



# Preparing for Your Semester in Bella Roma:

**The Christendom College  
Rome Program Student Guide**

**Fall 2012**

Welcome to the Christendom College Rome Program! You are about to embark on an exciting experience in the Eternal City. As you can imagine, a trip of this kind requires a considerable amount of preparation.

This guide is designed to *assist* you as you plan for your time in Rome. It will be useful as you can use this guide to answer any questions you might have throughout your preparation process. It is expected that each student will read and thoroughly understand all of the information in this guide. If the guide cannot answer all of your questions, then you may contact the Student Life Office at [studentlife@christendom.edu](mailto:studentlife@christendom.edu). While this guide is meant to be a key aid for you in your preparation, it is NOT intended to be exhaustive! You should also seek out other resources (books, websites, etc.) that will further prepare you for your travels and knowledge about international regulations.

Your parents will receive basic information about your Rome semester. While this guide is your personal copy for your possession, the information in this guide should be shared and discussed with your parents along the way. We also recommend bringing this guide with you to Rome. We understand that some items may be repeated throughout the guide. This is often done to keep information that may overlap between areas consistent. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Rome Program Coordinator or Student Life. We are happy to help you find the answers to your questions!

Thank you for your time and attention to this important information! We are confident this guide will build your anticipation of the Rome Program and prepare you for a wonderful semester!

## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Program Expectations .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Rome Program Policies and Rules .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Rome Program Rules and Requests .....	5
Sanctions .....	7
Dress Code .....	7
<b>Travel to Rome and Around Europe .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Airport Navigation and Airport Transportation Information .....	10
Transportation to/from Dulles International Airport to/from Christendom College .....	10
Staying on Campus in Front Royal Before or After the Rome Program .....	10
Arrival Instructions if you are Flying into Rome FCO International Airport Specifically .....	11
Planning for Travel Outside the Program .....	12
Luggage Storage Facilities .....	14
General Travel and Safety Tips for Your Trip to Rome .....	14
<b>Travel Documents .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Obtaining a Passport .....	16
<b>Insurance .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Packing for Rome.....</b>	<b>20</b>
School Supplies .....	20
Toiletries .....	21
Handy Personal Items .....	21
Laundry .....	22
Vitamins and Medications .....	23
Shoes and Clothes .....	23
Final Notes and Tips Concerning Packing.....	25
Packing for the Assisi and Siena Pilgrimage Week .....	26
<b>Basic Finance Guide .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Communication .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Internet and Email .....	31
Phone and Internet Use .....	31
<b>Final Notes .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Additional Information Related to Fall 2012 in Rome .....</b>	<b>33</b>
At the Airport .....	34
Weekend Travel .....	35
Book List.....	35
Program Trips .....	35

## Program Expectations

- The Rome Program, while being the experience of a lifetime, is quite intensive. You should be prepared for a hectic schedule and for minimal free time. Visiting a foreign country will require that you understand that some of your expectations may not be met, you will have to extend yourself in many areas including charity, tolerance, patience, and flexibility, the comforts of home will not be available, your room will not be the same, etc. Further, understand that simply due to the ways of life in another country, the best-laid plans can change at a moment's notice. You should be ready to be very busy, be ready for lots of change, and be ready to bring out the best in yourself in difficult times. Further, understand that due to the shortened semester, you will be in class approximately four hours per week for every class that you are taking. Noting this, take time now to prepare yourself.
- Think about how you can be more flexible and practice those new ways now before you depart so that you can exercise those new skills in Rome.
  - What are things in your personal character that may become difficult to handle in Rome? How can you improve these difficult qualities and bring out more of your positive ones?
  - Think specifically about how you can deal with those things now before you leave and begin acting on those new skills. For example, if patience is an issue for you, begin to practice now how you can deal with situations better when you become impatient.
- A positive attitude is a must in Rome! With such a small group, all the stresses of being in a foreign country, and the nature that intensive change can cause, there will be times when you may be negative or when you don't want to do something. Your attitude affects others. In the difficult situations that you may be personally experiencing, please remember that your attitude can directly affect those around you and how they are experiencing the trip. In those difficult times, please either ask for help from the Program directors or simply do all that you can to be positive, putting aside any negativity that you may be outwardly expressing to others. Look into your character and pull out all the strength you can to be a positive influence even in the difficult times. Of course, never forget to pray first in those situations! If something is really bothering you and needs to be addressed, speak with the Rome Program staff in private and not in front of the group. This will allow them to really hear out your need, better assist you and make any changes necessary.
- To help you capitalize on your time in Rome, we recommend that you spend the \$25 or so on a Rome guide and also consider learning some Italian now. You can begin learning the language by purchasing a basic Italian workbook. Then, when you arrive in Italy you will at least have a bit more context to figure out the new world around you. Regarding living in Rome, it is not possible to explain all of the possibilities available to you there! A guide will greatly aid you in this. We recommend you purchase a guide such as "The Blue Guide" or "The DK Guide" on Rome prior to your trip. If you are intending to do traveling outside of Rome, a "Rick Steve's" guide, a "Go College" guide or a "Let's Go" guide series may provide additional help in planning your excursions.
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## **Rome Program Policies and Rules**

Just as the rules and dress code on the home Christendom campus are set in place to maintain order and to help you to grow, the Rome Program has set policies and rules you are expected to follow and uphold during your travels and stay with the Rome Program. The following information will give you a good idea of what is expected.

- Remember that you will sign a behavior contract during your preparations for Rome. You should consider yourself on probation from now through your semester in Rome. Please be smart when it comes to your behavior. ***Do not do anything that could remotely jeopardize your participation in the Rome Program.***
- A substantial fine will be given to anyone missing class on the Thursday preceding a free weekend and the Monday following a free weekend.
- Failure to arrive at the hotel by 3:00 p.m. on the day of arrival for the program is a very hefty fine (effective only for that day). Anyone late beyond that day will not be permitted to participate in the program. If a student must be late beyond one day, they **MUST** speak with the Associate Dean of Student Life to see if permission to persist in the Rome Program may be granted.
- College provided storage for personal items is **NOT** available at the Front Royal campus or in Rome.

### **Rome Program Rules and Requests**

The rules listed in the student handbook apply in Rome. In addition, note the following items:

- 1) Illegal drugs are often treated more seriously in foreign countries than they are in the U.S. Use of any illegal drugs will not be tolerated and will result in automatic expulsion from the Rome Program.
- 2) Possession or use of alcohol in your rooms *outside of the Rome Program Policy guidelines* (these guidelines can be found on page 22 of the Rome Program handbook which will be given to you upon your arrival in Rome) is a reason for disciplinary action. The Rome Program staff members will further define all policies and appropriate use of alcohol upon your arrival in Rome. Here are a couple of basic things to know now about alcohol use, though.  
Permission to use alcohol in your room beyond what the Rome Program Policy guidelines permit may be granted by the Rome Resident Coordinator on an individual basis for a specific time and place only. If you want to have alcohol in your room, please *just ask* for permission! Failure to receive permission, repeated alcohol policy violations, and/or repeated actions of disorder and/or drunkenness are grounds for dismissal from the program.
- 3) Verbal altercations, arguing and combative conversation/actions with the Director, Associate Director or Residence Coordinator will not be tolerated. Students are expected to behave in an appropriate, respectful and composed manner. Any concerns or difference of opinions that students may have with the Director, Associate Director or Residence Coordinator must be handled in said manner which is a time and place appropriate manner. Failure to handle such situations in this fashion will result in sanctioning. If a

student is found to be continually engaging in such behaviors, expulsion from the Rome Program will be considered.

- 4) As a general rule, men are not allowed in women's rooms and vice versa. Male and female students may visit each other in Residence Candia apartments only from 6:00 - 10:00 PM each night. This allows plenty of time for studying, games, or a movie. Understand that extensions of these hours will not be granted.  
Further information can be found in your Rome Handbook, pages 20-21.
- 5) Music that is bothersome or offensive to other people must be turned off immediately. Failure to comply with common courtesy will result in disciplinary action.
- 6) Rooms are to be kept as clean and presentable as possible. Room checks may be done weekly and fines issued for noncompliance as determined necessary by the RC.
- 7) Smoking is not allowed in the bedrooms, out windows, in corridors, elevators, dining rooms, or on tours.
- 8) From Sunday through Thursday the curfew will be 1 am. On Friday and Saturday nights the curfew is 2 am. At curfew, students are to be at the hotel and in a gender appropriate area (ie. women in female rooms or patios and men in male rooms or patios). If you have a reason to be out later, you must notify the appropriate Rome Program staff member. The curfew is not a punishment. Conditions are different in Rome than they are in Front Royal where you are very used to the campus and the area. Flexibility regarding the curfew will depend on your age and the conditions at the time.
- 9) When you are leaving the residence by yourself or in a small group, either for a few hours in the evening or for a day or more, please tell someone where you are going.  
In this way, if you do not return, we will have some idea where to begin looking for you. It is strongly recommended that all persons go out with at least one other person at all times.
- 10) You will spend many weekends attending a museum, a talk, or a required trip as part of the program. Before you leave the city for a weekend outing, notify the Directors and/or the RC of your destination. Failure to notify the Directors and/or the RC will result in a minimum 25 Euro fine per person per night.
- 11) Guests are NOT permitted to stay overnight in your rooms. They must make their own accommodations. Since putting someone up in your room violates Italian law and endangers our ability to stay at the hotel in the future, the fine will equal twice the amount that the hotel would charge to have an extra person stay in the room. You may, however, make a request for accommodation at the front desk for a guest to stay in a separate room. Please just follow the guidelines set forth by the Rome Program staff upon your arrival.
- 12) Friends and/or family are not allowed to stay with the Christendom program during the Assisi and Siena portion of the semester.
- 13) One man and one woman may not go on an overnight or weekend trip together unless permission is given by the Directors and written or oral permission is granted by the parents of both parties.
- 14) Attendance at dinner is required unless specific permission is granted. If you know you are going to miss dinner or a meal, please inform the Director, Associate Director, or Residence Coordinator.
- 15) The usual rule for attendance at academic functions holds while participating in the Rome Program. Penalties for missing classes are set by individual instructors. Students who do not attend class or a tour should not attend any group meals for that day. Because of the

