

Christmas & New Year Newsletter 2015-16





A CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Friends,

The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, whose mission is to promote the Christian faith, is not like any business: it is under new ownership, it operates according to quite different principles. If it perceives an urgent need, it does things that no businessman would think sensible (see my own article on clergy education) – and as a consequence, its experiences are very different.

Just how different was brought home to me by the report of a colleague visiting from a sister institution in Moscow – but an experience so like our own as to be immediately recognizable. The staff were sitting late at night in their office, wondering (as we at the Cambridge Institute do every month) how on earth they were to pay the salaries to keep their teachers going – when there was a knock at the outside door, and in came a scruffy man out of the Moscow cold and darkness, with a brown envelope in his hand, saying he wanted to make a donation. And as in all such stories, the amount in the envelope was exactly what was required to pay the teachers. That is also our experience in Cambridge: as our President, Metropolitan Kallistos, says in one of our promotional videos: 'The Institute seems to survive by a succession of small miracles!'

At this time, when we celebrate Christ's birth, the arrival of a new age and the turning of the year, the Institute likes to blow its own trumpet a bit and to tell of all the good things we have done and to announce what our offerings will be in the year ahead. But don't be deceived by what seems a record of success: be advised that trumpet-calls are designed to wake the sleeper, and to summon the troops to an unavoidable battle! We cannot survive without that man in the scruffy mac, coming out of the darkness with his envelope in his hand. The section at the end of our Newsletter will tell you of our needs, how serious they are - and how they might be met.

Professor David Frost, Principal and Administrator





I am encouraged to write these reflections on the preparation of clergy and lay-workers to serve the growing communities of Orthodox in the British Isles by an event in which the Institute itself has played a major part: the establishment of a third Orthodox congregation in Cambridge, the Romanian parish of St John the Evangelist, meeting in the Anglican church of St Giles (see the account on page 8).

The Institute saw an opportunity to expand our teaching ministry by encouraging the ordination of one of our staff to serve as parish priest. Providentially, the parish's personnel have previously studied with us: Father Dragos himself and the gifted choirmaster Claudiu Radu both came from Romania to study our M.A. in Pastoral Theology, whilst the first priest of the parish, Father Aurel, is also a graduate of the same course.

The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies exists to meet the need for education in the Orthodox faith wherever it is to be found – and a substantial number of clergy in the various Orthodox Churches of Great Britain have studied with us or taught for us. I regularly receive as Principal requests from bishops here and from overseas, seeking concessionary fees for students taking our courses both in Cambridge and by distance learning – and this because these students are studying for ordination.

In June of this year, the Institute received a ringing endorsement of our courses, from Certificate and Diploma level, through BA, MA, right up to doctoral studies, from the Ecumenical Patriarch himself. And yet, for the newly introduced Bachelor degree in Theology for Ministry and Mission, validated by the prestigious University of Durham, with courses in Liturgy, Theology and Spirituality taught by Orthodox and especially designed to attract Orthodox students, not one person enrolled – and that despite the degree being a professional qualification within the British system of higher education, internationally recognized, eligible for student loans, and with fees substantially less than those of any other British university.

Something is plainly wrong: as a resource for training people to serve as clergy or lay-workers in Great Britain, the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies is seriously under-used – and this when there are no degree-giving seminaries in Great Britain comparable to St Vladimir's in the United States, Saint-Serge in Paris, or the University of Balamand in the Lebanon.

When I travel the country on Institute matters and especially when I have moved around Britain and overseas to teach in our Institute course introductory to the Orthodox faith, THE WAY, I meet many good, competent and saintly priests, often British-born – but you would be surprised to learn how many (some say, as much as 40%) have learned their faith and trained with other Christian denominations and have 'come over' to Orthodoxy. They were 'lights of the world in their generation' – but that generation is now passing, and we cannot expect to get a sufficient supply of replacements from the same source. The recruits of a younger generation often confess to me, with some embarrassment, that they have learned what they could largely from books or from correspondence courses – and of course, from the example of their elders.

It may still be possible, despite increasing visa difficulties, to import graduates from seminaries in the home country: but that has the disadvantage that caused my Archbishop in Sydney to abandon the practice some ten years back:

it took, he said, seven years on average for a young man from an Arabic-speaking society, even with reasonably good English, to acclimatize fully to life in a new country – and even then he might find difficulty relating to a mixed congregation, who were often from varied ethnic backgrounds, and whose shared language – especially among the children and grandchildren of migrants – was English and their culture chiefly that of their adopted country.

It was hoped, when the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops for Great

Britain and Ireland was formed, that an early task would be to establish training facilities in Great Britain. The Assembly's adoption of and blessing for the Cambridge Institute was a welcome first step, as was their election of Metropolitan Kallistos to be our first President. But as Metropolitan Kallistos himself observes: 'The Cambridge Institute, being pan-Orthodox, has had the misfortune to belong to everybody and be owned by nobody!'

Yet it is not easy for any cash-strapped diocese to maintain its basic structures, let alone to establish and maintain its own seminary. Research in the United States and Europe commissioned by the Laing Trust shows that everywhere seminaries are in difficulties, whilst co-operative ventures such as the Cambridge Theological Federation (of which the Institute is a full Member) thrive. A seminary house under the direction of our Assembly of Bishops that welcomes ordinands from all Orthodox dioceses and uses the Institute for theological instruction and pedagogic training looks to be the most practical and promising way forward.



