Vatican Museums Report

Report Volume LXIV

Summer 2026

Office of Relations with the Patrons
of the Arts in the Vatican Museums



From the President of the Governorate of the Vatican City State

SISTER RAFFAELLA PETRINI, F.S.E.

Dear Patrons and Friends,

For the Vatican and the Governorate, this past year has continued to be one of grace and gratitude, as pilgrims and visitors from around the world have continued to arrive in great numbers, many still carrying with them the spirit of hope kindled during the Jubilee year, that also marked the election of Pope Leo XIV, on 8 May 2025. This first anniversary is honored through a painting of Saint Augustine, Doctor of the Church, an image that serves as a fitting tribute to a pontificate rooted in Augustinian wisdom, humility, and pastoral care. Amid this steady flow of visitors, we have once again been blessed by the presence of our Patron benefactors, whose generosity continues to shape the beauty and preservation of the Vatican Museums.

This Spring, the Office of Relations with the Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums welcomed hundreds of Patrons from around the world, who toured the Sistine Chapel, the Vatican Gardens and Museums, and Castel Gandolfo. Throughout the season, several of our Chapters spent meaningful time with our staff, visiting projects both completed and still underway, and witnessing firsthand the impact of their support on the artistic treasures entrusted to our care.

As the season turned toward summer, we continued to welcome Patrons from across the United States, Asia, and Canada, as well as friends from across Europe, each visit strengthening the bonds of friendship and shared purpose that unite our global Patron family.

None of this would be possible without the steadfast generosity of our Chapter Leaders, their Boards of Directors, and the dedicated staff who labor faithfully on behalf of this mission. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to every Leader and every Patron for the kindness manifested through your continued support, and I assure you that each of you is remembered in my prayers. May God bless you.



Around the painting of Saint Augustine, from left to right: Barbara Jatta, Sr. Petrini, Pope Leo XIV, Curator Alessandra Rodolfo, Restorer Laura Baldelli and Msgr. Terence Hogan

From the Director of the Vatican Museums

DR. BARBARA JATTA

Dear Patrons and Friends,

The spring of 2026 found the Vatican Museums filled with many wonderful events, conferences, and exhibitions, of which many were made possible due to the ongoing generosity of the Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums.

In April I had the opportunity to represent the Vatican Museums by participating at the symposium: "Raphael in the Vatican Museums" held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. On this wonderful occasion, I was able to spend time with some of our Patrons and friends who showed me a warm and very dear welcome in the great city of New York that is so well known for its support of art and culture. The MET Exhibition focused on more than 170 masterpieces of the master's rarely exhibited works, tracing a path through the artist's genius and poetic sensitivity.

Also, in the month of April, for the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Raclin Murphy Museum of Art, located on the exquisite campus of the University of Notre Dame, I travelled to South Bend, Indiana and was graciously welcomed as the guest of honour, representing the Vatican Museums. On a personal level, this was a very moving moment for me as I met colleagues, scholars and friends, but also this was a tribute to the artistic patrimony and cultural heritage of the Vatican.

This spring and summer have blossomed with so many opportunities for Patrons and visitors to come to Italy and experience the joys of artistic expression handed down throughout the ages. In June I attended the grand opening of the exhibition *The Annunciation of Federico Barocci from the Vatican Museums* held at the Pontifical Museum of the Holy House in Loreto (Ancona) and open until October 2026. If you, our Patrons, wish to visit the exhibit, it can be a special opportunity to enjoy the lovely region of Marche, the home of the artist Raphael. If you find yourself in Rome, ever since March and until November 2026, the Vatican Museums has been organizing exceptional concerts either within the Vatican Museums or in the Apostolic Palace of Castel Gandolfo. These evening concerts are free and open to our Patrons and visitors. Finally, it is always a joy to personally meet you, dear Patrons, when you visit the Vatican Museums. Over the past few months, I have been able to spend time with our North American friends from Michigan and Georgia, the Thrivent Foundation (Minnesota & North Dakota Chapter), as well as Washington, D.C., Ohio, and Canada Chapters. In addition, the Patrons from Asia, Côte d'Azur, and the Italian & International Chapter, have visited and continue to show their generous commitment.

Thank you for your continued patronage, support and friendship. I look forward to many moments and events that are planned for you in the Fall of 2026.



Dr. Barbara Jatta in the Vatican Museums

From the Coordinator of the Office of Relations with the Patrons of the Arts

MONSIGNOR TERENCE HOGAN

Dear Patrons and Friends,

These last months have been busy with activities for the entire staff of the Office of Relations with the Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums. During the weeks before Christmas, I was able to visit our Patrons in 'snowy' Michigan where we celebrated Mass and enjoyed a wonderful reception in Bloomfield Hills.

