



«Avvisi» dalla Vaticana

Holy Year begins, a journey of hope

"The Angel announces the beginning of the Jubilee year, a time of remission of sins and reconciliation. The angel's message hovers in the form of a dove, as a promise of hope and peace."

The concept of Jubilee comes from the Jewish tradition, which celebrated a special year every fifty years in which the land rested (*Leviticus* 25). The beginning of the special year was announced by the sound of the horn, *Jobel*, from which the word Jubilee is derived.

"Count off seven sabbath years—seven times seven years—so that the seven sabbath years amount to a period of forty-nine years. Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan. The fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you; do not sow and do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the untended vines. For it is a jubilee and is to be holy for you; eat only what is taken directly from the fields." (8-12).

The first Christian Jubilee, "the year of the Lord's grace," was promulgated by Pope Boniface VIII (Caetani, 1294-1303) with the bull *Antiquorum Habet Fida Relatio*, dated February 22, 1300. The text of the document on parchment is preserved in the Vatican Library (*Arch. Cap. S. Pietro*, caps. I, fasc. 1 (8)).

Spes non confundit (hope does not disappoint, Rom. 5:5) is the title of the Bull of Indiction for the upcoming Holy Year, which will open on Dec. 24. "Everyone hopes. In the heart of every person is contained hope as a desire and expectation of good, even though we do not know what tomorrow will bring. The unpredictability of the future, however, raises sometimes opposing feelings: from confidence to fear, from serenity to discouragement, from certainty to doubt. We often meet challenged people, who look to the future with skepticism and pessimism, as if nothing could offer them happiness. May the Jubilee be for everyone an occasion to revive hope."



M. Spencer, "The Angel of Jubilee", 2000

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For the Jubilee

"Open words"

As part of the initiatives for the Jubilee Year, the Library is organizing a cultural project in collaboration with the Antonio Rosmini Institute for Culture and Education (ISCUFAR), entitled "Open Words, Jubilee Lexicon for Our Time." These are eight meetings that will be held monthly from December 2024 until December 2025, and will deeply examine the meaning of the eight words chosen from the papal bull on the Holy Year's indiction, in order to encourage also personal reflections through the rediscovery of the secular heritage. The meetings will be held in the Library's Sistine Hall. The words they will reflect on during the meetings are: *Visions* (Dec. 13), *Journey* (Feb. 14), *Silence* (March 14), *Word* (May 9), *Intelligence* (June 13), *Charity* (Oct. 10), *Humanism* (Nov. 21), *Hope* (Dec. 12).



"Each word will be analyzed in a lecture by a speaker identified from specialists in various disciplines, who may be joined by a discussant. This will be followed by the reading of selected texts consistent with the theme, which will be interpreted by Italian and international professionals with the accompaniment of background music."



"En route": the journey on display

In the exhibition spaces of the Kerkorian Hall of the Vatican Library, an exhibition will be inaugurated on January 31 and will remain open for the entire Jubilee year. It is a new opportunity for "dialogue" between the Vatican Library, which offers its own unedited documents, and contemporary creative people.



"For the duration of the jubilee year, the Library has planned a major exhibition, which continues, and at the same time renews, the appointment since 2021 has engaged in dialogue with contemporary artists, with whom it compares its historical heritage. The chosen theme is that of "world tours," which began to multiply during the last decades of the 19th century, partly in the wake of the possibilities offered by new means of transportation. The exhibition will illustrate the travels of the Italian diplomat Cesare Poma (1862-1932). The Vatican Library received Poma's legacy and will now for the first time present a formidable collection of newspapers from the remotest parts of the world and printed in many languages, with very interesting combinations of different languages and alphabets. This journey will be juxtaposed with those of two French journalists and six women who, either for a fun challenge, in a new form of journalistic information or for the most diverse cultural reasons, set off around the world alone, defying prejudices and commonplaces." One will be able to book their visit online.

Two concerts on the days dedicated to libraries

On Nov. 14 and 15, representatives from 24 libraries discussed not only the most important issues concerning these institutions and the future of library collections (see OWL 31, p. 3), but also "one of the decisive aspects that they all stand for together: the preservation and dissemination of memory and the commitment to research and studies," in order to identify new prospects for growth, both cultural and human.

Crowning the days of study and discussion were two concerts, which were also attended by the Library's benefactors, members of the foundations "The Sanctuary of Culture", "Treasures of History" (which supports the Apostolic Archives), and "Fonds des Amis de la Bibliothèque Vaticane."



Pope Francis' words, which emphasize how we must all work for peace, are the foundation of the engaging music the artist offered during the concert, making himself a "pilgrim of peace," as the pontiff told him, as the Jubilee year, the year of hope, is about to begin.

