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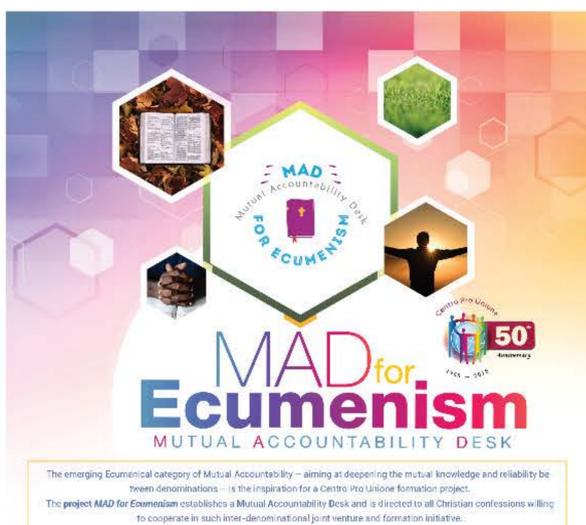
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'MAD for Ecumenism': a new formation project for Centro Pro Unione

Published on November 9, 2018



The emerging Ecumenical category of Mutual Accountability – aiming at deepening the mutual knowledge and reliability between denominations – is the inspiration for a Centro Pro Unione formation project. The project MAD for Ecumenism establishes a Mutual Accountability Desk and is directed to all Christian confessions willing to cooperate in such inter-denominational joint venture and formation initiative.

The project

sets micro-goals revolving around study, charity actions, worship, which are carried out in the format of modules. Each module develops according to three modalities: dislocation, sharing, spreading.

- * Dislocation: partners are free to work on the project by organizing their own timing, modalities and organizational details;
- * Sharing: at some stage there will be 2/3 plenary meetings where results, reflections and perspectives are put in common;
- * Spreading: means that at the end of the experience there will be an (official) outcome publication indicating the people involved in the group and the conclusions drawn, to constitute some growing archive.

The project is carried out both in Italian and English. The first module will be focused on the theme of preaching and it will last from November to February 2018-2019.



A plenary event

- open to the public - to present the initiative will be held at the Centro Pro Unione on Thursday November 15th at 5.30pm, with a lecture by Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches on the theme "What does it mean for Christians to be mutually accountable". Place: Centro Pro Unione, via Santa Maria dell'Anima, 30 (1st floor).

Participants in the project

In addition to the Centro Pro Unione who will coordinate the project (Prof. Teresa Francesca Rossi is responsible of the project: tercfranc@prounione.it) - are local communities of various Christian traditions in Rome, Ecumenical Centres, Universities, Seminaries, Parishes as well as Public High schools in Rome.

By Elena Dini

ROME — "MAD for Ecumenism" is the captivating title of a new formation project offered by the Centro Pro Unione during its 50th-anniversary year. "MAD" stands for Mutual Accountability Desk, which is what the initiative wants to establish — a space for all Christian confessions willing to cooperate in this joint venture. "Mutual accountability" is an emerging ecumenical category, aimed at deepening the mutual knowledge and reliability between denominations.

"Some years ago, I had been researching and teaching on new emerging concepts in ecumenism, concepts which are increasingly present in the theological reflection about the paradigm shift that recently occurred within the ecumenical movement. Mutual accountability was one of these concepts and one that is gaining attention," said Teresa Francesca Rossi, associate director of the Centro Pro Unione, in a recent interview with The Lay Centre.

This formation project offers different modules and each of them will focus on a specific theme: preaching, spiritual life, baptismal commitment, Biblical studies, and social/charity activities carried out together.

"Each module is open to all Christian denominations, though some bi-lateral privileged interactions relationships there can be singled out, according to the specific profile or interest of the various Christian communities involved," Rossi explained.

Three keywords explicate the modalities of approach for this project: dislocation, sharing and spreading. Partners are free to work on the project independently, wherever they reside (dislocation), while having the possibility of sharing results, reflections and perspectives in plenary meetings (sharing). Finally, the initiative will produce a publication that includes the input of participants and the conclusions drawn throughout the process (spreading).

"Generally speaking, the project meets the expectations of Pope Francis' invitation to Christians to walk together, facing difficulties and overcoming stereotypes and prejudices together, as well as to handcraft unity and peace," said Rossi, while discussing the underpinnings for this initiative.

"A similar concern comes from the WCC (World Council of Churches) through General Secretary Dr Rev Olav Fykse Tveit, who recently emphasized mutual accountability as a lifestyle for churches that are not yet united," she continued.

Dr Rev Tveit will present the "MAD for Ecumenism" initiative Nov. 15 during a plenary session, starting at 5:30 p.m. at the Centro Pro Unione. The theme is, "What does it mean for Christians to be mutually accountable?"

The Centro Pro Unione is a ministry of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement. Its mission "is to provide a solid base for research and ecumenical formation of pastoral agents by maintaining a highly specialized library in ecumenism and by various events, such as lectures by recognized authorities in the field of ecumenism and interreligious relations, and an annual summer course of introduction to the ecumenical and interreligious movements. In addition, the Centro provides materials for the annual celebration of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity," explained Father James Puglisi, SA, director of the Centro Pro Unione.

This year is also significant for the centre, which marks its 50th anniversary; it is also the 120th anniversary of the Society of the Atonement, which has been praying and working for the reconciliation of churches for more than a century. The centre held many other anniversary events (see <https://www.prounione.it/en/> for more information).

Looking ahead, Rossi said "the first and foremost result" that is sought in carrying out the first module of MAD for Ecumenism "is to get familiar with the concept of mutual accountability and to contribute to its definition and clarification by means of a concrete mutual experience, in a sort of 'learning by doing' process."

"MAD for Ecumenism" will begin at the Centro Pro Unione Nov. 15 at 5:30 p.m. Dr Rev Olav Fykse Tveit will present on the theme, "What does it mean for Christians to be mutually accountable?" For more information, go to <https://www.prounione.it/en/>

The Lay Centre VPI session, initially planned for this date, "Selflessness in the Age of Selfies," presented by Lay Centre alumnus Filipe Domingues, was re-scheduled for Nov. 13 at 5 p.m., in support of our friends at Centro Pro Unione.

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