In Washington, D.C., we gathered with Cardinal Christophe Pierre, the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, and many of our Patrons and local clergy for a wonderful evening of relaxation and conversation. Several days later I joined Sr. Raffaella Petrini, President of the Governorate of the Vatican City State, to honor the Ohio Patrons as they gathered in Cleveland for their 20th Anniversary Christmas Gala, joined by Bishop Edward Malesic and hundreds of Patrons and friends. Returning to Rome, the lights, ceremonies and music of the Christmas season brought the joy and wonder as we celebrated and remembered all our Patrons at Christmas Mass.

In January of the new year 2026, I was warmly welcomed to Asia in order to celebrate their 10th anniversary of supporting the many *Wonders of the Vatican*. In Hong Kong, I was honored to visit many historical holy places within the city proper, as well as outside, even partaking in a pilgrimage to Yim Tin Sai Island with its exquisite natural beauty and its inhabitants' faithfulness to Christianity. Along with Msgr. José Luis Mariblanca, Nunciature Counselor and Head of the Holy See's Hong Kong Study Mission, and Cardinal Stephen Chow Sau-yan, S.J. of Hong Kong, we were able to greet and promote the mission of the Patrons.



Cardinal Stephen Chow Sau-yan, S.J., Bishop of Hong Kong, receives Msgr. Terence Hogan, Ben Chang and PAVM Asia representatives



Msgr. Terence Hogan, Lorraine Dodero (OH) and Fr. Patrick O'Neill

In the ever-growing splendor of Singapore, the leaders of the Asia Chapter alongside Archbishop Marek Zalewski, Apostolic Nuncio to Singapore and Papal Representative to Vietnam, as well as Msgr. Marinko Antolović, Chargé d'Affaires of the Apostolic Nunciature, most generously welcomed several hundred Patrons and friends at various elegant gatherings throughout the sovereign island city-state.

During March, the Minnesota and North Dakota Chapter, in collaboration with the Thrivent organization, spent time with our ORPAVM staff and visited their projects, both past and future. In addition, the Michigan and Georgia Chapter leaders hosted a large group of wonderfully dedicated Patrons who were able to visit their projects in both the Vatican Museums and the major Roman basilicas.

As you will read in this newsletter, the Last Judgment of the Sistine Chapel was restored to its original marvelous colors and beauty thanks to our talented curators and restorers.
During the Easter Season, I made a special visit to our Patrons in Belgium where we were able to recognize Madame Mimi Solvay for her many years of leadership and patronage. April and May, found our Washington, D.C. Chapter visiting, followed by the Asia Patrons as well as Ohio and Canada. In addition, the Catholic Extension Society, led by Cardinal Blase Cupich, with members of the Illinois Chapter spent time at the Vatican Museums, Basilicas and Castel Gandolfo. With the June sunshine, we welcomed the Côte d'Azur, as well as Italian & International Chapters.

The ongoing work of the Patrons of the Arts is only possible through the generosity and leadership of our Patron Chapter Leaders, their Boards of Directors, and of course our ORPAVM staff who work untiringly in collaboration with each other. With grateful thanks, let us continue to pray for one another knowing that the Patron's mission is truly a work of evangelization and a source of inspiration for all who enter our beloved Vatican Museums.



Madame Solvay being honored for her many years of President of the Belgium Chapter

Thanks to Your Commitment

THESE PROJECTS ARE MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER

St. Mary Major
The Vision of St. Leo the Great

WASHINGTON D.C. CHAPTER

Bathed in heavenly light and surrounded by angelic figures, Sebastiano Ceccarini's *The Vision of St. Leo the Great* celebrates one of the Church's most influential leaders. Displayed in the left nave of the Basilica of St. Mary Major, Ceccarini captures the spiritual grandeur of St. Leo the Great through the artist's masterful use of color, light, and movement. Years of atmospheric deposits, oxidized paint, and water infiltration compromised the stability of the painted surface. During restoration, conservators removed surface deposits, consolidated weakened areas, removed later alterations, and carefully reintegrated losses using pictorial integration. As treatment progressed, Ceccarini's vibrant palette and luminous effects gradually reemerged, restoring the painting's original visual impact. The restoration was made possible through the generosity of the **Washington D.C. Chapter**.





St. Mary Major
The Ecstasy of St. Francis of Assisi

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Painted in the 18th century by the Roman artist Placido Costanzi, *The Ecstasy of St. Francis of Assisi* is a religious masterpiece in the Basilica of St. Mary Major. Known for his use of light and color, the painter depicts the saint immersed in a divine vision, surrounded by angels and heavenly light. Costanzi's use of light enhances the scene's otherworldly atmosphere and draws the viewer into the saint's divine vision. Years of accumulated dust, oxidized varnish, and water infiltration had obscured the painting's original brilliance. Thanks to the **Michigan Chapter**, the restoration process reintegrated losses using reversible colors that revealed the vibrant colors and luminous effects characteristic of Costanzi's style.

