

## CATHOLICITY AND MISSION – TOPIC SESSION

Topic: Thinking Catholic Interreligiously  
 Convener: Sophia Park, S.N.J.M., Holy Names University  
 Moderator: Laurie Johnston, Emmanuel College  
 Presenters: Heejung Adele Cho, Regis College  
 Enrico Beltramini, Notre Dame de Namur University  
 Mary Doak, University of San Diego

Three engaging presentations explore the deep meaning of engaging with the other.

Heejung Cho, in her presentation entitled “From *Redemptoris Missio* to *Fratelli Tutti*: The Mission of the Church and Interreligious Dialogue,” carefully examined how the church documents have changed the mode of mission and engagement with the other cultures and religions. Comparing two documents, *Redemptoris Missio* and *Fratelli Tutti*, Cho argues that there is a significant development, demonstrating a trajectory that the church is moving toward understanding its mission (*ad intra*) in the Church. This movement involves encountering complex issues and perspectives, which can contribute to a fuller and broader understanding of the truth.

Enrico Beltramini’s presentation, entitled “Cosmic Christ and National God in Panikkar’s The Unknown Christ of Hinduism,” critiques how the worship of Christ constructed the identity of Jesus Christ as a national god. Exploring an Indian theologian Raymon Panikkar’s concepts of worship of the national deity in Ancient Rome, Beltramini examines the Cosmic Christ, juxtaposing the Unknown God, introduced by Paul in the Acts of Apostle. Beltramini argues that seeking the hidden message of The Unknown is seeking Christ beyond one’s understanding of God. In a sense, Christianity is quite unready to meet in Christ through the other religions. Then, it is mutual that the Unknown Christ of Hinduism is unknown to Christianity, and the Unknown Christ of Christianity is also unknown to Hinduism.

A third presentation, “Radical Hospitality: A Public and Prophetic Mission for a De-Colonized Church,” was given by Mary Doak. She explores how the church, pretty much embodied in the colonial and Western dominant culture, can practice the culture of encounter. Doak engages the notion of radical hospitality, which can be a form of encounter but needs to be critiqued in so far as it reinforces Western centeredness. Further, work in Eucharistic hospitality challenges the practice of closed communion in the church. She raises the question of whether a table fellowship open to all might better express our ecclesial identity as the sacrament to the world of our ultimate, eschatological unity.

A vibrant and fruitful discussion followed the presentations. One central concern was about the binary thinking of “us and the other.” Who is the other? And how can we find otherness in ourselves? The further discussion was about how we can encounter First Nation Peoples and how we reconcile the brutal history.

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