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**For GTU students only:** Please register for STHS4013 01 ROME CROSSROADS OF RELIGIONS, 3 credits, Prof. Gabriella Lettini, e-mail: [glettini@sksm.edu](mailto:glettini@sksm.edu)

# Rome - A Crossroads of Religions

Rome

Italy

4/18 January 2011



### \* Application deadline: 2010

**September 15**

If by this date we have less than 20 applicants then the course will not take place. Detailed syllabus and schedule will be available in December, 2010.

### Costs and Payment Due Dates:

The cost for the class is projected to be \$1,800 USD/person (final amount to be confirmed in the fall, as determined by final schedule and exchange rate). The price is based on arrival on January 4<sup>th</sup> and departure on January 18. It includes hotels in Rome (double occupancy), breakfast, all meals taken with the group and all fees related to the course-work and site visits. The price does not include airfare. Students are expected to organize their own travel to and from Rome.

Non-refundable deposit of \$600 due by 9/15/10.

Second installment of \$600 by 11/01/10.

Final payment of \$600 by 12/01/10.

### Need Based Financial Assistance:

The American Waldensian Society will accept requests for limited need-based financial assistance for students recommended by faculty of their home institutions. Your written request and a supporting letter from the home institution faculty should be mailed to the AWS office to the attention of the Executive Committee, by September 15, 2010

All correspondence, payments and concerns should be directed to the American Waldensian Society at the above US office.

The Waldensian Seminary and the Melancthon Ecumenical Center present the continuation of an International, Interdisciplinary and Multi-religious course in theology. In collaboration with the American Waldensian Society, the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Union Theological Seminary in New York and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia.

**Program directors:**

- Rev. Dr. Daniele Garrone, Facolta' Valdese di Teologia, Roma

- Rev. Dr. Gabriella Lettini, Starr King School for the Ministry-Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA

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## Rome – A Crossroads of



The Library

The *Facoltà Valdese* serves the Protestant churches in Italy. There are Waldensians (Reformed), Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Pentecostals and Adventists who are studying for a Masters degree.

These denominations, together with some Roman Catholics, are represented in the student body. Every year, the *Facoltà Valdese* also welcomes students from various European universities as visiting “Annual Students”.

The students traveling from the United States to take part in this class are graduate students from a variety of spiritual and religious traditions, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Unitarian Universalism, and Buddhism.

### The Library

It is acknowledged by the Italian Education State Department as the only library in Italy specializing in Protestant theology.

Students and scholars of many denominations, from Italian and foreign seminaries, universities and cultural institutions come to study here.

The library contains more than 90,000 volumes, and a growing rate of 1800 - 2000 volumes per year, and subscribes to about 290 journals.

### Melanchthon Ecumenical Protestant Centre

The Centre offers a platform of research and dialogue within the communion of Churches which have signed the Leuenberg Concord. It offers an ecumenical formation to all Churches.

In this way, the Centre encourages ecumenical initiatives with catholic theological institutions, in particular with the papal Universities in Rome.

The Center offers students of Protestant Theology the opportunity to spend a year studying abroad in Rome. The goal of the stay should be to focus specifically on those areas of study which refer to Rome during the second half of the program (graduates or advanced undergraduates).



Philippe Melanchthon

This can concern ecumenical theology, Church history (in particular patristics), Biblical exegesis, Christian archeology, liturgy or studies of Eastern churches. The studies can take place at the Waldensian Faculty as well

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## Objectives

Utilizing the history, geography, architecture, arts, religious and cultural diversity of Rome this interdisciplinary course will address central elements of Ecumenical and Interfaith Dialogue. The course will also explore what it means to be a religious minority in a pluralistic society by exploring the particular experiences of the Waldensian Church, as well as other religious minorities in Italy.

## Opportunities

- An introduction to Rome and Italy from an Interdisciplinary point of view.
- The opportunity to meet and be in dialogue with divinity students, religious scholars and leaders as well as communities of faith in Europe.
- An introduction to important crossroads of Ecumenical and Interfaith dialogue.
- A multi-religious and multi-cultural exploration of the challenges that religious leaders, scholars and communities of faith face in their own particular contexts.

## Themes of the Course

**History, Arts and Archeology:** Taking advantage of the physical setting of Rome, the course will offer tours that encompass arts, history, politics, and theology and that introduce students to the diverse faces of Rome: including the Rome(s) of proto-Christianity and Constantine, of the Counter Reformation and Vatican I, of the Inquisition and anti-clericalism, of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, of the Jewish Ghetto, and of film neo-realism.

**Ecumenism:** The Waldensian Seminary has extensive contacts and relationships that would allow students to explore the history and current state of dialogue between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. The location and history of the Waldensian Seminary offers a perspective that invites both a deeper understanding of ecumenism and greater appreciation for its complexity.

**Religious Pluralism, the “Resurgence of God” and politics:** Rome historically has been at the center of the debate over pluralism that has become a hallmark of contemporary religious life. Accordingly, Rome provides an intriguing setting in which to



Arco di Tito



explore themes of theocracy and pluralism and the relationship between church and state. Here, too, the Waldensian Seminary can introduce students to the perspective of Italian Protestantism, which strongly supports the separation of church and state but clings tenaciously to the heritage and theology of

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## Rome – A Crossroads of

the Reformation and is a strong advocate for the civil and religious rights of immigrants of other religious faiths.

