

**Mindful Dialogue – Network for Attention and Kin-Making
Symposium, Sankt-Wenzeslaus-Stift, Germany & online: May 14-17, 2026
Interfaith Dialogue, Ecology, and Education**

Thursday, May 14, 2026: ARRIVAL and OPENING SESSION

Registration and opening of the Symposium (Central European Time)

15:00	Registration
17:00	Symposium Team Briefing
18:00	Dinner at the conference venue
19:00	Opening session (Conference Room) Dr. Emilio Ricardo Báez Rivera , Puerto Rico: Ecología, educación y diálogo interreligioso en el amor místico Dr. Antonio Ramos , Puerto Rico: Los límites del lenguaje en Wittgenstein: Una ventana hacia lo inefable y lo místico Dr. Luis O. Canting Placa , Puerto Rico: Noosfera y Antropoceno: educar para el avance evolutivo de la “Super-Humanidad” Plenary

Friday, May 15, 2026: DAY 1

Topic of the Day: Interfaith Dialogue and Education (Central European Time)

07:15	Breakfast at the conference venue
08:30	Meditation (Conference Room) Wilfredo Benitez , Portugal
09:00	Intercultural Forum (Conference Room)
10:30	Break
11:00	<u>Keynote I:</u> Prof. Dr. Meena Sharify-Funk , Canada: Gendering Sufism - Tradition and Transformation Associate Professor of Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada. She is author of <i>Contemporary Sufism: Piety, Politics, and Popular Culture</i> (Routledge, 2018). <u>Keynote II:</u> Prof. Dr. Luce Lopez-Baralt , Puerto Rico: Borges in Dialogue with Islamic Mysticism Distinguished Professor (Insignis Professor) and Emeritus Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literatures at the University of Puerto Rico. She is author of 30 books on comparative Spanish and Arabic literatures and mysticism, <i>aljamiado-moorish</i> and Latin American literatures.

Keynote III: Prof. Dr. Cristobal Serran-Pagan y Fuentes, Czech Republic: Thomas Merton's Engagement with Muslims: Insights for Dialogue with Muslims Today

Professor in the Department of Philosophy at University Palackeho in Olomouc, the Czech Republic. He is author of *Saint John of the Cross: his Prophetic Mysticism in the Historical Context of Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Washington DC: Pacem in Terris Press, 2018).

Plenary

12:45 Lunch at the conference venue

15:00 Workshops and papers I

Wilfredo Benitez, Portugal: Photography as Contemplative Exploration

Dr. Juan Carlos Ramos Hendez, Colombia: Contemplative Power: Thomas Merton, poética-profética ante la persecución religiosa

Dr. Luis H Pabón Batlle, Puerto Rico: El Pitágoras que no conocemos

Dr. Pinghua Liu, China: "Dao Follows Nature" and Zen's Hermitage in Mountains and Forests: A Dialogue on Ecological Wisdom between Laozi and Zen Buddhism (online)

Dr. Aizaiah G. Yong, USA: Trauma and Renewal: Emerging Contemplative Contributions to Interfaith Community Transformation (online)

16:30 Break

17:00 Reflexion groups I

18:45 Dinner at the conference venue

20:00 Conversations and Connections

Saturday, May 16, 2026: DAY 2

Topic of the Day: Ecology and Education (Central European Time)
--

07:15 Breakfast at the conference venue

08:30 Departure to local projects in Herrnhut and Ostritz

13:00 Lunch

15:00 Workshops and papers II

Prof. Dr. Marcela Raggio, Argentina: The Legacy of Thomas Merton and Pope Francis: Ecology and the Literary Education

Lilian Naserian Martine, Kenia: Building a Sustainable Future

Dr. Jose Andujar, USA: Albert Schweitzer's "Reverence": Honoring life in all forms in these convoluted times

Dr. Alicia Irene Bugallo Finnemann, Argentina: Links between Environmental Philosophy and Environmental Education (online)

Prof. Dr. John Gillespie, USA: The Sacred Ecology of Vision: Inscape, Incarnation, and Nature in Thomas Merton and Gerard Manley Hopkins (online)

- 16:30 Break
- 17:00 Reflexion Groups II
- 18:45 Festive dinner at the conference venue
Latif Bolat, Turkiye: concert
- 20:00 Conversations and Connections

Sunday, May 17, 2026: DAY 3

Topic of the Day: Ecology and Interfaith Dialogue (Central European Time)
--

- 07:15 Breakfast at the conference venue
- 08:30 Meditation (Conference Room)
Latif Bolat, Turkiye: Andalusia under the Islamic Rule: Tolerance and Dialog
- 09:30 Intercultural Forum (Conference Room)
- 10:30 Break
- 11:00 Keynote I: **Prof. Dr. Vasudha Narayanan**, USA: The Cosmos as the Body of God: Ecology, Interfaith Conversations, and Emergency Ethics
Distinguished Professor, Departement of Religion, at the University of Florida. She is author or editor of nine books. She created the first Center for the Study of Hindu Traditions (CHiTra) with the University of Florida.
Keynote II: **Prof. Dr. Jung Eun Sophia Park**, USA: Thomas Merton and Cross-Cultural Spiritual Direction: To Construct a Borderland
Associate Professor of Emerita at Holy Names University and a Global Educator/Learner. She published *An Asian Woman's Religious Journey with Thomas Merton* (Palgrave, 2022).
Keynote III: **Dr. Sanjana Das**, Singapore: "Wake Up and Dance": In Solidarity with the Struggles of Indigenous Women in the Global South affected by Ecocide
Researcher, feminist theologian and development practitioner, from India. She has co-edited a book with Joerg Rieger, *Decolonizing Development and Religion: Theoretical Frameworks, Case Studies, and Theological Models*, SCM Press, 2025
Plenary
- 12:45 Lunch at the conference venue



Mindful Dialogue
Network for Attention and Kin-Making
<https://mindful-dialogue.org>