

José Míguez Bonino, liberation theologian

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Liberation theologian José Míguez Bonino died July 1 in Buenos Aires at the age of 88.

Míguez's contribution to liberation theology had a strong impact in Latin America and beyond, said Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the WCC.

Míguez served as WCC president from 1975 and 1983 and was one of the editors of the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*. He earned a doctorate in theology in 1959 from Union Theological Seminary in New York. For several decades, Míguez was a professor and director of the Instituto Superior Evangelico de Estudios Teologicos (ISEDET).

Tveit said the Methodist pastor had a "significant influence on my own personal ecumenical journey and ecumenical theological positions," according to a July 5 news release.

He added that Míguez has a "very special place in the work of integrating contextual theology and liberation theology into ecumenical theology, and for the coherence and integrity of the WCC."

Míguez was the only Latin American Protestant invited as an observer at the mid-1960s Second Vatican Council, where he had personal encounters with Pope John XXIII and his successor Pope Paul VI. He was a Protestant observer to the Second Latin American Episcopal Conference in Medellín, Colombia, in 1968.

Míguez authored several books, including *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (1975), *Toward a Christian Political Ethics* (1983) and *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (1997).

Noting how Míguez inspired a generation of clergy and theologians by combining bold ideas with a gracious manner, Lutheran leader Walter Altmann of Brazil, moderator of the WCC, said: "His clear theological stances and sensitivity to the

beliefs and convictions of others were much respected in all confessional families.”

—ENInews