Celebrating
50 years
(1962–2012)
Fifty years of transforming lives...

WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED AT LOYOLA...

University Chicago in 2001, one of its most dynamic attributes that immediately stood out to me was the Rome Center. I felt this program was the jewel in the University’s crown that truly sets us apart from other American universities. It also became clear that this strong and unique program, with a rich history and long track record of success, was still ripe with possibilities and more relevant than ever. During my early tenure, John Felice, our beloved and then “retired” founder, visited me often and shared this deep vision of a promising future.

Today, the term “study abroad” is common among American universities, but in 1961, when young theology professor John Felice crafted his idea for a permanent American liberal arts program in Rome, a formal study abroad experience was rare.

That early inception of the Rome Center—to foster education and tolerance among people of various religious, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds through a liberal arts education and overseas experience, rooted in a deep Jesuit tradition—was a concept far ahead of its time.

The John Felice Rome Center is the oldest continuous American program in Italy. Today, we own one of the largest American campuses in Europe. The program began by changing the lives of 92 students in spring 1962, and now it has inspired nearly 16,000 Americans.

As much as 50 years ago or as recently as last semester, you called this special place “home.” May you take pride in your status as a JFRC alumnus.

IT IS A GREAT HONOR TO LEAD...

the John Felice Rome Center at such a significant and pivotal time in its existence. Fifty years is indeed an amazing milestone, and the fact that we are one of the only programs in Italy able to claim such a long, successful history makes it even more incredible. We began as pioneers in study abroad programming, and now we are the expert veterans, the program to which others aspire. The Rome Center is truly a leader in expanding overseas experience, rooted in a deep Jesuit tradition—was a concept far ahead of its time.

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Emilio Iodice

Vice President and Director, John Felice Rome Center

It is a privilege to work with such a grateful and supportive alumni group. You are an inspiration to us and future students. I look forward to realizing new dreams and goals in our shared future, with you and every student who walks through our doors.

Michael J. Garanzini, S.J.
President and CEO, Loyola University Chicago

When I first arrived at Loyola...
I REMEMBER SITTING IN MY DORM ROOM... 

Kate Felice  
JFRC Class of Winter '69

at Seattle University in the early 1960s, thinking how glamorous it would be to spend a year abroad. I heard about a new program called the Loyola University Chicago Rome Center for Humane Studies through my cousin, who attended the first semester in spring 1962. At the time, tuition, room, board, round-trip airfare, and a two-week tour of Europe cost just over $2,000.

In fall 1962, I left Portland, Oregon, and headed for Rome amidst the tears of my father who thought I might never return. He was partially right! The moment I set foot on a plane bound for New York 50 years ago, my world and my life would change forever.

Looking back on 50 years of the Rome Center and my time here, I recall fondly my year as a student at CVIS (the first campus), our travels to amazing places, the fantastic faculty and administrators who left lasting impressions on us, and the city of Rome itself—its citizens patiently teaching us to appreciate their way of life at times so foreign to our own, at times better than our own. Often we don't realize the real transformation that has taken or is taking place until months or years after we return home. We don't realize that what we thought was simply “the best time of our lives” also influences the choices we make and changes our views of the world.

After my student days, I worked at the Rome Center for more than 30 years on all four campuses and for 12 different directors. In 1975, John Felice and I were married. Perhaps no one’s life has been transformed by the decision to attend the Rome Center more than my own. And I’m so proud that the Rome Center not only has stood the test of time but also continues to capture the minds and hearts of young people every year.

IN 1972, OUR COUNTRY WAS AT WAR IN VIETNAM...

Paula Nori Hennessey  
JFRC Class of Spring '72

One night at the Rome Center we heard, through Radio Free Europe, that President Nixon was sending in more troops. Some of us met and decided to appeal to Pope Paul VI to speak on our behalf. We composed a letter and sent it to the Pope. In it, we explained that we were American students concerned about our country—especially family members and friends who were fighting in Vietnam.

Someone contacted John Felice and gave him tickets to the audience with the Pope, he asked us American students to make a writing a column about our trip to Rome, including our journey aboard the ship that carried us across the Atlantic. I sent my entire back to Chicago via air mail in that long-ago day when we communicated by such primitive means!

What was it like to be part of the first Rome Center class? 

Peter: Both Peggy and I were on staff at the Loyola News—the student paper that later became the Loyola Phoenix—and I was writing a column about our trip to Rome, including our journey aboard the ship that carried us across the Atlantic. I sent my entire back to Chicago via air mail in that long-ago day when we communicated by such primitive means!

What was the trip to Rome like? 

Peggy: I had never been to Europe or ridden a ship before. There were passengers aboard our ship who were being deported by the US government. I don't remember the entire trip taking 12 days, but it did. The ship stopped in Barcelona and a few other spots before docking in Naples. From there, we took a wild bus ride to Rome.

