Thursday, March 03, 2016

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM  Registration: Maliotis Center

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM  Chapel Service: Vespers

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM  Dinner: Condakes Refectory

7:00 PM - 7:30 PM  Opening Reception: Maliotis Center

7:30 PM - 7:45 PM  Announcements: Welcome and Introductory Remarks, Maliotis Center

7:45 PM - 8:30 PM  Plenary Session: Maliotis Center

   Nick Roumas, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology          Right Wing
   The Hermeneutical Science: An Exploration of Maximus the Confessor’s Questions to Thalassius
   Respondent: Rodolfo Casals, Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley, CA

Friday, March 04, 2016

8:00 AM - 8:30 AM  Orthros: Orthros
**Friday, March 04, 2016**

8:30 AM - 9:15 AM  **Breakfast: Condakes Refectory**

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM  **Announcements:**

9:30 AM - 10:10 AM  **Parallel Sessions: 1**

- John Solheid, People Incorporated, Saint John’s School of Theology/Seminary  
  Right Wing
  *Scripture and Origen’s Theological Vision in His Commentary on the Gospel According to John*
  Respondent: Jillian Marcantonio, Princeton Theological Seminary

- Marshall Goodge, St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary  
  Left Wing
  *The Nestorian Implications of Severan Christology*
  Respondent: George Bryant, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

- Bishop Dawood, University of St. Michael’s College in the University of Toronto  
  Maliotis Rm
  *Imageless Prayer: Evagrian Hesychasm in the Context of Buddhist Mindfulness Practice*
  Respondent: Samuel Johnson, University of Notre Dame

10:20 AM - 11:00 AM  **Parallel Sessions: 2**

- Lukas Buhler, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology  
  Right Wing
  *Abandonment of Notions*
  Respondent: Bishop Dawood, University of St. Michael’s College in the University of Toronto

- Joseph Grabau, KU Leuven/Catholic University of Louvain  
  Left Wing
  *Christos Yannaras and Jean-Luc Marion on ‘Experience’ in Negative Theology: Ancient, Medieval & (Post-)Modern?*
  Respondent: Samuel Johnson, University of Notre Dame

- Seraphim Ramos, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology  
  Maliotis Rm
  *“Beauty First and Last”: The Threefold Beauty First Way and a Question: “The Garden of Eden; Primary sin, Pride or Sensuality?”*
  Respondent: Mikel Hill, Saint Tikhon’s Orthodox Theological Seminary

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM  **Break:**
Friday, March 04, 2016

11:30 AM - 12:10 PM Parallel Sessions: 3

- Rodolfo Casals, Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley, CA Right Wing
  Inquiry into God: The Logic of Correction in Gregory of Nyssa's Why Not Three Gods
  Respondent: Jonathan Lincoln, St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary
- Mikel Hill, Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary Left Wing
  Hierarchy as Revelation: The contribution of the Corpus Dionysium to the appreciation of the hierarchal structure of the liturgical assembly
  Respondent: Paul Colwell, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
- Marian Lukas Ureutz, University of Graz Maliotis Rm
  Eastern Churches in Caucasus during Late Antiquity - A struggle for unity?
  Respondent: Jason M Gehrke, Marquette University

12:10 PM - 1:10 PM Meal: Condakes Refectory

1:10 PM - 2:00 PM Free Block: Bookstore/Library

2:00 PM - 2:40 PM Parallel Sessions: 4

- Katherine Louise Gilbert, Gordon College Right Wing
  Ephrem the Syrian’s Hymns: Symmetry in Primordial and Eschatological Paradise
  Respondent: Sarah Jenks, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
- Pablo Irizar, KU Leuven Left Wing
  Divine justice: the image of human justice?: The use of imago Dei in Augustine’s dispute with Julian of Eclanenum over the sin of unbaptized infants and the nature of the justice of God
  Respondent: Marshall Goodge, St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary

2:50 PM - 3:30 PM Parallel Sessions: 5

- Emily Chesley, Princeton Theological Seminary Right Wing
  Side Note or Central Element?: Wordlessness in the Dionysian Mystical Ascent
  Respondent: Lukas Buhler, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
- Sarah Jenks, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology Left Wing
  Typology in the Hymns of St. John of Damascus: a case of Patristic Biblical Interpretation
  Respondent: Corey Stephan, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry
- Don Springer, McMaster Divinity College Maliotis Rm
  Promise and Prescription: Divine Participation in the Apostolic Fathers
  Respondent: Jacob E. Drake, Yale University, Institute of Sacred Music and Divinity School

3:30 PM - 4:00 PM Break:
Friday, March 04, 2016

4:00 PM - 4:40 PM  Parallel Sessions: 6

Paul Colwell, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology  Right Wing
Our Faithfulness to Christ's Faithfulness: An examination of the “πίστις Χριστοῦ” debate in Pauline scholarship and its relation to Patristic thought.
Respondent: Harold A. Laurence V, Seattle Pacific Seminary

Samuel Johnson, University of Notre Dame  Left Wing
“But is that tree not within us?”: Synthesis and Exegesis in St. Gregory Palamas’s 150 Chapters
Respondent: Jacob Nielsen, Villanova University

Stephen Meawad, Duquesne University  Maliotis Rm
Fasting Reconsidered: St. John Chrysostom and Modern Science on Fasting
Respondent: Seraphim Ramos, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM  Chapel Service: Vespers

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM  Meal: Condakes Refectory

7:00 PM - 8:00 PM  Discussion: Sheraton Hotel lobby area

Saturday, March 05, 2016

8:15 AM - 9:00 AM  Breakfast: Maliotis Center

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM  Announcements: Maliotis Center

9:15 AM - 9:55 AM  Parallel Sessions: 7

Alexander D. Craven, St. Mary's University, Halifax, NS  Right Wing
Defender of the Faith: Examining the Religious and Cultural Tools of Second Century Apologists
Respondent: Don Springer, McMaster Divinity College

Harold A. Laurence V, Seattle Pacific Seminary  Left Wing
Reception History of the Lord’s Prayer in Origen, Evagrius Ponticus, and Maximus Confessor
Respondent: John Solheid, People Incorporated, Saint John’s School of Theology/Seminary

Sid Sudiacal, McMaster Divinity College  Maliotis Rm
Disgust Psychology and the Donatist Controversy, Bowen’s Theory and Augustinian Leadership: Using Psychological Theories to Understand Theological Issues
Respondent: Jimmy Chan, Alliance Bible Seminary, Hong Kong
Saturday, March 05, 2016

10:05 AM - 10:45 AM  Parallel Sessions: 8

- Kirsten Anderson, University of Notre Dame          Right Wing
  *Kakōi Kouvovia: Gregory of Nyssa on Evil and Desire in the Catechetical Oration*
  Respondent: Katherine Louise Gilbert, Gordon College

- Jonathan Lincoln, St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary          Left Wing
  *Universal Salvation: St. Gregory of Nyssa in light of St. Mark of Ephesus*
  Respondent: Sid Sudiacal, McMaster Divinity College

- Evan Underbrink, Instructor at the New Testament School of Theology          Maliotis Rm
  *Mimesis and Fate in the Martyrdom of Polycarp*
  Respondent: Nathan A. Lunsford, Marquette University

10:45 AM - 11:15 AM  Break: Maliotis Center lobby

11:15 AM - 11:55 AM  Parallel Sessions: 9

- Zachary Domach, Columbia University          Right Wing
  *The Holy Scriptures 'from infancy': The Greek Fathers on Education in the Fourth Century*
  Respondent: Emily Chesley, Princeton Theological Seminary

