

PROFESSOR ELOCHUKWU UZUKWU, C.S.SP.: REVIEW OF HIS
SCHOLARSHIP AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO AFRICAN THEOLOGY IN THE
LAST TWENTY YEARS – INVITED SESSION

- Topic: Professor Elochukwu Uzukwu, C.S.Sp.: Review of His Scholarship and Contributions to African Theology in the Last Twenty Years
- Convener: Marinus C. Iwuchukwu, Duquesne University
- Moderator: SimonMary Aihokhai, University of Portland
- Presenters: Emmanuel Osigwe, Duquesne University
Besem Obem Etchi, Duquesne University
- Respondent: Elochukwu Uzukwu, C.S.Sp., Duquesne University

The first paper, “Theology and Method from a West African Context: Exploring the Contributions of Elochukwu Uzukwu,” was presented by Rev. Emmanuel Osigwe. The paper presents Uzukwu’s works that argue strongly for a recognition of the diversity that should exist in a truly catholic church, respecting and appreciating the differences in culture and cultural nuances in the liturgy and life of the church. The paper portrays Uzukwu’s works as pointing out how best to comply with the incarnation of the gospel in cultures, which requires a new methodology that is more attuned to various contexts. In such a worldview, as articulated by Uzukwu, plurality is celebrated as the condition of the relational tension that mediates being-in-the-world. This tradition eschews absolutism, universalism and exclusivism, and celebrates difference.

The second paper, “Multiplicity: The Portrait of the African female in Uzukwu's Works From 1995 to 2015,” presented by Besem Obem Etchi, highlights some of Uzukwu’s works and how they have impacted the study and contributions of women toward progressive African societies and how African theology needs to frame its focus on women. It surveys a twenty-year period of Uzukwu’s theological works, that spearhead West African contextual theology and liturgical methods, highlighting rising African women authors on the sacralized oppression of African women in the African church and society. Uzukwu champions female concerns and leadership in *A Listening Church* (1996); recognizes the inattention of Catholic liturgy to female traditional initiation rites, honors titles and widowhood in *Worship as Body Language* (1997); and stretches into the acknowledgement of Igbo theology’s feminine divine *Ala* and the salvific significance of *Idemili*, Chukwu’s daughter, in *God, Human and Wholeness* (2012), as relevant for the African church’s return to community from an excess of individualism and clericalism.

The respondent, Professor Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, complimented the works of both presenters. He was particularly intrigued at the positive appreciation of his works in support of African liturgy, the idea of the local church and their enduring relevance to society, the church and world Christianity, and particularly African womanhood. He stated how humbled and delighted he was that his work has received such honorable mention and recognition by an esteemed professional body of scholars like the CTSA.

Invited Session: Professor Elochukwu Uzukwu, C.S.Sp.

He hopes to embark on more research to further uplift and promote the contributions of Africans to the struggles of society and development of worship in general.

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