



«Avvisi» dalla Vaticana

Pope Francis is joyfully received at his Library



The Holy Father with H.E. Msgr. José Tolentino de Mendonça, Msgr. Cesare Pasini and Paolo Vian, Director of the Department of Manuscripts.

At 10:30 on Tuesday, December 4, His Holiness Pope Francis crossed the threshold of the Library. Accompanied by the Librarian, H.E. Msgr. José Tolentino de Mendonça, by the prefect, Msgr. Cesare Pasini and the vice prefect, Ambrogio Piazzoni, the Holy Father visited important areas of the Library, including the Photographic Department, and was able to admire some of the most important documents preserved there. Finally, in the great hall named after Leo XIII, he was welcomed by the employees and collaborators, who had gathered there to give him a warm welcome to his library. *“Your visit fills us with joy because we all feel that we are at your service, your collaborators, and we carry out our activities in a spirit of deep filial communion with you, Holy Father,”* said Msgr. de Mendonça, who defined the Library as a *“sanctuary for the word of God,”* and also *“a sanctuary for the human word.”* He then added: *“to be able to serve, one needs to know. And in order to know, one needs to love. If there exists any ecclesial intuition that documents the love of the Church for the world, it is the Apostolic Library, because truly nothing of what is human is indifferent to it.”*

Referring to the words pronounced by our Librarian, the Holy Father stressed: *“no human thing is indifferent to Us.”* And speaking of the transmission of the word of God, he said: *“How did the Jewish and Christian faithful preserve the word of God? In difficult times, in moments of persecution, they hid it or learned it by heart to keep it: it was the treasure. And the grandmothers in those difficult times taught it to their grandchildren. The word of God, which does not stand still, which is always moving, is always spoken to be passed down. That transmission does not happen only by writing, it is also done with the voice. Each of these pieces of writing has many voices. The word of God must always be transmitted in dialect. The dialect of love, the dialect of the family, the dialect of the heart.”*

Before greeting all the employees and collaborators one by one, the pope thanked them: *“You work at the crossroads of these great rivers: the word of God and the word of men. I thank you for your courage to swim in these rivers, the courage to go forward and transmit these two words which are ours, which have been given as a gift to us. Thank you for your work.”*

Thank you to Your Holiness!





Ott.lat.119, 43r

Conjugating the verb “to be born”

Those who think that we are born only once are deceived. For those who seek to understand, life is full of births. In childhood, we are born many times over, every time the eyes are opened by wonder and joy. We are born on uncharted journeys when we take risks in our youth. We are born in the sowing of adult life, between winters and springs that cultivate the mysterious transformation that places the flower on the stem, and inside the flower the scent of the fruit. We are born many times at the age when our work has not yet ceased, but are reconciled with inner bonds and with paths that had been postponed.

Those who think that we are born only once are deceived. We are born when we discover that we are loved and able to love. We are born in the enthusiasm of laughter and in the night of weeping. We are born in prayer and in gift.

We are born in a wound and in forgiveness. We are born in silence or illuminated by a word. We are born in activity and in sharing. We are born in gestures or what goes beyond gestures. We are born within us and in the heart of God.

Those who think you can only be born in a particular place are deceived. We are born at home and on the street. We are born in the hidden silence of the temple and in the clamorous embrace of the community. We are born in the unexpected happenings of a journey and in the landscape of our most ordinary daily life. We are born in both familiar space and in foreign space. We are born in the open space of the square and in the recollection of the libraries.

May this Christmas renew in each of us the possibility of conjugating the verb “to be born” in hope.

+ José Tolentino de Mendonça
Archivist and Librarian of H.R.C.





On peace: the encyclical letter “*Pacem Dei munus pulcherrimum*”

As we mark the centenary of the end of the First World War, we would like to offer our readers some excerpts from the encyclical letter of Pope Benedict XV, published on May 23, 1920. It is a beautiful document on peace, entitled *Pacem Dei munus pulcherrimum*, a strong message by the pontiff who tempted to stop and who condemned the “useless slaughter”, addressed “to the patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops and ordinaries in peace and communion with the Holy See: peace and reconciliation among Christians,” in the sixth year of his pontificate:

Peace, the beautiful gift of God, the name of which, as St. Augustine says, is the sweetest word to our hearing and the best and most desirable possession; peace, which was for more than four years implored by the ardent wishes of all good peoples, by the prayers of pious souls and the tears of mothers, begins at last to shine upon the nations. At this We are indeed the happiest of all, and heartily do We rejoice. But this joy of Our paternal heart is disturbed by many bitter anxieties, for if in most places peace is in some sort established and treaties signed, the germs of former enmities remain; and you well know, Venerable Brethren, that there can be no stable peace or lasting treaties, though made after long and difficult negotiations and duly signed, unless there be a return of mutual charity to appease hate and banish enmity [...]

For Ourselves, never since, by the hidden designs of God, We were raised to the Chair have We ceased to do everything in Our power from the very beginning of the war that all the nations of the world might resume cordial relations as soon as possible. To that end We never ceased to pray, to repeat exhortations, to propose ways of arrangement, to try every means, in fact, to open by divine aid, a path to a just, honorable and lasting peace; and at the same time We exercised all Our paternal care to alleviate everywhere that terrible load of sorrow and disaster of every sort by which the immense tragedy was accompanied. And now, just as from the beginning of Our troubled pontificate the charity to Jesus Christ led Us to work both for the return of peace and to alleviate the horrors of the war, so now that comparative peace has been concluded, this same charity urges Us to exhort all the children of the Church, and all mankind, to clear their hearts of bitterness, and give place to mutual love and concord [...]



