



Catholic Theological Society of America
74th Annual Convention
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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Another World is Possible: Violence, Resistance and Transformation

The theme of the 2019 CTSA Convention, *Another World is Possible: Violence, Resistance and Transformation*, is envisioned as a theological exploration on alternatives for society, religion, and spirituality. This exploration intends to support positive interaction with the contemporary social and religious movements for constructive change—also known as the *global justice movement*—by connecting theological reflection to their practices seeking prevention and elimination of destructive violence and to their experiences of resistance and transformation. In the past two decades, civil society has increased its vitality around the world. Moved by the hopeful conviction that *another world is possible*, collective and organized mobilization of social and religious actors share interests and enact voluntary intervention for constructive transformation. Religious discourse and institutions, as well as faith-based networks and grassroots organizations have continued to play a significant role as a motivating force of aspirations and initiatives. The contemporary global arena is also affected by the intervention of fundamentalist and authoritarian social and religious actors continuing to incite dynamics of hateful interaction while maintaining unjust social systems and relationships. Today's dynamic arena of civil society, with all its complexity, contradictions, and disputed futures, brings forth new opportunities for creative theological reflection about the actual and potential contribution of theology to overcome the current social context of a deeply violent and divided world.

Two other factors also influenced the selection of this year's theme. First, a desire to shed a new light on the interaction of experience and theology from the setting of our troubled but hopeful times. The city of Pittsburgh has welcomed the CTSA twice, in 1962 and 1992. The theme of the 1992 Convention, *Experience and Theology: A Critical Appropriation*, provides inspiration to this year's theme, particularly in light of the issues addressed during the plenary sessions. These issues include the status of conceptualization and its relation to experience, the relevance of Scripture to contemporary Christian experience, and the relevance of the experience of the poor and marginalized to faith and theology (1992 *Proceedings*, 7, 26, 48). Second, the year 2019 marks the Fortieth Anniversary of the III General Conference of Latin American Bishops, which produced the *Puebla Conclusions* (1979). This conference and the resulting conclusions adopted the prophetic vision and hermeneutic options declared by the *Medellín Conclusions* (1968). They also declared the Church's commitment to uproot poverty, to support work for the transformation of institutionalized injustice, to promote activism for the common good as the basis of all human life together, and to encourage contribution to the dynamic processes of integral liberation.

The 2019 Convention seeks to continue those thematic lines as they are reframed from the context of today's social dynamics engendered by social and religious actors in their initiatives for constructive transformation both locally and globally. The CTSA membership is invited to explore resources, visions, values, and paths in the Catholic theological tradition for supporting intervention, strengthening motivation, and fostering hope in the search for alternatives.

The topics below serve as suggestions for theological exploration in the different sessions and paper proposals.

- Why the practices of the global justice movement are relevant to our theological endeavors today,
- How the motivating vision encapsulated in the expression *another world is possible* influences or enriches our understanding of God, creation, and eschatology,
- What the global mobilization of social and religious actors for constructive change brings to our study of ethics and spirituality,
- Why the current struggles for integral liberation are significant to our study and understanding of the human in relation to the world and to other religious traditions,
- In what ways our articulations of Catholicity and Catholic Social Thought are altered, updated, or improved by the resurgence of civil society today,
- How faith-based intervention in the contemporary social dynamics is giving shape to theological method and to the historical development of theology,
- What hermeneutical keys are entailed in the transformative practices of social and religious actors for the evolving Christological and ecclesiological articulations,
- Why and how the experiences of violence elimination, resistance, and transformation continue to provide the grounds for building spaces of constructive liturgy and rituals,
- How the global justice movement increases opportunities for collaboration and facilitates a shared spirituality of solidarity between the global South and the global North,
- In what ways the global feminist movement continues to provide visions, knowledge, and motivation for the transformation of kyriarchal society, culture, church, and theology,
- How the positive interaction of global religious actors sharing together interests, values, and motivation for change affects relationships within our U.S. theological community,
- What philosophical, theological, and ethical traditions are more useful to encourage intervention for ending destructive violence and the weapons industry today,
- What lessons can we appropriate from the commitment and messages of Pope Francis to the World Meeting of Popular Movements.