to let ourselves be carried away by the current of historical evolution, surrendering in the face of the rapidity of social changes and *trends* . Instead, the Institute proposes patient formation to understand and evaluate these changing realities in the light of the immutable truth of the dignity and Christian vocation of the human person. This allows students to find ideas for possible effective actions at a personal, family and community level.

The Institute continues to expand its network of highly qualified collaborators in the different areas of science and transdisciplinary studies. The **Diploma of Higher Education in Science and Faith** (Postgraduate Diploma, a title offered jointly with the European University of Rome) has reached its twenty-ninth edition, in person or totally online. Up-to-date courses and conferences include current topics such as: Artificial Intelligence and the information and technologically mediated revolution, neuroscience and neurotechnology, fundamental physics and related technologies, evolution and ecology. This academic year, the launch of the online **Diploma in English "Faith in Dialogue with the Modern World"** is planned, with modules on the fundamental understanding of faith, on the dialogue between faith and the sciences, art, religions and technology, and on the art of dialogue itself. The **Diploma of Shroud Studies** – offered in three languages – continues to raise great interest and surprising ideas for evangelization. Those interested in particular topics can access **single courses or in packages**, for credits or as auditors.

We invite pastoral agents, scientists, health workers, educators, communicators, priests and lay people committed to discovering and taking advantage of these formation courses, solid tools for understanding our time and for strengthening the ability to **witness to the Gospel with intelligence, competence and hope**.

See ISF webpage





Institute for Higher Studies on Woman

Innovation and looking to the future: the path that the Institute is taking

by Anita Cadavid - Institute Director



The mission of the ISSD emphasizes that the work that the Institute carries out must be able to inspire concrete actions. We are aware that we are part of a period of change on many fronts and therefore there are questions that challenge us and we want to start in-depth and training courses that aim at the future, as well as adequate ways of transmitting this content.

For two years now, our inter-university and interdisciplinary research group "***Cuerpo, Amor y Cultura***" has been formed together with the Francisco de Vitoria University. This year we presented our first publication entitled "***Identidad, Cuerpo y Cultura***". The volume presents the work done in recent years and was conceived with the aim of offering a rigorous and open look at issues related to personal identity, the body, freedom and human relationships. The group wants to continue by always listening to the questions of our time from a perspective of open reason, that is, illuminating them from an interdisciplinary reflection.

The **Joint Diploma Women and the Church**, which has been carried out for several years together with various pontifical institutions, will have a further development in order to be able to draw on a wider audience. While the current version remains online, the Institute is developing, together with the Anahuac Online University of Mexico, the **all-Spanish language version** in order to be able to offer a more relevant and specific service to Hispanic speakers by **addressing specific realities of the Church in Latin America**.

Always in the spirit of listening to our time and current challenges, we are starting the preparation of three **Expert Meetings** together with the **International Network of Women Leaders**, which will prepare the final results of the 2030 Agenda for **Sustainable Development**. These academic meetings to be held in 2026, 2027 and 2028 will address issues related to **goal number 5 on gender equality**. Again this year the first will be held in Rome in October and we will reflect on goal 5 in relation to the world of work, next year it will probably be held in Mexico and we will address the same goal 5 in relation to education and finally in 2028 addressing issues related to economics and politics. The **group of experts** is made up of researchers, entrepreneurs, journalists, representatives of institutions from different countries. We want to offer a contribution that deepens the work, educational, economic and political aspects that have not yet been explored and that could illuminate and promote a better achievement of this goal.

Another project that has been on our horizon for two years and which aims to promote new skills in women who want to re-enter the world of work. This is the **Career Blossom** project. The world of work has changed and requires the development of new skills, especially soft skills, but not only, especially digital skills and mastery of the different artificial intelligence platforms. This project aims to offer a horizon to women who want to reinvent themselves, who want to return to the world of work and who want to understand the new ways of working. Several **companies** and **recruiting companies** are participating in this project. Since last year we have received the **endorsement of the Lazio Region and the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies**.

Our dialogue with culture had an important moment in June. Together with the **Prioritalia Foundation**, we organized an afternoon seminar entitled "The impact of algorithms on the person and in the socio-economic fabric" at **CNEL** on the occasion of the presentation of the review of our **Summer School The Human Challenge in the Era of Digital Transformation** held in 2025.

All these initiatives are the result of an attitude of listening to the questions and needs of our time. We want to continue on this path because innovation is based on allowing ourselves to be challenged by the time in which we live and to give the most appropriate answers in content and form.

See ISSD webpage

Hildebrand Chair for Christian Personalism

Innovating while preserving the human

by Elisa Grimi - Director of the Chair

Among the most significant initiatives promoted by the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum is the **Hildebrand Chair for Christian Personalism**, established in 2025 in collaboration with the **Dietrich von Hildebrand Legacy Project** (USA). Its birth represents a cultural and academic investment that looks to the future without renouncing the richness of tradition, in the conviction that authentic innovation does not consist in the simple search for the new, but in the ability to **reread the heritage of Christian thought in the light of the questions of our time**.

In this sense, the Chair interprets in a particularly significant way the theme proposed for this issue of the APRA magazine: "**Innovation as an integral perspective"**. Innovation, in fact, does not only concern the tools or methods of research, but above all the gaze with which we approach **reality** and the **human person**. As Pope **Leo XIV** recalled, "in order to innovate it is necessary to safeguard the human": a perspective that finds a profound consonance with Christian personalism and with the thought of Dietrich von Hildebrand**.** To innovate therefore means to **safeguard** what is **essential about man**, so that scientific and cultural progress always remains at the **service of his dignity**.

As one of the most authoritative Catholic philosophers of the twentieth century, Hildebrand dedicated his work to understanding the person in his or her irreducible dignity, delving into themes such as freedom, conscience, affectivity, marriage, beauty and the relationship between truth and love. His thought continues today to dialogue with the great questions of our time: from the anthropological crisis to the challenges posed by new technologies, from education to the construction of a culture of encounter.

The **mission of the Chair** is to promote **research**, study and dissemination of Hildebrand's thought and, more broadly, of the tradition of Christian personalism, fostering dialogue between philosophy, theology and contemporary culture. Alongside the scientific activity, particular importance is given to the work of **enhancing** the important archival and documentary heritage linked to the philosopher, as well as the **editorial commitment**, which will see the publication of new works and translations into Italian in the coming years, progressively making available a philosophical heritageof extraordinary richness still little known on Italian philosophical context.

The **activity of the Chair** is developed through seminars, study days, international conferences and research projects, promoting a network of collaboration involving scholars and academic institutions from different countries. The **inaugural event**, held in June 2025 with the participation of Rocco Buttiglione and John F. Crosby, represented the start of a path aimed at relaunching the contribution of Christian personalism in the contemporary philosophical debate. This was followed by numerous initiatives of research and scientific discussion, including the first **Study Day** of the Chair dedicated to the theme of love and communion in Hildebrand's thought, organized also in the light of the Doctrinal Note *Una caro* of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, in which the works of Dietrich and Alice von Hildebrand are significantly recalled. Participation in international conferences and the establishment of new scientific collaborations also testify to the growing attention to this project and its inclusion in an increasingly wide research network.

