

THE FORUM ROMANUM

News from the University of Dallas Eugene Constantin Rome Campus at Due Santi



Dr. Andrew Moran Reads in the Dante Marathon. Photo by John Rhodes

Dante Marathon Raises Money for Rome Library

The *Divine Comedy* consists of two famous poetic lines, separated by a fifteen-hour journey of wonder and suspense, hope and despair, and above all, some very serious fatigue. This is the essence of Dante's masterpiece—not as the esteemed poet conceived of the *Comedy* himself, mind you, but rather as an intrepid group of students, faculty, and staff at UD Rome experienced it during the Dante Marathon of Spring 2007.

Reading the whole of Dante's *Divine Comedy* aloud was the goal of this medieval journey and modern Marathon. Along the way, participants refreshed their appreciation for UD's distinctive core curriculum and contributed some much-needed financial support to the UD Rome's library renovation project.

And what of those two famous lines? The Dante Marathon began in the black of the night on April 12th with participants gathered around a big campfire as Dr. Andrew Moran (English) intoned: *Midway upon the journey of our life, I found myself in a dark wood.* The Marathon ended at high noon on April 13th when Dr. Joseph Stibora (Theology), reciting the epic poem's last words, thanked *the Love that moves the sun and other stars.* While about 70 UD Rome faculty, staff, and students had set out upon Dante's journey, only about 10 hearty souls survived the descent into the *Inferno*, waited out the trying conditions of the *Purgatorio*, and celebrated at reaching *Paradiso*. A full reading of the

continued on p. 2

WHY ROME MATTERS

Dr. David Sweet

*Associate Professor of Classics and
Dean of the Braniff School of Liberal
Arts*

Rome is a city that invites us into its depths. For below the surface currents of modern Roman life there are enormous swirling vortexes that may catch us—if we let them—and draw us downward. I refer to all those aged, venerable monuments that remain unmoved amid the confusion of modern life but that represent direct descents deep into the past.

The Basilica of San Clemente illustrates the point. In order to experience this great church fully, one must first pass through its Baroque surface into the 11th-century structure destroyed by rampaging Normans in 1084. From there one plunges deeper still into the 4th-century church built to honor Pope St. Clement, a near contemporary of Ss. Peter and Paul. This church rests upon the foundations of a 1st-century house associated with the Roman consul and Christian martyr Clemens. Located 60 feet below street level, this same house is furnished with an ancient temple of Mithras, an eastern sun-god and competitor with Christ for the devotion of those whose souls craved peace and purpose.

To descend into San Clemente, to reflect on its foundations, is an intellectual, a spiritual and an emotional adventure that brings into focus the goal of a UD education, namely, that it be an education for the mind and soul and heart. To put it another way, studying in Rome should become a series of deep, swift ocean dives, that take us plummeting past the complex and beautiful articulation of reefs, through strange, darting life forms, down among the gathering gloom and the haze of protozoa, and onward toward the bottom of the sea where all is quiet and metamorphosis may occur. Exhilarating, certainly; but also difficult. There is much work to do to get down there.



Donations Made to the UD Rome Library Fund

continued from p. 1

Inferno required 325 minutes and the *Purgatorio* took 296 minutes, while the *Paradiso* required 279.

Campfires and caves sufficed as a makeshift stage for the early books, terraces and the UD theater were host to later ones. Dante himself made regular appearances over the course of the Marathon. He came and went in the form of a wonderfully convincing period costume, which circulated from one participant to another. Like the participants themselves, this costume was worn out but by no means reduced to rags by the Marathon's end.

Nearly \$7,000 was raised by the event. Our warmest thanks goes out to a total of 72 individual and corporate sponsors. Financial contributions to UD Rome's library renovation project can still be submitted by writing to udallas@udrome.it.