Benedictus PP. XV

Therefore, Venerable Brethren, We pray you and exhort you in the mercy and charity of Jesus Christ, strive with all zeal and diligence not only to urge the faithful entrusted to your care to abandon hatred and to pardon offences; but, and what is more immediately practical, to promote all those works of Christian benevolence which bring aid to the needy, comfort to the afflicted and protection to the weak, and to give opportune and appropriate assistance of every kind to all who have suffered from the war [...]

All that We have said here to individuals about the duty of charity We wish to say also to the peoples who have been delivered from the burden of a long war, in order that, when every cause of disagreement has been, as far as possible, removed, and without prejudice to the rights of justice, they may resume friendly relations among themselves. The charity law in the Gospels for individuals is not different from the one that has to exist between the States and the nations, which are indeed but collections of individuals. The war being now over, people seem called to a general reconciliation not only from motives of charity, but from necessity; the nations are naturally drawn together by the need they have of one another, and by the bond of mutual good will, bonds which are today strengthened by the development of civilization and the marvelous increase of communication [...]

Things being thus restored, the order required by justice and charity re-established and the nations reconciled, it is much to be desired, Venerable Brethren, that all States, putting aside mutual suspicion, should unite in one league, or rather a sort of family of peoples, calculated both to maintain their own independence and safeguard the order of human society [...]

The Church will certainly not refuse her zealous aid to States united under the Christian law in any of their undertakings inspired by justice and charity, inasmuch as she is herself the most perfect type of universal society. She possesses in her organization and institutions a wonderful instrument for bringing this brotherhood among men, not only for their eternal salvation but also for their material well-being to the sure acquisition of eternal blessings. It is the teaching of history that when the Church pervaded with her spirit the ancient and barbarous nations of Europe, little by little the many and varied differences that divided them were diminished and their quarrels extinguished; in time they formed a homogeneous society from which sprang Christian Europe which, under the guidance and auspices of the Church, whilst preserving a diversity of nations, tended to a unity that favored its prosperity and glory [...]

To come back to what We said at the beginning, We turn affectionately to all Our children and conjure them in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ to forget mutual differences and offences and draw together in the bonds of Christian charity, from which none are excluded and within which none are strangers. We fervently exhort all the nations, under the inspiration of Christian benevolence, to establish a true peace among themselves and join together in an alliance which shall be just and therefore lasting [...]



A small big chorus

Thanks to a fortuitous event, the acquisition of some works published by the Library for an important gift, we recently learned of a small but significant story we would like to share with our readers. It concerns a choir of northern Italy, Ceredo to be exact, a district of Sant'Anna d'Alfaedo, in the province of Verona.

The requested publications were to be a homage to the maestro Lorenzo Giacomini, founder of the choir *Fiorelin del bosco*, who had also served as its director for fifty years.

Founded in order to learn to sing with some technical foundation as well as to pass the time in a pleasant way, the choir grew quickly and devoted particular attention to the popular songs of the local tradition, salvaging older songs that had been almost lost, even to the point of resorting to oral tradition. The collection of the songs is now published by the teacher and the choir themselves.

Maestro Giacomini “re-taught the songs of their land to young and old so that they would not lose sight of the mountaineer culture of their forefathers; so that through the musical verses they might sense the feelings of love, of even dramatic conflicts, of religiosity, of joy and of connection to the customs of those who have inhabited these mountains, these valleys and these stone houses; that they might go back to loving the woods, the meadows and the land with greater awareness, even though if difficult to cultivate.”

Lorenzo Giacomini, accompanied by Mrs. Margherita, personally came to the Vaticana to collect the gifts and was able to visit the Library with great excitement.

Congratulations to the teacher for his projects, and also for study, best wishes to Margherita, his caring companion, best wishes to the choir that represents the voice of a community that, even if small, plays an important role in safeguarding the memory of its history.



“500x500”, a pilot project with CGS-Piql: 60 digitized manuscripts

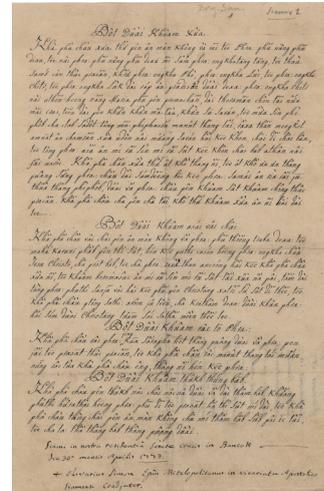
The digitization of 60 manuscripts has just been made possible by the contribution of the Thai company, CGS Chemicals, Co., and the support of the Norwegian Piql (which deals with the archiving of “future-proof” data). This is part of a project which is called “500 manuscripts for 500 years” and which plans for the preservation of reproductions of Vatican codices in Norwegian ice deposits.

Thanks to this pilot project, featured among the digitized documents is the edition of the *Adagia* of Erasmus, with his annotations (R.VIII.62); the repertoire of the *Roman de la Rose*, 1444, an “unicum” (Reg.lat.1350); Ovid moralized, 15th century, “unicum” (Reg.lat.1686); the *Nouvelle des sens*, 15th century, “unicum” (Reg.lat.1716); a possible autograph document by Jean Budé (1425-1500, Reg.lat.1933); an illustrated Greek Lectionary, 10th century (Vat.gr.1157); prayers in Tamil on palm leaves, 16th century, originating from the “Bibliotheca Palatina” in Heidelberg (Vat.ind.38); the *Aelii Aristides Orationes*, with 12 palimpsest folios at the end of the codex; “scriptio antiquior”: *Aristotelis Poetica* (Vat.gr.1298). A palimpsest is a rewritten manuscript (from the Greek “scraped again”), in which the older text can now be deciphered by means of the proper reading tools.

