

## **Open letter from the Rector, Elio Franzini**

The images you see are self-explanatory and are the **result of the umpteenth illegal occupation** of our university spaces, on the occasion of Halloween on Thursday night.

These utterly abusive parties, organized by largely external groups asking for an entrance fee, were **tolerated for many years**, as if they were the inevitable price to pay to save our community from worse damage.

However, I am deeply convinced that **passive indifference** or resignation to acts of obvious illegality is **absolutely wrong**, even more so on the part of a public university, which has always advocated the defence of law and rights as a fundamental value, to be transmitted to the young generations.

For this reason, **we had decided that the university would exceptionally close** at 4 pm on Thursday. Students and staff were notified well in advance, so as not to keep them exposed to the events, as had happened in the past. I believe that the strongest reaction to all forms of abuse and arrogance is proving to be, as we are, a cohesive community of people who proudly claim respect for the place where they study and work, both for what it represents and what it actually is – one of the most important historical structures in our country, a valuable and vulnerable public asset, which we have the honour of inhabiting, with the ensuing responsibilities.

Unfortunately, **precautionary measures were not enough**.

After 4 pm, we were left alone **to helplessly witness a crime**, resulting in the mess that you see and that may have had far worse consequences, as has recently occurred in similar circumstances at another Italian university.

I am committed to the demanding task of **defending law**, peacefully and together with our entire community. However, everyone must **take responsibility**, inside and outside the University, first of all **public security authorities**, to whom I am **appealing on behalf of the whole of our University**. We hope that this place, its students and staff, as well as residents in the area, can and shall be safeguarded. We do not believe in extreme positions – either police charges or dangerous passivity – as if there were no other solutions inspired by a peaceful but firm assumption of responsibility, compliance with law, the defence of the most elementary rights of civil coexistence.

We have decided to **publish these images** to ensure that all are aware and commit **to stopping this abuse** from happening in the collective silence of the academic community, institutions and public opinion.