



Meeting of the FEAMC Executive Board
with a Conference on

**PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CHALLENGES
IN MEDICINE DURING WARTIME**

Đakovo – Vukovar, Croatia
May 30 – June 2, 2024

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS



As part of the regular annual meeting of the European Federation of the Catholic Medical Associations Executive Board, we have organized a conference on ***Professional and Ethical Challenges in Medicine During Wartime***, in cooperation with the Croatian Catholic Medical Society.

The Conference will take place in Đakovo and Vukovar.

Why here?

Because, the Croatian Catholic Medical Society organizes a pilgrimage and prayer in November for all victims of war for the Homeland War Victims Remembrance Day. Last year, I couldn't attend the FEAMC ExCo meeting for that reason and when I explained to Vincenzo why – he invited our Society to organize this Conference.

And here we are!

One of the first victims of war is the healthcare system.

And there are many armed conflicts currently raging all over the world (Russia-Ukraine, Israel-Palestine, Syria, Myanmar, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Haiti...). For that reason war medicine became an urgent global health problem.

Unfortunately, health facilities are sometimes attacked and damaged, with many healthcare workers becoming victims themselves.

Doctors and other medical professionals have to provide adequate healthcare under extreme conditions, while confronting a number of professional and ethical challenges. Besides distinguished international speakers that are going to address various aspects of war medicine, including spiritual assistance to soldiers, civilians and healthcare workers during armed conflicts, the hosts from Croatia will present our experiences from the recent Croatian Homeland War (1991–1995), in which healthcare workers played a major role in preserving the health system under extreme pressure, through their heroic efforts to provide care to both soldiers and civilians, often those on opposing sides.

We divided lectures in five sessions and I believe you will find them all interesting.

Friday, May 31, 2024	
7:30	Breakfast
8:00 – 9:30	FEAMC ExCo meeting (FEAMC Executive Committee and delegates only)
9:30 – 11:00	Session 1: Spiritual and Pastoral Care During Wartime Chairs: <i>Simon Kulli, Vincenzo Defilippis, Rok Čivljak</i>
9:30	Welcome introduction (Defilippis & Čivljak)
9:45	<i>The Nonsense of War in the War Against the Sense of God's Order and Peace</i> Ivan Bodrožić (Ecclesiastical Assistant of the HKLD) Catholic Faculty of Theology of the University of Split Split, Croatia
10:00	<i>Teaching of Pope Francis: The Search for Peace Beyond Conflicts</i> Renzo Pegoraro (Secretary General of the Pontifical Academy for Life) Rome, Italy
10:15	<i>The Role of Clergymen and Pastoral Care During War Conflicts</i> Jure Bogdan (The Military Ordinariate of the Republic of Croatia) Zagreb, Croatia
10:30	Panel Discussion and Q&A
11:00	Coffee break
11:30 – 13:00	Session 2: Medical Challenges During Wartime Chairs: <i>Jozef Glasa, Darko Richter, Šime Kevrić, Ana Magličić</i>
11:30	<i>Organization of Healthcare During the Croatian Homeland War</i> Rok Čivljak (President of the HKLD) University of Zagreb School of Medicine Zagreb, Croatia
11:45	<i>Medical Triage Principles in Wartime and Pandemic Scarcity: A Catholic Perspective</i> Frans J. van Ittersum (Secretary General of the FEAMC) Amsterdam University Medical Centers Amsterdam, The Netherlands
12:00	<i>Organization of the Surgical Service During the Homeland War</i> Ivica Grković, Mihovil Biočić, Vedran Radonić University Hospital of Split & University of Split School of Medicine Split, Croatia
12:15	<i>The Impact of Armed Conflict on the Development and Global Spread of Antibiotic Resistance</i> Nicola Petrosillo Campus Bio-Medico University Hospital Rome, Italy
12:30	Panel Discussion and Q&A

