PAPPAS PATRISTIC INSTITUTE
SUMMER STUDIES PROGRAM

Courses and Faculty

JULY 30 - AUGUST 4, 2017
AT HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
BROOKLINE, MA

St. John Chrysostom writing with St. Paul looking over his shoulder
Milan, Ambrosian A 172, Sup., fol. 263' (property of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana)
from Margaret Mitchell, The Heavenly Trumpet, plate 4, p. 505
MORNING COURSES  
9:15-12:15

WEALTH AND POVERTY IN THE PATRISTIC TRADITION  
   Dr. Brian Matz

THE ASCENDING PILGRIMAGE: THE SPIRITUAL LIFE ACCORDING TO IRENAEUS OF LYONS  
   Don Springer

CHRIST IN THE GREEK PATRISTIC TRADITION  
   Rev. Dr. Paul Kolbet

LIVES OF THE SAINTS: IMITATION AS SPIRITUAL FORMATION  
   Dr. Sean Moberg

THE LORD’S PRAYER IN PATRISTIC TRADITION  
   Dr. Zachary Kostopoulos

AFTERNOON COURSES  
2:00-5:00

ECONOMIA AND ECOLOGY: THE CHURCH FATHERS ON THE CREATION  
   Dr. David Goodin

READING SCRIPTURE WITH THE FATHERS: STUDIES IN PATRISTIC THEOLOGY OF INTERPRETATION  
   Dr. Bruce Beck

TAMING THE THOUGHTS: ASCESIS IN THE MONASTIC WRITINGS  
   Dr. Despina D. Prassas

VIRTUES AND VICES IN THE EASTERN AND WESTERN FATHERS  
   Kevin Clarke
Wealth and Poverty in the Patristic Tradition

Dr. Brian Matz, Carondelet Chair in Catholic Thought, Fontbonne University

Christians in Late Antiquity, particularly the pastors and bishops, were far from immune to the social, cultural, and economic pressures of the imperial system. While at times they benefitted from that class-based society, they more often went out of their way to identify themselves with those on the social margins. Their interactions with people and systems reveal, to an extent, their interest in social ethics. Indeed, the course analyses trends in early Christian thinking on social ethics, particularly those concerned with economic life. Readings from authors spanning the third through sixth century will be supplemented by more recent, secondary literature as well as additional notes distributed by the instructor during the course.

The Ascending Pilgrimage: The Spiritual Life According to Irenaeus of Lyons

Don Springer
McMaster Divinity College

This course examines Irenaeus of Lyons’ writings on the Spiritual life. A careful reading of his texts reveals several foundational themes, five of which this class will study in detail. These themes include: an emphasis on humanity’s creation and restoration into the divine image and likeness, the Christian life as pilgrimage, the pilgrimage as a journey marked by growth and ascent to God, spirituality as fellowship with God, and divinization. The course will conclude with a brief survey of Irenaeus’ few thoughts on the practical steps of the spiritual life.

Don Springer is a Ph.D. candidate at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario. After a decade of pastoral ministry in British Columbia, Don turned his attention to the study of Christian spirituality in the early church. For two summers he served as a teaching fellow at the Pappas Patristic Institute, where in 2017 he will instruct a course on the spirituality of Irenaeus of Lyons. Early this year he taught a course on early patristic theology and spirituality at McMaster Divinity College. This year he will have an article published in Vox Patrum, a book chapter in a volume on Eastern mysticism with Theotokos Press, and a book review in the Journal of Ecclesiastical History. He is also co-editing a volume on patristic perspectives on anagogy. Don is also an ecumenical (associate) fellow at the Sophia Institute in New York, NY.
Paul Kolbet is Lecturer in Early Christianity at Yale Divinity School, instructor at Hellenic College, and Co-Chair of the Augustine and Augustinianisms Group of the American Academy of Religion. He is the author of Augustine and the Cure of Souls: Revising a Classical Ideal (University of Notre Dame Press, 2010); and (with Brian Daley, S.J.) The Harp of Prophecy: Early Christian Interpretation of the Psalms (University of Notre Dame Press, 2015). He has also published articles on topics ranging from early Christian strategies for coping with state-sponsored torture to contemporary Christian realism in journals such as Ecclesiology, Harvard Theological Review, Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Modern Theology, Studia Patristica, and the Toronto Journal of Theology.

