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Newsletter for the English-speaking members and friends of the Church Law Society
Prague – Brno – Olomouc – Stříbro – České Budějovice

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English version



25th June 2023, Holy Mass to begin the lecture activities of the Church Law Society in Stříbro celebrated in the Dean Church of All Saints by Jiří Rajmund Tretera and Miroslav Martiš.

Photo Jiřina Barhoňová

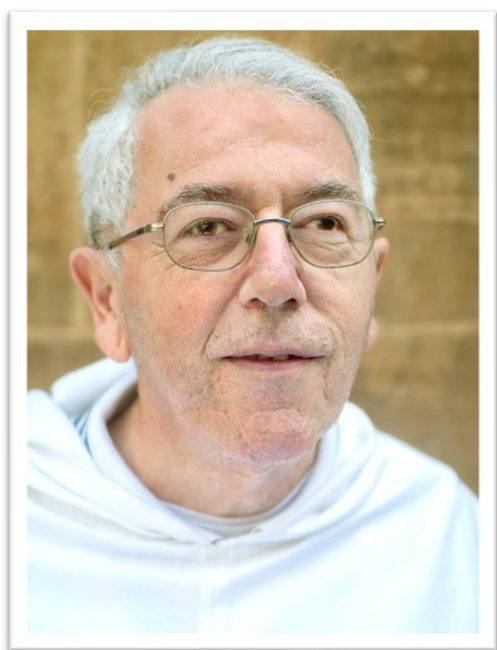


Local group in Prague

Robert Ombres celebrates his 75th birthday

On **24th July 2023**, our great friend, *Rev. Dr Robert Ombres OP*, Official Fellow, Lector, will celebrate his 75th birthday. Father Robert served for many years as the Novice Master of the English Dominican Province in Oxford and Cambridge and also as the Procurator General of the Order of Preacher Friars in Rome. He still teaches in the Blackfriars Priory in Oxford and at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) in Rome.

From the biography of Father Robert Ombres



Fr Robert was born in 1948 in Naples (Italy), and obtained an LL.B. from Bristol University, an LL.M. from London University, and was called to the Bar (Inner Temple). Having become a Dominican friar he studied philosophy and theology (STL) at the Oxford Study House, and then canon law (licence and doctorate) at the Pontifical University of St Thomas (Rome). He was elected Prior of both the Cambridge and Oxford Dominican priories. Having served as novice master, he was called to Rome to be the Procurator General of his Order (2004–2011).

He was a member of the Theology Faculty of Oxford University, and currently teaches moral theology and canon law at Blackfriars and is Raymond of Penyafort Fellow of Blackfriars Hall. He also teaches canon law at the Pontifical University of St

Thomas in Rome. He is reviews editor of *New Blackfriars* and on the editorial boards of the periodicals *Angelicum*, *Law & Justice* and *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*. He has published widely.

A selection of his publications includes:

The Theology of Purgatory, Dublin, 1978

The Catholic Perspective on the Family, in D. Riches, *The Civilization of Love*, Oxford, 1995

English Canon Law, co-edited with N. Doe and M. Hill, Cardiff, 1998

RC Canon Law (A. McGrath, co-author), in N. Doe (ed.), *Church Laws and Ecumenism*, 2021

Thomas Aquinas's Treatise on Divine Law, in *Law & Justice*, 2021.

From the Czech memoirs of Jiří Rajmund Tretera: meetings with Robert Ombres in 2000 and 2005

*In December 2022, Leges publishing house in Prague published Jiří Rajmund Tretera's book *Czech Memoirs, the Adventurous Life of a Lawyer, Law Professor and Priest*, in which he remembers a journey that he made in June 2000 together with Záběj Horák and Štěpán Hůlka to England and Wales. Here is an extract from the text on pages 489–490:*

“Our host, Professor Norman Doe, Head of the Department of Church Law and Religion Law at Cardiff University, called the Centre for Law and Religion, gave us a warm welcome and provided accommodation for us in the university halls of residence. [...]

During the first few days, Professor Doe told us about the joint Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Canon Law. The main representative on the Catholic side is the novice master of the Oxford Dominican Novitiate, Robert Ombres, who also invites us to drop in on the Oxford Priory during our stay in Cardiff.

This we were happy to do. As fate would have it, I spent my 60th birthday on 8th June 2000 in the Dominican Priory in Oxford. Father Robert was also pleased about this, and we celebrated it after Mass with the whole community. Over three days in Oxford we went round all the colleges and libraries and so I repeated my visit of 1969. We spent considerable time studying in the Dominican library where it smelled so wonderfully. The weather was beautiful, just windy, so in most of the photographs my robes are blowing in all directions.

We have met Father Robert Ombres many more times in our lives. Even in Rome at the General Curia of the Dominican Order in the Convent of St. Sabina during a pilgrimage with Czech Dominicans in 2005, when he was one of the representatives of the General Master and a member of the General Council.

He also confirmed to me an earlier statement by the General Master Timothy Radcliffe that they were convinced at the General Council that my evangelisation through church law and teaching at the law faculty were typical Dominican activities.”

