

# The Governor-General pays a visit to ACU's Rome Campus

AUSTRALIAN Catholic University (ACU) was honored to receive the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd), and Lady Cosgrove at its Rome Campus this week. The Ambassador to the Holy See, Her Excellency, Melissa Hitchman, hosted the visit in collaboration with ACU. While on the campus, Sir Peter and Lady Cosgrove took the opportunity to tour the campus facilities, meet with staff and students currently in Rome undertaking programs of study, and join the campus community for refreshments.

The Governor-General, a former Chancellor of ACU, was in Rome as part of an official visit to Italy and the Vatican City that included an audience with His Holiness Pope Francis and a meeting with the Vatican's Secretary of State, Cardinal Parolin. After his visit to ACU's Rome Campus, the Governor-General visited the Basilica of St Paul's Outside the Wall to pay his respects to Francis Xavier Conaci, the young Australian indigenous Seminarian from New Norcia who was posthumously recognised by ACU with the establishment of a scholarship in his name.

ACU Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Greg Craven said, "As Chancellor of Australian Catholic University from 2010 to 2014, Sir Peter Cosgrove made a major contribution to Australian Catholic University, so this visit is very significant for the University community."

Sir Peter and Lady Cosgrove met with more than 70 students and staff members from ACU, including more than 40 undergraduate students studying Art, Politics and Culture, and Occupational Therapy units in Rome. Since the Campus opened in 2015, nearly 700 ACU students have had the opportunity to study and undertake community engagement in Rome. ACU's Provost, Professor Pauline Nugent said, "We are delighted that the Governor-General is visiting our Rome campus and will have the opportunity to meet with students from diverse courses and hear first hand, the impact this rich learning opportunity offers our students".

The Governor-General's visit also coincided with ACU's Faculty of Education and La Salle Academy for Faith Formation and Religious Education three-week program at the Rome Campus for 20 Catholic school principals as well as other school educators from around Australia.

The La Salle Academy aims to develop and deliver quality teaching and research programs to help fully realise the aspirations of the New Evangelisation of the Catholic Church.

Dean of the La Salle Academy, Professor Brother David Hall cms said, "In this particular program Rome becomes our classroom. We visit various dicasteries of the Holy See, celebrate Mass in many of Rome's significant churches, engage with the Sant Egidio community and study Benedictine, Franciscan and Marian spiritualities. It is a refreshing, engaging way to learn more about the Church in which we live and work."

ACU's Vice President, Fr Anthony Casamento csma, who was in Rome as Chaplain for the program said that the program, "Further exemplifies the way in which ACU and its Catholic school stakeholders are working together to support school leaders in advancing the mission of Catholic schools in the Australian community."

The group includes a large cohort from the Archdiocese of Melbourne as well as principals and other leaders from schools across Australia.

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