



**Newsletter
Christmas
& New Year
2020-2021**

MESSAGE FROM THE INSTITUTE



Dr Christoph Schneider (Academic Director), Dr Razvan Porumb (Vice-Principal) and Father Dragos Herescu (Principal)

An unusual year

Just like for everyone else around the world the pandemic came as a shock to IOCS staff and students, and caused some disruption as the members of staff – as well as many students – had to make arrangements to work or study from home. However, the Institute has continued to operate largely unaffected as all of its study programmes were already offered online, or had an online component. None of the full-time Cambridge-based staff, tutors, or students have reported contracting COVID 19, which has been a blessing and a relief. The three full-time members of the staff have continued to work full-time, mostly from home, either engaged in teaching, administration or the organisation of online-events.

Distance Learning courses

The Institute has continued to run its postgraduate degrees – the MA in Contemporary Faith and Belief and the MA in Spirituality – with nine students enrolled in various stages of the programmes, plus six MPhil/ PhD students. Our most popular programme, the Certificate in Orthodox Christian Studies has continued to offer its modules with an average cohort of 45 students throughout its

five bi-monthly modules. We have received four visiting scholars who spent time at IOCS working on their doctoral or post-doctoral research. Also, the Institute is finally able to offer for the first time a Sabbatical Scholarship in Cambridge, available this past year, but also in 2021- Scholarships offered through the kind generosity of one of our students and supporters, Mrs Kathleen Eden.

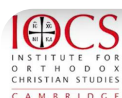
Lockdown Conversation Days

During these difficult times, we felt that one way of coping with the pandemic would be to create a space for reflection, conversation, and dialogue that would address this unusual context. This has led to the introduction of a novel series of online events entitled 'Lockdown conversations at IOCS', aimed at dealing with the effects of COVID-19 on Orthodox faith communities in the UK and abroad. By having a panel of clergy and lecturers approach relevant themes in dialogue with each other and with the participants, these events brought an exploration of theological aspects related to liturgical practice or to faith in the public



and private space. Throughout the three episodes organised so far, participants have included distinguished names like: Revd Dr John Jillions (Founding Principal of IOCS), Prof Marcus Plested (Marquette University, US), Revd Dr Demetrios Bathrellos (Visiting Professor IOCS), Dr Elizabeth Theokritoff (Associate Lecturer IOCS), Revd Dr Anastasios Brandon Gallaher (Senior Lecturer, University of Exeter) – to name but a few. ***All these sessions are now available to watch on the IOCS YouTube channel.***

In 2020 the Institute also continued its



series of public Conversation Days, a format based on two speakers – preferably from different but related Christian traditions – who each deliver a presentation on a given theme, but also engage in dialogue with each other and the audience. This year's Conversation Days, held online due to pandemic restrictions approached the theme of 'Faith and Film: A Theological Exploration of Contemporary Cinema'. We explored a number of films with eminent guest speakers, among whom Sister Vassa Larin (host of the popular series of podcasts 'Coffee with Sr Vassa') (*More information about these events on page 6*).

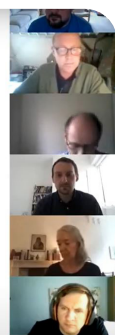
Co-operation with American university

This past academic year has seen the first steps in our cooperation with the University of St Katherine, San Marcos, California, USA, (USK), following the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement for Academic Cooperation between our Institutions. USK is a nationally recognized US-University

founded and rooted in the life of the Orthodox Christian Tradition. The two institutions have already organised a joint online Conversation Day and are currently working together towards developing a new Master's programme in Eastern Orthodox Studies validated by USK and taught jointly by IOCS and USK.

Optimism in communion

Who would have thought one year ago that we would be facing one of the most unusual, anxious year of our lives, in a quest for normality during a global pandemic? However, through God's grace, we are still looking at 2021 with optimism. Firstly, because we will be moving back to our spacious headquarters at Wesley House and join our dear friends there – though spending the past year in temporary harbour at the Federation's head office has also been a heart-warming experience of friendship and communion. We will be welcoming eleven MA students and five MPhil/PhDs in the next academic year, plus our usual international and diverse cohort of Certificate students. We have a forthcoming planned series of seminars and a series of four Conversation Days on attractive topics, as well as a Conference on Florensky (more details on our web site). In co-operation with the other theological houses and supported by the prayers of all our friends and benefactors, we trust we can turn 2021 into another successful year of study and fellowship.