At the same time, the Chair has taken part in international conferences, research programs and academic initiatives in Italy and abroad, consolidating a **network of collaborations** with universities, research centers and scholars committed to the deepening of Christian personalism. This interdisciplinary and international dialogue is one of the qualifying elements of the project and testifies to the vitality of a tradition of thought capable of confronting the cultural challenges of the 21st century. The scientific dimension is also accompanied by a clear formative and evangelizing purpose. Through philosophical research, the Chair intends to contribute to the integral formation of the person, offering critical tools to understand reality and promote a culture based on truth, freedom and the dignity of every human being. In this way, philosophical reflection also becomes a service to the evangelizing mission of the Church, showing how faith and reason can dialogue fruitfully in facing the deepest questions of contemporary man. In this way, it **participates fully in the University's mission** of forming men and women capable of making an impact on society and culture with competence, responsibility and faith.

Looking to the future, the Chair is called upon to further develop its research, training and dissemination activities, consolidating an increasingly wide network of national and international collaborations. Among the main **events** already scheduled, October 2027 will see the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum host an **international summit** dedicated to Dietrich von Hildebrand, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Dietrich von Hildebrand's passing into eternal life. The initiative will bring together scholars from different countries and will offer an important opportunity for discussion on the contribution of Christian personalism to the challenges of our time, strengthening the dialogue between academic research, culture and evangelization.

The numerous **initiatives** planned, together with the editorial and scientific projects currently underway, the work of enhancing the **Hildebrandian archive** and the progressive **expansion of the international network of collaborations**, confirm the Chair' s desire to become a point of reference for studies on Christian personalism. In this spirit, it intends to make a stable contribution to the mission of the Athenaeum, promoting a culture capable of combining truth, reason and faith, so that philosophical reflection may continue to be an authentic service to the person, to the Church and to society.

Visit Chair webpage

The Neurobioethics Group and IINBE

APRA and the new frontiers of neuroscience and AI

Advancements in biotechnology, regenerative medicine, and digital technologies are reshaping the boundaries of human life and action, confronting the scientific community with monumental questions. Within this landscape, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum (APRA) confirms its position as a cutting-edge hub for the integration of scientific rigor and ethical-anthropological reflection, showcasing the rich work promoted by the **International Institute of Neurobioethics** (IINBE) and the **Neurobioethics Group** (GdN) under the leadership of the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, **Prof. Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C.**

Among the academic year's most prominent events was the second edition of the *Vatican Longevity Summit*, hosted on May 25–26, 2026. Chaired and led by Fr. Carrara in his role as President of IINBE, the forum has established itself as a global reference point for the study of human aging through four interdisciplinary sessions (biogerontology, epigenetics, neuroscience, and bioethics). The opening session featured a *lectio magistralis* by **Nobel Laureate Thomas C. Südhof** on synaptic transmission, alongside **world-renowned scientists** such as **Suresh Rattan**, **Juan Carlos Izpisúa Belmonte**, and **Rusty Gage**. True to its mission, the Pontifical Athenaeum bridged biological data with the anthropological dimension through contributions from figures such as **Maria Pia Abbracchio**, **Matilde Leonardi**, **Francesco Billari**, and **Andrea Lavazza**, culminating in the drafting of the "Ethical Charter on Healthy Aging and Longevity."

Parallel to the longevity studies, the scientific endeavor led by Fr. Alberto Carrara—coordinator of the **GdN**, which celebrates the **18th anniversary** of its founding this year while coordinating 8 research subgroups and several local chapters—extended to the emerging challenges of Artificial Intelligence. Within the framework of APRA's Master's Degree in Science and Faith, special focus was directed toward the topic of Algorithmic Ethics (**Algoretica**). Building upon and developing the central thesis of his recent volume, *L'eredità di Francesco. Il magistero bioetico di papa Bergoglio* (2026), Fr. Carrara highlights that algorithmic ethics is not a mere decorative phrase, but the meeting point where the Magisterium translates bioethical humanism into the heart of the digital transformation. As demonstrated by the diachronic reconstruction of papal documents, this neologism—originally coined by Luigi Lombardi Vallauri—has undergone a significant evolution: initially conceived for the protection of minors in the digital world, algorithmic ethics has become a framework for rethinking the human-machine relationship, a language for global AI governance, and, ultimately, a pillar for peace, policy, and the safeguarding of uniquely human decision-making.

The research conducted at the Pontifical Athenaeum distinguishes and delves deeply into two fundamental aspects of the discipline: on the one hand, the **ethics of algorithms** (ethical charters and the *Rome Call for AI Ethics*); on the other hand, the **algorithms of ethics**, namely the ontological and metaphysical inquiry into the status of artificial intelligences—an area explored by Fr. Carrara starting from the **World Congress of Metaphysics** through to the course dedicated to the "Metaphysics of the Algorithm."

Through a continuous synergy between research, teaching, and public outreach, IINBE and the Neurobioethics Group reaffirm the centrality of the human person, interdisciplinary discernment, and shared responsibility when facing the techno-scientific challenges of our time.



The Marco Arosio Chair of Advanced Medieval Studies

An opportunity for training and human and professional growth

by Marco Martorana - Professor and Coordinator of Arosio Prize

In the panorama of contemporary medieval studies, the **Marco Arosio Chair of Advanced Medieval Studies** and the related **Marco Arosio Prize of Medieval Philosophy and Theology** represent as an original laboratory in which innovation does not represent a break with tradition, but an integral reworking of it. Innovation, in this context, is understood as the ability to generate dynamic continuity: a process that integrates memory, research and training, directing them towards new scientific perspectives.

Established in 2010 at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum in Rome (APRA), the Chair was created with the intention of **continuing and expanding the legacy of Marco Arosio**, a scholar who contributed significantly to the knowledge of medieval philosophy and theology. However, its function does not end in a commemorative dimension. Rather, it presents itself as a **space for academic research**, in which the **medieval tradition** is **questioned in the light of the needs of contemporaneity**. In this perspective, the promotion of studies between the fifth and fifteenth centuries is not mere conservation, but **critical reinterpretation and interdisciplinary openness**.

The integral approach emerges in particular in the activities of the Chair: scientific publications, international conferences, specialized courses and the management of the Arosio Book Fund contribute to creating a network of shared knowledge. These initiatives not only preserve texts and traditions, but also make them operational within a **living academic community**, encouraging dialogue between **generations of scholars**. In this way, constant updating does not only concern the contents, but also the processes of transmission and construction of knowledge.

The **Marco Arosio Prize**, established as a concrete expression of the mission of the Chair, fits into this framework. The Prize is aimed at young scholars, invited to present monographs dedicated to themes of medieval philosophy and theology. It represents a training **updating** device: through economic support and the possibility of publication, it offers emerging researchers the tools to enter the international scientific debate. The **enhancement of youth research** is not an accessory element here, but a structural choice that reflects a **dynamic idea of knowledge**.

The peculiarity of the Prize is also manifested in its **linguistic and thematic openness**: the possibility of participating in different European languages and the attention to a wide chronological span (from the fifth to the fifteenth century) favor an intercultural and interdisciplinary comparison. In this sense, the **Middle Ages** becomes not a static object, but a **field of critical experimentation**, capable of generating new questions and new methodologies.

Considered together, the Chair and the Prize outline a model of academic institution in which innovation is truly integral: it involves contents, methods and subjects of research. The medieval tradition, far from being a closed heritage, is configured as an **open horizon** in which thought can continually regenerate itself. In this sense, Marco Arosio's legacy translates into a cultural project that testifies how fidelity to the past can be a condition for authentic scientific creativity.

The experience of the Arosio Chair therefore shows how **innovation**, if understood in an integral way, is not discontinuity, but **renewed continuity**: a movement that, rooted in the depths of tradition, opens up to the complexity of the present and the challenges of the future.



