

XLVI Meeting of Scholars of Ancient Christianity AUGUSTINIANUM 10-12 May 2018

Dear Friends,

The Augustinianum and the Organizing Committee (J.A. Cabrera Montero, G. Caruso, F. Cocchini, M.G. Crepaldi, A. Di Berardino, V. Grossi, M. Marin, P. Mattei, A. Nazzaro, L. Perrone, S. Pricoco, E. Prinzivalli, R. Ronzani) cordially thank all who took part in the *XLV Meeting of Scholars of Ancient Christianity*, and announce that the next Meeting will take place on

10, 11 and 12 May 2018, and will be dedicated to the topic:

Time of God, Time of Man

Quid est ergo tempus? Si nemo ex me quaerat, scio; si quaerenti explicare velim, nescio. The famous expression of Augustine (*Conf.* XI 14.17) sheds light on the great difficulty that one encounters in defining time, which, perhaps for this reason, has been the object of intense intellectual reflection since antiquity, as is witnessed by both myth and philosophy. Greek philosophical reflection has proposed various perspectives of interpretation for temporality. Particular attention has been given to the conception proffered by Platonism that has seen in time the weakened image of eternity, which was judged immovable and for this reason superior (Plat., *Tim.* 37d). The Bible offers a fundamentally linear vision of time, from which not even God retreats. The fact that in the eyes of the Omnipotent, “a single day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a single day” (Ps 90:4; 2 Pt 3:8), indicates that God knows no temporal limits, those, that is, to which human life is subject. The time of God appears therefore quantitatively more than qualitatively distinct from that of human beings. Early Christians sought to create a synthesis between these two conceptions, but not without problems. If the Apologists inserted a temporality in God connected to the generation of the Logos, this position was nevertheless harshly critiqued by Origen, who proposed instead an eternal generation (*Prin.* I 2, 4). In any case the idea of eternity understood as an absolute atemporality, which in the end seems to have prevailed over a simpler and more intuitive idea of unlimited temporality, has to take into account the biblical datum concerning the involvement of God in human affairs, in which He intervenes both through individual salvific acts, and, in a more spectacular way, in the Incarnation of the Logos. These divine interventions impress a dynamism in history that Christian writers frequently express through periodizations which, after signaling their culmination in Christ, open to an eschatological future completion. Writers easily capture in this way the attempt to structure the fluidity of history in a form that shows the unravelling of the economy of salvation within history. Within such a delineated conceptual framework, the patristic vision, which is more directly linked with the human conception of time, can be found. This patristic optic includes in its purview the ages marking the passage of life from birth to death, while it pays close attention to those models of thinking that connect Greco-Roman cultural concepts with scriptural referents. It also incorporates the different settings of time according to the alternation of feast days with ordinary weekdays in the liturgical calendar, without ignoring the diversified consistency of daily life in relation to the variety of the conditions of life.

Contributions to the Meeting may develop the themes proposed here as they are treated by Christian authors or by those connected with Christians, from the 1st to the 8th century. Theological, philosophical, exegetical, historiographical, iconographical and liturgical perspectives are welcome.

Those wishing to offer a brief communication (15 minutes) or a talk (25 minutes) are asked to send the title along with a brief summary of the paper and a short CV no later than **30 November 2017** to the following address only:

Segreteria Incontri Augustinianum, Via Paolo VI, 25 – 00193 Roma / Italia - Fax +39.06.68006298; e-mail: incontri@patristicum.org

The Organizing Committee will meet during January 2018 to evaluate the proposals, and will communicate the results confidentially immediately thereafter.

The Organizing Committee of the
XLVI Meeting of Scholars of Ancient Christianity

p.s. The deadline for submission of manuscripts for publication in the Acts is 1 September 2018. Extensions will not be granted for any reason, and manuscripts received late will be discarded. Manuscripts may not exceed 25,000 characters for communications and 50,000 characters for talks. All received manuscripts will be subject to a double blind peer review, the results of which (to be communicated confidentially to authors) is final. This complex review procedure does not allow us to guarantee publication, nor does it allow us to ensure that the Acts will be published by the date of the following year's Meeting. Thank you for your kind attention to these details.