

CALL FOR PAPERS

Memoria comune e perdono collettivo / *Common Memory and Collective Forgiveness*

Date: May 6 - 7, 2025

Venue: Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Rome)

The Christianity and Society Center, pertaining to the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Rome), and the Confederation of Businessmen Coparmex (Mexico) launch the conference *Common Memory and Collective Forgiveness*. The event is sponsored by the Dicastery for Evangelization (Holy See) and it will take place in Rome, as listed in the [Jubilee 2025](#) activities.

For the Christian faithful, the Jubilee is a year characterized by remission of sins and reconciliation. In the biblical world, the Jubilee had a strong social dimension, as liberation from negative dependence relationships between human beings (slavery, usury, domination, offenses, revenge, etc.). Now it already provides us with an opportunity for reflection, in order to prepare ourselves to live this special year, exploring new horizons and ways to achieve peace in today's society, wounded in its interpersonal relationships and traversed by social conflicts, including armed ones.

Among other things, *Common memory* advocates for those who have been forgiven to pass on this experience to others, as an act of purification of memory and liberation from resentment. The memory of the offense is relevant for forgiveness, but it should not make the person - or a group - captive to pain and revenge. Rather, it should contribute to discovering the others' vulnerability and one's own vulnerability. The impulse to renew a relationship, and possibly reach a reconciliation can arise from this memory.

The proliferation of collective forgiveness and apologies since the early 1990s raises a number of issues that deserve to be explored. *Collective forgiveness* is not simply a group's forgiveness: it requires the group to be an organized structure and not just a sum of individuals. Collectives have distinct qualities received from each of the individuals that make up the collective. More importantly, they usually have formal organizational structures that enable them to make decisions and take action together. Subjects of such acts of collective forgiveness are groups such as – including but not exhaustively – countries and states, the Church, universities, companies, etc., but also ethnic groups or collectives whose unifying feature is the fact that they have shared the suffering caused by the same type of offense.

Collective forgiveness, in any case, is modeled on interpersonal forgiveness. Specialists (philosophers, jurists, theologians, historians, sociologists, etc.) investigate a variety of topics, including: the very possibility of the existence of collective forgiveness, offense, memory, truth, responsibility, justice and its limits, guilt, solidarity between generations, storytelling, reparation or the public use of history. Collective forgiveness has also brought renewed attention to our society institutions, to their mechanisms of representation or to the loss of trust in them by citizens. These issues influence the soundness of relationships of all levels, the lack of peace and reconciliation in society, in families, in individuals, not only because the culture of forgiveness has faded among citizens, but also because evil is not considered as such, so that there is no room for repentance. Finally, common memory and collective forgiveness influence society structures overseeing law and justice, facilitating or hindering the creation of contexts favoring the possibility of forgiving and asking for forgiveness.

The conference intends to carefully explore how an organization can initiate processes of recognition of common memory and collective forgiveness in view of the today socially needed peace. Ultimately, these processes would arise from the consideration of God's forgiveness of each person (theological field), from the awareness of belonging to a community where mistakes are not necessarily definitive (philosophical and relational field) and from creating new processes rendering it easier to forgive and ask for forgiveness (field of institutions, justice and law).

Topics of the conference:

- **Historical memory and transitional justice:** analysis of mechanisms such as truth commissions, war crimes trials and their impact on common memory, etc.
- **Narratives of memory:** Study of narrative and transmission forms of collective memories: through literature, art, film, and other media.
- **Forgiveness and reconciliation:** Theories and practices of collective forgiveness, community and national reconciliation processes.
- **Memory policy:** Public policies and their role in the construction and preservation of historical memory.
- **Education and memory:** Pedagogical strategies for teaching recent history and memory in post-conflict contexts.
- **Memory and human rights:** Relationship between the preservation of memory and the promotion of human rights.
- **Memory and identity:** Ways in which common memory influences the construction of individual and group identities.
- **Case studies:** Analysis of specific cases of memory building and reconciliation processes in different parts of the world.

Presentation of papers:

We invite interested scholars to submit abstracts of their papers. These should include:

- Title
- Author's name and institutional affiliation
- Abstract of 300 words maximum
- Keywords (maximum 5)
- Short biography of the author(s) (150 words max.)

Deadline for abstract submission: January 31, 2025

Notification of acceptance: February 28, 2025

Paper Requirements:

- Papers must be original and may be read in English, Spanish or Italian.
- Only abstracts that are directly related to the main topics of the conference will be taken into consideration.
- Abstracts should be submitted in Word or PDF format.
- Accepted paper presentations will be 15 minutes long.
- The final text submitted for publication is due by September 30, 2025. Afterwards, full papers accepted for publication should be submitted also in English.
- Editorial rules require Chicago Style.

Submission of papers and questions: Proposals for papers should be sent to the e-mail address of the organizing committee, to Professor Miriam Savarese: m.savarese@pusc.it

For additional information, please visit our website: www.pusc.it.

Communications evaluation committee:

- Prof. Mariano Crespo
- Prof. Jaime Cardenas
- Prof. Rafael Domingo
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- Prof. Miriam Savarese