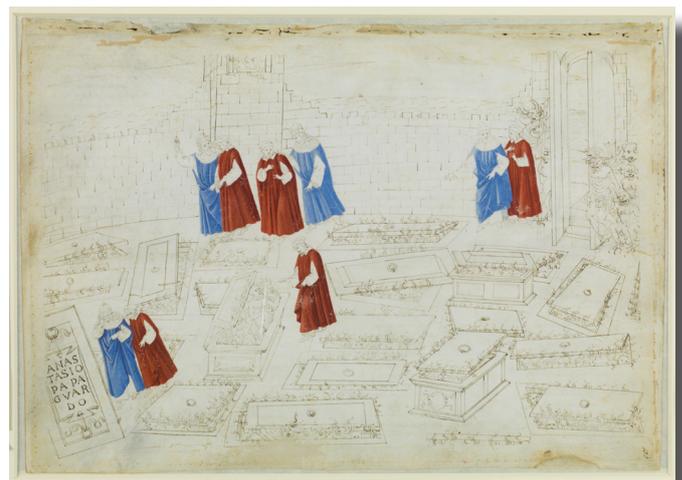
According to the agreements, sixty digitized manuscripts of the Vaticana copied on tape will be kept in the depositories of the Svalbard islands, in the Arctic sea. These include: the “Codex B” of the Bible (Vat.gr.1209); the drawings by Botticelli for the *Divine Comedy* (Reg.lat.1896); the world map of Matteo Ricci (Barb.or.150); the original letters written by Galileo Galilei, with nine figures of sunspots (Barb.lat.6479); the original letters written by Martin Luther (Ott.lat.3029); and the Roman Virgil (Vat.lat.3867).

Through the digitization of the manuscripts, SCG is helping the Library to preserve not only the documents that comprise the heritage of Thai history and culture, but also those that form the cultures of other peoples, in different countries and on other continents, and this gives the initiative an even greater value.

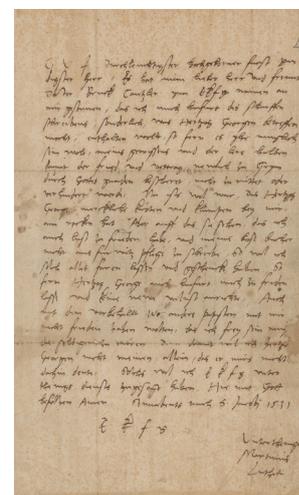
Now that the pilot project has been accomplished, we are working toward reaching the target number of reproductions proposed by Piql.



Borg.siam.1, 1r



Reg.lat.1896.pt.A, 100r



Ott.lat.3029, 4r

October 25: Mass celebrated in suffrage for Leonard E. Boyle, O.P. (1923-1999)

This year, as in previous years, in San Clemente, the ancient basilica on the Via Labicana that is dedicated to a holy pontiff of the first century, a Mass was celebrated to commemorate Fr. Leonard Eugene Boyle on the memorial of his death. Fr Boyle, former prefect of the Apostolic Library, is buried in the lower Basilica of the Clementine complex entrusted to the Irish Dominicans since 1677.

His memory is still alive in the Library that he directed from 1984 and 1997. Those who attended the religious service were also able to visit his grave, where we can read a quote from the *Didascalicon* of Hugo di St. Victor (c. 1096-1141), that was so dear to him: “*Omnia disce, videbis postea nihil superfluum esse; coartata scientia iucunda non est*” (*Learn everything, you will later understand that nothing is superfluous. Partial knowledge does not give gratification*).



Acknowledgment of retirees December 2017-December 2018

In these pages we wish to acknowledge the colleagues who have left or who are about to leave the service and thank them on behalf of the whole Library.

Thanks to:

Luciano Ammenti, Head of IT Coordination, in service since October 1, 1983;
Alfonso Bracci, Printed Books Catalog, Prints Cabinet, in service since July 1, 1982.
Oswaldo De Martino, Conservation, in service since July 1, 1979;
Virginia Gil Moyano, Missionary *Idente*, Catalog Service, Accessions Office, in service since September 1, 1989;
Christine Grafinger, Archives of the Prefecture, in service since January 1, 1990;
Pietro Montanari, Library Museums, Concierge, in service since July 1, 1978;
Stefano Righetti, Catalog Service, Bursar's Office, in service since January 1, 1986;
Adalbert Roth, Head of the Accessions Office, Director of the Department of Printed Books, *scriptor*, in service since July 1, 2001;
Carlo Vecchioni, Library Museums, Economato, in service since May 1, 1978.

A Chair dedicated to Pope Francis at the School of Library Science



On November 6, at the headquarters of the Vatican School of Library Science, a chair named after Pope Francis was inaugurated for the higher studies of Library Science. H.E. Card. Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, presided over the ceremony.

In the presence of the Librarian, H.E. Msgr. José Tolentino de Mendonça, the prefect, Msgr. Cesare Pasini, the Vice-Director of the School, prof. Antonio Manfredi, Msgr. Laurence Spiteri, the administrator for the Sanctuary of Culture Foundation, the teaching staff of the School and of the students of the current year and ex-students, Card. Parolin gave a commendable speech that insisted on the value of the education that the Vatican School can offer, “with the expediency of those who have had experience with the material on their own” before teaching it. Thus bolstered by its long experience and pioneering instruments, the Library’s School founded in 1934 has formed generations of Librarians who have been able to join a number of institutions in many places, not only Italian ones, and continues to offer young graduates a qualified training that deepens their knowledge of library science.

Thanks to the donations received by the Sanctuary of Culture for the School, it was possible to establish the prestigious chair for high studies in library science and two scholarships that took their name after St. Gregory the Illuminator (c.257-c.331). Card. Parolin personally awarded the scholarships to the two students who obtained the best ratings, Serena La Malfa and Giulia De Castro.

