



NEWSLETTER

FOR THE ENGLISH SPEAKING MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
OF THE CHURCH LAW SOCIETY
PRAGUE – BRNO – OLOMOUC

No. 1/2018

Volume 3

28th January 2018

Ceremony of Sending Prison Chaplains in December 2017

An ecumenical worship was held at the St. Wenceslas Congregation of the Czechoslovak Hussite Church in Prague – New Town, on 14th December 2017, during which **new prison chaplains and volunteers from many churches in the Czech Republic were sent to serve.**

We believe that this originally monastic church on the corner of Resslova and Václavská Streets was chosen because of its historical tradition. The monastery was confiscated from the church at the time of Emperor Josef II and from 1809 it was rebuilt to the well-known St. Wenceslas Prison, the predecessor of the later Pankrác Prison in another part of Prague. The church was re-opened in 1827 and was used for worship services for the prisoners. At the same place, a Catholic priest František Josef Řezáč was active in the years 1847–1856, whose name was “inscribed in golden writing in the tradition of the spiritual service of the Czech prison system as one of the leading prison system theoretician”,¹ and whose activity is commemorated by a memorial plaque on the outer perimeter of the church.

The ceremony of sending prison chaplains took place two years after the last similar celebration. Ecumenical worship was presided over by Mons. Josef Kajnek, Catholic Auxiliary Bishop from the Diocese of Hradec Králové, and Daniel Ženatý, Moderator of the Synod Council of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren.

The oath of new prison chaplains, who were accepted by the representative of the Czech Bishops' Conference (ČBK), its Secretary General P. Stanislav Příbyl CSsR, was the main part of the worship. The oath of volunteers serving in prisons was accepted by the Head of the Ecumenical Council of Churches (ERC), Moderator of the Synod Council Daniel Ženatý. The Secretary General of the ERC, P. Petr Jan Vinš, priest of the Old Catholic Church, emphasized following words during his encouraging sermon to the prison chaplains and their helpers: “Be messengers of God’s light and the mercy of God.”

¹ TRETERA, Jiří Rajmund, HORÁK, Záboj, *Konfesní právo* [Religion Law], Praha, Leges, 2015, p. 212.

Signing of a supplementary arrangement to **the Prison System Spiritual Service Agreement**, concluded in 2013, was included in the meeting. The supplementary arrangement was signed by representatives of the *ERC*, *ČBK* and the *Prison Spiritual Care*, an association uniting Christians of various denominations and acting in an ecumenical spirit. The Prison Spiritual Care sends its members, with consent of the appropriate denomination, to prison facilities to provide spiritual and pastoral service.

The parties to the agreement confirmed that experienced ministers as well as lay persons, who have necessary personal prerequisites and meet specific conditions associated with service in these facilities, will be entrusted with spiritual and pastoral service in prisons and remand prisons. The work of the prison chaplains was also appreciated by a former prisoner who said in his speech that he received the faith in Jesus Christ thanks to the chaplains. At the end of the ceremony, Svatopluk band performed the song *Faith*.



From the left: Secretary General P. Stanislav Přebyl CSsR and Moderator of the Synod Council Daniel Ženatý.

Church Law Society *Prague – Brno – Olomouc* reached number of 491 members

We announce that according to listings in the membership list, the Church Law Society reached a total of 491 members on 1st January 2018. We include a table on the membership of our Society over the last five years:

Year	Number of newly accepted members	The number of members who stepped out	The number of members who passed away	Number of members at the end of the year
2013	14	8	3	421
2014	31	7	2	443
2015	22	4	3	458
2016	26	4	2	478
2017	25	9	3	491

From New Publications

Journals

L'année canonique, La Société Internationale de Droit Canonique et de Législations religieuses comparées, publié avec la collaboration de la Faculté de Droit Canonique de Paris, Paris, ISSN 0570–1953,

Tome LVII – 2016,

including:

DURAND, Jean-Paul, *Chronique de droit français des religions : Le régime local en Guyane est constitutionnel*, pp. 435–442.

Oxford Journal of Law and Religion, Oxford University Press, Oxford, ISSN 2047-0770, Volume 6, Number 3, October 2017,

including:

NASH, Patrick S., *Sharia in England: The Marriage Law Solution*, pp. 523–543.

Newsletter for the English speaking members and friends of the Church Law Society, Prague – Brno – Olomouc, published by Společnost pro církevní právo, Sudoměřská 25, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic.

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Issues appear monthly.

ISSN 2464-7276