

# REGIONAL REPORTS



2024



Source: <https://www.mapsofworld.com/africa/>

**AFRICA:** Based on the reports submitted by the Catholic Theological Association of Nigeria, the Catholic Theological Society of Southern Africa, and the Cellule de Réflexion et de Propositions des Théologiens Ivoiriens, the following are the key themes that have emerged from the research projects in the African region:



## **1. Decolonization of Catholic Theology**

- All three groups emphasize decolonizing theology by moving away from Western-centric frameworks and engaging with local cultures and contexts. This involves reinterpreting doctrines to align with African experiences, thereby ensuring theology's relevance and resonance.

## **2. Inculturation and Contextual Approaches**

- Efforts to integrate African cultural elements into theology are central to the work of CATHAN, the Catholic Theological Society of Southern Africa, and CEREPTI. Inculturation makes faith more relatable while addressing dual allegiances between traditional beliefs and Christianity.

## **3. Liberation and Justice-Oriented Hermeneutics**

- Liberation theology plays a crucial role, with a focus on addressing social injustices like poverty, systemic violence, and underdevelopment. These reflections aim to empower communities and foster human development.

## **4. Historical-Systematic and Doctrinal Development**

- A robust understanding of Catholic doctrine is vital for African Catholics, with systematic approaches ensuring that traditional teachings are enriched by African experiences and made accessible through theological education.

## **5. Empowerment of the Laity**

- Decolonization efforts emphasize the laity's role, recognizing their baptismal duty in church leadership and community building. This empowerment is particularly significant in contexts such as apartheid and post-colonial governance.





## **6. Indigenous Leadership and Ethical Governance**

- The need for ethical, service-oriented leadership within the Church is highlighted, advocating for African leaders to assume roles traditionally dominated by missionaries. This is crucial for fostering transformative governance in ecclesial and societal contexts.

## **7. Synodality as a Key Theme**

- Synodality is a recurring focus, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire, where it intersects with socio-pastoral concerns, governance, and inclusivity. Synodality reflects a commitment to listening, participation, and collaborative decision-making.

## **8. Publications and Research as Tools for Advocacy**

- Publications such as the Nigerian Journal of Theology and CEREPTI's annual research themes reflect an ongoing commitment to addressing contemporary issues, from faith formation to socio-political challenges.

## **9. Faith and Cultural Re-appropriation**

- Groups like CEREPTI emphasize reclaiming faith by aligning it with local contexts, fostering theological maturity, and addressing issues like syncretism and the integration of traditional values with Christian teachings.

## **10. Addressing Specific Social Challenges**

- The reports highlight the importance of responding to pressing societal issues, including political governance, insecurity, poverty, and the dignity of women. These themes demonstrate theology's engagement with real-world challenges in Africa.





## Catholic Theological Association of Nigeria

**1. Decolonization of Catholic Theology:** The Catholic Theological Association of Nigeria (CATHAN) is part of a global effort to decolonize Catholic theology, making it relevant to contemporary thought and local culture. This involves moving away from Western-centric theological frameworks and developing a theology that resonates with African experiences and cultural contexts.

**2. Inculturation – Contextual Approach:** This approach emphasizes integrating African cultural elements into Catholic theology to make the faith more relatable and meaningful to Africans. It addresses the issue of dual allegiance by ensuring that theological reflections and Christian practices are articulated in ways that align with African modes of understanding and expression.

**3. Liberation Hermeneutical Approach:** Focused on addressing social injustices and underdevelopment in Africa, this approach advocates for a theology that prioritizes human development and liberation. It critiques dehumanizing practices within the faith and emphasizes responding to African socio-economic challenges rather than merely adhering to traditional theological reflections.

**4. Historical-Systematic Approach:** This approach aims to deepen the understanding of Catholic doctrines among African Catholics. It stresses the importance of theological education and the propagation of the Church's historical and doctrinal teachings, ensuring that African experiences are illuminated by the rich traditions of the Church.

**5. CATHAN's Activities and Publications:** CATHAN organizes annual conferences and publishes the Nigerian Journal of Theology and conference proceedings to promote theological reflections that address contemporary African issues. Recent conference themes have focused on topics such as elections, intellectual heritage, insecurity, synodality, the relationship between religion and politics, culture, and new media, reflecting the association's commitment to relevant and contextual theological discourse.



## Catholic Theological Society of Southern Africa (CTSSA)

**1. Translation and Colonial Influence:** Professor Itumeleng Daniel Mothoagae highlights the translation of the Bible into Setswana by 19th-century missionaries, particularly the 1857 English-Setswana Bible by Moffat. This translation is seen as a complex activity that transmits cultural and ideological messages, often serving colonial interests and leading to the desecration of the linguistic heritage of the Batswana.

**2. Waves of Colonization:** Dr. Anselm Laurence Prior discusses the multiple waves of colonization in Southern Africa, starting with the Dutch in 1652 and followed by the British. Each wave left deep scars on society, including land dispossession, enslavement, and systemic violence. The South African Union Bill of 1909 further entrenched racial divisions by excluding indigenous black Africans from political and economic roles.

**3. Decolonization and Inculturation in the Church:** The Second Vatican Council and subsequent movements led to a push for inculturation within the Catholic Church in Southern Africa. Fr. Fritz Lobinger spearheaded efforts in the 1970s to decolonize the faith by building Small Christian Communities, allowing for a more authentic expression of local cultures within the church.

**4. Empowerment of the Laity:** The movement towards decolonization in the church emphasized the role of the laity in taking responsibility for church activities. This empowerment was seen as a baptismal right and duty, fostering leadership skills that would later be applied in broader social, political, and economic contexts, especially during the apartheid era.

**5. Indigenous Leadership and Ethical Governance:** Olehile Buffel and Steve Biko critique the domination of white missionaries, which stifled the potential of African leaders within the church. Buffel argues for ethical, service-oriented, and transformative leadership to fulfill the church's mission. The vitality of local churches indicates that they are ready to assume leadership roles with confidence and strength.





