



The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies

A new Principal-elect for IOCS

Dr Grant White, a native of Kansas, USA, has been appointed as the new IOCS Principal as of 1 September 2004. Dr White will succeed Dr Marcus Plested, current Principal, who will take up the post of Vice-Principal and Director of Studies.

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What is Man?: 'A first-rate Summer School'

IOCS completed its fifth academic year with another successful Summer School. Like last year, it was over-subscribed and is gaining a reputation of being an exceptional spiritual, academic and social experience. This year the theme, *What is Man?* brought together an eclectic mix of students. The regular students who attend the monthly study weekends throughout the year were joined by others from a wide variety of backgrounds, all keen to hear more about what it means to be human in the contemporary world.

Here is what the students say about their experience:

'I expected it to be excellent but it has far exceeded my expectation. I am very grateful to have had the

opportunity to attend such a stimulating course which has given me enough material to mull over for a life time'

'A very good week which provoked a great deal of new thought'

'The Summer School was a real first, so many good things were offered and so much was given by the students in their response to the lectures. It is interesting to ponder on what makes it such a vibrant entity when you think that each year there are different students and different lecturers. Perhaps one answer would be that the students have not come so much to receive education but to find answers to essential questions such as *What is Man?*

One student went on to reflect: 'Like his Creator, Man is a mystery. Therefore on one level, the question *What is Man?* will always be asked in every age, for its answer can never be fully and completely grasped. In fact we might say that the proclamation of the Gospel in our time is the proclamation of what it means to be human. It is to accompany our surrounding culture and those whom God has put in our path on the journey through the question *What is Man?* to the person of Jesus Christ: the quintessential human being and the embodiment of all Truth. Man cannot derive identity, freedom, a sense of worth, or personhood outside of his being a creature of an ineffable Creator who loves His creation. This is a sublime mystery. God has created Man for Himself and Man can only know himself if he is in God.' ■



Fr Michael Fortounatto, IOCS Director of Liturgical Music, leading Vespers during Summer School

Past, Present and Future Principals

For a brief moment during the recent IOCS Summer School the past, present and future Principals of IOCS were together.

Fr John Jillions, one of the main founders of IOCS, was Principal between 1999-2002. Fr John is now Assistant Professor of Theology at Saint Paul University in Ottawa, specializing in Eastern Christian Studies and Ecumenism (jjillions@ustpaul.ca). The University has extensive undergraduate and graduate programmes in Eastern Christian Studies through its Sheptytsky Institute. He also serves as Dean of the province of

Ontario and of the Orthodox Church of America's Cathedral of the Annunciation and St Nicholas in Ottawa under Bishop Seraphim of Canada.

Dr Marcus Plested took over as Principal from Fr John in 2002 and has led the Institute forward over the past two years consolidating the foundations of his predecessor and developing the academic programme and student in-take. As from September 2004, Dr Plested will continue as Vice-Principal and Director of Studies in order to direct the academic programme of the Institute alongside continuing his own research.



Current and former Principals: Dr Marcus Plested and Fr John Jillions

Dr Grant White, comes to IOCS from the Department of Orthodox Theology of the University of Joensuu (Finland) where he has been a professor in church history and deputy director of the department for the past three years. A Harvard graduate in comparative religion, he took his doctorate at the Roman Catholic University of Notre Dame, USA, in the history of early Christian liturgy. During this period he spent a year in Oxford, UK, as a Fulbright scholar studying under Dr Sebastian Brock. Whilst Dr White's academic pursuits are rooted in the history of liturgy, he has a developing interest in the history of the Orthodox Christian - Jewish encounter, and in Russian religious philosophy. ■

An interview with Dr Grant White

IOCS: What was your reaction when you were offered the post of Principal of IOCS?

GW: I was absolutely delighted. There's nothing else like the IOCS, and I was thrilled to be offered the chance to be part of it.

IOCS: Can you share with us something of your background and family?

GW: I was born in Denver, Colorado, and grew up in a very small town in Kansas, in the centre of the United States. My late father was an American history professor and my mother is an occupational therapist. The majority of my ancestors came to the US in the late nineteenth century, from what are now the Czech Republic and Slovenia, and from Sweden. My father was the first in his family to go to college.