Friday, May 31, 2024	
13:00	Lunch
14:30 – 15:45	Session 3: Interdisciplinary and International Aspects of War Chairs: <i>Diogo Cunha e Sá, Lotte Voets, Marko Šimenc, Stefan De Smedt</i>
14:30	<i>Challenges of Pastoral Care During Wartime in Ukraine</i> Ihor Boyko, Mykhaylo Plotsidem Lviv Theological Seminary of the Holy Spirit Lviv, Ukraine
14:45	<i>The Testimony of the Albanian People During the Kosovo War</i> Msgr. Simon Kulli (Bishop of Diocese of Sapë) Sapë, Albania
15:00	<i>Possible Impact of Diplomacy During Wartime: Experiences from the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in Ukraine</i> Anica Djamić (Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia in Ukraine) Zagreb, Croatia / Kiev, Ukraine
15:15	<i>The Role of Catholic Pharmacists in Responding to the Croatian Homeland War</i> Andrea Koščec, Mirjana Vrsalović, Ines Buhač (Pharmacists' and Medical Biochemists' Section of the Croatian Catholic Medical Society) Zagreb, Croatia
15:30	Panel Discussion and Q&A
15:45 – 16:45	Session 4: Children as Victims of War Chairs: <i>Andrea Koščec, Pavao Mikulčić, Ihor Boyko</i>
15:45	<i>Care for the Displaced and Refugee Children During the War in Croatia</i> Darko Richter University Hospital Center Zagreb Zagreb, Croatia
16:00	<i>Psychological and Psychiatric Problems of Children in War: Experience from Croatia</i> Dubravka Kocijan Hercigonja University of Zagreb School of Medicine Zagreb, Croatia
16:15	<i>Infant Feeding in Wartime: Professional and Ethical Challenges</i> Irena Zakarija Grković University of Split School of Medicine Split, Croatia
16:30	Panel Discussion and Q&A
17:00	Tour of the Đakovo Cathedral
19:00	Holy Mass at the Chapel in the Seminary of the Archdiocese of Đakovo-Osijek
20:00	Gala Dinner

Saturday, June 1, 2024	
7:30	Breakfast
9:00	Trip to Vukovar
9:30	Visit to the National Memorial War Hospital Vukovar
10:30 – 12:00	Session 5: Croatian Homeland War as a Challenge and Lesson for the Future Chairs: <i>Petar Bilić, Jan Čáp, Renzo Pegoraro, Frans van Ittersum, Ivan Bodrožić</i>
10:30	<i>The Suffering of a General County Hospital During the War: The Example of the Vukovar County Hospital in 1991</i> Anto Blažanović (Director of the National Memorial War Hospital Vukovar) Vukovar, Croatia
10:45	<i>Military Medical Service in Peace Keeping Missions and Multinational Military Operations During War Conflicts</i> Ružica Pavić-Kevrić, Šime Kevrić Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Croatia Zagreb, Croatia
11:00	<i>The Role of Schools of Medicine During the Croatian Homeland War</i> Elena Jelavić Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Croatia Zagreb, Croatia
11:15	<i>What Can Medical Journal Editors Do During the War?</i> Matko Marušić University of Split School of Medicine Split, Croatia
11:30	<i>Catholic Doctors in Wartime and Peacetime in the Service of the Gospel</i> Vincenzo Defilippis (President of the FEAMC) Bari, Italy
11:45	Panel Discussion and Q&A
12:00	Closing of the Symposium
12:30	Coffee break
13:00	Guided tour of the City Museum – the Palace of the Eltz Counts, National Memorial Cemetery of the Victims of the Homeland War in Vukovar, Ovčara Memorial Center
15:00	Guided tour of the City of Ilok (Odescalchi Castle, Ilok Cellars, Franciscan Monastery)
18:00	Holy Mass at the Church of St. John Capistrano in Ilok
19:00	Concert by the Oratorio Choir of the Church of St. Mark (Zagreb) <i>Cantores sancti Marci</i>
20:00	Dinner



If we are talking about the Croatian Homeland War, for a better understanding of it, it is important to briefly explain its causes and roots in the introduction.

This photo symbolically sums up the the Croatian Homeland War and shows exactly what actually happened: weak people, mostly civilians, were attacked by the combined criminal forces shown in this photo: the official Yugoslav Army, paramilitary formations of Serbian extremists, and Chetniks from Serbia. So called “evacuation” of civilians performed by these troops actually meant evacuation to death!



