

LETTER OF INVITATION TO THE 44TH THEOLOGY CONGRESS
A WORLD IN DARKNESS, ARE THERE ANY REASONS FOR HOPE?

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light (Is 9:2)

'You are the light of the world' (Mt 5:14)

5-7 September 2025

(Note November 26 2025: This text was written before the 2025 Congress took place)

Dear Female and Male Friends

We invite you to participate in the 44th Theology Congress entitled *A world in darkness. Are there reasons for hope?*, which will be held online from 5 to 7 September 2025. Below are some key points to encourage participation and make it easier to follow the Congress.

To analyse the complex and turbulent reality we are experiencing, we will have specialists in political science, information sciences, liberation theology, and ecofeminist theology, who will offer rigorous analyses of some of the most important crises in our world and make proposals for a liberationist, ecological, and ecofeminist Christianity on the horizon of the political, economic, and ecological revolution carried out by Pope Francis in response to these crises.

We will begin with an analysis of the mega-problems facing representative liberal democracies, such as the economic crisis, the digital revolution, inequality gaps and citizens' distrust of the ability of political representatives to resolve them. In this context, populism and technocratic governments appear as two alternative paths. The questions that political scientist Cristina Monje seeks to answer are whether these models are effective and what legitimacy they respond to.

Our analysis must include a critical look at Zionism, colonialism and Israel's genocide against Palestine. Teresa Aranguren, a journalist and writer specialising in the Middle East, will analyse from a historical perspective the convergence of Zionist and European colonialist interests, which have given rise to the tragedy of Palestine, whose process of denial is now culminating in an atrocious manner that has gone from apartheid to the final solution.

We will then move on to a theological reflection oriented towards a transformative praxis that illuminates the darkness of the present. Alejandro Ortiz, a Latin American liberation theologian, will offer the main contributions of Pope Francis, emphasising his criticism of neoliberal economics, the collapse of civilisation and global geopolitics. He also refers to the reform of the ecclesiastical institution, seeking to make it more inclusive, participatory and just.

In a world where darkness and light are intermingled, Brazilian ecofeminist theologian Ivone Gebara proposes a Christianity marked by pluralism and darkness, which defends economic, ecological and gender justice and learns to walk through terrain mixed with light and darkness, flowers and thorns, without idealism, but without renouncing utopia.

At the closing ceremony, Emilce Cuda, secretary of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, will invite us to walk together from the peripheries to the centre, building bridges for peace, a peace that is 'unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering' (Leon XIV), in the midst of a piecemeal war against nature and humanity. She will call on the churches of the Global South to dismantle denialist discourses and their destructive social, economic and ecological consequences.

Juan José Tamayo. Association of Theologians Juan XXIII

Spanish readers can download the texts and videos of the 44th Congress by clicking on www.congresodeteologia.info.