

call
for
papers

Charism & Creativity

*Catalogues, management and innovation
regarding the cultural heritage
of institutes of consecrated life*



Rome, Antonianum
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Notre-Dame de Toute Grâce du Plateau d'Assy, 1948.
Graphical elaboration.

promotors



CONGREGATIO
PRO INSTITUTIS
VITAE CONSECRATAE
ET SOCIETATIBUS
VITAE APOSTOLICAE



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM
DE CULTURA

with the collaboration of



Ufficio Nazionale
per i beni culturali ecclesiastici
e l'edilizia di culto



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“ We can almost formulate
a theological discourse on
cultural heritage, considering
that it is part of the sacred
liturgy, of evangelization and of
the exercise of charity ”

Francis, Message to participants at the conference
“Doesn't God dwell here anymore?”
29 November 2018

THE CONFERENCE

Introduction

The *Annuario Pontificio* provides clear statistics to back up what many analysts have long pointed out: the geography of the Catholic Church is undergoing a polar inversion with respect to its historical configuration, with some regions being more dynamic in ecclesial experimentation and generous in terms of vocations to consecrated life, while other regions require more creativity to envisage ecclesial presence for a post-secular context that is fragmented between expanding urban societies and shrinking rural communities.

The liveliness, dynamism and complexity of this framework is a challenge to the whole Christian community on the ecclesiological and pastoral levels, on the liturgical and juridical levels, and on the economic and programmatic levels.

Object and approach

This conference intends to focus on the cultural heritage of communities of consecrated life in light of these accelerations across different fields. Requiring interdisciplinary reflection, the first task of this meeting is to define its object: cultural heritage is a concept that has differing meanings and articulations depending on the observer's stance and methodological perspective. A critical and comparative analysis concerning these formulations is the basis for a clear dialogue between all the subjects engaging with this heritage.

Relational goods

When considered in relation to communities of consecrated life, cultural goods emphasize some of their traits. They are relational goods, i.e., goods that reveal their meaning and value when understood in relation to their counterparts and their function in the context of the life of the community in which they are realized (historical, cultural and social).

Systemic goods

Although administered under legitimate legal and accounting autonomy, or physically isolated, the cultural goods of consecrated life communities are systemic assets. They are the singular image of the community that promoted their origin, and they describe globally the visible aspect of the spiritual wealth that has enriched the Church in all ages through the particular charisms of each order or institute. Individual goods are, therefore, features of a vast and global network, a mark of the spread of individual religious families, and with them the

migration of artists, artisans, techniques and styles, a reason for enrichment and hybridization of particular contexts.

Identity goods

Where they are located, the cultural goods of communities of consecrated life constitute nodes of sociality, recognition and cultural, and grounded identity. They are strongly interrelated with the territorial context and often contribute to define it, sometimes becoming its icon, sometimes synthesizing its characteristic regional aspects in the artistic, artisan, architectural and productive spheres. They are therefore identity goods with a twofold meaning, local and global, being on the one hand the manifestation of a particular charism in the unity of the Church, and on the other the expression of a specific cultural context.

Universal cultural heritage

Many ecclesiastical goods thus find themselves in the dual role of being both places of witness to faith and universal cultural goods, also protected and defended by the norms of the national legislatures and international laws.

Themes

In the situation described above, given the dynamism needed today, many goods may appear a burden rather than an opportunity in light of a facile, but perhaps inadequate, interpretation of the rich young man who chooses them over the *sequela Christi* (cf. Matt 19:16-22).

With regard, in particular, to the cultural heritage of communities of consecrated life, a number of critical points can be highlighted that need appropriate interventions.

*Catalogues:
methods and experiences*

First of all, a catalogue is needed. The difficulty of establishing a common census is due to the plurality of charisms and communities, since the singularities of each are reflected in the nature of the corresponding cultural heritage, which hinders the design of a shared matrix of understanding. In this sense, the case of the monasteries of contemplative life is emblematic, in that monastic *stabilitas* involves creating relative cultural heritage, producing vast, organic and characteristic stratifications that are of great ecclesiological and anthropological interest, in harmony with the history of the individual religious community, and that are capable of delineating its profile.

Difficulties in drawing up a catalogue do not, however, defer the need. Both the quantity and quality of the goods make it necessary, as do the decrease in the number of consecrated men and women, and the new possibilities of data interoperability with local institutions dealing with the protection and use of cultural heritage. An effective cataloguing of assets will lead to an appreciation of their consistency, the beginning of an acquisition of systematic knowledge, facilitation of the verification of their state of conservation, and easier management by the owning communities, also thanks to technological implementation.

*Cultural heritage and
multi-level use projects*

Public affection for the Church's goods favours projects for the promotion and use of cultural heritage that involve both ecclesiastical bodies and the faithful, as well as public institutions and civil society. This changes the understanding and use of cultural heritage in the cultural offering of the territories and museum programmes with participatory aspects that can restore their role as instruments of Gospel proclamation and pastoral activity.

*Innovative and participatory
projects for church
buildings*

In the context of management processes, particular attention must be paid to church buildings, which today are often more than is needed by most consecrated communities. Alienations and sales should be considered as last resorts, after having demonstrated the impossibility of any other ecclesial, social, charitable or service use, as Pope Francis has stated: "I hope for the streamlining of structures, the reuse of large houses in favour of works that are more responsive to the current needs of evangelization and charity, the adaptation of works to the new needs" (Apostolic Letter "To all consecrated persons", 21 November 2014).

