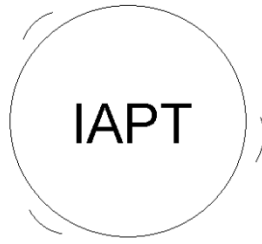


International Academy  
of Practical Theology

<http://www.ia-pt.org>



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Dear IAPT colleagues

Greetings from Pretoria.

Our conference in Pretoria is now only a few weeks away. We look forward to meeting many of our members, old and new, here in Pretoria. It is an occasion to share our research and ideas and to strengthen our collegial bonds. We wish all of you travelling to Pretoria a safe journey, and look forward to welcome you here in the capital city of South Africa.

In this newsletter, the last one from the current Executive Committee, we reflect on the responses that we received from our members regarding the future of the IAPT. We also share some important information regarding the 2015 Pretoria conference, the 2013 conference publication and some administrative and other issues.

### ***The future of the IAPT***

In the previous newsletter we invited you to share your experiences and your ideas on the future of the IAPT. Thank you to all the members who took the time to respond to our ideas and questions (see previous newsletter). Although we only received a few reactions, they were very thoughtful and detailed responses, and came from both long-standing and relatively new members. The Executive Committee discussed these reactions from our members at a recent Skype call meeting. We would like to share the following impressions with our members. Firstly, it is evident that there is general agreement about the issues raised in the previous newsletter regarding the identity of the IAPT. In the words of one of our long-standing and senior members: "I don't have a lot to say, beyond agreeing with a lot of the diagnosis." Our members seem to agree on the importance of the IAPT as a forum to meet international colleagues, on the importance of the IAPT as a place for establishing and facilitating research collaboration and shared research, on the importance of appreciating and encouraging greater representation of groups that are underrepresented, on providing more possibilities for young promising scholars to join the IAPT network, and on the important role that the IAPT plays in promoting practical theology as an academic discipline.

We also received some interesting proposals for enhancing the work of the IAPT, in particular the biennial conference. Some suggestions in this regard are to connect the conference themes to specific traditions or “sub-disciplines” within practical theology, to present more opportunities to learn about practical theology and its challenges in the host country, and to put more emphasis on panel discussions in the conference programme.

However, despite the positive tone of most responses and the general agreement about the important role of the IAPT in the scholarly community of practical theologians, we also noticed a diversity of opinions and ideas on how the IAPT could reach these common aims. For example, opinions seem to differ on how to bring about greater representation, on the criteria for membership and on providing scope for the variety of approaches to practical theology. Some members also expressed their concerns about the marginalization of “gifted practitioners” in the academy, the loss of focus due to the efforts to cater for each and every one, the lack of high quality scholarship (although some expressed the opposite view), the passivity regarding our working groups and the lack of collegiality experienced by some.

These issues and proposals will of course not be “solved” and are an indication of the healthy nature of an international academy. We will discuss these issues in more depth in the second roundtable (Monday 20 July) of our Pretoria conference. In view of the responses and the EC’s deliberations on the future of the IAPT, we would like to ask you to start thinking about the issues mentioned above and in particular the following three issues.

- First, please consider the establishment of a new category of membership (perhaps “associate members”) to deal with some of the challenges regarding our membership criteria (e.g. not yet meeting the criterion of a “distinguished record of publications”) and to provide opportunities for young promising scholars to become involved in the work of the IAPT.
- Second, please consider ways in which collegiality and research collaboration could be fostered, not only at the biennial conferences but also in the two years between conferences. The current system of working groups (<http://www.ia-pt.org/working-groups/>) does not function, and we have to consider other ways to enhance our research collaboration. What do you think about planning collaborative research projects (and publications) on difficult methodological issues in practical theology?
- Third, members seem to agree that the IAPT should allow for greater diversity in approaches. What does collegiality mean in this regard? How can the IAPT facilitate learning about approaches to practical theology different from your own or from those on the margins?

### ***Slate of candidates for the election of the next EC***

The slate of candidates for the election of the next EC was presented in the previous newsletter. According to the By-Laws, alternative candidates for one or all of the offices may be nominated by a petition containing ten signatures of current members up to three months prior to the next scheduled official conference of the Academy. We have not received nominations of alternative candidates, and thus look forward to

these members to serve the Academy in the next two years. We here briefly present the nominees for the different offices.

