

## Online Window into the Library



«Avvisi» dalla Vaticana

### *A new Prefect for the Vatican Library*

On Tuesday, February 14, the appointment of the new Prefect of the Apostolic Library, Fr. Mauro Mantovani, a Salesian, was announced.

On the morning of the 15th, the Prefect was presented to the employees by the Librarian, H.E. Msgr. Angelo Vincenzo Zani, and by the former Prefect, Msgr. Cesare Pasini, who is leaving the post after more than 15 years of service, accompanied by the gratitude of the employees.

Born on Jan. 3, 1966, in Moncalieri (Turin), Fr. Mantovani graduated in Philosophy from the University of Tor Vergata in Rome. He obtained a Baccalaureate and Licentiate in Philosophy and Theology from the Salesian Pontifical University.

He then obtained a Doctorate in Philosophy and Letters at the Pontifical University of Salamanca, and another Doctorate in Thomistic Theology at St. Thomas Aquinas University (Angelicum). During the years 2003-2007, he repeatedly visited the Vatican Library as a scholar, especially for research on a particular collection of 16th-century manuscripts.

As a full professor of Philosophy at the Pontifical Salesian University, Fr. Mantovani specialized in Thomism and the commentary tradition relative to Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* in the authors of the "Second Scholasticism" and the philosophical "School of Salamanca."

After serving as Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and Vice Rector of the Salesian University, he served as Rector there for two terms (2015-2018 and 2018-2021). He was also President of the Conference of Rectors of Roman Pontifical Universities and Institutions (in Italian, CRUIPRO).

We wish the new Prefect all the best for his new position, to work with joy at the Vatican Library, because, in the words of St. Thomas, "there can be no joy in life without the joy of work," and thus "to work well is to live well."



## *Farewell and Acknowledgments to Msgr. Cesare Pasini*



In the words of Timothy Janz, our Vice Prefect, the entire Library acknowledges and bids farewell to Msgr. Cesare Pasini, who was Prefect from 2007 to 2023.

"'Excellent scholar, excellent priest.' With these four words, spoken with conviction, a well-informed colleague commented on Pope Benedict XVI's appointment of the new prefect of the Vatican Library on June 25, 2007. In his previous role as Vice Prefect of the Ambrosian Library, Msgr. Pasini had also proved to be an excellent administrator. These three kinds of excellence were then demonstrated daily by Msgr. Pasini over the next 15 years, up until the end of his assignment last February 14, in keeping with Pope Francis' apostolic constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*. On this occasion, the Library warmly bids its farewell and thanks him.

A Milanese by birth and heart, Msgr. Pasini demonstrated an unusual combination of abilities even as a young man, qualities which puzzled the Superiors of Milan's archdiocesan Seminary: was it better to direct the candidate toward a degree in mathematics or patristic philology?

After being ordained a priest on June 8, 1974 by Cardinal Giovanni Colombo, Msgr. Pasini followed the second path, studying at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, graduating in Ecclesiastical Sciences in 1979, and subsequently publishing a series of important studies and critical editions with particular reference to his fellow citizen Saint Ambrose. He never ceased to be fascinated by mathematics, however, as anyone who has spent a quarter of an hour in his company analyzing the composition of manuscript files, reasoning about the logistical aspects of digitization, or simply checking the Library's accounts can testify.

It is precisely this unique combination of skills that has enabled Prefect Cesare Pasini to lead the Library with extraordinary efficiency and generous dedication over the past fifteen years. On an institutional level, the greatest novelty of these years has undoubtedly been the opening of the Library's collections to the world through the digitization project. This project, which began in 2010 and is now well underway, was conceived, implemented, and attended to as only a fine scholar (and mathematician!) could do. Moreover, it has not only transfigured the Library's relations with its users, but has also had a major impact on every internal sector of the Institution, in ways that were often unpredictable. We are grateful to have been able to bring about this historic breakthrough, which has witnessed the Vatican Library rise to the forefront of virtual librarianship. This has been possible under the sure leadership of an excellent administrator who has been able to manage so many changes with constant attention to both the details and the mission of the Institution. He has thus accomplished all of these things (and much more) as an excellent priest, that is, with humility, with generosity, with integrity, with exemplary (and inimitable) diligence, and above all without ever forgetting that the individuals who carry out such projects, whether great or small, are also to be understood, accompanied in joyful or trying moments, appreciated, and valued.

We thank Msgr. Pasini for the experiences we have had together over the past fifteen years and wish him all the best for the future. The Library also welcomes his successor Fr. Mauro Mantovani, SDB, who now takes charge of a Library that has given increase (from every point of view) compared to the one of fifteen years ago, and is ready to grow again."



## Meeting with "Les Amis de la Bibliothèque Vaticane"

The day of January 20 was dedicated to *Les Amis de la Bibliothèque Vaticane*, the foundation established under the auspices of Fondation Roi Baudouin to support the Vatican Library's projects (<https://kbs-frb.be/fr/les-amis-de-la-bibliotheque-du-vatican-fonds>).

During the morning in the Vestibule a meeting of the foundation's *Comité de gestion* took place, with President Vincent Montagne and Antoine Vivant, Hélié de Cornois, Isabella Salburg, Maxime Bonassies, the first time in the presence of all its members, including the Librarian, H.E. Msgr. Angelo Vincenzo Zani. They were also joined by Mr. Bertrand du Vignaud, president of the *Comité International des Amis de la Bibliothèque Vaticane*, and Hubert Barbier de Chalais, who is particularly interested in Arabic manuscripts. Also present for the Vatican Library were the Prefect, Msgr. Cesare Pasini, and Timothy Janz, Vice Prefect.