## Cellule de réflexion et de propositions des théologiens Ivoiriens (CREPTI)

- 1. Re-appropriation of Faith and Theological Maturity:** Since its inception in 2014, CEREPTI has focused on the re-appropriation of faith, aiming for deep evangelization and theological maturity among Christians in Côte d'Ivoire. This involves understanding and contextualizing faith within the Ivorian context.
- 2. Annual Research Themes:** CEREPTI conducts annual research on various themes related to faith and theology. These themes include educating in faith, the role of the Catholic Church in unity and reconciliation, responses to suffering, socio-pastoral issues, and synodality.
- 3. Contextual Theology and Decolonization:** The research is contextualized to address the specific social, political, and religious conditions in Côte d'Ivoire. From 2020 to 2024, the focus was on "Thinking Faith Today," which aligns with the decolonization of theology by analyzing it within the Ivorian context.
- 4. Synodality and Governance:** Recent themes (2022-2024) have focused on synodality, addressing socio-pastoral issues, the dignity of women, welcoming vulnerabilities, and governance both in civil and church contexts. This includes discussions on political governance, justice, poverty, and family formation.
- 5. Challenges and Objectives:** CEREPTI aims to address the challenges of syncretism, formation, and the lived experiences of Christians in Côte d'Ivoire. The objective is to create a theology that is relevant and responsive to the real conditions of existence of the people in contact with faith.





Source: <https://www.mapsofworld.com/asia/>

**ASIA-PACIFIC:** Based on the reports submitted by the Australian Catholic Theological Association, DaKaTeo, Ecclesia of Women in Asia, FABC-OTC, Indian Theological Association, and Indian Women Theologians' Forum, the following are the key themes that have emerged from the research projects in the Asia-Pacific region:



## **1. Annual Theological Conferences Across Asia**

- Organizations like ACTA, DaKaTeo, EWA, and ITA host annual conferences on theological anthropology, leadership in the Church, synodality, and social justice. These gatherings foster dialogue on contemporary issues affecting the Church and society, pivotal for contextualizing theology and ensuring its relevance in addressing modern challenges.

## **2. Synodality as a Central Theme**

- Synodality is a recurring topic, emphasizing dialogue, participation, and communal discernment. Conferences discuss the process from Lumen Gentium to the Synod on Synodality and its application within diverse Asian contexts. The emphasis on synodality reflects the Church's commitment to inclusivity, dialogue, and reform.

## **3. Decolonial and Indigenous Theologies**

- Decolonial perspectives and indigenous spirituality are explored to address historical injustices and integrate local cultures into theological reflections. This approach challenges colonial legacies in theology, promoting justice and inclusivity for marginalized communities.

## **4. Engagement with Gender Justice and Women's Rights**

- Groups like EWA and IWTF advocate for women's voices in Church leadership, address abuse within the Church, and produce feminist theological reflections. These efforts highlight the importance of gender equality in fostering a more inclusive Church.

## **5. Addressing Church Credibility and Leadership**

- Discussions focus on renewing the Church's credibility by aligning leadership with values of justice, compassion, and solidarity, as exemplified by Pope Francis's vision. This renewal is crucial for rebuilding trust and relevance in contemporary society.





## **6. Contextual Theology and Social Issues**

- Works like *Jesus for Filipinos* and *Diwaang Balaan* reflect on social issues such as nationalism, peacebuilding, and ecological concerns from theological perspectives. Contextual theology enables the Church to address societal challenges effectively.

## **7. Interfaith Dialogue and Cultural Engagement**

- Organizations stress the importance of interreligious dialogue, especially in pluralistic societies like India, to promote harmony and shared values. This engagement fosters mutual understanding and collaboration in diverse contexts.

## **8. Theological Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

- Themes like the Body of Christ and communal suffering during the pandemic have inspired reflections on faith, resilience, and interconnectedness. These reflections highlight the Church's role in offering hope and solidarity during crises.

## **9. Publications and Research Contributions**

- Extensive research and publications by members of these organizations address themes like sexual abuse, decolonization, synodality, and ecological concerns. These contributions enrich academic and ecclesial discourses while fostering a deeper understanding of pressing issues.

## **10. Collaborations and Future Directions**

- Partnerships with global organizations and plans for future conferences and publications aim to expand theological discussions and influence Church reforms. Collaborative efforts enhance these theological reflections' global and regional impact, ensuring sustained progress.





## Australian Catholic Theological Association (ACTA)

**1. Annual Members Conference and Research Themes:** The ACTA holds an annual members' conference where members present papers on a chosen theme. In 2023, the theme was "Being Human: Biblical and Theological Anthropologies." This theme was used to engage with discussions from the Australian Plenary Council of 2022-2023 and to articulate ways forward for the Church in Australia and globally. The conference featured a variety of papers addressing different aspects of theological anthropology.

**2. Current Areas of Research:** ACTA members are involved in diverse theological research areas. Some of the key themes include anthropology and Vatican II, synodality, Ignatian spirituality, comparative religions, gender justice, Catholic social thought, public theology, and the theological reorientation of management theory. These research efforts are collaborative, involving partnerships with universities and institutions both in Australia and internationally.

**3. Engagement with INSeCT's Focus on Decolonizing Theologies:** Several ACTA members are engaged in research related to decolonization, exploring how theological methods can either perpetuate or assist in overcoming the effects of colonization. This includes engaging with the voices of refugees and indigenous peoples, examining the cultures of Melanesia, and addressing epistemic injustice in global health research. Collaborations with international universities and networks are a significant part of this work.

**4. Specific Research Projects and Publications:** The document details specific research projects by ACTA members, including their themes, project titles, descriptions, key findings, collaborations, obstacles, and future plans. Examples include Teresa Brown's work on new Trinitarian ontologies, Raymond Canning's engagement with refugee and indigenous voices, and Cristina Lledo-Gomez's decolonizing theologies from a Filipina-Australian feminist perspective.

