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EXPERTS OPINE ON BUILDING HOMES IN OUTER SPACE

Say We Are Meant to Fill More Than Earth

VALENCIA, Spain, JULY 27, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- A recent conference on space architecture brought together astronomers, architects and theologians to reflect on the various aspects of this new field.

The July 16 gathering was sponsored by the Fides et Ratio Chair of the Catholic University of Valencia. Participants included experts and architects of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), members of the European Space Agency and various businesses and institutions, as well as professors and theologians.

A report from the university noted that the seminar illustrated the interplay between faith and science as the participants looked to highlight truths discovered through knowledge of the cosmos.

José Luis Sánchez, director of the Fides et Ratio Chair, stated, "From space architecture we contemplate man who wants to know his own limits and to find in them the grandeur of the meaning of his existence: The transcendent dimension comes closer to us in this journeying."

Space architecture refers to the field of design and construction of inhabited environments in outer space, including laboratories, homes, and tourist sites. It draws on physiology, psychology, sociology and technology.

Archbishop Carlos Osoro of Valencia opened the seminar, and encouraged those present to "be seekers of truth."

"If humanity is on the threshold of a new exploration, one must be involved at the beginning of that exploration" as "seekers, friends and trackers of truth," he said.

The archbishop pointed out that "faith, like science, must also be present" at the beginning of the "new exploration" that is going farther into space.

In reference to the scientists gathered in Valencia, he expressed appreciation for the "impressive beauty" of finding "trackers of truth who want to see the present situation, which must lead us to reflect on the sustainability of our world."

What "unites all of us profoundly," the prelate affirmed, both in science as well as in the world of faith, is that "all of us believe that the great capital that must be safeguarded always is man, the person."

Expansion

The conference addressed conceptual, technical and architectonic elements, as well as cosmological and anthropological aspects associated with space architecture.

Sánchez explained that the "search for truth through knowledge of the cosmos is constituted on this day in a faith-physics encounter: The book of faith and the book of nature encounter one another."

Theodore Hall, director of the Space Architecture Technical Committee and researcher at the University of Michigan, stated that "planet earth is a diminutive part of a much greater world that we are called to fill."

One of the aspects of space architecture, he said, is "to expand the human presence in a much greater universe and to do so we must learn to live in an efficient manner."

"Thus," the researcher added, "learning to live with very limited means in space we learn to live much more efficiently on earth."

Tourism

Brent Sherwood, architect of NASA's jet-propelled laboratory, spoke about the existence of asteroids with "tangible resources" as "an opportunity to improve life."

He affirmed the close possibility of "space tourism, as there already are companies interested in this business."

Sherwood also noted the existence of an "unlimited amount of clean solar energy in space."

Robotics expert Scott Howe pointed out that "we are on the threshold of a great adventure" and "we have the responsibility to take human beings to other worlds."

Scientist Mark Luther, of Deakin University in Australia, called for "sustainability" and attention to space architecture.

He noted that this field is developing a very valuable technology, as "space teaches us that every electron is valuable."

Luther lamented, for example, that "we still do not know how to use natural light in buildings."

The next course of the seminar sponsored by the Fides et Ratio Chair will be on "Space Architecture: A New Perspective for Sustainability and the Environment."

The chair was inaugurated last April for "analysis, study and research on the religious event and the Catholic event, in their encounter with reason, science and culture in their historical evolution."