Soup Kitchen Tuesdays

By Msgr. Thomas Fucinaro,
UD Rome Campus Chaplain

Soon after the election of Pope John Paul II in 1978, the new Pontiff bestowed upon the Missionaries of Charity of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta (who are almost universally called the MCs) a building in the southeast corner of Vatican City. The Pope made the gift out of admiration for the profound work done by the sisters, but he also hoped that the sisters would bring into Vatican City itself the wondrous formula of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, providing loving care for the poorest of the poor. Mother Teresa dedicated the house to Mary, the Mother of God, giving it the title "Dono di Maria" or "Gift of Mary," and to this day MCs working there provide shelter for the homeless (especially for those homeless who are dying) and serve an evening meal for those who would otherwise go without. In this way, they preach the gospel of Jesus Christ more eloquently than words ever could.

For the last several years students from the University of Dallas have worked as volunteers at Dono di Maria. Like their predecessors, Fall 2007 "Romans" have now stepped into place as Tuesday volunteers, with a different group of five students serving meals to the poor and homeless each Tuesday from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

One Fall 2007 student volunteer noted the calming effect that the sisters have on those for whom they are caring and was moved by the way in which the somewhat diminutive MCs command the attention and the respect of the homeless men, saying, "with just a word from one of the sisters, the problems are solved". Another of the students marveled at the concern of the sisters, not only for those in need, but also for the students themselves!

The sisters make clear to the students the idea that volun-



UD Students Working in the Dono di Maria Soup Kitchen

teering must always be about selflessly giving service to the poorest of the poor, without making reference to ourselves. Yet perhaps the greatest surprise for student-volunteers is that in giving of themselves after the example of the sisters -- at least for a few short hours in an afternoon -- they are compensated with a sense of satisfaction they could have never imagined. Truly, God is never outdone in generosity!

LOOKING AT ROME: Art & Architecture in the Eterna



University of Dallas students study Renaissance frescoes painted by Raphael in the Stanza della Segnatura of the Vatican Museums

Every Wednesday when the clock strikes 11:15 a.m., marking the end of a morning spent pondering events that shaped Western Civilization and rhetorical strategies of some of the English language's most celebrated writers, Rome students file into the mensa to grab sandwich-stuffed sack lunches, and then board buses that will take them to their the afternoon Art & Architecture of Rome class in the Rome's historic center.

The weekly trips are a highlight of a course in which Dr. Laura Flusche challenges students to use Rome as a laboratory for study by encouraging them to question all they see and experience as they explore the Eternal City. How did an ancient athletic stadium become Piazza Navona, home to one of Rome's most beautiful Baroque fountains? What factors have worked to insure the preservation and continued use of the Pantheon, a temple to all the Roman gods constructed by Rome's Emperor Hadrian. What rhetorical messages are we to understand when we look at sculpture, architecture, and painting and how are those messages conveyed? In what ways were Renaissance artists like Raphael, Michelangelo, and Bramante influenced by ancient sculpture and architecture when they conceived such masterpieces as the *School of Athens*, the Sistine Chapel Ceiling, and new Saint Peter's Basilica? What's the relationship between the eighteenth-century Trevi Fountain and the Aqua Virgo, an aqueduct constructed in the first century BC?

In classroom sessions on Monday mornings, students are introduced to these questions and more. On Wednesday afternoons, they head to Rome's most celebrated archaeological sites, museums, and churches where they practice newly learned skills of observation and analysis. By the end of the semester, students have studied some of the world's most acclaimed works of art, up-close and in person. The list of visited sites includes the Capitoline Museums, the Ara Pacis, the Roman Forum, the Pantheon, the Tempietto, the Vatican Museums and the Sistine Chapel, Piazza del Campidoglio, the Galleria Borghese, and a host of Baroque churches designed by Gianlorenzo Bernini and his rival Francesco Borromini.

As with any art history course, one of the goals of the Art & Archaeology of Rome class is that of introducing students to the basic methods of the study of art. Attentive and interested students leave the course with a sharper eye and with knowledge of the artistic styles and the intellectual ideas that have influenced the making of art from the time of the ancient Greeks to the eighteenth century. But the course also asks students to go beyond the textbook approach to art history and to undertake a hands-on study of one of the most architecturally and historically complex cities in the world, thereby reaching a sophisticated understanding of how the city they experience during their Rome semester came into being.

