The School of Canon Law at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross is widely recognized as a unique program. While other canon law programs in Rome tend to focus more on the exegetical approach to studying existing code, Santa Croce follows natural law as proposed by Saint Thomas Aquinas. Student Fr. Albert Llaveria of Spain explains the difference: “We follow a systematic model to study the law. Instead of studying the canons one by one, we try to know them as part of a whole.”

Third-year student Father Stanislav Oleshko of Ukraine is also enthusiastic about Santa Croce’s uniqueness: “Canon law at Santa Croce follows one ‘school,’ so all the professors are consistent in teaching in this way. It doesn’t mean that there are no different opinions or discussions between them – that wouldn’t be a good academic example – but it helps to have one coherent general view of canon law, which gives a hermeneutic key for interpretation in different cultural contexts.”

This approach is rooted in a historic understand-
ing of theology and the magisterium, connected to reality. Therefore, Catho-
lic jurists are offered a profound way of looking at law and the world. "Let all things be done decently and in order," says Saint Paul, and canon law is an im-
portant tool for giving the universal Church a structure within which to find har-
mony and order for its members. Deacon Jürgen Thoma Kurkut acknowledges this historical look and its practical goals. "Due importance is given to the history of canon law, to understand the current normative sys-
tem. The mastery of the jurist should be to find the ‘What is just’ in concrete ec-
cesiastical situations.

Why is this approach so impor-
tant? One of the issues today is the rapidly-changing face of civil law, and the interactions with civil law in ev-
ery country. Laws are being changed at the will of legislators and voters, and often have little connection with the unchanging realities on which the Church is based with its mag-
isterium and theology. Canon law mirrors the Continental European approach to law, known as codic, a system based on principles. English-
speaking countries use "common
law", or a developmental, normative approach. While this type of law is very flexible, it risks losing its ground-
ing in moral principles and the real-
ity God created. The study of canon law can open up a whole new “lan-
guage” and worldview for those ac-
customed to common or normative law, due to the timeless structure of Thomistic natural law. And as any
multilingual person will tell you, knowing multiple languages allows more flexibility and options for solv-
ing problems and for understanding complex situations.

Many canonists are also trained as civil lawyers, and many secular civil lawyers are interacting with can-
onists for issues of the Church – from marriage law to church closures, int-
terpretations of themes in Vatican II, transparency and efficiency of gov-
ernance. “Santa Croce is in frequent dialogue with civil lawyers, confront-
ing the influences of these normative and positivistic approaches, where there are risks of losing touch with the foundations," said Fr. Massimo Del Pozzo, Director of Studies for the faculty. "There is also an increasing influence of the laity in the Church, whether individuals in positions of re-
sponsibility, or ‘new movements' and communities, many of whom choose to study at Santa Croce." Thomistic canon law studies have a great deal to offer them in terms of structure and principled guidance.

“After the Catholic Church regained its freedom from Communism in Ukraine 26 years ago, we had to begin from zero (no parish communities, church buildings, pastoral centers, etc.). In my diocese only one priest has studied Canon Law. There is no diocesan court or law assistant to help our bishop with his governing mission. I decided to study Canon Law at Santa Croce to help with this situation.” — Fr. Stanislav Oleshko, Ukraine

Fr. Jesús Miñambres, Dean of Santa Croce’s faculty of Canon Law with Fr. Massimo Del Pozzo, Director of Studies, at the 2017 diploma ceremony for Canon Law graduates.

S.R.R. Prof. Msgr. Kyrillos Katerelos, Bishop of Abydos, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece), Prof. Salvatore Berlingo, Professor of Canon Law at the University of Messina (Italy), Prof. Heinrich De Will, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg (Germany)

Fr. Stanislav Oleshko, Third-year licentiate Future doctoral student

October 4-7, 2017 was an exciting time for canon lawyers in Rome. "Consociatio," the Internationa-
ional Association Promoting the Studies of Canon Law, gathered for its 16th con-
gress, meeting at the Lateran Univer-
sity and at Santa Croce. Celebrating the centenary of the first streamlined Codex Iuris Canonici of 1917 (or “Pio-Benedictine Code”) the confer-
cence program unpacked the theme, “Canon Law and Legal Culture”. Santa Croce’s Rector, Fr. Luis Navarro, commented beforehand, “The cente-
nary of the codification serves to look back, not only at the moment of codi-
fication a hundred years ago, but also to look what Canon Law has meant within legal culture around the world.”