His compositions include *Sauvez une vie, vous sauvez l'humanité*, inspired by a famous phrase found in both the Talmud and the Koran. "Each one must choose to do all he can, with the means he has at his disposal to help peace." War is everywhere; since there are only wars, we must all make ourselves "artisans of fraternity and peace."

Heartfelt thanks to Omar Harfouch and his musicians who stirred so much emotion.

After the concert, all guests were able to take a close look at some splendid documents from the Vatican collections, texts from every discipline, in different languages, from various eras, expressions of different civilizations, which coexist peacefully in the Library and serve as a reference for the study and development of human life.



Concerto for Peace

On the evening of November 14, in the Library's Sistine Hall, pianist and composer Omar Harfouch performed his *Concerto for peace*, for piano, violin and orchestra, with twenty-three young musicians and eight choristers conducted by Mathieu Bonnin; an initiative with a high symbolic value, particularly welcomed by the papal library.

The concert, full of evocative moments, touched the participants deeply. Poignant music that needs no words to convey its message; its notes transcend any boundary and reach every heart.

French but Lebanese by birth, as a child Harfouch grew up during the war, the bloody civil conflict that ravaged the country between 1975 and 1994, when bombs, innocent deaths, were the norm for him. The piano, which he began playing self-taught, before his studies in Ukraine, was his only refuge, his salvation. Music, culture, poetry, and literature provided him with that space of hope and future that became concrete and active commitment in him.

Anna Bondarenko, first violin



Reg. lat. 12, "Bury St. Edmunds Psalter", first half of the 11th cent.

On f. 92r, the artist chose to visualize the verse "Justice and Peace shall kiss" (v. 11: "iustitia et pax osculatae sunt"): the metaphor is depicted concretely in the outer margin through the depiction of two women, personifications of Justice and Peace, exchanging a kiss and clasping hands in a sign of covenant.

Concert of the Pontifical Musical Chapel "Sistine"

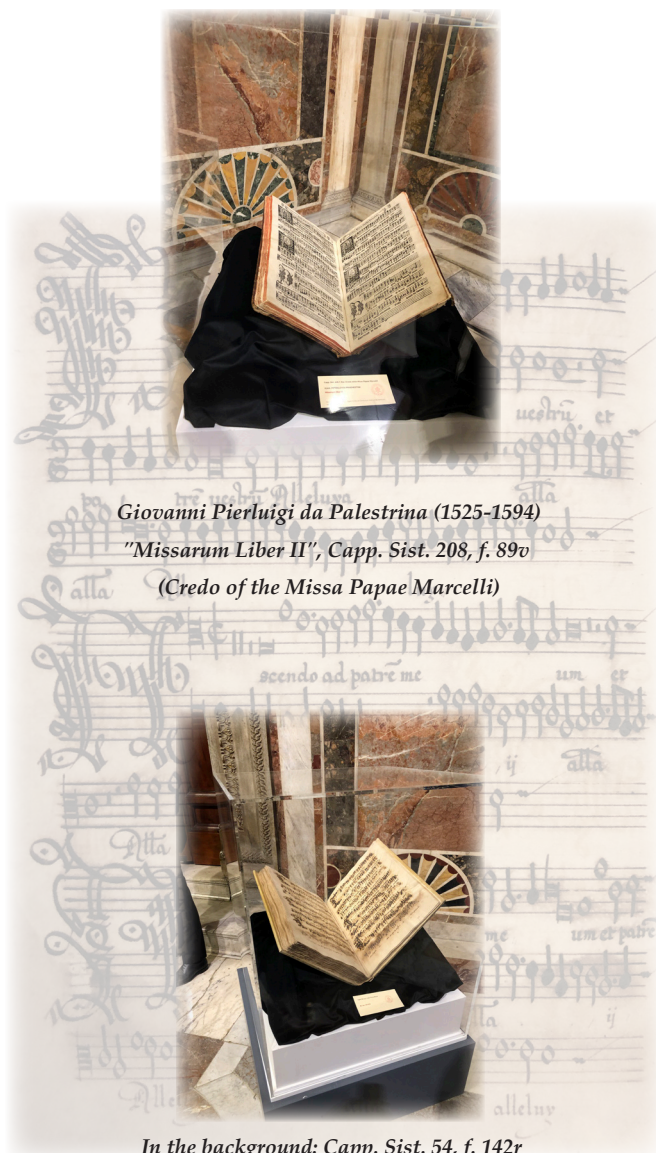


In the splendor of these frescoes among the most famous scenes is surely, above us, that of creation: the finger of God reaches out toward that of man. It may surprise us that the two fingers do not touch and that a short distance remains. It marks the space of freedom handed over to the human being, a space also of responsibility that the Creator offers to his Creature. In our free responsibility lies an enormous potential for hope and therein lies the path of humanity toward its destiny. Libraries collect the troubled and splendid memory of this and this is also why they are the true treasure of humanity."

