



PONTIFICAL ACADEMY
FOR LIFE

VATICAN
MUSEUMS



ACCOMPANYING LIFE

ART AND THE BEAUTY OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

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the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life

Cover image: St Matthew and the Angel by Guido Reni

We were fooling ourselves when we thought that the question of life could be answered simply by increasing our reliance on ever more efficient and pervasively present technology. In fact — and this is something we all experience at one time or other — our humanity asks for more, aspires to something greater. It unfolds fully only in fraternal, friendly relationships characterized by solidarity; relationships that form us, accompany us, care for us and save us. Life is not something abstract: it is the concreteness of generations, the gratuity of giving and receiving, the good news of doing things together. The myth of a technology that is able to answer every question produces only individuals who accept no obligations, who are only apparently free but in reality hopelessly alone.

This exhibit, sponsored by the Pontifical Academy for Life and organized by the Vatican Museums, offers visitors the opportunity to contemplate the beauty of human relationships, especially those in which the different generations support each other in their day-to-day life and labors. It is a parade of faces and stories that come out meet us, filled with compassion, wisdom, and humanity. The magnificent stories that we see are enriched by artistic presentations curated by the Vatican Museums and by commentaries written by several Members of the Academy for Life from around the world: great scientists and eminent scholars who present from their qualified perspective the beauty of taking care of each other.

This exhibit, thanks to the enthusiasm and cooperation of the Vatican Museums, marks the beginning of fruitful collaboration between the Pontifical Academy for Life and the world's great cultural institutions: human life is God's masterpiece, and we are all called, together, to know it, to take care of it, to pass it on, with amazement, intelligence and passion.

I wish all of you an enjoyable visit!

+ Vincenzo Paglia
President of the Pontifical Academy for Life

Contemplation of a work of art creates an immediate relationship between what is seen and the emotions. Beauty moves us and arouses in us many different feelings. For this reason, I believe that art is truly the natural expression of what is human, and of our dialogue with all that surrounds us. It can never leave us indifferent.

That is why the Vatican Museums welcomed enthusiastically the unique proposal made by the Pontifical Academy for Life, and have cooperated in the creation of a specific new tour within the Museums. We have chosen a core group of works that reflect the temporal flow of our collections, giving special consideration to the several papal contributions, from Greek and Roman statuary, through Raphael, Guido Reni and Domenichino, to the artists of today.

These works of art will lead the visitor to realize that art knows how to be a true and, perhaps, matchless interpreter of that desire of every heart: to feel, not alone, but rather part of an unbroken web of human relationships. These are relationships that preserve the lives of every individual, making them feel loved, and reminding us of our duty to care for one another in our common destiny, care that is the mark of a life that is truly worth living.

Barbara Jatta
Director of the Vatican Museums

OLIVUCCIO DA CICCARELLO, *VISITING THE SICK*



The protagonist of the work is the skeletal body of a veiled woman, supported by pitying hands. A male figure, in the foreground, holds the doctor's hand to lead him to the bedside of the ailing woman. The compact matter of the tempera and the lucid quality of the colours, gleam against the flat background of the gold. Olivuccio di Ciccarello, a late-Gothic painter active in the Marche, painted the six panels depicting the Works of Mercy described in the Gospel of Matthew, for the ancient church of Saint Mary of Mercy in Ancona.

1404
tempera and gold on wood
panel
cm 37,4 x 29,5

An education which protects against sensitivity for human illness withers the heart. It “anaesthetizes” us against the suffering of others, incapable of facing suffering and of living the experience of limitation.

(Pope Francis - June 10, 2015)

“Visiting the Sick” is, for all, a duty of mercy. For a doctor, it is a special vocation. The word “visit” evokes—as the painting, with the two faces next to one another, highlights—a presence of care and concern for the whole person, knowing that the patient “wishes to be seen in a kindly manner, not merely examined; he wants to be listened to, not merely subjected to sophisticated diagnoses; he wants to be certain that he is in the mind and heart of the doctor treating him” (Benedict XVI). The doctor knows that caring for a sick person, therefore, means becoming his companion on the path of life, giving his experience a meaning that goes beyond the hope of getting well again. This alliance marks his human, moral, and spiritual maturity. And if the cultural context is inclined to obtuseness and is marked by a crisis of meaning, this only intensifies the soul’s need to understand, to know why we suffer, why people die, and ultimately what life is all about. The doctor, faced with these questions rooted in the person’s heart, is called to offer, in addition to medication, the word of hope.

