

Abschlussbericht:

Making Church Visible in Society

Which goals for the project did you set in the application/in the initial phase? Did you achieve these goals?

Thanks to the financial support of Bonifatiuswerk, and the initiative of the Apostolic Administrator of Estonia, Bishop Philippe Jourdan, the Catholic Church in Estonia was able to expand its efforts in the press and media-relation last two years. I, in charge of relations with the media and communication at the Estonian Apostolic Administration have been work for the Catholic Church now 10 years. I tried to offer a deeper, and more reflective, awareness of the faith for those who are already members of the Catholic Church of Estonia, as well as for those who are still discovering the roots of the Catholic faith.

The 2 years project almost achieved goals set in the initial phase. Last two years were very active media scene (media covering different activities, feast days, catechesis etc.) in Catholic Church. Catholic Church faced some difficulties also in the field of communications: the pandemic and war in Ukraine. Two years ago the main focus was to create a new media and information center and develop the social media channels. The pandemic and war in Ukraine influence the church communication a lot, and due the difficult situation, the main goal was to share information, to reach the target groups – work with different parishes, also Greek-Ukrainian Catholic Church – to support and help church in communication in difficult times.

The third objective was the Synod: communion, participation, mission. This was a new thing among other projects what needed to communicate. The idea of Synod in local Churches in Estonia was quite new and it needed to have a new missionary communication work. But, this initiative worked quite well in Estonia and the result was quite productive.

The last, and the biggest communication effort during last two year period in Catholic Church was to communicate inside Catholic Church in Estonia and in Estonian media was, and still is,

communicating the beatification of Servant of God Archbishop Eduard Profittlich SJ. Apostolic Administration of Estonia had vision that the beatification will take place in 2022-2023, but due the pandemic there was pause to run the process with the Holy See almost two year. Still, the Church made all that the Servant of God Eduard Profittlich life and martyrdom is known and there is the interest in local society. Catholic Church continue the fame of sainthood of the German roots, Archbishop Profittlich SJ among Catholics in Estonia and outside. Also the communication the beatification process in Germany.

Looking back to the project activities, we can say that the goals were achieved very well, and despite the difficult period during last two years, we were able to do a lot in the church media and outreach all tasks.



Ecumenical prayer for the peace in Ukrainian-Greek Catholic Church.

Did you develop further goals during the project? If so, did you achieve them?

The project goals have been developed well. Catholic Church in Estonia is well know in society with different activities. There are bible groups, adult, young-adult and children catheses, English speaking community especially in Tallinn is very active.

For example, Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Tallinn organize some time itself classical music concerts to open the church for non-Christian. These concerts are very popular. Usually the concerts are connecting with the feast days. Last year the biggest production was on November 11. Music opens up an opportunity to reflect on the life we live here on earth, and music makes us wonder where we are going. Inspired by this thought, the programme of the concert was prepared, with works by Palestrina, Victoria, Bach, Elgar, Pärt performed by Voces Tallinn.

Catholic Church in Estonia sees also in near future to continue these activities: Catecheses, bible groups, pilgrims, concerts, exhibitions to present our beautiful faith and to communicate these activities among Catholics and also in to other to provide nice experience and carry out the church missionary spirit.

All media and info services provided by Catholic Church holds on the information center during these years. Now it looks that the real room for info sharing and developing a new media tools (podcasts, social media) is needed for following years.

Which activities did you carry out?

Even looking with difficulties, we worked well in Catholic Church in Estonia. We did not made concrete room - an media center - but renovated a little a room what is dedicated to Saint Pope John Paul II, next to cathedral and made it as a meeting point, info centre, place where journalist could have interviews, seminars and other meetings should be. It is needed that there is a community place for Catholic/non-Catholic where to come together. Some media presentations took place on that room. Also some receptions and high level interviews. Today there is no need for small local community a media center, but a place where to have meetings and run different activities. There is a library, books what belonged to the Servant of God Eduard Profittlich, SJ and exhibition dedicated to Archbishop Profittlich life and martyrdom. This room carry on one position in local Catholic church and was used also as a media and info centre in 2018 when Pope Francis visited Estonia.

Today, main media actions takes place online platforms. Social media and social media channels are the front line for the Church communication also in media. Our energy went last two years also to implement the social media channels and look where the social media itself develops, especially thinking church communications.

Catholic Church used a lot to carry out information of biggest feast days, activities, events, concerts via online media and Catholic channels. This is also a thing what need a further developments.

It is worth to bring out some bigger activities what we carried out during the project time:

2021

Online Mass and activities and info sharing online due the pandemic period. All communication moved to online channels : Catholic Youtube channel, Website, Facebook. This was a challenge to move all online where some older generation had a complication to reach to the info. But Catholic Community is so small and by the support of parishioners, the messages and info reached to the targets.