Guests were also able to visit a small exhibition of manuscripts and printed books featuring Palestrina's music preserved in the Vaticana, set up in the Sala Regia of the Papal Palaces.

On Nov. 15, in the Sistine Chapel, a concert by the Choir of the Pontifical Music Chapel "Sistina" delighted conference attendees and guests of the Library with music by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, whose fifth centenary of birth falls in 2025.

The concert was introduced by H.E. Card. Pietro Parolin: "Three are the ways to return to Heaven: one by the way of beauty, of love: the second by music: the third by philosophy," thus, Torquato Tasso, one of the greatest Italian poets of the sixteenth century, quoting Plotinus, describes the experience we are about to have this evening. For by listening to music and contemplating the work that Michelangelo has left us, we can experience Heaven, the goal, I think, of so many works written down over the millennia and treasured here as in your libraries. This concert is a very special moment of the meeting that is taking place in the Vatican ... In this journey of dialogue and confrontation, however, it is important that there be moments of silence, of pure listening and contemplation, in order to rest the mind and the heart.



Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594)

"Missarum Liber II", Capp. Sist. 208, f. 89v

(Credo of the Missa Papae Marcelli)

In the background: Capp. Sist. 54, f. 142r

The Holy Father meets conference participants and guests of the Library



At the conclusion of the work that took place during the two days dedicated to libraries, *Conservata et perlecta aliis tradere - Libraries in Dialogue*, all conference participants, along with guests and benefactors of the Library, had an audience with Pope Francis on the morning of Saturday, November 16.

His Holiness greeted all the attendees and addressed words of appreciation to the library workers who had spoken over the previous two days, declaring himself pleased with the meeting "which expresses the Vatican Apostolic Library's openness to the world."

The Holy Father urged the preservation of memory. "Many cultural institutions find themselves so helpless before the violence of wars and depredation. How many times it has happened before! Let us commit ourselves so that it does not happen again: to the clash of civilizations, ideological colonialism and the erasure of memory let us respond with the *care of culture*. To support this commitment, I would like to entrust you with four criteria I proposed in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (cf. nos. 222-237)."

"The first criterion: *that time be superior to space*. You hold immense repositories of knowledge: may they become places where time is given for reflection, opening up to the spiritual and transcendent dimension. And so may you foster long-term studies, without the obsession with immediate results, fostering in silence and meditation the growth of a new humanism.

Second criterion: *unity prevails over conflict*. Academic research inevitably provokes moments of controversy, which must be carried out within a serious debate, so as not to arrive at prevarication. Libraries must be open to all areas of knowledge, witnessing a communion of purpose among different perspectives.

Third criterion: *that reality is more important than the idea*. It is good for the concreteness of choices and attention to reality to grow in close contact with the critical and speculative approach, to avoid any false opposition between thought and experience, facts and principles, praxis and theory. There is a primacy of reality that reflection must always honor if it is to sincerely seek truth.

Fourth criterion: *that the whole is greater than the part*. We are called to harmonize the tension between the local and the global, remembering that no one is an isolated individual, but everyone is a person living from social ties and networks, in which to participate with responsibility.

Dear ones, fear not the complexity of the world in which we are called to work! May what you have shared help to grow, in your Libraries, the wise "scribes" praised by the Lord, who know how to draw from their treasury new things and old things, for the good of all (cf. Mt 13:52).

I repeat the four criteria: *time is superior to space; unity prevails over conflict; reality is superior to the idea; the whole is superior to the part*. Let us not forget these four criteria."

We sincerely thank all those who came from all over to spend these three unforgettable days with us.

The Patrons of the Vatican Library



A group of young entrepreneurs who had visited the Library in July 2023 decided to form an association to help support the preservation and enhancement activities of the Vatican Library's heritage. Four of them formed the "Patrons of the Vatican Library," a London-based charity, joining the already existing entities, "The Sanctuary of Culture Foundation", which is very active with projects related to preservation and digitization, and the "Fonds des Amis de la Bibliothèque Vaticane", which is supporting the project of restoring some of the great musical manuscripts of the Sistine Chapel.