The Joseph Ratzinger Chair - Benedict XVI

Institution in 2027 and First Congress for the Centenary

by Fr. Sameer Advani, L.C. - Professor at the Faculty of Theology



In 2027, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum will launch a project of particular cultural and institutional importance: the creation of the **Joseph Ratzinger – Benedict XVI Chair**, a new academic structure dedicated to the study, dissemination and development of the theological thought of the great theologian and pontiff. The direction of the Chair will be entrusted to **Prof. Sameer Advani**, professor of the Faculty of Theology and internationally recognized as an expert on Ratzinger's thought, author of several books and publications dedicated to his theology. The Deputy Director will be **Prof. Leonardo Pelonara**, also a scholar of reference in the Ratzingerian panorama, with particular expertise in the field of ecclesiology and interpretation of the Second Vatican Council.
The initiative was born within the Faculty of Theology and is part of the celebrations for the centenary of the birth of Joseph Ratzinger, which falls in 2027. The Chair represents a significant step in the enhancement of a theological heritage that continues to exert a profound influence on contemporary ecclesial reflection.

An academic structure dedicated to research and training

The statutes of the Chair, approved by the Grand Chancellor of the Athenaeum, clearly define its nature and purpose. Its mission is equally explicit: to promote "scientific *research and academic activities of formation and dissemination inspired by the thought of Joseph Ratzinger – Benedict XVI*".
The Chair is therefore proposed as a place for the systematic study of Ratzinger's work, but also as a platform for dialogue and international collaboration. Planned activities include:

- the organization of study days, conferences, seminars and research groups;
- the publication of scientific studies, in particular in the series *Studi Ratzingeriani* in collaboration with the Cantagalli publishing house;
- support for doctoral research projects dedicated to Ratzinger's theology;
- the expansion of Ratzinger's bibliographic collection already present in the "Pius XII" Library of the Athenaeum;
- the offering academic courses and training initiatives aimed at both students of the Athenaeum and the International Network of *Regnum Christi universities*.

This structure demonstrates how the Chair is not conceived as a simple documentation center, but as a true academic hub capable of generating original research, fostering theological formation and promoting the cultural dissemination of Ratzinger's thought.

The first major event: the Theological Congress for the Centenary of Joseph Ratzinger (2027)

The birth of the Chair coincides with the preparation of its first major event: the **Theological Congress for the Centenary of Joseph Ratzinger**, which will be held on March 11 and 12, 2027, and which will be dedicated to deepening two particularly significant works: *Eschatology* (1977), on the fiftieth anniversary of its publication, and the encyclical *Spe Salvi* (2007), on its twentieth anniversary.
The choice to put these two texts in dialogue is not accidental. *Eschatology* represents one of Ratzinger's most influential contributions to contemporary theology, while *Spe Salvi* offers a mature and pastoral reflection on Christian hope. Both texts open up current perspectives on the future of man, on his ultimate destination and on the historical responsibility of faith.

A Theological Legacy for the Future

The creation of the Joseph Ratzinger-Benedict XVI Chair and the organization of the 2027 Congress represent a twofold sign of academic vitality. On the one hand, the Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum* recognizes the permanent relevance of Ratzinger's thought for contemporary theology; on the other, it is committed to promoting research that is not only commemorative, but capable of dialoguing with the cultural and spiritual challenges of our time.
In *Spe Salvi*, Ratzinger writes: "The great hope can only be God, who embraces the universe and who can propose to us and give us what we cannot achieve on our own" (n31). This intuition, which runs through all his work, is also the guiding principle of the Chair: to offer the academic and ecclesial community a space in which Christian hope can be thought of, deepened and witnessed to with rigor and creativity.
With its birth and its first major event, the Chair presents itself as a meeting place between memory and future, between tradition and research, between the depth of theological thought and the needs of contemporary formation. An initiative that not only honors the centenary of Joseph Ratzinger, but opens new ways to understand and live the faith in today's world.

Aperitivo Filosofico

"The taste of longevity is the aroma of the future"



On November 13 at 5:00 p.m., the **Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum** hosted a new and stimulating edition of the '**Philosophical Aperitif**,' titled "*The taste of longevity is the aroma of the future*."
The initiative—which evolved from the traditional 'Philosophical Café'—aims to bring philosophy beyond purely academic settings to foster critical thinking in everyday life.
Organized **in collaboration with UCID** (*Unione Cristiana Imprenditori Dirigenti*—Christian Union of Business Executives), the meeting was entirely dedicated to the theme of **longevity**. Far from being viewed as a mere age metric, longevity was rediscovered as a vital existential resource to be leveraged in the professional realm as well. In a constantly changing workplace and social environment, the experience gained over the years emerges as a strategic pillar and an essential guide to interpreting the present and building the future.
Leading and animating the reflection were **Prof. Guido Traversa** and **Prof. Claudio Bonito**, who engaged the audience in a lively and interactive discussion. During the debate, Prof. Traversa highlighted the generative power of experience:
"*The taste of longevity is an enriching resource. When the adult's experience meets the youth's perspective, personal and professional futures gain depth, vision, and purpose.*"
The event proved to be a valuable opportunity for deep yet informal exchange, demonstrating how intergenerational dialogue and the synthesis of memory and innovation are key drivers for personal and organizational growth.

«*Dilexit nos*»: Study day

by Angela Tagliafico – Professor, Faculty of Theology

Through the Study Day "**The Encyclical on the Sacred Heart *'Dilexit nos'* in Light of the Theology of the Saints and the Spirituality of Regnum Christi,**" held on the morning of March 20, the Faculty of Theology at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum recalled the importance of the spirituality of the Heart of Christ within the Christian journey of the Saints. Upon careful study, this journey proves to be fully imbued with the certainty that Christ's pre-emptive love—symbolized by His Heart—always invites and offers men and women the opportunity to live in the full intimacy of His friendship.

The Study Day began with a presentation by **Fr. Raffaele Di Muro**, Dean and Full Professor of Spiritual Theology at the Pontifical Faculty St. Bonaventure, who explained the continuity between Pope Francis's encyclical *Dilexit nos* and Pope Leo XIV's encyclical *Dilexit te*, which represents its development in all respects.

This was followed by a series of presentations centered on the Theology of the Saints, focusing on figures cited in *Dilexit nos* who notably lived the spirituality of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Each was addressed by a professor expert in the field: St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio was presented by **Sr. Daniela del Gaudio**, Adjunct Professor of Dogmatic Theology at APRA; St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. John of the Cross were explained by **Angela Tagliafico**, Associate Professor of Theology at APRA; St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and St. Claude de la Colombière were illustrated by **Fr. Pedro Barrajón**, Full Professor of Theology at APRA; and St. Thérèse of Lisieux and St. Charles de Foucauld were elucidated by **Fr. Joseph Spence**, Adjunct Professor of Spiritual Theology at APRA.

These presentations were preceded and followed by two talks: the first, on the historical development of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Legion of Christ and the *Regnum Christi* Movement, was given by **Emilio Martinez**, Associate Professor of Theology at APRA; the second, on the spirituality of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the lives of *Regnum Christi* members, was delivered by **Fr. Paolo Cerquitella**, Doctor of Theology and Pastoral Coordinator for Adults in *Regnum Christi*.

The event was held **in Italian** with **simultaneous translation into English and Spanish**, **gathering 614 participants**—priests, consecrated men and women, and laypeople—both present in the auditorium and connected from various parts of Italy, Europe, Asia, and the Americas.

The Study Day also fostered interaction between participants and speakers, ensuring the full engagement of attendees through a concluding dynamic Q&A and discussion session.