tendency to extend the long weekends by skipping Monday classes, a fine of €30 will be levied upon anyone who misses the last class on Thursday afternoon and the first class Monday morning. You cannot be required to attend any specifically religious function, however, you are encouraged to attend daily Mass, special Masses that are arranged, daily rosary and the retreat in Assisi.

### **Sanctions**

The Directors and/or the Residence Coordinator will decide on the appropriate sanction based on the offense committed. Because of conditions in the Rome Program, the sanctions can include verbal or written reprimands, fines, restriction, individual work assignments, loss of privileges, and/or suspension and removal from the Rome Program. If a student is removed from the Rome Program and sent home, they are automatically suspended from Christendom College for at least the remainder of the semester and forfeit any ability to complete the academic coursework for that semester. The student will also incur the costs of any damages, lost labor or costs to remove them from a program or event.

\*Please be advised that, as noted, late admits/arrivals to the program and early departures from the program are not permitted. Persons arriving late and leaving early are subject to immediate suspension from the program and substantial fine. It is up to the student to be on time to the program and to be sure that all travel arrangements allow for the program start and end time.

### **Dress Code**

Since there are a variety of events and variations of activity in Rome, there are various applications of dresscode. Below are descriptions as to what is applicable to each occasion. Violation of any of these codes will result in a 5 euro fine and the violator must change his/her apparel immediately.

- 1) **First Week Pilgrimage** to Assisi and Siena, Weekly Dinner, and Optional Trips
  - more casual clothing may be worn, except for the following: ripped clothing, sweat pants, shorts, athletic tank tops, flip-flops
  - **PLEASE NOTE:** Jeans ARE allowed, as long as they are not ripped or overly frayed.
  - **As always, Modesty Dresscode applies at all times.**
  
- 2) **Class and tour dresscode** (this dresscode is also applicable to other specified events)
 

Men:

  - Button-down shirts, polo shirts, khakis, or dress pants are dresscode, and your pants may have back patch pockets. Dress socks are not required – white socks are acceptable due to the challenging laundry situation in Rome. Ties are not required for class or tour dresscode, but are always appreciated. ☺
  - It is not dresscode, however, to have words, pictures, or numbers on your button-down or polo shirts (a.k.a. no sports shirts), nor are Cargo-style pants, jeans, and sweat pants dresscode for classes or tours.
  - Sweatshirts and hoodies are NOT permitted. Men should bring either a warm sweater, coat, or jacket to class or on tours if the weather is inclement.
  - Shoe requirements and tips are discussed below.

- Overall, dresscode is the same as Christendom dresscode with the exceptions of polo shirts, back patch pockets, more casual shoes, and the optional nature of ties and dress socks.

Women:

- Dress shirts/blouses, polo shirts, skirts, slacks/pants, and khakis are all dresscode attire, and pants may have back patch pockets.
- Additionally, many of the churches we visit on tours require women to cover bare shoulders, so a scarf or jacket may be necessary if wearing a sleeveless blouse.
- T-shirts, shirts/blouses with words or numbers are not permitted, nor are Cargo-style pants, sweat pants, and jeans class and tour dresscode.
- Additionally, sweatshirts and hoodies are NOT class or tour dresscode appropriate, so women should bring jackets, coats, or warm sweaters on tours or to class if the weather is inclement.
- See shoe specifications below
- Overall, dresscode is the same as Christendom dresscode with the exceptions of polo shirts, more casual shoes, and back patch pockets. The Christendom Modesty dresscode always applies. For more info on the modesty dresscode, please see the Student Handbook.

3) **Sunday Dresscode**

Men and Women: Several times throughout the course of the semester it may be required for the students to wear Sunday dresscode. The Rome version of Sunday dresscode is exactly the same as Christendom Main Campus Sunday dresscode. For specifics on Sunday dresscode, see the Student Handbook. *The student is responsible for bringing the clothing articles necessary for Sunday dresscode, such as a suit/sports coat, tie, or appropriate skirt/dress.*

Guys: Note that you will need to bring a suit/sports coat.

Girls: Note that you will need either a dress or a Sunday Dresscode appropriate skirt. We do recommend bringing a pair of your NICEST, dark-colored (black or grey tend to be dressier) dress pants in case of inclement weather. These must be PROFESSIONAL, full-length dress pants, i.e. no leggings, pants tucked into boots, etc.

4) **Other Christendom Events**

A Christendom Event is any outing or event, however informal, that the Director, Assistant Director, or Residence Coordinator has organized for the group (i.e. going to the beach, Opera, Ballet, Park, Soccer, etc.). In such a case, modesty rules apply, but clothes that are appropriate for the venue may be worn (i.e. no bikinis are to be worn to the beach; soccer shorts and t-shirts are appropriate for soccer; etc.).

5) **Papal Audiences**

If the audience is held in the square follow the guidelines for **First Week Pilgrimage**

6) **Meetings with Papal Dignitaries and Major Speakers**

Traditional Christendom Sunday Dress Code is required

7) **Shoe Dresscode**

Comfortable class shoes or sandals are acceptable. (Athletic sandals such as Teva, Choco, Crocs, or Keens are not allowed. Flip flops are also NOT permitted for class/tours.) Sketchers dress shoes are acceptable. Any questions regarding acceptable dress shoes should be directed to the Resident Coordinator.

## **Travel to Rome and Around Europe**

Travel in Europe is a very exciting adventure, but it can be a stressful experience if the proper arrangements and plans are not worked out well ahead of time and you don't really know what you are doing or what to expect. Here is some basic travel information that should help you in planning and to give you an idea of how things will work regarding your travel.

### **Airport Navigation and Airport Transportation Information**

All Rome Program Students are required to arrange for their own flight to and from Rome. The College does not offer a group flight to/from Rome. Students are also required to arrange and pay for their transportation to and from the airport, both in the U.S. and upon arrival in Rome. Read the sections below for an explanation of these costs.

Remember, you are solely responsible for all information regarding your flight, baggage regulations, etc. This applies to all Rome Program students; even those on the group flight. You should check the website of your air carrier in advance of your departure for any changes in regulations. Please also email your itinerary to Student Life so we have a copy in case of emergencies.

### **Transportation to/from Dulles International Airport to/from Christendom College**

Remember, even if you are using Washington Dulles International Airport you need to arrange your own transportation to/from Washington/Dulles International Airport. The College does not automatically provide this. If you need College transportation to access this airport or the metro where you can access Regan International Airport, contact Transportation Services at (540) 626-2900 x 1307 or email [transportation@christendom.edu](mailto:transportation@christendom.edu) at least three weeks in advance. The College Transportation Services Department will arrange transportation for you to/from the Front Royal Campus to/from Dulles or the Vienna Metro station for approximately \$30-35 each way and only within 48 hours of the program's beginning and end.

### **Staying on Campus in Front Royal Before or After the Rome Program**

Occasionally, Rome Program students desire to spend time on campus in Front Royal prior to or just after their Rome Semester for various reasons (they are travelling from Wash. IAD, want to say good bye to friends, etc.). Because the College is in session with the regular Front Royal class schedule during this time, and students are fully engaged in the academic pursuit, Rome Program students have limitations and special obligations for their stay on the Front Royal campus prior to departing for or returning from their semester in Rome.

- Rome Program students may not stay on campus in Front Royal for more than 3 nights and 4 days before their departure to or after their return from the Rome Program.

