

A Successful *Church and State* Conference in Brno

On Friday, 9th September 2022, the 28th annual *Church and State* conference was held in the Faculty of Law of Masaryk University in Brno (Moravia). It was organised by the Law Faculty's Department of Constitutional Law and Political Science and the Church Law Society (CLS), and was devoted to the following topics:

- *Changes in Catholic and Evangelical Church Law* and
- *Discrimination on the Grounds of Religion*.

At the beginning, the participants were welcomed by *Dr Kateřina Šimáčková*, a judge at the European Court of Human Rights and chairperson of the Local Group of the Church Law Society in Brno, *Professor Jiří Rajmund Tretera*, professor of church law at the Faculty of Law of Charles University in Prague and President of the Church Law Society, and *Associate Professor Martin Škop*, Dean of the Faculty of Law of Masaryk University.

The **first block** of papers, moderated by *Associate Professor Zábaj Horák* from the Prague Law Faculty, was devoted to the *reform of the Code of Canon Law* made by the Apostolic Constitution of Pope Francis, *Pascite gregem Dei*, with effect from 8th December 2021.

The speakers were *Associate Professor Jiří Dvořáček* from the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt (the rules of criminal responsibility in canon law), *Mgr. Jakub Nagy*, full-time doctoral student at the Prague Faculty of Law specialising in church law (property crimes according to the new version of Book VI of CIC/1983 of 2021), and *Professor Damián Němec*, Ordinary of Church Law at the Faculty of Theology in Olomouc (new regulation of expiatory penalties).

The **second block**, moderated by *Dr Jaroslav Benák* from the Brno Faculty of Law, focused on *changes in other sub-areas of church and canon law*.

The first speaker was *Dr Adam Csukás* from Prague, a lawyer at the Central Church Office of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, who spoke about upcoming changes to the presbyteries (middle management chains) of the Church.

ICLic. Jiří Zámečník, a judge of the Interdiocesan Church in Olomouc (Moravia), talked about the role of personal faith in marriage in the Catholic Church.

Dr Monika Menke, a teacher of church law at the Faculty of Theology and the Faculty of Law in Olomouc, discussed the reform of the Roman Curia according to the Apostolic Constitution of Pope Francis, *Praedicate Evangelium* (2022), and spoke about the expansion of the position of the laity in the Church and synodality.

ICLic. Mgr. František Ponižil from Zábřeh (Moravia) talked about the direct amendments to the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

Finally, *Dr Zuzana Mičková* from the Faculty of Law in Banská Bystrica (Slovakia), discussed the consequences of Josephinism for the Banská Bystrica diocese in the late 18th century.

The **third block**, again moderated by *Dr Jaroslav Benák*, focused on *discrimination on grounds of religion*.

The first speaker was *Tomáš Grundza* from Prague, secretary of the Church Law Society, who discussed how the current legislation in the Czech Republic does not allow religious legal entities to draw grants for work with children and young people.

Mgr. Lenka Kříčková, a lawyer at the Office of the Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman) in Brno, analysed cases of discrimination on the grounds of religion, faith and worldview that had been dealt with by the Ombudsman's Office; her contribution sparked a lively discussion.

Dr Michal Lamparter from Brno, the founding father of the *Church and State* conference, spoke on the personality of Augustin Navrátil (1928–2003), the author of a petition in support of religious freedom (1987), which was signed by 600,000 citizens of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

Around forty people attended the conference. The papers were published, as in previous years, in peer-reviewed proceedings.

Jakub Nagy