S. Bartolini, "Beggar"
woodcut, 1947
Bartolini.Matrici.96r

A first gesture of the Patrons is the gift of a 3D scanner, which will be immediately employed in a project concerning matrices by engraver Sigfrido Bartolini (1932-2007) of whom the Library preserves 231 matrices (zinc, wood, linoleum, marble, plaster) and 297 prints (intaglio, woodcuts, lithographs, mixed techniques). A project is being carried out as part of the Doctoral Program in Cultural Heritage Sciences at the University of Tor Vergata for the study, protection and enhancement of the artistic heritage of the 20th century, which is taking place in the Vatican Library's Graphic Cabinet.

The project will deal precisely with the analysis of the matrices, and the materials and processes used by the artist will be explored in depth. 3D footage will help the work being done, and to encourage the possibility of consulting this special three-dimensional material in the future.

At the urging of the Patrons, Colnaghi UK, the oldest art gallery still in existence, whose founding dates back to 1760, will participate in the renovation of the Library's Archives Section. This collection holds about one hundred thousand manuscripts with documents from institutions and families, including the *Barberini*, *Chigi*, and *Capitolo di San Pietro* Archives.

The Library's spaces extend beyond the Sistine Building; its storerooms occupy much of the southern corridor of the Belvedere Cortile, and part of the northern corridor, on the lower floor, where the periodicals storerooms are located.

At the end of the southern corridor, beyond the fourth floor of the storerooms that house the printed books collections, are the Graphics Cabinet and the Archives Section; the latter faces the Triangle Courtyard, while on the upper floor is the Vatican Medagliere, also an integral part of the Library.

The rooms in which the Archives Section is located were adapted for the purpose in the 1970s as a temporary arrangement, pending the possibility of making the rooms more suitable at a later date. Until now it has not been possible to devote the necessary resources to such an initiative, but during the course of this past year the possibility of intervening in those rooms no longer suitable to house the very important archival collections located there and the employees of the Section has taken shape.

The Milan office of architect Sir David John Chipperfield is working on a special project to renovate the rooms and arrange the spaces more effectively. The Governorate of Vatican City State will carry out the work.

To this end, all documents will have to be temporarily housed in spaces outside Vatican City.

We would like to thank in advance the members of the Patrons of the Vatican Library association: Candida De Angelis Corvi, Jorge Coll, Raphael Wertheimer and Iwan Wirth; Colnaghi UK. We would also like to express deep gratitude to the architect Chipperfield and all his staff who are facing a not easy challenge with great enthusiasm and extraordinary commitment.



Archives Section

Major agreement signed with King Hamad Digital Library (Bahrain)

On the occasion of the days dedicated to libraries, music, and peace, the Library Government was able to meet with representatives of the Kingdom of Bahrain and sign a cooperation agreement with the King Hamad Digital Library regarding the preservation and restoration of Arabic documents.

The agreement was promoted by Les Amis de la Bibliothèque Vaticane, and especially by Monsieur Hubert Barbier de Chalais, who acted as a liaison with Bahraini authorities to present the project. Exchanges between the parties, which began with a trip to Bahrain by the Librarian, H.E. Msgr. Angelo Vincenzo Zani and Fr. Adrien de Fouchier, OP, Arabist, led to the agreement that will see implementation over the next year.

The document was signed by Dr. Majed bin Ali Alnoaimi, Minister of Public Affairs of Bahrain for the King Hamad Digital Library, and H.E. Msgr. Zani for the Vatican Library.



The agreement includes support from the Kingdom of Bahrain for conservation work on fifteen Arabic manuscripts; the design and implementation of an innovative restoration card module for the cataloging and preservation of the cultural heritage of Arabic language and provenance housed in the Apostolic Library; and the organization of joint projects aimed at the cultural and scientific promotion and dissemination of this precious cultural heritage that the Library preserves.

We are especially grateful to the Bahraini authorities and the King Hamad Digital Library.

A farewell to Antonio Schiavi

At the end of the year, as is customary, we bid farewell to colleagues who are leaving the Library for well-deserved retirement after long years of service.

This time we extend our warm greetings to Antonio Schiavi, head of the Manuscript Room, who retired from his position on January 31.

Born Feb. 15, 1959, he was hired on Oct. 1, 1983 as a porter working at the Sacred and Profane Library Museums. From 1985 to 1996 he worked in the Printed Books Reading Room and from 1996 to 1999 he served in the Graphics Cabinet. "A person of great reliability, he has always performed the jobs assigned to him with particular diligence."

On September 15, 1999 he was transferred to the Manuscripts Room, and on October 1, 2010 he was appointed



head of that Section for his "proven special experience and ability" after having been co-head of the Section since 2007.

To Antonio the thanks of the Vatican Library and best wishes from all colleagues.