The main takeaway from the Study Day was that through the Heart of Jesus, every Christian can daily experience the love of God the Father and learn to become, through the action of the Holy Spirit, an ever-greater gift to others.

Study day

Marriage Spirituality as an Ecclesial subject: training to accompany

by Fr. Luca Frontali, L.C.

Thirteen times in *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis insists on the importance of accompanying couples (in the beginning stages, during maturity, in times of crisis...). But the novelty lies in the fact that couples themselves, as pastoral subjects, are the main protagonists along with their pastors: «Alongside priests and religious, a primary role must be played by married couples. The preparation of couples for marriage is a true work of evangelization, and lay faithful, particularly married couples, are called, like religious and ordained ministers, to participate in the Church's evangelizing mission: they are a pastoral subject» (*Catechumenal Itineraries for Married Life*, no. 10).

Highlighting this challenge, the Church simultaneously asks for preparation and formation, not just generous impulses.

For this reason, the Pontifical Athenaeum and the *Mistero Grande* Project collaborated to launch a course for spiritual directors and companions of couples. Now in its 4th edition, the course consists of two levels—basic and advanced—designed to offer the opportunity, first and foremost to married couples, but also to pastors, religious women, and lay people, to walk alongside couples. The theological foundation lies in the fact that marriage constitutes an ecclesial subject; therefore, spiritual care cannot simply be the sum of two individual directions, but requires its own pastoral categories.

Consequently, in the basic level, we will examine the structure and method of spiritual direction for couples, followed by its connection to the Sacrament of Matrimony, the vast area of difficulties faced by spouses, and finally, the original spirituality of the couple. In the advanced level, on the other hand, the main dimensions of the couples' discipleship in Christ are addressed.

The program concluded with a study day on Saturday, May 23, which was also open to those who had not taken the courses, to allow participants to get to know one another and interact with prominent ecclesial figures, such as Fr. Renzo Bonetti, Costanza Miriano, and Fr. Luigi Maria Epicoco.

4th Prioritalia – APRA Summer School

The impact of algorithms on the individual and the socioeconomic fabric

by Adele Ercolano - Cultural Area Coordinator Institute for Higher Studies on Woman



On Wednesday, June 3, 2026, the presentation of the report on the **4th Prioritalia – APRA Summer School** took place at the **CNEL headquarters in Rome**, centered on the theme *"The Impact of Algorithms on the Individual and the Socioeconomic Fabric."*

The initiative, promoted by **Prioritalia** together with the **Institute for Higher Studies on Woman of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum**, is part of a broader educational program aimed at exploring the relationship between digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and the human dimension.

In a context marked by the increasing reliance on algorithms and AI in decision-making processes, the event aimed to serve as a **platform for dialogue and reflection** on development models capable of blending technological innovation, ethical responsibility, and social impact.

The proceedings opened with **official remarks by the President of CNEL, Renato Brunetta**. Following this, the report was presented by **Adele Ercolano**, Cultural Area Coordinator at ISSD, and **Filippo Salone**, Head of External Relations at the Prioritalia Foundation.

Contributions were also made by the Summer School faculty, including **Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C.**, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (APRA); **Stefania Celsi** (Board Value@Work-ISSD); **Antonio Palmieri** (Fondazione Pensiero Solido); and **Michele Petrocelli** (Guglielmo Marconi University).

The program continued with in-depth sessions dedicated to the relationship between human beings and artificial intelligence, as well as evolving scenarios shaping the economic and social landscape, featuring insights from experts, academics, and leaders from the managerial and corporate sectors.

Ad Excellentiam - Presentation of New Financial Aid Grants

Antonietta, Matteo and Dibin: *here is what we learned at a Papal Athenaeum*

by Giampaolo Cerri - Managing Editor, VITA



A pontifical university that educates not only priests but also laypeople in skill sets in high demand across today's job market—such as those dealing with ethics, from bioethics to AI—is now boosting its student financial aid. A day at the Regina Apostolorum in Rome.

We are at the presentation of the "Student Financial Aid Plan" established by the pontifical university for the upcoming academic year. The presentation is taking place during Ad Excellentiam, a conference held in the main auditorium of the Roman campus and streamed live to participants across the globe. Founded in 1993, the university was established through the initiative of a missionary congregation, the Legionaries of Christ, which itself originated in Mexico in the mid-20th century.

We are in Rome, along Via Aurelia. You reach it via the small railway station of the same name, along the line leading to Civitavecchia—a "magical" short train ride through a city that is notoriously difficult to navigate due to public transport limitations relative to its urban sprawl, where a shortage of taxis is so endemic that it has become a common cliché. It is a train line largely unknown to visitors, who at most are familiar only with the line to Fiumicino Airport. Aurelia Station sits on the side of a hill, at the summit of which stands a dual university campus: the pontifical institution, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, and a private one, the European University of Rome.

This year, the pontifical institution has expanded its student support initiatives. Thanks to a broad network of individual and organizational donors, it is offering numerous scholarships for courses in philosophy and theology, as well as for those at the "Science and Faith" Institute, which trains bioethicists and prepares students to address complex ethical questions across various domains.

These students include priests seeking advanced qualifications to enrich their pastoral ministry, as well as an increasing number of laypeople determined to acquire expertise that the job market is actively seeking—in human resources, healthcare, and vocational healthcare education.

Read the full italian article

Study day

"*The Greatness of Metaphysics*" with Vittorio Possenti

On January 15, 2026, the Faculty of Philosophy at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum hosted a major Study Day titled "The Greatness of Metaphysics." In an era deeply marked by postmodern fragmentation, the event provided a high-level opportunity for speculative reflection, aiming to place the value of metaphysics back at the center of academic debate as an indispensable foundation for all knowledge.

The keynote speaker for the event was Prof. Vittorio Possenti, one of the most prominent figures in contemporary Italian philosophy and a leading authority on Neo-Thomism and the philosophy of being. The fruitful dialogue with Prof. Possenti allowed professors, students, and scholars to explore the vitality and compelling necessity of an inquiry that rigorously questions the ultimate structures of reality.

The morning program was structured into two main sessions. Following the institutional greetings and opening remarks, the first presentation sparked a lively debate in the hall. The second presentation offered further insights, leading the audience toward an engaging final discussion and Q&A session.

The event drew an attentive and engaged audience, reaffirming the mission of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum as a privileged locus for cultural dialogue and the pursuit of truth—capable of addressing the intellectual challenges of contemporary thought through the rediscovery of the great philosophical tradition.



Doctoral dissertations A.Y. 2025-2026

Philosophy

- **Canal Vallejo Adrián** with the dissertation *Consciousness and Person: Historical and Semantic Elements of Locke's Account of Personal Identity;*
- **Ordoñez Karina Edith** with the dissertation *Fraude en la investigación biomédica: las implicaciones bioéticas de los caos de Joachim Boldt y Yoshitaka Fujii.*

Theology

- **Gaudioso Mercuri** with the dissertation *Gli Angeli in Jean Danielou, analisi teologico-scritturistica;*
- **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);*
- **Puglisi Giuseppe** with the dissertation *La sequela e il servizio per una nuova evangelizzazione dei giovani.*

Bioethics

- **Akpa Tavershima Silas** with the dissertation *Organ Donation in Nigeria Developments, Challenges, and Prospects: A Personalist Bioethical Approach;*
- **Augustin Dieunico** with the dissertation *LA BIOÉTHIQUE DANS LA PENSÉE D'EMMANUEL MOUNIER. Emmanuel Mounier, un précurseur de la bioéthique catholique? Une enquête sur les racines de la bioéthique personnaliste ontologiquement fondée dans ses écrits et l'actualité de sa pensée pour notre temps;*
- **Bayón Weidmann Maria Cecilia** with the dissertation *La titularidad y comercialidad del material biológico humano en la fase de circulación en el mercado a través de la propiedad industrial en el ordenamiento jurídico italiano.*

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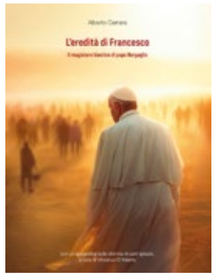


L'eredità di Francesco. Il magistero bioetico di Jorge Mario Bergoglio

What truly remains of the pontificate of Pope Francis? Beyond the headlines, the controversies, and superficial interpretations, a deeper question emerges: what vision of humanity, life, and limits does Jorge Mario Bergoglio leave behind for us?

