

Martina Kopeckà named goodwill ambassador for Czech Republic

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(Facebook)

Martina Viktorie Kopecká, a 34-year-old priest in the Czechoslovak Hussite Church, has been named a goodwill ambassador by the Czech Republic's minister of foreign affairs.

In an interview with the World Council of Churches, Kopecká—who moderates the WCC's youth commission and is also president of Meeting Brno, a festival focused on encountering different cultures, opinions, and religions—said her new role will parallel the ecumenical work she already does.

"I will share stories from the Czech Republic with the world and promote the good name of my country," she said. "It is connected with international relationships, very much the same kind of relationships in which we engage within our ecumenical circles."

Relationships are key for Kopecká, who is also a family therapist specializing in crisis intervention.

"When a human being meets another human being, it doesn't matter which denomination we belong to," she said in a 2018 interview about her experience as the only female cleric at a gathering of Catholic bishops in Rome. (The Hussite Church separated from the Catholic Church after World War I.)

"We believe in Christ and can find a way—as Pope Francis says—to work and pray together. We are from different cultures and societies, but we have something in common. Young people, through friendship, are learning how to move toward acceptance and respect."