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**UNIVERSITÄT
BERN**

Theologische Fakultät

**Departement für
Christkatholische Theologie**

4th International Conference
"Interreligious Relations and
Ecumenical Issues" (IREI)

**Belief Diversity and the Lived
Experience of Religion:
Narratives and Interpretations**

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4. Internationale Konferenz
„Interreligiöse Beziehungen und
ökumenische Fragen“ (IREI):

**Glaubensvielfalt und gelebte
Erfahrung von Religion:
Zeugnisse und Interpretationen**

**Ankündigung einer Konferenz
Conference Announcement**

**Belief Diversity and the Lived Experience of Religion:
Narratives and Interpretations**

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**Glaubensvielfalt und gelebte Erfahrung von Religion:
Zeugnisse und Interpretationen**

Bern, 27 – 29 October 2016

26 January 2016

Dear Colleague,

You are cordially invited to participate in our conference in 2016, the fourth in a series that brings together an ecumenical group of theologians and scholars of religion to critically discuss aspects of Christian involvement in interreligious relations and related issues.

The October 2016 conference aims to address issues pertinent to the intersecting themes of religious diversity and the day-to-day 'lived experience' of religion in the 21st century.

Papers are invited that examine, among other things, the place and role of religion(s) within contemporary everyday secular society. Questions about the mutual ways in which religious praxis and diversity of belief engages, challenges, or confronts an increasing sense of irreligiosity that, arguably, dominates presumptions about the nature of secular society in the West, are among the sorts of issues that this conference seeks to explore. What are the markers of lived experiences of diverse communities of faith? In what way do the dominant narratives of major religions take root and/or are subject to fresh interpretation within the context of secular society and belief diversity? Should religiosity be more or less visible in the public sphere?

As our theme relates very much to the vision and function of the *Haus der Religionen* where several religious communities engage with each other in Bern, the conference will include sessions held at the *Haus* as well as engaging with the wider community, in particular those linked to the life and work of the *Haus der Religionen*.

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Further programme details will be forthcoming in due course.

Composition of the Conference: A two-day meeting of an invited group of scholars, together with Bern participants inclusive of student and other observers.

Conference Format: Primarily the presentation of short papers (20-25 minutes), allowing time for discussion, to be given in plenary session, together with opportunity for small group meetings in respect to one or more 'parallel' paper sessions, depending on the number of papers offered. The conference will also feature a public event in connection with the Haus der Religionen in Bern.

Call for papers: Together with invitations made directly, persons in receipt of this announcement who are interested in offering a paper for consideration by the organizers are kindly requested to submit an abstract (no more than half a page) **by 1 May, 2016 to Professor (George) Douglas Pratt at:** dpratt@waikato.ac.nz **copied (cc.) to** george.pratt@theol.unibe.ch. Advice of acceptance will be made by 1 June 2016.

Conference languages: Primarily English, together with German. A prepared paper in German may need to be supplied also in an English version (or summary); it is unlikely that the reverse will be necessary.

Travel costs to and from Bern will be the responsibility of participants.

Costs for accommodation will be covered for confirmed plenary speakers for up to three nights. Costs for panel session speakers will be met in part or in full, depending on available funding.

Venue: The conference begins on Thursday, 27 October 2016, at 5. p.m., and ends on Saturday, 29 October, in the late afternoon.

Conference Publication: The conference organizers are planning to publish a selection of the papers in IKZ-bios (Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift: *Berner Interreligiöse Ökumenische Studien / Bern Interreligious Oecumenical Studies*, <http://www.ikz-bios.unibe.ch>).

Conference Organization: Professors Angela Berlis and Douglas Pratt are convening this conference with the organizational help of assistants and others of the *Departement für Christkatholische Theologie*.

With collegial regards,
Angela Berlis and Douglas Pratt
Conference Convenors