

Healing with integrity: a summer school for young minds in medicine

10 May 2026

The European Federation of Catholic Medical Associations (FEAMC) is pleased to announce and invite you to participate in the first **Summer School of Medical Ethics for Young People**, which will take place from **30 August to 6 September 2026** on the island of Lošinj, Croatia.

The Summer School is designed for young people interested in exploring some of the most challenging ethical issues in contemporary healthcare and medicine. The program will address topics such as: ethical challenges in obstetrics and gynecology (reproductive medicine), substance addiction, end-of-life care, vaccination, and other important bioethical questions.

Participants will have the opportunity to attend lectures by international experts in medicine and bioethics, engage in small-group discussions, participate in spiritual activities, and enjoy fellowship with colleagues from different countries and professional backgrounds.

Accommodation and full board will be provided at the **Betanija House**, in the village of Ćunski, the island of Lošinj, including seven nights and three meals per day. The house also includes a chapel where prayer and spiritual activities will take place. Each day will include free time for rest and swimming at the beautiful beaches of the Adriatic Sea, as well as short excursions to the nearby historic towns of Osor, Cres, and Mali Lošinj.

Who Can Apply?

The Summer School is intended for: medical and healthcare students, young physicians, dentists, pharmacists, and other healthcare professionals aged 18–35. Priority will be given to members of national Catholic medical associations.

Application

Applications can be submitted via [the form on this website](#) (**no later than 15 June 2026**) and must include:

- a motivation letter explaining the applicant's interest in the Summer School (attached in doc, docx or pdf)
- a recommendation letter signed by the president of a national association or a member of the FEAMC Executive Committee (attached (doc, docx or pdf).

The number of participants is limited to 35.

Applicants will be informed about the results of the selection process and practical details regarding travel and accommodation **no later than 30 June 2026**.

Registration Fee

The participation fee is **350 EUR**, which includes:

- accommodation,
- full board for seven days,
- participation in all program activities.

Travel expenses are not included. Participants may request financial support from their national associations.

The registration fee must be paid within 7 days of receiving confirmation of acceptance, and **no later than 10 July 2026**.

Contact Information

For further information, please contact one of the organizers using the [FEAMC contact form](#):

We warmly invite you to join us for a week of learning, reflection, spirituality, friendship, and professional

growth in the beautiful surroundings of the Adriatic coast.

We look forward to welcoming you to Croatia.

Sincerely,

Organizing Committee
FEAMC Summer School of Medical Ethics for Youth

Program of the Summer School

Day 1 (moderators all faculty) marks the opening of the Summer School of Medical Ethics, bringing together participants, faculty, and organizers in a shared space of learning and reflection. The introductory sessions will present the goals, structure, and key themes of the program, emphasizing interdisciplinary dialogue, critical thinking, and ethical sensitivity in medical practice. The day will conclude with Holy Mass, offering a spiritual foundation for the week ahead.

Day 2 (moderators Renzo Pegoraro, Frans van Ittersum, Jozef Glasa) focuses on the foundations of medical ethics and ethical decision-making in clinical practice. Participants will explore the secular c.q. mid-level consensus principles of autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice through lectures by both a physician and a theologian-priest. These principles will be explored through Christian anthropology and Christian principles of respect for human life, the therapeutic principle, the principle of proportionality, the principle of freedom and responsibility, the principle of sociality and subsidiarity, and the principle for solving dilemmas. The second session introduces Christian anthropology and reflects on the human person as a unity of body, and soul, endowed with freedom, as well as principles of Catholic medical ethics supported by discussion of real clinical cases in small groups.

Day 3 (moderators Ivan Zmijanović) addresses ethical challenges in obstetrics and gynecology, particularly situations involving the well-being of both mother and unborn child. Discussions will examine morally sensitive clinical decisions, human dignity, and compassionate patient care, including the psychological and emotional experiences that may follow abortion.

Day 4 begins with a testimony by the married couple Nikolina and Lovro Mlakar, a physician and nurse, sharing their experiences related to reproductive ethics and the value of human life. The second session (**moderator Kate Kondratuk**) focuses on ethical questions in pediatric care, including consent, vulnerability, parental authority, and the long-term welfare of children.

Day 5 (moderators Nicola Petrosillo, Rok Čivljak, Vincenzo Defilippis, Marta Čivljak) explores the ethical implications of antimicrobial resistance and the responsibility of healthcare professionals in preserving effective treatments for future generations. The following session examines substance addiction with emphasis on human dignity, stigma, responsibility, and compassionate, holistic care.

Day 6 (moderators Dariusz Gąsecki, Frans van Ittersum) is dedicated to ethical questions surrounding end-of-life care, including brain death, organ donation, and assisted suicide. Participants will reflect on informed consent, patient freedom, fairness, vulnerability, and the responsibilities of healthcare professionals when facing difficult medical and moral decisions.

Day 7 (moderators Rok Čivljak, Nicola Petrosillo) opens with a discussion on the ethics of vaccination, considered both as an act of solidarity and an issue of conscientious objection. The Summer School concludes with participants' evaluations and reflections aimed at improving future editions of the program.

Faculty (in alphabetical order):

1) Andrea Koščec, MPharm
Croatian Catholic Medical Association, Secretary-General
Zagreb, Croatia

2) Dariusz Gąsecki, MD, PhD
Professor of Neurology
Medical University of Gdańsk
Gdańsk, Poland

3) Frans van Ittersum, MD, PhD
Professor of Nephrology
Amsterdam University Medical Center

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
Amsterdam, Netherlands

4) Ivan Zmijanović, MD
Consultant in Obstetrics and Gynaecology
Šibenik, Croatia

5) Jozef Glasa, MD, PhD, PhD.
Professor of Medicine and Bioethics
Slovak Medical University in Bratislava
Bratislava, Slovakia

6) Kate Kondratuk, MD
Assistant Professor, Pediatric Dermatology
Associate Pediatric Dermatology Fellowship Program Director
Medical College of Wisconsin/Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
Wisconsin, USA

7) Marta Čivljak, MD, PhD
Professor of Public Health, Faculty of Health Studies
Catholic University of Croatia
Zagreb, Croatia

8) Nicola Petrosillo, MD, FESCMID
Professor of Infectious Diseases
Fondazione Policlinico Universitario Campus Bio-Medico
Rome, Italy

9) Nikolina Mlakar, RN, and Lovro Mlakar, MD
General Practitioner / Family Medicine Physician
Varaždin, Croatia

10) Msgr. Renzo Pegoraro, MD, PhD
President Pontifical Academy for Life
Rome, Italy

11) Rok Čivljak, MD, PhD
Professor of Infectious Diseases
University of Zagreb School of Medicine
University Hospital for Infectious Diseases
Zagreb, Croatia

12) Vincenzo Defilippis, MD, PhD
Professor of Clinical Risk management
Azienda Sanitaria Locale Bari
FEAMC Past President
Bari, Italy