- Nathan A. Lunsford, Marquette University          Left Wing
  *Imitatio Christi, imitatio nobilitatis: The Noble Imitation of Christ in Mart. Polycarp*
  Respondent: Joseph Grabau, KU Leuven/Catholic University of Louvain

- Linda Peters, M.A., Theological Studies, Providence College          Maliotis Rm
  *Perpetua: From Daughter to Paterfamilias*
  Respondent: Marian Lukas Ureutz, University of Graz

11:55 AM - 12:55 PM  Meal: Condakes Refectory

12:55 PM - 1:35 PM  Parallel Sessions: 10

- Jacob E. Drake, Yale University, Institute of Sacred Music and Divinity School          Right Wing
  *Gregory of Nyssa: The Lord’s Prayer and Pastoral Concern*
  Respondent: Evan Underbrink, Instructor at the New Testament School of Theology

- Jillian Marcantonio, Princeton Theological Seminary          Left Wing
  *The Divine Names, a Dionysian Hymn*
  Respondent: Kirsten Anderson, University of Notre Dame

1:45 PM - 2:30 PM  Faculty Presentation: Dr. Alexis Torrance, University of Notre Dame
Saturday, March 05, 2016

2:30 PM - 3:00 PM  Break: Maliotis Center lobby

3:30 PM - 4:10 PM  Parallel Sessions: 11

Jason M Gehrke, Marquette University          Right Wing
   Power and Virtue: Tertullian and Origen in Lactantius' Christology
   Respondent: Nick Roumas, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
Corey Stephan, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry          Left Wing
   Tongues Can Save or Damn: St. Gregory the Great’s Fortieth Gospel Homily & the Priority of Moral Exegesis
   Respondent: Zachary Domach, Columbia University

4:20 PM - 5:00 PM  Parallel Sessions: 12

Jimmy Chan, Alliance Bible Seminary, Hong Kong          Right Wing
   Investigating a ‘LEGO’ set of Augustine’s Theology of History in De Civitate Dei, Books XI-XXII: Re-reading the masterpiece through the building blocks with ‘restore’ nuances
   Respondent: Pablo Irizar, KU Leuven
Jacob Nielsen, Villanova University          Left Wing
   Acquiring the “Words of the Saints” and the “Mind of the Theologians:” The Logic of Fittingness in St. Athanasius the Great’s Apologia for the Incarnation
   Respondent: Linda Peters, M.A., Theological Studies, Providence College

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM  Chapel Service: Vespers

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM  Meal: Condakes Refectory
The Pappas Patristic Institute Graduate Student Conference
March 3-5, 2016
Presenters and times by name

Kirsten Anderson, University of Notre Dame
*Kakoi Kounovia: Gregory of Nyssa on Evil and Desire in the Catechetical Oration*
3/5/2016 10:05:00 AM Right Wing
Respondent: Katie Gilbert, Gordon College
Moderator:

Lukas Buhler, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
*Abandonment of Notions*
3/4/2016 10:20:00 AM Right Wing
Respondent: Bishoy Dawood, University of St. Michael’s College in the University of Toronto
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Rodolfo Casals, S.J., Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley, CA
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Emily Chesley, Princeton Theological Seminary
*Side Note or Central Element?: Wordlessness in the Dionysian Mystical Ascent*
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Bishoy Dawood, University of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto
* Imageless Prayer: Evagrian Hesychasm in the Context of Buddhist Mindfulness Practice*

3/4/2016 9:30:00 AM Maliotis Rm
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Zach Domach, Columbia University
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### Paper Respondents: Pappas Patristic Institute's Graduate Student Conference

**March 3-5, 2016**

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Perpetua: From Daughter to Paterfamilias                                                      | 3/5/2016 11:15:00 AM |
### Kirsten Anderson

**Institution**
University of Notre Dame

**Title**
Κακοῦ Κοινωνία: Gregory of Nyssa on Evil and Desire in the Catechetical Oration

**Abstract**
Describing the creation of man, Gregory of Nyssa is clear that man is constructed akin to the Divine, and, consequently, is suited to participation in divine goods. Man’s divine-like attributes naturally give him a desire for communion with their divine source. Rather than elevated by divine desire toward what is good, however, we generally observe man drug down by carnal passion toward what is evil. How is it possible for man to desire what is contrary to his nature, in light of the way he is constructed and the good toward which he is naturally oriented? It is well recognized that, following the Platonic tradition, Gregory of Nyssa understands evil as a privation of being, as not having an independent nature of its own. Such an explanation, however, hardly accounts for how human beings experience evil as though it really exists, and desire it as though suited to their nature. Indeed, Gregory does not describe evil exclusively in negative terms. Drawing primarily from his Catechetical Oration, I will examine how Gregory describes evil in positive language, as though having a real existence, growing within man’s will and sharing with him in a bond of kinship. Attending to this language of kinship and organic unity, my aim is to shed some light on Gregory’s understanding of how evil, although strictly a deprivation of being, arising from the will’s withdrawal from the good, can nevertheless be experienced as something that is, and is desirable for man as though it were “his own.”

### Lukas Buhler

**Institution**
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

**Title**
Abandonment of Notions

**Abstract**
The concept of abandoning one’s notions surfaces frequently in Orthodox spiritual literature. It takes the form of diverse admonitions against basing one’s spiritual life on purely intellectual conceptions. Generally, it is understood as a perquisite of abandonment of self. In recent writings of Orthodox Elders it is especially a reoccurring theme—as seen, for example,
in Archimandrite Aimilianos of Simonopetra. The question arises: is abandonment of notions just a minor step in spiritual life that might be crucial for overly intellectual people but is generally bypassed by the rest, or is it applicable to all? This paper investigates Aimilianos’ statements regarding abandonment of self, which are often unqualified. In order to shed light on this concept, Soren Kierkegaard’s existential definitions of the self and his philosophy of “infinite resignation” lay a foundation for understanding the abandonment of self. Lev Shestov, a much forgotten Russian religious thinker, expounds on Kierkegaard and mounts a full on attack on reason, or what he calls Necessity. From his perspective, the abandonment of notions takes on the spiritual quest of reverting the effects of eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thus showing the absolute centrality and applicability of it to all. Far from being simply a nihilistic outlook, Shestov’s assertions tie in deeply with St. Maximus’s understanding of the gnomic will and reveal how deeply the roots of abandonment of notions in particular, are connected to the general abandonment of self.

**Presenter** Rodolfo Casals, S.J.  
**Institution** Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley, CA  
**Title** Inquiry into God: The Logic of Correction in Gregory of Nyssa’s Why Not Three Gods  
**Abstract** In “Why Not Three Gods” (Ad Ablabium quod non sint tres dei), Gregory of Nyssa (d. 395) takes up the cause of defending the theology of the First Council of Constantinople against those who accuse christians of believing in three gods. Gregory argues that a failure to recognize the ontological difference between God and humanity is at the root of the problem. This difference between God and humanity also defines and shapes our ability to know God. But, did Gregory go too far? Does Gregory make God completely unknowable? In this paper, I will map Gregory’s argument and show that although Gregory postulates the ultimate epistemological inaccessibility of God, he develops a method of theology based on a logic of correction. Instead of rejecting diverse understandings of God, Gregory makes use of these modes of understanding as a basis for his theology.