PHD / MPHIL IN ORTHODOX STUDIES

A three-year full-time (or six-year part-time) research degree supervised by IOCS staff or jointly with staff of the Cambridge Theological Federation. This degree is awarded by Anglia Ruskin University.



OUR MA PROGRAMMES:

❖ **MA Programme Contemporary Faith and Belief.** Our MA in Contemporary Faith and Belief will enable students to join a timely debate about the role of faith and belief in the contemporary world. Modules include*: The Human Condition, Secularisation and Christianity, Mystery of Love, Ecumenism in Theory and Practice, Christianity and Ecology, Theology and Science, Philosophical Theology.

❖ With our **MA in Spirituality** you will join a lively debate on the meaning and the role of spirituality in the context of the Christian traditions as well as in today's multi-cultural and multi-religious environments.

Modules include*: The Human Condition, Christian Spirituality in Context, Mystery of Love, Christianity and Ecology, Ecumenism in Theory and Practice, Orthodox Spirituality – Life in Liturgy.

** Not all of these modules will be offered every year. For more information please contact our Academic Director.*

Options: These programmes are available full-time or part-time. All teaching is currently done online. Some modules will be available by block teaching in Cambridge over one or two weeks. This degree is awarded by Anglia Ruskin University.

Fees for the whole course start from **£7,035 (approx \$9,250)** for the Distance Learning mode of delivery (for UK, EU and international students).



Metropolitan Kallistos Ware

Why our MA courses are unique:

- They are shaped by our Cambridge history and experience
- Affordable - from £3,520 (\$4,630) per year (Distance Learning, part-time)
- Available both residentially and by Distance Learning
- Student interaction in the unique Cambridge ecumenical context



'The MA at IOCS is nothing but a life-changing and transformative experience, undoubtedly, due to IOCS's high-calibre faculty and fellow students.'

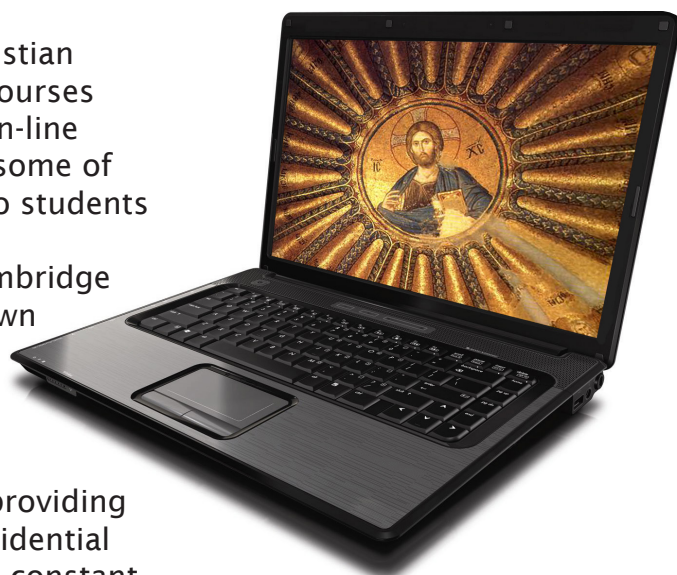
(Sergei Baranov, MA alumnus, Russia/USA)

CERTIFICATE IN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN STUDIES BY DISTANCE LEARNING

For more than a decade the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies has offered a version of its Cambridge-based courses on-line, using the internet and the latest advances in on-line teaching and learning methodology to make available some of the most distinguished teachers of Orthodox studies to students anywhere in the world.

Our Distance Learning programme is based on our Cambridge face-to-face courses. You will be taught by experts drawn from the United Kingdom and around the world, who present an up-to-the minute digest of their topic on video and sound recording, available at any time and anywhere for private study.

We aim to offer the whole 'Cambridge experience' by providing teaching at the same level as our Cambridge-based residential courses. The online community of IOCS students and a constant connection with the specially assigned tutors help circumvent 'the loneliness of the long distance learner'. Our 50+ strong community of online distance learning students are connected to one another and with dedicated Tutors.