**5. Future Plans and Collaborations:** ACTA members have ongoing and future plans for their research, including further publications, conference proceedings, and new collaborations. There is a strong emphasis on continuing to develop and expand their research in areas such as decolonization, synodality, and theological anthropology, with a view to making a significant impact on both academic and ecclesial contexts.



## Catholic Theological Society of the Philippines (DaKaTeo)

**1. Leadership and Ministry in the Church:** The 2021 conference focused on rethinking leadership and ministry in the Church, with papers discussing various aspects such as the incarnational mission of CICM, the leadership of Cardinal Chito Tagle, and the challenges of priestly vocation. Other papers examined Pope Francis' role, intercultural theology, and the peace agenda in Southeast Asia. The theme also included discussions on lay empowerment, synodality, and the Church's response to the sex abuse crisis.

**2. Filipino Religious Faith and Nationalism/Patriotism:** The 2022 conference explored the engagement and disentanglement of Filipino religious faith and nationalism/patriotism. Topics included Catholic involvement in electoral politics, historical political events, religious and political martyrdom, nationalism through the lens of Bartolome de Las Casas, and the dynamics of ethnicity in the fourth Gospel. Other papers addressed inculturation in the Mass, cyberchurch models, gender theory, and the role of Basic Ecclesial Communities in societal change.

**3. Synodality and Church Reformation:** The 2023 conference centered on the theme of synodality and the Church's journey from Lumen Gentium to the Synod on Synodality. Research topics included the development of local church theology, the synodal processes in the Philippine church, Pope Francis' reformation agenda for Catholic education, Christian unity, and the challenges to synodality within the Philippine hierarchy and clergy.

**4. Decolonial Theology and Indigenous Perspectives:** Several published works by DaKaTeo members focused on decolonial theology and indigenous perspectives. Notable books include "Handuman" by Bro. Karl Gaspar, which discusses the impact of Western imperialism on indigenous peoples in Mindanao, and "Diwaang Balaan," which brings indigenous spirituality into dialogue with Christian faith. Other works include "Toward a Bai Theology," an anthology on Catholic feminism, and "Ayta," which highlights the struggles of the Mag-indi Ayta in Pampanga.

**5. Contextual Theology and Social Issues:** The report also highlights efforts to contextualize theology in response to social issues. For instance, "Jesus for Filipinos" by Fr. Ramon Echica reflects on Philippine social issues in light of the Gospel, helping Filipino Christians find contextualized answers to their faith questions. This theme underscores the importance of addressing contemporary social challenges through a theological lens.





## Ecclesia of Women in Asia (EWA)

- 1. Decolonizing Theologies and Asian Feminist Perspectives:** EWA focuses on enriching Asian identity and context through decolonial theologies. The 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference in 2022 emphasized creating life-giving communities post-pandemic, highlighting the critical role of women and addressing structural inequalities.
- 2. Upcoming Conference and Synodal Third Space:** The upcoming 2024 conference in Macau will explore reimagining Church structures and leadership from various theological perspectives. It aims to address the exclusion of marginalized groups and foster inclusive, egalitarian communities.
- 3. Key Findings and Gender Studies:** There is a growing recognition among Asian women theologians of the need to interrogate global structural inequalities and participate in building inclusive communities. This challenges the notion that feminism and gender equality are Western constructs.
- 4. Collaborations and Partnerships:** EWA has partnered with the Catholic Women's Council to advance the dignity and equality of women in the Roman Catholic Church. This collaboration aims to amplify women's voices in the Synod on Synodality.
- 5. Challenges and Future Plans:** EWA faces challenges such as financial sustainability and ensuring their voices are heard. Future plans include the 2024 conference, which will contribute to decolonial theology by reflecting on Asian perspectives and reimagining Church structures to be more inclusive and empowering.





## **Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Office of Theological Concerns (FABC-OTC)**

**1. The Body of Christ in the Pandemic:** The pandemic has reshaped perspectives, beliefs, and lifeways, emphasizing the body as a theological locus. The paper reflects on the Body of Christ in families, local churches, and ecology, highlighting suffering and connection to Jesus' paschal mystery. It discusses how the pandemic has affected people's daily lives, faith practices, and the environment, urging a reappropriation of body theology. The reflection emphasizes the interconnectedness of humanity, God, and creation, advocating for a healthier and more sustainable life.

**2. The Asian Face of Synodality:** The biblical story of the encounter on the road to Emmaus is used to explore an Asian understanding of a Synodal Church. The narrative highlights the importance of community, recognizing God's presence, and the joy and hope from the resurrection. The project is divided into five chapters: current realities, biblical perspectives, historical and theological interpretations, personal and communal transformation, and new mission pathways. The story of Emmaus serves as a metaphor for the synodal journey, emphasizing communal mission and transformation.

**3. Current Realities and Concerns:** The first chapter of the synodality paper re-reads the experiences of synodality in Asian Churches, situating them in the broader context of human and Salvation History.

**4. Biblical and Theological Insights:** Chapters two and three of the synodality paper focus on biblical, historical, and theological understandings of synodal paths, sensitive to Asian realities and mindsets.

**5. Transformation and New Mission Pathways:** Chapter four discusses personal conversion and communal transformation, inspired by the Emmaus story. Chapter five explores new mission pathways for the Synodal Asian Church, emphasizing a synodal and communitarian approach to mission.



## Indian Theological Association

**1. Theological Methodology and Context in India:** The ITA's theological approach is rooted in the Christic experience and addresses the complex Indian context, including religious diversity, poverty, and the reconciliation between religions and secular life. This methodology aligns with the FABC's 'triple immersion' approach.

**2. Hindu Nationalism and Constitutional Values:** The 2019 conference focused on the rise of Hindu nationalism and its threat to India's secular and democratic fabric. Theologians discussed the need for Christian theology to defend constitutional values and promote a pluri-cultural identity, advocating for participatory democracy and social justice.