**Presenter** Jimmy Chan  
**Institution** Alliance Bible Seminary, Hong Kong  
**Title** Investigating a ‘LEGO’ set of Augustine’s Theology of History in De Civitate Dei, Books XI-XXII: Re-reading the masterpiece through the building blocks with ‘restore’ nuances
Abstract

LEGO means “I read” or “I assemble” in Latin, and as a pun it is also a well-known brand of toy building blocks; this would be a perfect ‘code name’ for the project at hand: It is a lexical-contextual-theological study of the second part of De civitate Dei, Books XI to XXII, focusing on how a ‘restoration’ word group (comprising the ‘restore’ lemma in Latin) serves as important building blocks, or a ‘backbone’ for Augustine’s theology of history throughout the text, by providing it with the semantic support necessary to connect its various key elements theological. The occurrences of all the Latin lemma carrying the ‘restore’ nuances are identified through Corpus Augustinianum Gissense (CAG 2). Then, for each of the three main divisions within De civitate Dei, key passages comprising the ‘restore’ lemma are studied, in terms of how they play the lexical function within the given context. The restoration word group is shown to provide a fresh reading of De civitate Dei and opens up a new perspective of studying Augustine’s theology of history which is so prominent in his masterpiece. Specifically, four restoration dimensions, namely, the restoration of the body and soul, the restoration of the predestined number of saints, the restoration of the virtues and morals, the restoration of faith and hope of the saints on earth, are identified. These restoration dimensions effectively expresses and connects the key elements of Augustine’s theology of history, namely, universality out of divine providence, biblicality, Christocentrality and directionality (or linearity). Synergically they show how Augustine is consistently focused on the restorative actions of God to his people, for His Church as a community of faith and for every Christian as they sojourn in this world before Christ’s final judgement accompanied by a complete restoration of our body and soul. According to Augustine, all these add up to the meaning of history. Last but not least, this research has demonstrated that there is a pastoral aspect in De civitate Dei, an aspect of the work that is not highlighted in recent literature. By emphasizing the restoration of body and human virtues, Augustine shows concern of the spirituality of his readers: despite the ups and downs of life (which for the immediate readers would include the sack of Rome), one is exhorted to redirect one’s love towards God instead of toward earthly values. One potential research direction would be to explore how Augustine expresses his concern for his readers’ spirituality and morality based on the concept of restoration, and how the contemporary reader can be benefited from a refreshed understanding of a ‘restorative’ history.

Presenter

Emily Chesley

Institution

Princeton Theological Seminary

Title

Side Note or Central Element?: Wordlessness in the Dionysian Mystical Ascent

Abstract

Insufficiency of language permeates the works of Pseudo-Dionysius, perhaps the paradigmatic apophatic theologian. In his corpus and
particularly in Mystical Theology, he presents the ascent to union as a progression from plentitude of speech (πολύλογος) to brevity of speech (βραχυλογίαν) to lack of speech (ἄλογος) to cessation of thought (ἀνοησίαν) (MT 1000C and 1033B). Words fall away as one ascends the Dionysian ladder of negation and are lost completely as one takes the final step from the conceptual realm into the darkness of union. While many authors have studied negations in the Dionysian ascent and have noted the progression from speech to silence in said ascent, few have completed a detailed study of the role wordlessness plays. By ignoring the seemingly obvious, however, one may miss the full depth of his paradigm. Is the silence of union merely a ripple effect into the five senses, an audible hint that one has reached theosis? Or is wordlessness more central to the actual union? This paper explores the “wordlessness” and “speechlessness” of the Dionysian ascent through a focused word study of ἀφωνος and ἀλογία/ἄλογος as they are used in the Dionysian corpus. It first summarizes the Dionysian ascent, then analyzes the role of words and wordlessness in that ascent, and finally studies the intellectual counterpart to speech. This paper concludes that the role of words and Pseudo-Dionysius’ movement to wordlessness are far more than peripheral, sense-perceptible effects of union, but rather central stages of the mystical ascent.

Presenter: Paul Colwell
Institution: Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
Title: Our Faithfulness to Christ’s Faithfulness: An examination of the “πίστις Χριστοῦ” debate in Pauline scholarship and its relation to Patristic thought.
Abstract: One recent debate within New Testament scholarship, commonly known as the “πίστις Χριστοῦ” (“pistis Christou”) debate, concerns a particular grammatical construction that appears seven times in the Pauline corpus indicating either that we are saved/justified by our faith in Christ or by Christ’s own faithfulness. Both interpretations would be grammatically acceptable. Though most modern translations interpret the construction as referring to our faith, not to Christ’s faithfulness, as salvific, some scholars (such as N.T. Wright and Richard Hays), have advocated the subjective-genitive interpretation (that it is Christ’s faithfulness being referred to in the text) as more accurate within the context. Is this a recently-discovered ambiguity, or can the interpretation that we are saved by Christ’s faithfulness also be found in early post-Apostolic Christian texts? In order to help answer this question, first the contextual meaning of the concept “faith” must be determined in light of St. Paul’s cultural situatedness and that of early patristic writers. Second, the texts in question within the Pauline corpus can be examined and their possible meanings clarified. Third, patristic writings referring both directly and indirectly to the passages from St. Paul and possibly relating to Christ’s faithfulness will be investigated. Finally, the implications of a patristic soteriological understanding incorporating Christ’s own faithfulness can be elucidated.
Throughout this study, special emphasis will be placed on the concept of “faith” as involving trust in and remembrance of a past narrative relating God to His people.

**Presenter**: Alex Craven  
**Institution**: St. Mary’s University, Halifax, NS  
**Title**: Defender of the Faith: Examining the Religious and Cultural Tools of Second Century Apologists  
**Abstract**: The Christian apologist of the second century often found himself in a difficult-to-navigate cultural environment. In many ways, the very implications of accepting the Christian Gospel put the apologists at odds with the established worldviews of the time, yet at the same time those same worldviews offered the likes of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Athenagoras valuable tools for the defense and promulgation of the Christian faith. The analytical goals of this paper are twofold: first, to examine, in the light of their historical-cultural context, the logical constructions and rhetorical devices of these figures, specifically seeing how their apologies utilized the cultural and political tools of the Roman Empire to establish the legitimacy of Christian belief. By utilizing appeals to respected figures from antiquity and an acute knowledge of the religious and social values held by their respective audiences, the apologists attempted to paint nascent Christianity as something palatable and acceptable to the standards of the time, while at the same time often subverting or critiquing those selfsame standards. Secondly, this paper also seeks to allow these apologists the opportunity to speak to the modern West by virtue of the ways in which they delivered their message rather than by simply analysis of the message itself. By examining the manner in which the messages are delivered, this paper hopes to raise questions of cultural congruency and offer suggestions to help modern apologies accomplish their goals in the no less difficult-to-navigate cultural milieu of the 21st century.

**Presenter**: Bishoy Dawood  
**Institution**: University of St. Michael’s College in the University of Toronto  
**Title**: Imageless Prayer: Evagrian Hesychasm in the Context of Buddhist Mindfulness Practice  
**Abstract**: While we have surviving today a few writings on prayer and meditation practice by Evagrius of Pontus, Patristics scholars tended to categorize his theology and spirituality as Origenist and Neo-Platonic. In this paper, I would like to go further than the theoretical framework of Origenism/Neo-Platonism, and suggest that Evagrian hesychasm may have come into contact with the Buddhist meditation practice of Mindfulness. I will do so
by examining what Evagrius taught in terms of hesychastic practice, as well as Buddhist Mindfulness practice that may have existed in the context of cosmopolitan Alexandria and the monastic wilderness of Egypt. The point of contact will aid in contextualizing the Evagrian tradition as a variant of the incarnational body-centred monasticism that triumphed over the Origenist and monastic controversies of fifth century Egypt; but it will also further aid in contemporary inter-faith dialogue between Christians and Buddhists, particularly in the monastic and spiritual practice settings.