For the centenary of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio



*"The Book and the Spirit"
Display of codices and documentary evidence
On the occasion of the 750th anniversary of the death of
Bonaventure of Bagnoregio and of Thomas Aquinas*

From Oct. 25 to Dec. 12, the Kerkorian Room of the Vatican Library hosted the exhibition "The Book and the Spirit," featuring fifty-four documents, including manuscripts, printed matter and medals, related to St. Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican, and St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, a Franciscan, considered *duae olivae et duo candelabra in domo Dei lucentia*.

The two doctors of the Church were friends, both studied in Paris, taught in that city, and died the same year, 1274, within months of each other. Inside the Latin library room in the former site of the Apostolic Library, a fresco depicts them close together, as they were.

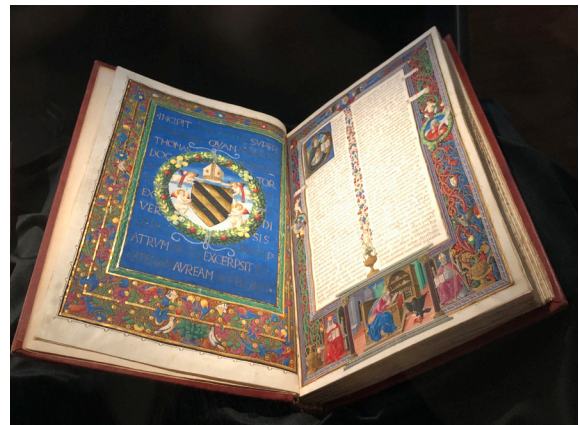
The Vatican Library preserves more than three hundred manuscripts with the works of Thomas; about one hundred are those with the works of Bonaventure. Three autographs survive of the former, with writing that has been called *inintelligibilis*, two preserved in the Vatican Library and displayed in the exhibition; the third is in the National Library in Naples. No autographs of St. Bonaventure are preserved.

Displayed are various works by the two saints, with some critical editions, as well as works related to the period of their existence; sources that marked their formation and life journey; works inspired by their teaching and theological and philosophical vision, even in non-Western contexts.

The exhibition was especially appreciated by all who had the privilege of visiting it.



Bonaventura, "Legenda Maior", Vat. lat. 9297



Thomas Aquinas, "Glossa continua super Evangelia", Vat. lat. 797

Tinexta for the "Avvisi"

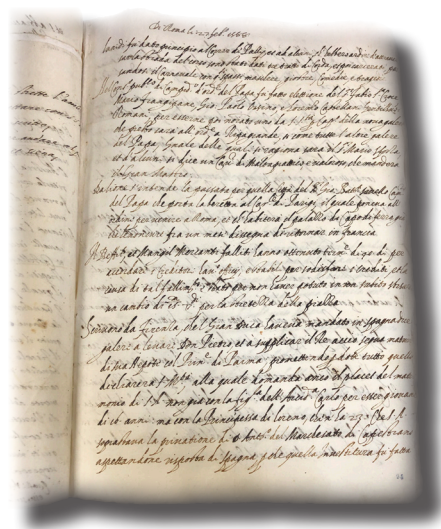
The Tinexta Group, which offers cyber security and technological innovation services, recently decided to sponsor the restoration and digitization of a group of voluminous manuscripts containing mostly historical documents called "Avvisi" (Notices).

These were short reports on news and events that occurred in a particular place, collected by people who often worked on commission from agents who then sent the dispatches to the courts, or to personalities who wished to be informed about what was happening in the major centers of Europe. These people, who were called "menanti" or "novellanti," collected the information in those areas of the cities where religious, political, economic, and social life was most intense, sometimes working together and forming small "newsrooms." The Avvisi could be printed and sold to several people.



Thus, it has been said about the Avvisi that they were the first expressions of journalism and the creation of public opinion (also because of the attempts at control by authority and the systems of protection and defense devised precisely by the "menanti" who sought the support of their often powerful clients).

It seems that those who first used the system of Avvisi in Italy were the Fuggers, in the 16th century, who had news of Venice collected to send to Augsburg. From Venice the system passed to Rome, where it was widely practiced by the agents of the dukes of Urbino. The Vatican Library preserves a large number of this type of document. The largest and most famous collection preserved, arranged chronologically from 1554 to 1629, is precisely that collected by the dukes of Urbino (*Urb. lat.* 1038-1117, 1704, 1727), which entered the Vatican Library with their library in 1657; but several Avvisi are also found in other manuscript collections of the papal library.