Christmas trees in St Giles' Church Cambridge

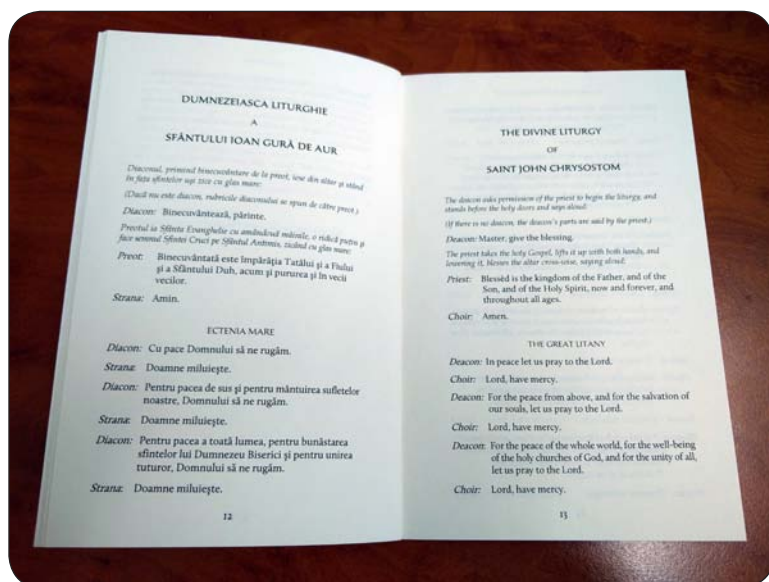


THE IOCS LITURGY PROJECT

The Institute's Liturgy Project was occasioned by an urgent pastoral need in the Orthodox churches of Great Britain for parallel texts suited to congregations of mixed nationality that may have attracted native speakers of English and where second and third generations of migrants are more at ease in the language of their adopted country.

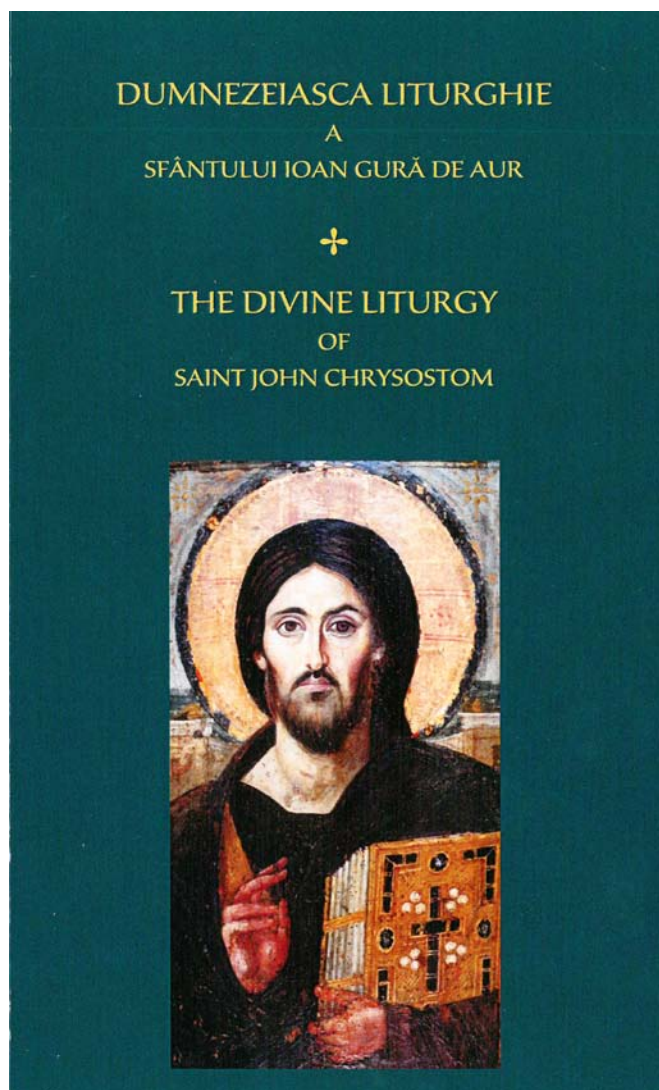
Our first venture has been to marry the text of the authorized Romanian version of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom to a version in modern English that the reviewer for PRAXIS: NEWS OR WORSHIP (Issue 46, June 2015) (who attended an actual service in Cambridge) found 'expertly crafted', and which, with 'the beautiful unaccompanied singing', had 'language moving seamlessly from Romanian to English by priest, choir, or the whole congregation, [so that] everyone has a feeling of true participation.'

Production costs of the parallel text were roughly £3 a copy for a 139 pp. booklet that also includes the hymns at the liturgy sung throughout the Church's year. After equipping two churches, in Cambridge and London,



the Institute was able (by a happy accident whereby the printer sent 350 extra copies and invited us to keep them) to equip for free two Romanian mission churches in Ireland.

The Institute has announced that it is willing to produce similar parallel texts, at cost, for any church that supplies the version authorised for use in their Church and



wants it paired with our modern English version. Our hope is to accustom the Orthodox congregations of Great Britain to good English versions of texts such as the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the 'Prayer before Communion', so that all Orthodox worshippers may have experience of a common translation.

An edition in English of The Liturgies of Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Basil is available from the Institute direct or from Amazon. There is also at present a plan to produce a parallel text for singing in Romanian and English the 'Lamentations', and to compile a booklet in English containing versions of Baptism and Chrismation, the Marriage and Funeral services, for possible use in future parallel-text editions.

IOCS Conference 2015: Christian Faith, Identity and Otherness: possibilities and limitations of dialogue in ecumenical and interfaith discourse



Revd Professor Nikolaos Loudovikos delivering his conference lecture

From 31st August to 2nd September IOCS hosted an international conference on Christian Faith, Identity and Otherness, which explored the possibilities and limitations of dialogue in ecumenical and interfaith discourse. The conference, which took place in Sidney Sussex College, examined the nature of Christian faith and identity, and how Christians can appropriately relate to other Church traditions and other religions. The starting-point of the conference was the insight that dialogue is often still uncritically idealized as the mode of discourse par excellence to access truth. It is believed that dialogue somehow enables us to transcend specific manifestations of lived religion, and to access the common, universal core of human existence. Or, by contrast, different religious beliefs and practices are viewed as

incommensurable, and dialogue is exposed as a manipulatory rhetorical tool in disguise. From this perspective, any attempt to initiate dialogue is viewed as an encroachment of the dominant and more powerful interlocutor on the ideological territory of the other. According to this theory, co-existence of proponents of different religious traditions



Professor Ivana Noble

necessarily has an antagonistic character.

