



the Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas

Summer 2006

Catholic Higher Education: The Dialogue of Mission and Identity

The Lay Centre is pleased to have sponsored the Second Annual Rome Seminar for the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities from June 22-29, 2006. The seminar gathered trustees, administrators and key senior faculty of the ACCU's member institutions to offer an inside look at the living Catholic heritage as it has been and continues to be shaped through the Roman experience. Conducted and coordinated by senior staff of the ACCU and the staff of the Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas, the seminar affords opportunities to meet representatives of the various pontifical councils and congregations at the Vatican and some key administrators of the pontifical universities in Rome to discuss issues surrounding Catholic identity in higher education.



The Rome Seminar this year featured two keynote presentations on Catholic higher education. First, participants were invited to dialogue with **Most Rev. J. Michael Miller**, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education, about *"The Goals and Principles of Catholic Education and the Role of the Congregation for Catholic Education."* And later in the week, the group visited the Vatican for a presentation entitled *"Academic Freedom and Fidelity to Church Teaching: A Vatican Perspective"* by the **Rev. J. Augustine DiNoia, OP**, Undersecretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Featured presentations also included *"Catholic Worship and Catholic Identity"* by **His Eminence Francis Cardinal Arinze**, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship (see picture above); *"The Contribution of Catholic Intellectual Life for the Common Good"* by **His Eminence Renato Cardinal Martino**, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace; and *"The Commitment of the Roman Catholic Church to Ecumenical Dialogue"* with **Most Rev. Brian Farrell**, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Through site visits to the Vatican and Rome's historic center, participants explored some of the ecclesiastical, architectural and cultural treasures of the Eternal City and came to a deeper appreciation for the history of the center of Roman Catholicism. The week also featured a trip to Subiaco for a Day of Recollection with **Abbot Edmund Power, OSB** of the Monastery at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. The day was a time spent apart for prayer and reflection at the traditional site of the first monastic foundation of St. Benedict in the sixth century. Throughout the week daily celebrations of the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours, including the papal liturgy for the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul at the Basilica of St. Peter on June 29th gave a spiritual focus to the seminar. The impact of the Rome Seminar will be extended to more people involved in Catholic higher education in the United States throughout the coming months as this year's participants present their experiences and reflections to the faculties of the various institutions they represent.



Living the Pascal Mystery: 2006 Lenten Retreat

After an intense month of exams, and the beginning of the second semester, the residents of the Lay Centre were privileged to spend a weekend together for a Lenten retreat in Bagnoregio, Italy, at the Emmaus House of Prayer of the Sisters of Jesus the Redeemer. The weekend of prayer and reflection was led by a friend of the Lay Centre, **Rev. Anthony McSweeney, SSS**. The time featured the celebration of the liturgy, conversation, group discussions focused on community life and the meaning of Lent, silence and meditation. Some of the students (shown in the picture above) also had the opportunity to venture across a foot bridge to the nearby abandoned ninth century cività which was the birthplace of St. Bonaventure in the 13th century.

(Photo by Michelle Mueller).

The Lay Centre Course Update

The Lay Centre is happy to announce the upcoming study week this fall: **"Women at the Well: Prophetic Voices in the Church"** with **Donna Orsuto** September 24-30, 2006.

Throughout the centuries, women have made a particular contribution to the building up of the Church, especially during times of crisis. This study week will offer participants the opportunity to encounter the stories, writings and prayers of some of these women in order to learn who they were, how they

served the Church of their own age, and how they challenge us as Christian disciples today. **Visit our website for more information: www.laycentre.org**

Mark your calendars now!

A Rome Seminar on the history, theology and spirituality of lay ecclesial ministry. **July 1-8, 2007 "Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: Laity Yesterday and Today"** with **Dr. H. Richard McCord** and others, Director of the Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women and Youth at United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Lay Centre E-Letter: You've got mail!



To keep up to date on the news of the Lay Centre in Rome – from wherever you are – please send us your current e-mail address in order to receive "News from the Lay Centre" our e-letter to our friends around the world about current happenings and upcoming program offerings. Contact us at info@laycentre.org and keep an eye on your inbox!

The Anagni Code

On Saturday, May 6 2006, the staff and resident student community of the Lay Centre were accompanied by **Msgr. Liam Bergin**, Rector of the Pontifical Irish College in Rome on a day long excursion to Anagni. The important medieval town was the site of this year's annual cultural day, featuring a series of reflections highlighting the art, history and theological significance of the papal palace and cathedral.