The meeting was an occasion to deepen mutual acquaintance and to discuss initiatives to be undertaken in support of four projects that have already been presented to the foundation. These include different areas of activity regarding digitization (the most challenging one), the restructuring of the Archival Section, which preserves the archival collections of important families and institutions, with a wealth of documents that for the most part have yet to be studied. During the meeting, the groups examined the project regarding the restoration of a series of musical



manuscripts belonging to the *Sistine Chapel* collection, some of which are of particular beauty, and thoroughly discussed the cataloguing of the Penitentiary Fathers' rich library.

The Penitentiary Fathers, active at St. Peter's Basilica and in cathedrals, were those who had the authority to hear confessions in extraordinary cases of greater gravity.

The last topic dealt with the digitization, restoration and cataloging of Arabic and Middle Eastern manuscripts; Fr. Adrien de Fouchier, OP, who is in charge of cataloging the Vatican Library's Arabic manuscripts, also participated in the discussion on the topic.



At the end of the meeting, guests were able to partake in a lunch at the Casa Santa Marta in the Vatican.

In the afternoon, the morning group was joined by other guests who came with *Les Amis* to visit the Library's historical rooms and the *Book! Boom!*

A small exhibition of ancient documents was also set up in the Vestibule for them, with the intention of presenting and introducing them to some of the documents preserved in the Library's various collections and archives, and to explain the projects.

*Merci aux Amis de la Bibliothèque Vaticane!*



## Engraver Patrizio Di Sciullo donates some of his own works to the Vatican Library



Patrizio Di Sciullo has been collaborating with the Vatican Library since 2000, when he took part in the project for the creation of *Forma Urbis Romae*, the *Pianta monumentale di Roma* for the Jubilee, *Civitas Vaticana*, which he engraved in 2007, and for the occasion of the Jubilee of Mercy in 2016, he created *Misericordiae Vultus*. These are works executed on commission, "translating" into engraving the "sign," or the drawing, of others.

The artist recently decided to donate a series of creative works he created to the Vatican Library. The donation formally took place last February 10, in the presence of authorities and representatives of the Library.

"Several of my works are present in the Vatican Library, and I thought it would be right to leave something 'more mine' to the Library as well." The artist therefore offered seventy-two engravings and nine original drawings, which have become part of the Vatican Library's graphic collections.

Through these works it is possible to trace Patrizio Di Sciullo's artistic journey. They illustrate the author's diverse skills and the richness of his production, in an artistic journey that can be reconstructed from his beginnings.

Born in the Abruzzo countryside in the province of Chieti, Di Sciullo has always been passionate about nature and writing. The link between engraving and text has become the north star of his career path: "the sign is the taste of the thought," he says, "the sign written in the engraving."

As a child he would go out at night to go trout fishing and observe wild animals such as badgers and foxes; the trees along the banks took strange shapes and grew with their shadows, even in his young mind, taking root in his fantasies and inhabiting his dreams.

Trees and the motion of water recur as constant motifs in his designs; the spirals are true galaxies, as in the drawings of shells, which he observes and poetically re-proposes in delicate, evocative images.

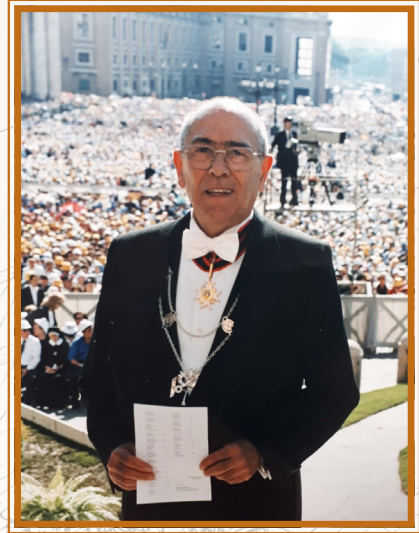
A special sensitivity guides the artist's hand as he probes the natural elements among the most significant, most complex and, perhaps, most mysterious in creation.



## A moving gesture

On February 13, our colleague Maria Adalgisa Ottaviani and her brother Alfredo Maria donated to the Library three bronze sculptures owned by their father Enrico, who passed away recently. Previously the sculptures had been housed in their father's home.

Also present at the small ceremony, which took place in the Library's Vestibule, were Alberto Pastore, Adalgisa's spouse, and master Sergio Capellini, the artist of two of the three sculptures.



The works include a crucifix made with the Persian wax casting technique and an *Orlando Furioso*. The third work, *Horse and Horseman*, is by Angelo Canevari, whose graphic works are preserved in the Vatican Library. Capellini was very close to Canevari; he worked with him for a long time in a Roman foundry. Canevari inspired Capellini to create some of his works such as *Orlando furioso*, and following his example, he took to making wax models instead of clay.

Msgr. Pasini expressed gratitude on the part of the Library to the Ottaviani family and to Adalgisa in particular, who was visibly moved. "He would definitely have been happy to know they were kept in the Vatican Library," she tells us.

Enrico Ottaviani, who was born in 1937 in the Palazzina S. Egidio in the Vatican, began work at the Libreria Editrice when he was 19 and worked there for 43 years, serving as its general cashier. "For him the Vatican was not only a place of work, but also his home." He lived in the Vatican until 1971.

As a retiree, he proudly continued his service as "antechamber attendant" of His Holiness at audiences or events, taking care of welcoming dignitaries on official visits to the Holy Father.

One of his passions was collecting works by young and yet unknown contemporary artists. He was a small patron who purchased some of their works even if buying them meant making a sacrifice because of the cost.

"Some of these objects could not but come into the possession of an institution of the Holy See," Adalgisa stated. In a way, they came back home.



