

FOUR CENTURIES OF RESEARCH

Antwerp, 1607: Jesuit father Heribert Rosweyde devised a plan for a philologically accurate publication of all the early and medieval Lives of saints. His work was continued and expanded by his fellow Jesuit, Jean Bolland, who embarked upon the publication of the greatest ever collection of texts and critical studies related to saints: the *Acta Sanctorum* or "Acts of the Saints".

Bolland's successors, who soon came to be known as Bollandists, continued the undertaking. Four centuries later, despite being excommunicated by the Spanish Inquisition, revolutionary turmoil, pillage, expulsions and even their total suppression for some forty years, the Society of Bollandists survived and thrives to this day.

THE MISSION TODAY

Saints are inspirational, even when they seem to belong more to the realm of folklore or imagination. For two thousand years, aside from being the leading force of renewal in Christianity, they have been influencing our world, our culture and our thinking in ways few people realise. From the early martyrs whose exploits sustained generations of readers, to the great mystical authors, from pilgrimages and the trade in relics, to accounts of prodigious healings and other miracles: the saints have inspired innumerable writers and artists, their very names identify towns and villages all over Europe and America, their patronage still animates countless feasts and processions.

This precious field of study, part of mankind's cultural heritage, has been developed by the Bollandists over more than four centuries. Our team of scholars, now both Jesuit and lay, is dedicated exclusively to the critical study of the saints, their lives and their cults. Our laboratory is the *Bibliotheca Bollandiana*, a 500,000 volume library with a unique collection.



OUR PUBLICATIONS

- *Acta Sanctorum*, the greatest publishing enterprise ever dedicated to saints: 67 volumes (1643-1940), more than 60,000 pages containing exhaustive critical studies and sources relating to all the saints of Eastern and Western Christianity.
- *Analecta Bollandiana*, A Journal of Critical Hagiography, first published in 1882, is the only academic journal exclusively dedicated to the study of Latin, Greek, ancient Eastern and modern hagiography. Issues of 240 pages each twice a year, with text editions, studies and book reviews.
- *Subsidia Hagiographica*, a series of monographs and research instruments.
- *Tabularium Hagiographicum*, a series dedicated to the correspondence and archives of famous hagiographers.
- Several electronic publications can be accessed from our website.
- Follow us on Facebook for regular posts on our work and singular insights.



OUR LIBRARY

With its hundreds of medieval manuscripts and incunables, a historic collection of some 25,000 pre-1800 volumes, more than 1,000 current periodicals, special Greek, Slavic, Armenian and Georgian sections, hundreds of copper plates, tens of thousands of images, the *Bibliotheca Bollandiana* is unique in its field. It is continuously increased and updated thanks to painstaking and systematic documentation seen to by the Bollandists themselves since the very beginning. It is hosted in an impressive 1905 neo-romanesque building in Brussels and is accessible to scholars. By means of electronic databases available online, this unique collection will, gradually, be made accessible to all. This is simply the best place in the world for hagiographic research.

RESEARCH TEAM



Robert Godding SJ

Director of the Society, a historian and specialist in Latin hagiography mainly from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, and in the hagiography of Italy. He teaches hagiography at the Gregorian University in Rome.
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Bernard Joassart SJ

A historian, he is the Bollandists' archivist, in addition to his research on the Modern Era, and teaches Church history at the Institut d'Études Théologiques in Brussels.
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Marc Lindeijer SJ

A historian specialising in modern and contemporary holiness. He worked for seven years in Rome as assistant to the Postulator General, responsible for the Jesuits' canonisation causes.
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A philologist (Greek and Oriental literature). His main field of research is Greek hagiography. Further interests include translations of Latin texts in Byzantium and the Neomartyrs.
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François De Vriendt

A historian, specialist in medieval studies. His main field of research is Latin medieval hagiography, especially in the Hainaut region. He is the editor-in-chief of the Bollandist publications.
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OUR PROJECTS

- Digitising printed repertoires and handwritten card indexes. They will be made accessible online in new electronic databases and continuously updated. Two projects are underway, in partnership with Louvain university and the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes (CNRS, Paris), allowing every Latin or Greek hagiographic text prior to 1500 AD to be cross-linked to the manuscripts and the printed editions where they can be found.
- A new, scientifically organised and presented catalogue of the saints, blessed and servants of God post-1500 AD, with their earliest biographies and prime data regarding their cults and iconography.
- Specialised seminars and teaching programmes for doctoral and post-doctoral students, the hagiographers and historians of the future.
- The Bollandists corresponded widely with other scholars in the 17th - 19th centuries. Its insightful and instructive content means the archive merits thorough searches, organisation and publication.
- Our Library's detailed and comprehensive card catalogue, developed over 150 years, is a great instrument for us. We aim to put it online, so that others can benefit too.
- The restoration and conservation, using modern methods, of the unique collection of original copper plates containing the engravings printed in the *Acta Sanctorum*.
- Devotional images of 17th to 20th centuries – our large collection requires organisation and preservation.

SUPPORT US

We receive no public funding for our work or our projects. To preserve and continue our great tradition of research, as well as safeguard a heritage which belongs to the whole of mankind, your support is essential. To facilitate this, "The Bollandist Fund" was created under the auspices of the King Baudouin Foundation.

In Belgium: gifts of at least 40 € are tax exempt. Account of Fondation Roi Baudouin/Koning Boudewijn Stichting (FRB/KBS): BE10 0000 0000 0404, with the mention "Bollandist Fund".

In Europe: Via Transgiving Europe you can make cross-border donations and benefit from tax reduction. For additional information, please contact Mrs Irini de Saint Sernin at: saintsernin@bollandistes.be

In Canada: full details are available on www.kbfcanada.ca

In the USA, you can support our activities in a tax-efficient way through a contribution to the American Friends of the Bollandist Society at the King Baudouin Foundation United States (KBFUS). Because KBFUS is a public charity, within the meaning of Sections 501(c)3 and 509(a)1 of the IRC, donors may claim the maximum tax benefits allowed by U.S. tax law for their contributions.

If you wish to support us, here is how to proceed:

- Gifts by check: Write your check to KBFUS with the mention "American Friends of the Bollandist Society" in the memo section and send it to: KBFUS, 10 Rockefeller Plaza, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10020

- Gifts by wire transfer or for contributing other types of property, please contact KBFUS, email: info@kbfus.org | Phone: (212) 713 7660

For further information please contact:
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