

**Theological Symposium: *Christian Eschatology in the context of
Secularisation in the pandemic World***

***A meeting of teachers from Jesuit faculties of theology in Europe
Madrid, Universidad Pontificia Comillas, July 6-9 2022***

ICADE CAMPUS (Calle Alberto Aguilera 23, 28015 Madrid)

The vision

If the theology shaped by the Ignatian tradition is called to continue making its mark in Europe, the institutions that practice theology in this way should strengthen collaboration and networking among them. With this in mind, we invite you to this fourth symposium. Similarly, to the Paris meeting in 2015, the Frankfurt meeting in 2018, and the Warsaw meeting 2021, the conference in Madrid has three main objectives:

- to enable faculty members to get to know each other, both personally and professionally
- to foster and promote theological reflection marked by the Ignatian tradition.
- We hope that 2 or 3 faculty members from each institution will convene in Madrid and participate in the meeting's lectures, discussion, and cultural activities.

**The topic: *Christian Eschatology in the context of Secularisation in the
pandemic World***

In the Spiritual Exercises [23], Ignatius of Loyola states: "God created human beings to praise, reverence, and serve God, and by doing this, to save their souls." This "First Principle and Foundation" expresses the essence of Christian eschatology, which, generally speaking, is about the goal and fulfilment of creation and history of salvation on the individual as well as social and universal level. Hence, it is about the "last things" such as death, immortality, resurrection, judgment, the end of the world, new creation, purgatory, heaven, and hell. According to the Christian faith, rooted in the teaching of the Bible, these "last things" should penetrate and form our choices in the present life *hic et nunc*. They should also be a source of hope that life is stronger than death. Thus understood, eschatology is connected with the idea of God, transcendence, creation, salvation, and imagination.

On the contrary, secularization usually means total autonomy of the world and human beings regarding God and religion. Human beings understand themselves first and foremost on the horizon of immanence. What challenges does secularization pose, especially to Christian eschatology amid the pandemic situation we have been experiencing globally? Is it still possible to talk about the "last things"? How should Christian eschatology be rethought in the context of secularization and its challenges? Does the experience of the COVID-19 Pandemic for almost two years change anything in this regard?

All Christian theologians have something to say about eschatology: biblical scholars, systematic, moral, and practical theologians. We will have some keynote speakers, but the meeting is by design interactive and participative. Therefore, all participants are asked to present a 5–7-minute contribution during the workshop.

We will have four keynote speakers:

Nicolas Steeves, SJ (Pontifical Gregorian University), *Eschatology and imagination*

Marc Rastoin, SJ (Centre Sèvres), *Saint Paul and Eschatology*

Philip Geister, SJ (Newman Institute), *Ultimate happiness or ultimate failure – heaven and hell in modern Christian eschatology*

Gabino Uríbarri Bilbao, SJ (Comillas University), *Eschatology and History. What does Christian hope promise us for this present world and for the coming one?*

Time and Place

July 6-9, 2022

Madrid, Universidad Pontificia Comillas,

ICADE CAMPUS (Calle Alberto Aguilera 23, 28015 Madrid)

Lodging

Residencia "San Pedro Fabro" y casa de acogida para jesuitas y grupos de las obras apostólicas de la Provincia

C/ Santísima Trinidad, 32 28010, MADRID. Closest metro station: "Alonso Cano"

Tel 913 080 254

almagro@jesuitas.es

Contact Person: Fr. Manuel Atochero Muñoz, Minister

Mob. 606 979 850.

The assistants do not need to book in advance, rooms are already booked.

Languages

At least passive knowledge of English is expected of all participants. Formal presentations will be supported by written text. We encourage the use of English in all presentations and discussions, but French and Spanish may be used in communications, discussions and in small groups.

Number of Participants

Around 15 to 20 people (2-3 per institution)

Organizers

Francisco Ramírez Fueyo, SJ – Dean of the Faculty of Theology, Pontifical University Comillas, Madrid

Zbigniew Kubacki, SJ – Catholic Academy in Warsaw – Collegium Bobolanum, Warsaw

Gonzalo Villagrán Medina, SJ – Faculty of Theology, Universidad Loyola, Granada

Dariusz Kowalczyk, SJ – Gregorian Pontifical University, Roma

Dirk Ansorge – Sankt Georgen Jesuit College of Philosophy and Theology, Frankfurt

Susana Di Trollo - Executive Secretary, Kircher Network

Timetable

July 6: arrivals, time to settle in and sightseeing

July 7

In the morning session Nicolas Steeves, SJ, from the Gregorian University and Marc Rastoin, SJ, from Centre Sèvres will approach the theme of Eschatology from two different angles. Nicolas Steeves, SJ, will speak about Eschatology from the perspective of fundamental theology through the category of imagination. Marc Rastoin, SJ, as exegete, will approach the theme of Eschatology from the perspective of the teaching of Saint Paul. Both presentations will be followed by discussion.

The afternoon will be devoted to workgroups. Their aim is to deepen individual reflection on various issues related to the topic of the Symposium.

July 8

In the morning session two dogmatic theologians, Philip Geister, SJ, from the Newman Institute and Gabino Uríbarri Bilbao, SJ, from Comillas University, will present their reflections on Eschatology and its challenges for the teaching of the Catholic Church. Both presentations will be followed by discussion.

In the afternoon, we will visit the Royal Palace of Madrid, we will walk through the “Austrian Quartier” (Plaza de Oriente, Puerta del Sol, Plaza Mayor...) and have Dinner in at traditional restaurant in Madrid.

July 9: Communications and concluding meeting

The morning session will start by the sharing of the communications prepared by the participants (part II). After coffee break, we will have the concluding session.

We will discuss how helpful such a meeting can be. Should we continue? If so, where, when, and what? How to integrate this kind of meeting into the Kircher Network.

Eucharist, lunch, followed by some free time in Madrid and departures.

In a nutshell

The fourth Theological Symposium aims to bring together all theologians of our Jesuit Faculties of Theology in Europe, who would be ready to share their reflections and research related to the theme of eschatology. Everyone can find their place: biblical scholars, dogmatic theologians, specialists in spirituality or moral theology, as well as those whose reflection is carried out from a pastoral point of view. The symposium offers an opportunity to work together and get to know each other, and spend a good time as friends in the Lord.

Methodology

In addition to the keynote speeches, we will operate in groups using two languages (English/French or English/Spanish). Each participant is asked to contribute with a 5 to 7 minutes' reflection (approximately 1000 words). Language issues are discussed in the form below.

Cost: 275 Euros, including accommodation (4 nights), meals and entry fees (to be paid in cash or by bank transfer).