The two new graduates will be able to be integrated into the activities of the Library and perfect their training onsite with the guidance of the teachers. The Sanctuary of Culture has thus taken an increasingly concrete role in the area of professional training. The Secretary of State concluded by summing up the role of the Vatican School of Library Science, promoter of “the principles and values that are proper to Christian knowledge in the world of culture and research at the service of today’s men and women.

As a gift to Card. Parolin, two facsimiles were given (folios of the *Hanna Papyrus*, the *Pater Noster* in the Gospel of Luke and John’s Prologue of the Gospel), dating back to the beginning of the year 200. It is thanks to this very ancient document that our sequence of the Gospels as we know it today is the same as it was at the beginning of the third century.

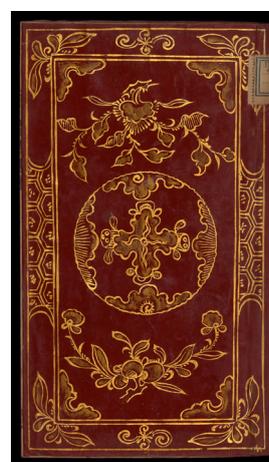
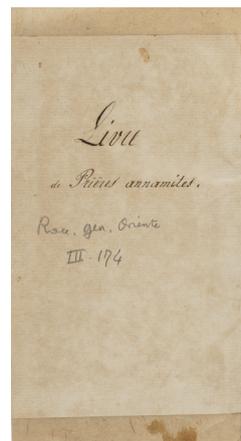
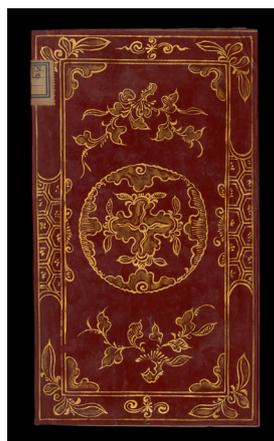
Nôm printed documents are now cataloged

A small group of Vietnamese documents kept at the Vatican have long remained unknown to scholars because they never received a catalographic description.

The collection consists of 110 documents, both printed (from 1802 to 1878) and in manuscript form. Most of them were written in Nôm, an ideographic writing system that employed Chinese characters to represent Vietnamese sound. A part of Nôm ideograms were borrowed from Chinese, Hán Việt, in order to make it the language spoken and written only by the *élite* of the population. Nôm was spoken from the tenth to the twentieth century. Approximately one thousand years of Vietnamese cultural history were recorded in the unique language of Nôm: literature, philosophy, history, jurisprudence, medicine, religion and politics. For the most part, this whole legacy has been lost; during the seventeenth century, with the introduction of the Latin alphabet into the country, the Nôm system fell into disuse. French colonialism decreed its end.

When the sinologist Paul Pelliot (1878-1945) came to the Vatican in 1922 to compile the catalog of Chinese documents, he ignored that group of volumes, which remained forgotten afterward.

The Library scriptor orientalis, Delio Vania Proverbio, recently raised the question concerning the description of these documents, and contacts were made with prof. Ngô Thanh Nhân, of the Center for Vietnamese Philosophy, Culture and Society, of Temple University in Philadelphia.



R.G.Oriente.III.154

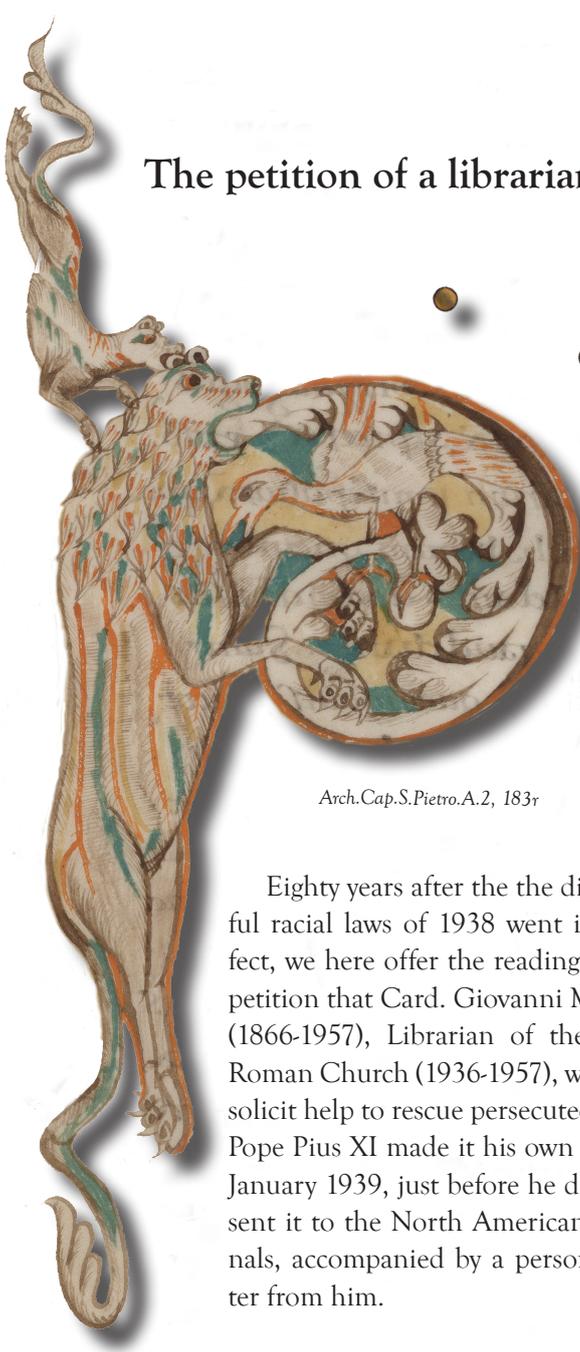
Last October, the distinguished professor spent a period in the Library in order to undertake the cataloging of the works. All the printed books, 87 volumes, most of which have covers made of lacquered cardboard, have been cataloged according to the Dublin Core standard (Dublin Core Metadata Initiative). The Library will import the metadata and make it available in its online catalog in the MARC21 format.

