



# Papal Justice: Subjects and Courts in the Papal State, 1500-1750

*Irene Fosi*

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In early modern Europe, justice was always the key to public order and the state's main pillar. The pope, though the head of the church, was also a prince like any other, but his justice, as machinery and moral model, displayed the double nature of his rule, targeting not only actions but also beliefs and consciences. Irene Fosi, the doyenne of scholars of papal justice, lays out the ambitious, complex, and sometimes baffled endeavors of the pope's magistrates and through lively anecdotes gives the flavor of the encounter between the pope's assorted magistrates, inquisitors, and others, and the men and women hauled before the law.

Originally published in Italian and widely acclaimed, *Papal Justice* has been translated into English by Thomas V. Cohen, professor of history at York University. With the English edition, this lively overview of the papal justice system reaches a transatlantic readership and makes available the fruit of Fosi's decades-long research in unpublished archives in Rome and the Vatican.

The book examines the very motley shape of the pope's territorial domain, the institutions found there, and the relationships between Rome and its outlying cities. Microhistories of how things worked form a clear picture of relations between the sovereign and his subjects.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Irene Fosi is professor of modern history at the University "G. d'Annunzio," Chieti-Pescara in Italy. The Italian edition of this book, *La giustizia del papa: Sudditi e tribunal nello Stato pontificio in eta moderna*, was published in 2007 by Laterza. Fosi has published two other books and numerous articles.

### PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:

"Irene Fosi is a seasoned scholar of Renaissance and Baroque Rome with over a quarter century of experience in papal judicial archives. Her book is a well-devised study of the courts and cases of Rome and the Papal State. The extended quotations from sources afford the reader a real taste of the interests and thinking of papal officials, Roman nobles, and local figures of all ranks. The translation is simple, elegant, and faithful to the original."?Thomas Kuehn, Professor of History, Clemson University

"Fosi is unquestionably the foremost authority in any language on the early modern papacy with an unrivaled range of experience working in different kinds of judicial sources. Fosi has a wonderful ear for the voices of exasperated administrators or desperate petitioners, and her quotations bring them alive. Equally important, her judgments can be trusted. She depicts papal justice in a fully rounded fashion."?Laurie Nussdorfer, Professor of History and Letters, Wesleyan University

"This book is the perfect combination of in-depth archival knowledge coupled with decades of historical experiences and the precision of the English language in an eloquent and accurate translation."? *Renaissance and Reformation*

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