DIPLOMA IN THEOLOGY FOR MINISTRY



Rev'd Professor Andrew Louth lecturing at IOCS

The Diploma in Theology for Ministry (DTM) is a graduate-entry programme designed primarily for people preparing for or already involved in Christian ministry or service.

Students examine the theologies, scriptures, histories, philosophies, doctrines and practices of Christianity, both within their own traditions and through comparative approaches. Current developments in scholarship and research and critical reflection on pastoral experience are central to the aims of the course. The DTM may be studied over one year on a full-time basis, or over two years on a part-time basis. This degree is awarded by the University of Cambridge.

SABBATICAL SCHOLARSHIPS

IOCS was delighted to offer a Sabbatical Scholarship in Cambridge in 2020 - covering accommodation, a stipend and access to academic resources for a period of ten weeks for a promising scholar at the beginning of his/her career. After receiving a great number of very good applications, our Admissions Committee has had the difficult task of deciding on the most suitable applicant - eventually settling on Dr Sotiris Mitralaxis of Greece.

The good news is that IOCS will be able to continue this tradition, offering the Sabbatical Scholarship in 2021 as well. This scholarship is addressed to postgraduate, doctoral or post-doctoral researchers. We will send out a call for applications shortly - do keep an eye on our website!



Dr Sotiris Mitralaxis

PAST YEAR'S EVENTS

CONVERSATION DAYS ON 'FAITH AND FILM' – AVAILABLE TO WATCH!

As an art form, cinema captures the deeply human fascination with meaningful narrative, hence its enormous potential to influence how ideas are shaped and transmitted in the socio-cultural milieu.



This is particularly the case when cinema creates space for theological exploration. As means of discreet dissemination of theological or religious narratives, certain films can be seen as the modern-day equivalent of parables. Our Conversation Days on 'Faith And Film: A Theological Exploration Of Contemporary Cinema' are now available to watch on our Youtube channel:

'Intersections between science-fiction & theology'. Prof Rowland Wymer - 'Science Fiction and Religion' and Dr Razvan Porumb - 'Being human: theological insights in *Blade Runner*'. 'The Way of the Cross vs. Violence' - with special guest Sister Vassa Larin (from the popular series of podcasts *Coffee with Sister Vassa*) who spoke on Clint Eastwood's *Gran Torino*.

'Beauty, Love and Sacrifice. The Cinematic Mediation of Transcendence in Tarkovsky's Films'. Revd Dr Colin Heber-Percy - 'Faith and Folly in Tarkovsky's *Stalker*' and Dr Christoph Schneider - 'Sacramental Science and Conjugal Love in Tarkovsky's *Solaris*'.

THE ANNUAL CONSTANTINOPLE LECTURE

Our Principal, Father Dragos Herescu was invited to deliver the Annual Constantinople Lecture, a prestigious event organised by the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association (AECA). Due to the global pandemic, the event had to be organised online for the first time. The theme of this year's lecture was 'Secularism, Orthodoxy and Europe'. **You can watch a recording of the event here.**

The Anglican and Eastern Churches Association Annual Constantinople Lecture Thursday 26th November 2020

Lecture to be given by

Fr Dragos Herescu

Principal of the Institute for
Orthodox Christian Studies,
Cambridge

*"Secularism,
Orthodoxy and
Europe"*

Schedule for the evening:

7.00pm Lecture

7.50pm Q and A



'THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS IN OUR MIDST. REDISCOVERING SACRED SPACES PAST AND PRESENT'



INSTITUTE FOR
ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN STUDIES
CAMBRIDGE



This special Conversation Day marked the beginning of our Institute's formal co-operation with the University of Saint Katherine, California – which is a nationally recognised American University founded and rooted in the life of the Orthodox Christian Tradition. Our two institutions have signed a Memorandum of Agreement for Academic Cooperation in 2019 and we very much hope to further materialize this joint endeavour through similar joint events in the near future, but most importantly though a

jointly taught Master of Arts in Eastern Orthodox Studies – hopefully by the next academic year.

