

The HISTORY of the COLLEGIO VESCOVILE SANT'ALESSANDRO

The official birth of the Collegio Vescovile Sant' Alessandro as educational institution is in 1846, when the rector Mons Alessandro Valsecchi asks to the State Authority "Imperiale Regia Delegazione Provinciale" to name one of the twenty-two religious institutes in Bergamo "Sant'Alessandro" in honour to the Saint Patron of our town.

In the following years the Collegio has seven important rectors with wide culture and deep faith, well appreciated both by students and their families. All of them were from the area of Bergamo, with a solid reputation in town and very close links to the local territory.

The above mentioned Mons A. Valsecchi (1846-1879) obtains in Wien the important title of an official recognised school for Gimnasium (1847) and for the Lower Gymnasium (1853). During 1872 the school is closed, due to the political situation connected with the re-unification of Italy. Mons Valsecchi then leaves the management of the school to Mons Luigi Bana (1873 – 1917) who is improving and expanding the activity of Collegio Sant' Alessandro in many directions, notwithstanding the difficult general situation.

During this period the school employs only professional and registered teachers, a new "**convitto**" (boarding school) is started with a very clear and focused educational strategy and planning, the economic figures are positive, the relationship with the Public Administration is good. Also in this period the Collegio Sant'Alessandro is put under the authority of the bishop of Bergamo.

During the First World War the premises of Collegio Sant' Alessandro are used as Military hospital.

The following rector, don Pietro Armani (1917 – 1925) renews and expands the building, and improves the economic situation of the Collegio. **After the War, the Gymnasium – Liceum is again opened, with an entirely new group of teachers.**

Mons. Giovanni Biava (1925 – 1947) is the founder of the Students' Association, still active today. **He starts the courses of the Primary school, and expands the premises: a new gym, a larger library, and again a theatre, a museum and last not least an internal Chapel. At this point the Gymnasium – Liceum is officially listed as recognised school.** In spite of the war the war, during the Forties the school activities continue, and in this period the school offers hospitality to several refugees.

During the long rectorship of Mons. Paolo Carrara (1947 – 1977) the Collegio Sant'Alessandro moves into a new modern building in the town centre (1968), **and in 1967 the “Liceo Scientifico” is opened.** Mons. Carrara opens the schools to female students and increases the number of laymen teachers.

Mons. Achille Sana (1977 – 2011) manages the Collegio as rector as well as headmaster of the school. His main target is to improve and enhance the educational and “didattico” profile of the school: both the teachers and for the students. The aim is to maintain the activities of the Collegio Sant' Alessandro up-dated with the modern challenging times as well as in line with the new requirements.

In this period the primary school has been closed, and there is no more need of a “boarding school”. Also the Intermediate school opens to female students, and a great achievement is the appointment as “Scuola Pubblica Paritaria”: that means a complete top legal status.

A new Musical Liceum is starting its activity.

In 2009 Mons. Achille Sana becomes Rector of all the schools of Opera Sant' Alessandro, the holding, and leaves the headmastership to Prof. Lucio Sisana, former teacher of the Liceo Classico at Collegio Sant' Alessandro.

Prof. Sisana has the difficult task to steer the school during the new “School Reform” issued by the Italian Ministry: holding into consideration a long tradition to maintain and respect, along with the challenge of a new era. Always new investments are dedicated to new laboratories, IT structures and renewed premises, to keep the infrastructures up-dated and efficient.

Since June 2011 Mons. Francesco Beschi, Bishop of Bergamo, appoints a new Rector: don Luciano Manenti, former “Padre Spirituale” of Collegio Sant' Alessandro.

The following words are from the speech of the present School Headmaster, Prof. Lucio Sisana at the beginning of this school year:

“...The curriculum of the Lower Secondary School offers the option of a school week that may include, or exclude, Saturday, together with the possibility of a Musical orientation; the Classical, Scientific and Musical Schools follow the academic path laid down by the Reform. The innovatory approaches proposed by our Institution are built upon the solid foundation and tradition that have made us one of the most important and deeply-rooted schools in Bergamo. Strengthened by this well-balanced relationship between our secular history and our careful, and measured, openness to modern needs, we enthusiastically greet our new intake and welcome back existing students, wishing them all a pleasant and fruitful School Year.”

Bergamo, 03.11.2011

The Headmaster
prof. Lucio Sisana