Abstract

This diploma thesis is devoted to the situation of Christians living in the Roman Empire in the first four centuries AD. Every new religion has to face a number of problems in its beginnings, its misunderstanding and its position in society must be gradually enforced. However, the very beginnings of Christianity are not easy to grasp, since so many sources have not been preserved to this day. Likewise, many events are perceived through Christian optics and thus interpreted unilaterally. These are, above all, martyrlogical texts that have been extensively modified over time and authenticity is now relatively difficult.

This diploma thesis is divided into several chapters, while in the first one I try to describe the Roman society and the Roman religion with which the Christian faith was confronted. Further chapters and chapters are devoted to the rise and spread of Christianity, the person of Jesus Christ, and the Church Fathers who report to us about the first centuries of Christian faith.

The most extensive part of this diploma thesis is devoted to the main topic of persecution of Christians in the first four centuries AD. To date the individual stages of the persecution of Christians, I will help them by dividing them according to G.E.M. de Ste. Croixe.

Chapters to describe the three stages of the persecution of Christians under the rule of the Roman Emperors are interwoven with the stories of the individual martyrs who have sacrificed their lives for the Christian faith and who are in great respect to the Christian Church today.

The aim of the work is to map out the different stages of persecution of Christians, the development of mutual relations between Christians and the Roman Empire, and answer the question why Christians were so persecuted, although otherwise we can say about the Roman empire that it was quite tolerant to the religion of the nations.