



Orientation Program Welcomes New & Returning Students to Lay Centre

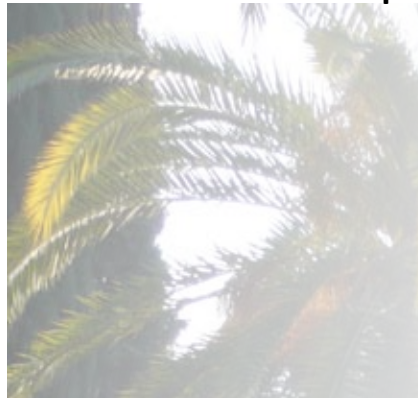


(Left photo) Abbot Edmund Power, OSB, listens to the discussion following his presentation to the student community on the grounds of the Lay Centre during the orientation program on Saturday, 11 October: (Right photo) Lay Centre student Radmilo Košutić on the path leading up the mountain to the Monastery of the Sacro Speco during the weekend retreat in the hillside town of Subiaco.

During the first two weeks of October before the first semester began, the staff helped fifteen students from nine different countries to get settled in Rome and at the Lay Centre. Although the majority of the members of this year's community are Roman Catholic, there are also one Serbian Orthodox, one Greek Orthodox, one Lutheran and three Muslim students. Throughout the orientation program, the students were offered assistance in applying for their residency papers, finalizing registration at their universities, and given opportunities to become familiar with some of the rich cultural and religious heritage of the city. On Saturday, 11 October, the Lay Centre held an orientation afternoon that included a brief community meeting, two presentations, the celebration of Vespers, and dinner.

In the first presentation, Abbot Edmund Power, OSB, of the Monastery of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome, spoke about the challenges and prospects for community life. In the second presentation, Spiritual Formator at the International Augustinian College of Santa Monica in Rome, Fr. Robert Guessetto, OSA, reflected on the more explicitly spiritual aspects of living in community. The orientation program was brought to a close with a retreat at the Monastery of Saint Scholastica in the ancient hillside town of Subiaco. Over the weekend of 17-19 October, the student community celebrated daily Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours, and took advantage of opportunities for private prayer and group discussion where St. Benedict embraced the monastic life in the fifth century.

Join Us When Archbishop Fitzgerald Returns for Oasis in the City Evening



The second "Oasis in the City Evening" will be held on Tuesday, 25 November, beginning with light refreshments at 18.00. Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald, M.Afr., longtime friend of the Lay Centre will give a presentation on his experiences as the Apostolic Nuncio in Egypt entitled, "Contemplating Cairo: Musings of a Nuncio." The evening will end with the Celebration of Sung Vespers at 19:30. To register for this event: info@laycentre.org.



Most Rev.
Michael Fitzgerald,
M.Afr

Celebrate the Season of Advent with the Upcoming Day of Recollection

On Sunday, 30 November, VPI is sponsoring "A Time to Begin Anew," an Advent Day of Recollection with Fr. John Keating, O.Carm, at the Passionist Retreat House here in Rome. The day begins at 9:30 with the Celebration of Morning Prayer, and will include two conferences, Sunday Mass, a luncheon, the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation and will conclude with the Celebration of Sung Vespers. For more information (including directions to the Passionist Monastery) visit www.laycentre.org/advent_recollection_2008.html. To register for this event: info@laycentre.org.



Fr. John Keating,
O.Carm





Rev. Dr. David Balch takes questions at his lecture.

Oasis in the City Evening

On Tuesday, 28 October, Rev. Dr. David Balch, presented a lecture entitled, "Art in the Earliest Roman Church Houses." It was the first of the new "Oasis in the City Evening" series. A group of scholars, students and professionals gathered for the evening that featured a light reception, the lecture, time for discussion, and the celebration of Sung Vespers. Rev. Dr. Balch, who is the Professor of New Testament at the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, California, spoke about his new book, *Roman Domestic Art and Early House Churches* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008) which treats the impact that the art in Roman houses had on those who gathered to worship in them and their interpretation of the Scriptures.

Congratulations, Newlyweds!



Fabrizio and Lizza Sebastiani on their wedding day.

It is with great joy that The Lay Centre announces the wedding of Lizza Rodriguez to Fabrizio Sebastiani on Friday, 26 September at the Baptistry of St John Lateran. Lizza was part of the Lay Centre resident student community for more than three years while she was pursuing her studies in Fundamental Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. Our prayers are with them both as they begin their new life together as husband and wife.

Vincent Pallotti Institute Marks the Pauline Year with Special Fall Series

The Vincent Pallotti Institute opened the new academic year with a six week course entitled, "Rejoice and Share Your Joy" (Philippians 4:9). Abbot Edmund Power, OSB, kicked off the series on the morning of 16 October and Rev. Steve Rehrauer, CSsR, has been leading the subsequent morning presentations each Thursday at The Lay Centre. On Thursday, 20 November, Abbot Edmund gave a special presentation, guided a visit to the tomb of St. Paul and celebrated Mass at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls to bring this special course to a close.

For all of the latest news from The Lay Centre please consult

WWW.LAYCENTRE.ORG

Be sure to send us your updated contact information to stay informed about upcoming activities and program offerings.



Sr. Helen Alford, OP, delivers fall lecture to students.

Student Fall Lecture

On Sunday, 26 October, Sr. Helen Alford, OP, presented a lecture on "The Dignity of Work: Christian Discipleship in the Marketplace." It was the first "Sunday Evening for University Students." A group of lay students from different pontifical universities joined the Lay Centre residents for an evening that included the lecture, Sung Vespers, a buffet dinner and relaxed conversation. Sister Helen, the Dean of the Social Sciences Faculty at the Angelicum (Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas) in Rome, shared her insights into the ways that Catholic social teaching can and should interact with the business world in the complexities of the modern economy.

Interreligious Activities Promote Dialogue of Life

The Lay Centre organized a meal for the Muslim feast of Eid al-Fitr for our three resident Muslim students and some of their friends on the evening of Thursday, 2 October. Monsignor Chidi Denis Osizoh read the letter written by Cardinal Tauran, President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, to mark the end of Ramadan.



(Left photo) Mons. C. Denis Osizoh reads the Vatican's Official Greeting to Muslims on their Feast of Eid al-Fitr; (Right photo) Donna Orsuto greets participants during the afternoon Interfaith Youth Core meeting.

The Lay Centre hosted a meeting sponsored by the United States Embassy to the Holy See with representatives from the Interfaith Youth Core on the afternoon of Wednesday, 29 October. The Interfaith Youth Core is an American organization that serves to promote interreligious dialogue and understanding. Lay Centre students Cenap Aydin, Zahra Rashidbeygi, and Nadia Othmani coordinated the afternoon together with Donna Orsuto.