The aim of the conference was to explore alternative and more nuanced views of dialogue and religious encounters. The speakers were invited to either theoretically reflect on the function and limitations of dialogue, or to analyse historical and theological case studies of ecumenical and interfaith encounters. Prof Ivana Noble (Charles University of Prague), Dr Razvan Porumb (IOCS) and Revd Dr Alexander Tefft (IOCS), drawing on a number different Orthodox thinkers, examined what role the Orthodox Church can and should play in the ongoing ecumenical dialogue. Revd Prof Nikolaos Loudovikos (University Ecclesiastical Academy of Thessaloniki) analysed the hidden, psychological dimension of the ecumenical dialogue that often secretly influences the course and outcome of theological debates. Drawing on the patristic distinction between the one Logos, Christ, and the many logoi in Creation, Dr Brandon Gallaher (University of Exeter) presented an outline of an Orthodox comparative theology that avoids both fundamentalism and liberalism. Dr Dominic Rubin (Higher School of Economics, Moscow) gave an account of Orthodox-Muslim interaction in Russia today, which was based on extensive fieldwork in Russia, and Dr Mangala Frost (IOCS) compared the respective



attitudes to suffering in Orthodoxy and Hinduism. Our guest from the Woolf Institute, Dr Gorazd Andrejč, elucidated the difference between dialogue, conversation and discursive encounter, and explained what role these different types of discourse play in interreligious dialogue. Dr Kateřina Bauerová (Charles University of Prague) gave a paper on Sergei Bulgakov's and Joanna Reitlinger's experience of otherness in exile, using philosophical ideas from Gaston Bachelard's work. The conference was concluded by a plenary discussion that recapitulated the most important arguments and insights of the conference.



IOCS RESEARCH CENTRE 2014-2015

The Research Centre of our Institute, organized by Dr Christine Mangala Frost, has recently acquired as a Research Associate His Grace Ignatie Muresanul, a Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Church with responsibilities for the Romanian congregations in the British Isles. The Centre has continued its activity by organising regular Seminars where a number of scholars presented some important findings to their peers. Our last Research Seminars were:



- ❖ 27 November 2014: Father Dragos Herescu (Doctoral researcher, Durham): ***'Religion in Romania: Considerations on the origins of ethno-religiosity, Church-State relations and secularisation.'***

Father Dragos is Vice-Principal and Assistant Lecturer of the Institute. He is an alumni of the Institute, having completed the MA in Pastoral Theology some years ago. He later graduated an MPhil in Theology with the Divinity Faculty, University of Cambridge. He is currently undertaking doctoral research with Durham University, exploring the secularisation paradigm in the social and religious context of Eastern Orthodoxy, with particular focus on Romania.

- ❖ 17 March 2015. Father Isidoros Charalambos (Doctoral researcher, University of Cambridge): ***'Divine Infinity in Philo of Alexandria: Much ado about Nothing?'***

Father Isidoros is a PhD research student with the Divinity Faculty of the University of Cambridge, and a Deacon of the Archdiocese of Athens, serving during his studies at St Athanasios Church, Cambridge.

- ❖ 19 May 2015. Dr Christine Mangala Frost: (Cambridge): ***'The Quest for the Divine: an appraisal of Bhakti (Hindu devotional tradition) from an Orthodox Christian Perspective.'***

Dr Christine Mangala Frost, B.A.Hons. (Delhi), MA (Osmania), PhD (Cantab), is a Research Associate and guest lecturer for IOCS. A convert from Hinduism, her writings, lectures and broadcasts explore inter-faith issues. Currently, she is preparing a book entitled: *The Human Icon: a Comparative Study of Hindu and Orthodox Christian Beliefs*. She has served on the organizing committee of THE WAY project, as contributor and editor of the video box-set.

- ❖ 14 July 2015. Father Marius Obreja (Doctoral researcher, Iasi, Romania) - ***'Sickness and suffering: a multidisciplinary perspective.'***

Fr Marius has recently commenced a PhD studentship in Iasi, Romania, and was in Cambridge for three months on an Erasmus research scholarship with the Institute. Fr Marius serves as a priest in Iasi, Romania.

- ❖ 26 November 2015. Remus Manoila (Doctoral researcher, Bucharest): ***'Reading the Fathers in the seventeenth century: Isaac Newton on the Unity of the deity.'***

Remus Gabriel Manoila is a PhD candidate at the University of Bucharest and a visiting student at the University of Cambridge (History and Philosophy of Science Department). His doctoral research is entitled 'The Concept of Dominion in Isaac Newton's Thought: an Intellectual History Research', focusing on Newton's theological and natural philosophical papers. Remus earned a BA in Orthodox Theology (2012) and an MA in Philology (2013) at the University of Bucharest.

- ❖ 10 December 2015. Dr Philip Gorsky (Nottingham): ***'Richard Rolle, The English Medieval Mystics, and the Eastern Orthodox Tradition.'***

Dr Philip Gorski is a Research Associate of the Institute. He has taught at the Universities of London (Goldsmiths') Loughborough and Nottingham Trent. His Doctorate (The University of Nottingham) was entitled 'Holy Foolishness, Russian Literature and Christianity'. Dr Gorski has published in the areas of Russian Literature, English Literature and Orthodox Christianity.

Between 21 April and 21 July 2015 I had the opportunity to come to Cambridge in order to gather sources and data for my PhD thesis through the prestigious Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies. I came on an Erasmus scholarship offered by the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Iasi, Romania. I wish to express my gratitude for the warm accessibility and Christian love that I felt amongst the wonderful team of scholars at this Institute.

The rich book collection I have discovered during my three months of study helped me enormously with my theme of research, revealing to me new perspectives on the ancient Orthodox tradition within the Western Christian space.

During the three months spent at the Institute I had the opportunity to interact with other MA or PhD students from other countries, and the exchange of ideas and perspectives regarding not only the study but also the *praxis* of our Christian faith was crucial to the development of my research.

Reflecting now on the wonderful experience I enjoyed at IOCS I cannot emphasise enough my conviction that this wonderful place is and must remain an oasis of light for all those who wish to deepen the Word of God given to us humans by our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

May our good Lord bless this missionary work and we pray that this Institute will endure 'unto the ages of ages, Amen!'

Priest Marius-Emanuel Obreja
Visiting Scholar IOCS



The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies is burgeoning into a world-class centre of Orthodox faith and learning, and I am proud to be a part of it. It gives access to the best Orthodox scholars from around the globe; to a staff that is committed to clear, honest, engaging dialogue; to students with amazingly different backgrounds; and to an ethos that seeks both to bring Orthodoxy into the hearts and minds of all those they encounter and to encourage vocations among those who seek the will of God.