At a later date, the 23 manuscripts will also be described and measures will be taken to restore the lacquered covers, which are particularly fragile and which impede the proper use of the works.

Prof. Nhân emphasized the extraordinary importance of these works. In many cases, these are unique documents, which will certainly appeal to scholars in the field.



The petition of a librarian in response to the racial laws in Italy (1938)



Arch.Cap.S.Pietro.A.2, 183r

Eighty years after the the disgraceful racial laws of 1938 went into effect, we here offer the reading of the petition that Card. Giovanni Mercati (1866-1957), Librarian of the Holy Roman Church (1936-1957), wrote to solicit help to rescue persecuted Jews. Pope Pius XI made it his own and in January 1939, just before he died, he sent it to the North American cardinals, accompanied by a personal letter from him.

Every impartial man, who is not misled by false ideas or misleading information, or by biased passions or other particular interests, even if he does not dare proclaim it, profoundly deplors the fact that in certain States, for the sole reason of origin, under the pretext (which goes more or less for any people, state or class and party) of evildoing and abuse of a part of the race and to free the country from any of influence it may incur on public and private life, many innocent people, including quite a few who are eminent and praiseworthy, have been indiscriminately eliminated and are being more or less ruthlessly despoiled. Some are being scornfully coated with shame and held despicable by a noisier group and even by children. Other multitudes, ever more fearful before the overpowering, have escaped so as not to have to compromise. For these unhappy people, life itself has become very painful and almost unbearable, deprived as they are of the common benefits of social and civil life. They would emigrate out of desperation, if for the vast majority this were not truly impossible.

They would emigrate also if for the few who could risk confronting the uncertainties and deprivations of someone forced to find a shelter and reestablish himself at a mature age, there were not so many difficulties for him in the native country. The countries of origin do not care at all for the man but rather for his money and very much so, and do not allow them to leave with it. The other countries are already too burdened by the unemployed and repulsive to receive many more people who have been purposely reduced to unemployment and misery by rival and adverse countries.

Among the wretched mentioned above, the most valiant and active scholars seem to have been entrusted in a very special way to American Universities and Institutes to advance scholarly pursuits. They have proven themselves competent to carry out research and excellent work to the purpose. The number of such researchers and scholars is always and everywhere very small, requiring a particular genius, a long and thorough formation, and experience in a rare combination of circumstances conducive to the development and production of the spirit. These are not men who are beginning, for whom success and perseverance are uncertain, but rather experienced men, who have laboriously searched and assembled work year after year. They consider it death not to be able to continue working fruitfully, and finish and deliver the product of their work to the public, banned as they are from professorships, laboratories, academies, libraries, and finding no more publishers.

Manifestly, it is of great interest then to procure with sacrifice that they do not remain abandoned nor abandon themselves, but continue and work unto the end, following their course beneath a more benign sky, in comfortable study and work centers, both of the old and new world. By supporting and helping them, it is not only an act of humanity and private charity, as it would be to do so for any other of their unhappy companions, but it becomes a provident, wise work of general public welfare, indeed universal, because in the end, genuine scholarly progress benefits the entire world. But at the same time you can also accomplish good American business, if you forgive the somewhat vulgar expression.

Everyone knows how important, but not so easy, it is to have first-rate, competent teachers in the Institutes of higher learning, who are willing to educate skilled pupils and to train the people who are most capable of scholarly work. North America has some examples of this type who may be quite gifted, but there is not a surplus of men; it is the same case for the countries that have advanced and made progress over the centuries.



Giovanni Mercati, 1866-1957

Now that in Europe men of ability and indisputable merit are essentially ostracized, as if there were dozens of them or as if they are not worth anything at all, a Graziadio Ascoli [1829-1907, glottologist] would not be spared, nor a Steinschneider [Moritz, 1816-1907, Hebraist and bibliographer], nor a Hertz [Heinrich Rudolf, 1857-1894, physicist], nor a Traube [Ludwig, 1861-1907, philologist and paleographer]. Rich America has a unique opportunity (which, however, we hope may never be repeated) to choose among the most talented people and thus bring their schools of higher learning to an unparalleled height.

In the saddest time of the siege, and then in the depression and poverty of Germany, I have examined how to assist the scholarly undertakings of Germans, despite my deficiencies, both by my own work and by begging and transferring subsidies. I do not hesitate now to do likewise, with the same spirit, towards the other earnest devotees of those same disciplines who now find themselves in distress, who are lovers of truth and of honesty, and who are men as much as we are and still called to the kingdom of God and to eternal life.



NTT Data confirms the collaboration with the Library



On November 30, a meeting took place in the Library Vestibule: Katsuichi Sonoda, new vice president and director of the Social Infrastructure Solution of the Japanese company Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT) Data, accompanied by some representatives of the Company, with the administrators of the Library.

The prefect, Msgr. Cesare Pasini, expressing his gratitude towards NTT Data, and stressed the growing spirit of collaboration that drives the successful construction of projects and common jobs: “We have grown together, with increased mutual knowledge and trust,” he said.

For his part, Mr. Sonoda reiterated the wishes of the company he represented (which recently adopted a new organizational structure) to continue the collaboration with the Library “indefinitely”, and emphasized the strategic importance of this collaboration.