Having two university-educated parents certainly shaped my own view of education. My father received his PhD in labour history when I was 17, so you can say that I grew up with his doctorate. After high school I went to Harvard University, where I studied

comparative religion. On graduation, I left for Notre Dame, the Roman Catholic university at the centre of liturgical studies in the US, to study the history of early Christian liturgy. Early on in my doctoral studies I won a Fulbright fellowship to study with Sebastian Brock in Oxford (Wolfson College, 1987-1988). After I graduated from Notre Dame in 1993, I taught early and medieval church history at a Protestant seminary in Kansas City for eight years. In 2001, the opportunity came to teach church history in the Department of Orthodox Theology of the University of Joensuu. During my time there I've also served as Deputy Director of the department.

My academic interests have shifted over the years. I continue to be interested in the history of liturgy, but the area in which I hope to devote my energies in the future is the history of the Orthodox Christian-Jewish encounter. I also am interested in the broad area of Orthodoxy and modernity, including Russian religious philosophy.

I came late to Orthodoxy (Easter 2001). I finally reached the conclusion that in my understanding of God, salvation, holiness, the sacraments, I had been Orthodox for a long time already. The time had come to make it official, as it were. My path to the Church took

me through Methodism and Anglicanism, and I am grateful to the members of those traditions who have helped me on this journey. In this context I want to say how happy I am that the IOCS is able to be located in Wesley House. After all, John Wesley had a great love for the ascetics of the early church, writing in his diary, '[Today I] read Macarius and sang.' It seems to me that he too is a true ascetic father!

My wife Mari Salminen is a native of Helsinki. She has a master's degree in Hebrew Bible from the University of Helsinki, and in pastoral theology from the Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg. Our two year-old son Leo Alexander was born in Joensuu; Mari joined the Orthodox Church when Leo was baptized in November 2002.

IOCS: How do you understand your role as Principal and what particular skills do you bring to the job?

GW: I'm here to serve the members of the Institute, to guide the development of its mission in Cambridge and the United Kingdom. To this purpose, I hope to do all I can to build a solid financial base for the Institute. I'm a good listener, and I try to see all sides of an issue before making a decision. I'm a 'team player', that is, I work together with others, not in isolation, and I try not to take myself too seriously!

IOCS: Which life experiences will help you in your new role as principal of IOCS?

GW: In the ecumenical setting of the IOCS, my experience with a variety of Christian traditions will be helpful. Of course, my experience of an Orthodox academic theological department is also important, as well as many years of teaching and working with students. On a personal level, I have experienced being a stranger in

a foreign culture, and think that this gives me some understanding of the situation of our students from overseas in Cambridge, and highlights for me the importance of hospitality for the Church and for any community.

IOCS: What do you see as priorities for the Institute in the coming years?

GW: First and foremost, we must build a firm financial base for the Institute: an endowment. In order to do that, we need to continue to reach out to long-standing friends of the Institute, and to find additional partners for our work. There is clearly a lot of good will toward the Institute. I want to find those people and institutions who believe in what we are doing here, and who are willing to support it with significant financial contributions. Of course, it's only because of the generosity of the individuals and foundations who have been faithfully keeping us going these past five years that I am here at all to ask now for more! We have a good foundation for continuing our work here. Now we need to take it to the next level. With the financial support for the long term secured, other important steps (such as looking toward acquiring our own premises) will be possible.

IOCS: We very much look forward to welcoming you! Thank you, Grant. ■



Photo: Teppo Vaisanen

Two institutes, one family

In the Spring of 2001, IOCS arranged a Study Weekend at the St Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris, which focused on the contribution to theological thought in the C20 of the 'Paris school.' A group of IOCS students attended the lectures which were delivered in English by staff of the Seminary for the occasion.



