

Religion and Politics in the Context of "Epochal Change"

25-26.11.2021

Idea and aim

The aim of the conference is to reflect on the changes that are currently taking place in the relationship between religion and politics. These changes, as it seems, are not only of cosmetic nature, but concern the very paradigm of these relations shaped in Western culture in the modern era. The source of these changes seems to lie in the political sphere, which not only undergoes progressive secularization, but also breaks with European metaphysics. However, in a peculiar feedback loop they also affect the self-consciousness of Western religious communities, including the Catholic Church. The redefinition in the political sphere of such categories as truth, dignity of the person, human rights, marriage, and family is accompanied by a disruption of their meaning also in the doctrines of Christian communities. Basic ethical principles often give way to pragmatic reasons (e.g., in the dispute about abortion, euthanasia, surrogacy, sexual orientation), not only in politics, but also in church practice. It seems that the change is so significant that the use of the term "epochal change" proposed by Pope Francis seems justified.

Is it possible, then, to arrange the relationship between religion and politics along new lines that respect the identity of each and its specific contribution to the common good, or will we witness a new conflict, as in the French Revolution or under communism? Or will the line of conflict not be between the state and religious communities, but across political and religious communities?

We invite you to submit papers for the conference. They may be devoted to the above issues, as well as to other dimensions of the problem of potential paradigm shift that interests us this year (such as the resurgence of so-called secular religions; the situation of non-Western religious traditions, especially Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism, in the context of "epochal change," etc.). We also invite presentations of current research in the political science of religion. As is tradition at our conferences, parallel panels on current research on religion and politics will be held alongside the main sessions – see Registration.