- Rome Program students are permitted one on-campus stay that is not to exceed 3 nights and 4 days before their departure and one additional stay of the same duration after their return from the Rome Program. Please keep this in mind if you are planning on attending any special events on the Front Royal campus such as Fall Orientation, Christmas or Spring Formal, Graduation, etc.
- Any Rome Program student staying on the Front Royal campus must be registered with Student Life at least one week prior to their scheduled stay and must be hosted by a current student who is on campus in Front Royal. The hosting CC Front Royal student should also register the Rome Program student as an overnight guest, as is usually done with any overnight visitors.
- Rome Program students visiting the Front Royal campus before they depart for their Rome Semester may only take meals in the Commons if they pay for each meal individually at the time the meal is taken.
- Any Rome Program student returning to the Front Royal campus for a special campus events (such as Christmas or Spring Formal or the like) should exercise a special courtesy and contact the professional staff/faculty member in charge of the event to seek permission/notify them of their desire to attend the event.
- Any Rome Program student visiting campus in Front Royal is expected to exhibit good behavior and follow all College policies during their time on campus.

### **Arrival Instructions if you are Flying into Rome FCO International Airport Specifically**

Walking through the Fiumicino Airport is fairly easy. After disembarking your plane, follow the signs for Baggage Claim (Ritorni Bagagli). At one point you will have to board a small in-airport train to get you to the baggage claim. Just keep following the signs and their accompanying arrows. Note: If you need money for your taxi/other transportation, keep your eyes open for ATM machines as you walk through the airport (but remember, we suggest you exchange about 150-200 euros before you depart the U.S. in case you can't find an operational ATM at the airport).

When you reach the point where lines have formed, get out your passport and stand in the lines (usually towards the left side rather than the right) for Non-EU (European Union) travelers. There should be electronic signs displaying which line is which over the booths. Present your passport to the official inside the booth and then pass through after he stamps it and motions you onward. After this you just need to collect your baggage and move towards the Exit or "Uscita" (again marked by arrows). There will be a wide doorway for those who have nothing to declare at Customs (which is YOU; at this point you have nothing to declare!) and then you will head into the outer airport. Outside these doors are people (family, friends, travel agents) waiting for the newly arrived passengers. Across from the door you just exited and to the right are another set of doors. Follow the signs for taxis until you exit the building through these doors.

Stand in line for a taxi (line is marked by yellow or white painted lines on the pavement). The official fee of the City of Rome for official Roman taxis is regulated at 40€ to and from Fiumicino Airport to the quarter of the city where the hotel is located in Rome. (It is 30€ for this service if you choose to fly into Rome Ciampino Airport.) However, minor fees may be added

for a number of passengers over 4. A tip is not required for the taxi. However, at least 60€ (the taxi fee plus a baggage fee, plus the service tip for the distance) is recommended for each ride to and from Fiumicino airport or Ciampino airport. Ignore anyone that tries to offer you a taxi ride and is not in a white, *officially marked taxi*. **Do not get into an unmarked taxi!** On that note, if you are asked to pay something ridiculous like 200 euro, know that you are not using an official taxi. Tell the taxi driver you want to go to:

Residence Candia  
Via Candia 135 B  
Roma, Italia

Have the hotel address written down clearly on a separate piece of paper so that you can just give it to the driver if you need to.

Another option for ground transportation once in Rome is a Rome Airport Shuttle (<http://rome-airport-shuttle.com>). The cost for this shuttle is approximately 40-50 euros per person. If you are traveling with more than one person, the cost per person decreases. For example, if you schedule the shuttle for you and four friends traveling with you, the cost goes down to about 20 euros per person. You can find out all the necessary information and arrange for transportation by using the above website.

Here is the very long, but useful link explaining the City Taxi Service from the Airport into the City of Rome:

[http://www.comune.roma.it/was/wps/portal!/ut/p/\\_s.7\\_0\\_A/7\\_0\\_21L?menuPage=/Area\\_di\\_navigazione/Sezioni\\_del\\_portale/Dipartimenti\\_e\\_altri\\_uffici/Dipartimento\\_VII/Trasporto\\_pubb-9-non\\_di\\_linea/TAXI/Tariffa\\_fissa\\_da\\_e\\_per\\_aeroporti/Fixed\\_rates\\_from\\_and\\_to\\_the\\_airports/](http://www.comune.roma.it/was/wps/portal!/ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_21L?menuPage=/Area_di_navigazione/Sezioni_del_portale/Dipartimenti_e_altri_uffici/Dipartimento_VII/Trasporto_pubb-9-non_di_linea/TAXI/Tariffa_fissa_da_e_per_aeroporti/Fixed_rates_from_and_to_the_airports/)

If you want this link emailed to you, email the request to [studentlife@christendom.edu](mailto:studentlife@christendom.edu)

### **Planning for Travel Outside the Program**

Determine your travel plans. Purchase your flight. If you would like to travel to other places during or after the program, start planning now, even if it is only preliminary. Get costs, ask past Rome students for recommendations, etc. *Then, when you have final dates for free weekends, you are ready to make reservations, etc.*

Lots of people take advantage of these free weekends to see other countries in Europe. These trips are best planned two to three months in advance if you want the best prices and if possible. Below are some popular, not to mention very affordable, airlines in Europe. The websites to check out are:

*easyjet.com*  
*ryanair.com*  
*wizzair.com*  
*skyeurope.com*

*skyscanner.net* for great rates on many different airlines.

Keep in mind that these airlines fly out of smaller airports, outside the cities (this is in reference to other cities, not just Rome), so check about the airport location and transportation before you book. Also, smaller airlines are often very restrictive regarding baggage, so be sure to check their regulations beforehand to avoid wasting money unnecessarily. These airlines are cheap, so don't expect too much, just realize it's worth it for the opportunity to travel!

There are cheap hostels and hotels everywhere, and they are often fairly nice. Check out:

*hostelbookers.com*

*bootsnall.com*

*hostelworld.com*

*guideforeurope.com*

Note about travelling with the opposite sex:

- Also, keep in mind that one man and one woman may not travel alone without expressed permission; doing so without permission could result in serious disciplinary action. So if you are planning on traveling with a member of the opposite sex, it is suggested that you ask permission before you purchase tickets; that way you will not be out of money later.

Note about hostels:

- When staying in hostels make sure you check and see if they offer towels/washcloths – many do not or charge extra for their use. You might just want to bring one of each anyway as hostel towels may be “questionable;” consider bringing a quick drying, thin towel and use your laundry line to hang things on. Just so you understand, a hostel is not a hotel – don’t expect it to be. They are typically very, very simple.
  - “Tip” about being out an about in a new place from a former Rome Program Student: Don’t be scared to go places! But do so with great prudence. Cities in Europe are like most cities in the states. They only seem more difficult to navigate because you are an outsider, they are less ordered than cities in the States, and mostly because you don’t know the language. Just keep your eyes open, be smart about how you carry your belongings, look confident, walk intently, and don’t do anything that could attract unwanted attention; i.e., singing and dancing, boisterous laughter, etc. in public places. Always prepare for trips in advance. Know where you are going, know how to get there, carry a map, etc. If you need to stop and reference your map or dig something out of your bag, DON’T do it openly. Try and find a more out of the way place (that is still safe), such as a coffee shop where you can stop and reference your map. If you do need to do this while you are walking down the street, stop and put your back up to a wall to better protect your belongings as you put your attention on your map, etc.
  - Try not to go to places alone if you can avoid it. Groups are tend to be a safer option because group travel allows you to look out for each other, gives more input into decision making, etc. Further, going with a small group can also just be more fun! You may have a better experience traveling with others who are just as interested in this “new adventure” as you are.
  - You may have many more questions and every person that has attended the Rome Program will have dozens of tips, suggestions, and personal thoughts to share with you.
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### **Luggage Storage Facilities**

Many students traveling before or after their time in the Rome Program find themselves needing storage. Below are some options in case you find yourself in this situation. These facilities are not recommended or endorsed by Christendom College; they are simply places students have used in the past. Any time you use storage facilities, you should exercise caution as you are using such facilities at your own risk. We recommend you research any storage facility thoroughly before use.

#### **Termini Train Station**

Lower level below Track 24  
(near the post office) Via Giolitti entrance  
open from 6:00 to 24:00  
Tel: 06-47825543 or 06-474 4777  
0-5 hours costs euro 3.80  
From the 6<sup>th</sup> hour it's 0.60 per hour  
24 hrs = euro 10.40  
From the second day the fee becomes euro  
5.00 (per day)

#### **Fiumicino Airport**

Terminal C, ground floor (International  
Arrivals) open from 06.30 to 23.30  
Tel: 06-6595 3541  
0 to 7 hours = euro 2.00  
7 to 24 hours = euro 3.50  
From the second day the fee becomes euro  
3.50 (per day)

Please remember that when you are storing items in these facilities or any facilities in general, you do so at your own risk. In general, it is prudent to refrain from bringing/storing valuables.