Alfredo ANZANI
Professor of Bioethics at “Vita-Salute S. Raffaele” University, Milan
(Italy)



The panel brings together two episodes from the Gospel. At the top, the theophany on Mount Tabor where the transfigured Christ, between Moses and Elias, reveals Himself to Peter, John and James in anticipation of the Resurrection. Below, in the tumult, the presentation of the obsessive young man to the disciples. The same light of Christ and the praying woman on her knees, symbol of faith, are splendid. The work is considered by Vasari to be Raphael's spiritual testament; after finishing the face of Christ he "no longer touched a brush", and died.

1517 - 1520
oil on wood panel
cm 410 x 279

There must never be a lack of prayer for the sick. We must help the sick, not to get lost in gossip, always help, comfort, relieve, be close to the sick; this is the task.

(Pope Francis, June 10, 2015)

The last words of Raffaello Sanzio, shortly before he died at only 37, were the brushstrokes given to Christ's face. The touching face of the Savior, full of majesty and grace, can penetrate into the soul of each of those who contemplate it and dominate the circular harmony that, at the top of the picture, transports Moses, Elijah, and the three disciples into a kind of ecstasy. Yet, in the lower part, the light reverberates with strong contrasts and violent movements. In front of the sick boy, the disciples gesture helplessly and point to the Lord who, in his divinity, hovers above.

The two parts of the picture, which are separated but refer to each another, remind us that we remain limited by our human means as we accompany, with humanity, life in all its phases, especially when there is suffering. Yet, as long as we continue to entangle ourselves in our human techniques, medicine will only be a kind of hopeless activism. We are freed precisely from that by the gaze of Jesus Christ presented to us by the dying Raphael. He is the Savior who heals the soul and the body—and does so in a definitive way.

Manfred LUTZ
Head Physician at Alexanier Infirmary, Cologne-Porz (Germany)

GUIDO RENI, *ST MATTHEW AND THE ANGEL*



1620 ca.
oil on canvas
cm 79 x 66

Saint Matthew, positioned in a three-quarter view, is captured at the moment in which he is writing his Gospel, not looking at it but rather as he contemplates and listens in ecstasy to the young angel. The divine envoy, portrayed from behind, counts on his fingers the protagonists and events of the Mystery of the incarnation. The naturalistic capacity displayed in rendering with the point of the brush the detail of the saint's bristly beard, lined forehead and tousled hair is exemplary. This canvas by Guido Reni, Bolognese artist of the seventeenth century, forms part of the series dedicated to the four evangelists whom the artist painted on several occasions.

There is a close link between the hope of a people and the harmony among generations. Children are the joy of the family and of society.

(Pope Francis, February 11, 2015)

The technological era tempts us to reduce our identity to an isolated and atomized will and our purpose simply to the sum of our desires. It risks transforming our relationships with others into purely instrumental encounters, often mediated by a technology itself. Left unchecked, it can lead us to what the Holy Father decries as a “throwaway culture” in which the strong cast aside those who are weak or viewed as burdensome.

Reni's masterpiece offers a powerful corrective to these temptations. We see a frail and elderly Evangelist listening intently to the words of a childlike figure. The very vehicle for transmitting the life giving words of the Gospel is the unmediated speech between seemingly fragile and vulnerable individuals from different generations. Their loving and intimate encounter reveals to us the goods necessary for human flourishing in the technological era – solidarity, friendship, reciprocal indebtedness, radical openness to the unbidden, and intrinsic dignity.

O. Carter SNEAD

*Director of the Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture,
University of Notre Dame (USA)*

DOMENICHINO, *LAST COMMUNION OF ST JEROME*



The painting shows the venerable saint with his gaunt and yearning face, whose body, consumed by privations and exalted by a red cape, is supported by a disciple. St. Jerome is about to receive the Eucharist from St. Ephraim; the kneeling acolyte observes with tender wonder the fragile elderly man's human desire for the encounter with God. This large altar panel, the first produced by Domenichino, was commissioned by the Congregation of Saint Jerome of Charity for the church of the same name in Via Monserrato, Rome.

1614
oil on canvas
cm 419 x 256

How many disabled and suffering persons open their hearts to life again as soon as they realize they are loved! How much love can well up in a heart simply with a smile!

