

PRESS RELEASE

THE CHURCH UP CLOSE:

Covering Catholicism in the Age of Francis

(September 10-16, 2018)

6th SEMINAR IN ROME FOR JOURNALISTS COVERING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Organized by the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross

ROME, SEPTEMBER 6, 2018 – This coming Monday, September 10th begins “The Church Up Close: Covering Catholicism in the Age of Francis,” a seminar organized by the School of Church Communications at Rome’s Pontifical University of the Holy Cross. The seminar’s sixth edition will take place in Rome from **September 10 to September 16**, and is designed to equip journalists with the tools to enhance their coverage of today’s Roman Catholic Church.

Previous seminars have seen the participation of reporters from media outlets such as *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *Il Corriere della Sera*, *El País*, the *BBC* and *Le Monde*, to name a few.

Among this year’s guest speakers are Arch. Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States (Vatican Secretariat of State); Bishop Fabio Fabene, Under-Secretary of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops; Bishop Brian Farrell, LC, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; Msgr. Mauro Rivella, Secretary of the APSA; Msgr. Santiago Michael, from the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue; Msgr. Lucio A. Ruiz, Secretary of the Dicastery for Communication; Prof. Guzmán M. Carriquiry Lecour, Secretary of the Pontifical Commission of Latin America; Rev. Michael Czerny, SJ, from the Vatican’s Department for Migrants; and Rev. Prof. Hans Zollner, SJ, from the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, among others.

In addition to conference sessions, this week-long seminar features on-site visits and personal meetings with curial officials and veteran Vatican correspondents. Among others, participants will meet the Honorable Mrs. Sally Axworthy, British Ambassador to the Holy See; Msgr. Philip Whitmore, rector of the Venerable English College; Rev. Prof. Paul Mueller, SJ, vice-director of the Vatican Observatory; and Fr. Tad Oxley of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The Church Up Close provides an insight into the nature of the Catholic Church and the inner workings of the Vatican. Conference sessions and interactive workshops address topics from the financial life of the Holy See, the Synod for the youth, the work of the Holy See in the international arena, Christians and the Muslim world, the Magisterium of Pope Francis, ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue, and the state of the Church in Africa and Asia.

According to the president of the organizing committee, Rev. Prof. John Wauck, “*The Church Up Close* seminar was inspired by a series of classes that our school was already offering throughout the year for Rome-based ‘vaticanisti’. *The Church Up Close* is a condensed, intensified and amplified version of the class that has been tailored for journalists from around the globe.”

The goal is to provide both a basic understanding of the Vatican and an in-depth analysis of specific hot-button issues regarding the Church today. Journalists seeking to meet the demand with quality

information are given the opportunity with *The Church Up Close*.

Fr. 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.”

The seminar has been made possible by a grant from the U.S.-based Our Sunday Visitor Institute, and to the collaboration of the Iscom (www.iscom.org) and the AIGAV (International Association of Journalists accredited to the Vatican).

The full program and detailed information about “The Church Up Close” seminar is available on its website (<https://www.church-communication.net/english-seminar-2018>)

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