Professor Gregory Roper and Family Return to Rome

by Greg Roper



Dr. Gregory and Mrs. Michele Roper with their sons Gabriel and Benjamin

Everyone assumes that the decision to move to Due Santi is an easy one, but when Dean Eaker asked if we'd return to the Rome Campus, we agonized for six long weeks before we agreed. At that point, it had been only a year since our return to Dallas, to the house we own, and to suburban life. The yard had been a mess after two years of severe drought, but I was making progress. The boys were in schools, had made friends again, and were playing soccer. "We have boxes we haven't unpacked!" my wife Michele said. Colleagues would ask: what about your work? And Michele knew, even better than I, the onerous difficulties of moving: switching bank accounts, choosing what should go in storage, worrying about renters and what they might do to baseboards, light fixtures and foundations. As both cars fell apart and appliances in the kitchen inexplicably blew up (I'm not kidding), we began to wonder if we'd made the right decision.

Maybe these were Roman auguries summoning us to Italy? We hoped so. But then again, maybe not. Frankly, we weren't entirely sure.

But, now, several weeks later, sitting outside on the *terrazzo* -- sipping a warm creamy coffee made of perfectly roasted beans, or drinking something clear and hay-colored that was grown and fermented nearby -- the perspective has changed. As we watch the evening light from past St. Peter's stream across the ochre of the *forno* just so, illuminating all with that golden sharpness; as we watch our kids run around the soccer field chased by six-foot-five newly arrived sophomores and wonder who's the bigger kid; as students sprawl across chairs reading Thucydides; as we peek up the hill at the papal flag flying above Castel Gandolfo, *La Dolce Vita* reappears.

We took the boys into the city shortly after our arrival, once it had cooled off a bit and the Italians had fled to the beach. Gabe and Ben, of course, wanted to look at the trains in Termini, but after, oh, an hour, we pushed on to Santa Maria della Vittoria. As I bent down next to the boys and told them the story of St. Theresa and her ecstasy and pointed out the men in opera boxes watching and not seeing, I found myself speaking to two small boys of the pain and pleasure of God's love, of being offered so much and fearing it, of experiencing *terribilit * and *meraviglia* simultaneously. Rome. Grace. It is always thus, is it not?

Calling all UD Rome Alums!

We want to know what you're up to!

If you're a UD Rome alum, we'd love to hear about your Rome experience. Did your time in Rome change you personally or professionally? Email us at udallas@udrome.it and tell us your story. We want to hear from you!



ROMA: The Teacher

by Justin Dugyon, Rome Student,
Fall 2007

After picking up my bag at Rome's Fiumicino Airport I boldly jumped onto the first express train to Termini. I was excited to get my first taste of Rome, the city with which all UD students eventually become very intimate. Now, I thought, my real European experience would begin.

My high hopes seemed to fade once I boarded the express train into the city and settled into a seat. Soon enough an Italian woman came up and started speaking to me in her native language. Unable to respond, I then watched as she lifted my 50 lb duffel bag from the seat next to me and dropped it down hard into my lap, before sinking down into the now unoccupied seat. Confusion gave way to the painful realization of my own ignorance, and my attempt at an apologetic *scusi* did nothing to ease this woman's look of annoyance. Cramped under the weight of my luggage I felt disconnected. I was alone in this sea of Italians, holding on tightly to my bag, and I suppose, in hindsight, my narrow-mindedness.

I thought it would all be better once I got off the train. Rome would greet me with all the beauty she had to offer. But instead her first embrace was a throng of people that jostled and shoved me off the train onto the crowded platform below. With my duffel bag weighing down like a stone around my neck and my oversized backpack hanging awkwardly on my other shoulder, I must have looked like a prime target for even the clumsiest thief.