Arriverderci Cari Amici: Goodbye Dear Friends!

Over the past few years, the Lay Centre has witnessed many changes and developments as it has expanded its theological course offerings for the laity and responded to the emerging needs of the community of lay students studying at the pontifical universities of Rome.

Behind all that has happened during that period of time has been the intellect, talent, and hard work of **Dr. David Dawson Vásquez**. From helping manage the finances and working on fundraising, through developing a series of week-long study seminars in Rome that have drawn people from around the world, to sharing his theological expertise with students through guided tours and presentations during evenings of formation, David has played a vital role in the life and mission of the Lay Centre since he first joined the staff eight years ago. Also, his wife **Susan Dawson Vásquez** has done much for the Lay Centre, including significant work on our website, the design of brochures, and the design of our new logo.

Hailing from Gonzales, Louisiana, David received his Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from The Catholic University of America. Beginning this August, he will leave his current position at the Lay Centre to devote more energy to

Planning for the future: a legacy program

We hope that many of you will want to help ensure the work of the Lay Centre in the years ahead with bequests, charitable trust and annuities, or other deferred gifts through the fund recently established with the National Catholic Community Foundation (NCCF-Friends of the Lay Centre). We invite you to learn more about this possibility by contacting Edward Robinson, President, National Catholic Community Foundation at: 1-800-757-2998. Thank you!

Getting to know the Saints in Rome

In the month of May, the Lay Centre welcomed a group of lay persons and clergy from the United States and Australia for a week-long seminar exploring the lives and times of holy women and men who gave their lives to follow Christ here in Rome. **Professor Lawrence Cunningham**, the John A. O'Brien Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame (South Bend, Indiana, USA) introduced participants to his rich knowledge of the saints who lived in Rome over the last two thousand years. The week featured lectures, site visits and guided discussions.

his position as Director of CUA Rome Program and DePaul University's Study Abroad Program in Rome, while continuing to teach at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (the Angelicum). We look forward to being able to call on David as a lecturer for future programs at the Lay Centre. The board, staff and the students of the Lay Centre want to express their great appreciation and heartfelt gratitude both to David and Susan for the past years of dedicated service that they have spent working with the programs, administration, and life of the resident student community.

Benvenuti: Welcome!

As David finishes his position at the Lay Centre some new faces will be assisting Donna Orsuto and Riekke Van Velzen with the administration of the programs and the resident student community. Beginning this October, **Robert White** will finish his second year as Administrative Assistant for the Vincent Pallotti Institute to take on more administrative responsibilities as the Assistant Director of the Lay Centre.

Robert will be entering the last year of the STL program in Patristic Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University this fall and brings with him a diverse experience of pastoral work, teaching and work in development.

In his stead, the Lay Centre is happy to welcome **Cherry Caldato** as the new Assistant for VPI. Cherry brings her vibrant faith, energy, and years of experience in health care administration and living abroad as the wife of a diplomat to the position.

We are fortunate to also welcome **Maregold E. Ofei**, a graphic designer living in Rome, who will be assisting with our webpage and brochures, and **Dr. Jem Sullivan**, in the United States, who will provide marketing and grant writing assistance.

Address, Board of Directors, Honorary board, Contributions

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Contributions

Contributions to help support the work of the Lay Centre are needed and welcomed. They may be sent to us at the above address; however, we encourage gifts to a fund established at the National Catholic Community Foundation. Checks can be made payable to: "NCCF-Friends of the Lay Centre" and sent to the following address: Friends of the Lay Centre National Catholic Community Foundation, 2661 Riva Road – Suite 1042 Annapolis, MD 21401.

The Mission of the Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas

- ◆ Provide within a Roman Catholic environment, an international residential community which fosters the intellectual, spiritual and human growth of lay students pursuing degrees at the pontifical institutes and universities in Rome;
- ◆ Be a living witness of the Church's vision of promoting Christian unity and interreligious dialogue in the spirit of the Foyer Unitas;
- ◆ Help lay persons develop a spirituality which integrates faith with everyday life;
- ◆ Promote the lay vocation in the Church and in the world.

The Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas is a legally recognized institute in Italy. In the United States it is incorporated at a not-for-profit corporation and is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.