**Presenter** Zach Domach  
**Institution** Columbia University  
**Title** The Holy Scriptures ‘from infancy’: The Greek Fathers on Education in the Fourth Century  
**Abstract** Early Christian attitudes towards the written word, education, and the Classical Tradition are one of the most complex manifestations of the young religion’s relationship with the Greek and Roman world; consequently, there is a significant corpus of literature examining these attitudes. But although modern scholarship has focused heavily on the components of the Classical educational system that early Christians retained, the ways in which Christians modified and supplemented the traditional curriculum to suit their moral and theological interests have been little studied. My paper argues that Christian education, as it was understood in the fourth century, is more innovative than usually acknowledged. This is not to say that it was not still fundamentally based upon the Classical educational system, for it most certainly was. But the general narrative of modern scholarship, which holds that early Christians were content to merely adopt (with discretion) the existing system, fails to account for the various means in which they augmented and censored the traditional curriculum and educational system of the Classical world by redefining and expanding the role of parents, emphasizing a knowledge of biblical morality from a young age, and re-envisioning Classical literature as preliminary training for the more profound texts of Scripture. The didactic notions present in three fourth-century Greek texts – the “Apostolic Constitutions,” John Chrysostom’s “On Vainglory and the Rearing of Children by Parents,” and Basil of Caesarea’s “Letter to Young Men concerning the Reading of Pagan Literature” – are illustrative of these practices; they reveal a key aspect of the give-and-take relationship between the Greek and Roman cultural legacy and burgeoning Christian identity in Late Antiquity.

**Presenter** Jacob Drake  
**Institution** Yale University, Institute of Sacred Music and Divinity School
**Title**  
Gregory of Nyssa: The Lord’s Prayer and Pastoral Concern

**Abstract**  
Gregory of Nyssa preached a series of sermons examining the Lord’s Prayer to common parishioners of his day. The sermon series shows a high-ranking, intellectual bishop acutely aware of his parishioners’ needs and social situations. His sermons teach the Lord’s Prayer to people struggling and toiling to make a living. In the series, Gregory sought to impart a method and guide for the whole church, particularly those who were unable to practice asceticism devotedly. Gregory begins the series highlighting the importance of prayer, and moves into an instructional guide to praying. He exhorts the parishioners to not neglect the duty to pray in spite of the discipline required. His rhetorical methods include metaphors and parables. Drawing extensively on the Prodigal Son parable, he illuminates a path connecting the congregation to the Triune God. He purports the idea that one must climb the metaphorical mountain of holiness to undergo divinization. In this process, Gregory offers guidance for this difficult journey. This paper will explore Gregory’s pastoral concerns, exegetical strategies, and rhetorical arguments in five short sermons on the Lord’s Prayer. The series should serve as a model of patristic preaching geared toward a congregation, seemingly without rigorous theological education. His works encourage the laity to approach lofty ideas such as theosis and Christology — themes seamlessly interwoven into the fabric of the sermon. He presents lofty theology simplistically: preaching to the common person.

**Presenter**  
Jason Gehrke

**Institution**  
Marquette University

**Title**  
Power and Virtue: Tertullian and Origen in Lactantius' Christology

**Abstract**  
Louis Ayers neatly sums up the predominant scholarly view of Lactantius when he writes that, “Modern scholars have treated Lactantius’ theology as idiosyncratic and Lactantius as ignorant of other Latin theology…The standard scholarly account of Lactantius as primarily indebted to non-Christian philosophy has long needed reconsideration (Ayers, Nicaea and Its Legacy, 71).” This paper makes a beginning at such reconsideration by demonstrating that Lactantius’ Christology and Trinitarian theology is based upon a pre-Nicene “power theology” that has already been identified as the basis for the mainstream theological conversation immediately prior to the Council of Nicaea (Barnes, Power and Dynamis in Gregory of Nyssa). Contrary to the long scholarly narrative, Lactantius’ theology is neither idiosyncratic nor based primarily on “non-Christian” philosophical sources. Rather, Lactantius, who lived and wrote in the Greek milieu, has translated into his own Latin idiom, theological notions that are readily observable in Origen and Tertullian. In his apologetic context, traditional power theology is the assumption the basic ontological
presupposition of his Christology. His work represents a significant witness to the state of Latin theology from 290-325 and an important advance in the field of Christian theological ethics.

**Presenter**  Katie Gilbert  
**Institution**  Gordon College  
**Title**  Ephrem the Syrian’s Hymns: Symmetry in Primordial and Eschatological Paradise  
**Abstract**  This paper discusses Ephrem’s conviction that meditation on paradise was the height of ascetic pursuit and that he was in a unique position to teach others. Ephrem’s Hymns on Paradise reveals an abundance of symbolism, rich with layers of theological significance, which are all united by an overarching allegory of a spiritual mountain. In this paper, I will draw from all fifteen hymns on Paradise to connect Ephrem’s primordial and eschatological visions of Paradise into a singular revelation.  

In order to fully engage in an analysis of Ephrem’s theology, I will first explain his personal history and historical context, then his theological and poetic influences. Finally I will produce a study of Ephrem’s primordial (the beginning of time) and eschatological (the end of time) descriptions of paradise and conclude with an analysis of symmetrical elements and their placement in his overall teaching on Paradise. The secondary sources that have influenced my view largely feature Sebastian P. Brock, a British scholar and the translator of Ephrem’s Hymns on Paradise, as well as other scholars, namely, Robert Murry, Sydney Griffith and Kathleen McVey. Besides Ephrem’s Hymns on Paradise, I will survey other primary sources that influenced Ephrem, including The First Book of Enoch and the Hebrew Pentateuch and quotations from other hymns by Ephrem.  

For the rest of my paper, I will provide an analysis of Ephrem’s primordial and eschatological Paradises, which reflect the whole of his theology, by first elaborating on how he connected the primordial and eschatological times with images from Paradise. He wove allusion and other rhetorical devices throughout his entire Hymn on Paradise, but I will focus on just a few of these instances. These will include references to Paradise as a Garden with repeated nature motifs and Adam as an individual and as the “man” who stands for all mankind throughout all time as he is recognized in his perfection and imperfection by descriptions of outer attire. In order to convey these parallels in Ephrem’s writing, I will depend on quotations from his Hymns on Paradise with occasional secondary commentary by the authors mentioned previously.  

Ephrem wrote theologically detailed poetry about past and future events for an audience that was living in uncertainty. After fleeing Nisibis, Christians in Edessa were seeking the next phase in God’s plan for them and were attracted to Ephrem’s Hymns on Paradise. His ability to string together familiar biblical narratives in a fixed poetic meter reassured his audience that an unknowable future in Paradise was still worth contemplating. Ephrem taught that meditation of
Paradise was the central aim of asceticism and incorporated theology into every day life by translating his poetry to music.