Without rhetoric, this volume addresses one of the most decisive fields of our time: bioethics—a realm where science, conscience, and responsibility intersect, and where the magisterium of Pope Francis reveals itself with particular force and originality. From the dignity of human life to the challenges of biotechnology, from the role of science to moral responsibility, the text presents a rigorous yet accessible analysis. A book for understanding, reflecting, and finding direction in an era when fundamental questions have once again become urgent. A lucid and necessary contribution for scholars, professionals in the field, and anyone seeking to deepen their understanding of the relationship between ethics, faith, and the contemporary world.



Joseph Ratzinger e il Concilio Vaticano II

Sixty years after the Second Vatican Council, its legacy and interpretation remain a subject of ongoing study. Serving as a tool for understanding and reflection, this book offers a Ratzingerian perspective on Vatican II by examining the specific contribution of the German theologian and pope, as well as developing his insights.
From the eighteen contributions, which draw upon the papers presented at the study day hosted at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, a clear picture emerges: Ratzinger's ability to integrate faith and reason, tradition and innovation, dogma and spirituality provides a particularly reliable compass for approaching the Council texts. This approach restores to Vatican II its true missionary scope—an openness to the world stemming from the encounter with the Incarnate, crucified, and risen Word, aiming to re-present the Gospel in all its radicality to contemporary humanity.

In the Library and Bookstore

BOOKS

CAMELO PANDOLFI, RAFAEL PASCUAL (eds.), *La filosofia che non si fa a niente può servire. La figura e gli studi di Marco Arosio a dieci anni dalla scomparsa (Ricerche di storia della filosofia e teologia medioevali, 29),* Roma 2026;

CRISTÓBAL VILARROIG MARTÍN, *Hebreo para Teólogos (Teologia 26),* Roma 2026;

JOSEPH THAM, SAMEER ADVANI (eds.), *Fratelli Tutti in Conversation: Voices from World Religions*, Routledge Studies in Religion, London 2026.

THESES

NATHANIEL JAMES DREYER, *Towards a Thomistic enactivist and embodied view of perception: Cornelio Fabro's sensibilia per accidens as the object of the vis cogitativa in dialogue with Maurice Merleau–Ponty's phenomenology, J. J. Gibson's ecological psychology, and Alva Noë's sensorimotor enactivism (Tesi Filosofia 28),* Roma 2025;

SANAL THOMAS MALIYECKAL, H*ermeneutics of An Authentic Inculturation in the Context of India: A Study of the Documents (1970-2020) of the Federation ofAsian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), (Tesi Teologia 51),* Roma 2025;

GAUDIOSO MERCURI, *Gli Angeli in Jean Daniélou, analisi teologico-scritturistica (Tesi Teologia 52),* Roma 2026;

ADRIÁN CANAL VALLEJO, *Consciousness and Person: Historical and Semantic Elements of Locke's Account of Personal Identity, (Filosofia 33),* Roma 2026;

TAVERSHIMA SILAS AKPA, *Organ Donation in Nigeria. Developments, Challenges, and Prospects: A Personalist Bioethical Approach, (Bioetica 57),* Roma 2026;

MARÍA CECILIA BAYÓN WEIDMANN, *La titularidad y comercialidad del material biológico humano en la fase de circulación en el mercado a través de la propiedad industrial en el ordenamiento jurídico italiano. (Bioetica 58),* Roma 2026;

AUGUSTIN DIEUNICO, *La bioéthique dans la pensée d'Emmanuel Mounier. Emmanuel Mounier, un précurseur de la bioéthique catholique ? Une enquête sur les racines de la bioéthique personnaliste ontologiquement fondée dans ses écrits et l'actualité de sa pensée pour notre temps (Bioetica 59),* Roma 2026;

FABIO BOLTRI, *La dimensione ascetica dell'atto d'amore: Gesù, Maria vi amo, salvate anime nel progresso della vita spirituale secondo la ven. suor Maria Consolata Betrone (Teologia 53),* Roma 2026;

P. DAMIÁN JIŘÍ ŠKODA, *La comunione spirituale in San Tommaso d'Aquino e la sua recezione nel Magistero della Chiesa (Teologia 54),* Roma 2026.

JOURNALS

Alpha Omega 28 1 (2025); 28 2 (2025); 28 3 (2025);

Ecclesia 39.3 (2025); 40.1 (2026); 40.2 (2026).

Supporting education to shape the future

By Fr. David Koonce, L.C. - Professor, Faculty of Theology, and Member of the Student Financial Aid Committee



For the past seven years, I have had the honor of chairing the Student Financial Aid Committee at APRA. During this time, we have encountered a wide array of stories: students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, priests, religious sisters and brothers, and dedicated laypeople from Italy and abroad. All of them are united by a common desire: to receive a rigorous education in order to put their skills at the service of the Church and society.
Until now, our efforts have primarily focused on listening and responding to the requests for assistance we received. This quiet yet consistent work made it possible to award a total of **44 scholarships** for the **2025–2026** academic year—**16 renewals** and **28 new awards**—supporting needy and deserving students throughout their university journey. Starting this year, however, we have chosen to take a step further by adopting a strategy that is not merely reactive, but **proactive**. On **June 11**, we officially launched a new call for applications for scholarships for the **2026–2027** academic year and **beyond**. On that occasion, we **announced the total number of available scholarships**—the result of responsible resource management and a vision that looks with confidence toward the future growth of the Athenaeum. The goal is twofold: on the one hand, to manage available resources responsibly while continuing to raise funds to guarantee future scholarships; on the other, to **attract talented students** capable of sharing the Athenaeum's mission and, in the future, stepping into roles of leadership and cultural influence.
We believe that financial support serves as an opportunity in pursuit of academic excellence. Indeed, scholarships represent an investment in the quality of our academic community, extending far beyond simple material aid—fostering students who are not passive spectators or mere recipients, but **active**, **constructive contributors** to university life. In this sense, supporting education truly means shaping the future.
We believe that financial assistance should not create dependence, but opportunity. Scholarships are not a mere material handout; they are an investment in the quality of our academic community.

The voice of the students

Fr. Juan Pablo Alarcón Arriaga, L.C.

Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy



Today I graduated in philosophy, and I would like to share something simple that impacted me deeply: being at the Athenaeum, I didn't study alone, but always with a community. For me, studying here was not just going, picking up a book, reading, and doing an assignment. It was meeting people, talking, suffering together with someone—building friendships while seeking the truth together, including with the professors. Then, there was an experience that was incredibly powerful for me: a professor who began to cry with emotion while sharing the depth of existence with us: "Being is, my friends. Nothingness is not. [...] When we talk about being, we are talking about God." And he continued to cry because this God had become a child. In that moment, I realized that philosophy, all philosophical knowledge, everything that reason can grasp, arrives in someone's arms and cries out because He makes Himself needy: Jesus Christ, the reason for everything. We do not study philosophy or theology just to earn a degree, but because we want to give everything to the Church. This is a community that shares study and mission. It is truly an incredible gift.



