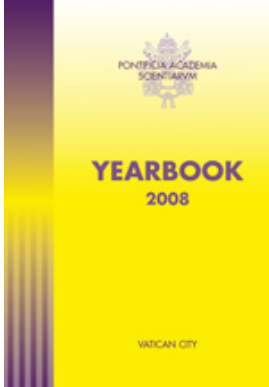




## Yearbook 2008



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**Foreword** – It is a great honour for me, as Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, to present this new Yearbook of our Academy to the Supreme Pontiff, the Catholic Church and other Churches, and the world of science and learning. This volume offers a photograph, a brief biography, a summary of scientific research, and a short list of publications of each Academician, as well as a variety of informative statistics. As can be seen from a perusal of the pages of this Yearbook, the Academy is fully loyal to the ends set out in its statutes, namely to achieve a representation within its ranks of the various branches of science and of the great regions of the world. The inter-disciplinary and international dialogue that this reality allows on the topical and pressing subjects of contemporary science may be adjudged a most valuable and perhaps unique source of fertile advance. The activity of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, for this reason, seeks to constitute a significant contribution to the progress of man at both a scientific and ethical level. We have to recognise that during the last century man achieved greater progress, if not in relation to knowledge about himself certainly in relation to knowledge about the macrocosm and the microcosm, than was the case throughout the whole of the rest of the history of mankind. The happy insight of Pope Clement VII, who in founding the Academy of the Lynxes in 1603 – continued by Pope Pius XI with his refoundation of the Academy in the form of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in 1936 – sought to establish a scientific ‘Senate’ within the Holy See, seems today more than ever of contemporary relevance during this epoch of ours which has been defined by many as the epoch of science. Of course, all the activities of the Academy would not be possible without the vital help of the Holy Father who has always followed its initiatives and deliberations with great care and interest, providing both keen moral support, as well as important funding and the magnificent buildings of the Academy (recently restored). A profound debt of gratitude must therefore be expressed to His Holiness Benedict XVI for his benevolence and guidance. I would also like to extend my thanks to the President, Prof. Nicola Cabbibo, the members of the Council, and all the Academicians, who, through their participation, make possible the life of the Academy.

Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo,

Bishop-Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences