



The Holy See

LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER TO BISHOPS IN SUPPORT OF THE PONTIFICAL LATERAN UNIVERSITY

Dear brothers,

The constant and renewed impulse for evangelization, which drives the Church's mission in diverse and ever new situations, cannot come to fruition without the foundation of a solid and expert theological and spiritual formation. Indeed, this facilitates the necessary cultural mediation of the faith, which, while articulated in a reflection open to dialogue with other fields of knowledge, finds its primary and perennial source in Jesus Christ and corresponds "to the multifaceted richness of reality disclosed by the event of Revelation" (Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium*, Foreword, 4 c).

The common setting called to be a "cultural laboratory" for the elaboration of such thought is principally that of Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties, now present in every continent. In acknowledging the valuable contribution made by every academic centre in the world, I cannot overlook the special role played by the Pontifical Academic Institutions in Rome. These Universities, Athenaeums and Institutes, which often express the charism of a religious family, have for centuries provided formation and research opportunities for the benefit of the whole Church.

Among these institutions, I would like to point out the Pontifical Lateran University, which has been carrying out its educational service for more than 250 years, and which bears the title of the "Pope's University" because of the special bond that binds it to the Pope.

It is therefore desirable that every year, when sending students to the Pontifical Universities and Faculties of Rome, the Dioceses, Religious Institutes and Lay Associations give special consideration to the Pontifical Lateran University, where young people can deepen their study of philosophy, theology, pastoral theology, canon law and comparative civil law, and peace and ecological studies.

At the same time, even when it is not possible to send students to Rome, I would ask you to participate in the Church's mission of formation by actively supporting our Alma Mater through research projects, scholarships or other initiatives.

I thank you wholeheartedly for your dedication to this important aspect of our pastoral mission and, wishing you a holy and peaceful Christmas, I cordially impart my blessing to each of you and your communities.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 13 December 2024

FRANCIS

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