President: Heather Walton (UK)

Heather Walton is Professor of Theology and Creative Practice at the University of Glasgow and Co-director of the Centre for Literature, Theology and the Arts. Her research interests lie in the intersection between theology, culture and everyday life and most particularly in the interplay between practical theology and poetics. She has supervised widely in all areas of practical theology and has a special interest in feminist approaches to Christian practice. She plays an active role in the Consortium of Universities that runs the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology in the UK. Her recent publications include *Writing Methods in Theological Reflection* (2014), *Christian Pilgrimage, Landscape and Heritage*, with A. Maddrell, A. Scaffi and V. Della Dora (2014) and *Not Eden: Spiritual Life Writing for This World* (2015). She edits the OUP Journal *Literature and Theology*.

Vice President: Robert Mager (Canada)

Robert Mager is Professor of Systematic Theology and Practical Theology at Université Laval in Quebec City, Canada. He was at the Manchester conference in 2003 and joined the Academy in 2005. His main areas of research have been the relationship between modernity and religion, methodological issues in practical theology, and theologies of action. He has edited or coedited many books through the years, such as *Complex Identities in a Shifting World* (LIT, 2015), *Religion et conservatisme* (Peeters, 2014), *Modernité et religion au Québec* (Presses de l'Université Laval, 2010), *Dieu agit-il dans l'histoire?* (Fides, 2006), *Durer dans l'engagement social* (Novalis, 2005) and *L'autre de la technique* (PUL / L'Harmattan, 2000). His thesis was published in 1994 as *Le politique dans l'Église. Essai ecclésiologique à partir de la théorie politique de Hannah Arendt* (Médiapaul, 1994). At the Faculté de théologie et de sciences religieuses of Université Laval, he has served as Head of Studies, Director of the Doctoral Program in Practical Theology, Director of the Ph.D. and M.A. programs and on countless committees. He is the former Secretary of the Société canadienne de théologie (2004-2008) and has been on the Executive Committee of IAPT as Member-at-large (2011-2013) and as Secretary (2013-2015).

Secretary: Annemie Dillen (Belgium)

Annemie Dillen is Associate Professor of Pastoral and Empirical Theology at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven. She has participated in meetings of IAPT since 2007, and is a member since 2013. She has been chairing the Academic Center for Practical Theology at the KU Leuven, from 2007 until 2013. Currently her teaching and research is related to the field of empirical theology. She has published various articles on families and children, domestic violence, religious education in families and fundamental practical theological reflections. She is the editor of a few volumes in English, such as Dillen, A. (ed.), (2014). *Soft Shepherd or Almighty Pastor? Power and Pastoral Care*, Eugene, Wipf and Stock; Dillen, A. & A. Vandenhoeck (ed.), *Prophetic Witness in World Christianities. Rethinking Pastoral Care and Counseling* (International Practical Theology, 13), Münster, Lit-verlag,

2011; Dillen, A. & D. Pollefeyt (ed.), *Children's Voices. Children's Perspectives in Ethics, Theology and Religious Education* (betl), Leuven, Peeters, 2010; Dillen, A. (ed.), *When 'Love' Strikes. Social Sciences, Ethics and Theology on Family Violence*, Leuven, Peeters, 2009. She recently co-authored a Dutch monograph on practical theology (A. Dillen & S. Gärtner, *Praktische theologie. Verkenningen aan de grens*, Leuven, LannooCampus, 2015).

Treasurer: Faustino Cruz (USA)

Faustino (Tito) Cruz is based in Seattle, Washington. He serves as Associate Dean of academic affairs, and Associate Professor of Practical Theology and Leadership at Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry. Born and raised in Manila, the Philippines, he migrated to the United States in 1982 to enter the seminary of the Society of Mary (Marists). In 2000, before completing his PhD in Religion and Education at Boston College, he joined the faculty of the Franciscan School of Theology (FST), one of the member schools of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California. He taught courses in Practical Theology and served as Executive Vice President and Academic Dean of FST and co-director of the GTU Asia Theology program. For over twenty five years, he has ministered with Filipino, French, and Spanish speaking immigrant congregations in the United States, and has collaborated with academic and pastoral communities across Asia and Latin America. His recent publications include: "Filipino Labor Migration and Human Trafficking in the United States," an article published in Japanese by Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan; "Locating Multiple Immigrant Identities in Relatedness—Insights for Intercultural Leadership" in *C(H)AOS Theory: Reflections of Chief Academic Officers in Theological Education* published by Eerdmans; and "The US Religious Context: Catholic Multicultural Trends" in *Religious Leadership* published by Sage. He also contributed several entries to the three-volume *Encyclopedia of Christian Education*, as well as to the forthcoming five-volume *Encyclopedia of Christianity in the United States*, both published by Rowman and Littlefield.

