

CHURCH REPORTER

1/2024

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

15th January 2024 | Volume 9
English version



29th December 2023: St. George's branch church in Hradsko, in the parish of Mšeno (north central Bohemia).
Nearby is the archaeological site of an old Slavic settlement.

Photo Záboj Horák

Joyous news for the Christmas holidays

In all the churches of the Diocese of Litoměřice (Leitmeritz) in north Bohemia we learned at Christmas that on 23rd December 2023 the Holy Father had appointed a new bishop for this diocese, founded in 1655.

Rev. ThLic. Ing. Stanislav Příbyl Th.D., CSsR, who was born in 1971 in Prague-Strašnice and is the General Secretary of the Czech Bishops' Conference, has become the twenty-first Bishop of Litoměřice. He will be ordained and enthroned in St. Stephen's Cathedral in Litoměřice on 2nd March 2024.

Mons. Stanislav Příbyl has been a member of the Church Law Society since 2011. His doctoral dissertation at the Catholic Theological Faculty, Charles University, was published not only as a university publication but also as a separate book under the title *The Legal Situation in the Litoměřice Diocese 1989–2010*. He wrote it at a time when he was already the Vicar General of this diocese. Prior to that, from 2002 to 2011 he held the office of provincial of the Czech province of the religious congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (the Redemptorists) based at the most important Czech pilgrimage site, in Svatá Hora near Příbram, in the Archdiocese of Prague.

We have sent our warmest congratulations on behalf of the Church Law Society to Father Bishop.

The Diocese of Litoměřice and church law in practice

The Diocese of Litoměřice consists of 384 parishes in ten vicariates. There are about 100 priests and thirteen permanent deacons in the pastoral care.

There are several monasteries in the diocese. Of particular importance is the pilgrimage site of Jablonné v Podještědí, on the very northern edge of the diocese, with the tomb of the patron saint of the diocese, the Dominican tertiary, noblewoman and exemplary mother, Saint Zdislava (1220–1252). In the town there is the Basilica of St. Lawrence and St. Zdislava, which houses a priory of the Dominican Fathers, restored in 1945, suppressed by communists in 1950, secretly restored during the days of the underground Church, and officially restored in 1990. In the town is a community of Dominican Sisters, too.

The national centre of the Focolare Movement, which cares for young people, has been in the parish of Příchovice in the foothills of the Jizera mountains since the time of the underground Church.

The most famous Bishop of Litoměřice was Cardinal Štěpán Trochta SDB (1947–1974). He was imprisoned by the Nazis from 1942 until 1945. Like Archbishop Josef Beran of Prague, he was one of the bishops who were appointed to office immediately after their return from the concentration camps.

After the communist coup in 1948, alongside Archbishop and Cardinal Josef Beran he played a leading role in negotiations with the state and was also among the first bishops who

were subjected to illegal prison internment as early as 1949. He was judicially sentenced to 25 years imprisonment after his “legal” arrest in 1953. He was released as part of an amnesty in 1960, then worked in a factory and in 1968 he resumed his episcopal office.

He was appointed cardinal in 1969, initially *in pectore*. After his appointment as cardinal was made public in 1973, the communist authorities were particularly harsh towards him. Cardinal Trochta died of a stroke a few hours after a savage interview with the highest official of the communist supervision of the churches in the North Bohemia region, who verbally abused him.

The new Bishop of Litoměřice, Stanislav Přibyl, succeeds Bishop Jan Baxant, who has successfully served the diocese since 2008 and who tendered his resignation after reaching the age of seventy-five in the autumn of 2023. Due to a recent myocardial infarction, his resignation was accepted by the Pope.

There is such a large number of members of the Church Law Society in the diocese that within the Society’s we are considering establishing its sixth local group there. There are several members in the Diocesan Curia in Litoměřice, as well as others in the Diocesan Ecclesiastical Court, whose office is in Liberec, the town that is considered the traditional cultural centre of North Bohemia. A number of other members work in various parishes within the diocese.

