

The Sacred Within (Rome, 16 Jun 26)

Sala dei Papi | Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Piazza della Minerva, 42 | Rome,
16.06.2026

Guendalina Serafinelli

International conference: THE SACRED WITHIN.

The Chapel Through Art, Liturgy, and Theology in the Early Modern Era.

Guendalina Serafinelli | Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata
Organizer and Chair.

Register by 14 June 2026: martina.bronzini@uniroma2.it

<https://dip.storia.uniroma2.it/portfolio/the-sacred-within/?portfolioCats=86%2C88%2C90%2C92>

The conference investigates chapels and altars of the early modern period through a theoretical framework that conceptualizes sacred space as a historically constituted medium, shaped by the convergence of artistic invention, architectural design, liturgical enactment, and theological signification.

Rather than functioning as passive backdrops to devotional practice, these spatial configurations are understood as operative structures in their own right: loci where doctrinal content is rendered visible, ritual action is performed within and through architectural form, and both collective and individual religious experience is produced, negotiated, and contested.

Bringing together interdisciplinary perspectives from art history, architectural history, liturgical studies, and theology, the conference examines how chapels and altars were planned, constructed, and decorated in dynamic articulation with the liturgical practices and theological paradigms that governed their conception, use, and institutional administration.

This conference is also supported by the funding received through the “Ricerca Scientifica di Ateneo 2024”, Dipartimento di Storia, Patrimonio culturale, Formazione e Società, Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata.

The conference will be held in Italian and English

PROGRAM

9:30-9:50 Welcome and Opening Remarks

Tullia Iori | Vice Chancellor for Education – Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata

Rev. Fr. Fabrizio Cambi O.P. | Prior of the Convent of Santa Maria sopra Minerva; Angelicum,

Pontificia Università S. Tommaso d'Aquino

Rev. Fr. Antonio Cocolicchio O.P. | Prior Provincial of the Roman Province of St. Catherine of Siena

9:50-10:15 Introduction

Guendalina Serafinelli | Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata

Rev. Fr. Rocco Ronzani O.S.A. | Prefect of the Archivio Apostolico Vaticano; Pontificio Istituto Patristico Augustinianum

10:15-11:15 Session I

The Construction of Sacred Space, Liturgy, and Devotion

Chair: Fabiana Spinelli | Archive of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome

Rev. Fr. Dominik Jurczak O.P. | Angelicum, Pontificia Università

S. Tommaso d'Aquino

Cappelle e altari nell'età moderna. Una lettura liturgica

Franco De Vivo | Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata

The Sacred Within the Ruins: The Transformation of Sacred Space in

Gervase of Canterbury's "Tractatus de combustione et reparatione

Cantuariensis ecclesiae"

Giovan Battista Fidanza | Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata

Wooden Pathological Crucifixes by Franciscan Baroque Sculptors in Chapel Contexts: Case Studies in Papal States

11:15–11:25 Discussion

11:25–11:40 Coffee break

11:40-12:50 Session II

Boundaries of the Sacred: Portraits, Performativity, and Spatial Activation

Chair: Giovan Battista Fidanza

Gail Feigenbaum | Getty Research Institute, ret.

Unruly Portraits: Profane and Sacred in the Chapel in the Age of the

Carracci and Caravaggio

Keith Sciberras | University of Malta

Caravaggio in the Oratory of the Decollato: Performance and the

Activation of Ritual Space

Maria Grazia D'Amelio | Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata

"Ad perpetuam rei memoriam". Le cappelle ipogee dei piloni della

Basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano

12:50–13:00 Discussion

13:00–14:30 Lunch break

Session III

14:30-15:30 Patronage, Visual Rhetoric, and Religious Identity
Chair: Lydia Salviucci Insolera | Pontificia Università Gregoriana

Stephanie C. Leone | Boston College

The Visual Rhetoric of Sanctity in the Chapel of San Francesco Saverio, Il Gesù

Guendalina Serafinelli | Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata

Negotiating Visibility: Artistic Patronage at SS. Domenico e Sisto
in Seventeenth-Century Rome

Martina Bronzini | Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata

The Chapel of Benedict XIII at Santa Maria sopra Minerva
between Devotion and Dominican Identity

15:30–15:40 Discussion

15:40–16:00 Coffee break

16:00-16:45 Keynote Lecture

Peter M. Lukehart | CASVA – The Center, National Gallery of Art,
Washington D.C

Further Observations on the Cerasi Chapel

16:45–17:00 Discussion

Quellennachweis:

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<<https://arthist.net/archive/52589>>.