



The 90th anniversary of the foundation of the Protestant Theological Faculty in Prague

This year, which is the anniversary year for a number of significant events in modern Czech and European history, is also the year in which the Protestant Theological Faculty of Charles University in Prague celebrates its jubilee. For it was 90 years ago that the *Hus Czechoslovak Protestant Theological Faculty* was established and started its work. Over the course of its history, the Faculty has shared in the fate of Czech society during the dramatic historical events of the 20th century. Twenty years ago it set out on a new stage of its life and has since then developed as part of Charles University in Prague.

We plan to commemorate this anniversary with a number of different events during the period ***19–22 November 2009***.

On Thursday, 19 November, in the afternoon, a ***festive academic assembly*** will take place in the Great Hall of the Carolinum university building, during which Professor Karel A. Deurloo from Amsterdam and Professor Gerhard Sauter from Bonn will be awarded honorary doctorates. This university ceremony will take place during the same week that the whole of Czech society will recall the events of 17 November 1989, the decisive moment for the overthrow of the communist regime. Through our proposal to honour these two colleagues with an honorary doctorate, we would like to express how much we appreciate not only their academic work as theologians, but also the personal bravery and selflessness with which they built up and developed their cooperation with Czech colleagues during the time of unfreedom and also during the years of new possibilities that opened up after 1989.

We have decided that the ***one-day conference*** that we will hold on ***Friday, 20 November***, will not on this occasion be devoted to the Faculty's past (which we will probably deal with in 10 years' time), but instead will present one of the central issues that we are concerned with at the current time. In recent years one of our salient research themes has been that of hermeneutics – that is, examining questions related to the understanding, explanation and interpretation of texts and other forms of Christian tradition. For this conference we have chosen one of the key texts that have accompanied the church and theology throughout their history – *the Decalogue* – and we would like to consider it and the ways in which it has been explained and interpreted from the viewpoints of biblical theology, history, ethics, practical theology, and cinematography.

On Saturday, 21 November, there will be a ***meeting of the Association of Friends of the Faculty***, which is also celebrating an anniversary this year, that of 10 years since its foundation.

On Sunday, 22 November, members of the Faculty community and guests will take part in a ***church service*** together with the congregation of the ***Salvator*** church in the Old Town district of Prague. Over the years, the life of the faculty has been linked with the Protestant Salvator church in many ways and often very closely. Teaching at the Faculty first started 90 years ago in the sacristy of this church.

A detailed programme, including the times and venues of the various events, can be found on the Faculty website at: www.etf.cuni.cz.

Overview of events:

- Thursday 19.11. Festive academic assembly in the Great Hall of the Carolinum university building
Friday 20.11. Conference *Sense and Meaning of the Text in the Christian Tradition – the Decalogue*
Saturday 21.11. Anniversary meeting of the Association of Friends of the Faculty (10th anniversary of its foundation)
Sunday 22.11. Church service in the congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren in Prague 1 – the Salvator church

Programme of the conference:

Sense and Meaning of the Text in the Christian Tradition – the Decalogue

plenary papers (Czech or English with simultaneous translation)

- 9:00 – 12:00 Martin Prudký – The Decalogue in Biblical Theology
Ota Halama – The Interpretation of the Decalogue in Czech Church History
14:00 – 16:00 Jindřich Halama – The Decalogue in Twentieth-Century Protestant Ethics
Tim Noble – "Telling It Like It Is": Cecil B. De Mille and Krzysztof Kieslowski on the Ten Commandments
seminars / workshops (Czech or English without translation)
16:30 – 18:00 Jiří Mrázek – The Reception of the Decalogue in Matthew's Gospel
Jan Roskovec – The Impact of the Decalogue in the Writings of the Apostle Paul
Ladislav Beneš – The Decalogue in Church Preaching and Teaching
Pavel Hošek – The Influence of the Decalogue on Hans Küng's Global Ethic Project

The recipients of the honorary doctorates:



Prof. Dr. Karel Adriaan Deurloo (1936), a Dutch theologian specialising in Old Testament Studies, for many years Dean of the Theology Faculty of Amsterdam University. Played a fundamental role in shaping the specific direction taken by Dutch Protestant theology, which for many years he represented in the Old Testament field (known as the "Amsterdam school"). From 1981 on he regularly taught at illegal seminars in Prague apartments, after 1989 he developed institutional cooperation with the Protestant Theological Faculty.



Prof. Dr. Gerhard Sauter, Dr. h.c. mult. (1935), a systematic theologian whose main interests are Reformation theology, the relationship between theology and the natural sciences, and ecumenical theology. In 1976 he assumed the leadership of the Ecumenical Institute at Bonn University, from where for many years he organised contacts, literature and activities with Czech theologians. After 1989 he opened up various forms of cooperation between the Ecumenical Institute and the Protestant Theological Faculty.