### **General Travel and Safety Tips for Your Trip to Rome**

- Always carry some form of personal identification (for example, your driver's license but never your passport unless you are directed to do so) on your person in a safe place or as advised by the Rome Program Directors.
- Always carry emergency contact information for both Rome and U.S. contacts.
- Know emergency plans and meeting locations.
- Once you are given the "Abbonamento Mensile" (or an integrated city transit pass) always carry it with you at all times – even if you don't believe that you will be utilizing a particular form of transportation. You can be heavily fined for using transportation without the proper ticket on you.
- Traveling outside of the city alone (on free weekends or the like) is not recommended. It is better if you can bring a travel partner if possible.
- Be smart about going places alone – ask the Rome Program Staff for advisement in this area. Most places are OK to visit alone, but other situations are not advisable (for example, going on a long night walk alone or going to certain areas of the city alone). Get to know the city first.
- As a matter of caution, it is a good idea to inform someone who is not in your travel group of where you are going and when you expect to return. It is also a good idea to inform your family of your travel plans, hotels, etc. so you can be reached if necessary.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Establish and utilize a method of communication with family, friends, etc. such as email, cell phone, etc.

- Utilize your resources. If you have questions, don't guess. Do research, and if your research doesn't prove fruitful, then ask the Rome Program staff for assistance.
- Follow your instincts – if something feels or seems unsafe – avoid it.
- In general, use caution as you would in any new place or large city. Just as you would if you were New York City, LA, etc., get a feel for the environment and learn about the area around you as best as you can and use caution appropriate to the environment.
- Plan ahead – While it is possible to find accommodation and transportation, it would be wise and ease a huge amount of stress when traveling if one makes a plan by arranging: lodging, transportation, etc. before you leave.
- Carry and USE a map at all times. This will build your confidence and provide useful with organizing your travel around the city or areas you are visiting.
- If you are taking prescription medications, bring enough for the duration of the trip. Bring a copy of your prescription just in case. Never mail medications overseas, they will be held up in customs.
- It would also be wise to inquire with friends or family members who have traveled abroad and seek their recommendations on preparing, packing and traveling abroad. They can also give you ideas on activities, restaurants and other great places to see and visit while in Rome. You may also ask the Rome Program staff if you have specific questions about Rome, packing, Residence Candia, the rules, or whatever else. However, do try to make sure you don't already know the answer (or that you haven't been given it in the guide or other documents) before you ask. ☺

## Travel Documents

### **Before You Leave**

#### **Obtaining a Passport**

Only a passport is required to participate in Christendom's Rome Program; students do *not* need a Visa.

You need to start the passport process at least 4 months prior to your departure. While you may have heard or read that processing your passport can take less time than that (which is true), we want you to be on the safe side. Depending on the state of the country, your previous living and travel experiences, the process could take up to 4 - 6 months. Best to prepare for that and be pleasantly surprised than to have the worry of a cancelled trip because you didn't allow enough of a margin.

You will need passport pictures to turn in with your Passport Application. You can have passport pictures done at the Shore Stop near the College, Wal-Mart and the like, or almost any store that has a photo developing station. You can apply for your passport by going to the County Clerk's Office, usually located in the local Court House and in some locations, you can apply at the post office. The Post Office here in Front Royal does handle passports, so that is an option for you. In order to apply you will need your passport pictures, either an old passport or a birth certificate (note – the birth certificate must be an original or official copy, not just a photo copy), a current form of identity such as your driver's license, and the completed application. For complete directions, see the following website:

[http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first\\_830.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_830.html)

Be sure you use your full legal name on EVERYTHING – no nick-names or shortened names.

You are only able to travel outside of the country with a passport for a maximum of 90 days. Students are responsible for obtaining a travelers/tourist visa if they intend on traveling outside of the country for more than 90 days. Please note that these are very hard to obtain unless you have a valid reason (like study at another European university, a job in Europe, etc.) to be out of the US longer and in another country longer than the 90 day allowance.

#### **Obtaining a Visa** (this is *not* necessary for Christendom's Program)

If you are planning on getting a Visa, you will need to do this on your own. Visas are necessary if you are planning on being out of the country for more than 90 days. It takes at least 3-4 months minimum to get a visa. Again, *visas are not necessary for Christendom's program.*

[http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa\\_1750.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html)

We recommend that each student be aware of the US State Department website specifically relating to travel. Explore this site for valuable travel information, embassy locations, passport questions, visa information, travel tips, etc.

<http://travel.state.gov/>

### **While You are En Route to Rome/Europe**

- Bring your passport with you on your person! Do NOT pack it in checked baggage!!
- Please leave a photo copy with a parent/guardian at home.
- Please bring 5 photocopies of your passport with you; these will need to be given to the Rome Program staff members on the day of your arrival. (Please don't pack these in checked baggage.)
- Do NOT place your passport in the same place where you place your copies of your passport! Separate them as you carry them on your person (again, not in your checked luggage).

### **Please know and bring along the following information**

- Your place of birth
- Your date of birth
- The full proper names of your parents
- The place of birth for both of your parents
- The date of birth for both of your parents
- Have your Social Security Number memorized

\*All of the above information should be on your person – i.e. not packed in checked baggage!\*

### **For Travel Within Europe**

- Do not carry your passport with your money, etc. but in another location on your person.
- Carrying a copy with you along with your passport is a good idea.
- Do NOT place your passport in the same place where you place a copy of your passport! Separate them as you carry them on your person (again, not in your checked luggage).
- Be prepared to provide the following to the Rome Program via email prior to your departure:
  - Your passport # (Please indicate if you do not have an American passport)
  - Your date of birth
  - Your place of birth (City + State [and if outside the USA, country as well])
  - Your arrival information in to Rome: Note: If you are taking a train into Rome from another location in Europe (as opposed to flying) and do not know the exact time of your arrival please indicate as much.
- For security purposes, you should also know your mother's maiden name. This is important when traveling to a country such as Italy. In European cultures, this is a very valued piece of information for identifying oneself.
- Bring a second form of photo ID with you such as a driver's license. This can be used at smaller venues such as internet cafes. Internet cafes require IDs for collateral while you are using their computers. It is better to use your drivers' license than a passport if possible in case you forget to pick it up at the counter when you leave, etc. This also allows you to carry something other than your passport when you are just running errands, thus reducing the risk of a lost or stolen passport.
- Be prepared to use your passport number frequently when registering with hotels and other reputable establishments. This is safe and often required by law before someone may stay in a hotel. The program will have done this each time we check into a hotel. We ask your understanding and prompt cooperation when we ask for your passport number. This may happen frequently during your trip depending on the itinerary.

- European law requires all hotels to register foreign travelers with the local government authority upon check-in, thus, you should expect this each time you stay at a new location.
- Please note; a passport is like a ticket or a “pass” to another country. Without the passport itself, it is useless. The passport number on its own, without the actual passport in hand, does no good to a thief. The actual passport itself in its “paper” or original format is what is desired. This “paper” or pass is the value, not the number. The use of a passport number on its own is perfectly safe to give to reputable establishments that request it – for example, the Rome Program or hotels/hostels that you stay in during your trip. The same is true of the photo copies. Since they are not original copies and do not have the valued passport paper, they are safer to carry. As well, this value of the passport itself is all the more reason to safeguard it from thieves, so use caution when you are carrying it. Without it, you will have a very difficult time as they are not easy to replace. Be prudent with the safekeeping of your passport.

Further note that the use of a passport number is not tied to your SSN, etc. So the theft or loss of your passport is not a threat to your ID as much as it is a threat to your easy departure from the country you are visiting. Losing a passport is different than losing a credit card or bank card. Passports aren't tied to your bank and ID in the same way that bank cards and SSNs are.

## Insurance

Please remember that health insurance that is valid in Europe/Italy is required in order to participate in the Rome Program! Be certain you have taken measures to insure that you are covered for your entire stay in Europe. This is VITAL! Student Life has some information about international student travel insurance if you are in need of resources in this area.

Discuss this with your parents, call your insurance company and be sure you are covered! Consider carefully your coverage. Medical care in Europe is very different from in the U.S. Ask the question, “If I have an injury that costs \$100,000, do I have a way to pay for it?” Discussing this question thoroughly with your parent/guardian will help ensure that you have a plan in place should serious injury occur. Note that travel health insurance policies are fairly inexpensive. A simple internet search will give you many options to choose from in addition to the companies that Student Life has information on. For example, if your insurance company will only cover an injury with a limit of something like \$10,000 – that is not that great. One single, simple injury can easily exceed \$10,000 or \$20,000. Paying \$200 now for travel health insurance that is more substantial could save you and your family thousands later.

- Valid health insurance is required.
- Inform your health insurance company that you are visiting Europe for approx. 3 months.
- Remember to contact your parents’ homeowner’s insurance company and arrange for your travel belongings to be covered under their policy.
- Remember that health, accident, & liability insurance are required to cover bodily and property damage. You will be required to provide proof of/verify international health insurance coverage.
- In general travel insurance is a good idea – most automotive insurance companies offer travel insurance if you are not covered under your parent’s home owners/renters insurance. AAA is also a commonly used travel insurance company. A good travel policy can be purchased for less than \$200 for 3 months.
- Student Life has brochures for two companies that sell student travel health insurance if you are not covered under a parent or guardian’s policy or if you do not find a viable option on your own. We don’t necessarily recommend these companies; they just send us their information to pass on to students.
- Life insurance is also something that travelers often purchase in addition to travel health and protection insurance. You and your family may find this is something you would like to consider as well. You are encouraged to discuss this option with your family/guardian.

