

Outgoing Word by Card. José Tolentino de Mendonça

The question: "What theology for our time?" risks becoming an even more radical question: "Do we still need theology?". The problem is that today the need for theology is being questioned *ad extra* and *ad intra*: secular society has no faith in an investigation of truth that presupposes its own truth, in which truth is thought of as a starting point as well as of arrival. In the ecclesial community, in turn, on the one hand there are those who think that accepting the truth means possessing it, being the owners of it, and on the other hand there are those who believe that Christian truth can be witnessed only as pragmatic action in the world, as *diakonia* to men, without the need for the priestly mediation of its transcendence, for the royal custody of its sacredness and for the prophetic criticism of what is inimical to it. For the ones, the truth is only taught, like an indisputable and immutable package of knowledge; for the others, truth is accessed only through action and service and not, complementarily, through the slow and patient path of the reflective and contemplative exercise of human rationality.

Those who carry the Word with them to teach it to men must travel light, because everything else is a burden that overloads, delays, slows down. In its mission of evangelization, the outreaching theology is light, has good legs, is hospitable and loves to be hosted. It creates "connecting circuits" between cultures, eras, geographical areas, social fields and forms of rationality. It makes the past a walking stick, it makes belonging to the ecclesial community a traveling companion and not a fortress in which to shut themselves up, it makes the Word the bread of life shared on the table of action and contemplation, of thought and service, of thanksgiving and prayer.