



Santa Croce



PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY OF THE HOLY CROSS FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2005

Habemus Papam Statement of the Prelate of Opus Dei on the Election of the New Pope

April 19, 2005



Today is a moment of great joy for the entire Church. Catholics all over the world are giving thanks to God for the gift of a new Pope, Benedict XVI. Once again his children turn their eyes to Peter's successor, finding in him light and serenity.

In my name, and with the certainty that I am expressing the sentiments of the men and women who make up the Prelature of Opus Dei, I assure Benedict XVI of our fullest union both with him and with his teachings: a deep communion.

The new Pope is well acquainted with the

Prelature's mission and knows he can count on the cheerful efforts of the priests and lay people who form part of it in order to serve the Church, which was St. Josemaría Escrivá's only ambition. Along with our union with him, I also want to transmit to him my deep filial affection, joined to the prayer and affection of all the faithful of Opus Dei.

During these days of trust-filled waiting, there has been a lot of talk about the Roman Pontiff's immense responsibility, about the Church's need for his ministry, and the weight of the mission that rests on his shoulders. All of this is true. But we are also seeing now how the Pope, besides God's help, can rely on the support of the prayer and affection of all Catholics and of so many other persons of good will.

The circumstances surrounding the death of John Paul II and the election of Benedict XVI have been a marvelous

manifestation of faith on the part of millions of persons and a moving expression of unity: in a shared sorrow first of all, at the loss of our beloved John Paul II, and also in their joy at the gift of a new Pope. May John Paul II protect his successor in this moment of a new springtime!

I am also struck, as is only natural, by the Church's marvelous continuity, so clearly reflected in the joy of the People of God at the election of Peter's new successor.

+ Javier Echevarría
Grand Chancellor
Pontifical University of the Holy Cross



Pope Benedict XVI, then Cardinal Ratzinger, with Bp. Javier Echevarría, Grand Chancellor, during a visit to the University last year.

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University Celebrates 20th Anniversary



Cardinal Jose Saraiva, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, with Bishop Javier Echevarria at the 20th anniversary ceremony.

What started in 1985 as a satellite theology campus affiliated with the University of Navarre, is now the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome.

“We began with 40 students. Now we are about 1,400,” said Msgr. Mariano Fazio, Rector of the University. “Our classrooms have gotten bigger, but thank God the spirit with which we began has not changed. We desire to serve the Church as the Church wants, through our academic work.”

Portuguese Cardinal Jose Saraiva, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, and members of the Vatican diplomatic corps attended a ceremony earlier this year to celebrate the milestone and pay homage to those who played a role in the school’s expansion.

“Obviously, the adjective ‘pontifical’ is not a decorative title but rather it is a whole program,” said Cardinal Saraiva. “Pontifical means being faithful to the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, the Successor of Peter. It means being faithful to the Church.”

The Grand Chancellor of the University, Bishop Javier Echevarria, Prelate of Opus Dei, recognized the University’s founders, St. Josemaria and Bishop Alvaro del Portillo.

“The expansion comes during an age where scientific debates on issues like embryonic stem cell research and crisis media management are among the Catholic Church’s modern day challenges.”

“With hard work, we are able to do things because we are not the ones doing them,” said Bishop Echevarria. “It is Our Lord who acts through us.”

The Pontifical University of the Holy Cross now boasts four departments: Theology, Philosophy, Canon Law and Institutional Social Communications. The expansion comes during an age where scientific debates on issues like embryonic stem cell research and crisis media management are among the Catholic Church’s modern day challenges.

“Theology can enlighten modern men and women. It can help clear up ignorance in religious matters and in Church issues, which unfortunately is widespread in modern society. There is nothing worse than ignorance in any matter but especially in religion,” said Cardinal Saraiva.

Like the range of studies offered at the University, the students represent an array of cultures and backgrounds.

“There is no profile which perfectly describes our students because they come from over 70 countries,” states Msgr. Fazio. “There are priests, religious, lay men and women. But obviously the majority are priests or seminarians who are seeking formation in order to better serve the Church.”

The University is “universal” in the sense that it represents students from across the globe, but the faculty still considers the atmosphere particularly Roman.

“Roman to me means universal, something I learned from St. Josemaria. You cannot be truly Roman without thinking of the entire world and all of its people,” said Bishop Echevarria.

The anniversary is also an occasion to honor the University’s founder, Saint Josemaria Escriva.

Plans for an institute dedicated to studying the life and writings of St. Josemaria were presented at the ceremony, as well as a summary publication of the 2002 International Conference entitled the “Grandeur of Ordinary Life” - which took part during the centenary of the saint’s birth.

