**CRISIS COMMUNICATION ON THE EXAMPLE OF CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES
ABSTRACT**

For a person, a company or an institution the crisis always represents a challenge, a turning point or a break point after which nothing remains the same. Depending on preparedness, premeditation and the speed of reaction of a subject affected by the crisis, the situation may change for better or for worse. While having in mind the aforementioned, the communications experts are aware of the importance of managing the crisis and of being prepared for it even before it occurs. They also know how important it is to manage a certain level of control during the crisis so that it would not escalate thus inflicting damage to hard-earned reputation.

In higher education institutions, the crises may be triggered by various events: from shooting or fire on campus, cyber-attacks, molestation and discrimination accusations, plagiarism, inadequate studying conditions to student protests. The Catholic universities are not unscathed by the crises.
The aim of this paper is to study management of crisis communications on Catholic universities.
The questionnaire was created for the purposes of this paper, and the respondents answered the questions on communication strategy and plans, crisis preparedness, responsibility for communicating the crisis to the public, on relations between the media and the communication channels they use. We hypothesize that the results will show the preparedness of Catholic universities for crisis intervention. In practice, the results presented in this paper may serve as an instigation and guidelines for drafting the communication strategies and plans in crisis situations at higher education institutions.

**Keywords:** crisis communication, crisis management, public relations, communication, Catholic universities