Finding the street to my hostel shouldn't have been too hard, I thought. Within minutes I found the right street well enough, but then I couldn't find the hostel. I might have looked in my bag for the correct instructions, but instead I walked the same street half a dozen times and asked countless Italians if they spoke English. Their shaking heads finally sent me plopping down in despair in a nearby piazza until an Asian couple told me that once I found the street number I would need to go through a bar



Aerial View of Rome taken from the Victor Emmanuel Monument

and a hallway, up a flight of stairs, and finally into the hostel reception area. A couple hours later I was sitting in the single room I had booked for myself, thinking back on the day's events. What had I done to make the day go so badly? What had I done to earn this spot for myself, alone and watching Italian soaps on my very first night in Rome?

I realized later that, of course, the problem was me. My reactions to the sticky situations I had encountered were all instinctive and closed-minded. Instead of trying to string together a complicated Italian response, I could have merely said *non occupato* to the lady on the train and moved my luggage. The frustrating search for my hostel could have been solved simply by being aware of my Italian surroundings, instead of searching in vain for English speakers or big and obvious signs. I had closed my mind to the city, resorting instead to preconceived notions about how things should be done, instead of accepting Rome the way she was and accepting what she could teach me.

Fast forward now to my first trip in Rome with my new fall Rome class. A few days after arriving, we headed to St. Peter's Basilica. My experience this time ironically had some of the same elements as those

first days in Rome, though seen from a different perspective. St. Peter's huge piazza and enveloping colonnades seemed to embrace me with the same kind of intensity and force I had felt some days before. I felt the same kind of rush throughout the entire day exploring the city, too. We wandered through Rome's piazzas and wandered down poorly lit alleys lined with Vespas and *tabacchi* stores. The beautiful churches reminded us of the glories of Christendom, and while walking through the Forum we recalled our debt to Roman law and justice. All of this and more fascinated me, because now I could see and feel the bigger picture—a connection between my expectations of Rome as a great treasure of culture and the city of Rome herself.

What made this experience different was that I now embraced Rome with all that she had to offer, instead of holding on to my fancies. I accepted the fact that the buses would always be late, the Metro would always be crowded, and Roman drivers seemed out to kill me. Rome has a complicated beauty. It is alluring in spite of its chaos and grime; it is captivating because of what lies underneath visible roads and buildings. It is the kind of beauty that is found only with careful searching, a little pain, and a true openness of the mind and heart.

Distinguished Churchmen Visit UD Rome Campus



Cardinal Pell

The Spring 2007 semester brought three distinguished members of the Roman Catholic clergy to UD Rome's Due Santi Campus. His Eminence George Cardinal Pell, Archbishop of Sydney, addressed students and staff on the evening of Tuesday, March 13th, 2007, taking as his theme, "Challenges for Young Catholics in the 21st Century." Cardinal Pell also spoke at length about his role as host of the Church's upcoming World Youth Day 2008, along with his responsibilities as chair of the Church's Vox Clara committee, which has been entrusted with revising the English language translations of important liturgical texts, notably the latest authoritative Latin edition of the Roman Missal.

The Most Reverend Kevin W. Vann, Bishop of Ft. Worth and a member of the University of Dallas Board of Trustees, was in attendance for Cardinal Pell's lecture and also celebrated Mass with students and staff. This was Bishop Vann's first visit to the UD Rome Campus since his ordination as Bishop of Ft. Worth on July 13th, 2005.



Bishop Vann

The visits by Cardinal Pell and Bishop Vann were the highlight of a busy week of events. On Monday, March 12th, UD Rome also hosted one of the world's foremost experts on Muslim-Christian relations, Fr. Samir Khalil Samir, S.J., Professor of Oriental Theology at St. Joseph's University in Lebanon and the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. The author of dozens of books and hundreds of articles, Fr. Samir spoke about the history of Christian churches in the Muslim world and their relationship to the Church of Rome.

UD Leads Volunteer Effort at Rome's Protestant Cemetery



Spring 2007 Student Volunteers at Rome's Protestant Cemetery.

Tucked beside an ancient gate and within a bend in Rome's third-century Aurelian Walls are two landmarks: one is the pyramid-shaped Roman tomb of a first-century civic magistrate named Gaius Cestius; the other is Rome's Protestant Cemetery.