**3. Church Credibility and Witness:** The 2021 conference addressed the credibility crisis of the Catholic Church in India. It emphasized the need for the Church to live authentically, aligning faith with practice, and adopting Pope Francis's vision of authority based on love, justice, and solidarity with the poor.

**4. Pandemic Response and Theological Reflection:** The 2022 conference reflected on the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the importance of addressing suffering and finding hope through theological insights. The Church was called to embrace a mission centered on compassion, solidarity, and proactive engagement with contemporary challenges.

**5. Synodality and Commitment to National Identity:** The 2023 and 2024 conferences focused on synodality and the Church's role in national identity. Synodality was seen as a process of continuous conversion and dialogue, while the 2024 conference emphasized the Church's responsibility





## Indian Women Theologians' Forum (IWTF)

**1. Synod on Synodality and Women's Role in the Church:** IWTF focused on the Synod on Synodality declared by Pope Francis in 2021. Collaborations with the Catholic Women's Council and Spirit Unbounded to reflect on Synodality and women's roles. Presentations and talks by Virginia Saldanha and Kochurani Abraham on Synodality in 2021. Participation in the online Symposium "Towards a Synodal Indian Church" in January 2022.

**2. Advocacy and Support for Women Victims of Abuse:** IWTF raised concerns about the abuse of women, especially religious sisters, in the Church. Letters to Church authorities regarding the suicides of sisters and support for a sister sexually abused by a bishop. Research and articles on sexual abuse in the Church by Kochurani Abraham and Virginia Saldanha.

**3. Publications and Research:** Numerous articles and books published by IWT members on topics such as sexual abuse, gender analysis, and feminist theology. Notable works include "Clergy Sexual Misconduct/Abuse of Women in Asia" and "When Spiritual Power Destroys Life – Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church".

**4. Events and Presentations:** Participation in various events, including a hybrid event in Rome and Bristol during the Synod on Synodality in 2023. Talks by Dr. Kochurani Abraham, Virginia Saldanha, and Raynah Braganza Passanah on topics related to women's rights and the role of the People of God in the Church.

**5. Ongoing Projects and Future Directions:** Continued focus on raising awareness and advocating for women's rights within the Church. Engagement in discussions on accountability, transparency, and the inclusion of women in Church leadership and governance.





Source: <https://www.mapsofworld.com/europe/>

**EUROPE:** Based on the reports submitted by the AGENDA, European Society for Catholic Theology, and European Society of Women in Theological Research, the following are the key themes that have emerged from the research projects in the European region:



### **1. Advocacy for Women's Roles in the Church:**

- AGENDA emphasizes advancing women's roles in the Church, including discussions on their access to ministries and offices, such as the priesthood. Publications like *Representation of Christ* contribute to the ongoing debates.

### **2. Diverse Contributions of Catholic Women Theologians**

- AGENDA's network of over 400 women theologians contributes to theology through research, anthologies, and congresses, focusing on topics such as ecofeminism and the inclusion of LGBTIQ Catholics.

### **3. Mental Health and Well-being in Theological Contexts**

- The European Society for Catholic Theology explores biopsychosocial well-being, particularly during pregnancy and postpartum, emphasizing interdisciplinary collaboration to develop support guidelines.

### **4. Ethical Reflections on Modern Family Structures:**

- Research on co-parenting and assisted reproductive technologies examines motivations, family values, and virtues, contributing to ethical discussions on contemporary parenting.

### **5. Chaplaincy Models for Workplace Challenges**

- The European Society for Catholic Theology investigates spiritual support for victims of workplace mobbing, exploring chaplaincy's role and identifying areas for improvement.





## **6. Decolonization and Postcolonial Theologies**

- ESWTR and AGENDA both focus on decolonization, engaging in research and organizing conferences such as "De/colonizing Theologies." Publications address the challenges of imperial histories and gender polarity.

## **7. Interreligious and Interdenominational Collaboration**

- ESWTR fosters dialogue across diverse religious traditions, including Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism, promoting interfaith collaboration in theology and religious studies.

## **8. Challenges in Funding and Recognition of Theology**

- Funding challenges arise from evaluators' biases against theology and religion-focused research. Some groups appeal against these discriminatory practices to secure support.

## **9. Publications as Platforms for Advocacy and Research**

- Journals and anthologies from AGENDA and ESWTR, such as *Eternally Truth?* and *Valuing Lives, Healing Earth*, provide platforms to discuss feminist and decolonial theology.

## **10. Individual Contributions to Interdisciplinary Theological Research**

- ESWTR members contribute to topics like climate change, indigenous rights, critical whiteness studies, and feminist theology, showcasing the diversity and depth of women's theological scholarship.



## AGENDA- Forum Catholic Women in Theology

**1. Role of Women in the Church:** AGENDA focuses significantly on the position and roles of women within the Catholic Church. This includes publishing works on the access of women to ministries and offices, such as the priesthood. The association supports discussions and research on these topics, exemplified by publications like "Representation of Christ: On the current debate about the admission of women to the Priesthood."

**2. Diverse Theological Contributions:** AGENDA is a network of over 400 Catholic women theologians who contribute to various theological discussions and research. They publish anthologies, organize congresses, and form research networks. Recent notable works include an anthology marking their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, "Eternally truth? On the genesis and claim of beliefs," and they plan to organize a conference on the future of theology in Stuttgart in October 2025. Topics of interest include ecofeminism and the recognition of LGBTIQ Catholics.





## European Society for Catholic Theology (ESCT)

### 1. Religious Spiritual Assistance for Workplace Mobbing Victims:

- *Description:* This project evaluates chaplaincy models in workplaces and their effectiveness in addressing mobbing, identifying victims' needs, and assessing legal limitations in Lithuania.
- *Challenges:* Adversarial stance from a reviewer and reluctance from priests to collaborate.
- *Future Plans:* The project will continue.

