

## From the Church Law Society

### The 66<sup>th</sup> Evening Event from the Lecture Series

#### *The Effects of Law on the Church and Society*

On Monday, 4 March 2013, a successful evening took place at the Law School of Charles University in Prague; 43 participants enjoyed a presentation of the book *Funeral Science* with the subtitle *Legal Assurance of Piety and the Dignity of Human Remains*. The book was authored by **Mgr. Tomáš Kotrlý, Th.D.**, an expert at the Ministry of Regional Development of the Czech Republic, and published by Linde Publishing House in Prague in 2013 (for more details see Church Law Review No. 54–1/13, “From New Publications”, p. 103). The book provides a clear overview of Czech law on funerals and Czech cemetery law, including a part that deals with churches and religious societies. The book not only discusses legal issues but also describes comprehensively all aspects of the care of the last matters of a person and close persons surviving him.

The presentation was introduced by

- Professor JUDr. Jiří Rajmund Tretera from the Law School of Charles University in Prague, who authored the Preface to the book and served as one of the reviewers of the book; and
- Professor PhDr. RNDr. Helena Haškovcová, CSc., the chairperson of the doctoral studies council for the area of Applied Ethics at the Faculty of Humanities of Charles University in Prague.

A rich and highly interactive discussion followed the presentation; most questions were directed to the author of the book. The author and those who collaborated with him introduced an interactive map with a database of all cemeteries in the Czech Republic, which can be found at [www.pohrebiste.cz](http://www.pohrebiste.cz).

Among the participants were Church Law Society members and students, and also employees of funeral homes and services and cemetery administrators.

A report and photographs from the event are available at the Facebook page of the Legal History Department of the Law School of Charles University at <https://www.facebook.com/Katedrapravnichdejnin>.

### **Black or White Smoke? Current and Historical Aspects of Papal Elections**

This was the original title of one of the cafe seminars by the student organization *The Common Law Society* at the Law School of Charles University in Prague. The seminar was being prepared before 13 March 2013 – before the date of the election of the current Pope, Pope Francis I. Because the election occurred before the seminar took place, the organizers decided to rename the seminar “The Elections of the Holy Father,” and they prepared a beautiful poster for the event.

The organizers invited Professor JUDr. Jiří Rajmund Tretera from the Legal History Department, in the specialty of church law, to speak at the seminar, which took place in the literary café “At the Hairy Spirit” on Konviktská Street in Prague – Old Town **on Thursday, 11 April 2013**, from 7 pm until 9 pm. The café provided an intimate environment for 27 participants, many of whom are members of the Church Law Society, in addition to students and practitioners.

Professor Tretera introduced the history of papal elections; as for the history of the elections by cardinals he pointed to an excellent article by PhDr. Drahomír Suchánek, Ph.D., which was published in *Church Law Review* No. 53–3/12. He explained ten legislative changes concerning papal elections that had been issued by popes between January 1904 and February 2013, and described the current status quo, which was used at the meetings of the general congregation and conclave in Rome in March 2013.

The lecture by Professor Tretera was followed by more than an hour of discussion during which Professor Tretera answered about 50 questions from the participants; Professor Tretera was delighted by the content of the questions and the manner in which the participants asked them.

### **The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Decease of Mr. Augustin Navrátil, Member of Church Law Society (Prague)**

On May 2, 2013, we remembered decease of a member to our Society, Mr Augustin Navrátil. He was a track signalman of the Czech Railroads and a private farmer from Lutopecný near Kroměříž (Moravia). The author of the famous 31-point petition called *The Incentives of Catholics to the Solution of Citizens-Believers' Situation in Czechoslovakia*, which was signed by over 600,000 citizens at the beginning of 1988. Until the last days of his life he always was a strict defender of the principles of friendly disestablishment, and a non-conform warrior for the

freedom of Church institutions. Recently he attended all the events of the Society on a very regular base, and relentlessly supported its management with his initiative. He was an editor to *Obzory* magazine.

**The Award of the 20th Annual Competition *Dictionary of the Year***

A set of six dictionaries published by the publishing house Grada in Prague in 2011–2012 received the jury award for the best dictionary from the Union of Translators and Interpreters. Among the six is the *Church Law Dictionary*, and its authors, Jiří Rajmund Tretera and Zábój Horák, received the award on Friday, 17 May 2013, in the Prague Exhibition Center during the 19<sup>th</sup> International Book Fair *Book World*. We congratulate all who contributed to the publication of this book.

## Brief News

### **Newly Established Center for State Law on Churches and Religious Societies**

As of 1 March 2013 a new research center – the Center for State Law on Churches and Religious Societies – was created at the CEVRO Institute in Prague 1, Jungmannova 28/17. The mission of the Center is to systematically research issues of religious freedom and state-church relations, including matters of property settlement between churches and the state. The Center will provide consultation services, publish research papers, and collaborate with Czech and foreign centers with a similar focus.

The director of the Center is Mgr. Jakub Kříž, Ph.D.

The new director lectured at two seminars concerning church property settlement matters on 26 and 27 February 2013.

### **“Churches and Employment” – an Interdisciplinary Conference**

The Law School of Charles University in Prague and the Center for State Law on Churches and Religious Societies of the CEVRO Institute organized a student research conference entitled “Churches and Employment”; the conference took place on 22 April 2013. At the conference the following speakers presented their contributions: Doc. Mag.phil. Dr.iur. Harald Christian Scheu, Ph.D., Assistant Professor Dr. Wolfgang Wieshaider, JUDr. Martin Štefko, Ph.D., Mgr. Jakub Kříž, Ph.D., Mgr. Kateřina Děkanovská, Ph.D., Doc. JUDr. Stanislav Příbyl, Ph.D., IC.D.

### **The Conference “Church Restitutions in Practice”**

The research conference “Church Restitutions in Practice” took place in the conference hall of the Hospital of the Sisters of Mercy of St. Charles Borromeo on 7 May 2013. The conference was organized by the B. I. D. Agency. The speakers were the following experts:

- Mgr. Jakub Kříž, Ph.D. (Location of Items and Its Relation to a Financial Settlement),
- Mgr. Aleš Chocholáč (Contribution to the Functioning of Churches during the Transitory Period),

- Mgr. Martin Pujman (Conduct of a Person with an Obligation prior to the Conclusion of an Agreement about Surrendering an Item),
- Jana Brantová (Navigating the Land Records in the Context of Obtaining Written Documents about Ownership of Church Property),
- JUDr. Stanislav Polčák (Conduct following a Breach of the Blocking Provision), and
- Daniel Kvasnička (Introduction of Charity Projects of the Church of Brethren).