

Santiago, Chile, December 31, 2025

COCTI – 2026 General Assembly

May 25-28, 2026

Rio de Janeiro – Brazil

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR
HUMAN INTELLIGENCE IN LIGHT OF BIBLICAL WISDOM**

Dear colleagues and friends,

It is with great joy and anticipation that we invite you to the 2026 General Assembly of the Conference of Catholic Theological Institutions (COCTI/CICT), to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from May 25 to 28, 2026. As decided at our General Assembly in Rome in May 2024.

After our last successful gathering in Rome in May 2024, we are delighted to bring our network together in Latin America once again. The Department of Theology at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio) has graciously offered to host this important meeting, and preparations are already well underway to welcome you to this vibrant city.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The formal General Assembly session will take place on Monday, May 25, 2026, and is reserved exclusively for deans, directors of theology faculties and schools, or their duly authorized delegates. During this session, we will address institutional matters, receive regional reports, and conduct the election of the new COCTI President, among other important business items.

THE BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL SYMPOSIUM ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Following our tradition of combining our assemblies with meaningful theological reflection on contemporary challenges, this year we will engage with one of the most pressing topics of our time: Artificial Intelligence and its implications for human intelligence and theological education.

From May 26 to 28, 2026, the Department of Theology at PUC-Rio will host a Biblical-Theological Symposium on the theme: “Artificial Intelligence: Challenges and Perspectives for Human Intelligence in Light of Biblical Wisdom.”

<http://www.cict-cocti.org/>

We have entered the era of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which is here to stay and continues to expand into various areas of knowledge and daily life. AI is literally in our hands: ChatGPT, Meta AI in WhatsApp, Gemini in Google, and generative AIs like GPT-4, Claude, and DeepSeek. There is no turning back from this step taken by humanity! But will it be a favorable or unfavorable step?

The Biblical Wisdom Literature—both protocanonical books (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes) and deuterocanonical books (Wisdom, Sirach)—offers a rich source of wisdom that allows us to approach the topic of AI in an intelligent and ethical manner. These books invite us to reflect on human nature, the purpose of life, the search for truth, and the importance of humility in our interests and objectives—principles that not only can but must guide the development and use of existing and future AIs.

The symposium will feature distinguished speakers from Europe and Latin America, including:

- Prof. Kátia Figueiredo (PUC-Rio, Brazil) on AI perspectives and challenges.
- Prof. Sebastiano Pinto (Italy) on Human Intelligence in the Wisdom Books.
- Prof. Luca Peyron (Italy) on the impact of emerging technologies on Christian anthropology and pastoral work.
- Prof. Jhon Fredy (Colombia) on how AI can enhance biblical studies.
- Prof. Ignacio Cea (Chile) on a critique of virtual utopia and eco-theological aspects.

The symposium will feature interdisciplinary panels and working groups, offering opportunities for in-depth dialogue among theology, computer science, philosophy, and pastoral practice. Simultaneous translation will be provided in English and Spanish throughout the symposium sessions.

All participants in the General Assembly are warmly invited to remain for the symposium, which promises to be a valuable space for theological reflection on this crucial contemporary challenge.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

You will find detailed practical information in the attached document, including details about arrival in Rio de Janeiro, accommodation options, transportation, registration procedures, and the social program we have prepared for you.

Registration is free of charge, thanks to the generous hospitality of PUC-Rio and the support of COCTI. Participants are responsible only for their accommodation and international travel expenses.

We are confident that this gathering in Rio de Janeiro will be an excellent opportunity to strengthen the bonds that unite our institutions, to reflect together on the transformative impact of artificial intelligence on theological formation, and to celebrate our shared commitment to excellence in Catholic theological education.

We look forward to welcoming you to Rio de Janeiro!

