



CONVERSATIONS ON ASIAN THEOLOGIES AND CULTURES

Religious Freedom and Peace: Modern Catholic Perspectives and Contemporary Taiwan Society

Speaker: Fr. Jeffrey Chang, S.J.

2 March 2022, Wednesday

1:30pm India • 3:00pm Vietnam and Indonesia

4:00pm Philippines and Taiwan • 5:00pm Korea and Japan

Zoom Link: <https://tinyurl.com/loyola2022>

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Abstract

After a brief review of the biblical background for peace, this presentation will address the theme of religion and peace from the perspective of modern Catholic principles, especially guidance from Vatican Council II, “*Dignitatis humanae*: On Religious Freedom,” and John XXIII, “*Pacem in terris*: On establishing universal peace in truth, justice, charity, and liberty,” which affirm the primacy of conscience in a personalist conception of society, where the role of government is to provide for the common welfare, which includes the right to religious freedom. Such a social order is instrumental for establishing peace on earth.

Taiwan offers an Asian example of a democratic society in which the state does not intervene in religious affairs, and religions participate in public affairs without actively seeking to control the state. Religious groups enjoy freedom within society, and society enjoys the benefits of religions contributing to the common good.

Conscious that the situation in each society differs, participants will be invited to reflect upon this theme in their respective contexts.

About the Speaker

Fr. Jeffrey Chang, S.J., a native of Hawaii, obtained his Licentiate in Biblical Theology at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, California, and Doctorate in Dogmatic Theology at the Fu Jen Faculty of St. Robert Bellarmine, Taiwan, where he currently serves as President/Dean, as well as Director of the graduate school, after previously

having taught at Loyola School of Theology, the Philippines. In 2020, the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific appointed him coordinator of its Network of Deans of Theological and Philosophical Centers.

About Conversations

Conversations is a theologico-cultural online Asian “coffee or tea room” where we can converse with each other in 1.5 -hour monthly or bi-monthly meetings. This virtual space features students, faculty, or alumni sharing their theological reflections on select aspects of our respective Asian cultures in the Jesuit Conference of South Asia and the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific. Selections may also include topics that discuss theologically those issues that are common to Asian contexts, such as poverty, globalization, migration, ecological degradation, etc.

Participating Theological Centers in Asia are as follows:

- Jnana-Deepa Institute of Philosophy and Theology, Pune, India
- Vidyajyoti College of Theology, New Delhi, India
- St. Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
- Wedabhakti Pontifical Faculty of Theology and the Faculty of Theology of Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Loyola School of Theology, Quezon City, Philippines
- Fu Jen Faculty of Theology of St. Robert Bellarmine, Taipei, Taiwan
- Graduate School of Theology, Sogang University, Seoul, Korea
- Jesuit Scholasticate, Tokyo, Japan