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Black Holes, Gravitational Waves and Spacetime Singularities

International Workshop at Specola Vaticana

9 - 12
MAY
2017

**Black Holes,
Gravitational Waves
and
Spacetime Singularities**

Georges Lemaitre

An international workshop to celebrate the legacy of G. Lemaitre in the new millennium

Vatican Observatory
Castel Gandolfo, Rome

9 - 12 May 2017

[Program and Download Presentation](#)

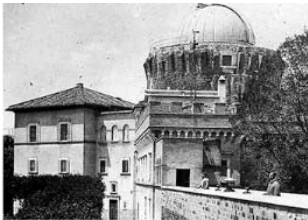




125th Anniversary of re-establishment of the Specola Vaticana

1891
2016
March, 14

On March 14, 1891, exactly 125 years ago, Pope Leo XIII issued a "Motu Proprio", a personal decree, that re-established the Vatican Observatory. In it he explained the apologetic need for supporting a scientific institution at that time, and also outlined the previous history of papal support for astronomy.



New Director for Vatican Observatory



On September 18, 2015, **Brother Guy Consolmagno SJ** has become the new director of the Vatican Observatory. He succeeds Fr. José Funes SJ, who is ending the second of his five-year terms. Fr. Funes' tenure included successfully guiding the Observatory to new modern headquarters in the Papal Summer Gardens, and beginning the ongoing program of upgrading the Vatican Advanced Technology Telescope in Arizona. We all wish Fr. Funes, SJ great success in his new assignment, returning to his home to teach at the Jesuit University in Córdoba, Argentina.



Welcome!

I am honored and humbled that Pope Francis has appointed me to this position. I can only look in awe at the wonderful things previous directors have accomplished, especially the two Jesuits who have been my directors, Fr. George Coyne, SJ and Fr. José Funes, SJ. I have seen first hand how the Holy Spirit has guided their talents to let us understand all the more intimately this amazing universe.

And I am equally humbled by the continued support of the Holy See for our work in Astronomy, ever since the Observatory was first founded by Pope Leo XIII in 1891. It is important to remember that this Observatory was a Pope's idea, not ours!

But we do this work not just because a Pope wants us to do it. All the science we do, and all the outreach we do, reflects a quality that motivates everything we do in astronomy: a sense of joy. The stars are glorious, and it's a treat to be engaged in their study. Their glory proclaims the Glory of their Creator!

Br. Guy Consolmagno, SJ
Director



Br. Guy Consolmagno, SJ - Biography

Brother Guy Consolmagno SJ is Director of the the Vatican Observatory and President of the Vatican Observatory Foundation. A native of Detroit, Michigan, he earned undergraduate and masters' degrees from MIT, and a Ph. D. in Planetary Science from the University of Arizona; he was a postdoctoral research fellow at Harvard and MIT, served in the US Peace Corps (Kenya), and taught university physics at Lafayette College before entering the Jesuits in 1989.

At the Vatican Observatory since 1993, his research explores connections between meteorites, asteroids, and the evolution of small solar system bodies, observing Kuiper Belt comets with the Vatican's 1.8 meter telescope in Arizona, and applying his measure of



meteorite physical properties to understanding asteroid origins and structure. Along with more than 200 scientific publications, he is the author of a number of popular books including *Turn Left at Orion* (with Dan Davis), and most recently *Would You Baptize an Extraterrestrial?* (with Father Paul Mueller, SJ). He also has hosted science programs for BBC Radio 4, been interviewed in numerous documentary films, appeared on *The Colbert Report*, and for more than ten years he has written a monthly science column for the British Catholic magazine, *The Tablet*.

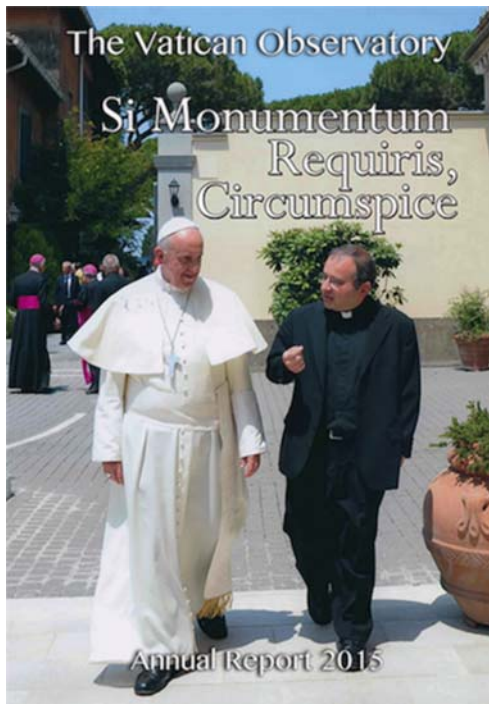
Dr. Consolmagno's work has taken him to every continent on Earth; for example, in 1996 he spent six weeks collecting meteorites with a NASA team on the blue ice regions of East Antarctica. He has served on the governing boards of the Meteoritical Society; the American Astronomical Society Division for Planetary Sciences (of which he was chair in 2006-2007); and IAU Commission 16 (Planets and Satellites). In 2000, the small bodies nomenclature committee of the IAU named an asteroid, 4597 Consolmagno, in recognition of his work. In 2014 he received the Carl Sagan Medal from the American Astronomical Society Division for Planetary Sciences for excellence in public communication in planetary sciences.