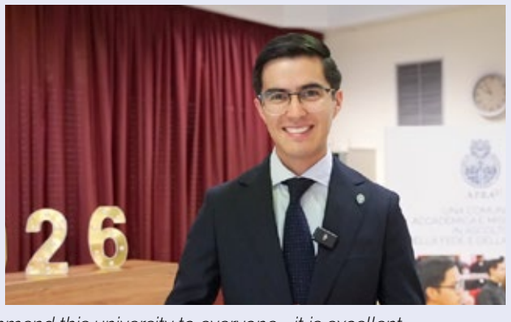
Sr. María Vírgen Pura de Luján Ambrosini, SSVM

Bachelor's Degree in Theology

I want to thank everyone for the grace of being able to study at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum because, for me and for all my sisters, it is an experience that allows us to receive our formation in a pontifical university in the heart of Rome. For us, as religious in the Church, it is a great grace that we must deeply treasure. I would also like to thank the community and staff of this university who welcomed us with open arms. The commitment to offering us an integral formation that will help us in our apostolate and religious life is evident in everyone—from the professors to the librarians and the entire staff.

Óscar Jáuregui

Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy



These three years have been wonderful, excellent, and of the highest caliber. They were years filled with so much joy and knowledge, because at this university, you truly study a lot. The faculty are attentive and help us tremendously through personalized formation. I have learned so much from them and from my classmates. Living and studying together was outstanding: the whole group listened, asked questions, and felt a vibrant desire to know. Perhaps the most beautiful aspect of this group was its openness to philosophy as a starting point for getting to know oneself deeply. The academic community is magnificent; I loved it so much and I recommend this university to everyone—it is excellent.

Close to the Holy Father

The APRA Community joined His Holiness Pope Leo XIV during the General Audience on May 6, 2026, which was attended by several recently ordained Legionary priests and Alumni of our Athenaeum. Being present in a crowded St. Peter's Square, surrounded by so many faithful gathered from around the world, reminded us that our formational mission extends beyond APRA's walls and stands at the service of the Universal Church.

This sentiment was beautifully captured by our chaplain, Fr. Wilson Lazarotto, L.C., who accompanied us: «*Being together with the Holy Father as an academic community reminded us that our mission is fulfilled by walking in step with the Church. As the Holy Father told us: 'The Church is the custodian of a hope that illuminates the path.' We too are joyful to walk our path under the light of the Church*».

A new academic year begins, filled with new initiatives and challenges. We want to continue rowing in the boat entrusted to Peter, contributing to the intellectual, human, and spiritual formation of individuals and society by seeking the Truth in Charity: *Veritatem Facientes in Caritate*.



Joint Diploma "*The Thought of Saint Thomas*"

Higher Education at APRA

Aiming to highlight the extraordinary relevance of the *Doctor Angelicus*, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum hosted one of the central teaching sessions of the annual **Joint Diploma** *"Il pensiero di san Tommaso d'Aquino Doctor Humanitatis"* [The Thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas Doctor Humanitatis]. This prestigious program of higher education stems from a fruitful **synergy among various Pontifical Academic Institutions**, offering an intellectual laboratory designed to explore the Thomistic philosophical and theological legacy with methodological rigor.



The academic track is structured into nine thematic modules, each entrusted to a specific partner institution, thus offering students a wide array of perspectives on Thomism. Each four-academic-hour session features two core thematic units followed by ample time for debate. Classes are held primarily on Tuesday afternoons in a hybrid format—both in person at the host universities and online—enabling flexible, international participation in Italian.

To earn the Diploma, which awards 6 widely recognized ECTS credits, regular attendance and targeted text study are required. The formational journey culminates in the writing of an in-depth final paper (12 to 20 pages), written under the supervision of a course professor. Reflecting the global reach of the project, the final paper may be written in various European languages, with three submission deadlines throughout the year.

Through this initiative, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum renews its commitment to promoting Thomistic thought as a fundamental key to engaging in dialogue with contemporary culture.

Presentation of Cardinal Eijk's Book

A dialogue on marriage and sexual ethics

The publishing and theological landscape has been enriched by a fundamental new work: on October 21, 2025, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum hosted the presentation of Cardinal Willem Jacobus Eijk's book, titled *"El vínculo del amor. Matrimonio y ética sexual"* [The Bond of Love: Marriage and Sexual Ethics]. Organized in close collaboration with Edizioni ART, the event provided participants with an important opportunity for dialogue and deep reflection on the complex dynamics of marriage and sexual morality in contemporary society.

The volume, currently available in Spanish and French editions, analyzes the indissoluble bonds of conjugal love with academic rigor and pastoral sensitivity. The gathering, held in the afternoon from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM, drew significant participation both in person and online, reflecting the widespread interest in the topics addressed by the Archbishop of Utrecht, who is well known for his strong background in medicine and bioethics.

To ensure maximum accessibility and foster an international debate, the proceedings were conducted in Italian with a simultaneous interpretation service in Spanish and English available in the hall via headsets.

With this book presentation, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum and Edizioni ART offered a valuable opportunity for scholarly development and reflection, reaffirming the Athenaeum's central role in promoting academic spaces capable of addressing the ethical and anthropological challenges of today's society.



Webinar

Global Dialogue on Neuroethics: Walter Glannon Hosted at APRA

On December 12, 2025, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum hosted an **event** of extraordinary **international** significance: a free webinar featuring Canadian philosopher Walter Glannon, one of the world's most influential voices in neuroethics. Organized by the **Faculty of Philosophy** and the Athenaeum's **Neurobioethics Group**, under the prestigious **auspices** of the **Pontifical Academy for Life**, the meeting offered a unique opportunity to address the ethical dilemmas surrounding neuroscience.

Professor Glannon, a leading authority on moral responsibility, identity, and human enhancement, shared his personal journey, illustrating his academic trajectory and future perspectives on the intersection of mind, brain, and technology. At the center of the discussion was an analysis of two of his most significant works, both pivotal to understanding the challenges of neuroscientific innovation. In *Psychiatric Neuroethics*, the author examined the complex moral issues inherent to clinical practice in mental health. The focus then shifted to *Neural Prosthetics*, a rigorous examination of the implications of advanced neural prostheses, touching upon crucial topics such as patient autonomy, cognitive enhancement, and longevity.

The event, which took place from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM, drew a wide audience of students, researchers, ethicists, and healthcare professionals. With this conference, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum reaffirmed its standing as a cutting-edge academic hub, dedicated to fostering a global, interdisciplinary dialogue on the technological frontiers reshaping the future of humanity.



Nominees and Thank You Notes

Appointments and Delegations

September 1, 2025 - Fr. José Fernández San Román, L.C.: Reappointed Dean of the Faculty of Theology for a second three-year term, effective August 1, 2025.

September 1, 2025 - Prof. Marta Rodríguez: Tenure-Track Associate Professor of the Faculty of Philosophy.

September 22, 2025 - Fr. Adrián Canal, L.C., Fr. Sameer Advani, L.C., Fr. Cristóbal Vilarroig, L.C., Dr. Anita Cadavid, Br. Roberto Allison, L.C., Fr. Louis Melahn, L.C., Eng. Oscar Sastré, Dr. Cristian Názer Astorga, and Dr. Daniela Longo: Members of the Quality Assurance Commission for a three-year term.