(Pope Francis, June 12, 2016)

Man's pursuit of self-empowerment is a sign of modernity. Yet the finite duration of our lives and the odds of illness mean we must inevitably confront our dependency. The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty (Ps 90:10). Even if technology extends life, it can never overcome the fact that we are dependent: this is an unsurmountable condition that lurks behind our aspirations of self-determination and autonomy. Even autonomy itself is dependent: We need others as St. Jerome needed his disciples.

Greatness is apparent not only in achievements in life; it is crystallized in the acceptance of suffering. The painting reminds us that humanity shows in how we serve others, notably if support is given to transcend physiological needs alone. Today, St Jerome would be placed in a computerised and remote-controlled wheelchair, and maybe be given medication to enhance his cognitive capacity. Yet, technology is but instrumental to striving for spiritual fulfillment.

Stephen SAHM
Director Medical Clinic I, Ketteler Hospital, Offenbach (Germany)



1620 - 1634
oil on canvas
cm 98 x 137

The luminous abandoned body of Saint Sebastian is aided by Irene in the act of extracting an arrow from his arm. In the dim light we see the profile of the matron Lucina, who holds the lantern, the sole source of light, typically baroque, which gives life to the scene. Trophime Bigot, known as the “Master of candlelight”, was a Provencal painter who specialised in Caravaggesque nocturnal representations. The painting is from the church of Saint Thomas of Villanova in Castel Gandolfo.

Doctors, while the Hippocratic Oath commits you to always be servants of life, the Gospel drives you further: to love life always and in any case, especially when it requires special care and attention.

(Pope Francis, November 15, 2014)

“Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours.” This is part of the heartfelt prayer that St. Theresa of Avila has given us. Upon entering the operating theater, I say this prayer and remind myself that as a physician I am called to represent Christ the Healer.

I understand that what I do for the least and most broken of my brothers I do unto our Lord Jesus. Like St. Irene I calmly and lovingly go about the task that I have been trained to do over many years. The arrows are removed; however, the open wounds will take time and continued care to fully heal. The world needs compassionate care from all Christians every moment of each day. All of us are called to tend to each other and heal what is broken. In this work the light enables Irene to clearly see and to care for Sebastian. Once God illuminates our vocation it is up to us to respond to the call. “Yours are the hands with which He is to bless men now.”

Robert BUCHANAN
*Chief of Neurosurgery at Seton Brain and Spine Institute, Austin,
Texas (USA)*

HERACLES WITH INFANT TELEPHOS



The statue in Pentelic marble is a replica dating from the age of Trajan, of a late Hellenistic original. The work, discovered in Rome at Campo de' Fiori in 1507, was displayed in the Courtyard of Statues, in the Belvedere, at the time of Pope Julius II. The imposing Heracles, dressed only in the skin of the Nemean lion, holds a club in his hand, and his son Telephos on one arm. The child looks tenderly at the hero, in search of paternal protection.

II cent. A.D.
marble
h cm 212

The father tries to teach the son the things he doesn't know, to correct the errors he doesn't see. The father who knows how to correct without humiliating is the one who knows how to protect without sparing himself.

(Pope Francis, February 4, 2015)

A baby abandoned by his mother in the solitude of a mountain symbolizes one of the most dramatic existential peripheries of our time: affective, spiritual, and physical abandonment. The heart of a child seeking care and guidance is suddenly left without reference points, without the certainties that give consistency to life because the experience of paternity is lacking.

What are these certainties? Balthasar has reflected so often on the importance of the mother's embrace and gaze for the mature development of her child's consciousness. The existential moment, when reality is discovered, occurs in the meeting of a glance, with a hug, with warmth that allows us to contemplate the world from the perspective of its ultimate meaning: reality is good and beautiful. Reality, in its final consistency, is neither violence nor oppression.

Heracles meeting the lost child, Telephos, shows us precisely that the ethics of care is possible, even in the midst of the coordinates of a pagan world. He holds the child in his powerful arms. In the trust that the relationship gives him, the child finds the space to play. Now, herein lies the secret of all things. As St. Thomas Aquinas said, "Man's life consists in the affection that sustains him most."

Rodrigo GUERRA LOPEZ

President of the Center for Advanced Social Research, Santiago de Querétaro (Mexico)

STATUE OF GODDESS BREASTFEEDING A BABY



The sculpture depicts a maternal deity, possibly identified with Isis, in the act of nursing her son Harpocrates. It was sculpted in Parian marble at the beginning of the first century A.D., in the Tiberian age. The work is from the Garden of the Apostolic Palace of the Quirinale, where it remained on display for many years, and entered the collections of the Vatican Museums in 1782. The theme of the deity nursing a child went on to inspire the Christian iconography of the Madonna Lactans.