Member at Large: Constanze Thierfelder (Germany)

Constanze Thierfelder is currently Privatdozentin at the Philipps-University of Marburg and Professor at the Theological Seminary of Herborn in the Church of Hessen and Nassau. She has been a member of the IAPT for 12 years and gave a plenary address at the IAPT Conference in Amsterdam in 2011. She is Supervisor and Lehr-Supervisor of the DGfP (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Pastoralpsychologie) and of the EH (Evangelische Hochschule) of Freiburg. She also is a member of the ESTWR (European Conference of Women in Theological Research). Her major publications include: *Durch den Spiegel der Anderen. Wahrnehmung von Fremdheit und Differenz in Seelsorge und Beratung* (Vandenhoek & Ruprecht 2009) [Habilitation]; *Resonanzen. Schwingungsräume Praktischer Theologie*, edited with Dietrich Hannes Eibach (Kohlhammer 2002); and *Gottesrepräsentanz. Kritische Interpretation des religionspsychologischen Ansatzes von Ana-Maria Rizzuto* (Kohlhammer 1998) (Dissertation).

Member at Large: Casparus Wepener (SA)

Cas Wepener is Head of the Department of Practical Theology at the Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria. He specializes in Liturgical Studies and teaches on a undergraduate and postgraduate level in Liturgical Studies and Homiletics. His areas of research are mainly liturgical- and ritual studies with a special emphasis on Africa and ethnographic methods. Currently he is also a member of the Executive Council of the Societas Liturgica, member of the African Association of the Study of Religion and the South African Practical Theological Society. His publications include 70 peer academic journal articles with the latest to be published in the next volume of *IJPT* and entitled “Burning incense for a focus group discussion. A spirituality of liminality for doing liturgical research in an African context from an emic perspective”. With Marcel Barnard and Johan Cilliers he published in 2014 *Worship in the Network Culture. Liturgical Ritual Studies. Fields and Methods, Concepts and Metaphors* (Leuven, Peeters), in 2009 he published *From fast to feast. A ritual-liturgical exploration of reconciliation in South African cultural contexts* (Leuven, Peeters) and a variety of books in Afrikaans on similar themes including *Ontdekkings in die erediens* (2009), *Aan tafel met Jesus* (2010), *Van voor die wieg tot na die graf* (2014) and his latest book, *Boiling Point! (Kookpunt!)* (2015) is on the expression of anger in current South African context. He is also a published author of Afrikaans literature.

### ***IAPT conference, Pretoria, South Africa: 16 – 20 July 2015***

Our conference host, Malan Nel, reports as follows:

Everything is going according to plan. We are currently 112 participants with some 65% of them being members. The program is about 99% finalized and will be posted on the IAPT website (<http://www.ia-pt.org>) soon. We will also post the abstracts, 64 in total, for the papers that were accepted. These electives will be offered in four parallel sessions. Once again, a hearty South African welcome to the conference. If you are coming, I hope you have received my personal letter.

Please also note the following important points regarding the conference:

- The working groups (<http://www.ia-pt.org/working-groups/>) are scheduled to meet on Friday 17 July during the lunch break (12:30 – 14:00). Please inform Pamela Couture ([pameladcouture@gmail.com](mailto:pameladcouture@gmail.com)) if you plan to meet, and also contact the conference host, Malan Nel ([malannelup@gmail.com](mailto:malannelup@gmail.com)), to arrange for a venue.
- Please remember to send an apology to our secretary ([secretary@ia-pt.org](mailto:secretary@ia-pt.org)), clearly stating the reason(s), if you will not attend the 2015 Pretoria conference. This is a requirement of the IAPT By-Laws (section V.G.) See <http://www.ia-pt.org/organization/> for more details.