Students and staff of St Serge and IOCS

Two years later, on the inspiration of their good memories of this weekend, a small delegation of seminarians from St Sergius took the initiative to organise a return visit to Cambridge. The IOCS study weekend of June 2004 thus welcomed some ten students from Paris, accompanied by St Sergius professors Dr Joost Van Rossum and Fr Nicholas Cernokrak.

One member of the group, Alexander Sadkowsky, summed up the visit in the following words:

'We had a strong feeling of being home, whilst in Cambridge at the Institute, and felt that our theological schools are of the same family. For this reason we must strive for more permanent and lasting links in order to be able to share the joys and the difficulties that are common to us both. I hope that our respective visits are only the beginning of a long and fruitful cooperation.'

IOCS and the St Sergius Institute are in informal discussion over the possibility of organising further joint events in the coming years. ■



Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies
Wesley House, Jesus Lane, Cambridge, CB5 8BJ, UK

Dates and course descriptions for the academic year 2004 – 2005

Certificate of Higher Education in Orthodox Christian Studies

■ **8—10 October 2004**

Principles of Orthodox Theology

An overview of Orthodox theological tradition from the early Church to the contemporary period. A look at Theology in practice and the ways in which we can do the theology which we speak about.

■ **12—14 November 2004**

The Orthodox Liturgical Cycle

An introduction to the historical development of the Orthodox liturgical cycle including the monthly festal cycle and the calendar of saints.

■ **10—12 December 2004**

Sacrifice and Redemption

A detailed study of the nature and purpose of sacrifice and redemption in the Bible and Orthodox tradition.

■ **7—9 January 2005**

The Synoptic Gospels

An analysis of the Synoptic Gospels from the perspective of the Orthodox Church and of modern biblical scholarship.

■ **28—30 January 2005 (elective)**

Theme to be confirmed

■ **11—13 February 2005**

Creation

This module discusses the understanding of creation in the Orthodox tradition. It looks at the creation as an act of grace and the doctrine of the human person created according to the image and likeness of God.

■ **11—13 March 2005**

The Person of Christ (I)

An exploration of the early Christian understanding of Christ as witnessed in the New Testament and the early Church.

■ **6—8 May 2005**

Baptism and Chrismation

An overview of the structure and content of the Eastern Orthodox baptismal and chrismation rites, and their use in the contemporary practice of the Orthodox Church.

■ **10—12 June 2005**

Prayer

An introduction to the Orthodox understanding and practice of prayer.

■ **3—8 July 2005 (Summer School)**

Theme to be confirmed

Diploma of Higher Education in Orthodox Christian Studies

■ **8—10 October 2004**

Trinity (II)

An introduction to the Orthodox doctrine of the Trinity in the fourth and fifth centuries, covering the Arian controversy, the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople and the Trinitarian theology of the Cappadocian Fathers.

■ **12—14 November 2004**

The Person of Christ (II)

A review of the development of Christology from the fourth century up to the definition of faith of the Sixth Ecumenical Council.

■ **10—12 December 2004**

Living the Faith

An exploration of the way in which the Fathers dealt with pressing social issues of their day, such as questions of wealth and poverty, and the institution of slavery. A consideration of how we in our day should live the faith.

■ **7—9 January 2005**

The Icon

A treatment of the major theological, liturgical, artistic and historical issues relating to the icon in the Eastern Christian tradition.

■ **11—13 February 2005**

Orthodoxy and the West

An historical overview of the great schism which examines the political, cultural, canonical and doctrinal levels of the conflict.

■ **11—13 March 2005**

The Divine Liturgy of the Orthodox Church

A detailed analysis of the historical development and theological significance of the Divine Liturgy, including issues relating to the preparation for and reception of Holy Communion.

■ **6—8 May 2005**

The Word of God

Salvation history — the creation, the fall, salvation and resurrection — is discussed in the framework of the First and Second Adam. This module also treats God's unbroken covenant with his creation, the revelation of God in the Law and the place of Wisdom.

■ **10—12 June 2005**

St John

An in-depth study of the Johannine writings, including their place in the liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church.

For further information contact the Institute on + 44 (0)1223 741037 or info@iocs.cam.ac.uk
or consult the website: www.iocs.cam.ac.uk for an application form