



Christmas and  
New Year Newsletter  
2013-14



## A TRULY BLESSED YEAR!

As the Feast of the Nativity and the New Year draw near, the time has come again to take a short break, have tea or coffee, and reflect together on our journey so far – on what blessings and challenges this year has brought to the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, but also what the next year might have in store!

The most important change for the Institute this year – and something we and all of our friends and supporters have only dared to dream about in the not so remote past – has been that we have managed for the first time to purchase a building of our own and move into our own Cambridge premises! On 7 February 2013 the Institute concluded purchase of a permanent home at 25-27 High Street Chesterton, Cambridge, CB4 1ND, and our team entered the new building for the first time with joy and wonderment to celebrate a service of thanksgiving in the board room – transformed in the meantime into our beautiful new library.

We had a formal opening of Palamas House – as we have named our home, in honour of St Gregory Palamas – on 6 July, celebrating a Liturgy of Thanksgiving at the local St Andrew's church in Chesterton, followed by a procession with the icons along Church Street to our new home.



All the Institute's staff took part in the move from Wesley House over to the Institute's new building, Palamas House



The former Board Room at Palamas House, soon acquired an Orthodox look as it became the new library/seminar room of the Institute!

The Institute was able to purchase Palamas House after two charities, Nicea and the Maurice and Hilda Laing Trust, and two individuals offered interest-free loans totalling £560,000. In less than a year the Institute succeeded in raising from a legacy and some generous donors the full £800,000 necessary to purchase the house. The loans are to be paid back within five years, during which time our Institute's efforts in fundraising and promotion will need to intensify. Having our own building has brought about countless new possibilities and openings, but also greater responsibilities. However, as we said before in our Letter of Appeal, to be able in the current economic climate to acquire a sizeable property for a Christian charity is nothing short of miraculous!

As you will see from the photographs, Palamas House is an imposing eighteenth-century, three-storey, brick building under a tiled mansard-style roof. The property occupies a prominent position on Chesterton High Street, approximately one mile east of the historic city centre of Cambridge. A large circular courtyard at the rear, with a lawn and majestic trees, offers adequate parking and an attractive garden - altogether a delightful accompaniment to a handsome edifice, giving the entire ensemble the air of a 'mini-college.'

Testimony to the great need for an Orthodox centre like Palamas House in Cambridge is



The Institute's first service in its new home on 7 February 2013



The Formal Opening of Palamas House, 6 July 2013: 'A day that the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be glad in it!'



the fact that, since March many events have been organised here and received by enthusiastic participants. We have had so far our Community Days, an Icon Painting workshop, several meetings with Orthodox bishops who came to visit us in our new home, research seminar meetings and youth meetings. Moreover, much of the teaching for our MA courses run jointly with the Cambridge Theological Federation has been done in our Library/Seminar Room. Palamas House is set to host similar teaching events in the future as well as being the venue for our own courses and seminars at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, and also for many of the courses taught within the Cambridge Theological Federation by our fellow theological colleges.



Metropolitan Kallistos Ware lecturing on Gregory of Nyssa in our new Library/Lecture Room



In July, we received the visit of Dr Andrew Bennett, Canada's Ambassador for Religious Freedom, for a very engaging and fruitful discussion



Participants in the Icon Painting Workshop with Nikita Andrejev (June 2013)



The Institute was delighted to receive in May a visit from one of its Bishops, the Romanian Metropolitan Iosif, at our new home

## MEET SOME OF OUR STUDENTS



**Father David Lowell, US**  
MA in Pastoral  
Theology

'I am enjoying the experience of direct study in Cambridge, and tremendously thankful for the chance to be exposed to the serious study of Orthodox Pastoral theology here at the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies.'

'The IOCS has given me an opportunity to pursue profound theological studies in a multiconfessional context. The Orthodox tradition is approached and analysed within the Western academic context, which helps me better understand its uniqueness and its distinguishing features.'



**Iliia Iliukovich, Russia**  
MA in Pastoral Theology



**Philip Champion, Russia/  
Switzerland, MA in Christian  
Theology**

'Being a student at the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies has so far been a tremendously interesting and, without a doubt, academically fascinating period of my life.'

Everyone in the IOCS Staff has been very supportive and this truly made me feel at home here. I have also joined the English-speaking Russian Orthodox Parish of St. Ephraim the Syrian, for it is impossible to properly study theology without living a spiritual life. Moreover, here in Cambridge I was given an opportunity to study with other Christians, which has greatly strengthened my love for the Orthodox Church.'