Fraternally,

Prof. Dr. Waldecir Gonzaga

Director, Department of Theology
Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro
President of COCTI

Prof. Dr. Fernando Soler

General Secretary
Conference of Catholic Theological Institutions

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

COCTI 2026 General Assembly

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

May 25-28, 2026

DATES AND VENUE

The General Assembly will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and will be organized by the Department of Theology of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio).

Key Dates:

- May 25, 2026 (Monday): Formal General Assembly session (deans, directors, and delegates only).
- May 26-28, 2026 (Tuesday-Thursday): Biblical-Theological Symposium on Artificial Intelligence (open to all participants).

The assembly and symposium sessions will take place in the Mini Auditorium of the CTC (Centro Técnico Científico) at PUC-Rio, which has a capacity for 52 participants. The campus is in the Gávea neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro.

Campus address:

Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro
Rua Marquês de São Vicente, 225
Gávea, Rio de Janeiro – RJ
22451-900, Brazil

Website: www.puc-rio.br

ARRIVAL IN RIO DE JANEIRO

Airport

The main international airport is Rio de Janeiro/Galeão – Antonio Carlos Jobim International Airport (GIG), located approximately 20 km from the PUC-Rio campus.

From the airport to your accommodation:

- TAXI: Available at the official taxi stands at the airport. The journey takes approximately 30-45 minutes, depending on traffic. Taxis in Rio de Janeiro are relatively inexpensive.
- UBER: Ride-sharing services are widely available, reliable, and very affordable in Rio de Janeiro. You can request a ride directly from the airport.

We recommend arriving on Saturday, May 23, or Sunday, May 24, 2026, to allow time to rest and adjust before the General Assembly begins on Monday morning.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is at your own expense. Participants are responsible for making their own hotel reservations. Rio de Janeiro offers a wide range of accommodation options at relatively affordable prices.

Recommended areas to stay:

- Gávea (near PUC-Rio campus).
- Leblon.
- Ipanema.
- Copacabana.

Suggested hotel chain: Ibis Hotels has several locations in Rio de Janeiro, offering good value for money. However, you are free to choose any hotel that fits your needs and budget.

We recommend booking early to secure the best rates. Popular booking platforms include:

- Booking.com
- Hotels.com
- Expedia

Daily transportation from your hotel to PUC-Rio:

TAXI and UBER services are readily available throughout Rio de Janeiro and are relatively inexpensive. The journey from most hotel areas to the campus takes 15-30 minutes, depending on location and traffic.

CLIMATE AND WHAT TO BRING

Rio de Janeiro in late May (autumn/winter in the Southern Hemisphere) typically features pleasant weather with average daytime temperatures between 20-25°C (68-77°F), accompanied by cooler evenings around 18-20°C (64-68°F).

We recommend bringing:

- Light layers for daytime.
- A light jacket or sweater for evenings and air-conditioned spaces.
- Comfortable walking shoes.
- Sunscreen and sunglasses.

REGISTRATION

Registration is FREE OF CHARGE. This includes:

- Participation in the General Assembly (May 25).
- Participation in the Biblical-Theological Symposium (May 26-28).
- Coffee breaks and lunches during all sessions.
- Conference materials.
- Social activities (Christ the Redeemer visit and farewell dinner).

The hospitality of PUC-Rio, with the support of COCTI, makes this possible. Participants are responsible only for their accommodation and international travel expenses.

Registration deadline: April 15, 2026

Please complete the registration form: <https://forms.office.com/r/3kWDb8rmbd>

VISA REQUIREMENTS

Citizens of many countries can enter Brazil visa-free for tourism or short business stays (up to 90 days). However, visa requirements vary by nationality.

To verify whether you need a visa to enter Brazil, please check: <https://brazil.vfsevisa.com/homepage>

If you require a visa and need an official invitation letter from PUC-Rio to support your visa application, please contact us at: waldecir@puc-rio.br with a copy to fasoler@uc.cl

We will be happy to provide the necessary documentation. Please request this well in advance of your travel dates to allow sufficient time for visa processing.

