



RELIGIOUS FORMATION CONFERENCE 2017 CONGRESS

**Biennial National Congress
November 16-18, 2017**

*Keynote Presentation
November 18, 2017*

*Becoming Prophets of Encounter:
The Culture of Encounter and Religious Life Today*

Building on Pope Francis's understanding of religious life as prophetic and on his hallmark phrase, "culture of encounter," this keynote presentation will reflect on the various ways that today's religious need to be formed-initially and continually-to be "prophets of encounter."

Becoming a "prophet of encounter" begins with encountering ourselves in wonder, humility, and possibility. It grows as we encounter both the world's beauty and cruelty. It is rooted in the realization that, before we encounter God, God encounters us. It matures as we encounter others "as Jesus did, not just seeing but looking, not just hearing but listening, not just passing by, but stopping with them" (Francis, Sept 23, 2016). Prophets of encounter eschew the "culture of indifference" so prevalent in the world today and seek to witness clearly to the gospel, offer a word of hope in our difficult times, and never hesitate to confront oppression and injustice.



Presenter: Stephen B. Bevans, SVD, is a priest in the religious missionary congregation of the Society of the Divine Word and Professor of Mission and Culture, Emeritus, at Catholic Theological Union, where he has taught since 1986. He served as a missionary to the Philippines from 1972 to 1981 and has lectured and taught all over the world. Father Bevans is the author, co-author, editor, and co-editor of seventeen books, has served as President of the American Society of Missiology, and is a member of the World Council of Churches' Commission on World Mission and Evangelism.

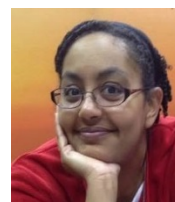
Respondents:



Javier Aguilar-Rivera, OSA



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