## A gift from Greece



The Interparliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy (I.A.O.) has produced a publication entitled *Αγία Σοφία* (St. Sophia), which introduces the reader to thirty-seven historical temples dedicated to St. Sophia located in different countries. Special attention is paid to the Basilica of Constantinople.

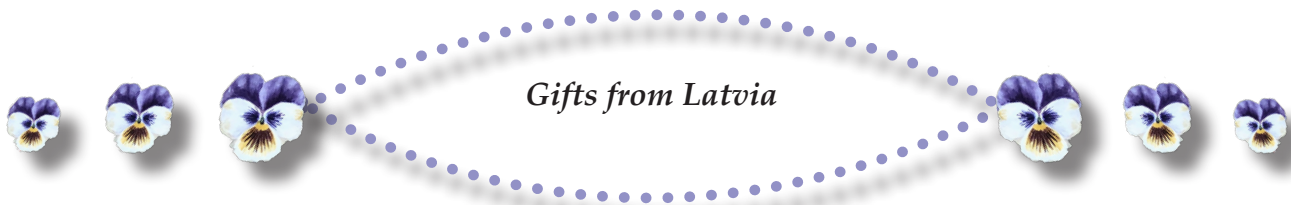
One copy of the volume (published in nine languages) was offered as a gift to the Holy Father and one to His Ecumenical Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew.

On Feb. 15, a delegation from the I.A.O. came to Rome to promote the book and offer it to the academic world; on the same day, representatives of the Assembly presented a copy of the volume to the Apostolic Library.

The delegation, accompanied by H.E. Mrs. Aikaterini Katia Georgiou, Ambassador of Greece to the Holy See, included Maximos Charakopoulos, member of the Hellenic Parliament, secretary general of the Interparliamentary



mentary Assembly of Orthodoxy; Stavros Keletsis, also a member of Parliament, treasurer and member of the Assembly's financial committee; Radomir Tcholakov, member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, head of the parliamentary delegation to the I.A.O.; Dirar Aldaoud, member of the House of Representatives of Jordan and head of the parliamentary delegation to the I.A.O.



On December 20, H.E. Msgr. Angelo Vincenzo Zani welcomed some officials of the National Library of Latvia, who donated a group of seventeen works published by the institution, concerning the history and culture of the Baltic country, most of them bilingual Latvian-English or English, one in German.

The works include *Latvian War of Independence 1918-1919*, published in 2019; *Handschriften, alte Drucke, graphische Werke: Katalog*, and *Books of Latvia outside Latvia*, both published in 2021.

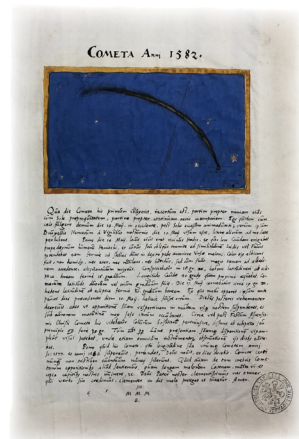
The group, that was accompanied by H.E. Mrs. Elita Kuzma, Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia, included Mr. Jānis Pleps, former legal policy advisor to the President of Latvia, judge of the country's Supreme Court and lecturer at the Faculty of Law at Latvian University; Mrs. Dina Gailīte, editor-in-chief of the official periodical *Jurista Vārds*; and Mrs. Gundega Pumpure, Embassy counselor. The Librarian expressed its keen appreciation to the gracious guests for the generous gesture and for the works, which have become part of the papal library's collection of printed books.



## Comets



Pal. lat. 1072, ff. 31r; 81r



The comet star is one of the symbols of waiting for Christmas until Epiphany. The Magi arriving in Bethlehem guided by a comet are first present from the account of the evangelist Matthew, who describes it as *astrum natale*, star of birth.

In the Christian context we find the first depictions of stylized stars in funerary contexts, especially in the catacombs. Souls, which upon death are freed from the gravity of the body, were destined to be reunited with the stars.

The ancients who devoted themselves to observing the heavens constructed many theories to define the identity of a free celestial body, untethered by the laws governing spatial movements. Because they turned out to be unpredictable in their trajectories, comets were regarded as signs of impending doom, as if they were otherworldly warnings addressed to our imperfect humanity. At the same time, however, they were also attributed with the characteristic of portending good tidings, just as in the epiphany of the star that announced the birth of Jesus.

Ancient theories about comets merged with popular beliefs until the scientific revolution took place. After each instance of observation of comets visible from earth, astronomers, and researchers were able to acquire new knowledge based on the scientific method. Technological advances facilitated astronomical observations over time which enabled new knowledge about comets.

Today we know that a comet is a celestial body that gravitates around the Sun. It is made up of icy gases, rocks and metals and is composed of a nucleus, a canopy, and a tail, directed in the direction opposite from the Sun.

In art, the first person to depict a comet was Giotto, who was able to see Halley's Comet in 1301, the star that appears once every seventy years. The first written record of its sighting was in 240 B.C. in a Chinese text. Giotto reproduced it realistically as it streaks across the sky in Bethlehem, majestically above the Nativity scene in the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua.

The appearance of a comet is sudden, its path unpredictable, its size ever changing. In the second half of last January and until February 5, it was possible to observe the so-called Neanderthal comet, visible from Earth after 50,000 years, the time of its revolution around the Sun; it enriched, albeit briefly, our night sky as it reached its minimum distance from our planet at 40 million kilometers.