Sean Moberg is a scholar of Christian asceticism in Late Antiquity, with a particular focus on early Egyptian monasticism. He recently completed his doctoral dissertation The Apophthegmata Patrum and the Greek Philosophical Tradition in the Center for the Study of Early Christianity at the Catholic University of America. Prior to coming to Catholic University, he received a Master’s in Early Christian Studies at the University of Notre Dame and a Bachelor’s in Ancient Civilizations and Biblical Studies at the University of Michigan. This summer will be his fifth year of being involved with the Pappas Patristic Summer Institute and his third year teaching.
The Lord’s Prayer is arguably the most important prayer in Christian history. Patristic authors have repeatedly reflected on its mystery and significance; Tertullian rightly called it, “truly the summary of the whole Gospel.” This course explores the rich tradition of patristic commentaries on the Lord’s Prayer. We will survey a series of commentaries across late antiquity in order to gain appreciation for both how the Lord’s Prayer was received in the early church as well as how different patristic authors approached the practice of prayer more generally. Some of the authors that we will read and discuss include Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian of Carthage, and Gregory of Nyssa, amongst others.

An important sub-text for this course will be how we in the modern era understand and practice prayer compared to the church fathers. In particular, what role does or should the Lord’s Prayer have in our religious lives today, and what can be emulated from the patristic tradition in our own appreciation of the Lord’s Prayer?

Zachary Kostopoulos has a PhD in Historical Theology from Saint Louis University with a concentration in early Christianity. He recently defended his doctoral dissertation, “Constructing Origen: Christian Biography in Late Antiquity,” which explores the various biographical portraits of Origen across late antiquity and the Byzantine period. Prior to coming to Saint Louis University, he received a Masters of Theological Studies from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology and Bachelor’s degree from Fordham University. This past year, Zachary was a Research Fellow in residence at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology where he completed work on his dissertation as well as a co-authored article that was released in the July 2017 issue of New Testament Studies.
Economia and Ecology: The Church Fathers on the Creation

Dr. David Goodin  
McGill University

In spiritual analogies, homilies, and in direct demonstrations of divine truth, references to the non-human world of Creation appear throughout the Patristic writings. The Fathers were called to defend the visible creation against certain heresies that had sought to represent the physical substance of the created world as intrinsically evil. Incarnational theology and Mariology however explicitly made clear the instrumental place of material substance in the redemptive economy. Likewise in their eschatological writings, references can also found to the place of the non-human world as sharing in some way that eschaton—plants and animals included. This course will present a survey of these Patristic writings, which are to be explored for the eco-theological insights that they may provide. Contemporary commentaries on these works and subjects will be supplied in the supplemental readings.

David K. Goodin has a PhD in Religious Studies from McGill University in the philosophy of religion, with a secondary area of concentration in Patristic theology. Currently, he is a lecturer for the McGill School of Environment and McGill Faculty of Religious Studies, as well as an Associate Researcher at the McGill Centre for Research on Religion (CREOR). He is also an instructor for the summer studies program at the Pappas Patristic Institute at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts.

Reading Scripture with the Fathers: Studies in Patristic Theology of Interpretation

Dr. Bruce Beck

This is a course on patristic interpretation of Scripture. We will examine various genres of patristic writing (including homilies, liturgical hymns, and biblical commentaries) in order to gain a hands-on appreciation for both how the scriptures were interpreted within the early Church, as well as why they were interpreted these ways. We will look at some representative figures in the early Church during the first six centuries as examples of Patristic Hermeneutics. The course will have as a sub-text the question of how these patterns of patristic exegesis compare to more modern uses of scripture, and whether the hermeneutical principles of the Fathers can or should be emulated in the Church today.