### 2. Biopsychosocial Well-being and Mental Health during Pregnancy and Postpartum:

- *Description:* Focuses on identifying risk and protective factors for emotional well-being and mental health, aiming to develop guidelines for prevention and support.
- *Collaborations:* LSMU and VMU for expertise in biological, psychosocial, and spiritual aspects.
- *Challenges:* Funding issues due to evaluators' lack of understanding of theological aspects.
- *Future Plans:* Continue seeking funding and collaboration.

### 3. Co-parenting Websites and Children's Rights in Assisted Reproductive Technology:

- *Description:* Interviews with potential co-parents about their motivations and values regarding family and parenthood, with ethical reflections.
- *Key Findings:* Importance of family values and virtues beyond marriage.
- *Collaborations:* Multiple universities and Familyship.org.
- *Future Plans:* Publication of research results and further collaborations, including speaking engagements.

### 4. Funding and Evaluation Challenges:

- *Description:* Several projects face funding challenges, often due to evaluators' lack of understanding or dismissive attitudes towards certain fields like theology.
- *Solutions:* Appeals against discrimination have led to some projects being funded.



## European Society of Women in Theological Research

**1. Introduction to ESWTR and Its Structure:** The European Society of Women in Theological Research (ESWTR) is an interreligious academic society founded in 1986 with 620 members across 24 countries. It aims to support and develop women's contributions to theology and religious studies. ESWTR organizes biennial congresses, regional conferences, and publishes journals and books. Internal communication is maintained through newsletters, email lists, and online meetings.

**2. Interreligious and Interdenominational Focus:** ESWTR members come from diverse religious backgrounds, including Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Post-Christian, and Christianity, with various Christian denominations represented. Since 2015, ESWTR has emphasized an interreligious focus in its engagements, fostering collaboration across different faiths and denominations.

**3. Research on Decolonization:** ESWTR has been actively involved in decolonization research from 2021 to 2024. Key events include the Twin conference on "De/colonizing Theologies: Glocal Histories, Contemporary Challenges" held in Manila and Leuven in 2023. The conference papers are being published in the ESWTR Studies in Religion series. Other notable conferences include "(De)Constructing Regimes of In/visibility" (2019), "Confronting Gender Polarity and Nationalism" (2022), and "Imperial Powers and Women: Trauma, Resistance, and Resilience" (2023).

**4. Publications and Contributions:** ESWTR publishes the ESWTR Journal annually and the ESWTR Studies in Religion series. The third volume, "Valuing Lives, Healing Earth: Religion, Gender, and Life on Earth," is a tribute to feminist Catholic theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether and includes contributions to decolonial theology. The anthology "Miradas a todo color. Teologías feministas poscoloniales en un mundo en conflicto" was published in 2023, highlighting postcolonial feminist theologies.

**5. Individual Member Contributions:** Several ESWTR members are engaged in decolonization and postcolonial studies. Notable contributors include Judith Gruber, Sigríður Guðmarsdóttir, Carlotta Israel, Sigrid Rettenbacher, Lovisa Mienna Sjøberg, Marita Anna Wagner, and Eske Wollrad. Their research spans various topics such as climate change, indigenous peoples, critical whiteness studies, and feminist theologies, reflecting the diverse and interdisciplinary nature of ESWTR's work.





Source: <https://www.mapsofworld.com/north-america/>

**NORTH AMERICA:** Based on the reports submitted by the Black Catholic Theological Symposium, Catholic Theological Society of America, College Theology Society, and Société Canadienne de Théologie, the following are the key themes that have emerged from the research projects in the North American region:



## **1. Decolonial Thought in Black Theology**

- BCTS emphasizes decoloniality by addressing racial biases and re-centering Black theological perspectives. This includes examining colonial legacies within Catholic theology and reclaiming Black identity in sacred and social contexts.

## **2. Annual Themes on Radical Blackness and Catholic Identity**

- BCTS's recent conference themes reflect a progressive shift:
  - 2021: Addressed social inequalities exacerbated by COVID-19.
  - 2022: Highlighted Black theology as a decolonizing force.
  - 2023: Focused on radical Blackness and its authenticity in promoting synodality and Black agency within the Church.

## **3. Scholarly Contributions in Decolonial Praxis**

- Prominent BCTS members engage in critical scholarship, covering topics like Black eschatology, the intersection of race and theology, and decolonial methodologies. Their academic works aim to create a more inclusive and just theological discourse.

## **4. Public Engagement and Advocacy**

- Through conferences, webinars, and advocacy, BCTS members challenge systemic racism and promote Black Catholic cultural practices. This public-facing engagement amplifies their mission to integrate racial justice into theological and ecclesial spaces.

## **5. Educational Initiatives on Race and Black Spirituality**

- BCTS members contribute to education by teaching on topics like race and caste. These courses aim to inspire a new generation of theologians to continue decolonizing theology and embedding Black Catholic perspectives in academia.





## **6. Displacing Eurocentrism in Theology**

- Organizations like CTS and CTSA aim to critique and displace Eurocentric theological perspectives. They emphasize global Catholicism, Indigenous traditions, and the localization of theology to reflect diverse cultural and historical contexts.

## **7. Feminist and Intersectional Theologies**

- CTS addresses feminist and LGBTQIA2S+ perspectives, challenging traditional views on gender, sexuality, and family. These efforts advocate for inclusivity in theological education and broader ecclesial structures.

## **8. Environmental and Ecological Concerns**

- Both CTSA and CTS integrate ecological concerns into theology, emphasizing the responsibility of faith communities in addressing environmental crises. Ecotheological frameworks highlight interconnectedness and care for creation.

## **9. Indigenous and Neo-Colonial Challenges in Canada**

- Société Canadienne de Théologie addresses the role of the Catholic Church in Canada's colonial history, especially its impact on Indigenous peoples. Decolonial initiatives include truth-telling, restitution, and theological reflection on cultural hybridity and Indigenous traditions.