Mr. Sonoda and Mr. Akifumi Nakajo, Mr. Minoru Endo, Mr. Shuji Katayama, Ms. Yuka Takahashi and Mr. Asahi Hasebe, then visited the Sistine Hall and the Library’s technological areas located in the Via della Conciliazione, which visits paid tribute to the notion that the past and the future engage in fruitful dialogue.

Sayonara, Sonoda san.



William John Sheehan, 1937-2018



On Saturday, November 25, Fr. William J. Sheehan, C.S.B. passed away. Fr. Sheehan worked in the Vatican from 1986 to 2006.

He was born in Utica, New York, on January 1, 1937. He graduated from the University of Toronto and then obtained a Masters in Library Science from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.

He was ordained a priest on December 10, 1966 and worked as a librarian at St. Thomas University in Houston, Texas; he also worked at the Woodstock Theological Library in Washington before obtaining a scholarship for L'Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Paris.

He arrived in the Vatican in 1986 and was asked by the prefect Leonard E. Boyle (1923-1999) to take care of the library's collection of incunabula, which did not yet have a complete repertoire. He dedicated himself to it beginning in 1987, with the support of the American Friends of the Vatican Library. In fact, when in 1997 Fr. Sheehan published his work, *Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae Incunabula* (Studi e testi, 380-382), he dedicated it to the "American Friends."

In 1997, he became director of the section created for the purpose, that is, of ancient books; in 1999, he was appointed Director of the Department for Printed Books. After completing his service to the Library in 2006, he returned to the United States. In 2012, he settled at Dillon House, the residence of the Basilian Fathers in Houston, while continuing his bibliographical research. His last stay in Rome dates back to 2016 or 2017, and it was expected that he would return to carry out further studies on the incunabula in the Library. His health problems were already serious and he needed the doctor's approval before making a new journey, which he did not repeat.

A person of few but clear words, he had a witty, sometimes sharp spirit. Father was particularly esteemed by the people who worked directly with him, and he in turn had a delicate attention and harbored sincere affection in their regard.



Ezio Consoli, 1952-2018

On November 15th, due to an unavoidable illness, a dear colleague left us, Ezio Consoli. He joined the Library's staff in 1977, and spent his life in the Conservation Laboratory, retiring in January 2017. Always available and of good humor, he will be particularly remembered for the generosity that he poured out to the Institution and to his colleagues, in things both great and small, giving equal dedication to both.

During the funeral, Card. Raffaele Farina spoke of him as a "dear friend". And you are to us, dear Ezio.



Anamorphosis, a gift from Marco Innocenzi



William Blake (from *Letters to Thomas Butts*)

Each grain of sand,
Every stone on the land,
Each rock and each hill,
Each fountain and rill,
Each herb and each tree,
Mountain, hill, earth, and sea,
Cloud, Meteor, and star,
Are men seen afar.



Anamorphism is a deformation of image, an optical phenomenon obtained with mirrors. In painting, drawing, and engraving it is used as a method to invert systems of linear perspective. The technique had its maximum expansion during the seventeenth century, while accompanying a more general interest in the ambiguity that characterized the Baroque era. The figures turn out somewhat deformed and arranged in such a way that they are understandable only if observed from a particular point of view.

This is the case for one of the graphic works of Marco Innocenzi recently donated to the Vatican, *Anamorphosis landscape*, which later became *Mother Earth*, in which the dotted lines that outline a lake, in effect, create a face, a person that hides behind harsh and powerful marks, the grid of a mask; this face represents the artist's mother, whom he observes and from whom he seems to want to draw or obtain something, like a child seeking a last hug.

It is an invitation to go beyond our habits, beyond appearances; it invites us to look deeply into the world around us, the beauties and meanings of which often escape our distracted eyes and hearts.

Born in Rome in 1966, from the nineties Innocenzi has dedicated himself to engraving, an expressive means particularly suited to his wishes to highlight depth and intensity, the urgency to bring to light something that is there, is real, but that it is difficult to see in its many facets, and that would otherwise remain hidden, the true nature of what it "describes" with its particular trait.





Visits to the Vatican

The Swedish ambassador in Italy

On the occasion of the arrangement of a small exhibition of the work, *Bibliotheca Sixtina litterarum cultoribus restituta*, consisting in wood engravings by Francesco Parisi for the 26 xylographs printed in the volume, H.E. Robert Rydberg, the Swedish ambassador to Italy, wished to visit both the exhibition as well as the rooms of the venerable Institution, which, among other things, possesses the library collection of Queen Christina of Sweden (1626-1689). The link between the Library and Sweden is deep and has been forged by its illustrious representatives; over time, a relationship of friendship and deep esteem has been established, to be further strengthened by this spirit of friendship and collaboration.



Mr. Rydberg expressed his admiration in visiting the Library, where he was also able to leaf through two important historical documents related to the extraordinary persona of Queen Christina: one of the two copies of the act of abdication delivered to the sovereign after the signature, in June 1654 (*Reg.lat.2121*), and the so-called *Catalog of Antwerp* (*Vat. lat.8171*), which describes the *Reginense* (or Queen's) collection that arrived by the journey that brought it from Stockholm to Rome. The catalog was completed and signed by Isaac Voss in October 1655, and bears the title *Catalogus librorum ser: Reginae Suetiae qui Antverpiae reperiuntur*.



A delegation of computer technicians from Japan

On October 9th, various representatives from the Japan Institute of Information Technology, which aims to contribute to the development of society, economy and industry in Japan, desired to visit the technological areas of the Library where the digitization of the manuscripts is carried out. They also came with the technical support of the company, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT) Data, with which the Library has been actively collaborating for some time and which will hopefully continue with the same mutual satisfaction. After visiting the spaces and equipment for digitization, the large delegation also visited the historical site of the Library and listened with great interest to stories relating to the construction and decoration of the Sistine Library. The guests showed marvel and appreciation for the involvement of the NTT Data company in a project aimed at preserving the past; for them it was a pleasant surprise to observe that such a centuries-old library like the Vatican is increasingly projected towards the future.



