

## INTRODUCTION

The 16th Symposium of the Canon Law was held at the Seminary of Bishop Ján Vojtaššák in Spišská Kapitula in Spišské Podhradie from Tuesday, 21 August to Friday, 24 August, 2012.

### **Cardinal Raymond Leo Burke in Bratislava**

Cardinal Leo Burke, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, arrived from Rome to attend the Symposium. Accompanied by Mons. Stanislav Zvolenský, Metropolitan Archbishop of Bratislava, Cardinal Burke paid tribute to the unborn life at the Memorial of Unborn Children at the Church of St. Elisabeth in Bratislava on Monday, 20 August 2012. In his speech, he defended the culture of life and refused the culture of death. The full wording of his speech is presented in this collection. Later in the afternoon, the Cardinal left Bratislava to visit Spišská Kapitula, where he was warmly welcomed by the Spiš Diocese Bishop Mons. Štefan Sečka.

### **Roundup of the 16th Symposium of the Canon Law in Spišská Kapitula**

Tuesday, 21 August, 2012, was the first working day of the Symposium. Several opening notes presented at 9 am in the lecture hall of the Seminary were followed by two lectures of the keynote speaker, the Cardinal Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura. The title of the Cardinal's first lecture was *Supervision of the Apostolic Signatura Over the Right Administration of Justice in the Church*. The second lecture of the Cardinal was named *Reflections on*

*the Mistake of Law as the Title of Nullity as Proposed by Some Diocesan and Interdiocesan Tribunals.* The first day of the Symposium was moderated by Mons. Stanislav Zvolenský, Bratislava Metropolitan Bishop and the Chairman of the Slovak Bishops' Conference. As a matter of tradition associated with the symposia, Holy Mass has been held in one of the churches of the Diocese of Spiš. This year, the Mass was served by Cardinal Leo Burke at 4 pm. in the Concathedral of the Virgin Mary of the Seven Sorrows in Poprad. The full wording of the Cardinal's homily is also presented in this collection.

On Wednesday, 22 August, 2012, Mons. Antonio Neri, Undersecretary of the Congregation for the Clergy and later that afternoon also Mons. Grzegorz Erlebach, judge of the Apostolic Tribunal Rota Romana, gave their lectures. The first lecture presented by Mons. Antonio Neri at 9 am was entitled *Dismissal From the Clerical State in poenam*. He informed the participants of the Symposium about the new competences granted to the Congregation for the Clergy by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009. The second lecture presented by Mons. Neri was entitled *Dismissal From the Clerical State Based on Dispensation*. Mons. Erlebach gave two lectures as part of the afternoon agenda. The first lecture titled *An Update on the Latest Rotal Jurisprudence on the Matter of Consensual Incapacity* was given at 3 pm, and the second lecture titled *New Competences of the Roman Rota After the Issuance of Motu Proprio Quaerit Semper* was given at 4:30 pm. Both lectures were presented in Polish – a language well understood by all participants to the Symposium. The former lecture, however, is not presented in this collection and will only be published in the next collection (the author kindly asked for extra time to prepare the printed version of the lecture). The second lecture is published in this collection in both Italian and Slovak. The second working day of the Symposium was moderated by Mons. Bernard Bober, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Košice.

An interesting part of the second day's agenda of the Symposium was the the Eucharistic Adoration in the Cathedral of St. Martin in Spišská

Kapitula, served by the local diocese bishop Mons. Štefan Sečka. After the Eucharistic Adoration, Mons. Antonio Neri read the letter of Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy addressed to the Bishop of Spiš. In his letter, he appreciated not only the educational dimension but also the spiritual dimension of the event as well as the power of prayers which enhance the priestly identity of the clergy. He specifically highlighted the existence of the Association of Priests – Adorators. Mons. Štefan Sečka thanked the Cardinal for the words of encouragement the Cardinal addressed to Slovak priests.