The leadership of the Church Law Society now also has its secondary headquarters in the diocese, in the former royal town of Mšeno u Mělníka, in the vicariate of Mladá Boleslav, the centre of Škoda car production. Mšeno is the gateway to an important tourist region around the ancient castles of Kokořín, Bezděz and Houska.



The Neo-Renaissance Town Hall in Mšeno. On the left is the sculpture of the Virgin Mary and Saints Sebastian and Roch. In the background is the monumental tower of the parish church of Saint Martin of Tours, visible from a distance of 30 kilometres.

Photo Zábaj Horák

Since 1830, the Horák family has had its seat in the town and since the late 19th century it has owned a large estate here, where our current vice-president, Assoc. Prof. Dr Zábój Horák was born in 1975 and where he grew up. When the management of this property passed to him six months ago, he moved here together with the Society's president, Rev. Prof. Jiří Rajmund Tretera, and both of them have not only taken on the reconstruction of the buildings and the large garden, but have also offered their help to the Mšeno parish priest, Peter Kothaj. In his collature he administers four parish churches, four branch churches, four chapels and several dozen smaller chapels, wayside shrines and crosses, and bell towers. He has welcomed this offer of help. And so since November 2023, Father Rajmund has served at all Sunday and feast day Masses in the parish church of Saint Martin, and has promised regular Sunday Masses in three other churches and occasional Masses in others. We all hope that the grand renovation of the parish church of Saint Martin of Tours will soon be completed.



Such Nativity scenes have grown up in all small towns and villages in the vicariate of Mladá Boleslav.

Towns have competed to see which one would have the most beautiful Christmas tree. In the small village of Stránka, 3 kilometres from Mšeno, two such trees were put up in the centre of the village.

In the photo, the Christmas tree and Nativity scene in Mšeno in December 2023.

Photo Zábój Horák

Tragedy at Charles University's Faculty of Arts

The mass murder that was committed on the afternoon of Thursday, 21st December 2023 by a student in the main building of this faculty on Jan Palach Square in Prague's Old Town has deeply shaken the entire Czech nation and, one might say, the whole world. And also the teachers and students at the Faculty of Law, which is nearby.

On that same evening, we informed all the members of the Church Law Society and received a letter of condolence from an honorary member of the Church Law Society, Mark Chopko,

a lawyer in Washington DC and former chief legal advisor to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Immediately afterwards, we received further condolences from Professor Wolfgang Wieshaider from Vienna, JUDr. Margita Čeplíková from Košice (Slovakia), Gareth Davies from Kent (UK), the Anglican Bishop William Paul Colton from Cork (Ireland), Will Adam, Archdeacon of Canterbury, Professor Iván Ibán from Universidad Complutense in Madrid, Lars Friedner, emeritus general secretary of the Swedish Lutheran Church, and others.

Ceremony in Mšeno

At 2 p.m. on Saturday, 23rd December 2023, citizens of the town of Mšeno spontaneously gathered on the square in front of the sculpture of the Virgin Mary, St. Roch and St. Sebastian for a silent mourning of those killed in Prague. The commemoration was also attended by representatives of the leadership of the Church Law Society. Rev. Prof. Jiří Rajmund Tretera OP said a prayer, and people lit several dozen candles.



Prof. Tretera at the statue on the day after the ceremony.

Photo Záboj Horák



Pastoral Care of Lawyers in Prague

Lawyers gathered again for Mass

At 5 p.m. on Thursday, 4th January 2024, another Mass was celebrated for the teachers, students and employees at Prague's Faculty of Law as well as for all members and supporters of the Church Law Society. The meeting place was again the Church of St. Francis of Assisi in Prague's Old Town, at the foot of Charles Bridge. The Mass was celebrated by Rev. Prof. Jiří Rajmund Tretera OP and concelebrated by Rev. David Kučerka OCr. The service was followed by conversation in the refectory of the monastery of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star. Some light refreshments were also prepared.

