

The GTU's Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences Announces Gift of \$2M from Dr. Francisco J. Ayala

For Immediate Release

Berkeley, CA – January 26, 2017 - The Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (CTNS) at the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) is pleased to announce a \$2M gift from long-time professional partner Dr. Francisco J. Ayala, University Professor in the Sciences and Humanities at the University of California Irvine. In recognition of Dr. Ayala's gift, CTNS will be renamed The Francisco J. Ayala Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences.

"Professor Ayala is donating \$2 million to the GTU to complete the endowment of the Ian G. Barbour Chair of Theology and CTNS, and CTNS will in turn be honored to carry his name," said CTNS Director Dr. Robert Russell. "As an internationally recognized scientist, Dr. Ayala will provide CTNS an extraordinary degree of credibility among the often hesitant scientific community, and it will open doors for us in the secular world that might otherwise have remained locked."

Dr. Francisco Ayala has been a champion of the compatibility of science and religion throughout his long and distinguished career. Dr. Ayala's gift ensures that CTNS will be a permanent leader in the international field of science and religion. It will continue CTNS's track record of outstanding interdisciplinary research and of academic excellence in seminary and doctoral education at the GTU. It will support the future of the ecumenical and the interfaith dialogue and mutual interaction between the scientific and religions communities which is so deeply needed by our global world today.

The Graduate Theological Union will host a naming event and reception for The Francisco J. Ayala Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences on Thursday, February 16, 2017 at 4pm, in the Dinner Board Room, Graduate Theological Union Library, 2400 Ridge Road, Berkeley, California.

About the Graduate Theological Union

Founded in 1962, the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley is home to the largest PhD program in religious studies in North America. As a consortium of independent theological schools, the GTU includes eight seminaries—two Roman Catholic, five Protestant, and one Unitarian Universalist—as well as a variety of academic centers and affiliates, including the Center for Jewish Studies, the Center for Islamic Studies, the Center for Dharma Studies, the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, and the Center for the Arts & Religion.

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