Disused property belonging to communities of consecrated life can be an opportunity for engagement with local communities (Christian and civil) according to participatory projects that help to clarify their vocation and future. Reuse and valorisation plans can also concern a plurality of assets considered from a systemic point of view or singular cases, that are to be analysed in relation to the corresponding territorial needs, once the presence of other communities of consecrated life and the peculiar opportunities of each context have been assessed. This highlights the close link between cataloguing systems and the envisioning of new uses.

*A catalogue of
methodological approaches
and best practices*

This conference is being held in the awareness of the many experiences already underway in these areas, but there is a need for a catalogue of best practices, which would allow them to be adequately known and shared. The conference is therefore intended to be an opportunity for discussion on general and common programmatic and methodological

aspects, perhaps capable of highlighting replicable models and recommended strategies, which can be useful, though not binding, for other cases and new contexts.

PROPOSALS FOR INTERVENTION

This conference has as its object the cultural heritage of communities of consecrated life, understood in all its movable, immovable and intangible components.

It considers and invites contributions around the following thematic areas:

A experiences and methodological reflections on the cataloguing of this heritage, considered in its tools and use.

We seek experiences of cataloguing already in progress of immovable and movable cultural heritage (objects of art and everyday use, archives and libraries); types of specific cataloguing files and projects of their construction; operational methods of cataloguing (project development, staff training, sources of funding); systems of sharing (and protection) of data on the internet;

B.I projects and theoretical and methodological aspects related to the management of the movable cultural heritage of consecrated life communities.

In addition to theoretical reflections on the understanding of goods, of particular interest are:

- management systems involving local communities and boasting exchanges and collaborations with civil institutions;
- exhibition programmes and projects for the reuse and valorisation of movable cultural heritage for pastoral or evangelisation purposes;
- contributions regarding the management of movable cultural heritage in the processes of closure or affiliation;

B.II experiences, strategies, techniques, research and projects of reuse, valorisation and re-functionalisation of church buildings belonging to communities of consecrated life.

Of particular interest:

- reflections and cases that make the most of the systemic and relational nature of assets;
- projects that concern and extend over several locations;
- experiences of transformation, reuse and management involving citizens, institutions, and stakeholders through the creation of so-

- cial infrastructure (matching demand with supply of services);
- experiences of transformation of church buildings into “common assets” from the perspective of generative welfare;

C general frameworks for understanding and interpreting the cultural heritage of communities of consecrated life in historical, ecclesial and ecclesiological, legal, symbolic and semiotic terms.

Of particular interest are approaches capable of inaugurating a new way of understanding cultural heritage and promoting it, at the intersection between charism and creativity. In particular:

- within the ecclesial community, the role and nature of what we today consider to be cultural goods, in relation to the different perspectives for the study of sacred disciplines: theology, ecclesiology, liturgy, canon law;
- in relation to the itineraries of internal formation within communities of consecrated life regarding the understanding of ecclesiastical cultural goods, their protection and their use in innovative projects of valorisation at the service of the charism;
- in relation to civil communities and cultural assets that determine belonging, identity or affection;
- in relation, in particular, to the processes of reuse, valorisation and re-functionalisation of the ecclesiastical cultural heritage;
- in relation to the evolution of the protection of cultural heritage in the national systems and in international law.

This conference aims to encourage different disciplinary approaches, in order to solicit alternative and complementary points of view that, at their intersection, produce a higher level of awareness.

It is hoped that contributions to this meeting will look both at theories and techniques and at practices and case studies, so as to promote comparison between the former and to organise a catalogue of the latter. Since innovative strategies and methods may also concern projects that, for various reasons, have not been completed, the promoters of this conference take into account studies and research prior for projects that have not been completed. The aim of this event is to draw up a catalogue of approaches and methods of operation that can outline models that can be replicated in different contexts and situations.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Proposals for intervention are invited from:

- Researchers, teachers and professionals;
- Representatives of communities of consecrated life;
- Representatives of associations and foundations.

Proposals in **Italian, English, French or Spanish** may be sent to:
abstract@carismaecreativita.net

by **9 April 2021** **27 September 2021**

attaching in one of the permitted languages:

- **anonymous abstract** (.doc / .docx format)
not exceeding 5000 characters, spaces included, with title, 5 keywords, indication of the thematic area (see "Proposals of interventions" on the previous pages), maximum 10 bibliographical references to be intended as main bibliography.
A subdivision into explanatory paragraphs is strongly recommended (*Introduction - Development - Conclusion*);
- **short CV** (.doc / .docx format)
in a single word file (for a maximum of 600 characters for each author, including spaces);
- **graphic attachments** (.jpg or .pdf format)
optional but strongly recommended element, in the maximum number of 3 projects, with a resolution of not less than 200 dpi, for a maximum total of 10 Mb.

The Scientific Committee will select the intervention proposals via **double-blind peer review**, selecting eligible contributions:

- for oral presentation;
- for presentation by poster;
- for publication only in the conference proceedings.

The speakers admitted to the oral presentation are exempt from the payment of the registration fee.

The result of the selection will be communicated no later than **14 June 2021** **29 November 2021**.

CALENDAR AND DEADLINES

7 December 2020

call launch / Conference announcement

~~9 April 2021~~ 27 September 2021

deadline for sending proposals for intervention

~~14 June 2021~~ 29 November 2021

communication of the results of the abstract review

By ~~26 July 2021~~ 7 March 2022

confirmation of participation by the authors

~~30 September – 1 October 2021~~ 4 | 5 May 2022

Conference in Rome

CONCLUDING VOLUME

Presentation of the *full papers* by ~~10 January 2022~~

12 September 2022.

An editorial style-guide will be sent to you.

The final contributions will be subject to **double-blind peer review**.

For further information:

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