Bruce Beck is the Assistant Professor of New Testament at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology and Director of the Religious Studies program at Hellenic College. He has also served since 2003 as the Director of the Pappas Patristic Institute. Dr. Beck received both his MDiv and ThD at Harvard Divinity School, where his area of specialization was New Testament and Early Christianity, and the history of the interpretation of Scripture.
Taming the Thoughts: Ascesis in the Monastic Writings

Dr. Despina Prassas  
Providence College

Taming the thoughts! The logismoi (thoughts) were the activities that usually made or broke the life of the monk, and the ability to maneuver one’s way around the noise in one’s head was skill necessary to perfect if one wanted to move closer to God. The demons were usually the culprits when it came to unwanted thoughts, plaguing the prayer life of the monk. This course will examine the role the logismoi played in the lives of the monks, focusing on the different types of thoughts and outlining the tools and tactics employed to negotiate and battle them. Specific topics that will be considered include discernment, hesychia (inner stillness), penthos (compunction), apatheia (passionlessness), and agape (unconditional love). Beginning with the Life of Antony, we will work our way through several of the early monastic texts, including the Apophthegmata Patrum as well as the writings of Isaiah of Scetis, John Cassian, Evagrius, Maximos the Confessor, Mark the Monk, and Barsanuphius and John. Finally, we will examine the role the demons play in the manipulation of the logismoi and the strategies that would help one to remain “watchful” over one’s thoughts.

Despina Prassas holds a PhD from Catholic University and teaches in the area of Historical Theology at Providence College. She works primarily in the late antique and the early byzantine period, specifically looking at the monastic and ascetical writings of St. Maximos the Confessor. Another area of interest is the modern ecumenical movement, and she is currently a participant on several ecumenical dialogues.

Virtues and Vices in the Eastern and Western Fathers

Kevin Clarke  
Ave Maria University

This course aims to examine the sayings of the Fathers of the Church on the capital vices/evil thoughts and the virtues that heal the soul of those vices. The course will primarily use a collection of quotes of the Fathers that is in production with CUA Press. At the most basic level, the course is going to introduce a) the tradition of the thoughts or vices that spawn other vices in the soul, and b) the virtues that are means for healing. A key theme for us is going to be discovering how the Fathers themselves saw these spiritual treasures as insights for healing the human condition of sin and brokenness. Since a study on vice alone would be plain drudgery, we will also be focusing on virtue and its relation to human nature. Other key themes we will take up during our course is how the Fathers used the presence of Christ, whether in the suffering other or in the suffering self, as a means for inspiring moral change and conversion.

Kevin Clarke is an adjunct professor at Ave Maria University, where he hopes to defend his dissertation in the next 9-12 months. He has been studying biblical theology and is writing his dissertation on Maximus the Confessor’s Christological exegesis. A member of IAPS and NAPS, he has edited and introduced a book for CUA Press on the Fathers of the Church and the capital vices, which is scheduled to ship in spring 2018. Before coming to Ave Maria, he taught Biblical Greek at John Paul Catholic University and high school in Southern California for five years. He has published in Nova et Vetera and has articles forthcoming in the Polish journal Vox Patrum and in Marian Studies. Before getting his master’s in theology at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Kevin was once a copy editor at The Roanoke Times in Virginia. Kevin is especially thankful to his beautiful wife of ten years and to their three daughters for generously sharing him with his writing projects.
EVENING LECTURES

Tuesday August 1, 7:00-8:15 p.m.
“Women in the Apostolic Constitutions” by Pauliina Pylänäinen, M.Th. candidate, University of Eastern Finland

Thursday August 3, 7:00-8:15 p.m.
“Guilt and Forgiveness: the Fathers in Dialogue with the Science of Emotion” by Dr. George Tsakiridis, South Dakota State University