



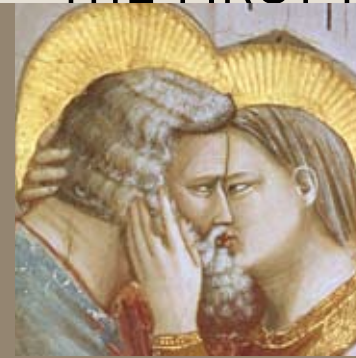
Photos of Florence by Missy Collins & Rosie Perera, 2007 Florence Seminar attendees.



I M A G E

3307 Third Avenue West  
Seattle, WA 98119  
206.281.2988  
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THE INCARNATIONAL VISION OF  
DANTE, GIOTTO & SAINT FRANCIS  
THE FIRST RENAISSANCE



*September 14 to 21, 2008, Florence, Italy*

THE FLORENCE SEMINAR

AN I M A G E EVENT

# THE FLORENCE SEMINAR

## THE FIRST RENAISSANCE: THE INCARNATIONAL VISION OF DANTE, GIOTTO & SAINT FRANCIS



IN THE LATE SUMMER of 2008, a small group of inquirers will gather in Florence, Italy, to explore what has been called “the first Renaissance,” a remarkable moment in the cultural history of the West. Together we will investigate the ways in which three great late-medieval figures—Dante Alighieri, Giotto, and Saint Francis of Assisi—renewed the culture of Europe and left a legacy that continues to nourish and inspire.

And we will ask how their vision of art and faith can speak to the work of cultural transformation today.

Our focus will be on the way these three great souls re-imagined the relationship between divine grace and ordinary human experience. What was so revolutionary about the way Saint Francis of Assisi approached nature and society? How did Saint Francis inspire Giotto to change the language of western art? How did Dante’s *Divine Comedy* fuse a medieval worldview with the emerging individualism of the approaching Renaissance?

We will undertake this journey in the city that gave birth to Renaissance Christian Humanism, an incarnational vision grounded in a profound dialogue between art and faith.



# REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION FOR THE FLORENCE SEMINAR, excluding airfare, includes seven nights accommodation at Villa Agape, all breakfasts and dinners, and transportation and entrance fees to all sites. Fees are \$3,800 per person for a shared room or \$4,000 for a single.

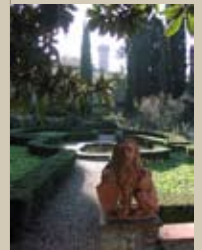
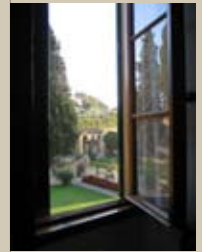
DEADLINE: June 1, or until the available space is filled. Registrations are accepted on a first come, first served basis. A receipt will be mailed to confirm your registration, followed by an informational packet.

PAYMENT: A \$500, non-refundable deposit must accompany your registration in order to reserve your space. \$1,500 is due by June 1 and the balance by July 15 (nonpayment will forfeit your space). Please make checks payable to *Image*, or phone us to pay by credit card.

REFUNDS: Between June 1 and July 15, a 50% refund will be paid upon cancellation. No refunds are available after July 15.

TRANSPORTATION: We will provide transportation into Florence for group excursions throughout the week.

WAITING LIST: If the seminar is full, we will contact you and place you on a waiting list. We will let you know as soon as space opens up.



## VILLA AGAPE



OUR HOME DURING THIS WEEK will be Villa Agape, the former estate of the Duchess D'Aosta, now a place of hospitality run by the nuns known as *Suore Stabilite nella Carita*.

Set on a hillside just south of the Arno, Villa Agape is surrounded by beautiful ornamental gardens, statuary, and an olive grove.



Just down the road, Galileo lived under house arrest. A ten-minute walk brings you to the church of San Miniato al Monte, where Benedictine monks continue their fifteen-hundred-year history of work and prayer.

At Villa Agape we will take our meals together in the formal dining room, meet in the library, and relax on the spacious, open-air terrazzo.

The rooms are simple but clean and bright. Each has a private bathroom and shower.

And views that are unforgettable.



## FACULTY & PROGRAM

OUR WEEK IN FLORENCE will involve a variety of activities, from lectures and visits to the great churches and museums, to a field trip to Assisi, to exquisite meals at restaurants in Florence and the surrounding area.



**ROBERT ROYAL** is president of the Faith and Reason Institute in Washington, DC. His books include: *1492 and All That: Political Manipulations of History*; *Dante Alighieri: Divine Comedy, Divine Spirituality*; and *The God That Did Not Fail: How Religion Built and Sustains the West*. He has received fellowships to study in Italy from the Renaissance Society of America and the Fulbright Program.

**MONSIGNOR TIMOTHY VERDON** (invited) is a priest in residence at the Duomo in Florence and a renowned expert on Renaissance art. A Yale-trained art historian, he is the author of several books, including *Mary in Western Art*; *Michelangelo the Theologian*; and *Art, Faith, History: A Guide to Christian Florence*.



**GREGORY WOLFE** is writer in residence at Seattle Pacific University and the founder and editor of *Image*, one of America's leading literary quarterlies. He also directs the Master of Fine Arts program in creative writing at SPU and recently served as a judge for the National Book Awards. His essays, reviews, and articles have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies.

# FLORENCE

## CRADLE OF CHRISTIAN HUMANISM



AS FREQUENT VISITORS will attest, the richness of Florence is inexhaustible—not merely because of the sheer quantity of timeless art and architecture, but because each visit reveals new resonances among art, faith, and history.

In the era of Dante and Giotto, Florence was wracked by political, military, and economic upheavals. And yet in the midst of this turmoil these artists created sublime works infused with spiritual wisdom that reshaped the course of western thought and values. Together they gave faith a human face, placing it within the drama of our pilgrim journey through this world.



THE IMAGINATIVE BREAKTHROUGHS of Dante and Giotto, splendid as they are, would be unthinkable without the pervasive influence of the one called *il poverello*, “the little poor man”—Saint Francis of Assisi.

Francis lived the paradoxes of the Incarnation in a special way: capable of self-denial, he celebrated the goodness of the body and the beauty of nature; embracing humility, he affirmed the dignity of man; devoted to the cross, he also established the first crèche at Christmas time.

A highlight of our trip will be our visit to Assisi where, among other things, we will see Giotto’s paintings of the life of Saint Francis.



“This is the fairest picture on our planet, the most enchanting to look upon, the most satisfying to the eye and spirit. To see the sun sink down, drowned in his pink and purple and golden floods, and overwhelm Florence with tides of color that make all the sharp lines dim and faint and turn the solid city to a city of dreams, is a sight to stir the coldest nature, and make a sympathetic one drunk with ecstasy.”

—MARK TWAIN