HEALTH AND INSURANCE

It is essential to have valid health insurance that provides coverage in Brazil. We strongly recommend obtaining travel health insurance before your trip.

Brazil does not require any specific vaccinations for entry from most countries. However, we recommend being up to date on routine vaccinations. Consult your doctor or travel health clinic for specific recommendations.

CURRENCY

The Brazilian currency is the Real (BRL or R\$). Current approximate exchange rate: 1 USD ≈ 5 BRL (subject to change).

ATMs are widely available throughout Rio de Janeiro. Major credit cards are accepted in most hotels, restaurants, and shops.

LANGUAGES

The official language in Brazil is Portuguese. However, during the General Assembly and Symposium, we will work in the languages that allow the greatest access for all participants.

Simultaneous translation will be provided in English and Spanish during the symposium sessions (May 26-28).

INTERNET ACCESS

All participants will have access to Wi-Fi on the PUC-Rio campus.

SOCIAL PROGRAM

We have prepared a social program to allow participants to experience some of Rio de Janeiro's most iconic attractions and to foster fellowship among colleagues:

Christ the Redeemer Visit

One of the New Seven Wonders of the World, the Christ the Redeemer statue offers breathtaking views of Rio de Janeiro from atop Corcovado Mountain. Transportation will be arranged for participants (date to be confirmed).

Farewell Dinner

A festive dinner will be held on one of the evenings (either May 26 or May 27) at a local restaurant, providing an opportunity for informal conversation and celebration of our time together.

Both activities are included in the registration at no additional cost.

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM (PRELIMINARY)

May 26, 2026 – Understanding AI and Its Implications

- Morning Conference: Prof. Kátia Figueiredo (PUC-Rio): “Unveiling AI: Perspectives and Challenges for Human Intelligence”
- Afternoon Conference: Prof. Anna Maria Tarantola (Italy) – TBC
- Interdisciplinary Panel
- Working Groups on symposium themes

May 27, 2026 – Human Intelligence in Biblical Wisdom Literature

- Morning Conference: Prof. Sebastiano Pinto (Italy): “Human Intelligence in the Wisdom Books and AI”
- Afternoon Conference: Prof. Sebastiano Pinto (Italy): Continuation
- Interdisciplinary Panel: Prof. Jhon Fredy (Colombia): “How Artificial Intelligence Can Enhance Biblical Studies”; Prof. Giovanni Chiafari (Italy, virtual): “Wisdom Books and Human Intelligence Formation”
- Working Groups on symposium themes

May 28, 2026 – AI, Anthropology, and Pastoral Practice

- Morning Conference: Prof. Luca Peyron (Italy): “The Impact of Emerging Technologies, Particularly AI, on Christian Anthropology and Pastoral Work”
- Afternoon Conference: Prof. Luca Peyron (Italy): Continuation
- Interdisciplinary Panel: Prof. Ignacio Cea (Chile): “Critique of Virtual Utopia and Eco-theological Aspects”
- Working Groups on symposium themes
- Closing session

A detailed program will be distributed closer to the event dates.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

<http://www.cict-cocti.org/>

For questions regarding the General Assembly or Symposium: waldecir@puc-rio.br

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency numbers in Brazil:

- Police: 190
- Ambulance: 192
- Fire Department: 193

We will provide participants with local emergency contact information and a 24-hour contact number for the organizing committee upon arrival.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Please make your travel arrangements early to secure the best fares.
- Book your accommodation as soon as possible.
- Complete your registration form by April 15, 2026.
- Request visa invitation letters well in advance if needed.
- Plan to arrive by May 24, 2026, at the latest.
- Departures are scheduled for May 29, 2026, or later.

We look forward to welcoming you to the beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro for what promises to be an enriching and memorable gathering of the COCTI community!

For the organizing committee,

Prof. Dr. Waldecir Gonzaga

Director, Department of Theology
Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro