

Another part of respecting creation is a general **anti-consumption approach to life**, which may call for an **alternative life style** in the contemporary European society. An anti-consumption life style means rejecting a life focused on achieving individual gain, growth and consumption, even though it does not mean building barriers or contempt but opening new possibilities. In the positive sense it means focusing on common benefit, mutual solidarity, exchange and enrichment with an emphasis on other spheres than mainly and solely production and consumption.

The churches primarily proclaim following of Jesus Christ and living it. Faithful following of Jesus leads to such an alternative life style in the positive sense - of tearing down barriers of blindness and egotism, of building an environment of mutuality and sharing.

The environment of an open civic society must be characterized by a respect to the basic atmosphere in the society as well as to the natural environment. The setting up and respecting the **fundamental human rights, including the religious rights, which are their part, is an important part** of such a society. This issue has become a matter of a wide public interest recently, especially in the context of globalization, disintegration of the Communist block and integration of the democratic countries. The individual promoters and supporters of rights have different understandings and emphasises, though.

The churches stress the uniqueness and enormous price of each person and the whole creation on the one hand, and the interconnection of rights with responsibility on the other. At the same time they are aware of the fact that historically they used to be perceived as reactionary, intolerant and arbitrary in the area of the human and religious rights. Yet, the churches in many countries including the Czech Republic are actively contributing to reconciliation of conflicts, overcoming long-term inequalities and achieving the principal equal rights and responsibilities in society.

## EVENTS ARRANGED BY CHURCHES DURING THE CZECH EU PRESIDENCY

- ⇒ A meeting of the representatives of the European church associations with the representatives of the Czech Government
- ⇒ A seminar on reconciliation – how do churches contribute to overcoming of barriers between neighbouring nations
- ⇒ A study day on the theology of the environment – responsibility of mankind towards the creation
- ⇒ A day of open churches on the occasion of the Day of Europe

Up-to-date information is available at the website of the Ecumenical Council of Churches: [www.ekumenickarada.cz](http://www.ekumenickarada.cz).

More information about the projects and events of the individual churches can be found on the CD, which is part of this publication.

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