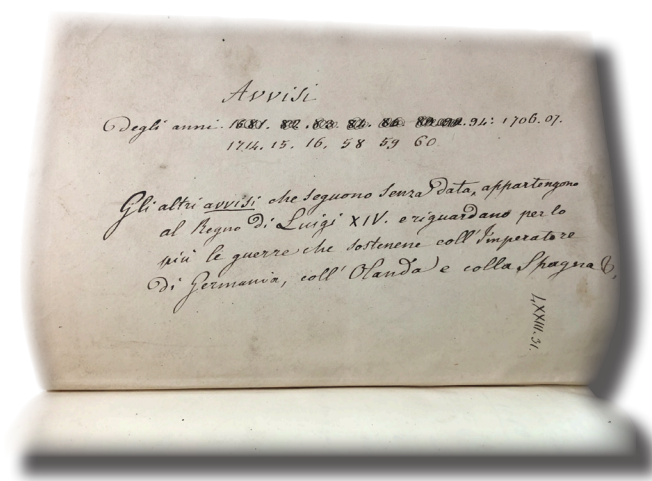


Urb. lat. 1056

There are thirty-eight manuscripts included in the project, nineteen of which are part of the *Urbinate* collection; twelve are preserved in the *Barberiniani Latini* collection and seven in the *Vaticani Latini*. The documents are of great historical significance and are frequently requested by scholars.

The project involves various kinds of conservation work on the documents, before digitizing them and publishing the reproductions online.

After the work is completed, some of those manuscripts will be displayed at the opening of the new Roman headquarters of the company Tinexta. We sincerely thank Tinexta and its managing director, Pier Andrea Chevallard.



Barb. lat. 6428

"The double-headed eagle and music: Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni in the era of Alexander VIII (1688-1691) from documents in the Vatican Library."



In the afternoon of Oct. 2, Teresa Chirico's volume, *L'aquila bicipite e la musica: il cardinale Pietro Ottoboni nell'epoca di Alessandro VIII (1688-1691) da documenti della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* (Studi e testi 560) was presented in the Sistine Hall of the Library.

The Venetian Pietro Ottoboni (1667-1740), grandnephew of Alexander VIII, was an eminent patron of the arts, playwright and librettist; the last example of a cardinal nephew, he was elevated to the purple in 1689, at the age of twenty-two with the post of vice-chancellor, which earned him residence in the Chancery Palace.

The Ottoboni family coat of arms features the imperial eagle, a privilege granted by Emperor Rudolph II for the family's services.

The study by Teresa Chirico, a professor at Rome's "Santa Cecilia" State Conservatory of Music, focuses on the period from 1688, the year in which Ottoboni wrote his first drama, *The Lover of His Enemy*, set to music by Flavio Lanciani, to 1691, the year of the death of Alexander VIII. The period represented a short but very fruitful time for the young Peter, of which the Vatican Library preserves a large quantity of documents, the subject of

the author's study in this volume.

The sources are of different types: accounting documents, reports, librettos, music, but also iconographic and epistolary sources.

"Pietro Ottoboni used music and theater as a means of propaganda for the family image and to entertain relationships with key figures of the nobility, in the same way as other Roman and non-Roman patrons" due to the wide means available to him at that time; and artistic, musical and theatrical activity was then intense and highly regarded.

The ubiquity of the available sources has enabled the scholar to learn about many hitherto ignored aspects related to theaters and theater productions; musical commissions; composers of Ottoboni's music; and theatrical performances of which there had been no previous news. Teresa Chirico was also able to reconstruct the chronology of Ottoboni's opera performances and update the activities of many theater professionals, composers, instrumental singers, who were then in his service. The work on Vatican sources contributes to enriching the knowledge of the youthful activity of a leading figure in the cultural life of his time.

A new acquisition for the Vatican Medagliere



Recently the Library received as a gift from Mrs. Monica Savonitti a valuable medal with a portrait of Pius XII, made by Aurelio Mistruzzi; it was issued on the occasion of the pontiff's episcopal jubilee in 1942. Pope Pacelli had been consecrated bishop on April 17, 1917. On the obverse is the profile of the pontiff; the reverse features the figure of a bishop in the act of handing the crosier to a novice bishop, who is seated in a trunk, on the side of which is the Pacelli coat of arms.

The medal had been given by Pietro Giampaoli (1898-1998), a well-known medallist whose collection the Vatican Library holds of great importance, to Mrs. Monica's

parents on the occasion of their wedding. Giampaoli was godfather to the groom, Faustino Savonitti; Savonitti's sister, Letizia, would later marry Pietro. The latter collaborated with Mistruzzi, and from 1937 onward all coins designed by Mistruzzi were engraved by Giampaoli.