This celebrated burial ground, which got its start in the eighteenth century, was established to accommodate the graves of non-Catholic travelers and residents who died in Rome. (Papal law forbade their burial in Catholic resting places.) Since then approximately 4000 people have been buried in this green oasis, and today, the Cemetery is celebrated as one of the most peaceful and beautiful places in all of Rome.

In the oldest section of the Cemetery is the grave of the English Romantic poet, John Keats, who died of tuberculosis in 1821, just three months after he came to Rome in search of a climate that might heal his disease. After Keats' death, the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley visited his grave and wrote that "it would make one in love with death to be buried in so beautiful a place." When Shelley himself died in a boating accident near Viareggio in 1822, his ashes were interred in this Cemetery and his grave was inscribed with the words *cor cordium* or "heart of hearts."

Visitors to the Protestant Cemetery agree that it is one of Rome's most extraordi-

nary sites. But, at present, the Cemetery is at risk. It was on the World Monument Fund's 2006 list of the 100 most endangered sites on earth. Many of the cemetery's tombstones are crumbling - they've been damaged by pollution and by years without maintenance. The landscape is overgrown, and the site is waterlogged by poor drainage.

Alarmed by these threats to the Cemetery, UD offered its assistance. In Spring 2007, nineteen University of Dallas students participated in "Weed & Read," a volunteer project conceived of by Dr. Laura Flusche, Visiting Assistant Professor of Art, and Kara Maggiore, Rome Coordinator. With the assistance of Senior Director Alison Lytle, who procured the sponsorship of the Association of College & University Programs in Rome, the project was expanded in Fall 2008, in order that all study abroad students in the Eternal City might participate.

Thus, led once again by Flusche and Maggiore, 80 volunteers from six Rome programs donned gloves and grabbed rakes and brooms on 19 October 2007. They went to work weeding, cleaning, and sweeping, and in total they gave some 240 hours of labor and enjoyed a literary tour of the Cemetery and an introduction to the works of Keats & Shelley. The event was an enormous success, so much so that one UD student remarked, "I'm happy to give something back to Rome."

OUR CARETAKERS: Vincenzo & Adele Romano

by John Norris, Associate Professor of
Theology and 1993-1995 Rome Director



Vincenzo & Adele Romano, Caretakers of the UD Rome Campus

Vincenzo and Adele Romano have been guardians and caretakers of the Due Santi campus for over half a century. Vincenzo, sixth out of seven children, came up with his family to Rome from Pompeii on a cart, like gypsies, as he puts it. In March of 1946, he arrived at the Piga villa (now home to our campus) to work in the vineyard and in the orchard, while Adele came in November of 1951 to work in the villa as maid and to cook for the Pigas. The Piga family with their four children came frequently to the countryside for the weekends, and Adele often fixed large meals for up to thirty people in the villa *salone*.

Vincenzo and Adele regularly encountered one another while working at the villa. Soon enough, they fell in love and were married in January of 1955. Their first child, a son named Michele, was born in November of that same year. They set up a home in the apartment over the cantina (now the mensa)

and eventually had two more children, Rita and Daniela.

When Signor Piga died in 1984, the Romanos acted as caretakers of the property for the family. When the family put up the land for sale, the Romanos were there to show the new buyers around. As first time owners in Italy, UD depended upon the Romanos to continue taking care of the campus with the same expertise they had gained from years of work on the site. When a Polish work crew moved onto the campus as construction began in 1992, Adele and her daughters helped run the mensa for the workers. Since the University program opened in 1994, Rita and Filippa (their daughter-in-law) have run the cleaning company that keeps the campus spotless, and Vincenzo has supervised all that lives and grows on the campus, especially the vineyard.

Once the campus was complete, Vincenzo and Adele moved off the grounds, as the upstairs apartments were redone to accommodate faculty housing. Now the Romanos have their own family compound up the hill in Frattocchie, where the entire family lives together. Michele and Filippa live in one apartment with their daughter Silvia, their son Daniele, his wife and their daughter, Giada. Rita and her husband Pino have three children, daughter Chiara, and sons Rudy and Lorenzo. Their youngest daughter, Daniela, and her husband Emiliano, have the two youngest grandchildren, Emily and Hilary. True to Italian custom, God and family are the cornerstone of their lives.