Annual Report 2015



Annual Report 2015




80th Anniversary
of Specola Vaticana in Castel Gandolfo
Internal Symposium

14 - 18 Sept. 2015

On September 29, 1935, Pope Pius XI officially inaugurated the new headquarters of the Specola Vaticana in the Papal Palace of

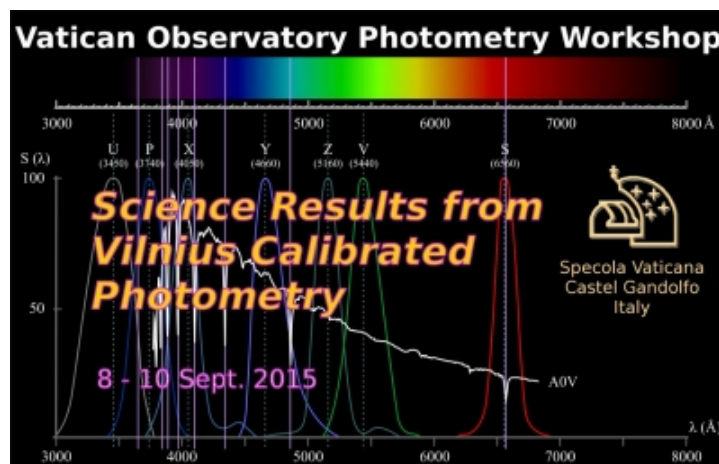
Castel Gandolfo. With new telescopes, a new spectra laboratory, and a young staff of Jesuit scientists, this inauguration marked the beginning of an intense period of scientific achievements at the Vatican Observatory. Now, eighty years later, the members of the current Vatican Observatory are joining with our adjunct scholars to celebrate this anniversary with an internal symposium that explores the scientific and cultural work being undertaken at the Observatory today.

 Program Symposium



Vatican **Photometry** Workshop

8 - 10 Sept. 2015





Vatican **VVV** Workshop



VVV Rationale



VOSS 2014



Pope Francis meets VOSS2014 Students



Education and Research Opportunities

The Vatican Observatory promotes education and research opportunities

The Vatican Observatory is committed to scientific astronomical research, education, and the promotion of scientific enterprise by being one of the founding members of the **International Network of Catholic Astronomy Institutions (INCAI)** which organizes the workshop "**Exploring the Nature of the Evolving Universe III**" to be held at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago from the 19 to the 24 of August, 2013.

The International Network of Catholic Astronomical Institutions was established in the summer of 2008 for the promotion of education and research opportunities for faculty, staff, and students in astronomy and space sciences. The partnership between the Vatican Observatory and the Catholic Universities has enabled graduate students to conduct research at the Vatican Observatory.



Publications



Download Annual Report 2014



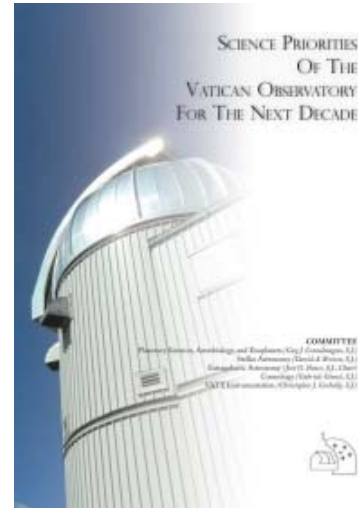
Science Priorities



Annual Report 2014



Science Priorities of the Vatican Observatory



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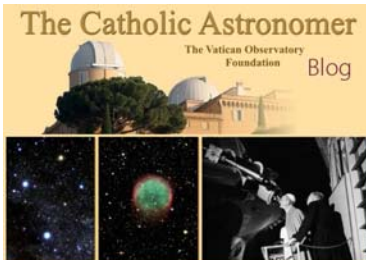


Photo Gallery - VATT Images



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