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<td>Institution</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>The Nestorian Implications of Severan Christology</td>
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<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Severus of Antioch is, without a doubt the most influential theologian of the Miaphysite tradition. Rejecting the Council of Chalcedon as a reaffirmation of Nestorianism while simultaneously denouncing Eutychianism, Severus attempted to lay out a theological system whereby the wholeness of both the Divinity and Humanity of Christ may be confessed while still holding to the Cyrilline μία φύσις. In this attempt, Severus described a concept of the Hypostatic Union wherein the one physis of Christ (Severus uses physis and hypostasis interchangeably) is formed out of two hypostases of different sorts: the one (the Logos) self-subsisting and the other (Humanity) non-self-subsisting. This same understanding is reflected in his anthropological system, wherein a single human being is comprised of body (non-self-subsisting) and soul (self-subsisting). Severus understands that the hypostatic union in Christ could not simply be between a soulless human body and the Logos, or else his system would turn out Apollinarian. Thus, he posits that the humanity to which the Logos unites itself must consist of a human body with a rational soul. While this manages to avoid Apollinarianism it ends up creating a bigger problem than it solves, since it can plainly be seen that such a union of body and soul, as previously explained, forms a single united self-subsisting hypostasis. Thus it seems to this author that the logical end of Severan thinking is necessarily either Apollinarianism or the Nestorian concept of the union of two completely self-subsisting hypostases, leaving Severus’ theology to profess what it had sought to refute.</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Christos Yannaras and Jean-Luc Marion on ‘Experience’ in Negative Theology: Ancient, Medieval &amp; (Post-)Modern?</td>
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<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Before Jean-Luc Marion wrote his 1982 Dieu sans l’être (“God without being”), the contemporary Greek philosopher Christos Yannaras had already explored related concepts in the field of ‘negative theology’, particularly with reference to the category of ‘experience’ (in the immediate aftermath of WWII and subsequent appearance of so-called European nihilism). In the present essay, I first (1) present the major themes of the latter’s 1967 book On the Absence and Unknowability of God: Heidegger</td>
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and the Areopagite, in order to propose a comprehensive vision of the ancient, patristic concept of theological negation and its sources, as well as its not so recent (post-)modern re-appropriation by Yannaras. Second (2), I relate the ancient tradition to the end of the medieval period, in the figure of Gregory Palamas, again primarily under the same author’s interpretative emphasis on illumination as a lived reality; third, and finally (3), I return to the patristic era to recommend a spirituality of love that combines these twin elements of nothingness and divine illumination. By way of conclusion and comparison (4), I recall Marion’s 2012 retraction regarding St Thomas Aquinas, and propose that similar categories as those explored here may indeed also be found in (medieval) Western authors. For although Yannaras took his cue largely from Heidegger and the European context, he maintains exclusive interest in authors of the East. As a result, his work too requires additional, synthetic reflection on both negative knowledge and experience of God, which Marion’s later thoughts serve to promote.

Presenter  Mikel Hill
Institution  Saint Tikhon’s Orthodox Theological Seminary
Title  Hierarchy as Revelation: The contribution of the Corpus Dionysium to the appreciation of the hierarchal structure of the liturgical assembly
Abstract  Mount Sinai, Mount Tabor, and the Holy Altar each form the summit of a progressive ascent. The visio Dei in gloria is invariably linked to hierarchy. Thus, the unfortunate result of liturgical democracy is theological obscurity. Destroy the mediating hierarchy and the vision of God becomes unattainable. Nevertheless, the laity could easily perceive the presence of a mediating hierarchy as an alienating barrier imposed by the intrusion of clericalism. Ornately vested priests, whispering prayers behind closed doors and a fortress-like icon screen can make this impression completely understandable. This paper seeks to address this pertinent concern through the lens of the Corpus Dionysium. Informed by the recent scholarship of Bp. Alexander (Golitzin) and Fr. Maximus (Constas), the paper alters the conventional prism through which hierarchy is typically seen. It demonstrates that hierarchy, rather than forming an obscuring barrier, reveals the immaterial through the material, paves the way for ascent, and exists as a mirror in which every person can see the intended ascent of their own soul to the altar of their heart. Such a positive view of hierarchy stands in direct opposition to many modern authors. This paper addresses, in particular, the writings of Karl Barth and George Fedotov. Viewing the issue of hierarchy from the vantage point of the Corpus Dionysium introduces an important Patristic witness to a very contemporary issue. It serves to bring both laity and clergy to a fuller appreciation of their respective roles within the liturgical assembly.
Divine justice: the image of human justice?: The use of imago Dei in Augustine's dispute with Julian of Eclaenum over the sin of unbaptized infants and the nature of the justice of God

In this presentation I argue, through a synchronic and diachronic, thematic and contextual comparative analysis, that at the heart of Julian of Eclaenum's dispute with Augustine of Hippo concerning the sins of unbaptized infants (from 419 until 430) are two competing understandings of the justice of God, which each party cited to fiercely support their opposing views. Overly simplified, for Augustine, if unbaptized infants bear original sin it is because, in his justice, God punishes the sin of Adam and Eve through whom all, even infants, have sinned. A just God, Julian protests, would not impune upon infants the sins of their parents, for if God is just, creation must be inherently good. Original sin, he accuses, is reminiscent of Augustine's Manichean dualism. Ironically, the young Augustine would also cite the justice of God and goodness of creation in his quarrels with the Manicheans. How to account for these discrepancies? Inspired by Roman law, for Julian, divine justice is equity. For Augustine, equity is a limited human projection that fails to capture the demands of divine justice: “You must distinguish,” he would exhort Julian, “between the justice of God from human ideas of justice.” More specifically, I argue that the concept of imago Dei plays a pivotal role in showing that this dispute over the nature of justice is motivated by deeper Christological concerns. Conversely, this polemical context helps account for revisions Augustine makes in his evolving understanding of the imago Dei in relation to grace: from restoration to transformation.
“But is that tree not within us?”: Synthesis and Exegesis in St. Gregory Palamas’s 150 Chapters

Despite the resurgence of scholarly interest in St. Gregory Palamas, concerns over the Essence-Energy distinction and the Hesychast method of prayer have overshadowed certain depths of his profound contribution to the broader development of Byzantine theology as a whole, particularly in his consummate theological synthesis, the 150 Chapters. The second part of this work has garnered a great deal of attention for its systematic presentation of the Essence-Energy distinction. However, the first part – a hierarchy of being and account of the divine economy mediated through a highly sophisticated reading of the early chapters of Genesis – has hardly received due consideration. In this presentation, I intend to show how the particularities of Palamas’s teaching on the uncreated Energies generated a kind of deep-structure foundational to his presentation of the hierarchy of being, all while drawing the preceding theological tradition up into a uniquely expressed account of the divine economy as a whole. Moreover, Palamas performs all of this as an extended – and equally unprecedented – exposition on the first three chapters of Genesis, and particularly, the Two Trees of Paradise. By walking through these various interrelated developments at play in the work, I hope to show that the immense value of the 150 Chapters is not exhausted by an account of its parts – whether as a critique of Hellenic natural philosophy, a source-text for debating East-West conceptions of trinitarian anthropology, a systematic presentation of the Essence-Energy distinction, or any other single aspect of its whole. Rather, I hope to make clear how Palamas composes the first part of the 150 Chapters as a crucial situating of his more controversial teachings within the whole divine economy, in order to show how these very teachings undergird and adorn the scriptural proclamation in its entirety.

Reception History of the Lord’s Prayer in Origen, Evagrius Ponticus, and Maximus Confessor

In keeping with the Benedictine slogan 'Ora et labora,' Christian monastics and mystics of the Patristic period viewed prayer as a superstructure that regulated their internal and external orders of life. The Lord’s Prayer received reverent interpretive attention from monastic and mystic figures in the Patristic period. As the Lord’s Prayer is read, its Patristic readers used the prayer text to construct prayer life, inner life, and outer life. Origen, Evagrius Ponticus, and Maximus Confessor each produced an exposition on the text of the Lord’s Prayer. This paper investigates their interpretive approaches, and the reflections to which the approaches
lead. Comparative analysis of the interpretive work of these three figures illuminates how each figure believed that prayer text should construct prayer life, inner life, and outer life. The focus rests primarily on Origen's exegesis in On Prayer, Evagrius' "Commentary on the Lord's Prayer," and Maximus' "Commentary on the Our Father," with reference to the larger corpus of each figure where appropriate. Understanding this process, from Scripture through prayer to discipline, yields concrete practical wisdom for contemporary ministers and mystics who seek the discipline to worship God in a world of spiritual disruption. The paper concludes by proposing practical wisdom of this kind, in discrete points.