The Birth

Sigfrido Bartolini (1932-2007)



The Minister of Culture of Korea

On the occasion of the meeting of the President of Korea S.E. Moon Jae-in with the Holy Father, which took place on October 18th, a project of collaboration between Korea and the Holy See was announced. This collaboration will see the participation of some of the Vatican dicasteries, along with the Apostolic Library. The *Vaticana* will make Korean documents available to specialists, along with those relating to Korea in other languages. On October 17th, the minister of Korean culture and well-known poet, H.E. Mr. Do Jonghwan, accompanied by diplomatic officials and representatives, had an encounter with the authorities of the Library to investigate some aspects of the project, reaffirming the profound interest of the Government of the Republic of Korea in the initiative and the desire to carry out substantial studies and to support the digitization of documents.

At the end of the meeting the minister was able to visit the Library and spent much time examining the texts that were shown to him, the *Emperor's Edict of the 18th day of the 10th month of the 19th year of the Daoguang period (1839) to the Chinese and to foreigners to reject evil (Vat.estr.or.65)*; and the *List of names of the faithful of Korea (roll, 399 x 16304 mm, Vat.estr.or.96)*. He read some of the songs and different names that were on the list; in a special way, this last document gave him the idea of finding out more information about the people of the long list (Korean surnames and Catholic names). The minister, signing our "Guestbook", wrote: "It is fortunate to find many documents so well preserved, which will allow us to shed new light on the long history of the Republic of Korea and the Vatican. Thank you for having preserved these precious documents. May our collaboration be an opportunity to explore and seek new ones." The project was born with very good hopes.

Technologists from Silicon Valley

When we talk about Silicon Valley, the start-ups and brilliant people immediately come to mind, those who put their ideas at the service of technological development. Silicon Valley conjures up the idea of a place where people prepare the tools to create companies that can develop innovative ideas and achieve success in business. It is from here that we have appropriated terms such as "networking", "creating networks", "informal networks of knowledge".

A group of professionals from the technological world based in the famous Valley came to visit the Library. When the time came to organize the visit with the Pontifical Council for Culture, the group was expected to be interested in the technological aspects that characterize some of the most important projects that the Vatican is carrying out; instead, the participants asked to see the more ancient areas and to listen to the stories that characterize the Institution that preserves the treasures of culture for the benefit of all humanity.

Accompanied by H.E. Msgr. Paul Tighe, Secretary of the Council of Culture, the guests visited the premises and closely observed some facsimiles of famous manuscripts preserved in the various collections, listening to the recount of their histories.

Tradition and innovation, history and technology go together, and this is perhaps the best way to look toward the future with confidence.

We hope that the brilliant technologists who have visited us will be inspired by what they have heard and especially by what they have seen of our institution.

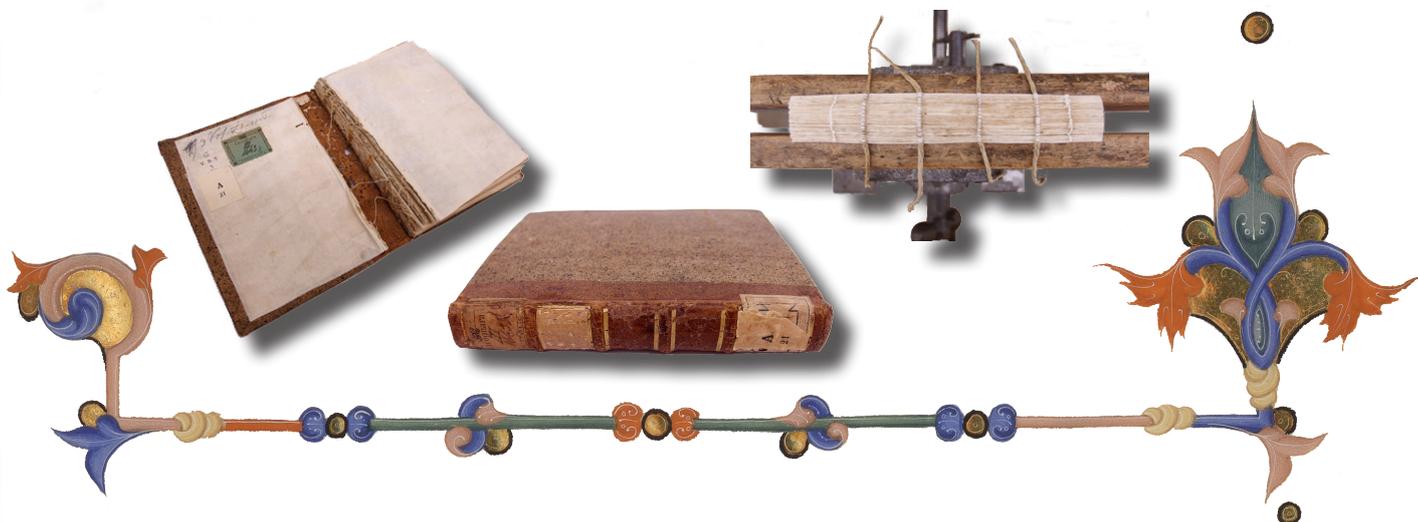


The Samuel H. Kress Foundation supports the restoration of the Cicognara collection

The precious art library of Count Leopoldo Cicognara was sold by the nobleman to the Holy See in 1824 and its approximately five thousand volumes are now kept at the Gabinetto della Grafica.