“Since the University is inspired by his message it seemed logical to us to combine the 20th anniversary and the presentation of the results of the Conference,” said Msgr. Fazio. “There is a special connection because on January 9, 1985, the academic center was founded. January 9th is the birthday of St. Josemaria. And the university organized the Congress on that date three years ago, on the centenary of his birth.”

After only 20 years, the University is already outgrowing its campus.

“We would like to finish up construction so that our students can study and work more comfortably. And we hope we can count on the help of many people because it is not easy to raise funds,” said Msgr. Fazio. “From an academic point of view, we would like to expand the faculty of our Theology department. We are also thinking of creating new departments.”

With the rapid increase in the school’s student body, expansion plans for the 21st century are currently in the works.



Meet Fr. William Donovan

Recent Doctoral Graduate

Fr. Donovan is a priest of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, currently on the faculty of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary. He teaches in the seminary's college division, whose various programs provide seminarians with the human and social, spiritual, apostolic and intellectual resources necessary to clarify vocational awareness in preparation for being a priest in contemporary society. He defended his doctoral dissertation in philosophy at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross last year graduating summa cum laude. One of eight children, Fr. Donovan worked as a certified public accountant at a global financial services firm before answering the call to the priesthood.

Please tell us about your background.

I grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia in a large Irish Catholic family. Growing up with seven brothers and sisters gave me a deep appreciation for the faith and, of course, for family. I'm happy to say all of my siblings were married in the Church and I have 17 nieces and nephews, all of whom attend Catholic school.

I attended St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, where I double-majored in philosophy and accounting. After my undergraduate studies, I began a professional career with Arthur Andersen where I worked for seven years as an audit manager. It was a wonderful experience where I worked alongside many talented and gifted people.

What happened next?

My latent desire to be a priest re-presented itself. I had this idea since childhood and at the age of 27 decided this was something I needed to take a closer look at. I applied and was admitted to Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, where I studied for six years and then graduated. I was ordained and served as a parish priest and high school teacher for a number of years. Then I was invited by Cardinal Bevilacqua to study in Rome for graduate work.

Where did you study?

I first went to the Pontifical Gregorian University for my licentiate. It was a very fine experience in which I worked on my license in philosophy. I spent three years there and graduated. When it came time to work on my doctorate, I looked at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross. I heard nothing but positive things about it while in Rome. I contacted Santa Croce and interviewed with some professors for admission and was accepted.

Your dissertation concerned Pope John Paul II, didn't it?

Yes. Early on, I met Fr. Juan Jose Sanguinetti, the Department Chair of Philosophy at the time and one of the founding faculty members of the University.

He became my advisor. I told him I was interested in working on St. Thomas Aquinas. He suggested I work on a comparison between St. Thomas Aquinas and Karol Wojtyla focusing on the human person. This was the beginning of a fruitful relationship with the University faculty. Fr. Sanguinetti is a good priest and a brilliant man. He often directed me in my studies and was always available and responsive. Moreover he was very generous with his time and made himself available whenever I needed direction. Whenever I gave him writings he read through them very carefully and provided helpful insights and so forth. This helped tremendously with the process.

Tell us more about your experience.

I was at the University for three years and finished in October 2004. I enjoyed it tremendously. The University has two great assets - its faculty and the library. I met with several professors over the years and they were always friendly and approachable, even though they were very busy. As for the library, even though it isn't the largest in Rome, it's new and it's expanding. I was impressed that although it's just over a hundred thousand volumes, it's a very nice collection. I also found the library staff to be quite helpful. Additionally the students who studied there were always very serious about their work. Moreover they were gracious, helpful and friendly — an unexpected benefit.

You could have studied anywhere. Why Santa Croce?

What attracted me to the University was the availability and interests of various professors. I knew the Cardinal was expecting me to come back and teach philosophy in the seminary here in Philadelphia. Rather than do something that was of my own personal interest, I wanted to concentrate on something that would benefit my future students. It made sense to do some studying of St. Thomas Aquinas and subsequently Wojtyla. When one goes about doing work at this level you need to find a professor or professors that are knowledgeable in the subject matter and show a sincere desire to help. That's exactly what I discovered at the University.

Did you attend activities of spiritual formation?

I'm not a member of Opus Dei, however I did attend some means of formation while in Rome. I also visited the tomb of St. Josemaria, which was quite moving. I became knowledgeable about the Work when I came to the University, but I didn't know much about it before I got there. Overall I found those involved to be quite impressive. A few of my closest friends are priests of the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross.