## Packing for Rome

Packing for Rome can be a little daunting because most students don't fully know what will be available there and what they will really need. The following are some helpful packing ideas. Please note that they are NOT exhaustive. (In other words, you may find that you pack more or less based on your own habits, needs, etc.) Please remember, however, that you are responsible for your own packing. While this is meant to aid you, it is YOUR job to pack well and to take the initiative in planning for your trip.

Consider: If you are not required to bring something, think carefully about it!

If you are not using it now or you don't use it on a regular basis, chances are you won't need it in Rome.

Rome is not a third world country! You can buy many common items there.

### School Supplies

- Notebooks with paper (for notes, quizzes, and tests)
  - Pens/pencils
  - General school supplies that you have used in the past for a basic college class (erasers, mini stapler, sticky notes, small pair of scissors, markers, highlighters, folders, etc.)
  - Index cards (these are particularly helpful for Italian class)
  - A small Italian dictionary
  - A small notebook with a HARD COVER for writing on the go (for tours, announcements, etc.)
  - Laptop computer: If you have a laptop computer, BRING IT TO ROME! You will need it for papers and it is incredibly useful for checking e-mails, keeping in contact with people back at home, and doing research for trips/travels over in Europe. If you don't have a laptop and can't borrow one from a family member, try to arrange sharing one with another Rome student or be prepared to spend money at the internet cafes for your computing needs.
  - USB/flash drive (for saving papers and info and then printing elsewhere)
- You will need to bring all of the required textbooks over to Rome with you in your packed baggage. The only exceptions are the Italian textbook, which is available to rent over in Rome, and the packets for Apologetics and Roman Perspectives. Take steps to get all of your books ahead of time since there is a fine for neglecting to purchase required books and it is nearly impossible to obtain them once you are in Rome. Former Rome students have recommended reading Ovid and Livy beforehand, as well as learning a little Italian, just to get a jump-start on the semester and make things easier later. It is a GREAT idea to buy a small Italian/English Dictionary – these are incredibly helpful.
  - As stated above, it may be necessary for you to type papers for various classes, so be prepared and either bring a laptop or arrange to borrow someone else's laptop if a typed paper is required. It is very important to bring a USB/flash drive for printing papers.

### **Toiletries**

All of these things are available in Rome in various brands that may be different than what you are used to in the U.S. Further, the cost may be more for these items in Rome.

Please note: As far as personal items are concerned, you can make your own decisions. What's below is a list of options for you to consider.

- Toothpaste (8 oz. is good for most people)
  - Toothbrush/floss/Listerine (think about what you usually need for your teeth)
  - Shampoo/conditioner (See note below)
  - Lotion
  - Soap or body wash (20 oz)
  - Facial wash (if you use it)
  - Sunscreen
  - Razors
  - Deodorant
  - Brush/comb/hair ties (whatever you usually use)
  - Contact solution/spare contacts: Solution is pretty expensive in Rome, so bring enough for the whole semester
  - Glasses (if you wear them – sometimes people have eye allergies in Rome, so glasses are an important potential substitute for contacts)
  - Hand sanitizer (bring an easy-to-carry bottle)
  - Band-Aids, anti-bacterial gel, knee/ankle braces/ice-or-heat-packs – whatever foreseeable things you'll need to take care of injuries
  - Ladies: Make-up (if you use it) adequate for the whole semester. Also, bring whatever personal products you will need for the semester.
  - Over the counter medications that you would regularly use over a 3 month period.
- With shampoo and conditioner, it is good to bring enough to last the semester for two reasons. 1) It is sometimes expensive in Rome and you may not be able to find the brands you like. 2) It is easy to use/discard by the end, which will leave you additional room and weight space when you are repacking at the end. This is great for gifts/souvenirs and other new additions to your stuff. This approach applies to most of the things on this list, including contact solution, lotion, body wash, etc.
  - Also, it is very helpful to have travel-size toiletry containers (sold very cheaply at Walmart) for weekend trips or for your carry-on bag to and from Rome. You can just fill them with the stuff from your larger bottles and take them on planes, etc.

### **Handy Personal Items**

- Alarm clock (battery operated, with extra batteries). This is ESSENTIAL.
- Adapter and converter (from US to European). See note below.
- Enough extra batteries for anything else you bring that will need them.
- Camera – it is great to have a good digital camera to take pictures of all the beautiful/bizarre things you'll see. Bring extra film/memory cards (as well as batteries).
- A watch. This is also ESSENTIAL.

- Curling iron/hair dryer (Note: Residence Candia provides hair dryers, but if you prefer your own or will need your own for other travels, bring it.)
  - Water bottle (big enough to hydrate, but small enough not to weigh you down)
  - Hat (if you wear one)
  - Umbrella!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
  - Backpack for day trips and weekend travels
  - A passport pouch: These are useful for keeping your money/passport close to you and safe while you're traveling in and out of countries.
  - A bag or purse for just walking around Rome, going on tours, getting to class, etc. Bear in mind that pickpockets are a problem in Rome, so you'll want a bag that allows you to be aware of people bumping it or reaching in. Shoulder bags are better than backpack style bags for this sort of thing. Make sure it is comfortable, though, since you may be carrying it around for hours at a time.
- Electronic Adapters: You can go to any Radio Shack or Best Buy and they should be able to help you with your adapter and converter needs. An adapter is a little plug-like thing that makes it possible for an American appliance to plug into the wall in Europe. A converter "converts" EU voltage to American voltage so the electricity does not fry your appliance and has a socket for an American plug and then Italian prongs on the other side. If you are bringing over any other appliances (cameras with re-chargeable battery stations, razors, blow-dryers, curling irons, mp3 speakers/players, etc.) you are going to need a converter. Make sure you read the packaging carefully before you purchase to be sure you have the correct device. Most laptop computers have a converter on their cord (it's that box like thing that hums a little bit and occasionally has a light). For your computer, all you typically need is an adapter so you can fit your computer plug into the wall. Plugging a computer into a converter when it already has one is not a good idea. Double check with your make/model to be sure you have a converter on your cord. Also, some computers have three prongs. Make sure your computer can fit into the adapter which sometimes only has room for two prongs. If you go to an electronics store to purchase these, they should be helpful in advising you.  
NOTE: The above info is meant to be helpful, but Christendom is NOT responsible for helping you buy the correct electronic equipment or for proper use of any electronic or converting equipment. Take the initiative and investigate here in the States at a Radio Shack, a Best Buy, or by searching the Internet for more info. It is much easier to take care of this stuff here in the U.S. and it is YOUR responsibility to do so.

### Laundry

- Clothespins
  - Clothesline (rope is nice since you can shorten it easily) VERY HANDY!!!
  - Stain remover
  - Tide To-Go stain sticks: They come in handy.
  - Laundry detergent: They do sell this in Rome and it isn't particularly expensive, but it is good to have some to start off with. Be careful that it doesn't spill in your suitcase, though...many students recommend powder as opposed to liquid for this reason.
- For many (if not most) things, it is easiest and cheapest simply to wash them in the sink and then let them dry on a clothes line, either in your room or outside. There are

laundromats in Rome, but they are fairly pricey and aren't always practical on a regular basis. Some of them have dryers and some don't, so having a clothesline and clothespins is important. Stain sticks are handy because you can take care of stains immediately and make washing them out later much easier.

### **Vitamins and Medications**

- Bring enough of any vitamins and medications that you are taking to last the entire semester!
- If you are taking prescription medications, make sure that you bring enough for your entire trip AND that you bring a copy of each prescription that you are taking in case an emergency refill is needed!
- Do NOT plan on sending medications over from the U.S. It is more than likely that they will end up stolen in the mail or held up in customs, leaving you without. Please do not consider mail as an option!
- If you use any kind of a support brace (i.e., knee brace, ankle brace, etc.) please bring it as the conditions of travel often cause old injuries to act up. It is better to have it and not need it than to be without.
- Think ahead and bring basic medicine from the U.S. Cough and cold medicine, allergy medicine, pain killers (like Advil, Tylenol, etc.), stomach flu aids, etc. are ALL things that are harder to find and more expensive to buy. Plus, when you're sick or in pain, you don't feel like searching a foreign city for medicine. If you're prepared, you'll save yourself a lot of frustration.
- Even if you don't currently take vitamins, you may want to consider bringing them for use as you adjust to the Italian diet. Some people have more difficulty adjusting than others, so take steps to keep yourself healthy! ☺

### **Shoes and Clothes**

Clothes are probably one of the most daunting parts of Rome packing, but the following guidelines should help. Again, everyone is different and has different clothes packing needs. This holds true for a regular semester at Christendom and is just as true for the Rome semester. Please take your own habits into account when reading the following.