The conference was sponsored in collaboration by the Canon Law Fac-
culties of four Roman universities: the Pontifical Lateran University, the Pontifical Gregorian University, the Pontifical Salesian University, and the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Santa Croce). With an open-
ning address sent by Pope Francis and delivered by Secretary of State Cardi-
nal Parolin, attendees were exhorted to "deepen the authentic sense of law in the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, where dominion is of the Word and of the Sacraments. Legal norms have a necessary role, that of service.”

Santa Croce hosted the attend-
ees on the second day for a series of internationally-themed roundtable sessions. Topics included canon law issues and legal culture in India, Fran-
cophone Africa, “mission territories”, Poland, Japan, comparisons between American/British common law and Continental code law, and more. Process issues, marriage law, trans-
parency and pastoral care were also discussed. Professor Jesús Miñam-
bers, Dean of Santa Croce’s Faculty of Canon Law, gave a roundtable talk on “Purpose and Title in the Legal Definition of Ecclesiastical Goods.” Sessions were packed with attendees, including both canonists and civil lawyers, and featured lively debate and collegial discussion, delivered in diverse languages. Lawyers from around the world enjoyed comparing experiences and applications of canon and civil law in various contexts. Professor Luis Navarro, Rector of the University of the Holy Cross and the President of Consociatio, gave the homily at the concluding Eucharistic celebration at the Church of Saint Ig-
natus of Loyola in Campo Marzio.

A conference attendee reviews the program for a three-day event marking the centenary of Codex Iuris Canonici.
UNIVERSITY NEWS

INAUGURAL MASS AND LECTURE

The 33rd academic year of the university opened on Tuesday October 17th with the inaugural Mass and lecture. The Mass was celebrated in San Apollinare Basilica by Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz, Prelate of Opus Dei and Grand Chancellor of the University. Msgr. Ocáriz’s homily dwelt on the role of the Holy Spirit in our academic life and formation. Following the Mass, Fr. Héctor Franceschi of the Canon Law faculty performed the first official act of the academic year: the inaugural lecture. He gave a timely discourse entitled, “Why Get Married? Reflections on Marriage, discussed cultural relativism, and how to convey the beauty of true love to today’s generation.

Msgr. Ocáriz also gave a talk entitled, “Christian Charity: Engine of Quality and Professionalism.” He spoke of how the virtue of charity, and how the values of fraternity and doing good with sensitivity allows us to serve and work with the highest level of professionalism. “We want to make the most of our commitment translated into quality service,” he said. In this sense, “charity drives towards professionalism.”

A series of nine weekly lectures, from October 17 through December 12, was sponsored by Santa Croce’s Center For Priestly Formation. The course is geared toward priests and designed to deepen aspects of fruitful participation in the Eucharistic celebration. The lectures seek to link three realities: the liturgy and its celebration, beauty, and life. As Pope Francis has written, “The Church evangelizes with the beauty of the liturgy…” (eg Evangel Gaudium, 24).

ONE OF THE COURSE OBJECTIVES IS TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO THE LITURGICAL RENEWAL DESIRED BY THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL WHILE BEING IN CONTINUITY WITH ECCLESIAL TRADITION. ATTENTION IS ALSO GIVEN TO ALL FORMS OF “LANGUAGE” IN THE LITURGY: WORD AND SONG, BODY MOVEMENTS, GESTURES AND SILENCE. 

FRUITFUL PARTICIPATION IN THE MASS

Msgr. Guido Marini, Master of Pontifical Liturgical Celebrations, with Fr. Juan José Silvestre, Professor of Liturgy and Pastoral Ministry at Santa Croce.

“TAKING EVANGELIZATION TO A “HIGHER LEVEL”

Fr. Francis J. Hoffmann (“Fr. Rocky”) is familiar to many Catholics, partly because he has been a weekly contributor to the Relevant Radio® “Morning Air® Show” for the past 15 years. Since the merger of Relevant Radio® with Immaculate Heart Radio this past July, his audience has expanded considerably. The potential audience in the USA totals 133 million persons via 127 AM/FM stations. Countless more people across the world can listen to programs through a free radio app.

