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# Insights

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## Digitization of Herculaneum Papyri Completed

BYU and Institute personnel recently traveled to Naples, Italy, to mark the completion of an Institute team's work of digitally imaging 1,600 papyrus scrolls from the ancient city of Herculaneum. On 4 June the Institute's Steve Booras, who supervised the team, and M. Gerald Bradford, associate executive director of the Institute, joined BYU professor Roger T. Macfarlane, the principal investigator of the Herculaneum papyri project, in presenting the final set of CDs containing the digitized images to Mauro Giancaspro, director of the library in Naples (the Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli) where the Herculaneum papyri are housed. They also presented a plaque commemorating the completion of the imaging.

Three days later, at the dedication ceremony of the library's new Office of Papyri, an event attended by top scholars, Booras and Macfarlane were honored for their successful efforts to image the papyri and to create an electronic archive of them. They in turn were presented with a plaque of appreciation for their

work, which is expected to help advance international research on the papyri by facilitating scholarly access to the superior images.

The work of imaging, accomplished in two phases over one and a half years, yielded more than 30,000 high-quality images of the scrolls. Many of the images made previously illegible and even unseen text (the scrolls were carbonized by the eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79) easily readable, to the delight of scholars. (For full reports on this project, see the February 1999 and July and November 2000 issues of *INSIGHTS*.)

The next step in the project, says Macfarlane, who chairs the Department of Humanities, Classics, and Comparative Literature at BYU, is to electronically stitch the images together for continuity in the text and then to work with the Biblioteca Nazionale and the International Center for the Study of the Herculaneum Papyri to publish and distribute the results. He estimates that some 100 scholars in Europe and the United States are working on the Herculaneum papyri but anticipates that "the release of these digital images will generate renewed interest in Herculaneum papyri research." 

## Doctrine of Exaltation Squares with Early Christian Belief

In 1998 Jordan Vajda wrote a remarkable master's thesis at the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology in Berkeley, California, entitled "Partakers of the Divine Nature': A Comparative Analysis of Patristic and Mormon Doctrines of Divinization." The thesis is remarkable both for what it has to say and, perhaps even more strikingly, for who is saying it: Jordan Vajda is a Dominican Catholic priest. At the present time, he serves in the Catholic campus ministry at the Newman Center adjacent to the University of Washington in Seattle.

The Institute is pleased to offer Father Vajda's thesis as the latest publication in the FARMS *Occasional Papers* series (see the enclosed order form).

"The underlying motive for this thesis," Father Vajda states in the new introduction that he has written for FARMS, "was my . . . perception that one connection between the Catholic Church and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints lay in the fact that those who sought to deny the label 'Christian' to the LDS Church were, more often than not, the very same people who would then turn around and attempt to deny this label to the Catholic Church—with the same reasons often being used in both instances to justify the conclusion. And since it was easy

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