Recordings of the two sessions are now up on our YouTube channel. Click on the titles below to view each session:

Father Dragos Herescu (Principal IOCS) – 'Sacred space and sacred action – Exploring a theological taxonomy of pilgrimage and the geography of the holy in secular context';

Dc David-John Williams (Assistant Professor of History, USK) – 'Holy Mountains: The creation and re-creation of sacred space through images, ritual and memory'.

THE 2021 IOCS CONVERSATION DAYS

More Conversation Days in 2021! - featuring many of our current valued collaborators, tutors and researchers. The dates and topics for next year's Conversation Days are:

25 February 2021: 'Interfaith dialogue and conflict: from Alexandria in the Fourth Century to the Present', featuring Dr Anna Lefteratou and Dr Alon Segev (both Research Associates of IOCS).

25 March 2021: 'The Church in the context of Theotic Relationships', featuring Revd Dr Alexander Tefft (IOCS Chaplain and Distance Learning Tutor) and Revd Dr Patrick Ramsey (IOCS Distance Learning Tutor).

22 April: 'On Spiritual Guidance', featuring Revd Dr Liviu Barbu (IOCS Distance Learning Tutor) – *the second speaker to be confirmed soon*.

The programme of every Conversation Day is:

6.30 pm – 7.30 pm: First session (approx. 40 mins) followed by response (10 mins), followed by Q&A (10 mins); 7.45 pm – 8.45 pm: Second session First session (40 mins) followed by response (10 mins), followed by Q&A (10 mins).

Do watch this space as it is possible for the above details to change and/or for other days to be added. Participation in the IOCS Conversation Days is free and open to all.

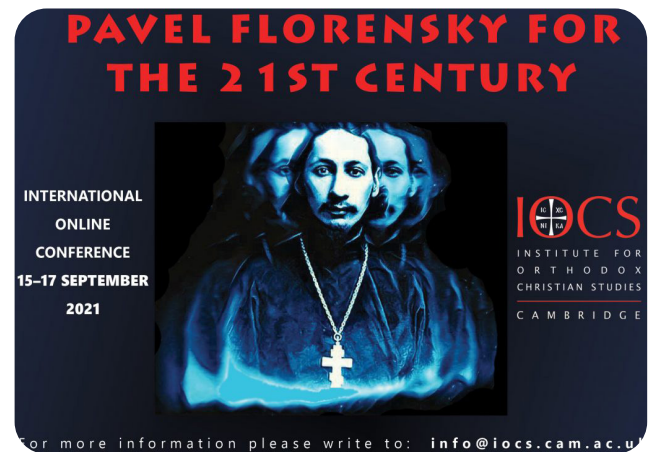
If you are interested to participate do write to info@iocs.cam.ac.uk



THE 2021 IOCS CONFERENCE ON FATHER PAVEL FLORENSKY

We are pleased to announce our next year's conference, which will be taking place in September 2021, at Wesley House, Cambridge. The conference will address the topic: 'FLORENSKY FOR THE 21st CENTURY'. For more details, enrolments and payments please keep an eye on our website, or ask to be notified.

Keynote speakers will include: Revd Prof Andrew Louth (Durham University), Prof John Milbank (University of Nottingham), Prof Bruce Foltz (Eckerd College).



