

AUC Theologica: Call for Papers

The Church as a Home

Deadline: 15 May 2022

The experience of the coronavirus pandemic has brought many new impulses for academic reflection in various areas of research, and theology is no exception. The world faced an unprecedented situation when the everyday-life priorities of many people quickly shifted; the areas of the private and public or of the personal and professional became mingled to a degree that most people had never previously experienced. The official activities were interrupted or transferred to digital platforms. Similarly, from the institutional point of view, the Church found herself in a crisis since regularly organised pastoral activities were cancelled or limited, and the numbers of attendants of Sunday services significantly decreased because of government regulations, the fear of infection, or because of the easily available online alternatives. The experience of loneliness, isolation, stress, and uncertainty, which many Christians underwent, could be coped with on the level of institutional apparatus only marginally and, in many cases, insufficiently. The Church could support its struggling members only to the degree it provided a concrete, homely place for those in need. This did not depend on any regulations, public speeches, general instructions, or new pastoral strategies; it was closely tied to the preparedness of the individual Christians reacting in concrete ways to concrete concerns. The telling symbol of this experience of the Church is the image of the Roman Pontiff, Pope Francis, praying alone in the empty rain-covered St. Peter's Square for the end of the pandemic: the institutional aspect of the Church was suppressed while the personal and relational underlined.

Such an experience was for us an impulse to theologically rethink the notion of the Church as a home for people and thus reflect on the role of the Church in the contemporary world from this perspective. It raises many questions: what does the coronavirus experience say to the Church? What are the areas of her life that she needs to focus on? Are there any areas of the life of the Church that need rethinking? Are there any experiences in the history of the Church that might bring some inspiration for today and tomorrow of the Church? What response to this 'sign of the times' does the Church and its various members have or need to have?

Since we find these questions to be crucial, we invite scholars of various theological disciplines to join us in exploring them.

AUC Theologica welcomes especially the papers touching on the following themes:

- Role of the Church today
- Synodality
- Relationship between the hierarchical Church and the laity
- Women in the Church
- Church as a home from an ecumenical perspective
- Home as a theological theme
- Theological reflection on the private and the public

Please, send your papers to smejdova@ktf.cuni.cz and follow [the guidelines for the authors](#).