## **10. Synodality and Black Agency**

- BCTS and other theological bodies align with Pope Francis' synodal vision, advocating for inclusive decision-making in the Church. Synodality is presented as a process enriched by Black agency, fostering dialogue and shared responsibility across diverse communities.



## Black Catholic Theological Symposium (BCTS)

**1. Decoloniality and Black Theology:** The Black Catholic Theological Symposium (BCTS) focuses on decolonial thought, addressing racial biases and promoting Black theological perspectives within the Catholic tradition. Annual themes from 2021 to 2023 reflect this focus, exploring the impact of the pandemic, shifts in Black Catholic identity, and the embodiment of radical Blackness in sacred and social spaces.

### 2. Annual Conference Themes:

- **2021:** "Emerging from the Pandemic: Black Theology Matters" highlighted social inequalities revealed by COVID-19 and emphasized Black theological insights for a more equitable world.
- **2022:** Shifted focus from "Authentically Black, Truly Catholic" to "Radically Black and Authentically Black," exploring Black theology as a decolonizing force within the Catholic Church.
- **2023:** "Radically Black, Authentically Catholic" examined radicality and authenticity in Black Catholic experiences, promoting a synodal church through Black agency.

**3. Scholarly Contributions:** Members of BCTS, such as LaRyssa Herrington, Alex Mikulich, SimonMary Asese Aihiokehai, Joseph Flipper, and C. Vanessa White, have made significant contributions through publications, lectures, and workshops. Their work spans topics like decolonial praxis, Black eschatology, and the intersection of race and Catholic theology.

**4. Public Engagement and Advocacy:** BCTS members actively engage in public discourse, addressing issues like racism within the Catholic Church, the role of Black Catholics in social movements, and the importance of Black cultural practices. They participate in conferences, webinars, and interviews, advocating for racial justice and inclusivity.

**5. Educational Initiatives:** BCTS members contribute to academia by teaching courses on race, caste, and Black spirituality. These courses aim to educate and inspire future scholars and practitioners to continue the work of decolonizing theology and promoting Black Catholic perspectives.





# Catholic Theological Society of America (CTSA)

## 1. Decolonizing Theologies and Decolonial Perspectives

### • Focus Areas:

- Decolonizing theological perspectives and practices.
- Addressing colonial legacies within theological frameworks.
- Promoting inclusive and diverse perspectives.

## 2. Intersectionality and Gender Justice

### • Focus Areas:

- Integrating gender and intersectional analysis into theological studies.
- Challenging traditional narratives and advocating for equitable and inclusive approaches within religious contexts.

## 3. Interreligious Dialogue and Comparative Theology

### • Focus Areas:

- Fostering mutual understanding and collaboration across different religious traditions.
- Enriching theological discourse and promoting global peace and understanding.

## 4. Ethics and Social Justice:

### • Focus Areas:

- Addressing contemporary social issues through a theological lens.
- Providing ethical frameworks that respond to pressing social challenges and advocate for justice and human dignity.

## 5. Environmental and Ecological Concerns

### • Focus Areas:

- Integrating ecological considerations into theological studies.
- Emphasizing the importance of caring for creation and addressing environmental degradation from a faith-based perspective.



## College Theology Society (CTS)

**1. Decolonizing Theology:** The College Theology Society (CTS) has focused on decolonizing Catholic theology, exploring themes such as cosmopolitan localism, decolonizing comparative theology, and reimagining history through Indigenous traditions. This includes critiquing colonial imaginaries and addressing power dynamics in education.

**2. Feminist and LGBTQIA2S+ Theologies:** CTS has engaged with feminist and LGBTQIA2S+ theologies, critiquing traditional views on human sexuality and family, addressing sexual harassment in theological training, and advocating for the inclusion and recognition of queer educators and gender-diverse understandings in theology.

**3. Antiracist Critiques and Retrievals of Catholic Tradition:** The society has produced significant work on antiracist theological reflection, engaging with systemic racism, promoting interracial solidarity, and offering reparative readings of historical theological figures. This includes explicit themes of antiracism in their annual volumes and statements on US racism.

**4. Displacing Eurocentrism in Catholic Theology:** CTS has worked to displace Eurocentric perspectives in theology, focusing on global Catholicism and the significance of local church communities. This includes exploring the role of land in mediating peoplehood and proposing local church communities as significant sites for discerning faith.

**5. Social Justice and Advocacy:** The society has taken strong stances on social issues such as racism and gun violence. They have issued statements condemning systemic racial injustice and police brutality, and have committed to addressing the structural roots of gun violence through scholarly work, public events, and future conventions.





## Société Canadienne de Théologie

**1. Decolonization and the Church:** The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada highlighted the role of residential schools in cultural genocide against Indigenous peoples and the involvement of churches in these schools. The Catholic Church faces ongoing calls for apologies, restitution of archives, and return of sacred artifacts. The need for decolonization within the Church is emphasized, with Pope Francis's 2022 visit to Canada showing that significant efforts are still required.

**2. Indigenous Issues and Theological Response:** Indigenous issues have gained attention but remain underexplored in Francophone theology. The Canadian Society of Theology has been addressing decolonization in its conferences, with recent symposiums focusing on the intersection of Indigenous theology and the future of Christianity, missiology, and postcolonial perspectives.

**3. Neo-colonialism and Global South Relations:** Canada's neo-colonial relationships with countries in the Global South, where Canadian multinationals exploit natural resources, and the xenophobic undertones in managing migrant and refugee cases, are highlighted. These issues are relevant to theological discussions and the need for a decolonial perspective.

**4. Francophone Theology and Cultural Hybridity:** Francophone Canadians' perception of themselves as a colonized people complicates their acknowledgment of their colonial role. The symposium "Francophone Theology in Canada: Where Do We Stand?" addressed decolonization, with presentations on cultural hybridity and the relevance of African Christianity to Francophone theology.