The medal of Pius XII was cast by Giampaoli, whose studio was then a point of reference and meeting place for artists, including Mistruzzi; engraving techniques and materials were discussed there: that studio was considered a true laboratory of experimentation.



New spaces for the Library



The problem of space is a vitally important issue for institutions such as libraries and archives. The Apostolic Library and the Apostolic Archives are no exception.

Last Oct. 29, Pope Francis, in a chirograph published in *L'Osservatore Romano* on Nov. 12, established the relocation of part of the Vatican Archives and Library to the Pontifical Roman Major Seminary, which is located near the Basilica of St. John Lateran.

We reproduce the text of the document.

The centuries-old care for the stewardship of the acts and documents concerning the governance of the universal Church, together with the commitment to the development and dissemination of culture, are the characteristic features of the activity of the Vatican Archives and Library.

Continuing the work already begun by my Predecessors, ever since the "Scrinium" of the Church of Rome, the two Institutions are today called to make this precious patrimony accessible.

Therefore, in pursuit of the aim of contributing to the most effective management of their activities and to the conservation of their assets, having acquired the appropriate information and competent opinions

I DECREE

that the spaces available to the Apostolic Archive and the Apostolic Library be expanded, using part of the building and its surroundings that in the extraterritorial area of Saint John Lateran houses the Pontifical Roman Major Seminary, according to the delimitation attached hereto.

To this end, the Institutions concerned will collaborate to carry out the work, according to their respective competences, observing the provisions in force, the procedures and the directives that will be necessary for an orderly execution of this indispensable work that the See of Peter places at the service of the Church and the world of culture.

At the same time, I decree that a Commission composed of representatives of the Secretariat of State, the Vatican Apostolic Archive and the Vatican Library be established to determine the categories of documents to be transferred to the new rooms. The Commission will be able to operate immediately, in parallel with the work being carried out.

The provisions are to be considered stable and valid from the moment of publication in "L'Osservatore Romano".

From the Vatican, October 29, 2024

FRANCIS



People of the Vatican Library: Alessandro Ramadori



Alessandro Ramadori (1910-1994) was the Bursar of the Vatican Library for over thirty years.

He was admitted to the Library as a supernumerary on October 15, 1932. At the beginning of his association with the Library, he was in charge of the temporary filing of printed books.

He received his law degree in 1934, the year in which he attended the first course in Library Science at the Vatican Library. He was then entrusted with the final part of the filing in the General Collections. He was appointed "assistant" in the position of bursar in October 1939 and in this capacity also had the management of non-scientific staff; he left the Library in 1972.

Alessandro Ramadori was an authority in the Library, not only because of his role, but also by virtue of his strong-willed personality. The staff feared and respected him, a not always usual combination.

A colleague who has been retired for several years now remembers his first day in the Vatican Library when he was sixteen years old. The bursar, who received him at the entrance of the Library, introduced him to the rooms they encountered as they visited the various floors and introduced him to the people who were part of the different departments; the tour lasted over two hours, during which the bursar explained to him places and the activities taking place there. At the end of the long tour, the two took the elevator that brought them back to the entrance, upon reaching it, the bursar asked the boy, "How long did it take us to go up and take in the Library and its surroundings?" The boy, intimidated, looked for the right answer, and Ramadori: "over two hours"; "and to go down? Two minutes." He was correct; the descent had been quick. "Remember and treasure the route taken today," he added, "it takes a lot to reach the Library, enter it, and be a part of it; to leave it takes little." A lesson well learned by that colleague, who is now a grandfather with grown-up grandchildren. This simple episode tells us something about Alessandro Ramadori, who remained highly regarded in the Library for a long time, so much so that he received a telegram of good wishes from the Holy Father on the occasion of his 80th birthday, in addition to the good wishes of the then Prefect, Fr. Leonard E. Boyle (1923-1999), who wrote to him, "The Vatican Library, which for so many years has been the setting of your human and working activity ... wishes to felicitate with you in fervent activity of pleasant and amiable memories and we hope especially those connected with your long activity, since 1932, in the Vatican Library."

You will not mind if the Library on this happy occasion still wishes to congratulate you on the long and protracted activity that you have carried out over your years and of which beneficial traces are still detectable here."



Ramadori with John XXIII, Card. Tisserant (Librarian of H.R.C.), Fr. Albareda (Prefect) and Fr. Van Lantschoot (Viceprefect)

Recently members of the Ramadori family representing three generations came to visit the Library: the daughter Carla (the other two children, Maurizio and Arnaldo are no longer with us); Barbara, Carla's daughter; Valentina, Arnaldo's daughter; and her children, Adriano and Angelica. The welcome guests visited the Historical Halls and shared some memories of their relative, whom none of the current employees knew, but many know his name from hearing the stories of older colleagues now retired.

