



PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURE

What's been going on at the Pontifical Council for Culture
Circular Letter, N. 9 (31 March 2016)

Intercultural Dialogue with Azerbaijan

An exchange of greetings, gifts and signatures marked an encounter between Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi and Mrs Mehriban Aliyeva, Azerbaijan's First Lady, President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, 23 February. There is an ongoing intercultural dialogue between them which has touched on a range of interests, with reciprocal visits and now the completed restoration of some frescos in the catacombs of Sts Marcellinus and Peter. Plans for the future were announced in a press conference, including a project in the catacombs of San Sebastian to restore sarcophagi and develop the museum, and the desire was expressed to continue collaboration in other fields such as sports.



Women's Consultation Group



Today saw the Women's Consultation Group meet for its regular input into the Dicastery's life with a look at ongoing and future projects to ensure a broader vision and approach. The group received their formal letters of nomination and surveyed the early phase of preparation for the next Plenary Meeting, which Members and Consultors have requested focus on the area of **Anthropology**, particularly in light of understandings of the human person given the perspectives supplied by genetics, the neurosciences and the digital cultural environment.

Visitors

The Ambassador of Croatia, the Bishop of Eisenstadt, students of Rural Studies from the USA and of Canon Law from Germany, the board of the Axel and Margaret Ax:son Johnson Foundation from Sweden, and representatives of the programme Living Fully and the Deaf Catholic Youth initiative.

Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 24 February marking 25 years of collaboration with the Embassy of Romania to the Holy See and outlining future relations. There followed a celebration of the work of Brâncuși (pictured is one of his serial works, *Endless Column*) with the opening of a photographic exhibition.



The Engagements of the Superiors

The President, Cardinal Ravasi opened the Academic Year at the European University of Rome, 16 February, with the talk "*L'Europa e la sfida dell'integrazione: cultura, conoscenza e solidarietà*". On the 19th he spoke on Mercy and Manzoni's *Promessi Sposi* at the Chiesa del Gesù. On the 25th he addressed Roman Artists in the Church of the Artists on the theme "Mercy and Beauty in the proclamation of the Faith".

Cardinal Ravasi also spoke to the International Conference of the Italian business federation, “Confindustria” on the 26th on the theme #FareInsieme. He was in Spain 3 March to offer the opening talk at the [Jornadas de Teologia del Centro de Estudios Teológicos de Sevilla](#) and on 4 March he was at the 4th centenary celebrations for the Galileo Galilei Decree at the *Biblioteca della Camera dei Deputati*. He spoke at a Meeting of Artists in Berlin’s Bundestag together with Minister Monika Grütters and on the 15th presided at the annual Mass for the Pontifical Academy of the Virtuosi al Pantheon. On the 17th he introduced the school-pupils’ section of the Courtyard of the Gentiles on “Happiness, Wellbeing and the Common Good” with economists such as Jeffrey Sachs and John Helliwell, and on the 18th was at the University of Catania for a Courtyard on “Light” with scientist Carlo Rovelli. He also appeared in the news thanks to a foray into pop culture during the Italian music festival at San Remo and due to reactions to his book review of a Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith publication on Freemasons.

The Delegate, Mons. Azevedo, spoke at the presentation of the book “Encarnação e Imagem”, 26 February. He inaugurated a holocaust museum in Poland, 17 March and then on 28 March he spoke on the Social and Political Place of Religions in Society at the University in Lisbon.

The Secretary, Mons. Adoukonou gave a Lenten Conference in Paris at Notre Dame, 20 March, on [Culture et Évangélisation](#), concentrating on the theme of Interculturality.

The new Adjunct Secretary, Mons. Tighe received Episcopal Consecration in St Peter’s Basilica on the afternoon of 27 February.



The Undersecretary, Mons. Sanchez de Toca spoke at the press conference 19 February presenting the 10th edition of the Clericus Cup, a soccer competition for Rome based seminarians, this year featuring 16 teams, each sporting the logo “Mercy out on the Field”. And on 18 March he was at the forum on Popes and Sport at the LUMSA university.



Save the Dates: Two Major Dicasterial Events

“Cellular Horizons”, a Vatican Conference on Regenerative Medicine, particularly on rare (or orphan) diseases affecting children is planned 28-30 April 2016.

“Sport at the Service of Humanity”, a first Global Conference on Sport and Faith in the Vatican planned 5-7 October 2016.

Further material on all these stories can be found in our review Cultures and Faith, published three times a year, on our website www.cultura.va, and various social media profiles.