From my earliest days as a certificate student up until now as I continue my journey to priesthood and embark on a PhD in Orthodox Theology, I have found in IOCS a house of study and a place of prayer that supports both my intellectual and vocational growth. This can clearly be seen in their assistance in the development of my dissertation topic, which is 'An Inquiry into the Concept of "Vicarious Satisfaction" as it relates to the Theory and Practice of "Spiritual Fatherhood" in the Orthodox Church'.

Through this most personal and professional of research, I hope to bring to the world a sense of and a desire for true, spiritual fatherhood and motherhood. By examining the theology, liturgy, and spirituality of the Orthodox Church, as well as the lives of the saints, I hope to be able to articulate and emulate what Jesus teaches us about intercession: namely, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34) and "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Many thanks and Merry Christmas to the friends and family of IOCS!

Thomas A. Colyandro
PhD Student, IOCS



IOCS AND THE ORTHODOX PARISHES IN THE UK

Father Dragos Herescu

The Institute is mostly known for the teaching and research that it does, whether in Cambridge or by distance learning. However, while the Institute continues to work and consider new ways of providing access to Orthodox theology and scholarship, it also aims to connect with the parishes and the wider Orthodox witness in the UK. The possibilities and opportunities of parishes working together with the



Institute have been made abundantly clear this year, in Cambridge, via the collaboration between IOCS and the Romanian Orthodox Parish of St John the Evangelist. In Cambridge, the link between the Romanian parish and the Institute was strengthened by the fact that I, a former student at IOCS on their Masters programme, and subsequently a member of staff, have been appointed parish priest in 2014. While all this facilitated, unsurprisingly, a good rapport between the Institute and the Romanian parish, one must emphasise, as impartially as possible, that the collaboration between the parish and the Institute felt very natural and indeed, beneficial – something that any parish priest might wish for.

While the Romanian parish in Cambridge belongs to the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of Western and Central Europe (under the care of His Eminence,



Metropolitan Iosif Pop) - and most Orthodox parishes in the UK similarly belong to overseas jurisdictions - it welcomes and is home to a mixed congregation, including native English speakers, Greeks and Russians. Therefore, the Sunday service is celebrated in both Romanian and English. With the help of the Institute, what was potentially a difficulty turned out to be a huge opportunity and, indeed, a blessing.

The Institute has responded to a pastoral need by providing bilingual Romanian-English Divine Liturgy books to the congregation. The benefit is multi-fold: native and non-native speakers of English have access to a clean, updated yet liturgically sensitive translation of the Divine Liturgy; also, the congregation is able to get better accustomed to the text and ritual of the service; finally, the books have become a catechetical tool, being the perfect place to start informal or organised discussions about the Orthodox faith and practice. Although Romanians use the vernacular for services, to have the English translation in parallel with the Romanian text often helps clarify or enlighten passages that in Romanian may sound either too



poetic or somewhat unclear.

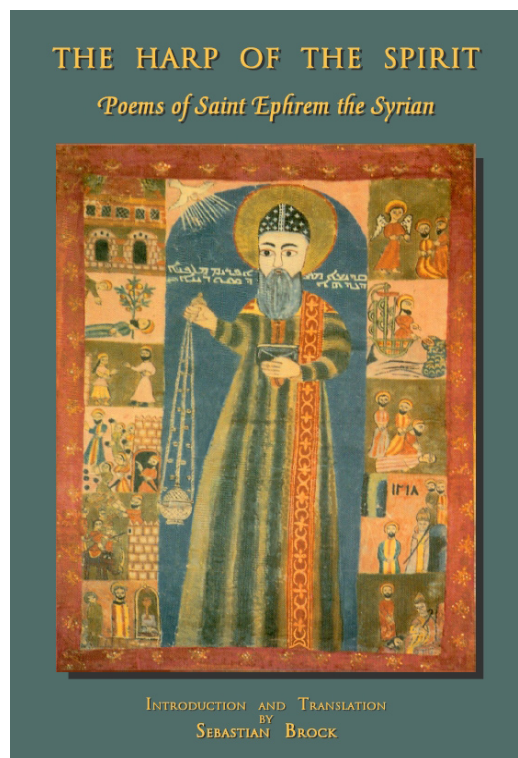
The Bilingual Liturgy project is just one of the ways in which the Institute has helped and can help. At least two more Romanian parishes in the UK and Ireland have requested copies of the bilingual Divine Liturgy book, and the feedback has been very positive. In Cambridge, plans are in place for a bilingual prayer book and other similar texts. The primary aim is to respond to pastoral need. However, the larger hope is that such collaborations will strengthen the Orthodox mission and witness in the UK and the English-speaking world, affirming Orthodoxy as a faith that transcends national or ethnic boundaries, while bringing to light the best in each nation's Orthodox tradition.

HOMILY ON THE NATIVITY

by Saint Ephrem the Syrian



'It is a source of great amazement, my beloved,
that someone should enquire into the wonder
of how God came down
and made His dwelling in a womb,
and how that Being
put on the body of man,
spending nine months in a womb,
not shrinking from such a home;
and how a womb of flesh was able
to carry flaming fire,
and how a flame dwelt
in a moist womb which did not get burnt up.
Just as the bush on Horeb bore
God in the flame,
so did Mary bear
Christ in her virginity.
Perfectly God,
He entered the womb through her ear,
in all purity the God-Man
came forth from the womb into creation.
A virgin is pregnant with God,
and a barren woman is pregnant with a virgin,
the son of sterility leaps
at the pregnancy of virginity.
A novel wonder has God
performed among the earth-born,
in that He is born without marriage,
and His herald's birth too is beyond nature's bounds.
He who measures the heavens with the span of His hand
lies in a manger a span's breadth;
He whose cupped hands contain the sea
is born in a cave;
His glory fills the heavens
and the manger is filled with His splendour.
Moses wished to see His glory
but was unable to see Him as he wished;
let us come and see Him today
as He lies in the manger in swaddling clothes.
Formerly there was none who dared
to see God and still live,
but today all who have seen Him
are saved from second death.
Moses depicted His symbols
when he saw fire in the bush,
the Magi fulfilled these symbols
when they saw fire in the swaddling clothes.
A voice cried out of the bush to Moses
that he loose his sandals from his feet,
the silence of a star told the Magi
to come to the sacred place.
Moses was unable to see
the Godhead, as Scripture tells,
but the Magi entered and saw
the Godhead who had become man.
The cave corresponds to the heavens
and Moses to the Magi;
if the hearer asks
where the correspondence lies,
between Moses, head of the prophets,
and the Magi, heads of Persia,
he should be persuaded by the fact
that, had not God in former time
chosen out wise and discerning men
to be His heralds,



