

Deutsche Provinz der Jesuiten

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Provincial and Bishop stand by Father Wucherpennig

Johannes Siebner SJ, Provincial of the Jesuits in Germany, and the Bishop of Limburg, Dr. Georg Bätzing, stand behind the elected Rector of Sankt Georgen, Prof. Dr. Ansgar Wucherpennig SJ, who has held the office since 2014. Already at the beginning of February the University Conference elected Wucherpennig as Rector for a further term of two years. This election requires a confirmation of the church authorities. Both the Bishop of Limburg, Dr. Georg Bätzing, and the Provincial, Fr. Johannes Siebner SJ, have agreed to this election. The still needed Roman declaration of no objection ("Nihil obstat"), which the Education Congregation issues together with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, has not yet been issued. Background of the missing Nihil obstat is the view of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that public statements of Father Wucherpennig in October 2016 do not agree with the doctrine of the church. On the one hand it is about questions of the diaconate of women and on the other hand about New Testament theological reflections on homosexuality.

The Provincial of the German Jesuits Father Siebner fully supports Ansgar Wucherpennig SJ: "I unreservedly stand by the elected Rector Father Wucherpennig; he enjoys my full trust. His administration of the last four years, his theology, his completely undisputed ecclesiality and his personal integrity do not allow the slightest doubt about his suitability. To be honest, I can imagine nothing else but a misunderstanding. Otherwise it would be an outrageous process. I am optimistic that the appointment can take place soon." Also the bishop of Limburg, Dr. Georg Bätzing, has already expressed his trust in Wucherpennig. He was a brilliant theologian, always with integrity and loyal to the Church. Bätzing had no reservations whatsoever and hoped that Rome would accept the choice of the Order and the dioceses.

Because the Roman declaration of no objection ("Nihil obstat") is not yet available, the Grand Chancellor cannot appoint Father Wucherpennig as Rector. According to the statutes of the university, the prorector represents the rector of the university. Prof. Dr. Thomas Meckel has therefore taken over the official duties of the Rector from 01.10.2018 until an ordinary appointment of the Rector of the University of Applied Sciences from Rome takes place. Johannes Siebner is very grateful for this commitment because he knows that the university is in good hands as long as the elected rector cannot take office. Johannes Siebner fully trusts Thomas Meckel.

[Das Interview von Pater Wucherpennig aus dem Oktober 2016 zum Nachlesen.](#)