PREPARE YOURSELF FOR FAITH & CULTURAL ENRICHMENT, INSPIRATION AND PERSONAL GROWTH.

With ancient culture dating back nearly 3,000 years, Italy has some of the most fascinating history in all of Europe. As the seat of the Catholic Church, it provides an unparalleled opportunity for religious exploration. The social diversity, ancient history and fascinating traditions you’ll encounter will present endless opportunities for cultural immersion, enduring connections and personal and faith transformation. We invite you to experience beauty, tradition and culture while exploring your faith in a whole new way.

Bon Voyage!
Today we depart the U.S. for Rome, Italy.

Benvenuto, Italia!
This morning, we arrive in the “Eternal City,” Rome. We’ll waste no time, as we begin our adventure with an active exploration of “Roma, Eterna!”

• Our first-hand introduction to Italian culture begins by experiencing many of Rome’s most iconic sites.
• Expert local guides will explain the past and present significance and importance of these sites, including: Hadrian’s Pantheon, St. Patrick Church, Chiesa del Gesu a Roma (St. Ignatius Loyola’s Grave), the Trevi Fountain and the Spanish Steps.
• The monumental, ornate and historic Piazza Navona is known for, among other things, being a fantastic place to enjoy gelato. Here, we’ll get our first life-changing taste of authentic Italian ice cream!

Tonight, we’ll dine like joyful Romans at our “Welcome to Italy” dinner.
Vatican City
This morning, we’ll step into the world’s smallest country and the heart of the universal Catholic Church: Vatican City.
- Experience a powerful and memorable, in-depth and hands-on experience of the Vatican.
- We’ll have an expert-guided tour of the Sistine Chapel, with its breathtaking frescos by Michelangelo and the Raphael Rooms. We’ll explore the priceless masterpieces in the Vatican Museums.
- Next, we’ll meet with an official Vatican emissary, a Catholic Priest who lives and works in the Vatican.
- Following our visit to the Vatican, we’ll enter St. Peter’s Basilica, and learn why it is the most important church in the Catholic faith.
- This afternoon, we will take part in a service project in conjunction with local Roman students.

City of Monuments and Ruins
Some of Rome’s most epic highlights await you today!
- This morning, we’ll explore the Colosseum. Here we’ll discover the truth about whether Christians were really fed to lions to entertain the Roman citizens. With the assistance of our local Roman expert, we’ll marvel at the construction and learn what the tunnels under the arena were used for.
- Next, walk through ancient ruins of the Roman Forum dating back more than 2,000 years.
- Our exploration isn’t complete without traversing Palatine Hill and Fori Imperiali.
- After lunch, we’ll apply the inspiration that springs from all this antiquity as we take part in a hands-on art lesson with a local Roman artist.
- After dinner we’ll have time for discussion, reflection and journaling.

Pisa and the Beach
Today we’ll explore one of the most iconic cities in Italy: Pisa!
- The Italian countryside rolls by as we gaze at the ancient Italian towns along the way. You’ll note the progression of architectural styles through the region, culminating in the Romanesque style made so famous in Pisa.
- Explore the Leaning Tower—you may find yourself posing for a picture as you demonstrate your strength by “holding up” the tilting monument.
- Pisa is one of Italy’s great souvenir stops, so we will take a little time to shop the local vendors.
- La dolce Vita! We’ll make our way to the Mediterranean coast for some time on the beach near Viarregio.

Upon arrival in Florence, you will be greeted by one of Gonzaga University’s highly acclaimed staff members who will accompany you for the duration of your journey.
Enjoy a welcome dinner with a Gonzaga great: Professor Henry Batterman. Together you will dine on a meal prepared in the tradition of the Tuscan region.

Florentine Culture, Architecture & Art
This morning, we’ll encounter the city of the Medici, Firenze! Our introduction to this majestic city is made possible for Quo Vadis students only through our partnership with Gonzaga in Florence. Begin the day at the University’s campus and learn first-hand why their program is one of the most renowned study abroad programs for American college students.

- Meet legendary Professor Mercedes Carrara for an architectural tour of this famous Renaissance city.
- Prepare to be in awe as we visit the magnificent Santa Maria Novella.
- We move on to the acclaimed Accademia Gallery, where the most famous of Michelangelo’s works is on display—the Statue of David.
- Gain an understanding of the impact of these key sites on the Florentines, past and present.
- Enjoy a lunch in Florence as a college student would with the infamous “Bruno’s Special” at La Spada Ristorante. Immerse yourself in historic gothic architecture at Il Duomo Santa Maria del Fiore, also known as Il Duomo, or simply, “the cathedral.” This historic cathedral was deemed a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1982!
- Descend into the Cathedral Santa Reparata, which was the original Florentine cathedral in ancient times, on top of which Il Duomo was constructed.
- Attend a welcome mass with a priest from Gonzaga at the awe-inspiring, private, Santi Apostoli Church—a rare opportunity made available to Quo Vadis students.
- Artists, performances and entertainment converge in a distinct Italian way at Teatro del Sale. Dinner is served family-style, leading to conversations and an organic cultural exchange.

Art and Man
Today we’ll gain a deeper understanding of Italian history and culture as we tour the Uffizi Gallery.

No trip to Florence is complete without strolling through Ponte Vecchio, known for its small shops and merchants.
Next, you’ll make an impact on Florence as we embark on an afternoon of meaningful community service.
- Pasta for English: This is a truly special night in Florence. You’ll be welcomed into the home of a local family who’ll teach you the true art of Italian pasta-making. In turn, you’ll provide an English lesson. The ensuing cultural exchange will deliver benefits that last for years to come.

Firenze!
On your final day under the Tuscan sun, students will have the unique opportunity to choose from the following activities:
- Guided E-bike tour throughout the Tuscan hills.
- Trip to the Tuscan Towers—highlighting the secret passageways of the Medici.
- Guided visit at the Ferrari Factory.
- Guided experience of the Galileo museum.
- Tasting tour at the Perugina Chocolate Factory.
- Immersive Italian at Gonzaga in Florence.
- You’ll also trek high up on a hill to the historic Piazza Michelangelo. From this vantage point, you’ll take in the most phenomenal views of the city.
- Gather with a group of local students and refugees to practice the universal language of friendship: soccer!
- Finally, we’ll enjoy an Italian farewell dinner and reflect upon the many ways our experiences in “The Boot” have inspired us, taught us and transformed us.

Arrivederci!
This morning we’ll begin our journey home. Buon viaggio!