Additionally, since we are addressing healthcare, there is the question: what was the role of HCWs (physicians) in this War? These are the most important War criminals from the Serbian side - they are all physicians:

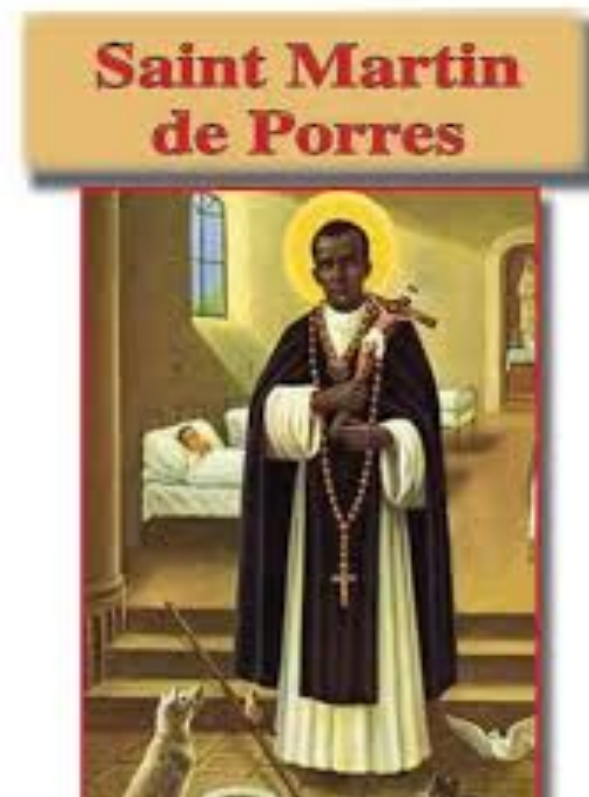
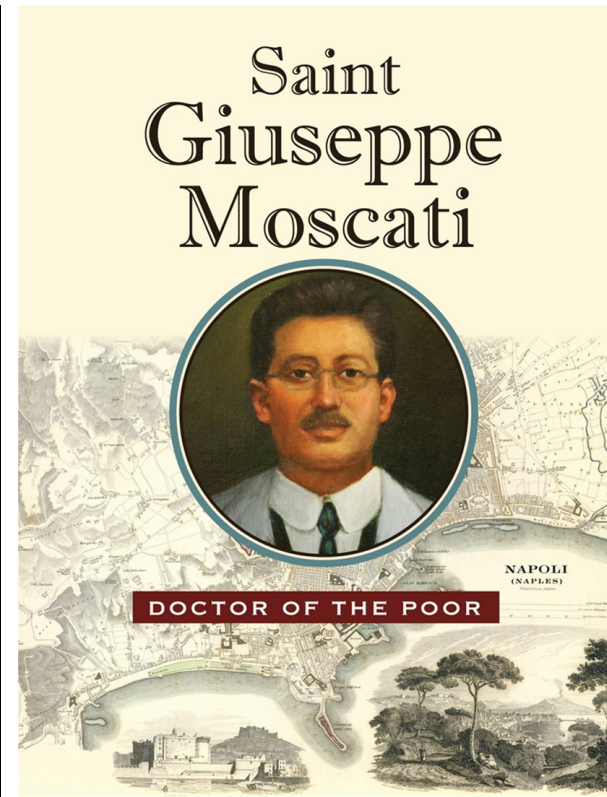
dr. Aleksandar Rašković,

dr. Milan Babić,

dr. Vojislav Stanimirović,

and the most famous one – dr. Radovan Karadžić.





Why do people today choose to follow these and such doctors and not others?
What is it that drives these doctors to the point of madness to plan, organize and carry out the mass elimination of thousands of people, including the infirm, children and the elderly?
Why do people not want to follow some other prototypes of doctors, like St. Luke, St. Cosmas and Damian, St. Giuseppe Moscati, St. Martin de Porres, and last but not least St. Gianna Beretta Molla from the recent history?



Mons. dr. Valentin Pozaić

(September 15, 1945. – May 15, 2023.)

the first ecclesiastical assistant of the HKLD
(1991. – 2018.)



And finally, I dedicate this conference to the person who connects our two societies: Croatian and European - Bishop Valentin Pozaić, ecclesiastical assistant and founder of the Croatian Catholic Medical Society and a long-time ecclesiastical assistant of the European Federation of Catholic Medical Societies, who passed away last year.

Bishop Pozaić was our great teacher, father and brother at the same time, and we owe him a lot, including this meeting, without whose spiritual support, even today, this meeting would not have taken place.