October 10, 2025 - Fr. Alex Yeung, L.C.: Reappointed Director of the Science and Faith Institute through June 30, 2027.

October 10, 2025 - Prof. Alberto García Gómez: Full Professor of the Faculty of Bioethics.

October 17, 2025 - Fr. Andrew Dalton, L.C., Fr. Alex Yeung, L.C., Nora Creech, and Dennis Creech: Members of the Scientific Committee of the Othonia Group.

October 27, 2025 - Fr. Luis Eduardo Rodríguez, L.C., Br. Darius Lawrence, L.C., Br. Roberto Allison Coronado, L.C., and Fr. Alejandro Mora, L.C.: Assistant Professors for courses under the research theme "Dialogue and Evangelization in a Postmodern Culture."

November 17, 2025 - Fr. Pedro Mendoza Magallón, L.C.: Reappointed Director of the APRA Library for a three-year term, effective from the date of the decree.

November 20, 2025 - Fr. Óscar Missas, L.C.: Vice Director of the Higher Institute of Religious Sciences for the duration of the current Director's mandate.

November 27, 2025 - Fr. Adrián Canal, L.C., Fr. Alberto Carrara, L.C., and Fr. Rafael Pascual, L.C.: Members of the Council of the Science and Faith Institute.

December 4, 2025 - Fr. José E. Oyarzún, L.C.: Full Professor of the Faculty of Theology.

December 4, 2025 - Fr. David Koonce, L.C.: Extension of appointment as Acting Dean of the Faculty of Bioethics until revocation of the decree.

December 9, 2025 - Fr. Vincenz Heereman, L.C., Fr. Pier Salabert, L.C., and Fr. Gonzalo Monzón, L.C.: Members of the Council of the Sacerdos Institute.

December 11, 2025 - Fr. Eamonn O'Higgins, L.C. and Prof. Marta Rodríguez: Members of the Scientific Committee of the Hildebrand Chair of Christian Personalism.

December 21, 2025 - Fr. Aarón Robles Amador, L.C.: Secretary General for a one-year term, effective from the signing of the Decree.

May 4, 2026 - Fr. José Fernández San Román, L.C.: Extraordinary Professor of the Faculty of Theology.

May 4, 2026 - Fr. Wilson Lazarotto, L.C.: APRA Chaplain for a two-year period from the signing of the decree through June 30, 2028.

June 10, 2026 - Fr. Luis Ramírez Almanza, L.C.: Secretary General of the Athenaeum for a three-year term beginning July 1, 2026.

June 30, 2026 - Prof. Fr. Rodrigo Ramírez, L.C.: Director of the APRA Publications Office, reappointed for a three-year term beginning July 1, 2026.

June 30, 2026 - Fr. Marcelo Bravo Pereira, L.C.: APRA Academic Vice-Rector for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2026.

July 2, 2026 - Fr. Óscar Missas, L.C.: Pro-Director of the Higher Institute of Religious Sciences for a six-month term through January 1, 2027.

July 27, 2026 - Prof. Massimo Losito: Acting Dean of the Faculty of Bioethics for a six-month term beginning August 1, 2026.

Acknowledgments

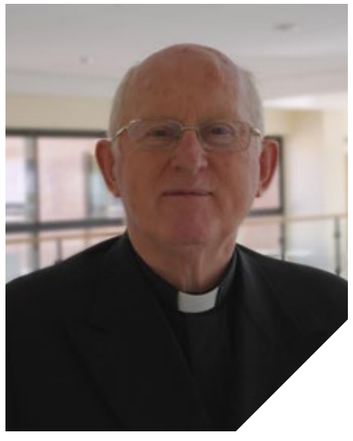
Our heartfelt thanks to **Fr. Jesús Villagrasa Lasaga, L.C.**, who distinguished himself through his significant contribution to student formation and to APRA as Professor of Metaphysics and Rector Magnificus (2013–2019). On May 5, 2026, he was granted the title of Professor Emeritus of the Faculty of Philosophy.

We extend our gratitude to **Fr. Aarón Robles, L.C.** for his dedicated service as APRA Secretary General. On this occasion, we wish him abundant apostolic fruits in his new mission as University Chaplain within the Anáhuac Network.

A special farewell to **Fr. Michael Ryan, L.C.**, Professor Emeritus of the Faculty of Philosophy, succeeded by **Fr. Wilson Lazarotto, L.C.** in the APRA Chaplaincy. We thank him for his numerous initiatives, attentive pastoral care, and spiritual accompaniment offered with devotion, closeness, and charity.







APRA's Third Mission: Formation, Solidarity, and Culture in the Service of the Human Person

by Roberto Serafini - Institutional Development Department



During the current academic year, the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum renewed its commitment to the **Third Mission**, understood as a concrete contribution to the evangelization of culture and the promotion of the human person. It sought to demonstrate that our dedication to formation is not limited to classroom study, but extends to the daily practice of solidarity by actively serving those in need. This journey of solidarity is both an intellectual act and a tangible service aimed at bringing hope to the human community and the most vulnerable.

Alongside interdisciplinary research and academic formation, the Athenaeum aimed to show that university life opens itself to caring for frailty and serving those most in need. In this perspective, APRA's Third Mission has become a pathway where **thought and action meet**.

Among the most significant and increasingly popular initiatives in 2026 was the APRA Team's participation in the **Run Rome The Marathon 2026**, as part of the 4th edition of **Run4Good**. Students and members of the academic community combined their passion for running with support for students facing financial hardship, raising funds for the **Good Samaritan Scholarships**. The marathon thus became a gesture of communion, transforming athletic effort into educational opportunities for those who demonstrate academic excellence but require concrete support.

In July, the **Tour2France** also took place—a charity cycling event linked to the **Pedaling for Scholarships** campaign. Led once again by alumnus Fr. Clemens, L.C., the APRA Team tackled a route filled with challenges, spirituality, and beauty, pedaling to support scholarships for the Athenaeum's students. In this way, sports, endurance, prayer, and team spirit became tangible signs of fraternity and care for one's neighbor.

In continuity with this same mission, the late 2025 **APRA Solidale campaign** brought together outreach initiatives aimed at those living in vulnerable situations. These included **Kilo Amico**, a collection of consumer goods for the *Caritas Solidarity Emporium*, and the traditional **Christmas Lunch for the needy**—an occasion during which the Athenaeum renewed its commitment to hospitality and service. Thanks also to the collaboration of partners such as the **Pellegrini Group** and the **Panorama/IN's Group**, along with dedicated volunteers, these initiatives reaffirmed the value of a community capable of drawing near to others. These experiences illustrated a vibrant Third Mission: a formation that generates responsibility, solidarity, and hope.

Find out more

Small gestures, great opportunities

Thanks to your help, we can form apostles, Christian leaders, clergy, and laity at the service of the Church.
Your donations are an important and concrete gesture that allows us to offer scholarships to deserving students who need financial support to access their education and research.

Tangible Support for the Formation of Priests

Our Faculty of **Theology**, tied to the evangelizing mission of the Church, will host over 80 students in the upcoming academic year at a cost of €150,000 fully borne by us, because their dioceses of origin are unable to contribute to their academic fees.

To continue offering this service to the Church, we ask for your help to **cover tuition fees, textbooks, study stipends**, and the formation of these students.

