

## **The Pontifical Gregorian University**

Faculty of Canon Law

Tuesday, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May, 2017

Our conversation with Fathers Yuji Sugawara, SJ, Dean of the Faculty of Canon Law, Gianfranco Ghirlanda, SJ, and Damian Astigueta, SJ, over lunch was broad and informative.

Numbers attending the Gregorian have remained somewhat consistent over the years, with 35 beginning their studies this year, 95 in their third year, 70 engaged in their JCD studies, and 12 graduating this year. 13% of their students are from the United States and Canada; 25% from Latin America; 50% from Europe, and the balance from Africa and Asia.

There is a good collaboration between the Gregorian, the Angelicum and the Pontifical Institute for the Eastern Churches – the Orientale – with students able to take selected courses from any of the three.

We asked about the meeting of the Deans of schools of canon law that we had discussed with the Congregation of Catholic Education (for Institutes of Study), and learned that there is a keen interest on the part of the Gregorian to provide a basic formation for those willing to help tribunals and parishes in light of both *Mitis Iudex* and *Amoris Laetitia*. Precisely what that formation would entail, or what the final degree or certification would be, is somewhat unclear. The Gregorian is awaiting direction from the Congregation for Catholic Education.

Was the Gregorian experiencing any difficulties with the three-year commitment required for the JCL? Not in recent years, no. Enrollment numbers have remained consistent. However, with an increased need for canonists worldwide, perhaps more conversation is needed with the Congregation for Catholic Education. The Gregorian shares the concern expressed by the Congregation that students engaging the study of canon law do so with a sound foundation in theology, pastoral practice, and Latin.

Would a two-year JCL, perhaps augmented by a third year specializing in matrimonial processes, or chancery administration, or perhaps even a specialization in temporal goods be an alternative? That is a possibility, again provided the candidate possessed the foundation mentioned previously. But, someone wondered, what would happen for someone having a specialization in, say, matrimonial tribunal jurisprudence, who was then moved into the service of a chancery? Would that one have sufficient preparation for that new ministry?

We came away from the meeting with a clear sense of mutual esteem and by a common eagerness to prepare others for our specialized ministry – both with degrees and without. The potential for new forms of preparation/formation is certainly exciting!

