

Minutes of the Network Council, St. Louis, Missouri 2005

Fourth Network Council Meeting

International Network of Societies of Catholic Theology Meets on Challenges Confronting Catholic Theology Worldwide

In an historic assembly, a group of 25 Catholic theologians representing societies and associations of Catholic theology from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America, and North America gathered in St. Louis, Missouri, USA on June 7-9, 2005 for a colloquium on *Catholic Theology Worldwide: Regional Challenges and New Developments*. This event marks the fourth Network Council of the International Network of Societies of Catholic Theology, which was founded in 1996 by Peter Hünemann from the University of Tübingen. In attendance were presidents and official delegates of societies of Catholic theology from around the world and were joined by representative theologians from Africa and Asia where few societies currently exist.

The meeting was devoted to a discussion in continental groups and in general assembly of regional issues facing theologians in the areas of theological education, societal problems, and matters of the church, based on papers prepared by each participant and distributed before the assembly. The gathering culminated with collective deliberation about the most pressing issues that merit attention by Catholic theologians around the world. Two issues were identified. The most widespread collective conviction was that Catholic theologians need to promote greater theological dialogue and collaboration with people in their local and daily reality, especially with women, children, youth, and those living in poverty, with bishops, with theologians across cultures, and with adherents of other religions and members of the wider society. The second conclusion was that there is an urgent need for more nuanced contextual analyses of the signs of the times in relation to globalization, intercultural relations, migration, fundamentalism and relativism, secularization and de-traditionalization, and ecology and respect for the earth.

The meeting concluded with each of the continental groups of Catholic theologians offering an assessment of the special character and achievements of their regional theologies, both in terms of what they might contribute to theologians around the world seeking to advance the principal agendas identified, and what they particularly needed from other sectors of the Catholic Church and theology to support their own efforts.

This gathering was made possible by generous donations from a number Catholic Universities in the United States, including Marquette University, Boston College, Fordham University, Duquesne University, and Georgetown University.

Elections: Bradford Hinze, Paulo Fernando Carneiro de Andrade, and Thomas Fliethmann were elected to one more term as officers.



International Network of Societies of Catholic Theology Colloquium, June 7-9, 2005

Top Row: Edmund Kee-Fook Chia (Malaysia), Vimal Tirimanna (Sri Lanka), Elochukwu Uzukwu (Nigeria), Gaston Ogui (Bénin), Léonard Santedi Kinkupu (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Fernando Berríos Medel (Chile), Jennifer Slater (South Africa), Damián Nannini (Argentina), Alejandro Crosthwaite

Middle Row: Abraham Fisher, Stuart Bate (South Africa), Jean-Guy Nadeau (Canada), Robert Masson (USA), Neil Ormerod (Australia), Josephat Obi Oguejiofor (Nigeria), Lieven Boeve (Belgium), Meinrad Hebga (Cameroon), Gideon Goosen (Australia), Peter Casarella (USA), Cyril Orji

Bottom Row: Teresia Hinga (Kenya), Monica Hellwig (USA), Gemma Talud Cruz (Philippines), Bradford Hinze (USA), Thomas Fliethmann (Germany), Paulo Fernando Carneiro de Andrade (Brazil), Judith Schaefer (USA), Christine Firer Hinze (USA)

Participants not in the photograph: M. Shawn Copeland (USA), Roberto Goizueta (USA)