### ***IAPT Conferences 2017 and 2019***

We reported in the previous newsletter about the possible hosts of the 2017 and 2019 conferences. The “Nordic countries” (Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden) indicated that they are willing to host the 2017 IAPT conference in Oslo, Norway, and

negotiations with representatives from these countries are well under way. Our long-standing aim to organize one of our biennial conferences in South America seems also to become a reality. Valburga Schmidt Streck and her colleagues from the Lutheran theological school Faculdades EST in Sao Leopoldo, Brazil, have already indicated to the EC that they are willing to host the 2019 conference. We will get more details about this possibility at our Pretoria conference.

Conferences of this nature have to be organised long in advance. The EC therefore decided to invite countries/locations to indicate their willingness to host future IAPT conferences. Please send an email to [president@iapt.org](mailto:president@iapt.org) if your institution/country is willing to host a future IAPT conference. This will help the EC in their planning of future conferences.

### ***Conference volume***

The conference volume developed from the Toronto conference will be distributed to the members in Pretoria, and shipped to the non-attendees. Under the title *Complex Identities in a Shifting World: Practical Theological Perspectives* (LIT, 2015), it offers an ample series of papers, samples of the works of art displayed in Toronto, and an optional CD of the conference musical performance.

### ***IAPT archives***

With the help of long-standing members, the Secretary was able to put together many archival documents giving testimony to the history of the Academy. It is still possible – and hoped for! – to send scanned documents to the Secretary ([secretary@ia-pt.org](mailto:secretary@ia-pt.org)), to mail them to him or to bring them to Pretoria. Documents of the 1990s are especially looked for. We would also like to make sure we have a reserve of all the books developed after the conferences: please write to the Secretary if you would be willing to donate one of them for archival purposes.

### ***Scholarship fund contributions***

Our treasurer, Neil Pembroke, reports the following about the scholarship fund.

Contributions to the Scholarship Fund in recent years have not been strong. Indeed, they have been far below the sum that is paid out for each conference. With this in mind, the executive committee introduced a new approach. It involved a number of levels of giving. We communicated to the whole membership that the goal to ensure adequate growth in the fund to cover future needs was as below:

- 2 IAPT Patrons to give €250 (\$300)
- 10 IAPT Fellows to give €150 (\$180)
- 20 IAPT Sustaining Members to give €100 (\$120)
- 25 IAPT Benefactors to give €50 (\$60)
- 50 IAPT Partners to give €25 (\$30)

What we have achieved thus far is this:

- 1 IAPT Patron
- No IAPT Fellows
- 4 IAPT Sustaining Members
- 10 IAPT Benefactors
- 11 IAPT Partners

This means that the total amount of the contributions to date is €1425. On behalf of the executive, I want to warmly thank those who made donations to this very important fund. However, the figure is quite a bit short of the €625 that we have awarded in scholarships for the 2015 Pretoria conference. It is not too late to make a contribution.

### ***2015 – 2016 membership fees***

This is another friendly reminder that the membership fees for 2015 – 2016 are now due. You can make your payment by going to the IAPT website (<http://www.ia-pt.org/>) and then to the Membership tab, and then to ‘Membership Fees and Donations’.

### ***IJPT***

Although there is no formal relationship between the IAPT and the *International Journal of Practical Theology* (IJPT), there has always been a close connection between the Academy and the Journal. The current editors, Elaine Graham and Bernd Schröder, are members of the IAPT, and all the editorial board members had been or are members of the IAPT. De Gruyter, the publisher of IJPT, through its Editorial Director for Theology/Jewish Studies/Religious Studies Dr. Albrecht Döhnert, has always been very supportive of the work of the IAPT. If your school or university’s library has not yet subscribed, we kindly request that you encourage your library to subscribe to this important practical theological journal (with an A rating of the European Science Foundation). Please see the IJPT’s website (<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/ijpt>) for more details.

We look forward to meeting many of you in Pretoria and wish you all of the best with the preparations for the conference. Please contact us at [info@ia-pt.org](mailto:info@ia-pt.org) or write to [president@ia-pt.org](mailto:president@ia-pt.org) if you have any questions, ideas or suggestions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Jaco S. Dreyer, South Africa (President)

On behalf of the Executive Committee:

Pam Couture, Canada (Vice President)

Robert Mager, Canada (Secretary)

Neil Pembroke, Australia (Treasurer)

Malan Nel, South Africa (Host/Program Committee Chair)

Constanze Thierfelder, Germany (Member at Large)

Faustino (Tito) Cruz, USA (Member at Large)