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92nd National Day of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart: educate in solidarity

Vatican City, 10 April 2016 – Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin has sent, on behalf of the Holy Father, a letter to Cardinal Angelo Scola, archbishop of Milan and president of the Giuseppe Toniolo Institute of Higher Education, on the occasion of the 92nd National Day of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart.

In the text, the Cardinal recalls that the Church entrusts to the Catholic Universities "the task of forming the new generations in the light of the principles of Christian faith and of the Catholic tradition to construct networks of authentic solidarity and to contribute to the common good". He continues, "without looking to the fundamental values of truth, good, justice and peace, which are born of a genuine openness of the spirit, it will not be possible to counter the strong pressures of materialism and scientific positivism, which seem to be the dominant coordinates guiding the culture and society of our time. Therefore, it is important to renew every effort so that the new generations may find people, institutions and places where they are able to receive a full education made possible by open and constructive dialogue between faith and reason, and between the various areas of knowledge and theology. From this perspective, of note is the fundamental contribution made in Italy by the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, that Fr. Agostino Gemelli and his collaborators intended as a solid and qualified point of reference for the formation of new generations in the various sectors of knowledge and the different professional fields".

"Educating the young from this perspective is a fascinating and very challenging task that requires a common effort shared by all the ecclesial community. But it also necessitates a constant capacity for renewal on the part of the academic institution itself, called upon to unite indispensable original and constitutive values with the new demands of a complex university system open to new international situations. A distinctive sign of the Catholic Athenaeum, aside from offering an education at a high scientific level, must always be that of a notable education in solidarity and service to the least among us, through all the dimensions of human knowledge and life. A particular sign of this insoluble link between the academic dimension and service to the needy and suffering, such as the sick, is offered by the Policlinico Agostino Gemelli, which represents the fulfilment of the dream of its founder and should be increasingly acknowledged as a exemplary place of Christian-inspired learning and care".