He would not have accepted gifts
from hands that were not holy.
Moses depicted the symbols,
our Lord fulfilled them.
The face of Moses shone
when God spoke with him,
and he laid a veil over his face
for the people were unable to behold him
— just as our Lord, from the womb,
entered and put on the veil of the body;
He shone out and went forth, and the Magi
beheld Him and brought gifts.
Great is the amazement on this earth of ours
that the Lord of all has come down to it:
God has become man,
the Ancient has become a child,
the Master has become like His servants,
the King's Son is as someone despised.
The exalted nature has become low,
mixing itself with our nature,
taking upon itself, for us all,
what is alien to its nature.
Who is it who will not listen to this wonder,
that God has come to be born?
Who will not be amazed when he sees
that the Lord of the angels has been born?'

This Homily was taken from the book *The Harp of the Spirit. Poems of Saint Ephrem the Syrian*, translated by Dr Sebastian Brock and published by the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, Cambridge (available from our website - www.iocs.cam.ac.uk/publications.html - or Amazon).

You can also listen to the complete homily on our website read by Professor David Frost, (one of our most popular downloads, at <http://sms.cam.ac.uk/media/1856051>)



FORTHCOMING BOOKS AND PROJECTS FROM IOCS

Revd Dr John Binns - *The History of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church*

Dr John Binns was appointed Visiting Professor at the Institute to carry out a research project into the history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Ethiopia has an important part to play in the history of Christianity. Its first bishop was consecrated by Athanasios of Alexandria in 342, and the Church has maintained its witness in the highlands of East Africa ever since. Its life combines the Syriac theological traditions of the Middle East, a hierarchy sent from Egypt, with influences from Africa and Asia. It has managed to co-exist - usually peacefully - with its Islamic neighbours, and has maintained its characteristic identity despite various missionary initiatives by Roman Catholic and Protestant missions. It is the only pre-colonial Christian Church of sub-Saharan Africa, and if current membership trends continue, it is predicted to become the largest Orthodox Church in the world by 2050. The project to research and present the history and theology of this Church has been supported by the Institute, and we look forward to seeing the results.



John Binns lecturing on the Ethiopian Church for one of the Institute's Community Days

Note: Professor John Binns has been asked by his publisher, I. B. Tauris for a proposal for a book on Orthodox monasticism which he hopes to draw up in collaboration with IOCS.

Dr Razvan Porumb - *Orthodoxy and Ecumenism: Towards Active Metanoia*



The author says: 'The questions that have underlined and motivated my book have been: *Why do members of the Orthodox Church participate in the ecumenical movement, and how can they negotiate an involvement in ecumenical contexts, together with their non-Orthodox counterparts – considering that the Orthodox see their*

Church as the one and only true Church?

'This project is based on the analysis of sources from contemporary Orthodox and Western theological milieux. It has interpreted these sources with a view to determining how they interact and coalesce into visions that inform the relationship between Orthodoxy and ecumenism. My book attempts to delineate paradigms for Orthodoxy and ecumenism that will enable future ecumenical interactions of greater efficiency and integrity. Such paradigms outline a vision wherein central aspects of Orthodox theology would move away from a paradigm of 'passive conservatism' to one of 'active metanoia' (transformation), while ecumenism

would come to be seen as a perennial process and an intrinsic aspect of theology. These vantage points define a new Orthodox vision of ecumenism as an ever-enlarging catholicity, by restoring to the foreground the common theological core of both Orthodoxy and ecumenism – the concept of 'human consubstantiality' (Staniloae) derived from Trinitarian theology. According to this concept, Christian life has as its main direction an unceasing motion towards an ever fuller, ever wider human communion based on the Trinitarian dynamic by which each of the three Persons communicates with the others in a continual rotation of self-giving, love and ministry. This overall theological vision would enable the Orthodox to see themselves not in triumphalist terms as 'passive conservators' of Tradition against the perceived onslaughts of schismatics and heretics, but as 'consubstantial' with all human beings and fellow-travellers (or indeed fellow-penitents) with all who seek a transformed life in communion with God.

'No similar study acknowledging and exploring at length these tensions between Orthodoxy and ecumenism, as well as proposing a different perspective or paradigm vis-à-vis ecumenism rooted in Orthodox theology has ever, to my knowledge, been done before. Research on this theme is generally scarce as it runs counter to a prevailing inclination in Orthodox circles to avoid or marginalise the topic of ecumenism as inflammatory, or even as an attack or betrayal of the Church establishment. Such research – and its dissemination – is nevertheless all the more necessary, given the context of Orthodox prejudice as regards ecumenism, which is itself a distortion of Christian life and witness.'



Dr Christine Mangala Frost - *The Human Icon: A Comparative Study of Hindu and Orthodox Christian Beliefs*



The author says: 'I am an Orthodox Christian with a unique, first-hand experience of what it is like to be a committed religious Hindu and yet experiencing the riches of Christianity in the vibrant theology and worship of the Orthodox tradition.'

'I was born and brought up in a Hindu brahmin family which boasts an illustrious line of scholar-pundits, poets and composers, dating back to the sixteenth century. Retrospectively, I understand and appreciate how my Hindu experience had prepared me to embrace the Christian faith, where I found and continue to find the "The Way, the Truth, the Life".'

'I am now prompted to assess "the good, the bad, and the ugly" in my Hindu background. Likewise, even as I am fully committed to the Orthodox Church as bearing the "fullness of truth", I am aware of its all too human limitations. Not surprisingly, many among those disenchanted with Christianity turn to Hindu beliefs and practices. Orthodox writers have not yet responded fully to the Hindu religious world nor recognized the need to face the challenges that arise from such an encounter. I have met both Orthodox questioning Hindus and Hindus questioning Orthodox Christianity. This book is an attempt to facilitate dialogue as "respectful conversation" between two strong, ancient, vibrant traditions.'