I first met the Romanos back in 1992 when the campus was under construction, at a lively, lengthy, many-coursed Italian meal at the big table under the oak tree by the forno. Their open-armed hospitality offered the best of Italian life—everyone was welcome, everyone talked at the same time, and everyone went away more than satisfied. Over the years, the Romanos have opened their home to faculty and staff and students: pizzas at the *forno*, Adele’s homemade gnocchi or spaghetti *all’amatriciana*, Vincenzo’s homemade grappa with *strozzapreti* berries, and innumerable cats and dogs underfoot. Those who appreciate the beauty and warmth of the Due Santi campus know that deep down it reflects the loving hearts of Adele and Vincenzo.

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PAST & PRESENT: Legends of the Appia Antica



Jacques-Louis David, Oath of the Horatii, 1784, Musee du Louvre, Paris

One of ancient Rome's most enduring legends, that of the Horatii and Curiatii, tells of an epic clash between the city of Rome and its neighbor Alba Longa. This was a stand-off between two communities that had longstanding ties reaching back to the earliest days of the Latin peoples, if not to the great hero Aeneas himself. By the mid-7th century B.C., however, relations had cooled and both cities readied for war. Rome defeated Alba in the conflict, which in turn spurred them on to their centuries-long conquest of the known world. Later observers readily identified the victory over Alba as a crucial turning point in Rome's glorious history. For centuries, too, the tombs of the Horatii and the Curiatii stood in public view along the Appian Way—not far from the present location of UD's Due Santi campus—as a memorial to both the battle itself and its most important fallen heroes.

Despite Rome's later reputation as an inveterate fighting machine, this was a victory that lasted only a matter of minutes and produced a mere handful of human casualties. By prior agreement, soldiers in both camps laid down their arms before any serious military

engagements had begun, apparently to limit the bloodshed and to avoid possible mutual destruction. Two opposing teams of gladiators were entrusted with the outcome of the conflict instead. Rome put its trust in three young brothers from the Horatii family, while Alba turned to a like trio of brothers from the Curiatii clan. The Horatii prevailed in the volatile and merciless combat that followed, although just barely and not without a paying a terrible family price: two of the three brothers were cut down immediately in the field; and as for the third, Publius Horatius, he went on to murder his sister and to risk the death penalty for his reckless behavior following Rome's triumph.

Later tradition, heavy with symbolism, both obscured and colored the true events of that fateful day. In addition to the Appian tombs, local Roman monuments like Horatius' Column (*pila horatia*) and the ominous Sister's Yoke (*tigillum sororium*) kept the bittersweet memory of the Alban war alive for centuries. The keen interest of subsequent commentators had a similar effect—from Livy and Propertius in ancient Rome right through to St. Augustine and Dante in

the Christian Middle Ages. With time the story of Horatii and Curiatii eventually found its way into modern opera, painting, poetry and the novel. So great was its symbolic and historical appeal that it even accommodated the real-life drama of World War II. In a celebrated exchange between Winston Churchill and his French counterpart Paul Reynard during Europe's dark night of 1940, it was duly invoked as symbolic of the death-struggle between Hitler's "Horatian" imperialism and Western Europe's fading "Curatian" democracies.

This was some very old and proud Roman propaganda turned upside down. But never mind that twist of history. By this time the surviving Tomb of the Horatii and Curiatii, located today in the city of Albano had long since become a pilgrimage site of sorts. It is questionable whether this impressive monument truly corresponds to what Livy identified, in the 1st century B.C., as "the graves where each man fell, which are still visible today." But for the countless visitors who have stopped at this spot over the centuries to behold a towering symbol of Rome's hard-fought glory, a very good legend was always enough.



A monument called "The Tomb of the Horatii" still stands along the Appian Way