However, Fr. Rocky’s involvement is much more than as a once-a-week radio host. In 2009, at the invitation of the Board of Directors, the request of Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, and the permission of his superiors in Opus Dei, he was appointed Executive Director and CEO. This position requires frequent travel across the country, public speaking, fundraising, and building relationships to support the mission of Relevant Radio®: “To assist the Church in the New Evangelization by promoting relevant programs through media platforms to help people bridge the gap between faith and everyday life.”

In addition to his “business” responsibilities, Fr. Rocky has an important pastoral role – encouraging employees and volunteers and reminding everyone of the priority of Jesus Christ. When the management team encounters difficulties and obstacles he tells them, “If it were easy, it wouldn’t be evangelization.” He also promotes the sage advice of St. Josemaría (the founder of Opus Dei) who wrote: “First prayer. Then sacrifice. In the third place, very much in the third place: action.”

One of the course objectives is to remain faithful to the liturgical renewal desired by the Second Vatican Council while being in continuity with ecclesial tradition. Attention is also given to all forms of “language” in the liturgy: word and song, body movements, gestures and silences.

“TAKING EVANGELIZATION TO A “HIGHER LEVEL”

Msgr. Guido Marini, Master of Pontifical Liturgical Celebrations, with Fr. Juan José Silvestre, Professor of Liturgy and Pastoral Ministry at Santa Croce.

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With the ending of the calendar year, now is an ideal time for you to consider giving towards a sponsorship of a student at Santa Croce. By making a sponsorship gift now, you will be helping one of our student priests or seminarians become a future leader in the Church. We like to say that our students are 'among the best and brightest, but not among the most affluent.' This is because many of them are sent by their bishops from poorer dioceses around the world to compete for a spot at Santa Croce. We want to be able to fund all deserving seminarrians and priests who are accepted into our programs at Santa Croce. After a solid education and immersion in the culture of the Church in the heart of Rome, they are prepared to meet the challenges of the re-evangelization of today's world when they return home to become pastors and leaders in their dioceses.

Every student at Santa Croce receives a subsidy of about $18,000 annually toward tuition, fees, books, room and board as well as health insurance. However, nearly 300 students from extremely poor dioceses need all their expenses covered. The Holy Spirit has provided us with a great privilege and a great challenge to equip priests for the Church. We can respond through prayer and by addressing the reality of their financial need. A full sponsorship for our poorest students is $30,000 – a quarter of this is $7,500, one month is $2,500, and a week is $577. Every gift, regardless of size, is very important to us. Those we sponsor will be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world. We are helping the entire world through our graduates to find Jesus Christ.

In addition to your cash gifts, which are always needed to fund sponsorships for our students annually, there are several ways you can help secure Santa Croce’s future for decades to come; gifts of securities, bequests, and endowment gifts. Also, many find it convenient to support the university through a recurring monthly gift as a Sustainer Society member.
FROM ALL THE WORLD TO ALL THE WORLD

Our students are tremendously grateful for the unique opportunity they have to study at Santa Croce. They study with world-renowned thinkers, and they meet friends from every continent—all within an easy stroll of the Vatican, the Pantheon, and the countless other treasures of the Eternal City, and more importantly, all done for the glory of God and the good of His holy Church.

“I completed my theological studies at Santa Croce in 2015. When my archbishop in India proposed that I also study Canon Law, I wanted to continue my studies here because of the excellent reputation of the faculty’s Thomistic approach to natural law. The study of Canon Law is more than knowing code, the jurist should find ‘what is just’ in concrete ecclesiastical situations.”

Deacon Jiso Thomas Kuttikatt
Third-year licentiate
Kerala, India

“My bishop asked if I would like to study in Rome and which subject area I preferred. I asked what was most needed in our diocese and he replied, “Canon Law.” So I said, “Then I like Canon Law!” Santa Croce’s program was the best for what I needed. It is also great to live in a college residence with priests from all over the world.”

Fr. Albert Fortuny Llaveria
Third-year licentiate
Tarragona, Spain

“I send you my sincere gratitude because of your humble and great magnanimity so I can continue my studies here. I am really happy to be here and pray for you and your intentions during my Holy Mass. It’s only because of good people like you that our university can give scholarships to the students, so we are indebted to you.”

Fr. Tinesh Kurian
Church Communications
Pinarkayil, India

SANTA CROCE’S 1,600 STUDENTS HAIL FROM 75 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES!

On behalf of all our students, THANK YOU! Your help makes a world of difference!