

**CLOSING REFLECTION
A LITURGY OF GRATITUDE AND RESILIENCE**

CHARLES E. CURRAN

25TH PRESIDENT OF THE CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

We have gathered here tonight virtually as the CTSA in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent reminder of the racial injustice in our society. We have come tonight to remember, to grieve, and to give thanks.

We remember.

We remember the members of the CTSA who have gone before us—colleagues, friends, mentors, and, for those of us of a certain age, students.

We grieve.

We grieve all those members of the CTSA who have gone before us.

We grieve the loss of life in our hemisphere and in the world because of the virus.

We grieve the many who have lost their jobs.

We grieve the injustices in our society—the growing gap between the rich and the poor, and the racial injustices.

We grieve the lives lost and the injuries inflicted through police brutality.

We give thanks.

We give thanks for the 75-year history of the CTSA and the contributions made to theology and the Church.

We give thanks for the medical personnel—the doctors, nurses, EMTs, and all those who have risked their lives in an attempt to heal and serve those who have come down with the virus.

We give thanks for the minority women who have risked their lives to take care of the elderly, who so often are alone, confused, and dying.

We give thanks for the many people who have been deemed “essential”—the bus drivers, the garbage collectors, the supermarket employees, who have risked their lives for the rest of us.

But I leave here tonight with questions for which I have no answer. And perhaps they are not only my questions, but also yours. What does it mean to do theology in our time and circumstances? What does it mean to have been sheltered-in-place while all this has been going on? What does it mean to have been a guilty bystander?