Peter: Both Peggy and I were on staff at the Loyola News—the student paper that later became the Loyola Phoenix—and I was writing a column about our trip to Rome, including our journey aboard the ship that carried us across the Atlantic. I sent my entire back to Chicago via air mail in that long-ago day when we communicated by such primitive means!

What was it like to be part of the first Rome Center class? 

Peggy: Being part of that first group was great, because we did pretty much whatever we wanted. There were some young Italian men studying engineering nearby the campus, and there were some fluctuations that went on between them and some of the girls staying at the Rome Center. I think that made Father Felice very nervous. There weren’t many rules that we had to follow, and I don’t even think there was a curfew.

Peter: The fact that this was 50 years ago is a bit frightening! We stayed in buildings that had been assembled originally to house people for the 1960 summer Olympics in Rome. Since we were the first bunch, I’ve often said that our special task was to do all the things that the University wanted to do. It wasn't until the future.

What were your perceptions of studying abroad in those days? 

Peggy: At the time, it seemed like a pretty extraordinary concept to study abroad. The formation of the Rome Center kept with the Loyola that was about—a very good liberal arts school. In that sense, the Rome Center fit well into the curriculum. People seemed less focused on their careers then, and many embraced the idea of a broader humanistic education.

Peter: In the 1950s and 1960s, studying abroad was not an experience a lot of Americans had. I'm glad students have more of these kinds of opportunities today, but the world has changed so much. For us, this was really something special. Now, so many students pursue experiences outside the US.

What did you think of John Felice? 

Peggy: Father Felice was pretty amazing in a lot of ways. A Maltese man who spoke fluent Italian, he had all sorts of contacts in Rome that supported the creation of this program. He was conscious of someone who was building something impressive in an environment in which he felt very comfortable. I think that was a real benefit to Loyola.

Peter: I remember driving around Rome with him by car, running errands. I wear he met and had conversations with half a dozen Maltese concierges and other people he knew around the city. He was an interesting and colorful aspect of our time at the Rome Center. Though we sometimes got into trouble, he was always very supportive of his students.

What memory stands out for you? 

Peggy: Back in the early 1960s, there were parts of Germany especially—entire buildings and Stuart blocks—that had not been rebuilt after World War II. That made me conscious of the fact that there had been a world in a very different way. That, 50 years later, may not be the same for others who visit those same areas.

Peter: On our last visit to St. Peter’s before the semester ended, there were barriers erected around flooring that was being torn up for making some kind of preparation (new wiring, perhaps) for the opening of Vatican II in the fall. I jumped over the barriers and grabbed a few floor fragments, special relics of the coming Second Vatican Council, which I still have today.

The Felice Award

Loyola paid special tribute to the John Felice Rome Center by presenting the first Felice Award at this year’s annual Founders’ Dinner on June 2. Named after John Felice, this award will be given annually to a JFRC alumna/us who has shown exemplary leadership in business and community and support to the Rome Center.

The first recipient of the Felice Award was Leonard P. Slotkowski Jr. (JFRC ’65–’66, BA ’69, MEd ’72).
Housing

If you would like to make hotel reservations for Sept. 28–30, JFRC alumni(e)s receive an exclusive room rate of $229 at the JW Marriott Chicago, a four-star, four-diamond hotel. Located at 151 W. Adams Street, the JW Marriott Chicago is in direct proximity to all weekend events.

To reserve your room at the exclusive $229 rate, please call 800.303.0104 and reference the JFRC or go to LUC.edu/cinquanta/housing.

Scheduled Events

SATURDAY EVENING LA FESTA!

 Held at the exclusive Union Station in downtown Chicago, this evening gala will be held from 6:00 to 11:00 p.m., beginning with a cocktail hour that features a premier open bar and passed hors d’oeuvres. Enjoy mingling among longtime friends and fellow JFRC classmates. A plated, three-course dinner will be served at 7:15 p.m., including a welcome from JFRC Director Emilio Iodice. The event will conclude with dancing and cocktails. For guests dining at Union Station, valet parking is $15 per car starting at 5:45 p.m. See the available ticket prices below.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON OUTINGS

Whether a local Chicagoan or out-of-town alums, take advantage of a Saturday afternoon outing with classmates.

Chicago Pizza Tour

11 am–2:30 pm • $60 per person

Sample a variety of savory pizzas, including deep dish, tavern style, artisanal, and Neapolitan as you travel by bus through several Chicago neighborhoods. A special addition to the tour will be Felice’s, Loyola’s new pizzeria, which pays homage to Roman-style pizza experienced while attending the John Felice Rome Center.

