



PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURE

What's been going on at the Pontifical Council for Culture
Circular Newsletter, N. 26 (October 4, 2019)

The Common Good in the Digital Age

“A better world is possible thanks to technological process.” These are the words of Pope Francis during the audience for our conference on the Common Good in the Digital Age (Sept. 26-28) when lawyers, businesspersons, moral theologians and tech executives gathered to discuss the challenges affecting people today and in the future. The pope added: “You are engaged in efforts to promote civilization, whose goal includes the attenuation of economic, educational, technological, social and cultural inequalities.” He highlighted the potential of these technologies when “accompanied by an ethic inspired by a vision of the common good, an ethic of freedom, responsibility and fraternity, capable of fostering the full development of people in relation to others and to the whole of creation.”



National Day of the Holy See at Expo Beijing



Our Pavilion at the Beijing Garden EXPO had its National Day, Sept. 14, when Bishop Tighe spoke alongside Beijing Expo Chief Engineer Mr. Zhang Lannian about environmental challenges and our response to them. Other speakers included: Kazuhiko Nishi with an historical analysis of technological progress and prosperity; Frans Otten looking at how light is the basis of all life on the planet and how research into the

difference between sunlight and moonlight can create unique opportunities for energy savings; Peng Jin gave an intriguing paper on “The light from above for all” and Sergio Guidi looked at “Biodiversity: The trees of the future come from the past.”



Barca Nostra



On Aug. 2, 2019, Bishop Paul Tighe visited the wreck of the ship that sank in the Mediterranean on Apr. 18, 2015. It had been positioned within the setting of the Venice Biennale Arte. He brought, in the name of the Holy Father, a word of appreciation for the initiative and a prayerful remembrance for the victims. It has come to be called “Our Boat” representing the shared experience and journey that all humans undertake.

A Third Church Music Conference

Preparations are almost complete for the Third Church Music Conference, taking place in the Vatican Nov. 7-9, 2019. The theme is to be Church, Music, Interpreters: a necessary dialogue, allowing an exploration of some of the people and institutions that are called to perform and interpret this particular art form. Among the themes are the vocation of the musical interpreter, instruments in the composition of sacred music, compositional styles, scores and improvisation, vocal techniques, and a look at interculturality. To register [click here](#).

Running for Peace

Before attending the world athletics championship in Qatar, the undersecretary was on the start line for the annual Via Pacis, a half marathon with associated 5km fun run, which took place Sept. 22nd with men and women carrying the message: “No to violence, No to racism, No to discrimination.” *Vatican Athletica* has now replaced the Dicastery in the organization of this event which sees families and friends running a route around Rome that passes religious buildings to promote dialogue in favor of human brotherhood.



Visitors to the Dicastery

Recent visitors to the dicastery included bishops from Australia and the Pacific Isles (CEPAC) in *ad limina*. We have also received visits from HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, the Culture Minister from Slovenia, Ambassadors of Finland, Lebanon, Slovenia, Iraq, Turkey, Germany, Switzerland, Malaysia and representatives of Hispanic and Latin Catholics in the USA, as well as the directors of Bienalsur – the South American art exhibition, academics from Mongolia and from the Catholic University of Australia.

Cardinal Ravasi opened the exhibition of 26 works of art by 23 artists on the theme “The Light of the World” at the Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and gave a number of lectures and conferences, including one in Rome on John Henry Newman, ones in Bergamo and the airport of Orio al Serio, and Parma on the needs of Cultural Restoration. He also participated in a dialogue with photographer Sebastiao Salgado at the Cortile di Francesco, Assisi, an event connected to our own [Courtyard of the Gentiles](#) dedicated to the meeting of peoples and the promotion of an integral economy. He also presented to the press the winners of the Ratzinger Prize: Charles Taylor and Fr. Paul Béré.



A welcome addition to the staff of the Dicastery comes in the form of Monsignor Carlo Maria Polvani as Adjunct Undersecretary.

On the horizon:

Oct. 12 Catacomb Day, [Life beyond death](#)

Oct. 18 “The Bible and Culture” Lecture by Cardinal Ravasi at the University of Navarra

Oct. 30 “Costruire lo Spazio sacro” Cardinal Ravasi dialogues with Mario Botta, Gregorian University

Nov. 7-8-9 [Music Conference on Interpretation](#), Vatican

Dec. 4 *Dies Academicus*, Pontifical Academies

Further material on these stories can be found in our review [Cultures and Faith](#), published three times a year, on our website www.cultura.va, and on social media