**5. Toward a Decolonial Theological Paradigm:** The African Theology and African Descendants Group (GTAS) at the University of Montreal has critiqued Eurocentric theological frameworks and promoted contextual theologies that engage marginalized perspectives. This approach calls for epistemological and ethical efforts to develop a theology that transcends imposed methodologies and fosters dialogue between African and Quebecois theological traditions.



Source: <https://www.mapsofworld.com/south-america/>

**SOUTH AMERICA:** Based on the reports submitted by the **Asociación Colombiana de Teólogas**, **Sociedade de Teologia e Ciências da Religio Brasil**, **Sociedad Chilena de Teología**, **TEOLOGANDA**, and **Amerindia Colombia Red**, the following are the key themes that have emerged from the research projects in the South American region:





## **1. Formation and Purpose of Theological Associations**

- Organizations like ACT and SCHAT serve as platforms for fostering theological discourse, integrating academic practice with real-life contexts, and building solidarity among members. Their work highlights the importance of collaboration and the intersection of theology with societal issues.

## **2. Engagement with International Networks and Gender Discourse**

- Associations such as ACT and Teologanda actively engage with international theological dialogues, focusing on gender and intersectionality. They reflect on the role of women in the Church, advocating for leadership opportunities and addressing patriarchal systems.

## **3. Annual Conferences and Thematic Meetings**

- Regular meetings by SCHAT, ACT, and Amerindia Colombia explore contemporary theological issues, such as intercultural dialogue, synodality, and public theology. These gatherings provide avenues to address local and global challenges while sharing diverse perspectives.

## **4. Publications and Theological Contributions**

- The production of books and articles is central to advancing theological debates. ACT's work on women's ordination and Teologanda's publications on feminist ethics and decolonial theologies contribute to academic and ecclesial discussions.

## **5. Decoloniality and Emancipatory Practices**

- Decolonial perspectives permeate the work of SOTER, Teologanda, and Amerindia. These efforts aim to dismantle colonial legacies, promote inclusivity, and reimagine theological frameworks that resonate with marginalized communities' experiences.



## **6. Liberation Theology and Social Justice**

- A key theme across Amerindia and SOTER is the integration of liberation theology with contemporary issues, including ecological justice and advocacy for vulnerable populations. This approach emphasizes praxis, connecting theology with real-world challenges.

## **7. Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Collaboration**

- Collaborations across fields, as seen in SOTER and SCHAT, foster holistic theological discourse. Events like SOTER's congresses and SCHAT's dialogues with Mapuche spirituality highlight the integration of diverse academic and cultural insights.

## **8. Focus on Marginalized Voices**

- The inclusion of Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and other marginalized communities is central to the work of ACT, SOTER, and Teologanda. These efforts challenge dominant paradigms and offer new epistemological perspectives on theology.

## **9. Commitment to Synodality and Decolonizing Ecclesial Practices**

- ACT and Amerindia emphasize synodality as a theological and ecclesial approach, fostering inclusivity and collective decision-making. Teologanda's focus on decolonizing church structures aligns with this goal, aiming to make the Church more just and representative.

## **10. Ecotheology and Environmental Concerns**

- Groups like Amerindia and SOTER incorporate ecological concerns into their theological frameworks, recognizing the interconnectedness of environmental and social liberation. Events and research on "ecotheologizing" reflect the urgency of addressing ecological crises through a theological lens.





## Asociación Colombiana de Teólogas (ACT)

**1. Formation and Purpose of the Association (2007-2023):** The Colombian Association of Women Theologians (ACT) was established in 2007 to create a community integrating academic practice and real-life situations into theological discourse. It aims to build networks of solidarity and share projects and results among Colombian women theologians.

**2. Engagement with International Networks and Gender Discourse:** In 2014, ACT participated in the INSeCT meeting, which emphasized gender discourse in theological research. Although not invited to subsequent meetings, ACT continued to incorporate gender discourse into its research, reflecting on how to do theology in new ecclesial contexts.

**3. Annual Theological Meetings and Key Themes:** ACT holds annual theological meetings to share research and reflections. Notable themes include "Gender and Peacebuilding" (2017), "From Silence to Voice" (2018), and rethinking ecclesial ministries and advocating for women's ordination (2019). These meetings integrate diverse perspectives, including those of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian women.

**4. Publications and Contributions to Theological Debates:** ACT has produced significant publications, such as Isabel Corpas de Posada's *¿Ordenación de mujeres?* (2020) and *Ministerial Conversion in the Time of Conversion to Synodality* (2023). These works contribute to debates on women's ordination and ecclesial ministries, reflecting Vatican II ecclesiology and Latin American feminist theology.

**5. Commitment to Decolonization and Synodality:** While decolonization is not the primary focus, ACT's research questions thought structures and paradigms incongruent with Jesus' vision, emphasizing deconstruction and reconstruction. The Association aligns with Pope Francis' call to "do theology in company," fostering connections with other theological collectives and serving the Church through a dialogical approach.



## Sociedade de Teologia e Ciências da Religião Brasil (SOTER)

**1. Decoloniality and Emancipatory Practices:** The book and the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of SOTER focus on decoloniality, addressing the urgent need to deconstruct colonial legacies in various fields, including Religious Sciences and Theology. This theme explores how decolonial practices can offer new perspectives and methodologies for understanding and addressing societal issues.

**2. Interdisciplinary and International Collaboration:** The congress and the book emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary and international collaboration. The event brought together theologians, scientists of religion, postgraduate students, and researchers from various fields and countries, fostering an exchange of ideas and experiences. This collaboration aims to enhance the academic discourse and contribute to societal development.

**3. Social Relevance and Urgency:** The themes discussed at the congress and in the book are chosen for their social relevance and urgency. The focus is on addressing contemporary challenges such as ethnic, cultural, political, and religious issues. The goal is to align academic research with the needs and urgencies of society, promoting the common good and social construction.

