



VIENNA-QOM CIRCLE FOR CATHOLIC-SHI'A DIALOGUE ON RELIGION,
PHILOSOPHY, AND POLITICAL THEORY

Conference

3rd-6th September 2020

“The future of faith in secular society”

Location:

St. Ottilien, Bavaria, Germany



Hosts:

**Br. Josef Götz OSB
Abbot Notker Wolf OSB**

Partner:

**International Institute for Peace and Religions (Qom, Iran) &
Renovatio Institut – Institut für kulturelle Resilienz (Augsburg, Germany)**

Organizer:

**Dr. Christian Machek
(0043/676/3207524)**

ViQo-DECLARATION

In a world of dramatic change with rapid technological advancement, including an influence of communications media greater than ever before, we believe that the fundamental questions of mankind need to be addressed again. The peace of mankind depends on guiding the processes of change so that they will be changes for the better rather than for the worse. But if we are to know what changes are “for the better”, we must understand what the good is. And this raises fundamental questions: What is the good for man? What is justice? What is peace? What is freedom? It is not possible to remain neutral towards these questions. Every attempt at promoting the welfare of our world implies answers to them.

We firmly believe that a true understanding of religion is indispensable in the search for truth, goodness, and justice without which there will be no peace. We hold that all things have been created by the all-powerful and all-wise God, and that the objective truth in the world which we call “nature” is therefore related to the reason of God. Humankind can find in nature a so-called “natural law” that helps them to see what is truly good. We call on scholars in all fields to help develop understanding of this ethical code of natural law.

A peaceful coexistence of nations cannot prevail unless religious and political leaders stand together in their effort to contribute to the search for truth and the fostering of the virtues – the necessary and constant education of mankind. This implies the understanding that human beings have obligations, duties, and rights that flow from the nature that God has given them. They are obliged to work together for the common good, to defend innocent life, and human dignity. They must allow one another the right to such goods as self-preservation, procreation, the increase of knowledge, participation in social life, and especially the worship God.

We believe that true peace cannot be established unless politics can be reconnected to morality and faith in God. The wellbeing of society and the state depend to a large extent on the active role of religion within them. We therefore call on political leaders to respect the contribution of religion to the common good. And we call on the religious communities to develop mutual understanding, deeper insight into the fundamental ethical and social questions facing mankind and to develop common standpoints where possible.

Timetable of Conference

Thursday, 3rd September 2020

16.00 – 17.00	Check-in at the St. Ottilien Gästehaus
18.00	Evening Prayer at the Abteikirche
18.45	Dinner and First Introduction

Friday, 4th September 2020

8.00 – 8.35	<i>Breakfast</i>
8.45 – 10.00	Session #1: <u>Basic Questions</u> Prof. Katarzyna Parzych-Blakiewicz (<i>online</i> - Olsztyn, Poland): “Sanctity – A Relic or a Permanent Foundation? Between the Sacrum and the Profanum” Prof. David Engels (<i>online</i> - Posen, Polen): “Disruption and Restoration: A Blueprint for the Political Future of Christianity in Europe” Prof. Mohammed Ali Savadi (Qom, Iran): “The Capacity of the Divine Religions for Humanizing the World”
10.00 – 10.15	<i>(Coffee) Break</i>
10.15 – 11.00	Session #2: <u>Political Science</u> Dr. Harald Bergbauer (Munich, Germany): “Secularization and Globalization. De-Christianization and the Crisis of Globalization?” Prof. Heinz Theissen (Cologne, Germany): “Too much Secularization in the West, too little Secularization in the Middle East?”
11.00 – 12.00	Discussion
12.00 – 12.15	<i>Noon Prayer at the Abteikirche (optional)</i>
12.30 – 13.00	<i>Lunch</i>
14.30 – 15.15	Session #3: <u>Religion and Philosophy – Part 1</u> Prof. Anna Varga-Jani (Budapest, Hungary): “The Question on God in Modern Thinking: Approaches in the Phenomenology” Dr. Aleksandar Novakovic (<i>online</i> - Belgrade, Serbia): “Can Rationalism be rationally Justified? – Arguments for Faith”
15.15 – 15.30	<i>(Coffee) Break</i>
15.30 – 16.15	Session #4: <u>Religion and Philosophy – Part 2</u> Prof. Andreas Kinneging (Leiden, Netherlands): “Invisible Measure – God, Natural Law and State: Archaeology of Good and Evil” Pater Dr. Edmund Waldstein (Heiligenkreuz, Austria): “The Integralist Response to Secularization”
16.15 – 17.00	Discussion
18.00 – 18.45	<i>Evening Prayer and Guided Tour at the Monastery (optional)</i>
18.45	<i>Dinner</i>

Saturday, 5th September 2020

8.00 – 8.35	<i>Breakfast</i>
9.00 – 10.00	Session #5: <u>Political Theory – Part 1</u> Dr. Emma Cohen de Lara (Amsterdam, Netherlands): “Reverence in Plato’s <i>Laws</i> . On the Relationship between Religion and the Civil Order” Prof. Michael Wladika (Vienna, Austria). “Only a God Radically not of this World Saves. Transcending Autonomy with St. Augustine”
10.00 – 10.15	<i>(Coffee) Break</i>
10.15 – 11.00	Session #6: <u>Political Theory – Part 2</u> Dr. Stefan Lakonig (Vienna, Austria): “The Dissolution of Justice and Law through Secularization” Dr. Christian Machek (Munich, Germany): “Christianity and Secularization. Redefinitions of the Relationship of Religion and Civic Order”
11.00 – 12.00	Discussion
12.00 – 12.15	<i>Noon Prayer at the Abteikirche (optional)</i>
12.30 – 13.00	<i>Lunch</i>
14.30 – 15.45	Session #7: <u>Perspectives on the Future – Part 1</u> Dr. Dusan Dostanic (<i>online</i> - Belgrade, Serbia): “Religion, Identity and Politics: Serbian Orthodox Point of View” Sheikh Dr. Taher Amini Golestani (<i>online</i> - Qom, Iran): „Social Responsibility of Religions for Peace in the Secular World from Shi’a Irfan (Mystical) and Jurisprudential Perspectives“ Prof. Bernhard Uhde (Freiburg, Germany): “‘God is dead’ – Is Catholicism still Alive? Some Remarks about Secularization and Detachment from Worldliness” Prof. Harald Seubert (Basel, Switzerland): “Protestant Identity and Neo-Protestant Self-secularization. Perspectives of the Church of the Reformation in the 21st century”
15.45 – 16.00	<i>(Coffee) Break</i>
16.00 – 17.00	Session #8: <u>Perspectives on the Future – Part 2</u> Simon Wunder (Potsdam, Germany): “Perspectives of Religious Renewal in Western Societies” Yannic Weber (Saarbrücken, Germany): “What to do? The Benedict option” Imam Mohammed Ali Schomali (London, Great Britain): “God, Religion and Humanity”
17.00 – 18.00	Closing Discussion
18.00 – 18.15	<i>Evening Prayer (optional)</i>
18.45	<i>Dinner</i>

Sunday, 6th September 2020

8.00 – 8.35	<i>Breakfast</i>
9.15	Holy Mass with the Convent (<i>optional</i>)
11.00	Holy Mass at the Abteikirche St. Ottilien
12.30 – 13.15	<i>Lunch</i>
13.30	<i>Departure</i>