The guests, whom we thank, brought the Library many photos of Alessandro Ramadori. We will make digital copies of these photos to preserve in our archives as a perpetual reminder of a figure so significant to the history of our institution.



Major Archbishop of Kyiv-Halyč visits the Vatican Library

Last October 18, His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Major Archbishop of Kyiv-Halyč, leader of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, visited the Apostolic Library. He was at the Vatican to attend the Second Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, held Oct. 2-27.

He wanted to deliver personally the first thirty-three volumes of the *Christianity of Kyiv* series in Ukrainian language with documents related to the thousand-year history of the Kyiv Church to be preserved in the papal library.

The Archbishop was accompanied by a delegation consisting of Ukrainian Church dignitaries and the editors of the work, given to print in 2013-2023.



The publication project was developed at a time when it became possible to access documentary sources in institutions located in Ukraine and beyond, which until not long ago were inaccessible to researchers.

"These are the first results of a long and laborious study," Archbishop Shevchuk said as he presented the gift to representatives of the Library.

"This is just the beginning," he added; "when completed the work will include perhaps one hundred volumes [...] What better place than the papal library to preserve these historical documents?"

"Per tutti nasce la Speranza"

"Hope for all is born"

"L'Espoir est né pour tous"



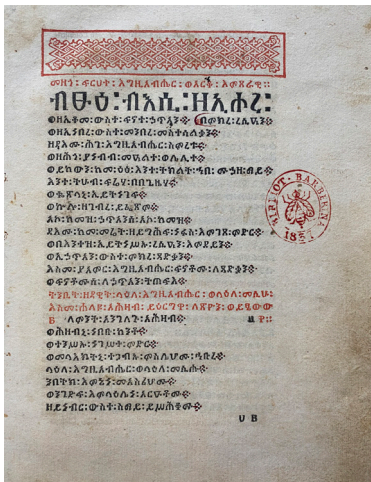
Barb. lat. 585, f. 2v, "Nativity".

Rospigliosi 92, pt. 2, Text of the "Pater Noster" in Akkadian
Mandarin, Mongolian, Japanese and Cantonese

Annual General Meeting of CERL

"On Oct. 25, in conjunction with the CERL Annual General Meeting, held in Rome on Oct. 23 at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale on the topic of European printing in non-Latin scripts, the Vatican Library welcomed a group of about 40 people involved in various capacities in the work of CERL for a tour of the historical rooms.

In accordance with the topic of the seminar, a small exhibition of rare printed books in non-Latin alphabets was set up in the Sistine Hall. In addition to other volumes, the *Psalter of Potken* was put on display. This psalter was the first typographic book in ge'ez (Ethiopian) characters, printed in Rome in 1513 by Marcellus Silber. The German priest Johann Potken covered the expenses for the edition, and ordered the creation of Ethiopian typographic characters for the first time in order to produce that edition.



Next to the various copies of the printed edition on display to show the different characteristics of the versions, the manuscript Psalter "in Indian language" (*Vat. et. 20*) probably used by Potken as a model for his edition. Another codex - also on display - holds the receipt that the German priest signed on Oct. 28, 1511 to request this manuscript on loan from the Vatican Library.

Guests also enjoyed the opportunity to visit the exhibition *The Book and the Spirit: Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure.*"



Poetry Corner



Vat. lat. 9495, ff. 59; 66

... Believing in the impossible

O Great King, I have not left
the hope of your grace;
I have with me so much cowardice,
so much shame, and yet
I didn't give up hope.
No one knows how your providence
secretly weaves a magical web
hidden from everyone's eyes.
At the time set by You,
suddenly, who knows from where,
the impossible comes, manifesting itself
in its own light,
always waited,
always in the guise of possible!
O Great King,
I have not given up hope!

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)



The anchor, a symbol of hope

"Extreme hope of the sailor in storms is most often linked to the hope that remains a support in the difficulties of life: 'We have this hope as an anchor of our soul, firm and secure' says St. Paul in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* (6:19). The anchor also represents the conflict between solid and liquid, earth and water. It stops the movement of life when it becomes stormy. The conflict needs to be resolved in order that the combination of earth and water may foster fruitful evolution.

From the mystical point of view, since it is impossible for such harmonization to be achieved in this world, we must, as St. Paul says, anchor our soul to Christ, the only means of avoiding spiritual shipwreck. *My soul and my cross*, the mystics will say, expressing fully the will not to abandon oneself to the upheavals of nature without grace, but to fix oneself at the source of all grace, which is the Cross."





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