#### **Casual Clothes**

For casual walking around Rome and spending time around Residence Candia, it is great to have comfortable clothes (t-shirts, jeans, sweatshirts, whatever you normally wear). Yes, sweatshirts will alert Romans to the fact that you are a foreigner, but if this is not an issue to you, just bring what makes you comfortable. Bring clothes that you know you like, that you'll definitely wear, and that can handle being washed by hand. Also, when packing, keep in mind that the weather can be a little unpredictable and that it is best to bring things that can be layered. Bring pants and skirts that can match a lot of different tops. In the Fall, the weather will initially be quite hot and will cool as the semester progresses. In the Spring, it will be wet and cold fairly predictably, so plan accordingly. It should begin to warm up as the semester draws to a close, so bring clothes that can be either warm weather or cold weather clothes. Again, layering is a great approach for either semester. Ladies should also be aware that many churches will not allow in women with bare shoulders or shorter (above the knee) skirts. Men and women both are sometimes turned away from churches if they are wearing shorts.

Please note that:

- More casual clothing may be worn, except for the following: ripped clothing, sweat pants, shorts, athletic tank tops, and flip-flops.
- Jeans ARE allowed, as long as they are not ripped or overly frayed.
- As always, Modesty Dress code applies at all times.

Girls (suggested)

- skirt
- pants
- couple of shirts/blouses (can wear polos)
- jeans (note that it is cold in the Spring, so bring appropriate clothes)
- sweater(s)
- heavy jacket/coat
- hat/gloves

Guys (suggested)

- 2 pairs of pants
- jeans
- a couple of shirts (Polos are a good idea and are dress code here)
- tie
- heavy jacket/coat
- sweater(s)
- hat/gloves

### Dress Code

Refer to Rome Program Policies and Rules in the Dress Code section for suggestions on packing to meet Dress Code.

### Shoes

It cannot be stressed enough how important it is to have good, comfortable walking shoes for Rome. Breaking in your shoes and letting your feet get used to them before going is a MUST. It is a good idea to have at least two pairs of class acceptable shoes so that you can alternate between the two (since odor definitely can become an issue). Also, students will need to have one pair of Sunday dress code appropriate shoes – basically, a standard dress shoe. Overall, it is recommended that you bring the following:

- 1) Flip flops for hanging around the dorm, taking showers, going to the beach
  - 2) At least 2 pairs of comfortable class shoes or sandals. (Athletic sandals such as Teva, Choco, Crocs, or Keens are not allowed. Flip flops are also NOT permitted for class/tours.) Sketchers dress shoes are acceptable.
  - 3) 1 pair of Sunday dress code shoes. (More if fashion dictates so to you. ☺)
  - 4) Sandals, if you will be traveling to a warm weather climate on trips/free weekends
  - 5) Sneakers/tennis shoes for walking around/hiking/traveling/tours. There are also opportunities to play soccer or to run, so bring appropriate shoes if you are interested.
- This is just a basic shoe list. Please consider this as an idea of the basics and then add more as your fashion or utility sense mandate. ☺ It is also a good idea to bring shoe freshener or disinfectant spray to keep your shoes smelling grand. (Sometimes baby powder works as well.) Odor can sometimes be an issue if you wear the same shoes over and over for weeks and weeks.

- Another handy tip is to bring plenty of socks (and nylons/tights for women). They can be a little more expensive over in Rome and can develop holes fairly quickly because of all the walking you'll do. Also, the laundry situation makes having an abundance of socks rather nice.

### ALL

- Toiletries

(don't forget your toothbrush! Travel sized items are nice as they will take up less space)

- A little clothes detergent and a clothesline

(to wash things in the sink; bring a small squirt bottle and share with someone)

- Battery powered alarm clock

(DO NOT PLAN ON USING YOUR AMERICAN CELL PHONE AS A CLOCK SINCE IT WILL NOT KEEP TIME IN ITALY!!!! BRING AN ALARM CLOCK!!!)

### - Walking shoes

- Dress shoes

- Shoes for hiking/running (there may be chances to do both in Assisi or Siena)

- Flip-flops for the shower

- Watch or the like – VERY IMPORTANT

### -**Notebook for tours - Important**

### -**Pens and pencils -Important**

- Devotional material for the retreat in Assisi (rosary, Bible, journal, whatever you need)

- Converter, adapter, and camera re-charger

- Camera/ battery re-charger

### Final Notes and Tips Concerning Packing

- Past Rome students have found a good rule of thumb; if you don't wear it here, you won't wear it there (or want it there!)
- Everyone is different and thus has different clothing needs. Nevertheless, it is a good rule of thumb not to bring things you don't think you'll wear more than three times. Also, when packing, try to pick tops and bottoms that go with a number of combinations. Mentally go through the different occasions/events you might run into (opera/ballet/concert nights, soccer/running/sports events, pub nights, hanging around the dorm, venturing around Rome, classes/tours, traveling Europe) and think through your clothes accordingly. Realize that you can also buy clothes there if necessary (although it can sometimes be challenging) and that not having the perfect outfit for every occasion is fine as long as you can meet the standards for the various Christendom functions. Also, think through the weather and pack accordingly. In the Fall it will initially be hot and will cool as the semester progresses. In the Spring it will be wet and rainy frequently, as well as cold, so a good rain jacket, waterproof shoes, a warm coat, and a hat and gloves are all wise packing moves. The weather should begin to warm by the end of the Spring semester, so it might be good to bring a Christendom appropriate swim suit as well.
- For the Fall Semester – it is typically HOT! So, consider a hat, sunglasses, and other items essential for very warm weather.

- For Spring Semester – it is usually COLD and WET for a large portion of the time you are there – hats, gloves, winter jacket, umbrella, sweaters, items that can be layered.
- For BOTH semesters, consider that weather changes are always possible. We recommend that you bring clothing that is versatile for a multitude of seasonal changes.

### **Packing for the Assisi and Siena Pilgrimage Week**

We will be leaving for Assisi and Siena shortly after you arrive in Rome. For this reason please pack carefully as we will be putting any large pieces of luggage into storage. Please note that you will need to pack separately for Assisi and Siena. Have available **one suitcase** (suitcases with wheels are much easier than ones without) **and 1 other small bag** (like a backpack) for Assisi and Siena with enough clothes and toiletries for a week.

Note on luggage for Assisi and Siena:

Because of the large size of the group, we cannot take a lot of luggage, so please make sure that you plan accordingly. Moreover, the places we will be staying at in Siena and Assisi are not conducive to large pieces of luggage. There is no elevator and there may possibly be several flights of stairs. As mentioned before, you may also bring a small knapsack or purse with you.

The rest of your luggage for the semester will be put into storage until we return to Rome.

**Remember, ALL portions and activities of the Siena and Assisi trip are required. Also, due to the retreat portion of this trip, and the itinerary, guests are absolutely not allowed during this time. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation with this.**

**\*This list is NOT exhaustive and can change based on your personal needs. Hopefully it will aid you as you prepare for your trip.**

### ***A note on the towns of Florence and Assisi:***

These towns are really wonderful to visit and have lots of unique souvenirs, so you might want to save your money for these places. There is a huge outdoor market in Florence where you ought to bargain for lower prices. You can get great leather coats here (half what they'd be in the States). Just be sure to bargain and make sure you're getting real leather. Also, Florence has lovely scarves and they are much cheaper (and more authentic) than they will be in Rome. This is a great time to buy all sorts of things: scarves, stationary (Florence has its own distinctive stationary), earrings, wallets, leather bags and purses, hats, knives, and all sorts of other things. It is good to set aside money for Florence (if you choose to visit there) and Assisi ahead of time if you intend to shop.

## Basic Finance Guide

It's time to start thinking about finances. Save money, determine your budget, etc. Be realistic about how much you will spend and how much things cost. This section will help you assess about how much money you should plan on saving and bringing on your trip.

- First, let's define a Euro. What is a Euro?
  - A euro is the official currency in Rome and other European Countries.

Is the exchange rate equivalent to an American dollar?

- The exchange rate is not equivalent to an American dollar, i.e., one dollar does not "equal" one euro. Be aware that the exchange rate does fluctuate very often. *It is your responsibility to be aware of exchange rates and account for this in your budget.* Exchange rates can be found easily by consulting on-line resources or your bank.

Is it comparable to an American dollar?

- Yes. Although, again, the exchange rate is not equivalent, they are roughly comparable. For instance, you may be able to buy a soda for 2 dollars here in the U.S. and the cost is approximately 2 euros in Rome.

