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Invitation

Moving toward an Open and Free Planetary Theology

This book is written for all those who are preoccupied by the future of theology: Where is it headed? How far can it go? Where does it seem to be headed?

The result of the investigation that this book presents, directed as it is to people devoted to theology throughout the world and in different world religions, draws a conclusion that is not only positive but a source of enthusiasm: in spite of what many believe, theology is moving, is evolving, is taking risks, is questioning itself, is asking about the transformations that have to be brought about so that it can be a theology for today and a theology for the future. As the religious discipline that it is, it has always been tinged with a halo of eternity, of unquestionability, of immutability. It seemed that theology—that sacred science!—could not change its classical figure as patrimony of religions and Churches. But that is over. For decades now some pioneers have proposed a “planetary theology,” to include not only the human world but also the world of the cosmos: Gaia. It was a proposal to advance toward a theology that would leave behind the ghetto of its own religious confession in order to be able to speak to all of society, the society of today that is increasingly plural in its religiosity. In today’s world, a strictly mono-confessional theology is condemned to be not listened to, and in fact not even to be heard by society as a whole.

We have asked these theologians—men and women—and their response allows us to present an attractive panorama: the theology of the future seems to be heading toward a pluralist model (without the classical complex of religious superiority and without the exclusivity of truth that traditionally accompanied theology). It is moving toward a pluri-confessional theology that we could also call inter-religious or multi-religious, or (always paying attention to the nuances of the word) trans-religious. There are those who also speak of a post-religional theology (religious but beyond the religions, on a level that is deeper), secular in that sense, and with a planetary awareness in this new knowledge society that in some way is being brought about little by little all across the planet, even in those places where they think it isn't evident.

These theologians offer us some passionate pages, worthy of study and meditation, with positive and negative arguments—for discernment. We hope that the conclusion of the reader will be, as was ours, that these are good times for theology, times of effervescence, of mutation, of new proposals, of risky experiences, of an open future. We are walking at a good pace, not without difficulties, toward a theology that is open and free.

Walk with us and see all that in reading these pages.

The Co-Authors