The next Mass will again be on the first Thursday of the month, on **1st February 2024 at 5 p.m.** *Everyone is cordially invited!*



Text and photo Jakub Nagy

Membership fees for 2024

We would like to remind all members of the Church Law Society to pay their membership fees for 2024. The basic membership fee is CZK 500 or € 20 for the year. Pensioners, students and other persons without income from employment or their own assets may pay a reduced membership fee of CZK 250 or € 10 for the year. Members may also pay an increased contribution, i.e. the basic fee increased by any amount of their choosing.

Česká spořitelna account number for payments in Czech crowns: 1939518309/0800

Account number for payments in euros (for SEPA payments):

IBAN: CZ62 2010 0000 0025 0114 3973, **BIC/SWIFT:** FIOBCZPPXXX



Consociatio Internationalis Studio Iuris Canonici Promovendo celebrated 50 years

On Friday, 1st December 2023, in the Marconi Hall of the National Research Council in Rome, there was a celebration to mark the 50th anniversary of the organisation *Consociatio Internationalis Studio Iuris Canonici Promovendo*. Consociatio is a leading scholarly institution, whose mission is to broaden and deepen knowledge of church and religion law throughout the world. It achieves this goal, among other things, by organising the International Congress of Canon Law, which has been held regularly since 1970.

The programme for the celebration, entitled *Cinquant'anni di promozione del diritto canonico nel panorama mondiale della scienza giuridica* (Fifty years of promoting canon law in the world panorama of legal science) was divided into two sessions. The morning section was called *The cultural adventures of Consociatio Internationalis Studio Iuris Canonici Promovendo*. The afternoon part was devoted to the topic of *Canon law in the formation of a contemporary lawyer*.

The detailed programme is available on the following link: <https://consociatio2.files.wordpress.com/2023/10/invito-50c2b0-consociatio.pdf>

From New Publications

Estudios Eclesiásticos, Revista de Investigación e información teológica y canónica, la Pontificia Universidad Comillas, Madrid, ISSN 0210-1610, Vol. 98 Núm. 387 (2023): octubre-diciembre,

From the contents:

GANDÍA BARBER, Juan Damián, *Modificaciones introducidas por la reforma del Libro VI en las circunstancias agravantes (c. 1326)*, p. 695–727,

JASZCZ, Adam, *La peculiar solicitud del obispo para el presbítero que ha cumplido las penas expiatorias por un delito «contra sextum cum minore»*, p. 729–767.

Ius Ecclesiae, Rivista internazionale di Diritto Canonico, a cura della Facoltà di Diritto Canonico della Pontificia Università della Santa Croce, Roma, ISSN 1120-6462, V. 35 N. 2 (2023),

From the contents:

PAPALE, Claudio, *Il nuovo delitto di furto (can. 1376 § 1, n. 1)*, p. 371–383,

ZALBIDEA, Diego, *La enajenación ilegítima: evolución histórica de la formulación del tipo del delito (can. 1376 §1, 2º)*, p. 385–405,

GHERRI, Paolo, *L'amministrazione invalida o illecita dei beni ecclesiastici (can. 1376 §1, 2º)*, p. 407–428,

MIÑAMBRES, Jesús, *I delitti amministrativi commessi per “grave negligenza” (can. 1376 §2)*, p. 429–447,

CARNÌ, Matteo, *La riparazione del danno da parte del delinquente e l'eventuale responsabilità civile ex delicto dell'ente di appartenenza*, p. 449–471,

TERRÁNEO, Sebastián, *Il delitto de corruptio impuberum presso il Sant'Uffizio (1922–1965)*, p. 507–530.

Church Reporter – Newsletter for the English-speaking members and friends of the Church Law Society, Prague – Brno – Olomouc – Stříbro – České Budějovice, published by Church Law Society, Sudoměřská 25, 130 00 Praha 3, CZ.

Photo on the front page: 29th December 2023, St. George's branch church in Hradsko, in the parish of Mšeno (north central Bohemia). Nearby is the archaeological site of an old Slavic settlement.

Photo Záboj Horák

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Available at: sccp.prf.cuni.cz/newsletter. Published monthly. Sent to 970 addresses.

E-mail: sccp@prf.cuni.cz

ISSN 2695-012X