2022

80 years of Servant of God Eduard Profittlich Sj martyrdom.

2022 Catholic Church also commemorate his 80 year of his martyrdom. A conference was held, an exhibition was made and presented in various places in Estonia, and a Profittlich library was reconstructed dedicated to Archbishop Profittlich. The media also became more interested in covering the Profittlich beatification process. It is important to note that the Positio was also completed. Catholic church in Estonia sees that through different activities it is also good to communicate our catholic faith. This is our mission to present, especially in the country where the catholic church is minor in society, our living faith and be a witness of the work of Holy Spirit in our everyday life. And this process of the beatification of the Servant of God is one very concrete example how to communicate the faith, and how one faithful person could be example for everybody in faith and in his thoughts.

2023

Benedictus XVI (1927 – 2022) R.I.P

Pope Benedict XVI died on 31 December 2022. His passing sparked unprecedented interest in the Estonian media. The bishop Philippe Jourdan and the church spokesman Dr. Paas and other Catholics were interviewed. Dr. Paas prepared an article for the Estonian media on Ratzinger's intellectual heritage and this covering got very good feedback. On 31 December, Bishop Philippe Jourdan celebrated the Mass for the soul of the Pope Benedict XVI and many guests, leaders of Christian churches, were present. A book of condolence was opened in the Cathedral of St Peter and Paul in Tallinn. An inscription was also made by long-time friend of Benedict XVI, the composer Arvo Pärt. The life and intellectual legacy of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI was reflected in a very positive light throughout the Estonian media. On the day of his funeral, a Requiem Mass was celebrated, attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Mr. Reinsalu, with his condolence with the Catholic Church. The Estonian media wrote about Benedict XVI in the days following his death a lot and very positively about his life and intellectual heritage. The whole Catholic Church was very grateful for this media coverage.

Nordic – Baltic Catholic Communication Network.

Nordic-Baltic network for the Catholic communicators was created in 2023. The initiative came from Catholic Church of Estonia collaborating with the Catholic Diocesan Communication manager Mrs. Hellner from Sweden. The idea of the network is to analyse the different issues that come up in church communication, opportunities for training, or even to share information about the big events that take place in churches. The first meeting was held February 2, and is a first step towards starting a Nordic-Baltic network for communicators. Participants from Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark took part zoom meeting and exchanged their communication experiences, challenges, advice and ideas. This initiative is very respected from all the parts. Next meeting was in April, 18 with a new member will be Lithuania. The third meeting takes place in September 2023.

Preparations and media work during World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon

Estonian youth pilgrim group was smallest from the Europe who participated in Lisboa 2023: 15 youth and 2 priest and 1 media person. The preparations for WYD went well and Estonian catholic youth participated wholeheartly in Lisbon.

Estonian media covering about World Youth Days, Lisabon 2023 (Radio, TV, Newspapers, Online, etc) was very active and surprising how secular media became interested in. Some examples: (Radio) Raadio 7 - Church bulletin, 27 July, Marge-Marie Paas; Pereraadio - Morning programme (live), 31 July, Father Tomasz Materna; Vikerraadio - Viker Morning News (live), 6 August, Marge-Marie Paas; Kuku Raadio - Välisilm radio, 20 August, Marge-Marie Paas. (TV) Aktuaalne kaamera - 1 August, Pope's speech to the Portuguese Heads of State and diplomatic corps, news clip. Aktuaalne kaamera - Pope's message at the Holy Mass on Youth Day, news clip; (Newspapers) Postimees - Marge-Marie Paas, To what great war did Fatima's revelation refer - (MARGE-MARIE PAAS) Täna seni tekitab küsimusi, millisele suurele sõjale viitas Fátima Jumalaema ilmutus (postimees.ee); Eesti Päevaleht - Marge-Marie Paas, "Young people are young and they behave in a youthful way." (REPORTAŽ | „Noored on noored ja nad käituvadki nooruslikult.“ Paavst jutlustas Lissaboni noortepäevadel sallimist ja armastust - Eesti Päevaleht (delfi.ee); Eesti Kirik - Marge-Marie Paas, One and a half million young people were together.

And a lots of social media coverings, and videos made by the communication manager before, during and after WYD. Youth Day website (www.noortepaev.ee), made by Triin Lilleberg.



Estonian Youth is ready to go Lisbon WYD 2023 in Tallinn airport.

Did you reach your target group? How did the project influence them?

Yes, we reach well to the target. The project was successful last two years, even before and continues in future. The need for that work is important. The main focus was info and communication inside the Catholic Church structure in Estonia, and to interact with Church members and promote its message of faith in this way.