Last Judgement

FLORIDA CHAPTER

Towering over the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* continues to inspire awe nearly five centuries after its creation. As part of the chapel's annual conservation maintenance program, specialists closely examined the monumental fresco to ensure its preservation for the millions of visitors who experience it each year. Over six weeks of evening work, conservators inspected the painted surface while technicians monitored the environmental systems that help safeguard the chapel's delicate balance. At the same time, a 14-meter mobile platform allowed restorers to carefully remove dust from the surrounding frescoes. The 2025 maintenance campaign was made possible through the generosity of the **Florida Chapter**, the Prefecture of the Papal Household, the Office for Papal Liturgical Celebrations, the Superior Organs of the Governorate, and the Directorate of the Museums.



Ongoing Restorations

THESE PROJECTS WILL BE COMPLETED SOON

Stories of a False Prophet

OHIO CHAPTER



This remarkable double-sided panel is one of the most intriguing works in the medieval collection. Across three scenes, a mysterious figure in a purple robe appears before elders and guards, culminating in his dramatic casting into the flames. On the reverse is an allegorical figure whose meaning remains uncertain but is likely a continuation of the scenes painted on the front. Time has left cracks and losses along the panel's unpainted borders. Conservation treatment will stabilize the painted surface, clean the painted and gilded areas, fill losses, retouch with paint, and apply a final protective varnish. The restoration of this work is supported by the generosity of the **Ohio Chapter**.

Four-Leaf Screen, Carved Red Lacquer

MINNESOTA & NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER



Created in China during the Qianlong period of the Qing dynasty (18th century), this four-panel red lacquer screen is a remarkable example of imperial Chinese decorative art. Before each restoration project begins, curators and conservators meet with the Patrons Office to explain the artwork's history and importance, discuss its current condition, and provide an overview of the conservation work that will be carried out. They also review the next steps in the restoration process before treatment begins. Over time, small losses, lifting lacquer, stains, scratches, and deformed hinges have affected its condition. During the conservation campaign, restorers will carefully stabilize the lacquer, clean the carved surfaces, and repair structural elements while preserving the craftsmanship and decorative richness of this remarkable example of Chinese lacquer art. We thank our **Minnesota & North Dakota Chapter** always so supportive of the Museums' ethnological collection.

Daily Visits

SPRING - SUMMER 2026



Clearwater Academy Students group (CANADA)



Velen & Jeff Thompson, Robyn & David Diaz, Georgia & Carlton Jones, Robin & Andrew Diaz (FL) with Msgr. Terence Hogan



Tim & Amy Riccardi (DC)



Kurt Polk and family (IT&Int.)



Austin Wilson and family (MN & ND)



Bill & Elizabeth Bergin and family (DC)



Annarita Imperio (ORPAVM) with Rabel McNutt, Summer Intern

Chapter Visits

SPRING - SUMMER 2026

In the last months, we were honored to welcome Patrons from around the world to the Vatican, a testament to the vitality, generosity, and global reach of our mission.
Among the distinguished groups received during Chapter Visits were the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Thrivent Foundation (Minnesota & North Dakota Chapter), and the Michigan and Georgia Chapters, in March. The Washington, D.C. and Asia Chapters, in April. The Ohio and Canada Chapters, the Catholic Extension Society (Illinois Chapter), in May. The Italian and International Chapter, and the Côte d'Azur Chapter, in June. A small group from Boston representing the Italian & International Chapter in July.
These visits offered valuable opportunities for spiritual enrichment, cultural exchange, and a deeper engagement with the Vatican Museums and the mission of the Holy See. Beyond experiencing the treasures of the Vatican firsthand, Patrons strengthened their connection to the institution they so generously support.



Delegation of the Detroit Institute of Arts (MI) in the Octagonal Courtyard of the Vatican Museums



Patrons of the Washington DC Chapter in front of the Equestrian Monument of Constantine



Delegation of the Thrivent Foundation (MN&ND) in the Anima Mundi Ethnological Museum



Patrons of the Michigan and Georgia Chapters in the Chapel of Mary Mother of the Family (Governorate Palace)



Patrons of the Asia Chapter on the Etruscan Terrace of the Vatican Museums



Patrons of the Ohio Chapter in the Chapel of Mary Mother of the Family (Governorate Palace)



Patrons of the Italian & International Chapter in the Sala Regia (Apostolic Palace)



Sr. Raffaella Petrini with Cardinal Blase Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago



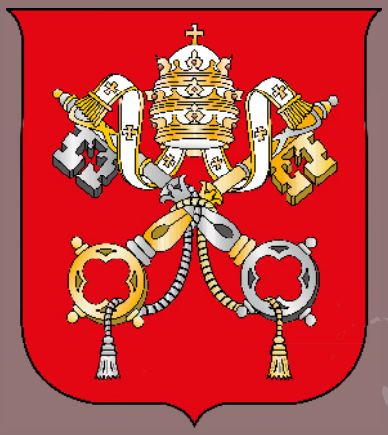
From left: Martina Suozzo, Sara Savoldello, Msgr. Terence Hogan, and Carlo Verdecchia (ORPAVM)



Patrons of the Canada Chapter in the Ducal Hall (Apostolic Palace)



Patrons of the Côte d'Azur Chapter in the Constantine Room of the Vatican Museums



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