

PRESS RELEASE

THE CHURCH UP CLOSE

2nd SEMINAR IN ROME FOR JOURNALISTS COVERING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Organized by the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross

ROME, September 2, 2010.- A seminar dedicated to information about the Catholic Church will take place in Rome from **September 6 to September 12, 2010**. The seminar, in its second edition, is entitled *The Church Up Close: Covering Catholicism in the Age of Benedict XVI*, and is organized by the School of Church Communications at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross.

An international group of journalists will participate in the one-week program designed to provide journalists who write about religion with an array of tools to strengthen their coverage of today's Roman Catholic Church. The journalists who have participated in previous seminars organized by the School include reporters from media outlets like *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *Il Corriere della Sera*, *El País* and *Le Monde*, among others.

Along with general presentations describing the nature of the Church and how the Vatican functions, a number of more specific topics, including the following, will also be addressed at the seminar:

- stem cell research and bio-ethical issues,
- Pope Pius XII and the Jews
- Christian minorities around the world
- Cardinal Newman's beatification (in light of the pope's upcoming visit to UK)
- sexual-abuse scandals
- Church diplomacy.

Among the authorities who will speak are the following:

Cardinal Francis Stafford (Major Penitentiary Emeritus of the Apostolic Penitentiary),
Msgr. Charles J. Scicluna (Promoter of Justice of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith)
Rev. Prof. Brian Ferme (former dean of Catholic University of America's canon law department),
Rev. Prof. David Jaeger, O.F.M. (the Holy See's expert on relations with Israel),
Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson (President of the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace),
Fr. Federico Lombardi (Director of the Press Office of the Holy See),
Msgr. Charles Brown (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith)
Msgr. Fortunatus Nwachukwu (Head of Protocol of the Vatican Secretariat of State),
Msgr. Lucio Ruiz (Head of the Vatican Internet Office),
Prof. Stefano Zamagni (University of Bologna),
Prof. Angelo L. Vescovi (University of Milano Bicocca),
Jack Valero (Spokesman for Cardinal Newman's beatification)
Yago de la Cierva (Director of Communications for World Youth Day, Madrid 2011).

According to the president of the organizing committee, **Rev. Prof. John Wauck**, “*The Church Up Close* seminar is a condensed version of a series of classes that our school already offers – once a month, in Italian - during the academic year for Rome-based ‘vaticanisti.’ The success of that series inspired us to offer a similar program - all in one week, and in English - for journalists who are not permanently based in Rome.”

Fr. John Wauck observes, “Covering an institution as old and as large as the Catholic Church has always been a huge challenge, and in today’s shrinking world, it’s becoming ever more necessary to tell even local stories about the Church from a global perspective. The seminar should help reporters do that. What’s more, Rome is an ideal setting for reflecting on religion and the media with journalists from around the world.”

In addition to classroom sessions, the fall seminar also features on-site visits and personal meetings with curial officials and veteran Vatican correspondents. The goal is to provide both a basic sense of the lay of the land at the Vatican and a serious, in-depth analysis of specific hot-button issues facing the Church today. Now in the fifth year of Benedict’s pontificate, the seminar also promises to give insights into the pope’s thinking and his leadership of the world’s largest church.

Detailed information about “The Church Up Close” program is available on its website: <http://www.church-communication.net/>.

For more information please contact:

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