The Vatican Library preserves several manuscripts dealing with comets, such as *De natura et significationibus cometarum commentarium* (Pal. lat. 1072) by Simon Grynaeus (1493-1541), a member of the Reformed Church of Basel, a professor of Greek and Latin, but also devoted to mathematics, music, and astronomy. On ff. 55r-70v the writing *De cometa anni 1577*, called the "great comet" because during the period when it was closest to earth it could be seen with the naked eye. This comet was first observed on November 7 in the city of Ferrara. In Pal. lat. 291, dated 1425, which contains Rabano Mauro's *De rerum naturis*, it is mentioned from f. 113, while in Urb. lat. 1363, on ff. 1-24r, we find the writing of Jacopo Mazzoni (1548-1598), *Discorso a Madama Ser.ma Granduchessa di Toscana [Cristina de' Medici di Lorena] intorno alla cometa veduta di luglio 1596*.



The Library also preserves, among other things, Giovanni da Legnano's *Tractatus de cometa* in two separate manuscripts, Vat. lat. 989, ff. 70r-81r, and Vat. lat. 2639, ff. 212r-214v.

A *Breve discorso sopra la cometa apparsa in Roma nel 1680* can be found in Vat. lat. 7159 on ff. 100r-101v.

Comets continue in their courses to illuminate the heavens, but also our vivid imagination.



Vat. lat. 989, f. 70r

Pal. lat. 1072, f. 71r

## Anniversaries of the arrival of the Palatina (1623) and Chigi (1923) collections to the Vatican Library

On October 28, 1622, Leone Allacci (1586-1669), *scriptor Graecus* of the Vatican Library and its first custodian since 1661, left Rome by order of Pope Gregory XV for Heidelberg with the intention of transporting the *Palatine* collection to the Vatican Library. This *fondo* constituted one of the richest book collections of the time; it was a munificent gift of Maximilian I, Duke of Bavaria, who had conquered the city in September.

The duke and a servant, Giacomo Natalli, made the journey which was long and troubled. The two arrived in Heidelberg on December 13.

The whole group of manuscripts and the printed books selected by Allacci formed part of three different collections: one linked to the Heiliggeistkirche, another to the university library, and a third to the library of the Palatine Electors. The approximately 10,500 volumes of which the collection consisted, one-third of them manuscripts, were placed in wooden crates stuffed with straw to facilitate the transportation that was complicated, to say the least.

University Library of Heidelberg have promoted important collaborative initiatives. In 1886 the Vatican Library participated in the celebrations for the 500th anniversary of the founding of the University, and catalogs of *Palatine* printed books prepared for the occasion were then delivered. In 1986 the two institutions produced an exhibition, and the Vatican Library lent some 200 manuscripts and over 300 printed books, which were then placed in their original place of preservation in the Heiliggeistkirche.

In 1959 the University carried out microfilming of the Latin manuscripts and the Eastern manuscripts, and later completed a co-edition of the *Palatine* printed books in microfiche. A few years ago a joint project was undertaken to digitize a good number of *Palatine* manuscripts for the virtual reconstruction of the original library. The Vatican Library recently completed this task and all the *Palatine* manuscripts – 2031 Latin and 432 Greek – are now digitized.

Four centuries after its arrival in Rome, the *Palatine Library* can be consulted by anyone anywhere.



Pal. gr. 431 "Joshua Roll", XIIIr

On February 14, 1623, Allacci's return journey began, which passed through Munich, Milan, Como, Pavia, Ferrara, Bologna, Florence, and finally arrived in Rome on July 24, shortly after Gregory XV's death on the 8th. On August 9, the custodian of the Vatican Library, Niccolò Alamanni, signed the receipt of delivery for 197 crates of codices and books. A few days before, Urban VIII Barberini had been elected pope. The new pontiff decided to accommodate the collection in a suitable location, the present-day Urban VIII Gallery, which was arranged and enriched with wooden cabinets. A project of inventory was then initiated for the new collection.

In the 19th century thirty-eight manuscripts belonging to the collection, twelve Latin and twenty-six Greek ones, were returned to Heidelberg. They were part of the group of about 500 codices that had been transported to Paris by virtue of the Treaty of Tolentino. To these five more manuscripts were added from the ones left in the Vatican Library, along with over 852 printed books.

On several occasions the Vatican Library and the Uni-



Pal. lat. 1071, f. 102v (part.)



Pal. lat. 501, f. 7r



Pal. lat. 1564, f. 4r

## The Chigi Library



Chig. F. VII 158, f. 7r

In an initiative aimed at a rapprochement with the Vatican, on December 28, 1922, the head of the Italian government Benito Mussolini informed Paolo Boselli, president of the Italian Historical Institute, former Minister of Education and Prime Minister, of the Council of Ministers' decision to "aggregate" the collection of the Chigi princes to the Vatican Library, "in the interest of studies."

The mediation had also been carried out on several occasions with the help of Fr. Pietro Tacchi Venturi, who was secretary general of the Society of Jesus from 1914 to 1921.

From February 6 of that year was a new pontiff on the chair of St. Peter: Achille Ratti, Pius XI, who had been prefect of the Vatican Library from 1914 to 1919.

Long before, the Vatican Library had expressed interest in the collection established by Fabio Chigi (1559-1667), later Alexander VII, who had become pope in 1655.

With his Prefect, Franz Ehrle, S.J., the Library had conducted negotiations for its acquisition with the Chigi princes, who had put up their collection for sale at the turn of the century. This was the last of the great princely libraries after the acquisition of the *Barberini* by Leo XIII in 1902.

The Italian state had acquired the palace in Piazza Colonna in 1917 to house the Ministry of the Colonies, and the library, manuscripts and printed books (as well as numerous objects and paintings), were handed over to the Italian state by an agreement between the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Italy and Prince Ludovico (Luigi) Chigi on April 11, 1918. The convention was ratified the following May 12.

