

*URBI ET ORBI:*  
CATHOLICISM AND THE CITY OF ROME  
THEO 44208

A joint project of three international universities:

**LUMSA University**  
**University of Notre Dame**  
**and**  
**Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum)**

Coordinator and Principal Instructor: Donna Orsuto

Meeting **Wednesday mornings (9:30-1) and two Saturdays**  
(**March 23** (St. Peter's\ Vatican area 9:30 am to 4 pm -including excavations under St. Peter's  
and a lecture at LUMSA) and  
**April 6**, (8 am to 4 pm, day trip to Subiaco [Sacro Speco])

FOR A TOTAL DURATION OF  
40 HOURS,  
ALLOWING 6 ECTS OR 3 US CREDITS TO BE EARNED.

Course Description: Offered in preparation of the 2025 jubilee, this course will consider the influence of the city of Rome on the Catholic Church and vice versa from a multiplicity of complementary perspectives. It aims to offer a historical and theoretical introduction to the city and to the role it has played and continues to play in the Catholic Church.

In conversation with a selection of texts from the New Testament, Church Fathers, and recent Magisterial teaching, this course will explore how Christians lived and continue to live their faith in this city through the exploration of history, theology, art, and spirituality from the first centuries of the Church in Rome to today.

Participants will explore how the church developed in Rome, from its foundation through to its legalization under Constantine and the emergence of the papacy. Rome has been a centre of Christianity since shortly after Jesus' resurrection. The monuments, art and architecture of Rome reveal important dimensions of how Christians lived in various ages. Participants will discover how the theology of martyrdom shaped the lives of early believers and how the Apostles Peter and Paul became pivotal figures in the city, in the Church, and in the world. They will discover the importance of pilgrimage in Christian spirituality and especially in Rome. They will consider how the early Christians worshipped together in house churches, explore the significance of some exemplary male and female saints, reflect on

the commitment of the early Christians to serving the poor, and consider how these impact both Catholicism and the city today.

Above all this course aims to form a cohesive group of women and men from different nationalities and diverse academic backgrounds who are committed to "walking together" on a pilgrim path and who desire to learn together and from each other about the treasures that Catholicism has received from the city of Rome and can now offer *urbi et orbi*.

Learning  
Outcomes:

Through guided visits, lectures, reflections on readings, class presentations and discussion, and in conversation with a selection of texts from the New Testament, Church Fathers, and recent Magisterial teaching, participants will be able to describe, verbally and in writing: 1) how Rome was a pivotal setting for the development of Early Christianity, 2) how the Apostles Peter and Paul shaped the emerging governance of the early Church and how they are presented in the New Testament, 3) how Roman culture influenced the Catholic Church (especially with regard to canon law), 4) how the theology of martyrdom played an important role in the lives of early believers, 5) how mission and dialogue shape the core of Christianity, 6) the impact of early monasticism in the Christian tradition and specifically the city of Rome, 7) the role of the sacraments and liturgy in Catholic spirituality in the city of Rome, 8) the commitment of Christians to serve the poor in the city of Rome both yesterday and today, 9) how the Christian theology of God's incarnate beauty is reflected in the art and architecture of Rome, 10) how pilgrimage and the celebration of the jubilee year impact Catholic spirituality in Rome and beyond.

**REGISTRATION: [SEGRTEOL@PUST.IT](mailto:SEGRTEOL@PUST.IT)**

For more details about the course itself, please email Dr. Donna Orsuto, at: [Donnaorsuto@gmail.com](mailto:Donnaorsuto@gmail.com)