**Presenter**  
Jonathan Lincoln

**Institution**  
St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary

**Title**  
*Universal Salvation: St. Gregory of Nyssa in light of St. Mark of Ephesus*

**Abstract**  
"The saints are understood by the saints," observes Metropolitan Hierotheos Vlachos. This is the principle by which I examine St. Gregory of Nyssa’s views on the apocatastasis through the lens of St. Mark of Ephesus’ teachings against the doctrine of Purgatory. With St. Gregory of Nyssa, there is a great hope that all might be saved, and that repentance may in fact be possible after death; with St. Mark of Ephesus, hope is not diminished, yet the possibility of a change of state after death is seen as much less likely. This study will show that St. Mark’s eschatological and soteriological convictions, arguably the standard for Eastern Orthodox Christianity, carry the same distinctly Orthodox ethos as is found in St. Gregory of Nyssa’s work: namely, an emphasis on God’s goodness and mercy, which allows humans the freedom to choose for themselves heaven or hell. I will show that in the writings of both saints, there is nowhere a concept of created purgatorial fire, being as the torments experienced by those in hell are borne from their own grief, shattered consciences, and distress in having rejected pure Love. Solidly in the company of the other Eastern Fathers, both St. Gregory and St. Mark reject any notion of retributive justice, as held by the Western theologians at the Council of Ferrara-Florence. While St. Gregory of Nyssa’s views on universal salvation were admitted by St. Mark of Ephesus to be theologoumena, St. Mark’s defense of Eastern Christian eschatology and soteriology nonetheless shows that he is following in the footsteps of his respected predecessor.

**Presenter**  
Nathan Lunsford

**Institution**  
Marquette University

**Title**  
*Imitatio Christi, imitatio nobilitatis: The Noble Imitation of Christ in Mart. Polycarp*
The mimetic relationship between the martyrs and Christ is well known, as is the highly developed literary form such imitatio Christi takes in the Martyrdom of Polycarp (Mart. Pol.). In addition, Mart. Pol. exhorts its readers to imitate Polycarp in his martyrdom, which took place “according to the gospel of Christ” (19.1). The readers are to become “partners and fellow-disciples of the martyrs,” who were themselves “disciples and imitators of the Lord” (17.3). Yet this dual imitation of both Christ and the exemplary bishop enjoined on the text’s recipients cannot consist in mere reenactment—especially when Polycarp himself departs from the Christic pattern, e.g., in refusing to be nailed to the wood of his pyre (13.3). Such departures in an otherwise programmatic conformity to Jesus’ Passion suggest another significant pattern underlying the depiction of the martyr, which thus shapes the character of the enjoined imitation. This pattern, I will argue, is the ideal of nobility. Nobility language plays a significant role in the portrait of the martyr in Mart. Pol., appearing in key passages that frame the martyr’s person, conduct, and death. Martyrdom according to the will of God is both “blessed and noble” (2.1). The martyrs’ superlative nobility is displayed amidst inhuman tortures, provokes bystanders to wonder, and moreover demonstrates Christian ethical superiority as a “godly and reverent race” (Mart. Pol. 3.2, see also 2.2–3, 16.1). Attending to this motif used to honor and thereby characterize the martyrs will better illumine the aspect of Polycarp—and through him, Christ—that the readers are exhorted to imitate: namely, his nobility. Such attribution of nobility to ideal figures has a long history in the ancient world, evoking combat and athletic imagery, raising questions of identity and one’s place among the peoples of the world, and conveying ideals of intellectual and moral excellence. To establish a baseline sense of what this ideal means to a writer navigating the wider Greco-Roman context while maintaining another religious-cultural identity, I will explore the Jewish use of such nobility language, focusing especially on the precedents set by the Maccabean literature and the works of Philo.

**Presenter**

Jillian Marcantonio

**Institution**

Princeton Theological Seminary

**Title**

The Divine Names, a Dionysian Hymn

**Abstract**

Pseudo-Dionysius’ great work, The Divine Names, gives away its purpose within its title. The work revolves around conceptual names attributed to the Transcendent Deity. While doing so, he chooses to use laudatory language such as “praise” or “hymns,” instead of descriptive language such as “call” or “describe.” A question arises: is this simply a pattern or does his use of praise portray something more? In order to better understand how praise fits into this treatise, this paper will investigate the relationships of praise to the names themselves, to the Dionysian emphasis of affirmation and negation, and to process of procession and return. The
The majority of this paper interacts with the Greek word ὑμνεω and words derived from it, which are found throughout the work. The first chapter of The Divine Names, containing the author’s methodology and main ideas, serves as a lens through which to view the entire treatise. For Pseudo-Dionysius, it is not that praise is incidental to this task but rather that the task is itself a hymn of praise to God. This Dionysian hymn includes both affirmations and negations for God and the entire process of procession and return; it permeates every corner of the author’s theological pursuit. Pseudo-Dionysius does not relegate the act of singing hymns to God to liturgical settings alone; he incorporates it into his intellectual work as well. When he uses a name for God, he lifts his voice in praise to the One who transcends all names.

**Presenter**  
Stephen Meawad  

**Institution**  
Duquesne University  

**Title**  
Fasting Reconsidered: St. John Chrysostom and Modern Science on Fasting  

**Abstract**  
When ancient practices meet contemporary culture, the practice ought to be assimilated and appropriated not with uncertain caution but with the graced confidence of the Holy Spirit of wisdom. This requires faithfulness to all that God has revealed not just through Scripture, Tradition, and the life of the Church, but also through the latest developments in the sciences, which should never be incongruent with the former. It is important that the Church, while maintaining its loyalty to its Patristic heritage, continue to incorporate, digest, and appropriate the latest contributions of modern medicine and scientific research. For this reason, this paper presents a synthesis of the ancient and the contemporary by focusing on the writings of St. John Chrysostom and Dr. Randi Fredricks, a leading authority and researcher on fasting. Three points will be discussed and defended throughout: 1) The disdain with which the medical field looks upon fasting is the result of poorly relaying what exactly constitutes the true spirit of fasting and how it is to be observed for the benefit of body and spirit. 2) Hyper-moderation can cause lax adherence to fasting, easily leading to repudiation of the tradition. Yet, in order to fully experience the power of fasting, earnest struggle and effort need be input. 3) The overly legalistic spirit with which fasting is often observed renders the practice null. Instead, fasting ought to be viewed as a holistic experience in which the cultivation of virtue is of utmost importance.