The consignment took place between January 23 and February 10, 1923, through Fr. Venturi and the respective librarians who signed the minutes, Giuseppe Baronci for the Chigiana, representing the state, and Prefect Giovanni Mercati, and Eugène Tisserant, *scriptor Orientalis*, who represented the Vatican Library.



Inc. Chig. V. 4939, f. 9r



Chig. C. IV 111, f. 146r

The original collection had been enriched with portions of ancient libraries, such as manuscripts that had belonged to the Piccolomini family; other manuscripts from the Sacro Convento of Assisi and other convents had been added. After the death of Alexander VII, the collection was further increased by the cardinals of the family, including Flavius I, who had received it as a gift. It was then transferred from Palazzo Chigi (Santi Apostoli), now Palazzo Odescalchi, to Palazzo Chigi in Piazza Colonna, where it remained until 1923.

The manuscript collection consists of 3,635 shelfmarks (in 3,626 items). It includes mainly Latin manuscripts, but there are also Greek, Slavonic and Oriental ones.

The collection of printed books contains 22,497 shelfmarks, with 249 miscellaneous volumes and 232 incunabula.



## *Reminiscences of Benedict XVI in the Vatican Library*



On Saturday, Dec. 31, at 9:34 a.m., Holy Father Emeritus Benedict XVI passed away at Mater Ecclesiae Monastery in the Vatican. By illustration of a few episodes, we recall here his closeness to the Library, the only "apostolic" dicastery, along with the Archives, that is, which belongs to the successors of Peter.

It was Pope Benedict who received from Frank J. Hanna III, a benefactor and friend of the Library, the *Bodmer Papyrus XIV-XV*, now called the *Hanna Papyrus*, the oldest witness to the Gospels of Luke and John, dated between 175 and 222 A.D.; the "originals" of the two Gospels date from the first century (60-70). The then Prefect Raffaele Farina, later on Cardinal Librarian, recounted the episode: "The audience of Jan. 22, 2007, in which the *Bodmer Papyrus XIV-XV* was presented and offered to the Holy Father took place in a particularly evocative and moving atmosphere. The Pope himself, clearly showing his excitement to be able to see and hold in his hands the precious "relic," showed elation and emotion at the same time. He paused for a long time to examine the two sheets presented to him."

On the occasion of the June 25, 2007 visit to the Library, Pope Benedict spoke words that touched each of those present deeply: "Down the centuries, the Vatican Library has assimilated and refined this mission, giving it an unmistakable character so that it has become a welcoming house of knowledge, culture and humanity, which opens its doors to scholars from every part of the world, irrespective of their origin, religion or culture. Your task, dear friends who work here every day, is to foster the synthesis between culture and faith which transpires from the valuable documents and treasures in your custody [...]."

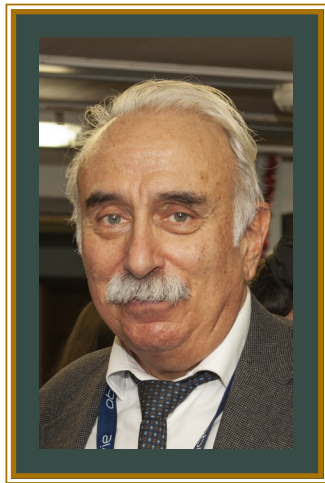
I confess that, on reaching 70 years of age, I would have liked for beloved John Paul II to permit me to devote myself to study and research into the interesting documents and materials that you carefully conserve, true masterpieces that help us to review the history of humanity and of Christianity. In his providential design the Lord had other plans for me and here I am with you today."

Just then the Library was being closed to scholars in order to carry out major and necessary work that lasted three years, aimed at making improvements for the people and the collections. At the end of that strenuous three-year period, an exhibition, *Conoscere la Vaticana*, was organized for the wider public, as well as a conference entitled, *The Apostolic Library as a Place of Research and as an Institution at the Service of Scholars*.

Pope Benedict thus addressed the Librarian on that occasion, Nov. 9, 2010: "I am following these initiatives with special interest not only to confirm my personal closeness to the praiseworthy Institution as a man of study but also to continue the age-old and constant care that my Predecessors gave it. [...] Since its origins it has preserved the unmistakable, truly "catholic" universal openness to everything that humanity has produced down the centuries that is beautiful, good, noble and worthy (cf. Phil 4:8) [...] Nothing truly human is foreign to the Church. For this reason she has always sought, gathered and preserved, with a continuity rarely matched, the best results of the efforts of human beings to rise above the purely material to the conscious or unconscious search for the Truth."

Thank you!

## Marco Buonocore "*scriptor Latinus*" of the Vatican Library (1954-2022)



On the evening of December 23, Marco Buonocore, *scriptor Latinus* of the Library, a valuable classicist and epigrapher, passed away.

Dr. Buonocore was born in Rome on Sept. 17, 1954. From 1976 to 1977 he collaborated with the Archaeological Superintendence of Rome on excavations at the Flavian Amphitheater. He also had the opportunity to collaborate with the University of Rome, La Sapienza, on enhancing study on the inscriptions of Rome from 1975 to 1977. Along with the Institutum Romanum Finlandiae he participated in the realization of the epigraphic update of southern Italy.

Hired on probation in the Vatican Library as vice assistant on October 1, 1981, he officially took the place of Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, *scriptor Latinus*, who left the Library for the University of Lausanne.

