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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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Memories of the 80th Anniversary of the Massacre of Lidice Culminated in Holy Mass

On **10th June 2022** the people in the Czech Republic commemorated 80 years since the extermination of the Central Bohemian typical village of *Lidice* (20 km northwest of Prague) by the Nazi occupiers. The destruction of Lidice and the massacre of its population by the German Gestapo was supposed to be the beginning of the planned genocide of Czech nation and at that moment it was an act of revenge for successful killing of Reinhard Heydrich, the acting Reich Protector of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, who, after taking office as protector in September 1941, had several thousand Czech patriots and leading intellectuals executed.

Heydrich was one of architects of the Holocaust. He chaired the January 1942 Wannsee Conference, which formalised plans for the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question” and was the second personality of Nazi Germany and possible successor of Hitler in the position of Führer. Hitler described him as “the man with the iron heart”. Heydrich was one of the worst war criminals of all times. His killing is considered one of the most important events of World War II and was a clear testimony of the state of war between Czechoslovakia and Germany. The event had a clear political message for the United Kingdom and the whole free world.

Heydrich was killed while driving to his office in Prague by two Czechoslovak paratroopers, trained in the United Kingdom, Czech soldier *Jan Kubiš* and Slovak soldier *Josef Gabčík*. It happened on 27th May 1942, symbolically on the eve of the birthday of the President of Czechoslovakia in exile Edvard Beneš. Kubiš and Gabčík died with other five comrades-in-arms after finding their hiding place in the crypt of the of Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox church in Prague. Some hundreds of people related to the soldiers we executed during several months, inclusive Orthodox priests.

The village Lidice had no relation to Heydrich’s killing. Nevertheless, it was chosen to perform exemplary revenge and so that its name is erased from the map of Europe and no Czech village will ever stand in its place again. This was announced by the Nazis in their intimidating statement of the destruction of Lidice the very next day.

The Nazi occupiers retaliated against the civilian population: they burned village of Lidice, utterly levelled it to the ground and the entire local population was executed or sent to concentration camps. All men were shot (inclusive Catholic parish priest *Josef Štemberka*). The total number of victims reached 340 (192 men, 60 women and 88 children).

Several dozen women were taken to the concentration camps without children. Some of them survived, returned after the war, and settled in the newly built Lidice, not far from the original village. Most children died. Several dozen children, who were recognized as members of the Nordic race, were re-educated in Nazi families in Germany, where they lost their names and language. Only part of new “parents” acknowledged their involvement in this re-education program after the war and the children returned. Some of the children are scattered around Germany and do not know about their Czech origin and that they were born in Lidice.

The extermination of Lidice has provoked strong responses around the world. Cities, towns and many women, especially on the American continent, bear the name *Lidice*.

This year, *Cardinal Dominik Duka*, Archbishop Emeritus of Prague, celebrated the open-air Mass on 10th June 2022 on the very same place where St. Martin's Church in Lidice stood. The Mass was attended by the Chairman of the Senate of the Czech Republic *Miloš Vystrčil*, and the Patriarch of the Czechoslovak Hussite Church *Tomáš Butta*. During the Holy Mass, Cardinal Duka recalled several times the *Ukrainian citizens* facing war in their country and begged for peace in Ukraine.

At the end of the Mass, Cardinal Duka handed over the image of the Virgin Mary standing next to the altar to Ukrainian Ambassador to the Czech Republic *Yevhen Perebyjnis*. The image of the Madonna will travel to the Ukrainian city of Bucha (Buča) where it will adorn the main temple. One of the biggest massacres of the war of Russia against the Ukraine took place in this city, where Russian soldiers killed several hundred people.

“Unfortunately, today we have hundreds and thousands of Lidice in Ukraine. The support you are showing us from the Czech people, the Czech state, is very important,” thanked the Ukrainian ambassador.

The reverence continued by laying flower wreaths at the grave of the Lidice men, where Duka also said a prayer, and honouring the memory of the child victims of the war at their memorial.



Dominik Cardinal Duka celebrating the Holy Mass in Lidice on 10th June 2022. On his right a picture of parish priest in Lidice Josef Štemberka (1869–1942). In front of the altar there is picture of Madonna for the Ukrainian city of Bucha.

Text: Jakub Nagy, Jiří Rajmund Tretera, Záboj Horák



Local group in Olomouc

International Conference on Marriage Processes in Katowice (Poland)

On 31st May 2022, an international conference with an interfaith dimension was held in the Polish university city of Katowice, at the *University of Silesia in Katowice*, organized by the Faculty of Theology in cooperation with the Faculty of Law and Administration.