In addition to your room, board and tuition, there will be other Rome Program costs you will need to prepare for in advance. Consider the following (note that this section does not include your spending on personal items):

### Meals

- As a part of the Rome Program, you will receive 50 euro per week to purchase food so you can cook your meals in your apartment (mentioned above). For the majority of students, this is sufficient. However, if for some reason you do not feel this will be sufficient for you for a week of meals (keeping in mind that a couple of meals each week are provided for you separately as a part of your already-paid program fee), you will be responsible for any remaining costs of your meals.

### Airport Transportation

- **You are responsible for all airport ground transportation costs.** When you arrive at the airport in Rome, you should plan on having 100 euros available to pay for a taxi to the hotel (approximately \$160 U.S. but *be sure you check current currency exchange rates!*). The cost for a taxi from the airport to the hotel should not be more than 60 euros total as it is a regulated taxi rate at Rome FCO airport to Rome proper, but having a little extra money available is prudent. Remember, total airport ground transportation costs will vary depending on your own personal transportations plans (for example, if you need transportation from Christendom in Front Royal to/from Dulles Airport, that will be an additional \$35 (approx.) each way). You will also need to plan for the same cost upon your departure from the hotel in Rome back to the airport at the end of the semester.

Be sure to account for your total ground transportation costs as you plan your budget.

#### Misc. Costs

- Internet Cafés – in case the internet in the hotel is not functional, you should plan on using internet cafés, which will cost approximately 3-5 euros per hour.
- Printing Costs – you will need to print papers at local internet cafés. The cost is between \$.10 and \$.25 per page. Plan for this.
- Phone Cards – you will need a phone card to call home to the States – plan for this. We have found that most students get by with \$50-\$75 on this if they were careful with their talk time. Also, consider bringing a computer headset with a microphone and using SKYPE, which is a free internet phone service you can set up yourself. SKYPE is a great way to call friends and family without using your calling card.

At any point, you could encounter the unexpected. Plan ahead. Even though we have listed some key expenses here, that does not mean that every possible cost is listed.

**\$800** – A student should not go with less than this amount of money. This is what we would call a bare-bones trip. It is the *minimum*. You can go, participate, maybe buy a few extra things like gelato here and there with friends every now and then, but not much more when you include any personal expenses. Please be aware, if your budget falls into this area, you will need to watch your expenses very carefully. Don't expect any side trips or souvenirs.

**\$1100** – This is a middle of the road budget. You will have some more freedom than the \$800 budget will allow. You could do some local weekend trips if budgeted well, possibly buy a few souvenirs. But still don't plan for any big fancy trips and/or many souvenirs.

**\$1500+** – This is a reasonably generous budget. You will be able to plan a few more elaborate trips, be able to purchase more souvenirs, etc. This is what we would call “comfortable.”

**\*\*\*Any statements above do not include emergency situation costs. We encourage all students to have a back-up financial source such as credit, a bond, or quick access to cash in case of emergencies.\*\*\***

Remember that no matter what your budget, you must plan ahead. *Everything is dependent on your personal spending habits.* If you think you need a gelato (around 2 euro) and a latte (around 1.50 euro) every day, plan for that. Decide what is really important and what is not. Always leave room for the unexpected. We encourage you to visit with other Rome Program students and really take the time to plan out your budget.

As a helpful note, you can be *reasonably* assured that food costs (as in the cost of buying grocery store foods) are similar to costs here in the States. Eating out at nicer restaurants will tend to be more than in the US. Low-cost dining out options, like a buffet or diner, are not common. Often when you eat out in Italy, all items are a-la-carte, which can increase costs for you. Additionally, clothing tends to be more expensive in Italy than here in the states.

### Financial Recommendations

- As you are making financial plans, make SURE you understand the rate of the euro against the US Dollar. This difference will absolutely impact your budget. You can check this on-line very easily by doing a search for the daily euro conversion.
- Do NOT use traveler's checks! No matter what your family or friends say, these will cause you many, many problems! You will have EXTREME difficulty finding places that will accept these – even banks! The bottom line here is that this is an outdated financial resource. Please don't cause yourself the complications of traveler's checks. If your family is insisting on this method of carrying money, please have them contact the Rome Program Coordinator.
- We recommend using an ATM, debit or credit card as your primary monetary resource. You should contact your bank to be sure it can be used in Europe and to also make your bank aware that you are leaving the country or they may shut your card off.
- In our experience, the safest way to have access to money in Rome is by Debit Card, which you can use to pull out money at the various "bancomats" (a bancomat is the Italian term for ATM) directly from your account.
- Failure to notify your bank that you are leaving the country could cause your card to be blocked and unable to be used because they think your card has been stolen. In some cases, when this happens, they cancel your card and make you get a new one – sometimes taking weeks to get you your new card! Then you are out of money for that time! Not to mention how hard it is to receive mail in Italy on top of this. Just call your bank in advance to avoid this. ☺
- Check your daily spending limits on credit, debit and ATM cards. Make sure that your daily spending limits are appropriate for your needs.
- We recommend at least two monetary resources; for example, have access to both an ATM card and a credit card. In case one doesn't work or isn't accepted, you have a back up option.
- Make photocopies of the front and back of any credit, debit, or ATM cards that you take with you to Europe. Leave the copies with reliable family members who you can contact to cancel the card(s) in case they are stolen. It is important to make photocopies of both the front and back of the card because you'll need to number on the back of the card to cancel it.
- We recommend STRONGLY that all students participating in the Rome Program have family or a guardian back in the U.S. who has ready access to cash. Think about the possibility of a family emergency or other emergency situation. If you needed to return home for something like that, having access to cash to purchase a new plane ticket home could save you lots of time and hassle in emergency situations. *This is really a very important detail in the financial planning of your trip to Rome!!!*
- We recommend that you exchange American dollars to euro prior to your departure from the States so you have euro upon your arrival in case the first ATMs you come across don't work. (While this may cost you a little more to do, we really recommend you do this as we have had multiple groups arrive at the airport in Rome only to find that the ATMs aren't working or are out of money which can be a substantial problem – so to save you the hassle of that, just exchange a small amount before you leave the States.)

You can typically do this at a large bank or at an international airport here in the US (for example Washington IAD airport has an Exchange Bank within the International Terminal). We recommend you arrive in Rome with 100 - 150 euros.

- As stated above, there will be ATMs in the airport in Rome. However, we have found that the ATMs in the airports are not reliable. Thus the advice to have some euro with you in case you cannot access an ATM at the airport and need to wait until you are off airport property can be very valuable.
- We do not recommend carrying large amounts of cash on you. Try to determine what you need for a day or for a trip and budget your cash accordingly. We also recommend that you take great caution carrying around your money, important documents, etc. Remember that pick pockets are very common in Rome/Europe. They are professional thieves and know how to spot the inattentive traveler. You should be constantly guarding your personal items knowing, unfortunately, that pickpockets are a likely reality.
- We suggest that you use other resources like travel websites, your bank, etc. to find out more about finances for your travel. This list is just a highlight of recommendations and is not intended to be exhaustive.

### **Storage of Important Documents and Handling Money While in Rome**

Some of these points are listed above, but this paragraph will help to sum things up. It's best to keep money, your passport (if you are told specifically by the Program staff to bring it with you on the outing), larger amounts of cash, and credit cards in a pouch on your person (hidden under clothing) when you go out. Be smart about caring for these items!! Research for items such as a waist or neck pouch or similar that can be hidden under your clothing. Don't carry wallets in your pocket! Pick pockets are a very significant problem – but they are significantly less of one when you store your money wisely and stay alert when you are out. Also note that cash is the best way to pay for anything in Rome. Often you will be buying little things, gelato, or pizza, etc when you are out and about. Small shops and street vendors where you make these purchases usually don't take credit cards. As you withdraw funds from your account, keep in mind that carrying large amounts of cash is not necessarily a good idea. At the same time, remember that with each withdrawal, there will be ATM fees as well. You will want to find a balance in this area that fits into your budget and recommendations for safe money handling. Simply put, make sure you take good care of your cash!

## Communication

### Internet and Email

*-You are required to set up your Christendom.edu email address. This should already have been done.* This will now become the standard method of communication with you. All administrators will use the Christendom email system to communicate with you. You should respond by checking your email on a very frequent basis – such as twice weekly at minimum. If you have problems setting up your email, contact Computer Services at [support@christendom.edu](mailto:support@christendom.edu). We also suggest that you forward your Christendom.edu email to a personal account. Be certain that you opt to delete old emails when you are in the Christendom.edu email system to prevent going over quota. You can find this under “options” in the account.