In 1986 he published *Bibliografia di Fondi Manoscritti della Biblioteca Vaticana (1968-1980)*. His *Catalogo dei manoscritti Vaticani latini 9734-9782 (Codices Amatiiani)* was published in 1988. In the years 1987-1989 he also obtained a teaching position at the Faculty of Humanities of the G. D'Annunzio University of Chieti, giving a course in Epigraphy as part of the official program in Greek and Roman Antiquities. The Berlin Academy of Sciences commissioned him in 1988 to update Theodor Mommsen's monumental work from 1883, on the Latin inscriptions of ancient Italy in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, vol. IX, relating to Augustan *regio IV* (the present regions of Molise, Abruzzo, Campania and northern Latium). On September 13, 1989, he received the appointment of *scriptor Latinus*.

He was a member of the Pontifical Roman Academy of Archaeology since January 30, 1992, and then president of the same Academy from July 20, 2011. He taught Roman History in the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of the University of Rome III in the year 1994-1995 and was a correspondent of the Deputation of the Homeland History of Abruzzo and Calabria, and of the Propertian Academy of Subasio.

He was also a corresponding member for Italy of the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid, as well as Academician of the Accademia Ambrosiana since February 29, 2016.

In the Vatican Library he was also Secretary of the Commission for Publishing, (*Editoria*). On October 1, 2003 he received the position of Chief Archivist of the Archival Section, which preserves important documentary collections of convents, religious bodies, and illustrious families whose book collections were acquired by the Library.

Retiring on December 31, 2019, Buonocore continued to cultivate the studies dearest to him, Latin epigraphy and classical antiquities in general, the manuscript tradition of classical authors, as well as the history of 19th-century Italian culture, with particular regard to the relationship with the German world and a predilection for Theodor Mommsen. He continued to frequent the Library as long as health allowed.

Marco Buonocore's bibliography is extensive and consists in over 500 titles, including articles and monographs. Among his publications is the catalog of the *Codices Horatiani in Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana*, compiled for the exhibition for the Bimillenary of Horace's death and arranged by the Vatican Library in 1992. He played a decisive role in the preparation of the exhibition *Vedere i Classici*, organized in the historical locales of the Vatican Library from October 9, 1996 to July 15, 1997. The edition of *Mommsen's Letters to the Italians*, in two volumes, dates from 2017.

Among the many honors bestowed on him was the pontifical honor of Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, which John Paul II bestowed on him on Jan. 25, 1998.

We had heard from him one last time on the occasion of the evening dedicated to the Vatican Library's retirees held last December 1, which unfortunately, and with regret, he had been unable to attend.

The Library remembers with affection and gratitude Marco Buonocore, a passionate scholar who leaves behind a void that is difficult to fill.



### *Rino Avesani former "scriptor" of the Vatican Library (1950-2023)*



Professor Rino Avesani, who was *scriptor Latinus* of the Library, left us on the evening of January 1. Born September 14, 1931, he showed early on that he had a particular aptitude for philological, paleographic, and historical studies.

He was hired at the Vatican Library on April 1, 1960 to replace Augusto Campana upon retirement. As his first assignment he was given the description of the manuscripts: *Vaticani latini* 2958-3191.



### *Giovanni Guerra, more of a friend than a colleague (1950-2023)*

On the morning of January 12, Giovanni Guerra, a dear colleague with a noble soul, left us. He had retired from the Library on March 1, 2012.

Born on November 5, 1950, he was hired into the Library's staff as a delivery man on September 1, 1976. Previously, from March 1, 1973, to February 28, 1974, he had obtained a partnership with the institution.

He was promoted to the rank of usher on December 1, 1983. A few years later, in April 1988, he received a promotion from Level IV to Level V. After serving in the Bursar's Office for many years, from October 18, 2004 he was transferred to the Manuscripts Department, and helped with the Depository. From September 3, 2008, due to needs imposed by the closure of the Library during major renovations, he took up service in the Printed Books Rooms and Stacks Section, where he remained until May 2010, when he returned to the Manuscripts Department.

He worked with Claudio Leonardi, also a Latin writer, first in the Library and then throughout their university careers; together they founded *Medioevo latino*, a bibliographical bulletin, and the Società italiana per lo studio del Medioevo latino (SISMEL).

On January 4, 1971, with a note addressed to Card. Eugène Tisserant, he communicated his resignation from the post of *scriptor*, which was accepted by the cardinal on the following February 28. He thus ceased his service at the Library to become a full professor in the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy at the University of Macerata, where he taught until 1976 and where he also served as dean.

He then moved to La Sapienza University in Rome where he became professor of Medieval and Humanistic Philology and Medieval Latin Literature until 2006, also serving as director of the Department of Classical Philology.

He continued to frequent the Library as a scholar until recently, and not infrequently lingered to converse with employees on a wide variety of topics. His last visit to the Library was on January 14, 2020.

We remember Rino Avesani's great helpfulness, his amiability, good smile, along with even his more melancholy tones. We will miss you, dear professor.



In July 2009 he was awarded a merit A for the 5th functional level. Highly appreciated by colleagues and Superiors for his affability, courtesy and discretion, he is much grieved by those who knew him.

## *The musicologist who loved the Vatican Library: Warren Kirkendale (1932-2023)*



On Monday, January 30, we received the news of the passing of Prof. Warren Kirkendale, friend and benefactor of the Vatican Library, who died the day before in the Villa Speranza nursing home in Rome after a brief illness.

A distinguished musicologist and music historian, Kirkendale had studied at the universities of Toronto, Bonn, Berlin and Vienna. He had practiced teaching first in Los Angeles and then in Durham. From 1983 to 1992 he was professor and director of the Institute of Musicology at the University of Regensburg.

For the studies conducted with his wife Ursula, who died in 2013, whose memory he continued to cherish with devotion, he frequented the Vatican Library and Archives, institutions to which he was especially grateful.

