

University of Bari establishes a course on ethics and economics

BARI, Italy, 4 December 2002 (BWNS) -- Officials at the University of Bari have established a permanent course on ethics and economics that is based on Baha'i principles and have appointed a well-known Baha'i businessman as its coordinator.

Titled "Ethics and Economy: Towards a New World Order," the course consists of ten seminars focused on essential Baha'i values such as consultation, justice and ethics, equality, universal education, and the unity of science and religion as they relate to the world of business and economics.

The University has appointed Giuseppe Robiati as the coordinator of the course. A member of the Baha'i community of Italy, Mr. Robiati is a businessman with extensive experience in engineering and business management, and in the fields of human resources and economics.

Currently president of SCAC, a leading industrial company in Italy, Mr. Robiati has also written a number of books, including "Faith and World Economy, a Joint Venture: A Baha'i Perspective," "God and Economy, a Possible Partnership," and "Economy for a New World Order." Mr. Robiati is also a member of the European Baha'i Business Forum (EBBF), which played a key role in helping to establish the course.

The University of Bari is the second largest university in Italy, with an enrollment of some 50,000 students and a faculty of some 2,200 professors. The "Ethics and Economics" course, which was approved by the academic senate and the rector of the University of Bari in July, is scheduled to begin in March 2003.

The initiative evolved from series of workshops and presentations by Mr. Robiati at the University in the 1990s, which emerged from a request by Giovanni Girone, then the dean of the Faculty of Economics at the University. In 1990, Prof. Girone, who is currently rector of the University, asked the EBBF to facilitate a one-day workshop on "ethics and economy" for the economics department.

"I attended one of Mr. Robiati's lectures and immediately realized that this course could be of great benefit for the students," said Prof. Girone, who then invited the EBBF to deliver lectures at the university on a regular basis, eventually leading to the establishment of the permanent course.

According to Mr. Robiati, Prof. Girone has often spoken highly of EBBF's program. "He fell in love with our vision and would always explain to the students that this course is not only important for their education but it will also provide them with a vision for their own personal future," said Mr. Robiati.

In 2001, EBBF was honored with the prestigious "Seal of the University of Bari" award in recognition of its contribution to the education of students and the values presented in the program. Mr. Robiati said the EBBF has been invited to offer similar lectures at the University of Rome, Milan,

Bologna, Siena and Pisa.

The European Baha'i Business Forum, founded in 1990, has evolved into a network of 350 businessmen and women residing in 50 countries. EBBF seeks to promote ethical values, personal virtues, and moral leadership in the field of business. It also has on-going collaborations with UNESCO and the International Labor Organization.

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