

What Keeps Us Together When We Disagree

**International Conference at the Luxembourg School of Religion & Society
March 21st and 22nd, 2024**

In cooperation with

the Faculty of Catholic Theology of the University of Bonn,
the European Society for Catholic Theology,
the International Federation of Catholic Universities, and
the Pontifical Academy of Theology.



Organizers

Prof. Dr. Jean Ehret (LSRS) & Prof. Dr. Jochen Sautermeister (University of Bonn)

Topic

The Catholic Church is a global player that has managed to maintain visible and institutional unity over the centuries. The 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops and the process that prepared this meeting showcased the rich diversity within the Church, as well as the tensions among different ways of living the faith. Preserving unity among the faithful, all of whom claim to be faithful to the Gospel, is a real challenge.

From the point of view and experience of the Church's intellectual life, considering various “lifeworlds” (*Lebenswelten*) as *loci theologici* (cf. “Ad theologiam promovendam,” §8) validates the pluralism of cultural, religious, and moral aspects, as well as theological positions. Such pluralism also generates divergent judgments concerning realities of life. Once again, one can ask what keeps us together when we strongly disagree on matters that we consider essential for Christian faith and lifestyle, and how we can live this unity. Can there be a way of engaging in respectful discussions, strongly disagreeing, and yet not denying that the others are faithful Christians? What attitudes do Catholics need to adopt so that divine grace can act?

To answer these questions, this conference gathers both academics and practitioners as speakers, working in various disciplines and areas. The presence and contribution of T. Halík offer a strong contribution, rooted not only in sociology and theology but also in the author’s biography and pastoral work. Generous time management (20 min. for the paper presentation, 20 min. for Q&A, 20 min. for a coffee break) offers the opportunity to listen, discuss, and enter informal exchange. The setting of the LSRS allows participants to take part in the discussions or to withdraw for a time of personal reflection.

The goal of this conference is to stimulate a transdisciplinary approach, as sketched out in the *Motu proprio* “Ad theologiam promovendam.” This way of working together “situates all knowledge and produces its fermentation within the space of Light and Life offered by the Wisdom that emanates from God’s Revelation” (Veritatis Gaudium 4c [our translation]). Luxembourg’s geographical and institutional situation provides a perfect space for dialogue, not dominated by one major academic tradition. The conference is part of LSRS’s strong collaboration with the University of Bonn, namely with its Faculty of Catholic Theology. Being held in the affiliate institute (“An-Institut”) of a university of excellence, the conference combines transdisciplinarity with social and political responsibility, exploring what it means to work as a theological “lab.” The collaboration with the European Society for Catholic Theology opens the conference to various social contexts, ecclesial traditions, and theological styles in Europe. The International Federation of Catholic Universities contributes to new ways of setting theology in the academic life of its members worldwide. The Pontifical Academy of Theology’s participation in this project shows a common intention to take up the challenge of “the change of an epoch.”

Besides the speakers, the conference will welcome “observers” from different regions and traditions who will look at the dynamics and development of the topic during the two days. They will share their impressions during the panel discussion and in the conference proceedings.

Program

Part 1

Keeping Together – A Transdisciplinary Approach

Thursday, March 21st, 2024, 2.00PM-5PM

1. Keeping Together – Still Possible? (J. Ehret, LSRS & J. Sautermeister, Bonn)
2. On Mutual Recognition (Prof. Dr. G. Kovacs, Pécs)
3. Keeping Together – How To Deal With Conflicts (Dr. W. Hoyer, former president of the EIB, Luxembourg; H.E. Ms. Yuriko Backes, Minister for Defense, Luxembourg)

Inaugural Lecture of Prof. Dr. T. Halík, 5:30PM-9:30PM

5:30PM Mass (presided by Card. J.-C. Hollerich)

7:00PM Inaugural Lecture of Prof. T. Halík, Response by Card. G. Rysz

8:30PM Reception

9:30PM End

Friday, March 22nd, 2024, 8:30AM-12:30PM

4. A Survey of Catholic Plurality (Christopher Lamb, CNN)
5. Keeping Together – A Psychoanalytic Perspective (Dr. A. Michels, Luxembourg & Paris)
6. Keeping Together – International Politics & Security (Prof. Dr. U. Schlie, Bonn)
7. Panel Discussion (including “observers” of the conference).

Lunch

Part 2
Keeping Together – Towards Wisdom

Friday, March 22nd, 2024, 2PM-5.30PM

8. Towards A Relational Theology (H.E. Mgr. A. Staglianò, PTh, Vatican)
 9. Keeping Together – An Anglican Perspective (Prof. Dr. M. Chapman, Oxford)
 10. Panel Discussion (including “observers” of the conference)
- Closing Thanks (J. Ehret & J. Sautermeister)

Registration

<https://www.billetweb.fr/international-conference-2024>

Publication

The organizers intend to publish the proceedings of the conference, including the reports of the conference observers before July 15th, 2024.

For any inquiry, please contact office@lsrs.lu