*I cent. A.D.
marble
h cm 163*

So often I find mothers in the square who are expecting a baby and ask me for a blessing.. And this is free, this is love; these children are loved before being born, like the love of God who always loves us first.

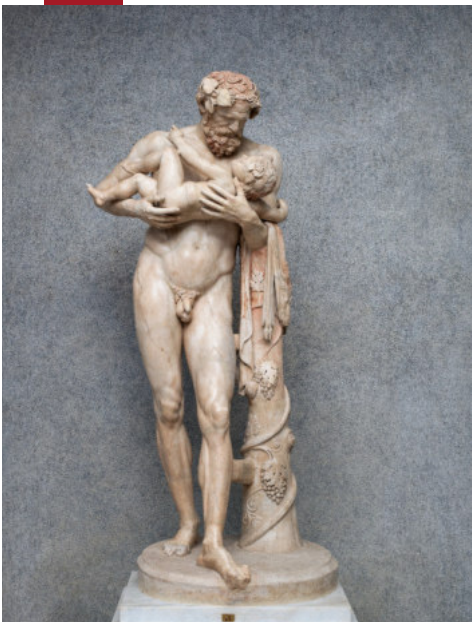
(Pope Francis, February 11, 2015)

“Blessed the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!” (Lk 11:27), exclaimed a woman who was listening to Jesus. And He replied, “Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it!” This truly expresses what Mary’s motherhood was: the acceptance and the fulfillment of God’s will in virginal maternity and in the maternity of the Universal Church.

This is parenthood: accepting the will of God, who chooses man and woman as the channels for transmitting life; and receiving and caring for children as a precious gift. The mother enjoys the privilege of carrying the child in her womb during pregnancy and then bringing him or her into the world. Pregnancy, like breastfeeding, establishes a very special bond between a mother and her child, interchange and protection, a bond which is not only an emotional but also cellular, biochemical (through the umbilical cord), and immunological nutrition (through breastfeeding). These are bonds that will accompany the child for the rest of his or her life.

Monica LOPEZ BARAHONA
Academic General Director of the “Centro de Estudios Biosanitarios”, Madrid (Spain)

SILENUS WITH THE CHILD DIONYSUS



The work in Pentelic marble, based on a Greek original of the school of Lissippus, is a Roman copy dating from the mid-second century A.D. It depicts Silenus, the ancient and wise preceptor of Dionysus, cradling the child and looking at him with tender affection. Silenus rests on an elm trunk, around which there coils the shoot of a vine, Dionysus' gift to men. The contrast between the protective strength of the elderly man and the lightness of the body of the helpless child is evident. Traces of colour are visible on the work.

II cent. A.D.
white marble
h cm 199,5

A good family upbringing is the backbone of humanity. Its radiance in society is the source that allows us to fill in the gaps, wounds and voids in parenthood that affect less fortunate children.

(Pope Francis, May 20, 2015)

The image of a man with a child in his arms reminds me of the abundant iconography of St. Anthony of Padua; but in this case, there seems to be some opacity. Neither the action nor the intention of the two characters seems clear.

It is, however, clear that we are before a scene of vulnerability and dependence: both are components of our existence, from the moment of our birth to the end of our days, from the child Dionysus to old Silenus. On one is never completely and constantly autonomous; that is an unfeasible utopia. Whatever the possibilities of science and technology may be, every human intergenerational relationship must be impregnated with loving care and attention for the vulnerable.

Herein lies the possibility of the development and the fullness of both the person and society, especially in the most technologically advanced countries.

We cannot forget or eliminate the anthropological dimension (vulnerability, intergenerational dependence) and the ethics of care when using science to serve humanity. The moral quality of a civilization will always be measured by the way it treats the most vulnerable, both the young and the elderly. Now, science and technology should be means to this end and never obstacles.

Elena POSTIGO SOLANA

*Assistant Professor of Ethics and Bioethics at "Francisco de Vitoria"
University, Madrid (Spain)*

MEDARDO ROSSO, *AETAS AUREA*



1885 ca.
wax
cm 44 x 41 x 36

In this work *Aetas Aurea*, in wax, the impressionist sculptor Medardo Rosso depicts his wife Giuditta Pozzi with their son Francesco. The symbiosis between the two is portrayed in relief, neglecting the background. Only the lateral view allows the comforting maternal embrace to be observed in all its tenderness and protectiveness, expressing the mother's concern and gentleness. The vital nucleus identified between the elbow and the two chins seems to pulsate almost with a cardioform consistency.