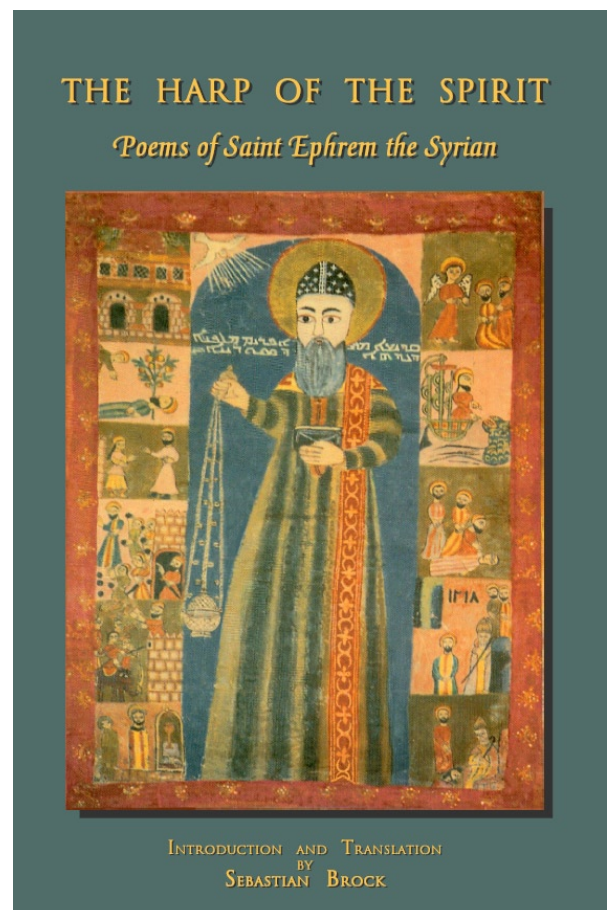
## IOCS book launch during St Ephraim's Parish celebrations

We are pleased to announce the lead publication in a new series of books from the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, a collection of poems by St Ephrem the Syrian, *The Harp of the Spirit*, in the acclaimed translation by one of the most distinguished Syriac scholars in the world, Dr Sebastian Brock. The series will be officially launched on 25 January 2014.

The launch will take place during an event organised jointly by St Ephraim's Russian Orthodox Parish in Cambridge - same saint, variant spelling! - and the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies. The day's festivities will take place in the Rank Room of Wesley House and the Chapel of Westcott House (Jesus Lane, Cambridge, CB5 8BJ) at the following times:

- 14.30 - Talk on St Ephrem the Syrian by Dr Sebastian Brock (Rank Room, Wesley House)**
- 15.30 - Book Launch / Tea and biscuits (Rank Room, Wesley House)**
- 17.00 - Vigil of St Ephrem (Chapel of Westcott House - across the road from Wesley House)**

The Parish's celebration will continue with the Divine Liturgy on Sunday 26 January, also in the Chapel of Westcott House, the usual place of worship for the Parish. All are welcome to attend these events.



# NEW!

MPhil / PhD IN ORTHODOX STUDIES

## DOCTORAL PROGRAMME AT THE INSTITUTE

Starting this academic year, The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies can offer an MPhil/PhD programme pursued through our Institute and the Cambridge Theological Federation, and awarded by Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge. This has been a degree of particular interest to Orthodox graduates in Theology who have frequently enquired about such a possibility over the years, so it gives us great joy to be able finally to offer it! Our first student to enrol in the Institute's PhD programme is Father Michael Pacella from the United States, who is comparing the approaches of St Thomas Aquinas and St Gregory Palamas to the matter of sanctification/theosis.

It is recommended that candidates first contact the Institute with a short written research proposal and details of their university qualifications before applying formally for either the MPhil or the PhD programme. For more details on this degree, please consult our website or contact the Institute office by email or phone.



The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, Cambridge, UK draws your attention to a new course that we will be hosting in 2014:

ENGLISH FOR CHURCH PURPOSES is an intensive 10-day course aimed at members of the Christian clergy and laity who wish to improve their spoken and written presentation skills in English. Students on the course will have opportunity to discuss topical church issues in English, whilst learning how to deliver talks, write reports, as well as manage meetings and interviews. At the end of the course, students will be expected to practise these skills by participating in a mock conference-day and giving a talk on a topic of interest. This course has been designed for students with an intermediate level of English and above, and can be tailored to suit individual requirements.