**Presenter**  
Jacob Nielsen  

**Institution**  
Villanova University  

**Title**  
Acquiring the “Words of the Saints” and the “Mind of the Theologians:” The Logic of Fittingness in St. Athanasius the Great’s Apologia for the Incarnation
Abstract

In his two-part treatise Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione, Athanasius offers a defense of the rationality of the Incarnation that relies on a logic of fittingness. While Athanasian scholarship often notes the presence of this aesthetic form of argumentation in the CG-DI, little work has been done to specify the relationship between the form of Athanasius’ arguments and the content of his defense. This paper seeks to fill this gap by tracking Athanasius’ use of key aesthetic and logical terms in his account of the reasons for the Incarnation. These terms—ανάγκη, δεῖ, χρεῖα, πρέπω, ἄξιος, and καλῶς—range in meaning from “necessary” to “beautiful” and “right.” This polyphony of terms is not the result of a muddled and imprecise understanding of the cause of the Incarnation, but is rather a reflection of the circumstances of Christ’s manifestation to humanity. Because of the reflective character of Athanasius’ logic of fittingness, his judgments about the beauty, necessity, and justice of the Incarnation must not be seen as foisting external categories upon God. On the contrary, these categories are shaped by Athanasius’ understanding of God’s relationship to the world, as it is made known by the Incarnation. Therefore, because the form of Athanasius’ arguments displays the rationality of the Incarnation from an internal perspective, his account not only characterizes God’s own work in the Incarnation as “fitting,” but also provides a way for us to reason about the Incarnation that is “fitting” to God, because it is shaped by God’s own Logos. Fullname: Jake Nielsen

Presenter

Linda Peters

Institution

M.A., Theological Studies, Providence College

Title

Perpetua: From Daughter to Paterfamilias

Abstract

In The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicity, the account of the Christian martyr, Vibia Perpetua of Carthage (203 A.D.), Perpetua’s earthly identity is completely supplanted by her newfound identity as a Christian. Nowhere is this more evident than in her relationship with her paterfamilias, the male head of the family, her father. The goal of this paper is to explore the account of her arrest, trial, and execution, to see how Perpetua’s new identity as a Christian shifts and supplants her identity and roles from those of a traditional Roman daughter to those of a traditional Roman paterfamilias. I will propose that this shift begins as Perpetua’s allegiance and loyalty moves away from her earthly father and towards her heavenly father. I will show that this shift is rooted in and required by her Christian faith. I will suggest that, in the case of Perpetua, her newfound paterfamilias is Jesus Christ. I will show that, ironically, as Perpetua walks under and in Christ’s authority, she becomes the pater over her own life and the paterfamilias—of her co-martyrs. Moreover, I will suggest that this shift supplants her role as daughter with a new role of paterfamilias. In addition, I explore how this shift in identity and roles subverts the power dynamics of the traditional Roman father-daughter relationship. Finally, I
will suggest that this shift ultimately subverts the power dynamics of the Roman emperor-citizen relationship and shows why Christianity posed such a threat to Roman social order in the early third century. Medieval Sourcebook: St. Perpetua: The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicity, 203 A.D.; www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/perpetua.ht

**Presenter**
Seraphim Ramos

**Institution**
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

**Title**
“Beauty First and Last”: The Threefold Beauty First Way and a Question: “The Garden of Eden; Primary sin, Pride or Sensuality?”

**Abstract**
St. Basil the Great, the erudite ascetic, bishop, and social philanthropist saint was also the author of the Long Rules, the fifty-five questions and answers that are still the basis of Orthodox Christian monasticism today. St. Basil drew up his constitution for communal living for the members of the monastery he founded c.356 on the banks of the Iris in Cappadocia, but they had a universal and long lasting effect in their reception — 1,700 years and still going strong! The first question of the Rules asks about the divine commandments, and which one’s are of preeminent importance.

St. Basil’s answer is the Lord’s reply to the lawyer in the Gospel of Matthew: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. The second is like unto it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:36-39). Having established love as constitutive of all the other commandments, St. Basil is then immediately asked how we may successfully accomplish this divine command, while acknowledging that it is necessary to love. The first commandment, if adhered to, naturally unfolds into love for one’s neighbor as “like unto it,” organically linked in succession. Basil’s answer to the second question in the Long Rules is worth investigating as it reveals something about the Beauty First Way (the topic of this paper), St. Basil’s own conversion,1 and every Orthodox Christian and monk striving to enter the kingdom of heaven. //1 “Having wasted much time on frivolous things, and having sacrificed virtually my entire youth to study the teachings of a wisdom that God had made foolish (cf. 1 Cor 1:20), I woke up, as if from a deep sleep, and beheld the wondrous light of the truth of the Gospel, and I recognized the uselessness of the wisdom “of the princes of this world, whose rule was doomed” (1 Cor 2:6). Shedding a flood of tears over my wretched life, I prayed for a guide who might form in me the principles of piety. Above all, my concern was to make some amendment in my character, which had been corrupted by long association with people of low morals (cf. 1 Cor 15:33). Having read the Gospel, I saw that a great means to attaining perfection was the selling of
one’s possessions (cf. Mt 19:21), and the sharing of one’s wealth with those in need; along with the refusal to take any thought for this present life, so that the soul should not be attached to the things of the world; and I prayed that I might find someone who had taken this path, so that with him I could cross the deep and troubled sea of life.” —St. Basil, Letter 223 (written in 375) (LCL 3:290-292)

Presenter  Nick Roumas
Institution  Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
Title  The Hermeneutical Science: An Exploration of Maximus the Confessor’s Questions to Thalassius
Abstract  In this extract from a study on Maximus the Confessor’s primary work of biblical exegesis, The Questions to Thalassius, I discuss Maximus' doctrine of evil as treated in his discussion of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Maximus' logos ontology allows him to treat both Scripture and nature as objects of hermeneutical inquiry. The human capacity to interpret Scripture and nature, however, is inhibited by the passions. The close adverse relationship between the passions and Scriptural interpretation lies at the center of this work and naturally leads into the problem of the origin of the passions and evil.

Presenter  John Solheid
Institution  People Incorporated, Saint John’s School of Theology/Seminar
Title  Scripture and Origen’s Theological Vision in His Commentary on the Gospel According to John
Abstract  In Book IV of Peri Archon, Origen outlined his theory of biblical interpretation emphasizing the necessity of a spiritual understanding of the sacred text. In this text, he outlined a three-fold understanding of scripture using the metaphysics of the human person as an analogy. He claimed that scripture contained senses that corresponded to the body, soul, and spirit of the human person. Both of these claims (i.e. the spiritual interpretation of scripture, and the tripartite division of scriptural senses) have received an abundance of attention from scholars in recent decades. This paper will place Peri Archon IV into dialogue with Book XIII of his Commentary on the Gospel According to John in order to elucidate his theory of biblical interpretation. In this text from his John Commentary, Origen makes two arguments while commenting on Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman (Cf. Jn. 4:13-26) that help us to better understand the principles of his exegetical theory. First, he explains how Jesus’ response to the Samaritan woman demonstrates scripture’s role in the Christian life of conversion. Second, he articulates a doctrine of God as a “spiritual” being
that demands a spiritual understanding of scripture. This paper argues that Book XIII of Origen’s John Commentary places the hermeneutical principles found in Peri Archon IV into their proper context of Christian contemplation of God, a process of progressive encounter with God: the essential characteristic of Christian conversion in Origen’s theological vision.

Presenter  Don Springer
Institution  McMaster Divinity College
Title  Promise and Prescription: Divine Participation in the Apostolic Fathers
Abstract  Mystical union with God in patristic theology is a concept generally traced to the Greek Fathers of the third and fourth centuries. Indeed, there can be little doubt that the Alexandrian and Cappadocian contributions are especially formative. The purpose of this essay is to look behind those influences. Key writings from the early second century are examined, seeking to identify the earliest traces of patristic reflection on the possibility of divine participation. The paper surveys the writings of Ignatius of Antioch, 1 Clement, and the Didache; the methodology is to isolate the specified promises and prescriptions concerning union with God. That is to say, what do the texts teach about divine participation, and what are the prescribed ways in which those promises are said to be accessed. This essay argues that each of the authors resolutely affirm the possibility of intimacy with God, and each contends that personal obedience is the requisite key to unlock the promise. Though each author offers a unique perspective on the nature of that obedience their contributions nevertheless foreshadow the theological developments of subsequent generations.