'This is a pioneering study with themes such as: "The dialogue of life in the Indian Syrian Orthodox Tradition"; "Divinization in Classical vedanta, as compared with *theosis*"; "The Hindu devotional tradition (*bhakti*) and the Orthodox approach to God as 'the Lover of Mankind'"; "Suffering and evil: Karma and the Cross"; "Yoga and hesychasm"; "Signs and Wonders: Orthodox Spiritual Elders and Hindu 'Holy men'".

'My comparative study has a threefold aim:

1. To promote a nuanced understanding of Hinduism which

has been likened to a "Great Banyan Tree" as it fosters a great number of religious beliefs under its canopy; to locate areas of convergence and divergence with their counterparts in Orthodox Christianity.

2. To take up the challenges posed by Hindu religious beliefs and practices which are now globally disseminated directly and indirectly through yoga, meditation, devotion to Kṛṣṇa, gurus, swamis and matajis who propagate various modes of "Self-realization"; to offer an Orthodox perspective on key Christian themes and to invite Hindus and other non-Christians, to "come and see", as Philip said to Nathaniel.

3. To identify problems, conundrums that both faiths have in common and how they deal with the challenges they embody.'

Extract 1:

'When I was seven years old I remember an odd event in the village home of my grandfather Y. Mahalinga Sastri. A ouija board had been set up, with a pencil attached to it. Some strangers were assisting grandfather in invoking the spirit of a distant ancestor. This was no ordinary psychic event. The ancestor who was invoked was no less than Sri Appayya Dīkshita (1520-1573). Dīkshita was a renowned Sanskrit scholar and hymnographer, especially valued for his commentaries on the nondualist (advaita) school of Vedānta. His works are still studied by scholars world-wide. Our family is proud of (one might say even obsessed with) the honour of being able to claim direct descent from this illustrious saintly figure from the sixteenth century.'

'That morning my grandfather, who was not normally given to spiritualist activities, was summoning Appayya Dīkshita from the other-world by means of a ouija board; not for any psychological solace or counsel, which are the standard reasons for invoking the spirits of the dead, but to settle a controversial literary issue. My grandfather was writing the biography of Dīkshita and he was embroiled in a controversy over the question of when exactly the great man was born. Whether the ouija medium delivered the right answer or not we were never told, but my grandfather did resolve the problem through painstaking research and the dates he settled on, 1520-1573, were accepted by subsequent scholars.'

Extract 2:

'Supposing Śāṅkara, or Rāmānuja were to meet St. Basil or Gregory of Nazianzus, or, supposing a Hindu worshipping an idol of Kṛṣṇa or Śiva were to meet an Orthodox Christian venerating icons of Christ, the Mother of God and the Saints ((or vice-a versa) – supposing such a scenario, how would they respond? What will they have to say to each other? How can one promote mutual understanding, respect and magnanimity of spirit while acknowledging crucial divergences?'



JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME

by Carol, a participant in the IOCS Icon Painting workshop

What a journey! It started in the cradle, being brought up in the very strict confines of the religious life of the Plymouth Brethren (certainly no make-up, no viewing films, no games on a Sunday, and absolutely no icons), developed through being sent to a Methodist Sunday School, into the waters of baptism in a Baptist Church, finding the glories of liturgy in a central London Church of England (and discovering that I would not be struck down for appreciating art), then (at the Retreat Centre of the House of Prayer in Surrey) being introduced, by the talented and meticulous Annie Shaw, to the wonders of the Orthodox Church and the powerful metaphors and teachings of icons, and ending with the news that Russian Orthodox Master Iconographer Nikita Andrejev would be coming to the Institute of Orthodox Christian Studies in the UK in September.



So I booked into his course at Cambridge, and was safely delivered to my Bed and Breakfast accommodation for the week, by one husband and one small black dog. Left to settle in, I wondered what the week would hold. With no artistic training at all, I was more than somewhat hesitant, while at the same time, tremendously keen to immerse myself in this astounding discipline.

The first morning of the course was a beautiful Autumn day. Birds caroling the Harvest renewal and the rich bronze of this season, and my heart beating rather faster as I approached the venue. As befits its self-effacing approach to life, the entrance to the IOCS in Cambridge is tucked away modestly at the back of the building and graced by an enormous spreading tree giving shelter in summer and protection from rain in the wilder months. So I turned up for the first day, nervous as a new girl at 'big' school at the start of the Autumn term, hungry to learn.

Other students had arrived earlier, and so we introduced ourselves to each other, and I tried not to feel too daunted by the fact that most of my fellow delegates had considerable previous experience. But the universal language of a cuppa (all ingredients laid enticingly out for us to make and take) soon brought a coherent expectancy.

A slender, distinguished-looking man, with abundant hair tied back in a low knot, came quietly amongst us and all eight students settled at one huge table where Nikita presented us with our boards in readiness for our work. He then led us in a beautiful sung liturgy, giving us the sense of joining the throng of generations who had done such work over many centuries beforehand. After that, he gave a brief but inspiring talk about the foundations of iconography (in particular the disciplines of the Prosopon School) and, having laid out his large desk with all necessities, we started to work.

The snow white linen was first etched with the appropriate image (in my case the Archangel Michael) and in due course completely covered with the background wash, and this was the start of metaphor after metaphor illuminating such precious work. Nikita's artistry with pigments and brushes kept spurring us on as he showed us each layer to follow. And with liturgical



music playing in the background to create a calming atmosphere, there was little 'flummery' (idle chat) to distract. So the days passed, with the rhythm of sung liturgy to start, brief lecture to follow, and then working hard as Nikita's careful planning ensured we would depart the course with a completed icon provided we followed his directions.

What astonished me was how tremendously forgiving the whole medium of egg tempera is! As I blundered through my attempts to let the light emerge from within the image on the board, dismay over my

mistakes soon turned to delight as Nikita's patient attention and skill demonstrated that it was *always* going to be a case of "All is *not* lost". . .

Working in the beautiful Library, as we were at the IOCS, meant we had the chance to study different books showing different styles of icons. The light to work by was difficult at first, but this essential necessity was soon sorted out by the helpfulness of staff and students alike (some of whom brought in lamps of their own). Observing such a range of skills was a rich feast in itself, and the generous encouragement of one to another made for a sweet space in which to work.

And the evening brought the joys of exploring the local hostelrys for some decent pub grub, and relaxing over a meal together. Such varied histories had brought us all to this place and this time, and created a rich diversity of thought and opinion!