Mothers are the strongest antidote to the spread of self-centred individualism. "Individual" means "what cannot be divided". Mothers, instead, "divide" themselves, from the moment they bear a child to give him to the world and help him grow.

(Pope Francis, January 7, 2015)

The golden age is not to be retrospectively regretted but the beginning of life, where everything, rooted in that initial moment and at the same time projected into the future, begins to unfold.

The matter and the form suggest the idea of fusion: translucent wax, unfinished figures emerging from a common background. However, the movement is not backward, towards indistinction, but rather forward, towards discovery. The prospect of the "us" does not contradict the "I;" it founds it.

The mother has her eyes closed; she feels the child with her hands, turning to him without needing words or sight, which introduce abstraction. It is contact that communicates: "The language of love is a secret language, and its highest expression is a silent embrace" (Robert Musil).

Yet, the baby is turning not to her—if he were, the cycle would be that of a claustrophobic exclusive I-you relationship—but to the world. It is the golden age that opens the world, while the eyes and mouth open to take nourishment, to let it enter, and then pronounce a word that will not be solely "I." As in Rublev's Trinity, which is deliberately open, the third figure here is the world, in a liturgy of proximity that is a welcoming embrace, open to what is Other.

Chiara GIACCARDI

Full Professor of Media Sociology and Anthropology at Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan (Italy)



1943
oil on wood panel
cm 81 x 100

During the years of the Second World War, Otto Dix, a key figure of German Expressionism, developed an interest in the episodes of the life of Christ and the Virgin. The fulcrum of the work is the face of Christ, beaded with drops of blood, and with disproportionate dimensions compared to the delicate and rose-like figure of Veronica. The violent colour contrasts convey the most intimate meanings of the painting. The homogeneous, anonymous crowd is saturated with blue, and at the left the light illuminates and puts in contrast the innocent purity of childhood with the horrendous executioners in the foreground. Christ is once again crucified by war.

The way we experience illness and disability is an index of the love we are ready to offer. The way we face suffering and limitation is the measure of our freedom to give meaning to life's experiences, even when they strike us as meaningless and unmerited.

(Pope Francis, June 12, 2016)

This painting vividly depicts a simple act of corporal charity. Veronica does not free Jesus from his leash; lighten the crushing weight of His cross, or save Him from his imminent, unjust execution. All she does is to lend Him a piece of cloth. Yet this small, but intensely interpersonal, act of com-passion (or 'suffering with' Jesus) speaks dramatically of the importance of even modest acts of accompaniment of the suffering. Veronica receives a true image (Vera Icon) of Jesus' face, a new name and eternal posterity. And the light her compassion sweeps across the painting, magnified by Jesus, to illuminate others, even the snarling, demonic thugs. Do we have the compassion, and if necessary the courage, to accompany the suffering? To get our veils dirty, to mop up the spit, mud and blood which deface them? Or are we, like many in the painting, mere bystanders? Let us be 'veils of Veronica'. Let see the face of Jesus in the suffering, so they can see His face in us.

John KEOWN
Professor of Christian Ethics, Georgetown University, Washington
DC (USA)



1980
oil on canvas
cm 150 x 150

Pedro Cano began the series dedicated to the theme of the embrace towards the beginning of the 1970s. This work depicts the encounter on 23 October 1978 between Saint John Paul II, pontiff for only seven days, and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, his spiritual father. The artist directly presented to the Pope the painting, whose dominant blue tone he much admired. He painted directly in oil on canvas in an illuminated monochrome, which renders united and firm as stone the two representatives of the Church.

The Lord is waiting for us, everybody of us. Why? Because he wants to embrace us. Nothing more. The embrace of God's love.

(Pope Francis, January 8, 2016)

One of the first images that marked the pontificate of John Paul II was that, just a few minutes after his election to the Seat of St. Peter, of Karol Wojtyła receiving the tribute of Cardinal Wyszyński. The young Pope, enthusiastically, humbly and with affection, helps the kneeling Primate of Poland to get up. The father was embracing his son. Much of St. John Paul II's magnificent pontificate was probably due to Cardinal Wyszyński who, a few hours before his election, announced in a sort of premonition: "You will lead the Church into the third millennium." This picture is the first of a multitude of others that marked and will forever mark those who had the immense joy of meeting St. John Paul II. I also think of my husband, Jérôme, who had great admiration for the Holy Father and shared his admiration for the beauty of creation and his unconditional love for every human life, though fragile and threatened. I thank God for having allowed me to witness their friendship, a friendship of two souls who had only one fear, that of not loving God and neighbor enough.

