



Faith and Reason

A Re-reading of Joseph Ratzinger

August 8-9, 2026 · Pollone, Piedmont Alps

The workshop proposes a reflection on the relationship between **faith and religion**, through a rereading of Joseph Ratzinger and of his message addressed to the heart of people in every age.

Through his thought, participants will be invited to rediscover the original meaning of the word “**catholic**”, from the Greek *katholikós*: not as a form of identity closure, but as a universal openness, “**for all**” and **open to all**. From this perspective, Christianity will be presented as a proposal capable of engaging faith, reason, and the concrete experience of human life together.

Starting from the reading of selected passages, ample space will be dedicated to personal reflection and dialogue among participants, with the aim of fostering a shared perspective and opening the way to possible future exploration and discussion.

Theme and Method

Ratzinger showed with particular clarity that Christian faith does not stand in opposition to reason, but seeks to defend and strengthen it, helping it to recognize its own limits and, precisely for this reason, to open itself to what transcends it.

The workshop will allow Ratzinger to speak in his own voice through selected passages from *Introduction to Christianity*, published in 1968 yet still remarkably relevant today—clear, accessible, and essential—and through selected excerpts from the 2006 Regensburg Lecture, often misunderstood in its public reception.

By placing these texts in dialogue, participants will be invited to appreciate the deep continuity of Ratzinger’s thought: from his years as a young theologian to his pontificate, with a constant focus on the relationship between faith, reason, and truth, and on the universal meaning of the Christian message.

Location

The workshop will take place in Pollone, a village in the Piedmont Alps between Turin and Milan, easily accessible by public or private transportation. The initiative is part of the activities of Studium (www.studium1.com), an intercultural and educational project open to all.

Program

Friday, August 7

7:30 PM	Welcome dinner
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Saturday, August 8

9:00-10:00	Faith and reason: who is Ratzinger and why this workshop?
10:00-11:00	Is it still possible to believe in today's world? - Introduction to the book
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-12:30	God: presence or illusion? The God of faith and the God of the philosophers - First part of the book
1:00-3:00 PM	Lunch break
3:00-4:00 PM	Jesus Christ: true man, true God. Cross and Resurrection: scandal or salvation? - Second part of the book
4:00-5:00 PM	Spirit and Christian mission in history; the Church holy and sinful - Third part of the book
7:30 PM	Dinner

Sunday, August 9

9:00-10:00	The Regensburg Lecture - September 12, 2006
10:30-11:30	And now? Final reflections and discussion

Organization and Leadership

The workshop will be led by two long-time collaborators of Joseph Ratzinger, recognized experts in Catholic theology, and moderated by the principal organizer in dialogue with participants from diverse backgrounds and sensibilities.

Damiano Marzotto Caotorta

He served for many years at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, working closely with Joseph Ratzinger, and later became Under-Secretary during his pontificate. He is the author of several important works, including Peter and Magdalene, a study on the relationship between man and woman in the Church. His long collaboration with Ratzinger makes him particularly well suited to guide a workshop centered on the essential elements of Christianity and on Ratzingerian thought.

Jacques Servais, S.J.

A Jesuit priest and theologian, he taught at the Pontifical Gregorian University and authored major studies on important theologians connected to Ratzinger's intellectual horizon, as well as a significant commentary on his Sorbonne lecture. At Ratzinger's request and under his patronage, he founded Casa Balthasar in Rome, of which he served as rector from 1990 to 2022. His deep familiarity with Ratzinger and his expertise in spiritual and systematic theology make him a valuable guide for exploring the heart of the Ratzingerian message.

Gian-Paolo Dotto

A biomedical researcher and educator, he has long cultivated dialogue between faith, culture, and human experience. He has organized numerous interdisciplinary initiatives and brings extensive experience in fostering reflective and open discussions among people from different backgrounds. As principal organizer, he will moderate the sessions and facilitate thoughtful and constructive dialogue among participants.

Information and Registration

For further information and registration: paolo.dotto@unil.ch