For more information about the course, please visit the Institute's website or get in touch with our office staff.

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE FOR CHURCH PURPOSES

### SPRING AND SUMMER COURSE DATES

Mon 5 May 2014 - Fri 16 May 2014

Mon 16 June 2014 - Fri 27 June 2014

Mon 18 August 2014 - Fri 29 August 2014



Contact the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies: email at [info@iocs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:info@iocs.cam.ac.uk), phone on +44 (0) 1223 741037, or mail at Palamas House, 25-27 High Street Chesterton, Cambridge CB4 1ND United Kingdom [www.iocs.cam.ac.uk](http://www.iocs.cam.ac.uk)

## IOCS COMMUNITY LECTURE DAYS 2014

# ORTHODOXY IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Venue: IOCS, Palamas House, 25-27 High St Chesterton, Cambridge CB4 1ND

We have great pleasure in inviting you to our new series of Community Lecture Days in 2014, which will again give opportunity to hear distinguished theologians in Cambridge on themes of major importance to the Orthodox tradition.

As before, on each of these five Saturdays participants will hear two lectures - one in the morning and one in the afternoon - and they will have the chance to meet old friends and make new ones, with a relaxed lunch between the lectures, refreshments, discussion sessions and a Vespers service at the close.

**Fee per person for each day: £30 (including lunch and coffee)**

**Students fee: £15 Reduced upfront payment for all 5 days: £120**

The Institute does not wish finance to be an obstacle. If you would like to come but are unable to pay the whole fee, please get in touch with us.

10.30 - 11.00: Welcome coffee  
 11.00 - 12.30: Session 1  
 12.30 - 14.30: Lunch  
 14.30 - 16.00: Session 2  
 16.00 - 16.30: Tea  
 16.30 - 17.30: Vespers

**22nd February**

**Metropolitan Kallistos Ware  
 Orthodox Theology in  
 the 21st Century**

**29th March**

**Revd Dr Christopher Knight  
 (International Society for  
 Science and Religion/IOCS)  
 Orthodox Theology  
 and the Sciences**

**26th April**

**Dr Adrian Pabst  
 (University of Kent)  
 Orthodoxy and the  
 Political**

**31st May**

**Dr Krastu Banev  
 (University of Durham)  
 War and Peace in  
 Christian Orthodoxy**



**28th June**

**Dr Christoph Schneider (IOCS)  
 Towards an Orthodox  
 Understanding of Faith  
 and Reason**



### Stay tuned for an exciting announcement from the Institute!

The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies is currently working with the Cambridge Theological Federation and Anglia Ruskin University to make available, from October 2014, our traditional MA programme in Pastoral Theology but by Distance Learning, so that people from all over the world can become postgraduate students of the Institute!

We'll keep you posted about these exciting developments - do visit our website regularly!