Catholic Church in Estonia understands that engaging their followers online is important, and influence via social media channels a new targets – people who are not Catholic Church members. There are many opportunities to experiment with ideas in social media. Facebook group Katoliku.ee can give clear social and connection value to our faith, especially for those in their 20s and 40s. The only need is to clarify more in church how to reach elderly and disabled target who are also the Catholic Church members and would like to get also the info and share the message of Gospel among other Catholics in Estonia.

The second, was media relations with Estonian media channels. According to surveys, Estonia is one of the most secularized societies in Europe, and then it was influence the media and talk the Catholic teaching, spreading faith through the media channels: radio, TV, online media.

What insights for the pastoral work of the church did you gain in the project?

We should think about the **Church social teachings communication** in near future. Communicate and find channels to talk about moral theology and ethics. Family and marriage issues should be the key words in pastoral work and in communication.

Also, **the youth** and youth ministries in our parishes. Youth involvement.

Prayer activities and devotions. It is very good that there are lots of things in church: catechesis, events etc, but prayer should be the center and communicate more prayers, ecumenical prayers, devotions.

I think the main topic is to communicate the gift of God's love for us and our love for one another should be the central message in upcoming years. It is not absolutely easy to do, but it is a challenge in pastoral work and in communications.

And I am looking forward what will come out the synod. What guidelines will bring the synod. Yesterday I had a post synod meeting on zoom with delegates from 20 countries who participated in Prague and to comment the final European continental document.

To what extent did the project have an impact in the surrounding area / in the city / in the diocese?

The main impact was for the Apostolic Administration of Estonia. And not only in Tallinn but other parishes in Estonia also had impact from the project: Synod communication, pilgrims in Estonia, activities in small parishes were presented also in our catholic website and in social media channel (katoliku.ee).

The Church is visible in society not only through its media work. A number of events were also organised and communicated. The Catholic Church participates in cultural festivals and history conferences. This information also has a great impact on society, to be visible, to be present as a community.

The visibility and awareness of the Catholic Church/ faith has increased and this is the big impact of all the work.

What happens after the end of the funding? Will the project continue?

Yes, the project will continue. Each diocese should certainly have its own media manager - the person responsible for both inter-parish and diocesan information and communication with the media. This work also brings visibility to the Church life in society and supports the spiritual values and helps spread the message of Gospel.

For the next year, Apostolic Administration of Estonia will celebrate 100 year of its foundation in 1924 and there will be events, receptions and meetings and conferences during the year. These activities what will take place in Apostolic Administration of Estonia should be communicated out and have had media coverings.

The second biggest project in Catholic Church of Estonia is the beatification of the Servant of God Eduard Profittlich what needs special media and press work in Estonia and outside of the country. These are the two big projects alongside day-to-day communication work in Apostolic Administration of Estonia.

Did you point out the funding by Bonifatiuswerk?

Bonifatiuswerk was pointed out by logo and verbally in various events. Also the big banner is made and presented in Saint Pope John Paul II room next to the Cathedral.

By Logo

We used as much as possible the Logo in print materials and web (look from the pictures). It was well presented and always visible.

Verbal thanks

Several conferences and media meetings were verbally thanked Bonifatiuswerk of its support to our Apostolic Administration.



Mons. Philippe Jourdan meeting with people in St. John Paul II room.

Do you have any feedback for Bonifatiuswerk?

It was very good co-operation with Bonifatiuswerk. Meetings were important, online, and a very good contact person who always helped us.

Bonifatiuswerk has supported the Catholic Church in Estonia with many projects and we hope that this cooperation will continue.

We will be able to continue our communication work together in the future. A very good experience.

Did the work on the project affect your personal faith? If yes, how?

This project provided personal development as well affected my personal faith. This work cannot be done in depth if the Catholic faith is not practised. Certainly the media work broadens the horizons and helps to see and communicate the views of people who are not believers and who know little or nothing about Christianity, as is largely the case in Estonia. But having the courage to speak publicly about Catholicism certainly has an impact on spiritual life.

Quantitative questions:

How big was the area of the project? (in sqkm)

45,000 sqkm

How many people worked on the project? (employees and volunteers)

Only one person work in Apostolic Administration of Estonia, in Media.

The Russian-speaking community was informed by the Russian-speaking priest in charge of the Russian-language Masses and catechesis.

How many people did you reach?

Hard to say. Wider audience around Estonia, because the main Catholic news were presented in the most popular radio, called Vikerraadio and in main news program, called Aktuaalne Kaamera. The biggest newspaper articles have been also published wide range.

Which target groups did you reach?

Catholics and non-Catholic, last mainly through the media, reaching a wider audience across the country. Especially those for whom the Catholic Church is distant.

Within the Church, mainly to all audiences, as the Church hosted a number of events and activities over the two years.