

Dr. Cesareo, president of Assumption College, together with trustees, Assumption Rome students, and members of the Assumpionist community in Rome

From October 1-8 more than fifteen of the twenty-five members of the Assumption College Board of Trustees, the body in the American higher educational system that bears primary responsibility for the institution's mission, sets institutional priorities, determines the budget, and hires senior management, and many of their spouses were in Rome for its first-ever visit, a visit with multiple purposes.

First, the Board wished to focus on their primary responsibility as a body, namely safeguarding the mission of the institution. In order to do so they spent an entire day listening to a series of talks beginning with the superior general, Fr. Benoît Grière, on the role of trustees at an Assumptionist institution. He addressed such topics as the meaning of Assumption College as a mobilizing work of the congregation, his expectations for College trustees, and avenues of broader collaboration between the College and other Assumptionists educational institutions.

Fr. John Franck, assistant general in charge of education, spoke about Fr. d'Alzon, the person and his vision, emphasizing his desire to penetrate the world with a Christian idea and to confront what Fr. d'Alzon identified as three of the major ills of the modern world, ignorance (of the faith), indifference, and unbelief.

In the afternoon, Fr. Richard Lamoureux, former superior general and a current member of the Board of Trustees, presented the results of the international Assumptionist education congress recently held at the College in Worcester which produced a set of guidelines for Assumptionist institutions. The day's retreat ended with small group discussions aimed at determining how trustees can best support the Assumptionist mission of the College in a consistent and thorough fashion. Second, the board wished to see first-hand the Rome campus established on the grounds of the Assumptionist general house three years ago and to meet the current contingent of students and faculty members. Already the program has received national attention and acclaim. It was also the occasion to unveil new signage recognizing the Villino as the Rome campus of the College and to enjoy an evening with the students. Third, the Board wished to fulfill a long-held desire to spend more time together on an informal basis. To do so they took advantage of their visit to Rome to get to know the Eternal City better under the expert direction of Dr. Cesareo, a seasoned guide of Rome. They were fortunate enough as well to attend an audience with Pope Francis and to visit two Papal Congregations, those of Catholic Education and of the Doctrine of the Faith to set the policies of the organization, and appoint (and fire) senior management personnel.