In the 1990s he decided to donate numerous publications to the Vatican Library and continued to cultivate a close relationship of friendship and collaboration with the Library, which he appreciated unconditionally, promoting the purchase of "serious" works on music, but also on art and literature, which are preserved in the papal library.

His latest piece was the Italian version of a work he had created with Ms. Ursula and published in 2015: *Hesiod's Theogony as Source of the iconological Program of the Giorgione's Tempesta. The Poet, Amalthea, The Infant Zeus and The Muses*, printed by Olschki a few months ago.

To Professor Kirkendale we extend our affectionate greetings and deep appreciation.

## *Umberto Cioli, a bold voice (1950-2023)*



Our colleague Umberto Cioli passed away suddenly on Saturday, March 25.

Born in Albano Laziale in 1952, he applied to the Library on March 21, 1979, to be hired as a binder, a job he had been doing since 1969.

He was hired on probation as a bookbinder on April 1, 1980, and was confirmed in his position the following year. On April 3, 1998, he received a promotion to the next level.

From September 15, 2003, to September 20, 2004, he served in the Rooms and Stacks Section, and then returned to the Restoration Laboratory, where he loved to work.

In order to be closer to his family, he submitted his early resignation on November 30, 2012, effective February 1, 2013, having turned sixty years of age and completed thirty years of service. Umberto Cioli will be dearly missed; he was someone who could be trusted for his frankness, for his sometimes brusque sincerity.

He was ever kind and generous to colleagues and friends; we remember him fondly and extend our heartfelt thoughts to his family.



**(RE)VERSUS**  
Riuso e riscatto nel patrimonio della Biblioteca  
Vaticana e nell'arte di Sidival Fila

Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana  
28 aprile - 15 luglio 2023

Visite guidate alla mostra:  
**sabato** 6 e 20 maggio, 10 giugno, 15 luglio  
**mercoledì** 10, 24 e 31 maggio, 14 giugno, 5 e 12 luglio  
**martedì** 16 maggio, 20 e 27 giugno

Per informazioni e prenotazioni: [www.vaticanlibrary.va](http://www.vaticanlibrary.va)

ספרייה אפוסטולית וטיקאנא  
סידיואל פילא

### *(Re)versus. Reuse and redemption of the heritage of the Vatican Library and the art of Sidival Fila*

"In an exhibition opening on Friday, April 28, 2023, the Vatican Library enters into dialogue with the artist Sidival Fila, a Franciscan religious of Brazilian origin.

The theme is the treatment of waste, of fragments, of what advances from the past or is marginalized in the present. An absolutely central issue in the papal magisterium of recent years, here the topic is presented in two very different but complementary perspectives. On the one hand, the exhibition draws on the universal patrimony of the Vatican Library, insofar as cases of "reuse" of book materials in the most diverse contexts will be presented: China, Italy, Ethiopia, Germany, but also the Islamic and Jewish world, with examples ranging from antiquity to the present day. On the other hand, the artist will propose a reflection on the power of art to recover scraps and fragments, not in a utilitarian and functionalist perspective, typical of the current economic and financial discourse, but in that of "redemption," whereby each element is not considered in relation to the use that can be made of it, but to its intrinsic and irreducible value. To its dignity as creature."

### *Poetry corner*

*Almond blossom - Sign of life*  
(Schalom Ben-Chorin, 1913-1999)

Almond trees, renewed in bloom,  
do they not proclaim  
life returning year by year,  
love that will remain?  
Almond blossom, sign of life  
in the face of pain,  
raises hope in people's hearts:  
spring has come again.  
War destroys a thousand-fold,  
hatred scars the earth,  
but the day when almonds bloom  
is a time of birth.  
Friends, give thanks for almond blooms  
swaying in the wind:  
token that the gift of life  
triumphs in the end.





### *Brad Smith returns to Vatican Library*

On the morning of January 11, Microsoft President Brad Smith returned to the Vatican Library after four years since his first visit, again accompanied by H.E. Msgr. Vincenzo Paglia and Fr. Paolo Benanti, TOR, following a new meeting with the Holy Father to explore the topic of "the need for a shared digital anthropology in techno-human era," a message that has since been developed and widely attended.

The guest was again shown the codices *Pal. lat. 984* (Ramon Llull, *Tabula generalis*); *Barb. lat. 6479* (Autograph letters of Galileo Galilei on sunspots); and the *Gutenberg Bible* (*Stamp. Barb. AAA. IV.16-17*).

An exchange of views about the humanistic roots of technological developments and the fundamental role of technology in safeguarding the ancient heritage preserved in places like the Vatican Library enlivened the pleasant meeting that we hope will lead to more developments in the future.



### *Three ambassadors from Korea*

Last February 14, we had the pleasure of hosting three Korean ambassadors who had asked to visit the papal library. H.E. Mrs. Hyun-joo Oh, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Holy See, H.E. Mr. Seong-ho Lee, Ambassador of Korea to the Quirinal, and H.E. Mr. Kyong-lim Choi, former Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of Korea to Geneva, visited the Lapidary Gallery, the Library Vestibule and the Sistine Hall.

They were accompanied by Mr. Choi's assistant and some officials from their respective embassies.

The gracious guests were able to appreciate in situ some manuscripts belonging to Korean culture preserved in the Papal Library, one of which will soon be published in facsimile edition in collaboration with the Naepo Church History Research Institute in Seoul.



## The history of the Vatican Library in an exhibition in Taipei



A moment of the opening of the exhibition, with the country's authorities, including the prime minister, the director and the deputy director of the National Museum, and our Librarian.

