

Interviewer - Fr. Erny, would you share with us a bit about your background and the beginnings of your life - long interest in *e*thics?

Fr. Erny - I was born in Luxemburg and early on I became interested in the Christian workers' youth organizations. As a result, I was led into the world of justice at the workplace and in society.

- **How did this interest develop further?**

– I soon asked myself the question of how come that ideologies and questions of faith separate people pursuing the same goal? Following a gut feeling, I set off to study theology, first in Luxemburg and then, thanks to good companions, later in Switzerland. Doctoral studies then took me to Belgium where I got to know the questions and needs of patients, doctors and hospital workers.

– **Were you able to expand your studies and research beyond Europe?**

– Yes, I was privileged to be able to study bioethics in the United States. Then I was called back to Luxemburg where I spent twenty-two years as a professor of moral theology and social ethics at a seminary and present institute for religious pedagogy. For my parallel ten years of teaching in Freiburg in Breisgau (Germany), I was awarded the Baden-Württemberg prize for excellent

teaching.

– **Has your interest gone beyond the world of academia?**

– Yes, I have striven to establish and support ethics committees in hospitals, care homes and retirement homes in German speaking countries and in Luxemburg. In addition, exchange with students has brought forth many articles on social and medical ethics. The topic of my doctoral thesis, “How Christians act and think ethically,” has pursued me and accompanied me all my life.

– **What have been your endeavors in recent years?**

– For thirty years, I worked to expand Caritas Luxemburg, first as a volunteer and then as director, then as general secretary, executive secretary and finally as president until May of 2015. The eventful story of new statutes and structures gave me insights into the Roman world behind the walls of Vatican City. In three and a half years as vicar-general of Luxemburg, I have worked full time for the reorganization and recovery of Church finances and the Church’s media group.

– **Where do you go from here?**

– Now after a semester in the Boston area, where I have further pursued my interest and research in medical ethics, I will now take some time out for myself and continue to follow God’s will for me.