### Phone and Internet Use

- Expect to use calling cards and pay phones when calling home.
- It is recommended that you purchase calling cards once you arrive in Rome. They work better than those purchased in the states.
- You may receive calls at the hotel in Rome, Residence Candia, but you cannot call out from the hotel. For this reason, you’re encouraged to set up a SKYPE account. Look into it at [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com) for more details – it can be relatively inexpensive (generally \$6 a month for unlimited calling to the U.S. and with no charge to the U.S. landline or mobile). A headset is necessary, but they can also be found at a reasonably low cost. You may consider sharing one with a friend if cost is an issue. SKYPE can sometimes be used at internet cafés as well. SKYPE can be very useful in contacting family and friends and is generally preferred by students in the hotel because of the inability to call out.
- Internet points and cafes also frequently have international calling booths. These can be a great alternative to the regular phone booth.
- You may purchase your own Italian track cell phone if desired. One common Italian company that is a partner of Verizon is called Vodafone. You can purchase a phone upon arrival in Rome for about \$75. You can also do an internet search of companies that rent phones. Many of them send you the phone prior to your departure from the U.S.
- Also, know that there is periodic Internet access at Residence Candia so Skype is an option as well (further note that the internet is not reliable there).
- You will have internet at the primary hotel in Rome, but it is not always dependable. You should budget in a moderate amount of money for checking email, printing, etc. at the local internet café. Please inform your family/friends of this detail so they understand that you may not be emailing on a daily basis.
- Remember to keep communication expectations with family and friends back home reasonable. You will not likely be able to call home or email every day or even every two/three days. Work out communication with friends and family before you leave so they understand your travels and limitations and do not worry if they don’t hear from you for a few days.

## **Final Notes**

The following are some random (but useful) tips that past Romers have had:

- Try to keep some sort of journal or account of what you do, as this is a once in a lifetime experience and you'll want to remember what you did and saw! Take advantage of every opportunity to see churches, holy places, and famous sites. **Walk around Rome!** This is the best way to see the city, and all sorts of unique little churches, which always have some sort of interesting paintings, statues, or relics. Rome is not as big as it seems, and you can walk from place to place in a short time. During the day it's fine to walk around by yourself, but everyone should go out in groups after dark.
- You will crave American food, and the Hard Rock Cafe on Via Veneto (off Barbarini Metro stop) is the best place to go!
- Don't be afraid to say no to street vendors of all kinds if the price is more than you want to pay. Chances are you will find the same or very similar item at 3 or 4 more vendors. In general, if a vendor approaches you and you don't want to buy their item, just say no confidently. Don't engage them in conversation. Just be polite and confirm confidently your "no" to buying what they are selling.
- Be sure to keep in mind the weight of things. It is incredibly expensive to send a box home (sometimes as high as \$200 or even more!!) so that is not a good fallback option if you are on a budget. Past students have found themselves weighing soap, bottles of wine, shoes, etc. when deciding what to pack, purchase, and bring home, especially considering the airline weight restrictions and bagging fees. For example, if you travel to Ireland (via flight – which is considered domestic there) after the Rome semester and the flight options are one suitcase with a 30 LB max and one carry-on with a 20 LB max, this means that you can easily have 50 LBS of extra luggage to deal with if you packed according to the international flight regulation when you initially came to Rome. Make sure to check this out on your airlines website and plan accordingly.
- Try to take advantage of free weekends as much as possible! Get out and see either another city, another country, or more of Rome! Don't be intimidated!
- Bring a couple of comfort items to help you through if you start to get homesick. A couple of favorite DVDs, a good book or two, one or two pictures of home/family, a bag of Snickers, a package of your favorite mac n' cheese...whatever it takes!
- Try to budget out your money instead of randomly spending it here and there without accounting for it. It is pretty easy to spend your stipend money on other things and then realize you don't have anything left for food – be careful with that stipend money! Have fun and definitely buy mementos, souvenirs, and gifts for others, but be aware of how much you are spending.

**Have a great semester in bella Rome**

## **Additional Information Related to Fall 2012 in Rome**

### **Travel Related**

#### **Flight**

The College does not offer a group flight to/from Rome. All Rome Program students are required to organize and pay for their own flight to/from Rome. If a student needs assistance with purchasing a flight, the College can direct the student to a travel agent. See the Rome Program Coordinator for this contact and more information relating to this.

#### **Ground Transportation Between the Airport and the Hotel in Rome**

Students are completely responsible for arranging and paying for all ground transportation service (at the time the service is rendered) relating to their arrival to and departure from the airport and hotel at the beginning and end of the Rome Program. A staff member will not be accompanying students to the airport from the hotel for the departure from Rome.

#### **Your Arrival in Rome**

Remember that the Rome Program begins at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, September 7, 2012. This means that you must be ready to begin orientation at this time – you should not be just arriving at the hotel at 3:00 p.m. Further, this means that you need to plan your flight arrival time and commute accordingly.

Here are some guidelines you need to consider when purchasing your flight and planning your commute to the hotel:

- Time it takes to arrive at your gate upon landing, de-plane, retrieve baggage and go through customs = 1 hour to 1.5 hours
- Time it takes to get a taxi = 15 minutes
- Time it takes to ride in the taxi from Rome FCO airport to Residence Candia = 1/2 hr to 1 hr depending on traffic.
- In conclusion, you will want to add between 1 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> to 2 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hours to the time your plane lands as an estimated arrival time at the Residence Candia, the hotel you will be staying at.

\*Considering the above guidelines, it is suggested that you do not book a flight that lands in Rome after 12:30 or 1:00 p.m. CEST to be on the safe side \*

Student are not permitted to arrive at the hotel after 3:00 p.m. CEST  
(A substantial fine is in place for late arrivals to the Program.)

Students can begin checking in to the hotel at 12noon CEST

The Rome Program ends 3:00 p.m. of Thursday, November 22, 2012. Students may not depart the Program prior to this time. To accommodate travel arrangements for the morning of Friday, November 23, 2012, we understand that most students will need to stay the night on Thursday,

November 22, 2012, thus your housing accommodations will cover this night. All students must depart/check out of the Residence Candia by 12 noon on Friday, November 23, 2012.

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## **At the Airport**

### **Paying for your Taxi**

All students are required to pay for their own taxi to/from the hotel from/to the airport (and all other ground transportation costs involved with getting to/from the airport for arrival and departure to/from Rome).

Remember that you need to have Euro already exchanged and ready for you to use to pay for your taxi ride to the hotel upon your arrival in Rome.

Remember to take only the official Roman Taxi—do not accept invitations from other taxi services or unmarked taxis. The official Roman taxi is easily located by exiting the airport terminal and looking for signs directing you to the taxi stand—which is an area where you literally stand to get in the Roman taxi. Here is a link you may find useful in learning more about the taxi system; the website even has a picture of an official Roman taxi. Remember to decline anyone who approaches you about a taxi service when you are in the airport. Just go to the taxi stand outside.

[http://www.rometoolkit.com/airport/fiumicino\\_airport\\_taxi.htm](http://www.rometoolkit.com/airport/fiumicino_airport_taxi.htm)

For All Rome Program Students:

- Learn how to navigate the airport prior to your departure by referencing the Rome Guide (pg 10-15), the website listed in this document, talking to other travelers, doing your own research, etc.
  - Be sure you carry the contact information for the Rome Program on you. This information will have the cell phone numbers of our Rome staff so if you encounter issues, you can give them a call.
  - Do research and purchase a pre-paid calling card that can be used in the Rome airport if needed.
  - Be sure you have Euro on you ready to use to pay the taxi â€“ this is still necessary even if you plan on meeting the Rome staff member.
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## **Weekend Travel**

You are going to receive a list of free weekends when you can plan for independent travel outside of Rome at least 8 weeks before the Program begins. It is suggested that you use the time until you receive the specific free weekends to plan your budget, possible destinations, etc. That list will be sent via email, so please prepare for that and save it once you receive it (as is the case with all email information sent to you).

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## **Book List**

Students traveling to Rome are expected to purchase any necessary books for their studies and bring those books with them to Rome. Do not send books to Rome—your likelihood of not receiving them is great. Further, you will receive a fine on the first day of class for each book that you do not have.

Know that the College does its best to reduce the number of books that you will have to bring over to Rome by providing books in Rome if possible. For example, this is the case with your Italian book. Where possible, we will be using photocopied handouts that you purchase once in Rome or sending you e-copies of chapter/books. You will receive more information on this in the weeks prior to your departure. Again, we ask your understanding as we cannot provide this with every class and there will be some books you will just have to purchase in the States and bring with you to Rome.

A complete list of books will be emailed to you at least 6 weeks prior to the beginning of the Rome Program. You should be prepared to order any books necessary immediately upon receipt of the book list to ensure their arrival prior to your departure from the U.S.

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## **Program Trips**

Currently, we have tentatively planned the following trips as a part of your Rome Program Experience. Please know that due to the circumstances pertaining to international travel, these trips may change. You will be notified later (at least several weeks prior to your departure) of all confirmed group trips and through the “Free Weekends” or spring semester calendar document that is distributed. We may also update you on this information via email if necessary - so please be aware of both your email and the forthcoming “Free Weekends” or spring semester calendar document for more information on Program group trips and tours.

- Assisi
- Siena
- Florence

- Orvieto (optional trip that students will pay for if they choose to attend — around 20 Euro per person)
- Subiaco (optional trip that students will pay for if they choose to attend — around 20 Euro per person).