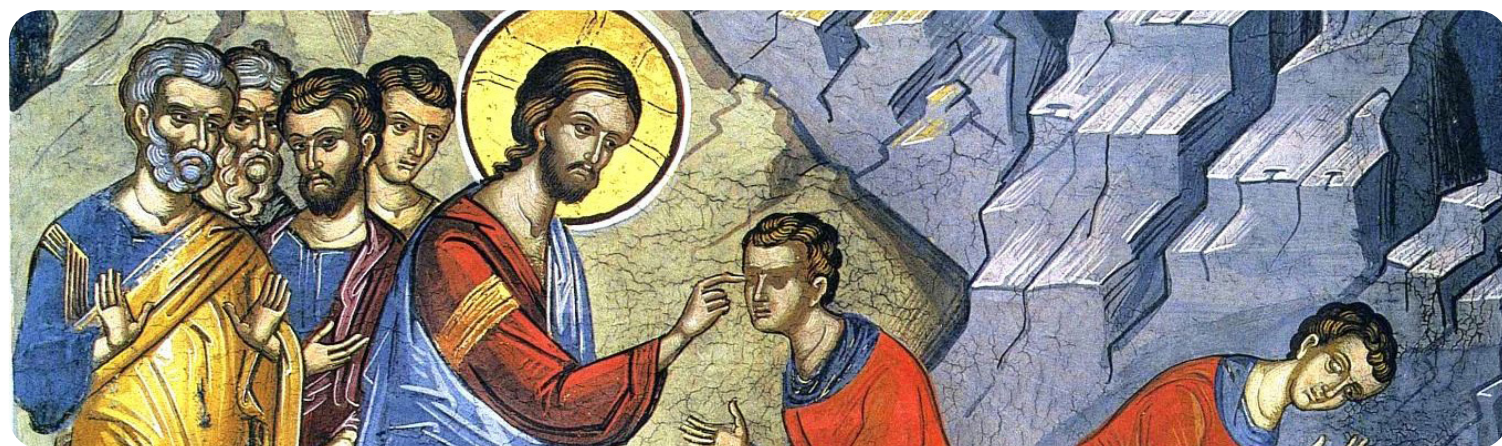
PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY (DPROF)

This forthcoming doctoral level research degree is aimed at the 'researching professional', i.e. individuals engaged in a religious practice context (church ministry and mission, theological education, charity work, chaplaincy etc.). It welcomes interdisciplinary approaches, contextual reflection and investigation which are, in turn, linked to the established research base in the field. Available part-time. This degree is awarded by Anglia Ruskin University. Please contact the Institute if you are interested in this course.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NEW SEMINAR SERIES IN 2021: MIRACLES IN GRAECO-ROMAN LITERATURE



Our Institute is thrilled to announce a new series of seminars for 2021, led by Dr Anna Lefteratou on *Miracles in Graeco-Roman literature: 1st c. AD to 5th century AD*.

This seminar series will discuss miracles in pagan and Christian narratives ranging from the 1st to the 5th century AD. The format will include the parallel examination of key miracle themes found in the Gospels and their counterparts in other pagan texts. The aim will be to show the narrative similarities, the shared audience's expectations, and also the ideological differences in the presentation of miracles in the different texts. English translations for all texts will be provided in advance.

Dr Anna Lefteratou is currently a Research Associate at ERCAM, (Équipe de Recherches sur le Christianisme Ancien et Médiéval, Strasbourg), and was previously associated with the Institute of Classical Studies, London, the Heidelberg University and the University of Göttingen. More on Anna's research and publications at: <https://uni-heidelberg.academia.edu/AnnaLefteratou>

Every seminar will take place between 5-6pm (45 mins lecture & 15 mins Q & A).

The dates of the seminars are:

14th January 2021: 'Healing the blind: cures for blindness in Asclepius dedications, Nonnus' Dionysiaca 25.281-91, and John 9'.

21st January 2021: 'Near deaths: Iphigenia and the Virgin from Antioch in Ambrose De Virginibus 4.22-31'.

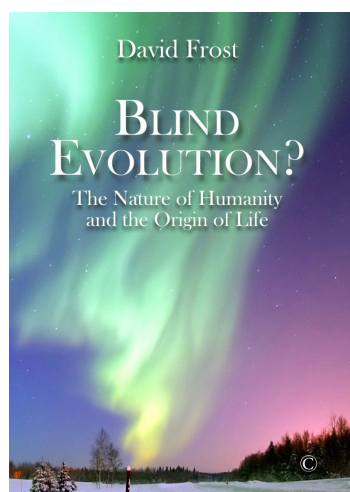
28th January 2021: 'Turning water into wine: the Cana Miracle from the pagan Dionysian perspective'.

4th February 2021: 'Resurrection vs. Apparent death I: Chariton's Callirhoe and Drusiana Apocryphal Acts of John: two cases of near-death experience'.

11th February 2021: 'Resurrection vs. Apparent death II: Philostratus' raising the Senator's daughter in the Life of Apollonius of Tyana and the Resurrection of the Daughter of Jairus'.