Our Visit to Blackfriars in Oxford in 2016



“The President and the Vice-President of the Church Law Society, Prague, visited Father Dr Robert Ombres OP, a known canonist, at the Dominican Priory of Oxford on Thursday 8th September 2016. Prof. Ombres is a member of the Church Law Society, Prague, and a professor at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) in Rome.

He is a member of the Colloquium of Anglican and Roman Catholic Canon Lawyers, established in Rome in 1999, as an initiative of the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas, the Centre for Law and Religion, Law School, Cardiff University, and Duquesne Law School, Pittsburgh, USA.

The guests from the Czech Republic visited the priory church and library, which serve the students of Blackfriars Hall, one of the forty-four Colleges and Permanent Private Halls of Oxford University.”¹

The Church Law Review ranks as the third best law journal

On 17th June 2023, at the XXXth International Conference in Karlovy Vary, the Church Law Review took third place among 31 law journals published in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The Leges publishing house wins the author's first prize in Karlovy Vary

The author's prize for best publication in 2022/2023 was awarded to Leges publishing house in Prague, for the publication of a commentary on the Czech constitutional law, *the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms*.



*A photo taken in the editorial office of Leges publishing house
by Zábaj Horák.*

¹ NEWSLETTER, Church Law Society Prague – Brno – Olomouc, Volume 1, No. 9/2016, p. 2.



Local group in Stříbro

Celebrations for the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the Diocese of Pilsen

Thirty years ago, in the west Bohemian metropolis of Pilsen, a city with a population of 180,000 and famous for its beer, the most western diocese in the territory of the Czech Bishops' Conference, the *Diocese of Pilsen*, was founded. The faithful celebrated the anniversary with a Holy Mass on Saturday, **27th May 2023**, in the beautifully restored Gothic Cathedral of St. Bartholomew in Pilsen. The main celebrant was Mons. Jan Graubner, the Archbishop of Prague. Also present were Cardinal Dominik Duka and other bishops from most Bohemian and Moravian dioceses. Other participants were Bishop Emeritus Joachim Reinelt from Dresden and Bishop Tomáš Galis from Žilina. The partner diocese of Regensburg was represented by Vicar General Michael Fuchs.

The diocese of Pilsen was founded on 31st May 1993 by Pope John Paul II. Mons. František Radkovský was appointed as the first Bishop of Pilsen and he was succeeded by the current Bishop, Mons. Tomáš Holub.



Holy Mass in the Cathedral of St. Bartholomew in Pilsen on 27th May 2023. From the left the Bishops of Pilsen František Radkovský and Tomáš Holub, the Archbishop of Prague Jan Graubner, Cardinal Dominik Duka and Bishop Vlastimil Kročil from České Budějovice.

Before the Mass, representatives from all the parishes in the Diocese of Pilsen brought a symbolic amount of earth, into which Bishop Tomáš Holub planted a tree for the diocese after the Mass. We believe that this tree will grow into a symbol of gratitude and hope.

*Text František Kratochvíl,
photo Soňa Pikrtová*

The local group in Stříbro celebrates the opening of regular lecture meetings

The celebration on Sunday, **25th June 2023**, was begun with a Holy Mass in the Dean Church of All Saints in Stříbro at 10.30. We celebrated the Holy Sacrifice to the thunder of the organ and a massive curtain of incense smoke. Parish priest Miroslav Martiš read the Gospel and Father Jiří Rajmund Tretera proceeded to the pulpit to deliver the sermon. The church was full to the brim, in fact during the sermon even more people came in, who could no longer fit into the pews and had to remain standing.



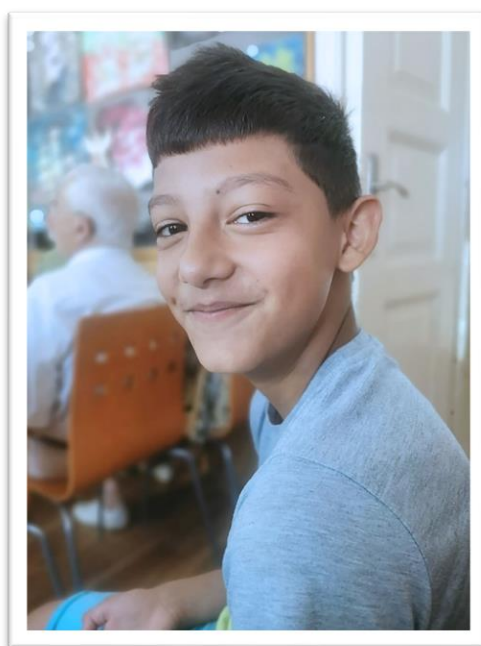
At the stroke of twelve o'clock, František Kratochvíl began the meeting of the Stříbro local group of the Church Law Society (CLS), attended by many supporters and invited faithful from the church. And that was really wonderful. The 30 participants at the start gradually increased to around 35. First of all, he welcomed Prof. Jiří Rajmund Tretera and Assoc. Prof. Zábaj Horák from the Prague Faculty of Law, President and Vice-President of the whole Society, and he then asked the former to give a talk on *What is church law and what is the Church Law Society and what are its aims?* The first topic corresponded to the first lecture in the Fundamentals of Church Law course at Charles University's Faculty of Law, prepared for October 2023. Photos were projected by CLS member Jaroslav Barhoň from Tachov.

