

8TH - 10TH

tonalestate

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER UNIVERSITY

AUG. 2026

NOLI TIMERE

**anche le cose più innocenti
vivono di tormenti**

Tiene el miedo muchos ojos
y ve las cosas debajo de la tierra.

(Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quijote)



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PASSO DEL TONALE E VERMIGLIO (TN) E PONTE DI LEGNO (BS)

NOLI TIMERE

Fear: this is the theme that the Tonalestate International Summer University proposes we study, reflect on and talk about in its convention next August, when representatives of the academic and religious world, intellectuals, journalists, teachers and researchers will join a group of university and high school students, adults and elders from all over the world, that will be reunited on the Italian Alps thanks to a friendship that is committed to building, in the countries in which they study and work, a peaceful society, worthy and respectful of every human being and of the whole universe.

Fear is a blade that causes slits in our hearts, division in our thoughts, separation from reality and in reality; that is why, normally, it causes instinctual reactions, impulsive rebellion or senseless violence. It is a sort of divinity that, to paraphrase Cervantes's words, present in the poster of this new edition, "tiene mucho ojos y ve las cosas debajo de la tierra". Always anxiously on alert, this shadowy deity scrutinises everything, sees everything and stands for nothing, and we feel that because of it something vital breaks in us, something good and precious. Why, then, do we fall so easily in its arms? And what will give us strength to not fall prey of fear?

Fear is, in itself, an understandable feeling: don't we feel, maybe and often, like peregrines lying in undulating wait, holding onto each other on a fragile ship with an unknown destination, as Vladimir Sabillón has masterfully represented in the Tonalestate poster? And isn't fear an understandable feeling because, as Virgil reminds us in *The Georgics*, "fugit irreparabile tempus", even time betrays us? And who, between us, isn't afraid of wars, of certain natural phenomena, of injustice, of violent acts and of evil? For all these reasons and even more, Petronio said that "primus in orbe deos fecit timor", that is, human beings have imagined the existence of various divinities, which if honoured by following very precise rites, could defend them from calamities and bring fortune in their lives. And, with the passing of time, they have started to imagine these divinities even more similar to those powerful people that often, yesterday as much as today, were and still are the cause of innumerable evil acts and are source of fear.

In its poster, Tonalestate relays the quote of a song that is very dear to it by the title of *Piccolo gregge* (little herd). It says: "Even the most innocent things live of torments". These torments are the ones that Saint Augustine, lovingly, didn't hide from his friends – he listed some of them, for example, when he was commenting Psalm 39: sufferings, anxieties, growing pains – so that they would be ready for the fight that each person must go through to become an adult. It is both a fight of purification as it is one of atonement, if we realise that

normally we haven't been neither innocent nor have we acted or act now with innocence. But who will be the one to give us strength for this? That is, who is the one that will care for the innocents in their growth, of ourselves even if we may not be innocent, and of the others that we keep close and may not be innocent as well, without taking into account how much sacrifice, detachment, pain, anxiety, or even boredom, this will entail? Will detachment from oneself be able to grab fear by the collar, to deprive it of its darkness, and will it null that stinger that paralyses us, blocks us and even makes us refute what is good? And in which direction will this detachment from our selves bring us?

The path that Tonalestate suggests is walking together towards that kind of freedom that a young Galilean proposed and is proposing still to this day with patience, one that he knew and knows to dispense without avarice to those that search for it, because the wish to free men and women, children, adults and elders from that slavery in which all of us easily fall is persistent in him. And so, today in the same way as back then, that young Galilean chooses to put a blindfold over his eyes so that he doesn't condemn anyone and, thus, he isn't stopped by anything or anyone in his operation of freedom.

Lastly, as truth and sincerity don't coincide, let's try and ask ourselves – with that kind of fear that is the start of knowledge – what is worth fearing and what isn't. Every morning and every evening, if we stay in silence and listen for a time, we have a voice inside – which is at times frail and at times clear – that says: "have courage!". And since courage, from the Latin, means "heart", it's telling us: "act with the heart!". It is then a voice that suggest we work by starting from a courageous source, but made of a courage that is completely different from the one that gets us to the irrational violence we use in order to not lose those goods and affections without which we fear to be left as weak, dead, leaves at the mercy of the hurricane. With its tempting and fragrant taste of wild honey, the evangelical "noli timere!", which is the title of this year's Tonalestate, is messenger and source of a true and lasting hope, by which we can be taken by hand, so that it will show us the steps and the choices to take. The Tonalestate convention, as a matter of fact, wishes to go to the root of this hope, so that it becomes companion of a personal and joint commitment in our society, which – despite it living significant and fast changes that aren't always easy to understand – is still that space, unique and divine, in which each of us is positively called to operate, in the glad conscience that "what we are hasn't yet been discovered".

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