Participation in these seminars will be free and open to all.

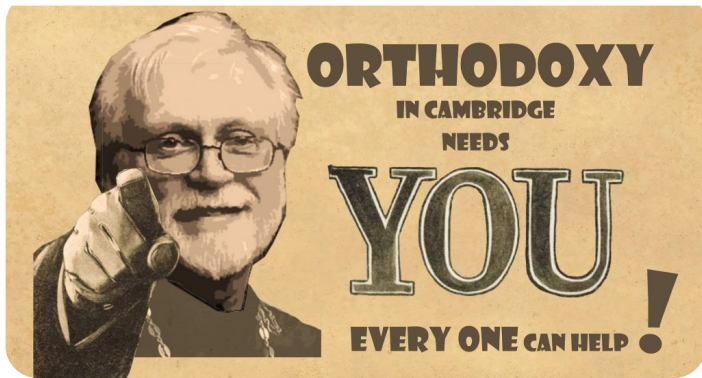
If you are interested to participate do write to info@iocs.cam.ac.uk, and we will send you a Zoom link for the seminars.



FORTHCOMING BOOK: *BLIND EVOLUTION? THE NATURE OF HUMANITY AND THE ORIGIN OF LIFE*

From former Principal of the Institute, Professor David Frost, comes an exciting new book, soon to be published by James Clarke & Co, Cambridge. Revd Dr John Jillions – founding Principal of IOCS – gives it a glowing presentation:

'Devotees of Darwin and Dawkins will have to close their eyes to the evidence David Frost brilliantly amasses if they wish to hold on to their faith in blind evolution. With head and heart he makes a powerful case for the incomprehensible Creator who shares in the world's beauty, suffering and transformation.'



Each and every one of you can become a Friend! To sign up, please join one of the categories below:

Tier 1: FRIENDS – IOCS AMBASSADORS

Expected monthly financial contribution: Not necessary.

To become an Ambassador, please send us an email at info@iocs.cam.ac.uk.

What your contribution can be: Help us spread the word! Friends and supporters who cannot contribute financially to our Institute's work can still help us immensely! You could ask us for printed brochures or posters of our courses and/or events and distribute these in your churches or groups of friends. The Orthodox Institute needs to become more well-known, and we need your support!

What you receive: Exclusive invitations to IOCS events.

Tier 2: FRIENDS – SILVER CROSS

Suggested monthly contribution: £5.

What your contribution helps us achieve: Given today's torrent and variety of information, it is increasingly difficult and costly to make our Institute's work more widely known in the context of an oversaturated media. Your contribution helps us reach out a little more widely every month, by continuing to advertise information about our courses and events.

What you receive: Exclusive invitations to IOCS events; Access to the IOCS Library (by appointment).

Tier 3: FRIENDS – GOLD CROSS

Suggested monthly contribution: £10

What your contribution helps us achieve: Keeping up with the latest necessary publications in the field of theology has become a rather costly affair and universities can only manage that by dedicating special funds for book acquisitions. By joining this category, you are helping the Institute every month to acquire at least one of the latest books and/or journals, essential to our students and researchers!

What you receive: Exclusive invitations to IOCS events; Mentioned in our Roll of Donors (unless you prefer to remain anonymous); Access to the IOCS Library (by appointment).

TO BECOME A BENEFACTOR:

SCHOLARSHIPS: CERTIFICATE – ORTHODOXY BY DISTANCE LEARNING

Expected monthly contribution: £100

What your contribution helps us achieve: Many Christians around the world are enthusiastic to learn about the Orthodox tradition and a great

number of Orthodox people feel they need to become re-acquainted with the teaching of the Church.

Our Certificate course by Distance

Learning has been designed precisely to cater for such people. However, not many of these people can afford to pay the fee. You can help them!

What you receive: Exclusive invitations to IOCS events; Mentioned in our Roll of Benefactors (unless you prefer to remain anonymous); Access to the IOCS Library (by appointment); Free access to our Certificate course by Distance Learning.

SABBATICALS – A HUB FOR RESEARCHERS

Expected monthly contribution: £500

What your contribution helps us achieve: We aim to be able to receive researchers or doctoral students from other countries for short sabbatical periods (3-4 months) in Cambridge – so that they too can benefit from the wide access to libraries and events which our Institute can facilitate.