Eleven contributions by participants from several countries of the world were planned. Some were personally present in Katowice, others connected online

About 30 participants physically gathered at the conference. In addition to lecturers – secular lawyers, canonists and theologians from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Romania and the USA, faculty students were also present. English was the conference language.

The program was focused on the changes in the matrimonial procedural law of the Catholic Church that occurred in 2015 and the view of matrimonial proceedings in general.

The introductory speech was given by Professor Joseph Halevi Horowitz Weiler from New York on the topic *Divorce and Same Sex Marriage: Some Iconoclastic Views on the Role of Church and State*. The contributions of Romanian participants from Ovidius University of Constanța could not be delivered due to technical problems, but the texts should be published in the forthcoming conference proceedings. These were contributions by Professor Theodosie Petrescu (*Selected Biblical Testimonies Regarding the Marriage*), Professor Catalina Mititelu and Professor Bogdan Moise (*The Right to Marriage According to the Provisions of Main Legal Instruments of the UN and EU*) and Professor Nicolae V. Dură (*About the Religious Marriage: From the Marriage by 'Confarreatio' to the Marriage as Sacrament*).

This was followed by a contribution by Professor Magdalena Habdas from the University of Silesia in Katowice on *Total Eclipse of Heart – Challenges of Modern Divorce Law in Poland*, online contribution by Professor Piotr Kroczek from Cracow on *Diagnosis of the Condition of the Contemporary Polish Family Through the Prism of the Canonical Annulment of Marriage: A New Research Perspective* and Dr Jurij Popovič of the University of Prešov, Slovakia, on *The Abbreviated Process before the Bishop and Ecclesiastical Divorce in the Orthodox Churches*.

Professor Damián Němec OP and Dr Monika Menke spoke on *Church Tribunals during the Covid-19 Pandemic*, and ICLic. Jiří Zámečník on *Marriage as a Sacrament in the Predominant Cultural Understanding of Marriage*. All three are from the Saints Cyril and Methodius Faculty of Theology of Palacký University in Olomouc (Czech Republic).

Last lecture by Ester Andrew Mdegipala from Tanzania on *The Nature of Marriage in Tanzania: Reflection of Biblical Values* was presented online.

Monika Menke

Young Scientists Met in Lublin

On 4th June 2022, the XI Polish National Scientific Conference of Young Canonists took place at John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (KUL). It was entitled *The Code of Canon Law in the Research of Young Scientists*. The conference was organized by the Department of Public and Constitutional Church Law, headed by Professor Mirosław Sitarz, Legal Commission of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Lublin (PAN), Association of Polish Canonists and Association of Alumni and Friends of the Faculty of Law KUL.

Young researchers, doctoral students and researchers before the habilitation presented nineteen papers, mostly in Polish (one paper in Italian), followed by a discussion. The conference, together with doctors and doctoral students from Polish universities, was also attended by representatives of the Czech Republic, including several members of the Church Law Society.

The introductory joint section was chaired by Professor Damián Němec OP. Contributions were presented by Dr Monika Menke from Palacký University Olomouc (UPOL) on *New Office for Communication in the Roman Curia*, mgr lic. Igor Kilanowski from Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (UKSW) on *Church Higher Studies and Higher Education System* and Dr Štefan Brynda on *Statute of the Priestly Council of the Hradec Králové Diocese*.

Afterwards, the participants divided into two sections acting in parallel with two stages of negotiations, which were gradually chaired by Professor Józef Krukowski (UKSW/KUL), Professor Krzysztof Mikołajczuk (KUL), Professor Dariusz Borek (UKSW) and Professor Paweł Kaleta (KUL), who supported (not only) their students in this way.

Then young researchers presented the results of their scientific work. Maciej Andrzejewski from Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow (UPJPII) lectured on *Praesumptio Boni Viri in Canon Law*, Paweł Kasperowicz from UKSW presented a paper on the topic *Pastoral Care of Persons in an Irregular Situation According to the Guidelines Contained in the Exhortation Amoris Laetitia*, Maciej Kiliszek from UKSW dealt with *Permanent Services as One of the Three Possibilities for the Involvement of Lay People According to Can. 230 CIC/1983*. Paweł Bandała from KUL lectured on *Development of Competences of the Polish Primate and President of the Polish Bishops' Conference*, Mateusz Przytułski OP from UKSW spoke on the topic *General Norms or General Regulations – Reflection of the Change of the Title of the 1st Book of CIC/1983 in a New Polish Translation* and Marcin Rycek from KUL reported on the topic *To What Extent Can the Content of a Lawsuit for the Validity of a Marriage Violate the Personal Good of the Civil Code?*