Last July, restoration was begun on a series of particularly damaged volumes belonging to the collection. The Kress Foundation has made a donation to Sanctuary of Culture Foundation, the organization based in the United States that helps to carry out the projects of the Apostolic Library; this will permit a new process of recovery of documents. These often delicate operations have been entrusted by the Laboratory of Conservation to a young and expert employee, Valentina Giunta. The project, which lasts two years, includes conservative interventions on 40 to 45 documents that suffered damage especially during the phases of reproduction in the Nineties, when the microfiche of the works were made.

We are grateful to the Kress Foundation, to Max Marmor who represents it, and to Sanctuary of Culture Foundation, which provides its continual support, for the help they are offering to make documents that are so important for the history of art and culture fully functioning once again.



“Equestria” in the Vaticana



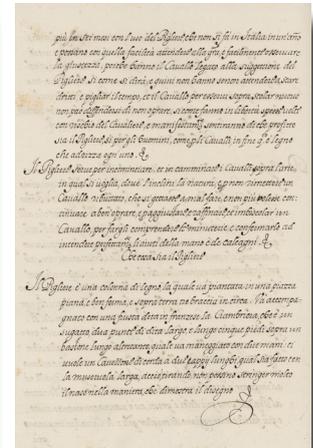
It is known that manuscripts of every type and from every era are found in the collections of the Vatican Library; not everyone knows, however, that there are also, for example, dozens of veterinary manuscripts and documents related to horse riding. These are more common than you might think, even if the tools to access these collections are scarce.

One document from this equestrian category was recently studied by Elisabetta Deriu, together with other texts of “equestria, that is, sources concerning the horse and the activities connected to it” kept in the Vatican (Library and Archives), documents between the fourteenth and the twentieth century. A catalog of these documents will be published in the near future.

The document in question is a seventeenth-century codex, Urb.lat.255, which contains two illustrated horse-riding treaties, from the *Scritti di cavalleria* (*Writings of Cavalry*) by Valerio Piccardini, and an anonymous treatise on the method for harnessing horses.

The titles include: *How a rider should be on horseback*, ff. 1r-4r; *Treaty of bridles and their purposes*, ff. 5r-20v; *On the times, and procedures that the rider should observe to make the horses move and how to handle them to make them suitable and easy*, ff. 31r-v. This last part is not found in the other copies of the *Scritti* of Piccardini.

This is just an example of the many, curious documents that Elisabetta Deriu’s repertoire describes and to which she will soon provide faster access.



Urb.lat.255, 1r; 31v, 5r



Urb.lat.276, 25v

Barberini Archive - “Giustificazioni II”, voll. 1-749 a projecto addressed to academic institutions



Barb.lat.4357, 14v-15r

Urban VIII Barberini was pontiff from 1623 to 1644, and during these years his family dominated in Roman political, social and artistic life. The Barberini family created an authentic dynasty that appropriated an immense patrimony and adopted a cultural and political expression that became an emblem of Baroque Rome. Urban VIII has been described as the pope who was the greatest patron and promoter of seventeenth-century art. The interests of the Barberini family include literature, music, visual arts and architecture, theology, liturgy, the classics, Eastern studies, history, government, protocol, military science, and the whole array of natural sciences from Galilean astronomy to astrology.

The documentary material which they left (now kept at the BAV) consists of an immense historical/administrative archive, entire libraries of printed books, manuscripts and music; thousands of letters, mostly still unpublished.

Numerous scholars from various countries who have carried out studies on the Barberini family have made extensive use of the registers kept in the BAV Archives: many studies and much research on art, music, theater and commissioning would not have been possible without these documents.

The *Giustificazioni II* series of the Barberini Archive, object of the project, concerns the documentation of the princes Barberini and of the estates owned by the family (Palestrina, Montelibretti, Monterotondo, Corcolle, S. Vittorino, Castel Gandolfo, Castelvechio and others). Going back to the sixteenth century, the term “*Giustificazioni*” designates the collections of various accounting documents (accounts, mandates and receipts) divided by year and by month according to the date of payment. The importance of these documents as a documentary source for a wide range of historical disciplines is indisputable:

from economic history to urban planning, from religious history to art history, to the history of music, to political history and society in general. From the first surveys carried out on the series *Giustificazioni II*, it became clear that, in addition to being a unique source for political, economic and social history, part of this abundant documentation is related to various artistic commissions, for example: Francesco Borromini, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Ippolito Leoni, Salvatore Lagi, Cassiano del Pozzo, Lorenzo Ottoni, Carlo Rainaldi, Antonio Giorgetti, Francesco Cavallini, Salvator Rosa.

A number of important artistic commissions have already come to light from the project that has been carried out with the first series, *Giustificazioni I*: Michelangelo Merisi, known as Caravaggio, Carlo Maratta, Pietro da Cortona, Andrea Camassei, Nicolas Poussin and Andrea Sacchi. As for the commissions in the field of music, we find names of some important musicians such as Girolamo Frescobaldi. In Palazzo Barberini, the first opera in music was performed: *The Sant’Alessio* by Stefano Landi with Marc’Antonio Pasqualini. The series *Giustificazioni I* has already been organized, arranged by inventory and published by Luigi Cacciaglia, who has been studying the documentation of the Barberini Archive for over thirty years.

A first phase of the project includes the description of the part related to the 17th century series, which consists of 115 volumes. The work could be done by two archivists in a year and a half time. The activities will include: analytical inventory, foliation, indexing and the subsequent publication of the work, edited by the Library.

We very much hope that some academic institutions will be interested in participating in this project and that they will contact us.

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If you would like to make a contribution to the projects of the Library, please contact:

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