On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of its opening in Rome, the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI) 

in collaboration with 

the Congregation for Catholic Education, 
the Federal Republic of Germany, 
and Georgetown University (Washington, DC) 

under the patronage of 

the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue 
and the Pontifical Urbaniana University 

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 

STUDYING AND UNDERSTANDING THE RELIGION OF THE OTHER TOWARDS MUTUAL RECOGNITION BETWEEN RELIGIONS AND CULTURES IN TODAY’S WORLD 

Pontifical Urbaniana University 
January 22nd-24th 2015
Programme

Thursday, January 22nd 2015 from 16.00-21.00
Celebration of the Jubilee of PISAI and the opening of the conference

Video on PISAI

Words of welcome
- H.E. Most Rev. Card. Zenon Grocholewski, Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education
- H.E. Most Rev. Card. Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples

Musical interlude (cello solo: Mehdi Elias Baba-Ameur)

Words of welcome
- H.E. Mrs Annette Schavan, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Holy See
- Prof. John Borelli, Special Assistant to the President for Interreligious Initiatives, Georgetown University and Coordinator for Interreligious Dialogue, US Jesuit Conference
- Prof. Fr. Valentino Cottini, Rector of PISAI

Musical interlude (cello solo)

Short speeches
- Prof. Maurice Borrmans, MAfr, Emeritus PISAI: Il PISAI da Tunisi a Roma

Musical interlude (cello solo)

Presentation of the programme of the conference
- Rev. Dr. Friedrich Bechina, FSO, Undersecretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education, member of the board of the Bologna process

19.15: Cultural evening: “Beyond Borders” Ensemble (Mehdi Elias Baba-Ameur and his group)

20.15: Toast to PISAI’s jubilee followed by dinner

last updated on 12 January 2015
Friday, January 23rd 2015 from 9.00-13.00
Theme: Studying and understanding Islam in a Christian milieu

9.00-10.30
Chairperson: Rev. Dr. Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot, MCCJ, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue
Keynote speaker: Prof. Michel Lagarde, Emeritus PISAI, UNESCO Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture: Insegnare la religione dell’altro, come educazione alla distanza e all’empatia

Respondents:
- Prof. David Thomas, University of Birmingham
- Prof. Jerusha Lamptey, Union Theological Seminary, New York

Open debate in conference hall

10.30-11.00: Coffee break

11.00-12.00
Presentation-discussion among experts (best practices)

a) Europe and Mediterranean countries
   - Dr. Nayla Tabbara, Director of Cross-Cultural Studies Department, ADYAN Foundation, Lebanon
   - Prof. Mohammed S. Dajani Daoudi, Founder and Director of the WASATIA movement of moderate Islam, Jerusalem
   - Prof. David Thomas, University of Birmingham

b) Institutes similar to PISAI and Africa
   - Fr. Jean Bevand, MAfr, Institut de Formation Islamo-Chrétienne (IFIC), Bamako, Mali
   - Rev. Dr. Richard Kyankaaga, MCCJ, Dar Comboni for Arabic Studies, Cairo, Egypt
   - Prof. Fatoumata Djibo, former Member of Parliament, Head of Mission at the National Assembly of Niger

12.00-13.00
Round table in the conference hall: challenges ahead
Chairperson: Prof. Daniel Madigan, SJ, Georgetown University
Participants:
- Prof. Thomas Michel, SJ, School of Foreign Service-Qatar, Georgetown University
- Prof. Azyumardi Azra, Director of the Postgraduate Programme, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Prof. Siti Syamsiyatun, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

13.00-14.00: Lunch break
Friday, January 23rd from 14.00-18.00

**Theme:** *Studying and understanding Christianity in a Muslim milieu*

**14.00-15.30**

Chairperson: H.E. Most Rev. Michael Fitzgerald, MAfr
Keynote speaker: Prof. Amer Al-Hafi, The Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (RIIFS), Amman, Jordan: *Teaching and Understanding Christianity in the Sharia Colleges*

Respondents:
- Prof. Siti Syamsiyatun, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Prof. Daniel Madigan, SJ, Georgetown University

Open debate in conference hall

**15.30-16.00:** Coffee break

**16.00-17.00**

Presentation-discussion among experts (best practices):

a) Gulf Region
- Prof. Thomas Michel, SJ, School of Foreign Service-Qatar, Georgetown University
- Prof. Aref Nayed, Libyan Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates

b) Shi'ism and Asia
- Dr. Hajar Alkuhtany, Director of International Forum for Islamic Dialogue, Ilford, UK
- Prof. Mohammad Ali Shomali, Director of the International Institute for Islamic Studies, Qum, Director of Islamic Centre of England, London
- Prof. Kazi Nurul Islam, Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (CIID), Dhaka, Bangladesh

**17.00-18.00**

Round table in the conference hall: Challenges ahead
Chairperson: Prof. John Borelli, Special Assistant to the President for Interreligious Initiatives, Georgetown University and Coordinator for Interreligious Dialogue, US Jesuit Conference
Participants:
- Prof. Felix Körner, SJ, Gregorian University, Rome
- Prof. George Massouh, University of Balamand, Lebanon
- Prof. Adnane Mokrani, PISAI
- Prof. Akhtarul Wasey, New Dehli, India

Evening free
Saturday, January 24th 2015 from 9.00-13.30
Theme: The socio-political impact of education on understanding the religion of the other

9.00-11.00
Chairperson: H.E. Mrs Annette Schavan, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Holy See
Keynote speaker: Prof. José Casanova, Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University

Respondents in a round table:
- H.E. Most Rev. Mario Zenari, Apostolic Nuncio in Syria
- Rev. Dr. Friedrich Bechina, FSÖ, Undersecretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education, member of the board of the Bologna process
- Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe Pallavicini, Vice-president of CO.RE.IS., the Islamic Religious Community of Italy
- Prof. Aref Nayed, Libyan Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates
- Prof. Fatoumata Djibo, former Member of Parliament, Head of Mission at the National Assembly of Niger
- Prof. Gianluca Parolin, American University in Cairo

Departure for the audience with Pope Francis

12.15: Audience with Pope Francis

Concluding speech and a look to the future: H.E. Most Rev. Michael Fitzgerald, MAfr

End of the conference