LUMA Tour and Lunch

11 am–2 pm • $40 per person

Take an exclusive tour of the Loyola University Museum of Art (LUMA), located at Loyola’s Water Tower Campus, followed by lunch at Chicago’s new Italian eatery Bar Toma, where you’ll enjoy pizza, a mozzarella bar, wine, and homemade gelato.

The Art Institute of Chicago’s Modern Wing Tour and Lunch

11 am–1:30 pm • $70 per person

Enjoy a private guided tour of the Art Institute of Chicago’s Modern Wing, led by one of the institute’s professional art educators. The tour illuminates the story of the building’s design by architect Renzo Piano and features highlights of paintings from Picasso, Gonzalez Torres, Dalí, and others. At the conclusion of the tour, enjoy lunch in the Museum Café, which features sustainable and local ingredients.

Architectural Boat Tour

11 am–2:30 pm • $35 per person

Experience the Chicago Architecture Foundation River Cruise aboard Chicago’s “First Lady,” a must for out-of-towners and Chicagoans alike. Certified volunteer tour guides provide an overview of historic and modern architectural styles plus many stories about the people who designed and built Chicago.

SUNDAY EVENTS

Sunday Mass 10 am–11 am • Free

Brunch 11 am–1:30 pm • $40 per person

Enjoy a final opportunity to join fellow JFRC alumni during a special JFRC Mass, held at the beautiful St. James Chapel in the Quigley Center of the Archdiocese of Chicago, followed by brunch with a mimosa toast at Loyola’s Water Tower Campus.

Tickets

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL! Before September 1 • $200

REGULAR PRICE FOR ALUMNI After September 1 • $300

Your past. Their future.

FOR 50 YEARS, THE JFRC HAS TRANSFORMED

the lives of 16,000 students, including you. A term or year in Rome results in what most alumni describe as “the best time of their lives.” Fifty years may seem like a long time, and for the study abroad industry it is, but our alumni are relatively young compared to other universities.

Fifty years is just the beginning.

Given the collective young age of our alumni, there is a need and an opportunity to establish a healthy planned-giving program to help secure the next 50 years and beyond for the JFRC and its students. Planned giving, or deferred giving, is a key philanthropic provision that directly impacts and helps sustain the Rome Center’s future. It serves as the backbone of most mature and healthy institutions.

Making a planned gift is not just for people who are wealthy, nor does it need to be complicated. In fact, many find planned giving allows them quite easily to make a larger charitable contribution than they thought possible. A planned gift can be as simple as adding language to your will that allocates a portion of assets to the Rome Center. It can mean adding the Rome Center as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy, IRA, or real estate, or it can take the form of a Charitable Annuity Trust, which provides lifetime income to donors.

By considering a planned gift today, you are not only helping the JFRC reach its $4 million planned gift goal for the insemi campaign but also becoming a stakeholder in the Rome Center, are considering making provisions, or would like more information, please contact Elaine Kreuz, JFRC director of development, at ekreuz@luc.edu.

Insie mine: goal: $12 million

Your planned gift will help us move toward our campaign goal.

If you already have made provisions in your estate plans for the John Felice Rome Center, are considering making provisions, or would like more information, please contact Elaine Kreuz, JFRC director of development, at ekreuz@luc.edu.

LUC.edu/cinquanta

Cinquanta! Celebrating 50 Years of the Rome Center

We are pleased to announce details for Cinquant! Celebrating 50 Years of the Rome Center, sure to be the party of the half century, September 28–30, 2012. Join us for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reunite with fellow classmates, meet new friends, and celebrate a historic milestone in the life of the John Felice Rome Center. The weekend’s highlight is La Festa, a Saturday-evening gala and benefit at Chicago’s Historic Union Station where JFRC alumni can share memories over passed hors d’oeuvres, a premium open bar, and a plated three-course dinner. Individual class reunions are being planned for Friday, and the weekend will be rounded out with Saturday afternoon activities and a Sunday Mass and brunch.

Register online for this event at LUC.edu/cinquanta/registration.

Questions? RomeReunion@luc.edu
Cinquanta! Celebrating 50 years of the Rome Center

September 28–30, 2012 • Chicago

Register today, make your housing arrangements, and learn more about this once-in-a-lifetime event at LUC.edu/cinquanta.

We are counting the days until Cinquanta! Celebrating 50 Years of the Rome Center, an all-class reunion and celebration in honor of the 50th anniversary of the John Felice Rome Center. Here are a few highlights to look forward to:

- A 50th Anniversary Rome Center commemorative book
- La Festa!—Saturday-night gala and benefit
- Pizza tour, architectural cruise, and other fun outings
- Mingling with JFRC staff and dignitaries
- Exploring the scenic and historic Windy City
- Sunday Mass and brunch