On seeing the gilding work I had done on my very first icon of the Archangel Gabriel, and now seeing it on Michael, my poet husband produced the following poem to be read at the dedication, which he has kindly allowed me to reproduce below as a coda to this article. The final day brought the luxury of IOCS allowing us early admittance so that those of us running a little behind could catch up with the others! A former student brought in her beautifully crafted icon for Nikita to demonstrate how to oil it, and it lay in a sunny window-sill in our work room as a spur to us all to reach that point. Without exception, all of us wanted further opportunities to work with such a talented, modest and calming tutor. So this write-up finishes with my heartfelt blessings and greetings to Nikita and all my fellow-students (if they should happen to read this), and the wish that further such courses may soon appear on the great horizon of life.



Priceless

*Behind the suppliant head,
the glint and glister of our High Home,
the hint of The Holy of Holies,
in which the gilded cost of Atonement abides.*

*We, obviously, have not seen that Temple,
yet in a manner we have –
The Ark Of The Covenant
becoming sweat and sleep on
Earth's ruined shore;
24-carat love, pure and pierced;
gouged meekness, grace defiled,
in shocking exile from The Mercy Seat.
Bereft and tarnished
for a seared season - for us.*

*This gold absolves us,
for in the New Jerusalem
such incandescence will be the architecture.
Luminous streets, transparent paths,
a safe state;
nothing to do with yellow brick roads,
the counting houses of Babel, or the folly of pyrite.
For this is where He wears the Sun as a crown,
our corona of redemption
towards which we will rise.
And unlike Icarus we will not perish or plunge
.....but become unblemished.
Behind the suppliant head, all this gold,
our waiting inheritance.*

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ICON PAINTING WORKSHOP WITH NIKITA ANDREJEV 2016

1. INTRODUCTORY ICONOGRAPHY COURSE WITH THE PROSON SCHOOL OF ICONOLOGY

**Monday, 4 April -
Saturday, 9 April 2016**

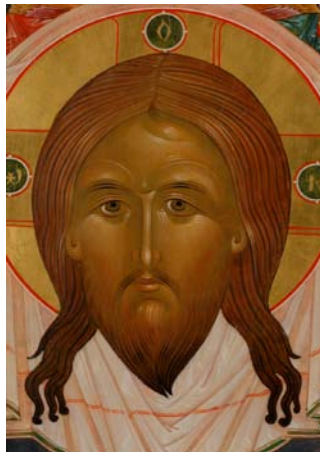
❖ A unique introduction to
iconography and its meaning!



2. INTERMEDIATE ICONOGRAPHY COURSE WITH THE PROSON SCHOOL OF ICONOLOGY

**Monday, 5 September -
Saturday, 10 September 2016**

- ❖ Aimed at the student who has
painted at least one icon in the
Proson method
- ❖ The subject will be the Image
of Christ Not-Made-by-Hand (the
Holy Mandylion).



PARTICIPATION FEE FOR THE WEEK: £350

(which includes personal
tuition and all materials, plus
tea and coffee)

Please note that accommodation
and meals are not provided. We can
recommend neighbouring B & B's, and
also riverside venues for lunch, within
walking distance.

How to Enrol :

By telephone: 01223 741037
by email at: info@iocs.cam.ac.uk
more information on our website:
www.iocs.cam.ac.uk.

Advance payment is necessary to
secure a place. Numbers limited
to 12 only for each course.

**TIMETABLE:
4 APRIL – 9 APRIL
&
5 SEPT - 10 SEPT**

**10 AM–1 PM: SESSION 1
1–2 PM: LUNCH BREAK
2–6 PM: SESSION 2 (2-5
PM ON SATURDAY)**

IOCS Distance Learning and New Equipment

IOCS has been offering courses taught by Distance Learning for a number of years. Given that we are an Orthodox Institute in Western Europe, it is crucial that we can also reach people outside the UK. This year we for the first time offered our postgraduate degree in Theology, Ministry and Mission by Distance Learning. The equipment we purchased allows us to teach in mixed groups: some students are present in the classroom while others use their computers and webcams in their respective home countries to attend the class. Our new conference camera not only enables external students to see what is going on in the classroom, they can also communicate with their tutor and fellow students. Likewise, the on-site students in the classroom can see the video image of each of the external students projected onto a screen. In Michaelmas term we extensively tested this new equipment and were impressed by its high quality and ease of use. We therefore intend to use it in the future not only for the teaching of university courses, but also for other IOCS events. People who do not have the time or energy to travel to Cambridge to attend a particular lecture or conference will be able to watch the live video broadcast of IOCS events from the comfort of their living room.

One of our plans for 2016 is to revise and improve our in-house Distance Learning Programme, which consists of a Certificate and Diploma course. A great deal of the teaching material needs to be revised and improved, and many of the video lectures have to be



re-recorded. In order to bring our equipment up to date, and to enhance the audio and video quality, we also need to acquire a new camera which will cost us about £1000 (the Logitech ConferenceCam CC3000e we use for live Distance Learning is unsuitable for this purpose). The IOCS Distance Learning Programme is popular among students who do not want the pressure of a university course, but still wish to study Orthodox theology under the guidance of a qualified tutor. We owe it to our faithful students to invest time and money to make the Certificate and Diploma high-quality courses that can serve the Orthodox community world-wide for many years. A number of scholars associated with IOCS have already agreed to assist us in this endeavour. The revised version will combine what has been working well in the last years with new and innovative ways of presenting and disseminating teaching material about Orthodox life and thought. Our aim is to design a course that is the equivalent of an undergraduate university course. This will enable students to take the Certificate and Diploma as a preparation for further academic studies on university level.

Dr Christoph Schneider, Academic Director

THE INSTITUTE WISH-LIST FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR



We have needs to accommodate the most generous company sponsor, the banker's bonus or the widow's mite! Just talk to us at +44 (0)1223 741037, e-mail to info@iocs.cam.ac.uk or write to 'Help at Hand', IOCS, Palamas House, 25-27 High Street, Chesterton, Cambridge CB4 1ND. Donate through our new website at www.iocs.cam.ac.uk, through 'Cambridge in America' for U.S. tax relief, or through 'Gift Aid' for U.K. taxpayers, which allows the government to give us another 25% on your donation.