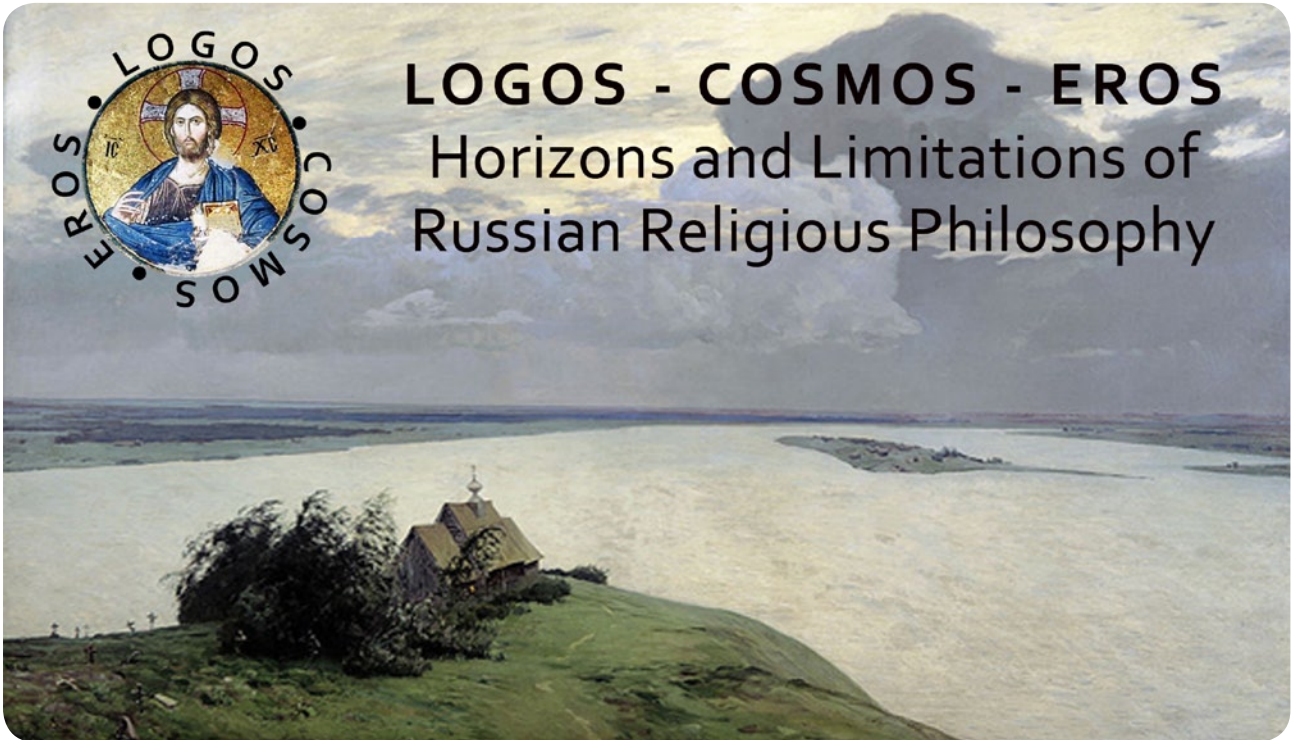
**IOCS Website: [www.iocs.cam.ac.uk](http://www.iocs.cam.ac.uk)**

**COVER STORY:** The Christmas tree on the cover was decorated by the Romanian Orthodox Parish of St John the Evangelist in Cambridge, as part of the Christmas Tree Festival organised in December 2013 at St Giles Church. The festival was an occasion for ecumenical encounter between the Orthodox, their Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed partners and other local charities, as they gathered together in preparation for Christmas.

# IOCS SUMMER CONFERENCE - 8-10 September 2014

(with an optional day-trip on 11 September)

Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge



## LOGOS - COSMOS - EROS Horizons and Limitations of Russian Religious Philosophy

The aim of the conference is twofold. First, it discusses and evaluates the reception of Byzantine theology and philosophy by Russian religious thinkers in the 19th and 20th century. The conference investigates the way Byzantine thought was modified and developed by Russian philosophy, and what role Western philosophy played in this process. It also addresses the question of how far the contribution of Russian thinkers can be regarded as a philosophically and theologically convincing continuation and development of the Byzantine tradition. One of the main tasks in this respect will be to establish the precise relationship between the sophiological tradition and the Byzantine essence-energy distinction.

Second, the conference will examine the relevance of Russian Religious Philosophy to the contemporary world. Characteristic features of this tradition are: all-unity (*vseedinstvo*), epistemological realism, catholicity (*sobornost*) and integral knowledge (*tsel'noe znanie*). These ideas are employed to envisage the transformation of the world towards its ultimate end and constitute a challenge to both modern and post-modern thought. Russian Religious Philosophy is of universal scope. It not only joins theology with philosophy, but also emphasizes the interconnectedness between cosmology, metaphysics, aesthetics, linguistics, anthropology, ethics, and the sciences. The conference will explore how far these vast but largely untapped intellectual resources can help us construct a genuinely Christian vision of God, of the world and of the self in the 21st century.

More details to follow shortly.

## Watch IOCS video lectures on our website and spend time with the Institute everyday!

Metropolitan Kallistos on 'From Light to Darkness: the Christian Journey Strangely Reversed'

Media Statistics



Duration: 49 mins 34 secs

We're delighted to introduce to you our new and growing Video Library page! Check our website ([www.iocs.cam.ac.uk](http://www.iocs.cam.ac.uk)) for a selection of lectures delivered at IOCS events by distinguished speakers including Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, Revd Prof Andrew Louth, Dr Sebastian Brock and many others.

Also you can listen to our *Cambridge Orthodox Forum* podcast via Ancient Faith Radio at: <http://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/cambridge>