Was there any event in your life that prompted you to pursue a priestly vocation?



Fr. William Donovan at the defense of his doctoral dissertation, with Archbishop John Foley, President of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications

No. I don't remember any time in my life when I didn't think I would be a priest. I had the desire to be a priest from the earliest age. Only years later when I entered the seminary did my parents reveal to me that they believed I would be a priest from the age of three. It's funny how they pondered all these things in their hearts all those years. Of course, in high school and college, if I had a nickel for every time someone said I would make a good priest — well you get the idea. Even though I knew this, I suppose I was waiting for some burning bush or some miraculous event. I thought, Lord, if you want me to be your priest, I need some sort of tangible evidence that you've worked in the past, nothing big, but something. I had the desire but was somewhat fearful. I had the mistaken notion that it might be a somewhat lonely and unhappy life. Everyone has a vocation story; some are more dramatic than others. Mine was just a desire that never went away. Sometimes it was on the front burner, other times not. Even though I wasn't sure, I decided to proceed. I told the Lord, if you want me, you're going to have to talk louder.

The irony of ironies came when I was working in public accounting. I was at a big firm with over 500 professionals. One day I got called into the office of the partner in charge of the audit division. He said, "Bill, we have a new client and we think you're the perfect man to conduct the audit. It's St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. Will you take care of it?" I said sure and the rest is history. It was clearly a humorous event. I ended up auditing the seminary for three years and got to know it from the inside. I met many of the administrators and staff and it gave me a chance to consider what it might be like to go there. When I left public accounting I went directly into St. Charles.

What's your position now?

My title is Assistant Professor of Philosophy. I teach ancient and medieval philosophy in the college division and in our religious studies program. My students are mainly college age, in

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Pontifical University of the Holy Cross

The University, referred to as *Santa Croce* (Italian for *Holy Cross*), is an institution of research and study in the ecclesiastical sciences established by the Holy See. It includes schools of Theology, Canon Law, Philosophy, and Institutional Social Communications and an Institute for Advanced Religious Studies. The schools grant Bachelor's, Licentiate, and Doctoral degrees. A Bachelor's degree in philosophy and theology satisfies the full academic requirement for priestly ordination. Currently there are over 1,400 students from 70 countries around the world. Since the beginning of its academic activities in 1985, there have been more than 5,300 students who have attended the courses of the four schools.

The University is entrusted to the Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei. It was inspired by the vision of Saint Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei, who desired to develop a university in Rome dedicated to the intense training in the ecclesiastical sciences, at the service of the universal Church.

Make an Investment in the Training of a Priest

The Pontifical University of the Holy Cross Foundation assists the University in its financial needs and grants scholarships to students from poor dioceses wishing to attend the University. In the past 16 years donations from benefactors in various countries have allowed the University to award 2,300 scholarships to priests and seminarians from 95 countries around the world.

Last year, the University awarded 200 scholarships. The goal for the next academic year is more than 230 scholarships. Please consider making an investment in the training of a priest.

To make a donation,
please send your check to:

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their teens and twenties. Some have degrees already. They come from all kinds of backgrounds, some with hard science degrees, such as engineering, and even military service.

Has your experience at Santa Croce helped?

Absolutely. I think of the faculty and in particular their discipline of maintaining a rigorous prayer life. In addition, there was a real interest among the faculty toward the students and the topics they were studying. They were great role models.

What are your future plans?

Obviously I'm a man under obedience so whatever the Cardinal decides, I do. But I suspect after spending all this time and money educating me to teach philosophy, I'll be teaching for quite some time. In addition to teaching, I also am involved in the formation of the seminarians. I meet with about a dozen seminarians regularly. We talk about *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, the Holy Father's guide for their spiritual, intellectual, apostolic and human formation. We talk about their

strengths and the areas in which they need to grow. This keeps me busy. On weekends, I minister in two parishes hearing confessions and celebrating Mass. As you can well imagine, being my first year of teaching, I'm still up to midnight many nights preparing lectures. In the future, when time permits, I would like to do more research and possibly some publishing.

Any thoughts for our readers?

Your benefactors help in making the Pontifical University available to those who come from difficult circumstances. Because the tuition is kept low, it allows students from all over the world to attend. This is due, in large part, because of the generosity of your readers and others. Although, in my situation, I did not need any direct financial assistance, I was able to attend a University whose value far outweighed the costs. In that regard, I am the beneficiary of their sacrifices and for that I express my gratitude and that of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

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