To donate,

scan the QR code

or make a bank transfer to:
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Scholarship Testimonials

Dibin Abraham
Theology Scholarship Recipient

Good afternoon, distinguished benefactors and participants.
I am Fr. Dibin Abraham, a priest of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam–Angamaly in Kerala, India. First and foremost, I wish to express my most sincere gratitude for the support I have received in my academic journey and for the opportunity to share my testimony at this special event.
Your generosity—which in my case resulted in a reduction of academic fees—is a true blessing that allows me to pursue my doctoral studies at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum with peace of mind, responsibility, and dedication.
To briefly introduce myself: I was born into a simple family deeply rooted in faith. I belong to the Syro-Malabar Church and, from a young age, was inspired by the witness of the priests in my parish. In 2012, I came to Rome for theological studies, where I completed my Bachelor's degree, my Licentiate, and now my Doctorate. Alongside my studies, I serve as a chaplain in a psychiatric facility: a ministry that bridges theological research with pastoral compassion.
I would like to briefly share what receiving a scholarship means for a student. First and foremost, it is concrete financial support, allowing one to study with greater peace of mind and continuity. It is a moral encouragement, because knowing that someone believes in your journey gives strength and motivation. It is also a positive responsibility, one that drives you to pursue your studies with commitment and gratitude. A scholarship allows for better planning of one's academic path, without having to forgo necessary courses or materials. It is a sign of ecclesial communion, the fruit of the sacrifices of many people. It is a help to avoid wasting opportunities, a contribution to the mission of the Church, and a silent yet precious collaboration. Finally, it is an invitation to give back the good received and a sign of hope, an investment in our future vocation and service.
On behalf of myself and so many other students, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Your generosity makes our path possible and inspires us to give our very best.



Matteo Pelusi
Bioethics Scholarship Recipient

Good evening to all. It is with deep gratitude that I accepted the invitation from the Academic Authorities to share my testimony at this event dedicated to supporting student education, bringing together people connected from different parts of the world.
Being a recipient of a scholarship from our Athenaeum, and specifically within the Faculty of Bioethics, has represented far more than mere financial assistance. It has been a precious opportunity that has allowed me to bring unity and depth to my educational journey, bridging my background in Medical Biotechnology with my studies in Theology and Philosophy.
Yet, the greatest value of this gift lies in another aspect: the ability to transform what I have received into concrete service for others. As a teacher in a vocational school for Healthcare Assistants, every day I have the privilege and responsibility of guiding young people who will tomorrow be called to care for the most vulnerable.
The formation I receive in this Faculty does not remain confined within these walls. It enters high school classrooms; it translates into questions, reflections, and educational and professional choices; it passes through the words and example of those called to teach, reaching those who will be assisted, cared for, and accompanied by my students. In this sense, a scholarship does not only support me as an individual student—it generates a good that spreads and multiplies over time.
When you receive something great, you realize that you do not hold it merely for yourself. The talents entrusted to us are meant to bear fruit and become opportunities for growth for others. That is why I consider this opportunity not only a privilege, but a responsibility.
I would like to conclude by recalling the teachings of Cardinal Sgreccia, who, through his life and work, reminded us that all study, research, and scientific progress find their authentic meaning only when oriented toward the integral good of the human person. This is the horizon that the Faculty of Bioethics has helped me rediscover and that I wish to transmit to my students, so that professional competence is always accompanied by a profound attention to the dignity of every human life.
For all of this, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Athenaeum and to all those who make this initiative possible. Thank you.



Alumni Testimonials

Maria Antonietta Castaldi
***Alumna*, Master's Degree in Science and Faith**

First of all, I would like to thank Father Alex and Father Rafael for inviting me to share my experience with the Science and Faith Institute of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum, where I earned my Master's Degree in Science and Faith, offered in partnership with the European University of Rome.



My story begins in 2024 when I had the opportunity to work for a year at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, USA, on a research project focused on artificial womb technology. Through this project, I was able to analyze the EXTEND system (EXTrauterine Environment for Neonatal Development) and use it as a model for pregnancy and labor. During this work, I discovered the existence of an umbilico-neuro-cardiac reflex, whereby stretching the umbilical cord causes an increase in the fetal heart rate detectable by monitoring systems.
During this period, I realized that these kinds of technologies—whose current objective is to provide a suitable environment for extremely premature infants (from 4 to 5 months of gestational age) and allow them to grow in an environment similar to the maternal womb, without breathing air which is harmful at such low gestational ages—raised monumental problems in ethics, medical ethics, and bioethics. I also recognized that, thanks to my previous training, I had an intuition of the ethical direction to take; however, I understood that in today's world, mere intuition is not enough: solid foundations are needed upon which to build universal, valid answers. Therefore, I began searching for an online program (since I was in the US) and specifically wanted a pontifical university. That is how I discovered the Master's Degree in Science and Faith, which I enrolled in during the spring of 2024.
The educational experience was both exceptional and outstanding: it enabled me to discuss the issues of our time with people from all backgrounds and, in particular, as a scientist with other scientists—often leaving them, I must say, literally speechless! In the sense of «Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have» (1 Pet 3:15).
Let me share two moments in my professional life where this Master's program proved vital:

1. *Currently, my research field focuses on the use of artificial intelligence in pattern recognition for 4D prenatal ultrasound and fetal consciousness. Recently, after reading an article in Science regarding the role of AI in the medical profession, I felt called to respond. I wrote a response on medical ethics that was published online in May—something I was able to do directly thanks to the knowledge acquired during the Master's program.*
2. *I was moderating a session at an AI conference in Berlin held at the Max Planck Institute. During a lunch break, I had a conversation with Hiroshi Ishiguro (the famous Japanese scientist who creates humanoid robots) about his worldview, his perspective on humanity, and how hylomorphism is the only paradigm that correctly accounts for the structure of the world. Again, I was able to engage in this dialogue thanks to the advanced knowledge gained through several courses in the Master's program.*

Therefore, I strongly recommend enrolling in the Master's Degree in Science and Faith to anyone considering it, as the benefits are truly manifold.
Finally, inspired in part by the passion of several professors, I have decided to continue my research and studies in this field.

Adriana Mira
***Alumna*, Master's Degree in Philosophical Counseling**

I'm Adriana Mira from Brazil. I live in São Paulo, where I am currently involved in consulting for corporate projects, offering philosophical support to business managers. In São Paulo, I served as Secretary General of the Chamber of Commerce—the first woman in 120 years to hold this position. Currently, at the invitation of the Chamber's President, I am a board member, collaborating with both the Chamber of Commerce and the Business Women's Committee alongside many women working in Italian-Brazilian companies across São Paulo.
I first saw a video lecture by Prof. Guido Traversa discussing the Master's in Philosophical Counseling, and as soon as I learned more about the Athenaeum, I decided to enroll. I attended in a hybrid format and was delighted to experience the intensive weeks in person here in Rome. It was a truly special and beautiful experience—I was the only Brazilian in the group and, in fact, the only non-philosopher, as my background is in marketing and communication while my peers were all philosophers. Once my enrollment was accepted, I decided to fully commit, and it turned out to be a wonderful journey. In my view, this Master's degree is not just for philosophers; it should be taken by professionals from all fields.



I particularly remember a lecture by Fr. Michael Ryan, where he said: 'By practicing goodness with constancy, our actions are strengthened.' In that moment, I was able to take full responsibility for myself.
I later shared this insight with my family, children, and colleagues, and it also inspired me to take on the commitment of publishing a book on promoting virtuous leadership and women's skills in corporate settings. The methodology described in the book is the direct result of practical application and the great insights I received from Fr. Michael Ryan.

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