FOR DIVES

DONATE sufficient to pay off one of the charitable interest-free loans that enabled us to buy Palamas House. (They are £350,000, £160,000, £60,000, £50,000 and £30,000 – and you can name a portion of the building after a beloved relative or for the saint of your choice).

GIVE to re-furbish and equip a teaching room – and name it. (But remember that we lose as much as £500 a month of a present tenant's rent.)

OFFER an urgently needed extension to our Library to accommodate all those books given to us by eminent scholars that are still in store. (The cost is substantial – but dedicate it in honour of our first President, Metropolitan Kallistos, and you'll hardly feel the pain!)

BUY OR RENT a modest Seminary House in Chesterton, from which ordinands may study at IOCS (£350,000 to buy, £1,000+ per month to rent.)

IMITATE the example of the Koga Post-Doctoral Fellowship, which brings a young scholar to study and teach at the Institute for three years. (£30,000 in each year.)

ENDOW a Professorship or a Lectureship that brings a major figure from the U.K. or from abroad to teach at the Institute. (Your endowment would need to yield a return of some £30,000 to £50,000 a year to cover costs.)

GUARANTEE an overdraft facility for the Institute against our remaining equity in our property. (The Institute suffers a recurrent cashflow problem because no bank will give us an overdraft, though we have £120,000 of our reserves tied up in the building. At most, it'll cost you bank interest.)

PLEASE CONSIDER BEQUEATHING your estate to the Institute, or remember us in your will. One gift, from Helen Mary Dixon, enabled us to look for our own base when we were homeless after the closing of Wesley House. We remember her with gratitude at our annual Commemoration of Benefactors on the day of our Patron Saint, Catherine of Alexandria, where we remember by name and pray for all those, living and dead, who have supported the Institute over the years. The Roll of Benefactors now numbers some 114 people and organisations – and growing. And if you are able to anticipate some of your future generosity – though the Institute (as we used to say) may 'have expectations' – the urgent need is now!

FOR LAZARUS

JOIN the 'Cappuccino Campaign' and give by bank standing order the cost of a coffee (or two or three) per month to meet recurring needs – such as heating and light. (We have around 24 donors at present, raising about £1,000 each month, £12,000 a year). And ask a friend or friends to follow your example.

SPONSOR the production of a podcast in the 'Cambridge Forum' series on Ancient Faith Radio, or a video recording of a lecture for distance learning or to go out from the Cambridge University website. (Lecturers normally donate their services, as do the recording staff – so it is only around £100 for travel and production costs.)

FUND a whole Community Lecture Day. (Each Day costs about £400 to run, for the lecturer's travel and the communal lunch, coffee and tea – but you and a rich friend can join us for free and be enticed further by what we do.)

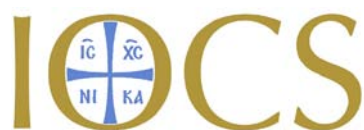
PURCHASE an urgently needed video camera and sound-recorder to improve the quality of our distance learning lectures. (Perhaps £500 or so – more if you want bells on!)

FIX the drainage problem that threatens to collapse a structural wall. (- Sorry! That one's already taken. But for another £700 we can repair a leaking water-tank in the roof.)

PERSUADE your congregation or your diocese to help fund a student at IOCS (£2,000 for a two-year Certificate or Diploma course by Distance Learning, rather more for an ordinand taking a three year B.A. on site in Cambridge or a one year M.A. by distance learning). But they can probably take out a student loan or get help from a charity – so it is chiefly a case of organizing ways and means.



Our Principal reading the Roll of Benefactors during this year's festive Liturgy on St Catherine's Day - the Patron Saint of the Institute



The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, Cambridge

Community Lecture Days 2016

CONTEMPORARY FATHERS AND MOTHERS OF THE CHURCH GUIDES FOR TODAY'S WORLD



20th February
Revd Dr Seraphim Aldea

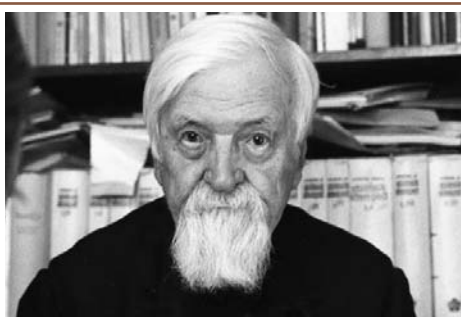
Father Sophrony
Sakharov

19th March
Dr Krastu Banev

Saint Maria of Paris
(Skoptsova)

16th April
Revd Dr Danut Manastireanu

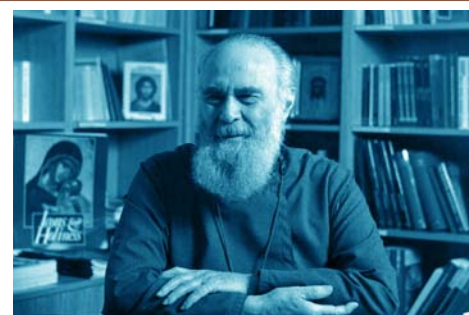
Father Dumitru
Staniloae



21st May
Irina Kirillova MBE
Metropolitan
Anthony of Sourozh



18th June
Karen Hetherington
Saint Macarius
Glukharev and Saint
Macarius Nevsky



OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE WILL ADDRESS THE SAME THEME, BETWEEN 29-31 AUGUST 2016 AT SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE. MORE DETAILS ON OUR WEBSITE SOON

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

Reduced upfront payment for all 5 days: £120
Students can attend for free (£5 if lunch included)

Payments are to be made in advance online at
www.iocs.cam.ac.uk/payments.html or by cheque.

Payments on the day are also accepted.

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.

All are welcome to the public programme of study days at IOCS Cambridge. These study days offer a wonderful opportunity to get to hear distinguished lecturers addressing a number of major themes related to the role of Orthodoxy in the world today.

All this with lunch, refreshments, discussion sessions, and vespers.

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

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

Please send a message with your name and address prior to the event to confirm attendance, either by e-mail to info@iocs.cam.ac.uk or by mail to IOCS, 25-27 High Street Chesterton, Cambridge CB4 1ND, UK. For more information please visit our website at www.iocs.cam.ac.uk, write to us by email or phone us at 01223 741037