Birthe LEJEUNE
Vice President of the "Jerome Lejeune" Foundation, Paris (France)

WILL BARNET, *FOUR GENERATIONS*



1984
oil on canvas
cm 100 x 130

The theme of the family constitutes the vital nucleus of all the long artistic research carried out by Will Barnett, an American painter who worked throughout the twentieth century. In *Four generations*, the extremely simplified figures are purified of superfluous details; they live in space thanks to their luminous faces and animated gestures, the true agent of a mute dialogue. Even the chromatic choice of earthy colours, applied in a homogeneous and compact manner, reveals the formal synthesis to which the American artist was always bound.

A society without mothers would be a dehumanized society, for mothers are always, even in the worst moments, witnesses of tenderness, dedication and moral strength. Without mothers, the faith would lose a good part of its simple and profound warmth.

(Pope Francis, January 7, 2015)

Now, here is the family, which is somehow “transversal”, it passes through time and history and holds together, through time, the works and days of men. And all this is entrusted to women. Will Barnett was an American painter who lived through the twentieth century (he lived 101 years): he was first abstract, fascinated by the mermaids of modernity and, then, in his full maturity, he returned to pure figuration, becoming a protagonist of so-called American naturalism, in Hopper’s sense. This picture shows four women of different generations, as the title suggests. There are four generations of women because the woman is the cement and guardian of the family. There is a baby girl, who is perhaps a year old or a little more, her young mom, who is twenty, her grandmother and her great-grandmother. The message that the picture gives us is unequivocal: women are the ones who transmit life; women are the caretakers of the family throughout the generations of humankind. The painter expresses this with American objectivity. It seems, in a sense, to be a photograph. Look at the well-defined features of these four women, who are in the picture and represent more or less a whole century. This is one of the most beautiful and touching paintings that speak to me about maternity and the united family, the transversal family, the one that goes through history, holding together the works and the days of men.

Antonio PAOLUCCI

Art historian and former Director of Vatican Museums, Rome (Italy)



The Pontifical Academy for Life, having its principal office in Vatican City State, was established by Pope Saint John Paul II with the Motu Proprio Vitae Misterium of 11 February 1994.

The objective of the Pontifical Academy for Life is the defence and promotion of the value of human life and of the dignity of the person.

The Academy has a primarily scientific role, for the promotion and defence of human life. In particular, it studies various matters dealing with care for the dignity of the human person at different stages of life, mutual respect between the sexes and generations; the defence of the dignity of each individual human being; and the promotion of a quality of human life that integrates material and spiritual values. It does so in the context of a genuine “human ecology” that seeks to recover the original balance in creation between the human person and the whole universe.

In its efforts to promote and spread the culture of life, the Academy maintains close contacts with institutes of higher education, scientific societies and research centres that deal with various life-related issues. For this reason, the Academy is composed of Members, appointed on the basis of their academic qualifications, proven professional integrity, professional expertise and faithful service in the defence and promotion of the right to life of every human person.

PONTIFICAL ACADEMY FOR LIFE

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“The Vatican, the Museum of Museums,” not only houses the extensive collections of art, archaeology and ethno-anthropology gathered by the Popes over the centuries, but also contains some of the Apostolic Palace’s most extraordinary and artistically significant rooms.



Thanks to five centuries of continuous enrichment, and works by the greatest artists of all time, you will resonate with the rich buzzing of great history and, almost, the breath of the Sacred.

For easier and more extensive access to their artistic patrimony, and in order to overcome any barrier or discrimination in the enjoyment of the artistic and cultural heritage accessible to visitors, the Vatican Museums have for some time opened their doors to deaf and hard of hearing visitors, offering a free service of guided tours in Italian Sign Language (LIS), and offer blind and partially sighted visitors a free service of tactile and multi-sensory tours.

Blind and visually impaired visitors will be able to access of Raffaello’s Transfiguration, on display within the exhibition, though a dedicated perspective bas-relief. To present, preserve and share this extraordinary legacy of culture, history and beauty that the Roman Pontiffs have collected and preserved for centuries: this is the mission of the Vatican Museums today.

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