

Abstract

This diploma thesis deals with the problem how parish priests and female parish priests respond to the trends in the number of the believers who attend their worships and the strategies used by parish priests to keep the current number of believers constant, or even how to increase it. According to the results of population census the number of believers organized in three largest Czech religious denominations has been decreased in the last 20 years. The attitudes and opinions of parish priests and female parish priests on the number of their believers have been examined with the help of a qualitative research. Nine semi-structured interviews with parish priests and female parish priests of three largest Czech churches, which are the Roman Catholic Church, the Evangelical Church and the Czechoslovak Hussite Church, have been done. According to the obtained data we can identify two strategies currently used by clergymen. The first one is a passive approach to addressing believers during ritualistic religious ceremonies. The parish priests and female parish priests who noticed a decrease in the number of their believers identify themselves with this strategy. On the other hand the other group is characterized by efforts to organize a huge number of cultural events and programs for the general public. Their target is to disprove all prejudices and inform people about the life of their parish church. These vicars and female vicars consider the number of their believers to be stable or even increasing.