



COLNAGHI

NUNTIUS - ART AND DIPLOMACY THROUGHOUT HISTORY IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE VATICAN LIBRARY AND THE COLNAGHI FOUNDATION: A THEMATIC JOURNEY CELEBRATING A NEW MILESTONE IN THE FOUNDATION'S SUPPORT PROJECT FOR THE RENEWAL OF THE LIBRARY'S ARCHIVAL SPACES

Vatican City, 13 May 2026

On 13 May 2026, the Vatican Library inaugurates *Nuntius*, an event organized in collaboration with the Colnaghi Foundation.

Now in its second edition, the initiative celebrates the collaboration between the two institutions – initiated in 2025 with the *Codex* project – and represents a further milestone in a broader programme of support by the Colnaghi Foundation for the renewal of the Library's archival spaces.

The event takes the form of a gala dinner for the Foundation's supporters and a selected group of invited guests, and seeks to celebrate cultural diplomacy through a selection of works from Colnaghi, displayed within the setting of the Vatican Library's collections, which provide the historical and cultural context that frames and enriches their display.

The exhibition offers an exploration of the theme of art and diplomacy throughout history, establishing a visual and semantic connection between the library's holdings and the world of art. The initiative aims to foster a broader reflection on the relationship between art and relations among States, through examples of works sent, in different historical periods and geographical areas, as official gifts. For centuries, the practice of exchanging gifts between States and sovereigns has constituted a significant instrument in international relations: diplomatic objects imbued with symbolic, material, and historical value, used to promote peace, strengthen alliances, and affirm the *status* of rulers. Moving beyond an exclusive *focus* on the individual gift, its rituals, and the ceremonies of exchange, and adopting an approach that interweaves history, art, and anthropology, the scholarly concept underlying this thematic installation highlights how the gift, both in artistic practice and in diplomacy, follows shared codes open to reciprocal influences, beyond the mere political and economic strategies that accompany it.

“We are pleased to welcome once again the Colnaghi Foundation, its distinguished works, and its supporters, as we continue a dialogue aimed at enhancing the Vatican Library's archival heritage through the careful renewal of its spaces. This intervention has been conceived to ensure the best possible preservation and transmission of these materials to future generations, with full respect for their integrity and historical value. We particularly appreciate the attention that the project devotes to the theme of cultural diplomacy, which has always been central to the Library and is profoundly consistent with its mission. In

today's world, where dialogue and the building of bridges between cultures are becoming ever more crucial, this perspective proves to be not only timely, but indeed urgent." (**H. Exc. most Rev. Msgr. Giovanni Cesare Pagazzi, Archivist and Librarian of H.R.C.**).

"This *démarche* would not have been made possible without the support and guidance from the Vatican Authorities, to whom we express our utmost gratitude. Going beyond the conventional analysis of the contingency of the single diplomatic donation, its rituals, and the elaborate ceremonial of exchange, the practice of gift-giving emerges as an instrumental way to both unify and virtuously amplify differences by reinstating artistic and cultural identity in order to *become together* in the preservation of our uniqueness. Drawing symbolic attention to the patron and recipient with *muta eloquenza* has today never felt more appropriate, not as a tool of soft-power but rather as a revendication of *alétheia*." (**Candida Lodovica Chi, PhDc, École Pratique des Hautes Études - PSL, Director of Colnaghi Foundation**).

Contacts and information

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