On Thursday, 23 August 2012, the day started with the Holy Mass in the Cathedral of St. Martin. Lectures began at 9 am. Mons. Stanislav Zvolenský, Metropolitan Archbishop of Bratislava and Chairman of the Slovak Bishops' Conference presented his lecture titled *Tasks and Importance of Bishop Conferences After the Second Vatican Council*. The second lecture given at 11 am was presented by Mons. Jan Vokál, the Diocese Bishop from Hradec Králové. The title of his lecture was *Tasks Faced by the Catholic Church in the Czech Republic After the Restitution Act*. Later in the afternoon, Professor JUDr. Marek Šmíd, PhD., Rector of the Trnava University in Trnava, gave his lecture titled *The Position of the Holy See in the International Law and in the Discussions of Secular Lawyers*. At 4:30 pm, Professor Ján Duda, PhD. presented his lecture titled *The coram Faltin Rotal Jurisprudence*. At 6 pm, a traditional Garden Party was held. Participants had an opportunity to meet each other and socialize informally. The third day of the Symposium was moderated by the Diocese Bishop of Spiš, Mons. Štefan Sečka.

On Friday, 24 August 2012, the General Meeting of the Slovak Society of Canon Law was held, during which individual judicial vicars of the dioceses of Slovakia and Czech Republic presented their papers. Since the mandates of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Slovak Society of Canon Law had expired, members of the Society elected a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Society. Mons. Professor Ján Duda, PhD. of the Spiš Diocese was re-elected as the Chairman and Mons. JCDr.

Tibor Hajdu, PhD. of the Bratislava Diocese was also re-elected as the Vice-Chairman of the Society.

### **Organisers of the 16th Symposium of the Canon Law**

The Symposia of the Canon Law in Slovakia began as an initiative in 1991 at the instigation of Mons. Daniel Faltin, a Slovak native and a Rota judge. Between 1991 and 2000, the Symposia have been held on an annual basis. Since 2000 until now, they have been held bi-annually.

In 1992, the Slovak Society of Canon Law was founded and took up the role of the main organiser of the Symposia of the Canon Law in Slovakia. Thus, the main organiser of the 16th Symposium in 2012 was the Slovak Society of Canon Law. Other partners included the Catholic University in Ružomberok, Council of the Slovak Bishops' Conference for the Implementation of the Treaties with the Holy See, the Bishopric of Spiš and the Seminary of Bishop Ján Vojtaššák in Spišská Kapitula.

### **Institute of Law and Canon Law**

Over the course of the history of the Symposia of the Canon Law, numerous meetings have produced a solid publishing basis for further development and improvement of the practice of canon law and the proper functioning of ecclesiastical courts in Slovakia. One should be grateful that the science of canon law in our country is taking on an institutionalised form. In late June 2013, the Accreditation Commission approved an undergraduate course in law and a post-graduate and doctoral course in canon law. Both courses will be provided by the Catholic University in Ružomberok. It is hoped that this new opportunity to study law will be for the good of the Church and the Slovak society. The accreditation file was elaborated by the Institute of Law and Canon Law of the Pedagogical Faculty in Ružomberok.

## Conclusion

Considering the number of organised symposia of the canon law over the past years, numerous enlightening lectures, meetings of the ecclesiastical judges and lawyers not only from Slovakia and Czech Republic but also from abroad, one must be thankful to God in the first place. Nevertheless, we must also thank all those who have strived to prepare a reasonably solid setting for the symposia. I would like to thank Mons. Štefan Sečka, Diocese Bishop of Spiš, who kindly took on the role of the moderator of the Slovak Society of Canon Law, and also hosted the lecturers and participants to the symposia. One should also thank Mons. Stanislav Zvolenský, Metropolitan Archbishop of Bratislava and Chairman of the Slovak Bishops' Conference, who is himself an ecclesiastical law graduate and a long-time supporter of the symposia. I would also like to express my gratitude to the staff of the Seminary of Bishop Ján Vojtaššák headed by Mons. Jozef Jarab, Rector of the Seminary. No scientific event would be possible without their technical, organisational and personal backing. Special thanks to all the scientific, professional and organisational team members of the symposia who have borne their part of the burden of organising these symposia. May God reward all of them abundantly.

Spišské Podhradie, 12 June 2013

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Chairman of the Slovak Society of Canon Law*