There was then a short pause, during which Associate Professor Zábaj Horák presented books from the display of current church law literature as well as Professor Tretera's books *Czech Memoirs* and *Eighteen Ballads and Romances from Hospital Wards and Anterooms*.

Afterwards, Professor Tretera, seconded by Assoc. Prof. Horák, talked about the thirty-year history of the Church Law Society. He began by recalling the presentation of a book on church law on 15th December 1993 in the reading room of the Dominican Priory in Prague attended by eighty guests, during which a spontaneous proposal came from the floor to establish a society which would regularly organise such meetings. The word was given and a society organising various lectures on church law and the life of the Church was born. The publication of a professional journal, the Church Law Review was immediately launched, followed in later years by the Church Mirror and the Church Reporter.



The meeting in the hall of the Stříbro Primary Art School, 25th June 2023.



The youngest participants at the talk on church law in Stříbro.

At the end of our meeting there were nice refreshments and the opportunity to have individual conversations in groups. Among those attending the meeting were CLS member and student of Prague's Law Faculty, Vojtěch Felber, his mother, sister and uncle, Ing. Josef Felber. Also in attendance were the director emeritus of the charity in Stříbro, Ing. Teresie Kupec, the Stříbro lawyer Mgr. Ondřej Bucha and his wife, and the young organist Kirsten Martina Nováčková with her mother.

*Text Jiří Rajmund Tretera, Záboj Horák
Photos Jiřina Barhoňová, Jaroslav Barhoň and Miroslav Martiš*



The 7th ICLARS Conference is being prepared

The 7th International Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ICLARS) Conference will be held at University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, USA, from **21st to 23rd October 2024**. The theme of the conference is: *The Accommodation of Religion or Belief in the Public Sphere: Undeserved Privilege or Fundamental Right?*

The aim of the conference is to examine different contemporary discourses on how religion, belief and personal ethics can or must be accommodated in the legal and operational structures of States across the world.

Members of ICLARS and scholars from all over the world are invited to submit proposals either for individual papers or for panels co-ordinated by specific institutions or research groups. Proposals for panels are especially welcomed. **The deadline for responses to this call for papers and panels is 31st January 2024.**

A webpage for the conference will be published shortly. Until then, use the following email address for any request for information: iclars@unimi.it.

A Course on Penal and Matrimonial Law

Facoltà di Diritto Canonico San Pio X in Venezia (Italy) organises a course entitled *Specializzazione in giurisprudenza e prassi, penale e matrimoniale*, which will be held **on Fridays from October 2023 until May 2024**.

The specialisation course, divided into two specific courses, penal and matrimonial law, aims to offer the enrolled students an in-depth theoretical and practical knowledge of the penal and matrimonial canonical cases that arise within the particular Churches. The lectures will be held in Italian.

The course is open to those who have obtained at least a licentiate in canon law. Participation is limited to a maximum of 15 people. Registration deadline: 29 September 2023. For more information, visit:

https://fdcvenezia.voxmail.it/rsp/pvwrib/content/zanini_2023_web.pdf?_d=84O&_c=0754ceafs

From New Publications

ASSOCIAZIONE CANONISTICA ITALIANA (Curatore), *Il diritto penale al servizio della comunione della Chiesa*, Glossa, Milano, 2021, 648 pp., ISBN 978-88-7105-480-3.

NĚMEC, Damián, HESOVÁ, Zora (eds.), *Annotated Legal Documents on Islam in Europe: Czech Republic*, Brill, Boston, 2021, 130 pp., ISBN 978-90-04-44431-7.

FELICIANI, Giorgio, *Le basi del diritto canonico*, Nuova edizione, a cura di Michele Madonna, il Mulino, Bologna, 168 pp., ISBN 978-88-15-38721-9.

FERRARI Silvio, *Scritti – Percorsi di libertà religiosa per una società plurale*, a cura di Cristiana Cianitto, Alessandro Ferrari, Daniela Milani, Alessandro Tira, il Mulino, Bologna, 2022, 533 pp., ISBN 978-88-15-29865-2.

POPOVIČ, Jurij, *Hierarchical organization of the Church according to the CCEO*, KUD Apokalipsa, Ljubljana, 2021, 378 pp., ISBN 978-961-7054-41-5.

RIVOIRE, Réginald-Marie, *Does Traditionis Custodes Pass the Juridical Rationality Test?* translator BARKER, William, Os Justi Press, Lincoln, Nebraska (USA), 2022, 118 pp., ISBN 979-8-36280-463-3.

SALACHAS, Dimitrios, *Ecclesiologia e normativa del codice dei canoni delle chiese orientali*. Nel 30° anniversario della promulgazione del «Codex canonum Ecclesiarum orientalium» (1990–2020), Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, Bologna, 2021, 397 pp., ISBN 978-88-10-41248-0.



28 May 2023: Rhododendrons in the Průhonice Dendrological Park near Prague.

Photo Záboj Horák

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Photo Jiřina Barhoňová

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