

XVIII AIFR CONFERENCE  
CATANIA, NOVEMBER 13TH-14TH, 2025  
"SACRIFICE AND FORGIVENESS"

DISUM – Università degli Studi di Catania  
Studio Teologico "San Paolo" di Catania

*Abstract on the General Theme of the Conference*

The experience of sacrifice is present in all religious traditions and human societies. Beyond religions, this topic has acquired ethical and philosophical significance in modern thought and throughout the 20th century. Thinkers such as Karl Jaspers, Hannah Arendt, Simone Weil, Gunther Anders, René Girard, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-Luc Nancy have linked sacrifice to phenomena of violence and the sacred, replacing it within a secular framework. Sacrifice conveys notions of deprivation or renunciation—whether voluntary or imposed—which is relevant in a lot of different fields, from bioethics to the financial management of states or corporations.

The term forgiveness, also theological in origin, has similarly taken on a more secular meaning, particularly within the humanities. It has become a central concept in moral philosophy, philosophy of religion, and psychoanalysis.

On the occasion of the Jubilee Year 2025, the AIFR Conference seeks to foster academic and interdisciplinary study of the significance of sacrifice and forgiveness, both of which remain deeply meaningful for biblical and theological studies, as well as for research in diverse scientific and philosophical disciplines.

**Sub-Themes and Areas of Research for Parallel Sessions**

**1. Bioethical-Scientific:**

Sacrifice and forgiveness are notions which can be applied in bioethics and the social, economic, or legal sciences. They are particularly pertinent in exploring the relationship between life and death in various stages, including abortion, surrogacy, birth, capital punishment, palliative care, end-of-life decisions, and euthanasia.

**2. Anthropological-Ethical:**

Sacrifice and forgiveness express the complex dimensions of personhood. This sub-theme aims to provide space for authors and schools of thought that have reinterpreted sacrifice and forgiveness in socio-political or ethical-philosophical contexts.

### 3. **Theological-Biblical:**

This sub-theme highlights significant theological and biblical studies on the topic while underscoring the religious origins of these terms and their importance for contemporary thought.

### 4. **History of the Concept:**

This sub-theme traces the historical development of the pair sacrifice-forgiveness in the history of philosophy and in key past thinkers, culminating in their re-signification within modern and contemporary discourse.

## *Call for Papers*

Dear Professors and Researchers,

We are pleased to announce the Call for Papers for the 2025 AIFR Conference on the theme "*Sacrifice and Forgiveness*". The conference will take place in Catania on November 13–14, 2025, at the DISUM (Ex-Monastery of the Benedictines) and the Theological Institute "San Paolo" (Viale Odorico da Pordenone, 24).

The conference is organized by the Italian Association for the Philosophy of Religion (AIFR), the Department of Humanities at the University of Catania, and the Theological Institute "San Paolo" of Catania.

Interested participants are invited to submit abstracts (max 300 words, with a translation into Italian if written in another language) to the AIFR Secretariat ([segreteria.aifr@gmail.com](mailto:segreteria.aifr@gmail.com)) by **June 30, 2025**. Submissions should indicate one of the sub-themes for the parallel sessions:

- Bioethical-Scientific
- Anthropological-Ethical
- Theological-Biblical
- History of the Concept

Acceptance notifications will be sent by **July 30, 2025**, via email. Selected papers will be presented in parallel sessions in 20-minute slots in Italian, English, or French. During the selection process, preference will be given to proposals for in-person participation.

For any inquiries, please contact: [segreteria.aifr@gmail.com](mailto:segreteria.aifr@gmail.com)

*Scientific committee*

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