

“Glorious Fifty Years”

|To Mark the Golden Jubilee of the University of Jaffna: 1974 - 2024|

Second International Research Conference on ‘Christian Studies’

(IRCCS II)

(Jointly Organized by the Faculty of Graduate Studies (Master of Christian Studies) of the University of Jaffna and the Asian Network for Public Theology)

The second international research conference on ‘Christian Studies’ at the University of Jaffna is organized by the ‘Masters of Christian Studies’ unit of the Faculty of Graduate Studies in collaboration with the Asian Network for Public Theology. It is scheduled to be held on the **01st and 02nd of February 2024** as a commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of the University of Jaffna.

The conference will be a grand event to ‘honour the glorious past, celebrate the golden present and envision the promising future’.

Motto

‘The Role of Religions in the Challenging Times’

Background of the Conference

‘The First International Research Conference on Christian Studies’ was organized by the **Department of Christian Civilization** of the University of Jaffna in collaboration with the **Centre for Performing Arts, Jaffna** and took place on the 07th and 08th of December 2018. As a continuation, the second in the series is organized by the Department of Christian Civilization which offers the ‘Masters of Christian Studies’ at the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Jaffna in collaboration with the Asian Network for Public Theology. It is scheduled to be held on the 01st and 02nd of February 2024.

Aim

Christianity has indeed been a significant role player in the Asian context in the different domains associated with public life and common good of all the people without any discrimination. The second international research conference on ‘Christian Studies’, therefore, aims to provide a platform to document with scientific and methodical research the efforts of Christianity which, among other things had indeed played a significant role in nurturing the rudiments of democracy and upliftment of the social and economic conditions in Sri Lanka as well as in different countries of Asia.

Objectives

- Basing on the aim, the objectives of the research conference are stipulated as follows:
- to examine the response of Christianity to the new normalcy and the ‘signs of the time’
 - to assess the role of Christianity in nurturing the rudiments of democracy and upliftment of the social and economic conditions in Asian countries

- to appraise the contribution of Christianity to the nurturance of democratic polity, public reason, common good, civil rights, noble citizenship, social justice and peace in the world especially in Asia
- evaluate the contribution of Christianity to safeguard the values of local cultures, art and literature from destruction in the verge of the modern trend of colonization and in the postmodern trend of globalization
- to revisit the history of Christianity in the local contexts with its solidarity with the poor and the marginalized for their economic and social empowerment
- to create the theological soundness in doing public theologies in the varying political and public contexts of Asian countries

Concept Note

The present world order with varied conflicts, violence, injustice, discriminations, anti-life concepts and practices, individualism, evil effects of globalization and pervasive environmental challenges has created a new normalcy. In such a milieu, responding to the ‘signs of the time’, Christianity in the Asian countries is called upon to play a creative, active and meaningful role in the wider public, to contribute to the nurturance of democratic polity, public reason, common good, civil rights, noble citizenship, social justice and peace. In this way, the conference will raise awareness of the responsibility that Christianity together with other religions have to be a partaker of a ‘silent revolution’ of the subaltern people by educating and imparting awareness of civil and human rights, with its role to the emergence of an inchoate public sphere, and with its solidarity with the poor and the marginalized for their economic and social empowerment. These historical contributions make Asian Christianity even more responsible for the continuous maturing of democracy and alleviation of social evils especially amidst the contemporary challenges. It would help re-envision the self-identity of Christian religion as a public body with a renewed understanding of its relationship with the state, other religions, civil society and individuals. By way of initiating this public theology, Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Jaffna in collaboration with the Asian Network for Public Theology, is organizing an international conference.

Organizers

- Faculty of Graduate Studies (Master of Christian Studies)

The Faculty of Graduate Studies is one of the eleven faculties of the University of Jaffna. It is offering a taught course, namely ‘Master of Christian Studies’ which is academically coordinated by the Department of Christian Civilization of the same university. Thus the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Department of Christian Civilization of the University of Jaffna become the local organizers of the conference.

- Asian Network for Public Theology

The Asian Network for Public Theology is a regional wing of the Global Network for Public Theology (GNPT), which is the largest network of higher education institutions researching on public theology. As a network having member institutions from all continents, GNPT fosters scholarly exchange about the contribution of Christianity to public discourse on contemporary concerns. (Ref. gnpublictheology.net) It also helps run the *International Journal of Public Theology* published by BRILL.

Modality of the Conference

The conference will be held in hybrid mode, virtual and direct participation. The organizers will make arrangements to host the onsite and online participants.

Sub Themes

The following list of sub themes certainly is not exhaustive. Those interested may find their own sub themes relevant to the theme of the conference.

1. Religions and Ideologies for Common Good
2. Public theology: concept, history and relevance for Asian countries
3. Social Teachings of the Churches: Public Theological Explorations
4. Bible as a Public Book: Asian Perspectives
5. Dialogue of Cultures and Religions: Prospects and Challenges
6. Dialogue of Science and Religions, and Public Policies in Asia
7. Asian Christianities and Asian States
8. The Minority Question as Addressed by Christianity in Asia
9. Gender Question addressed by Asian Christianity
10. Asian Christianity and Religious Pluralism
11. Asian Christianity and Civil Society
12. Christianity and Education in Asian Countries
13. Religions and Public Spheres in Asia
14. Doing Public Theology of Life in Slums
15. Sri Lankan Christianity and its Local Context

Call for Papers

As a first step, a call is made herewith to submit paper proposals of not more than 500 words, touching upon various aspects of the conference theme. Papers will be accepted from the international and local scholars in the field of public theology, reflecting their own context. In the proposal please indicate the modality of your participation, whether onsite or online.

To Send the Proposals / Abstract

Review Committee: irccs@univ.jfn.ac.lk

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Medium

English and Tamil

Important Dates: (GMT + 5:30)

Proposal Deadline: 30 November 2023
Proposal Acceptance Notification: 15 December 2023
Full Paper Deadline: 15 January 2024
Early Bird Registration Deadline: 20 January 2024
Participant Registration Deadline: 25 January 2024
Inauguration of the Conference: 01 February 2024

Conference Registration Fee

Local Presenters (National ID is necessary): LKR 2000/- (Onsite Only)
Local Students: LKR 1000/- (Onsite Only)
International Presenters: 10 US \$ (Both Onsite and Online)
(Mode of the payment of registration will be notified)

Accommodation Facilities

The international onsite presenters will be given accommodation facilities. (Details to follow)

Publication Details

The abstracts will be published in the Proceedings of the Research Conference and distributed on the final day of the conference. Full papers will be published with standard publishers after incorporating the evaluations given during the presentation.

Contact (Clarifications)

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