Presenter  Corey Stephan
Institution  Boston College School of Theology and Ministry
Title  Tongues Can Save or Damn: St. Gregory the Great’s Fortieth Gospel Homily & the Priority of Moral Exegesis
Abstract  St. Gregory the Great’s rarely studied forty Homiliae in Evangelia, the only extant sermons that Gregory gave to uneducated Christians, demonstrate his focus on theology as pastoral. For Gregory, being a pastor means calling one’s flock to repent and to embrace the fullness of Christian moral living. In the Homiliae, as in his Moralia in Job, Gregory often intimately connects the literal/historical sense of Scripture with the moral sense, bypassing the allegorical altogether – an exegetical program that Gregory himself explicitly explains at the beginning of Homilia XL. The Gospel reading for this final homily is Luke 16:19-31, the account of the rich man’s damnation and Lazarus’s elevation to the side of Abraham in Heaven. In
the Vulgate, lingua (which means both “tongue/mouth” as here and “language”) is the word used to identify the mouths of the dogs licking Lazarus’s side. Implicitly connecting this passage to James 3:1-12 (a famous discussion of the power of the lingua), Gregory interprets the lingua as either the teaching work of holy preachers or the sin-seducing words of flatterers. Gregory’s frequent inter-biblical connections have become more apparent as I have worked directly from the untranslated critical edition of the Latin text (Brepols, 1999). Since the lingua has such power, the pastor’s lingua is his mightiest evangelical tool. I argue that this belief informs Gregory’s entire pastoral theology; for Gregory, tongues can either save or damn.

**Presenter**  
Sid Sudiacal

**Institution**  
McMaster Divinity College

**Title**  
Disgust Psychology and the Donatist Controversy, Bowen’s Theory and Augustinian Leadership: Using Psychological Theories to Understand Theological Issues

**Abstract**  
It has been said that “everything rises and falls on leadership.” If this is true, then it means that leadership plays a crucial role in attaining success, whether on an individual or corporate level. Leadership models must therefore inform us how to properly lead ourselves and others in order to achieve our ambitions and dreams. When a congregation faces anxious times, the role of a leader can be a deciding factor on whether or not the church will be successful in facing difficulties. How must a leader act in times of conflict? This paper is an attempt to answer this very question by looking at Augustine and his leadership style during the Donatist Controversy. Psychology can provide us with another set of lens to shed light on religious matters. By using Bowen’s Theory as a psychological tool to understand Augustine’s leadership style, one quickly comes to the conclusion that his leadership style is one with a clear purpose and aim. Instead of automatically reacting to anxious situations, Augustine is well-versed in properly assessing his situation and creating creative solutions to combat the general anxiety present in his particular social and cultural milieu.

**Presenter**  
Evan Underbrink

**Institution**  
Instructor at the New Testament School of Theology

**Title**  
Mimesis and Fate in the Martyrdom of Polycarp

**Abstract**  
The Martyrdom of Polycarp stands as a foundational document, being the representation par excellence and the precedent in style for most to all following Christian martyr accounts, particularly before the rise of
Christendom in the fourth century CE. The classic view of these martyr accounts, typified by scholars such as Herman Müller and Bernhard Sepp, is that The Martyrdom of Polycarp places the virtue of the martyr in his conformity to the type of Christ. In other words, Polycarp was holy due to his right belief, which provided the fate to follow Christ and die in like manner, and indeed the author personally seems to endorse this interpretation. Yet this martyrdom account was in itself not written like the gospels, and instead through the narrative arc and perspective of the narrator presents the similarity between Jesus and Polycarp as far more mimetical than typological. The vitality of the martyrdom account is that Polycarp was primarily similar to Christ in their shared nature, and not in their similar fate. In this, the author of The Martyrdom of Polycarp presents us with theological underpinnings of theosis, along with the concept that individual personalities and fates, expressed through the actions of Polycarp, remain and enrich the eschatological reality of heaven. This paper will utilize Erich Auerbach’s definition and usage of the terms typology and mimesis, combined with a comparison of the commentary and arguments of scholars such as Hermann Müller, Bernard Sepp, and Herman Strathmann. While the main primary text will be The Martyrdom of Polycarp, Polycarp’s Epistle to the Philippians and other historically relevant martyrdom accounts will be presented where their consideration is useful.

**Presenter**  
Marian Ureutz

**Institution**  
University of Graz

**Title**  
Eastern Churches in Caucasus during Late Antiquity – A struggle for unity?

**Abstract**  
Early on Christian faith spread over to the Eastern frontiers of the Roman province Syria. In the Caucasus region and also in the Persian Empire the first Christian congregations are proven for the early 3rd century. It was King Trdat III. of Armenia who declared Christendom as state religion already in the year 301. Furthermore it was Gregory “the Enlightener” who raised up the Armenian Church as its first bishop. From the middle of the 4th century on, even the Georgians became Christians due to the deeds of Saint Nino, a Christian virgin. For the next half century, there took place a deep and intensive interaction between Armenia and Georgia, which was unfortunately given up when the Western Caucasus region came under Byzantine influence, while the Eastern territory was incorporated into the Persian Sassanid Empire. At that time, even in Persia, Christianity has already established itself. The invention of the Armenian script at the beginning of the 5th century fostered an independent development of the Armenian Church. Although she came under the influence of the East Syrian tradition, she might remain independent within the Sassanid Empire under the leadership of a supreme bishop, the so-called “Katholikos”. What happened in the 6th century makes sad ecumenical
First, in 506 Armenian as well as Georgian bishops held at the See of the Armenian Katholikos in Dvin, a Council with the final decision to sentence Nestorianism. Unfortunately, the Second Council of Dvin in 555 condemned the resolutions of the Chalcedon Council and triggered a development that finally brought the Armenian Church on the side of the anti-Chalcedonian opposition. On the other side, the Georgian bishops remained in recognition of the Chalcedonian Council, which caused in 610 the schism between those two Churches. From that time on, the Armenian Apostolic Church counts to the Oriental-Orthodox Churches, while the Georgian Church belongs to the Byzantine Orthodoxy. Within this paper I try to portray this history of a struggle: What happened exactly at that time? Furthermore, what caused this schism between two rather similar sibling-churches?
## Institutions Represented

### Pappas Patristic Graduate Student Conference

**March 3-5, 2016**

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Pappas Patristic Institute's Graduate Student Conference March 3-5, 2016

Kirsten Anderson
University of Notre Dame

Dr. Bruce Beck
Pappas Patristic Institute of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

Hannah Ruth Brown

George Bryant
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

Rodolfo Casals
Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley, CA

Jimmy Chan
Alliance Bible Seminary, Hong Kong

Emily Chesley
Princeton Theological Seminary

Paul Colwell
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

Alexander D. Craven
St. Mary's University, Halifax, NS

Mary Danckaert
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

Mark Daniel
Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

Bishoy Dawood
University of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto

Zachary Domach
Columbia University

Jacob E. Drake
Yale University, Institute of Sacred Music and Divinity School

Jason M Gehrke
Marquette University

Katherine Louise Gilbert
Gordon College

Marshall Goodge
St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary

Joseph Grabau
KU Leuven/Catholic University of Louvain

Mikel Hill
Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary

Pablo Irizar
KU Leuven

Sarah Jenks
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

Samuel Johnson
University of Notre Dame

Harold A. Laurence V
Seattle Pacific Seminary

Jonathan Lincoln
St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary

Nathan A. Lunsford
Marquette University

Jillian Marcantonio
Princeton Theological Seminary

Stephen Meawad
Duquesne University
Rachel Nelson  
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Marian Lukas Ureutz  
University of Graz