
A salutation of the Charles University Rector, Professor Tomáš Zima, at the opening of Hus Days on the Old Town Square on July 5, 2015, at 6 PM.

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Dear friends,

Let me greet you all on behalf of the Charles University and its academia. At the commemoration of the tragic death of Master Jan Hus, burned at the stake in Constance 600 years ago, the Prague University can't be missing for several reasons.

First, Master Jan Hus spent all his active life at this university. In addition to his studies, he had taught here from 1397 till 1412 before he had to leave Prague, having lost the King's trust and due to the interdict.

Second, he was the dean of the Faculty of Arts in 1401/1402, and the rector of the whole university in 1409/1410, and therefore the academic dignitary responsible not only for the administration of university affairs but also for the public image of the school.

And third, he struggled to implement the theoretical findings, gained through the years of studies and disputations, in real life from the pulpit in the Bethlehem Chapel, and thus he demonstrated the importance of the university education for the society.

He was neither a stirrer nor a revolutionary, yet he wanted to stand up for the truth he had known, right until his death. And thus he became a shining example for further generations of students and teachers of our university, often also struggling in difficult conditions, yet never betraying their beliefs even if that took their lives.

I do believe that even the modern university can use a lot of Hus's legacy, as it should – or must – stand up for moral values and values that support the free and developing life. This is the timeless message of Master Jan Hus. Certainly, it's not that easy to get it simply from reading his works; they were written 600 years ago, and people thought in a different way in those days, as the image of humanity and the world was different.

Still, it's possible to approach Hus's legacy quite accurately, and highlight its most important aspect. This is facilitated by Hus-related studies at several faculties of the university, from many different points of view, defined by current issues.

Let's therefore commemorate Hus's death with dignity, and let's think what his message tells us. When he graduated one of his students, he told him: *"In truth, you need three things – knowledge, education and life. Knowledge will protect you from the evil so you can use your reason to find the good; with education, you can help the inferior and teach them whatever you can. And life will enable you to shine as a model for others, being the perfect one. Keep on learning, then, so you can stay knowing, teaching and perfect."* And the author knew how to live by this code. Let's do the same, to become his true heirs! DIXI.