The history and the "universal" mission of the Papal Library are illustrated through the series of documents selected and described by the scientific staff of the Vatican Library. The materials were to be displayed in Taipei in a special exhibition, *Splendors of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana and Rare Books from the Ming and Qing Imperial Libraries*, inaugurated last March 10 in the presence of the Librarian of H.R.C., H.E. Msgr. Angelo Vincenzo Zani. "In light of the success of the 2016 exhibition, *Treasures from Heaven. A special exhibition of artifacts from the Holy See*, and in order to strengthen cultural relations between the Republic of Taiwan and the Holy See," the Librarian said during the opening, "the National Museum in 2018 made a formal request to promote this exhibition aimed at presenting the Vatican Apostolic Library. I thank Ambassador Matthew Lee, who has been the most fervent supporter of this project from the beginning, and the Director of the National Museum who enthusiastically put this special initiative into effect."

"The Vatican Library, like all great institutions of identity and culture," continued Msgr. Zani, "represents not only a place in which to preserve the past, but also a frontier of the present and the future, a vehicle for anticipat-

ing the future and heading towards it, facing the challenge that history sets before it with courage and commitment. Its mission is, therefore, both to tell the story that has preceded us and to preserve the heritage we have inherited, but looking to the future by going beyond the walls without letting ourselves be blocked by the boundaries that geography and history would sometimes like to impose on us."



Vat.gr.1626, f. 1v



Cicognara. VIII. 366, front.



Stampe. VI. 2 (int.22)



Vat. gr. 1626, f. 2r



Ross. 197, cop. ant.



Stamp. Barb. X. I. 16

Essential to the realization of the exhibition was the collaboration of the Embassy of the Republic of China, which acted as a substantial intermediary between the National Museum and the Vatican Library.

The new exhibition set up in Taipei is divided into six sections and proposes a chronological journey through the history of the Library, focussing on the most important and interesting moments that have characterized it.

This new initiative is a wonderful opportunity to bring even closer two different realities and strengthen mutual knowledge and friendship.

# Happy Easter



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Capp. Sist. 3, f. 93r, initial "R"

In the background: V. Van Gogh, "Almond blossom", 1890

"Everything is born to bloom in an eternal spring. God has also made us in order to bloom. I remember that dialogue, when the oak tree asked the almond tree, 'Tell me about God.' And the almond tree blossomed."

"In the Holiness of Easter, we pray for all the peoples of the world. The Lord gave us the life of his son who sacrificed it through death out of his immense love for us. Jesus then rose again giving us hope."

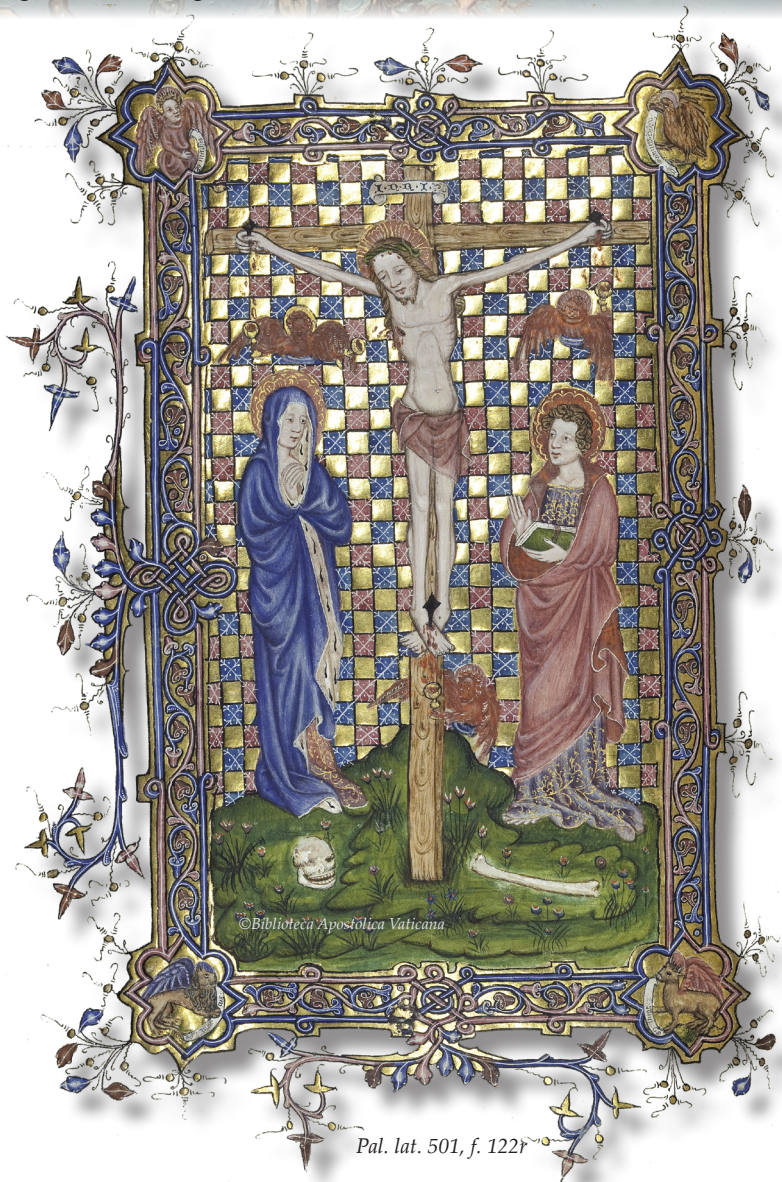
"Love is demanding, it asks us to commit our best resources, to awaken passion and to go forward with patience."

Pope Francis



Crucifix - Tree of life  
(initial "Q")

T. Marangoni, 1951



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Pal. lat. 501, f. 122r

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

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