What you receive: Exclusive invitations to IOCS events; mentioned in our Roll of Benefactors (unless you prefer to remain anonymous); access to the IOCS Library (by appointment); free access to our Certificate course by Distance Learning.

SCHOLARSHIPS: RESEARCH – HELP ORTHODOX SCHOLARS STUDY IN CAMBRIDGE!

Contributions of/over: £10,000 Please contact us if you wish to become a Patron in this Tier!

What your contribution helps us achieve: Cambridge is an appealing place for research and our Institute opens up access to a wealth of resources and expertise for Orthodox scholars from all over the world. Your contribution will not only help fund an Orthodox researcher's studies but it will also help the Cambridge theologians encounter more Orthodox scholars!

What you receive: Exclusive invitations to IOCS events; Mentioned in our Roll of Benefactors (unless you prefer to remain anonymous); Access to the IOCS Library (by appointment); Free access to our Certificate course by Distance Learning; Receipt of all IOCS Publications.

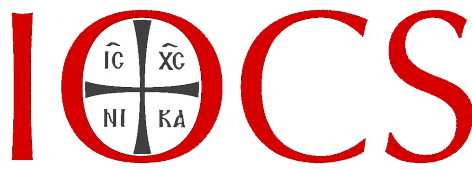
LECTURESHIP – ORTHODOXY IN CAMBRIDGE IN PERPETUITY!

Contributions of/over: £50,000. Please contact us if you wish to become a Patron in this Tier!

What your contribution helps us achieve: Your benefaction could help fund a lectureship or fellowship – which could be named or targeted to specific research or geographical areas. Teaching and conducting research projects are the most important things that we do in the prestigious context of Cambridge. This is one of the most significant manners of support we can receive – so this is a wonderful chance for becoming patrons of Orthodox education in Cambridge!

What you receive: Exclusive invitations to IOCS events; Included among the Founders of the Institute Access to the IOCS Library (by appointment). Free access to our Certificate course by Distance Learning; Receipt of all IOCS Publications.

For more information never hesitate to send us a line by email.



INSTITUTE FOR
ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN
STUDIES

C A M B R I D G E

As the Institute is funded through individual donations from our benefactors and friends, your contributions – one-off or regular - will enable us to continue our work within the academic environment of Cambridge as well as our outreach mission to the world.

Yes, I would like to support the work of the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies – Cambridge

GIFT BY STANDING ORDER

To the Manager of _____ Bank/Building Society

Branch Address: _____

Please pay the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies; Address of Bank: Barclays Bank PLC, 7/8 Clifton Court, Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge CB1 7BN; Sort Code: **20-17-20**; Account Number: **53286053**

Amount £ _____ in Words _____

Date of first payment _____ then thereafter on the _____ day of every month continuing payment until further notice.

My account number is: _____ Bank Sort Code: _____

Name: _____ Address: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Make your gift worth more by completing the Gift Aid Declaration which you can access [here](#). *giftaid it*

Alternatively, you can establish a regular donation to the Institute online via our [Donations](#) page.

Cambridge in America (CAm) - Income tax deduction for US donors

You can send a contribution from the US to our Institute via Cambridge in America (CAm), a registered tax-exempt organization, and you will receive a gift receipt letter from CAm that can be used for U.S. tax purposes.

☐ **CHEQUES:** If you prefer to make your gift by check, cheques should be made payable to "Cambridge in America" with a memo noting the designation to the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, and sent to the following address: **Cambridge in America, P.O. Box 9123 JAF BLG, New York, NY 10087-9123**

☐ **ONLINE:** Alternatively, you can also make a gift through the **Cambridge in America website** at <https://cantabny2.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/giveonline>. Please write 'The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies' in the 'College or University initiative you are supporting today' box. In the box below 'Special instructions/other designation', please write again 'The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies'.

Please return this form to: The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies,
Wesley House, 31 Jesus Lane, Cambridge, CB5 8BJ,
United Kingdom, or by email to: info@iocs.cam.ac.uk
PLEASE DO NOT SEND THE FORM TO YOUR BANK