**4. Voices from the Margins:** The book highlights the importance of including perspectives from marginalized communities. Contributions from scholars like Carlos Mendoza-Álvarez, Juan José Tamayo, Vicenta Mamani Bernabé, and Ronilso Pacheco emphasize the experiences and resistances of victims of colonization, indigenous peoples, and black communities. These voices offer new epistemological questions and alternative approaches to theology and religious studies.

**5. Liberation Theology and Ecological Concerns:** Liberation Theology is presented as inherently decolonial, with a historical focus on defending the poor and denouncing injustices. The book discusses how this theology also addresses ecological issues, promoting an awareness of the interconnectedness of liberation and environmental concerns. This theme underscores the need to expand concepts and open up decolonial horizons in theological and religious studies.





## Sociedad Chilena de Teología (SCT)

**1. Membership and Structure:** The Chilean Society of Theology (SCT) was established in 1988 and requires members to hold at least a Master's degree in Theology, be involved in teaching or research, and be current with membership fees. The society has about 60 members, with a significant portion holding doctoral degrees. The current board for the 2024-2025 term includes Dr. Fernando Verdugo as President, Dr. Ángela Pérez Jijena as Vice President, Dr. Jaime Bascuñán as Secretary, and Dr. Benoit Mathot as Treasurer.

**2. Affiliated Universities and Authorities:** SCT members are affiliated with several prominent universities in Chile, including the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaíso, Catholic University of the North, Catholic University of Maule, Catholic University of the Holy Conception, Catholic University of Temuco, Catholic Silva Henríquez University, and Alberto Hurtado University. Each university has specific academic units and authorities overseeing theological education and research.

**3. Annual Conferences:** The SCT organizes Annual Conferences that focus on various theological themes. The 2021 conference, held virtually due to COVID-19, centered on "THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE: LANGUAGE, MEANINGS, AND NEW IMAGINARIES." The 2022 conference at the Catholic University of Temuco focused on "THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE WITH MAPUCHE CULTURE AND SPIRITUALITY," emphasizing intercultural and religious dialogue. The 2023 conference at PUC in Santiago explored "THEOLOGY AND THE PUBLIC SPACE," addressing the role of theology in societal and political contexts.

**4. Research and Publications:** SCT members are actively involved in research and are required to produce scientific publications. The topics presented at the Annual Conferences often lead to publications in various journals. The research areas are diverse, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of theological studies and their application to contemporary issues.

**5. Thematic Focus of Conferences:** The themes of the recent conferences highlight the society's commitment to addressing contemporary issues through theological perspectives. Topics such as decolonization, environmental challenges, intercultural dialogue with indigenous cultures, and the role of theology in public spaces demonstrate the society's engagement with both academic and societal concerns. These themes reflect a broader effort to make theology relevant and impactful in addressing modern challenges.



## TEOLOGANDA

**1. Intersectionality and Decolonial Theologies:** Teologanda's seminars emphasize the importance of considering multiple dimensions of oppression and resistance, such as gender, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation, in decolonial theologies. This approach requires the Church to embrace diversity and show true sensitivity and empathy.

**2. Women and Leadership in the Church:** The seminars also focus on decolonizing practices within church institutions to create spaces where women can exercise leadership and break patriarchal colonial models. This includes promoting equality and challenging traditional power structures.

**3. Education as a Tool for Decolonization:** Education is highlighted as a transformative tool for justice. By incorporating a gender perspective and recognizing diverse experiences and knowledge, education can decolonize patriarchal discourses and promote critical thinking.

**4. Feminist Theological Ethics and Justice for Women:** Publications from Teologanda discuss the need to decolonize anthropocentric theology, bodies, and human trafficking. These works emphasize the importance of feminist theological ethics in questioning oppression and promoting justice, particularly where gender, race, and class intersect.

**5. Decolonizing Religious Narratives and Practices:** Research on Mary and popular Christianity in Latin America shows how indigenous and Black religious experiences have been integrated into the faith, creating a unique cultural expression. Additionally, the concept of decolonizing history through listening is explored, emphasizing the importance of genuinely hearing and recording the experiences of marginalized voices to challenge unjust structures and promote inclusion.





## Amerindia Colombia Red

**1. Liberation Theology and Its Relevance:** Amerindia Colombia has focused significantly on the relevance of liberation theology today. This includes organizing a Theology Congress in 2020 and conducting 10 "Liberation Theology Encounters" throughout 2023 to provide a theoretical framework, reflections, and praxis around liberation theology. These efforts aim to engage new generations and update knowledge on the subject.

**2. Ecotheology and Environmental Awareness:** Research on "Ecotheologizing the Land" has been a key theme, with multiple national and international events organized to raise awareness and promote action on environmental care. Notable events include the "Ecotheologizing the Land" encounter in May 2021 and the "Voices for Peace" interreligious event in Bogotá.

**3. Support for Vulnerable Populations:** Amerindia members are actively involved in supporting displaced populations and vulnerable communities. This includes peace processes, land restoration, and initiatives like "Aguapanelazo," which provides presence, companionship, and solidarity to impoverished individuals across Latin America. Efforts also extend to theological formation for laypeople and working with indigenous women on Bible formation.

**4. Theological Research and Education:** Members of Amerindia are engaged in various theological research and educational activities. This includes contributions to debates on women's ordination, ecclesial ministries, and feminist theology. Publications such as "Women's Ordination?" and "The God Trinity: Circularity and Encounter" reflect their scholarly work. Additionally, theological formation is provided to laypeople and university students.

**5. Communication and Advocacy:** Amerindia members contribute to communication and advocacy within the Catholic Church. This includes covering national and international church events, coordinating the Latin American Observatory on Synodality, and addressing issues like abuses in the Catholic Church. Publications like "Secret Archive" highlight their commitment to transparency and accountability.