

**CTSA CONVENTION, 2020 THEME**  
**“All You Who Labor . . .”**  
**Theology, Work, and Economy**

With many faith traditions, Christianity regards work and economy as morally and religiously consequential human endeavors. Christians from New Testament times on have reflected on what the gospel means for the nitty-gritty aspects of buying and selling, wealth and poverty, lending and borrowing, work and wages, owning and sharing, and corresponding economic institutions. And in every era, believers have been influenced by, and sought to influence, the exigencies of economy and work in their cultures and circumstances.

In North America and across the globe today, one is hard pressed to find any significant issue or concern—personal or collective, social or political, ecclesial or secular—that does not implicate economics. Work remains a constitutive site connecting economy with flesh-and-blood people and their embodied, materially-situated needs and abilities, efforts and aspirations. Horrifyingly, decent work, economic well-being, and even material survival continue to elude millions in our country and world. These signs of the times underscore the need for theological scholars to marshal our traditions’ theological, spiritual, moral, and practical resources to ponder and engage these critical realities.

At the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America, to take place in Cleveland, Ohio, June 11-14, 2020, we will bring theological perspectives to bear on the seminal topics of work and economy, considering their significance and the multifaceted challenges they pose within the purview of Catholic--in conversation with other Christian and religious communities’--visions of God and the divine economy, of humanity, and of the world. To this end, papers and sessions are invited to creatively engage the conference theme through diverse theological, ethical, historical, practical, and—very importantly--interdisciplinary methods and vantage points.

Our 2020 annual meeting will be the CTSA’s seventy-fifth. In light of this anniversary, we also welcome sessions that consider our work as theologians and the work of our Society in the face of the complicated dynamics and pressing needs of our contemporary educational, ecclesial, and societal contexts.

**Confirmed Plenary Speakers include:**

David Cloutier  
Associate Professor, Moral Theology and Ethics  
The Catholic University of America

Gemma Tulud Cruz  
Senior Lecturer, Religion and Theology  
Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry  
Australian Catholic University

Claire E. Wolfteich  
Associate Professor, Practical Theology & Spiritual Formation  
Director, Center for Practical Theology  
Boston University School of Theology

**SESSION or PAPER TOPICS related to Convention themes could include:**

**Scriptural treatments and interpretations** of work and economy

**Christianity in Antiquity**, work, and economy

**Historical theological approaches to work and economy:** e.g., Early church Eastern & Western fathers and mothers; in reflections on the relationship between the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*, in monastic thought and practice [*ora et labora*]; by saint-exemplars and theologians (e.g. Benedict, Augustine, Aquinas, Orthodox theologians, Calvin, Luther, radical reformers; etc.)

**Theological Anthropology, work, and economics:** e.g., Work as an expression of human dignity; work and creativity; work under fallen/sinful conditions; contrasting assumptions about the human condition/nature in Christianity and various streams of economics; is working an essential dimension of human flourishing?

**Liturgy, prayer, and work/economy:** e.g., approaches from liturgical theology, spiritual and mystical theology, practical theology; ethnographic and comparative religious studies

**Classic theological loci (soteriology, God/Trinity, eschatology, etc)** as sources/foci for theologies or ethics of work and economy

**Work, Sabbath, and rest:** “Keep Holy the Sabbath” – Catholic, ecumenical, interfaith historical and contemporary perspectives; theologies and ethics of rest from work; implications for education, pastoral ministry, professions; history and contemporary status of Sabbath/Sunday rest norm; Sabbath/Sunday rest as a lost practice, or as a countercultural witness.

**Time, work, and economy:** theological and ethical perspectives

**Spiritualities of work and rest:** monastic or lay, Benedictine or other religious rules, etc., contemporary popular spiritualities (e.g., prosperity gospel movements)

**Work and lay, religious, or ordained vocations:** historically and in diverse contexts today

**Ecumenical and/or interreligious perspectives** on work and economy, critical or comparative

**Work- and economy-related dimensions and implications of liberation and political theologies**, in particular solidarity and the option for the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable

**Economy/work and dynamics of power** inscribed in relations of class, race/ethnicity/nationality, gender/sexuality

**Lay ecclesial movements and communities, work, and economy:** e.g., Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin and the Catholic Worker Movement; Focolare Movement and “the economy of gift;” Jose Escriva and the Opus Dei movement; the Sumak Kawsay vision and movement for an economy of life

**Churches, work, and economy: theological, ethical, and practical issues:** e.g., employment and financial practices; decision-making concerning allocation of church resources

**Ecology/ecological crises, work, and economy**, faith communities' responses to climate change; "Earth Day" at 50 years; potentials and limits of economic strategies for addressing ecological crises; etc.

**Work and persons with disabilities**: practical-theological, ethical, theological analyses

**Vulnerable immigrant and refugees workers and families**, implications and obligations for churches

**Work and particular professions**: theological perspectives on, e.g., lawyering, medicine, teaching, business, etc.; **business as a vocation**; faith at work initiatives; ethics and theologies of business, corporations

**The work of the artists, works of art and the creative professions** as sources for/ in dialogue with theology; **Literary treatments of work and economy** as sources for/ in dialogue with theology

**Women, gender, and work/economy**: theological, ethical, interdisciplinary analyses

**Families and waged work** - in recent theology and ethics; historical or interdisciplinary perspectives; **Relations between waged and unwaged work** in family, local, and wider economies

**The 'care economy' and care work**: theological, ethical, interdisciplinary analyses

**Consumerism, consumerist economies and cultures**: and implications for Christian theology and discipleship

**Money, wealth, and investment**: theological, ethical, interdisciplinary treatments

**Markets and market activities**: theological, ethical, cultural, historical perspectives

**Work in/the economy of the academy and higher education**: theological and ethical perspectives on, e.g. ,changing structure of academic workforce [adjuncts, administrators]; costs and sustainability of [especially Catholic] K-12 and higher education; professional ethics in the academy

**Philosophical and social-theoretical approaches to work and economy** as sources for/ in dialogue with theology

**Historical and contemporary political economists/schools of economics and work**, theological appraisals

**Moral theological/theological ethical and practical analyses of work and economy**:

**Work justice, labor unions/movements, living wage campaigns**; **Catholic social teaching/thought** and issues surrounding work and economy; **Work and professional ethics**- business, medical, legal, academic, etc.; **Economic exploitation, theft, and corruption of labor and laborers**: Theft of work (slavery, wage theft, human trafficking); exploitative and abusive employment, economic, and trade relationships and practices; **Economic Inequality**; **Economic Globalization** and its impacts on national and local work, consumption, and cultures; **Normative and theological features and implications of competing political-economic theories, systems, and arrangements** e.g. consumer capitalism; social democracies; etc.; **Exclusion and marginalization** in economy and workforce; **Work and economy in a**

**digital age; Financialization of the economy** and its multifarious impacts; **Scarcity, reshaping, and/or the 'disappearance' of work** in 21<sup>st</sup> century economies; **Under- and unemployment** rise of contingent, freelance, or gig economies; displaced workers and immigration, homelessness

**The clergy abuse crisis in the Catholic church:** economic and professional (work) effects and implications

**Our work as theologians, and our work as a Society** in light of contemporary ecclesial, cultural, economic, and/or political exigencies and needs, with special attention to vulnerable and marginalized persons and groups