After a break and discussions, the second stage of two parallel sections continued. Anna Gajda from UKSW presented a paper on *Pious Foundations and Donations in Acquiring Material Goods in Churches*, Mariola Pirek from UKSW lectured on *Forms of the Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation: the Possibility of Celebrating the Sacrament at a Distance*, Jiří Zámečník from UPOL reported on the topic *The Proper Intention of the Giver as a Necessary Requirement for a Valid Celebration of the Sacraments*, Szymon Wasiak from UKSW spoke on the topic *Participation of the Laity in the Exercise of the Judiciary of the Church*, Zofia Stryszowska from KUL lectured on *Neglect of Parish Obligations as an Incentive to Dismiss the Pastor*, Agata Stępień from KUL presented a paper on the topic *Burial*

of the Dead in the Perspective of CIC/1983, Kinga Cichawa from KUL lectured on *Circumstances Changing the Criminal Responsibility of the Offender in the Context of the Reform of the Church's Criminal Law* and Monika Frąszczak from KUL dealt with *Dismissal of the Defender of the Bond in the Reformed Matrimonial Trial*.



4th June 2022, Catholic University of John Paul II. in Lublin: behind the lectern Rev. Jiří Zámečník.

Photo by Monika Menke

The number of papers in this year's conference was only about half of previous years. It was caused by the return of the conference to in-person lectures after the end of epidemiological measures, to which a certain part of young researchers and students have not yet got used to again.

According to the practice of the organizers, most of the submitted papers should be published in the form of an anthology, or in the form of papers in the peer-reviewed periodical *Kościół i Prawo*, published by the Catholic University of Lublin.

Monika Menke



Local group in Brno

New Diocesan Bishop of Brno



On 26th May 2022 the Holy Father Francis appointed the 14th Diocesan Bishop of Brno *Mons. Mgr. Ing. Pavel Konzbul, Dr.*, the current auxiliary bishop of Brno, titular bishop of Litomyšl and Vicar General of the Brno diocese.

Pavel Konzbul was born on 17th October 1965 in Brno. After his high school studies, he graduated from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Communication of the Brno University of Technology and worked as a researcher in the field electrical engineering.

In 1995 he began his studies at the Cyril and Methodius Theological Faculty of Palacký University in Olomouc, which he completed in 2000. In 2003 he received priestly ordination in the cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Brno. He then worked as a parish vicar in Boskovice and Svitávka, in Hustopeče near Brno, Starovičky and an

excurrent administrator in Starovice (all in Moravia). In 2013 he was appointed parish priest of the parish at the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Brno.

On 21st May 2016, he was appointed Titular Bishop of Litomyšl and Auxiliary Bishop of Brno by Pope Francis. On 29th June 2016 he received the Episcopal ordination in the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Brno from his diocesan bishop Vojtěch Cikrle.

In the Czech Bishops' Conference, Bishop Pavel Konzbul is a member of the Commission for the Priesthood and the Commission for Catholic Education. He is the author of eleven publications, intended primarily for young people.

Congratulations to the new Diocesan Bishop of Brno Mons. Pavel Konzbul. We are all the happier because Bishop Konzbul has been a *member of the Church Law Society since 1995.*

Jakub Nagy



The Night of Churches Successful Again

The 14th year of the ecumenical Night of Churches took place in the whole Czech Republic on Friday 10th June 2022. The first Night of Churches took place in the Czech Republic in 2009. During the annual Night of Churches parishes and congregations of various churches open their churches, prayer houses and chapels in the evening for the general public to see them. It became a traditional large nationwide event, held in May or June, which is very popular with the general public.

1729 churches and prayer houses took part in this year's event and 7614 programs were prepared. Since the late afternoon, open churches were filled with people who could view their interior, visit spaces inaccessible to the public, such as sacristies or oratories, read clearly printed information posters and signs, listen to concerts, musical accompaniments, lectures, light up candles, buy or receive free snacks and talk to present priests and religious. Masses or common prayers were held in some temples as well.

Many members of the Church Law Society took part in the Night of churches, either as visitors or as volunteers. The Church Law Society sees this event as a wonderful way of getting to know Christianity and meeting people. We fully support its expansion to other countries in Europe and around the world. The next Night of the Churches will be held on Friday, 2nd June 2023.

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Photo on the front page: 9th June 2022, Rome, Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala visits Holy Father Francis.

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