

INFORMAZIONE

informazione – formazione – azione

69

november 2024



LONG-AWAITED PEACE

Hostages, ballistic missiles, threats, drones: these are everyday terms we have unfortunately become accustomed to in this new "normality" of a world at war. But when war or any conflict touches us closely, it is natural to deeply desire and relentlessly fight for peace: between nations, in our neighborhoods, within our families... in our hearts. We want to achieve, savor, and live in peace. But how?

At IBEI, during the August Study Vacation, we saw how our "ancestors," the Romans, had a very clear strategy for achieving peace: imposing it by force. In the words of Virgil: "Remember, O Roman, to rule the nations; these will be your arts, to establish norms for peace, to spare the subdued, and to crush the proud" (*Aeneid*, 6.852-854). Augustus himself, whom we can consider the main architect of Roman peace, claimed to have brought peace three times throughout the Roman dominion, an exceptional feat given that such

an achievement had only occurred twice in over 700 years since the city's founding (*Res Gestae*, XIII). An unprecedented peace! But at what cost? Some Latin writers, unlike Virgil, viewed this peace with a critical eye. For example, Tacitus puts into the mouth of a Roman enemy these insightful words: "They rob, kill, and rape, and call it dominion; when they have created a desert, they call it peace" (*De Agricola*, 30.6).

The Jews during the time of Jesus suffered under this *pax* and sought instead *shalom*, a well-being that encompassed material, relational, and spiritual prosperity established by the Messiah. However, Jesus' disciples misunderstood this *shalom*, expecting it to be realized "the Roman way," imposed immediately and by force on the nations. Jesus had to correct this idea repeatedly, yet he guaranteed his followers true, deep, authentic peace: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. [...] I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have

trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 14:27; 16:33). The victory of Jesus, which brought and continues to bring this peace, did not come through military war, but through a victory born from an act of humiliation and suffering, enduring injustice and violence on the cross. Those who willingly submit in faith to this victory can taste the most important peace, that with God: "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1).

Moreover, those who know this peace can live in peace within their hearts (Philippians 4:6-7), within the Christian community (2 Corinthians 13:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:13), and in society (Romans 12:18). They can become peacemakers (Matthew 5:9), ambassadors and special envoys of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20; John 20:21).

Thus, the long-awaited peace is accessible to those who bow down now to the Prince of Peace!

DANIELE P. PASQUALE

Students of the Residential and Online School

Certificate of Theology students (1st year) introduce themselves with 3 words summarizing why they enrolled.

RESIDENTIAL



OSCAR BASSETT

Christian Evangelical Church Logos, Firenze

“Obedience, Love, Service.



NOEMI VILLA

Chiesa Viva, Mendrisio (Switzerland)

“Depth, Knowledge, Growth.



MICHELE CIOCIOLA

Reformed Baptist Church, Imola (BO)

“Consecration, Formation, Refreshment.



SARA DI CROCE

Evangelical Church Galed, Vasto (CH)

“Growth, Testimony, Mission.



JOSHUA STOEHR

Brethren Church, Modena

“Experience, Knowledge, Challenge.



SAMUELE MORETTI

Brethren Church, Anghiari (AR)

“Growth, Discipline, Love.

ONLINE



ESTER BOTTAZZI

Brethren Church, Turin

“Preparation, Knowledge, Responsibility.

Diploma of Theology students (2nd and 3rd years) tell us about their goals for this academic year.

RESIDENTIAL



NATAN NAPOLITANO

Christian Evangelical Church, Ruchheim (Germany)

“To know our Lord better in order to serve him as best as possible.



EMANUELE CANZERI

Apostolic Church, Ribera (AG)

“To grow in intimacy with Christ, experiencing and living with him more each day.



PAOLO ROSSI

Independent Church, Porto Sant'Elpidio (FM)

“To deepen the Scriptures in their original languages.



ALESSIA AMARIE

Missionary Church, Varfu Campului (Romania)

“To learn to nurture and persevere in the communal aspect of spiritual life.

ONLINE



PAOLO CRAITA

UCBC Church, Casalecchio (BO)

“To cultivate consistency, humility, and love in my approach to study.



GABRIELE TROGU

Brethren Church, Alghero (SS)

“To consolidate the experiences of these three years.

Florence Extension School

On September 7, classes began at the Florence extension school! A group of students from six different churches participated eagerly in the

Inductive Bible Study lessons. If you live in Florence or nearby, there's still time to enroll!

www.ibeit/scuole-succursali



The New Testament seen from Rome

The first Study Vacation was a great blessing! From August 10 to 18, we had 23 participants who experienced a special program combining the study of the Letter to the Romans, visits to archaeological and historical

sites, and much fellowship! Here are some comments from participants: “The study vacation was organized excellently, with intense study moments, visits to various monuments, and well-managed relaxation and

sharing times.” “It was a great joy to gain a deeper understanding of the beauty of our faith.” “This approach of studying a specific theme, with multiple teachers integrating different aspects—theological, evangelical, and historical—was very useful.” “My desire was to spend intense time with the Word and let my mind rest, and you succeeded.”



From right to left: At the table; on the Appian Way; classroom lecture; at the Colosseum.



Who Comes and Who Goes

At the end of summer, Luca and Chiara Perolli arrived to assist us with the residential school as Community Life Coordinators. They are active members of the Alfa Omega church in Rome, and Chiara is a former student of the residential

school (2016-2019). Welcome! Roberta Giangiulio concluded her time with us at IBEI, a former residential student (2018-2021) who then served with us in administration for three years. Thank you, Roberta! Among the teachers, after a couple of years teaching Pastoral Care, Emanuele Di Maio leaves, and Francesco Abortivi joins us. Goodbye Emanuele and welcome Francesco!

The 4th Lausanne Congress

“May the Church proclaim and show Christ together” – under this theme, the fourth congress of the Lausanne Movement in Seoul brought together 5,394 participants from 200 different countries. The messages encouraged the global Church to collaborate more effectively in carrying out the Great Commission. I had the opportunity to attend the congress along with others from IBEI (Danny Pasquale and Ester Montefalcone), and it was a great blessing. For all these reasons,

the upcoming spring issue of Lux Biblica will analyze various crucial aspects and trends of mission from both an Italian and a global perspective. Every believer has a role in the task of reaching those who have yet to hear the Gospel so that one day people from every nation, tribe, people, and language may worship God together (Revelation 7:9).

Susanne Waldner



Top: L4 conference room (Photo Credit Gjermund Oystese); above: Italian delegation at L4

LUX BIBLICA N° 70 Catholicism: An evangelical reflection on key aspects of Catholic theology

As preparations for a new "Holy Year" intensify in Rome, it is essential to recognize that the Jubilee is only the tip of the iceberg of the Roman Catholic Church. To understand Catholicism fully and to be more effective in witnessing about the biblical Gospel, one must delve deeper. Paraphrasing and contextualizing what a professor said, "To evangelize effectively, one must understand profoundly." The purpose of this issue of Lux Biblica is to carefully and com-

petently illuminate the submerged part of the iceberg, helping the reader engage effectively with the Catholic reality they live in, and encouraging them to shine the Gospel of Christ through both words and attitudes.



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