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## **Germany: Church's debate on "Freedom and Democracy – The Contribution of Catholic Schools" on 20 May**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Federal Catholic Schools Congress will be held in Erfurt on 20 May on "Freedom and Democracy – The Contribution of Catholic Schools". The focus of the congress will be on the contribution that Catholic schools can make to democratic education in line with their Christian vision of man. Due to the social developments related to the COVID-19 crisis and given the increase in anti-Semitism and populism, political education is a key concern for Catholic schools, organisers explain. The National Congress "aims to encourage reflection and exchange on these and similar issues while also giving new impetus to real school life". The various working groups will address the following subjects: political education in Catholic schools; project ideas for the education of children and young people in democracy; democracy in the Church from a theological perspective; the current state of affairs of the Catholic Church's synodal process; and joint action against anti-Semitism. Projects on civic engagement, social skills and a culture of remembrance will be presented together with an example of carbon-neutral school building. Following an introductory Liturgy of the Word presided over by Bishop Ulrich Neymeyr of Erfurt, the Federal Congress will then be opened by the chairman of the Commission for Education and Schools, Archbishop Hans-Josef Becker of Paderborn.

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