### Specific Curriculum Possibilities

- Rome of Religions.
- Italy: Introduction to the religious, historical, political and cultural context.
- The Christian Faces of Rome: *Jesus, Paul, Peter, John and Rome.*
- Rome and the Jews.
- Protestants and Jews in Europe.  
(*The legacy of the Reformation and Contemporary perspectives 1945-2005*).
- Protestant minorities in Italy and Roman Catholicism in Italy.
- A European Perspective on the separation of Church and State and the debate on the relationship between religion and politics in the United States.
- Rome and Interfaith Dialogue.
- The politics and ethics of immigration and interfaith dialogue.
- Rome and the Mediterranean.
- Rome and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.
- Rome, spirituality and religions in Italian movies.
- Ecumenical and Interfaith Meetings including:
  - Vatican Office on Christian Unity
  - Jewish Community of Rome
  - Islamic Cultural Center of Rome
  - Confronti, Inter-religious Magazine
  - Local faith communities
    - Women's Groups
    - LGBT faith community groups
    - Faith related Social Justice Groups.

### Cost (per person)

**\$ 1,800**

#### Tuition, board and lodging

(Does **NOT** include airfare. Travel costs and arrangements to and from Italy are the responsibility of each participant.)

The cost in US dollars is approximately \$1,800.00. As the exchange rate fluctuates frequently, the overall cost will be determined in Euros. US funds

will be accepted but keep in mind it may be more than \$1800 if the exchange

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rate changes drastically. See page 8 for payment schedule and contact info.

### The Facoltà Valdese di Teologia

The *Facoltà Valdese di Teologia*, is the only academic institute in Italy for the study of Protestant theology. During the Middle Ages, itinerant Waldensian preachers used to be educated by their elder colleagues. After Waldensians joined the Protestant Reformation at the Synod of Chanforan in 1532, pastors were trained in European universities, mostly in Switzerland (Geneva, Lausanne, Basel), but also in Holland, Great Britain, France and Germany.

The acknowledgement of civil and political rights, granted by King Charles Albert of Savoy on 17th February 1848, allowed Waldensians to get out of their alpine ghetto.

The *Facoltà Valdese di Teologia*, was founded in Torre Pellice (1855), the main town of the Waldensian valleys. The need for deeper roots in the Italian culture and life led to the decision to move the *Facoltà*, first to Florence (1860) and finally to Rome (1922), its present location.

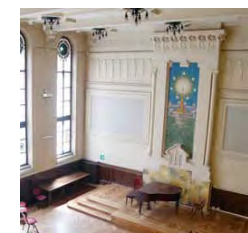
Protestants of XIX Century founded many churches throughout Italy, from the Alps to Sicily. The *Facoltà Valdese* serves this well- spread Diaspora, in a cultural context deeply changed by an intense ecumenical network.

The *Facoltà* offers 4 kinds of degrees:

- *Master in Theology*
- The Master program has the purpose of training future pastors. Lecture attendance is compulsory. At the end of this five- year course, the student must present a thesis in public. If the student wishes to serve as a pastor in Italy, he/she needs to study for a year in a foreign university and to have a trial period in a local church, before ordination.
- Bachelor in Bible and Religion (Formation by extension).
  - Doctoral degree in Systematic & Ecumenical theology and in History of the Church



The Seminary





### Why Rome

Rome is not only a fascinating backdrop for conversations that could take place anywhere, but also a unique living context that offers particular approaches to important issues in theology and ethics that will be explored with high academic standards and multiple pedagogical approaches.

**Lux lucet in tenebris** To meet in Rome is to be immersed in centuries of history and a complex political and cultural context. There you will encounter a network of ecumenical and interfaith contacts, and find yourself at the crossroads of Europe and the Mediterranean. Rome is, in short, a place that offers students an uncommon perspective on the world, a perspective rendered even more unique by perspective of Italian Protestantism that the Waldensian Seminary offers.

### Participants

- Students enrolled at the Waldensian Seminary in Rome and at the Melancthon Center
- Students enrolled at U.S. Seminaries (up to 30)

The program foresees joint sessions for members of the three participant groups as well as special curriculum events for students from U.S. seminaries. Most lectures and presentations will be in English, with Italian translation available. Some events featuring Italian speakers will include English translation.

This course is a serious and intense cross-cultural experience, so please be prepared to encounter a variety of accents, cultural and religious perspectives and to feel out of your usual “comfort zone.” Daily schedules might change and you will need to be flexible in understanding the cultures and needs of the Italian context that will host you. Please seriously consider this before applying.



Waldensian Church

### Casa Valdese

The Casa Valdese is a comfortable establishment, managed as a hotel by the Protestant Association for Cultural and Religious Exchange since 1990.

Today, it is accredited as a three-star hotel.

There are 33 rooms, with a capacity to house 75 people.

It is located in the Prati area of Rome on a side street that is peaceful and quiet, yet at the same time, very central.

In fact, it is within walking distance of some of the most recognized sites in the city: St. Peter's, Piazza del Popolo, etc.

All of the rooms are endowed with a private bath, heat, air conditioning, satellite television, and a telephone for internal and outside calls.

The lunch room and sitting areas are at the course disposal for meetings or general socializing.

A conference room equipped with about 20 seats is also available for those who need a quiet, isolated working space.

Casa Valdese also has a multimedia room with internet access, satellite television, books, daily newspapers and magazines for guest use.

After a full immersion day in Rome's history and culture, you can enjoy the typical meals of the Italian cooking. The kitchen provides a fixed menu on a two-week rotation, with meals that are based on the fresh produce of that particular season as well as the rich, traditional Italian cuisine.

Naturally, the Casa Valdese has no problem adapting to your dietary needs, as long as you communicate them in advance.

On the fourth floor there is a lovely terrace with a wonderful view on the "Eternal City".



Casa Valdese



Terrace