



Press Release

Raising the flag of tolerance and understanding

Tübingen's Faculty of Catholic Theology presents honorary doctorates to theologians Gregory Baum and Francis X. D'Sa

Dr. Karl Guido Rijkhoek
Director

Antje Karbe
Press Officer

Phone +49 7071 29-76788
+49 7071 29-76789

Fax +49 7071 29-5566
karl.rijkhoek[at]uni-tuebingen.de
antje.karbe[at]uni-tuebingen.de

www.uni-tuebingen.de/aktuell

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The University of Tübingen's Faculty of Catholic Theology on Thursday conferred honorary doctorates on the Indian theologian Professor Francis X. D'Sa and the German-Canadian theologian Professor Gregory Baum. It was a tribute to two men who have persistently worked for interreligious and intercultural dialogue. "Given the violence which has been carried out in recent months by terrorist organisations - supposedly in the name of religion - we wanted to raise a flag for tolerance and common understanding," said Professor Johanna Rahner, Dean of Catholic Theology.

D'Sa has worked to bring about reconciliation between Hindus and Christians and is considered an expert in the fields of Hinduism research, Indian philosophy and intercultural theology. He also labors to promote the rights of women and marginalized groups in rural India.

Professor Gregory Baum's "Die Juden und das Evangelium. Eine Überprüfung des Neuen Testaments" gave the Catholic Church fresh orientation in dealing with Judaism and other religions. One of its notable effects was that the Church stressed the significance of Judaism as the root of Christianity, recognized freedom of religious belief as a human right, and began the search for common ground with other religions.

Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Francis X. D'Sa (*1936) comes from Gokak Falls in southern India. He joined the Jesuit Order as a youth. After studying Philosophy at the university in Pune and Catholic Theology at the University of Innsbruck, D'Sa completed his doctorate at the University of Vienna. Among the posts he subsequently held were a professorship of intercultural theology at the University of Salzburg; he held guest lectures at Universities across Europe and in India. D'Sa founded the Institute for the Study of Religion in Pune; the institute researchers Hindu traditions and aims to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue. He is also one of the founders of the interreligious project MAHER, which is dedicated to helping abused Indian women and children.

Prof. Dr. Gregory Baum (*1923) grew up in a German Jewish family which emigrated to Canada during WWII. After the war, he joined the Roman Catholic Church and studied Theology, Mathematics, and Physics at Canada's McMaster University in Hamilton and at Ohio State University, USA. Baum completed his doctorate in Fribourg, Switzerland, and taught at the University of Toronto, at Saint Michael's College in Colchester, USA, and at McGill University in Montreal. At the Second Vatican Council he was a theological advisor on ecumenism and the Church's relation to non-Christian religions.

Contact:

Professor Dr. Johanna Rahner
University of Tübingen
Dean of Catholic Theology
Phone +49 7071 29- 78058
johanna.rahner[at]uni-tuebingen.de