

THE BEAUTY OF A GOD WHO IS AMONG US.

Christian theology is by nature deeply Incarnational. This has not always been reflected in the prevailing Christian worldview, which to varying degrees, in varying times and places, has been “otherworldly,” directing its gaze more towards heaven than earth. Yet St Maximus the Confessor reminds us that the Incarnation of God into the world has been at work from the beginning of creation itself, culminating in (rather than being confined to) the Incarnation of Christ on earth and a renewed creation.

Orthodox Christianity has been true to this commission in the many dimensions of its worship, from the veneration of icons and relics to the symbols we find everywhere in temple and liturgy, to the Holy Mysteries themselves. Genuine beauty is inherently incarnational and is perhaps best understood as the shining forth of the invisible within the visible.

Thus, “The Beauty of a God Who Is Among Us,” the 2025 PAIDEIA theme, invites us to reflect not just upon narrowly aesthetic matters, but also upon sacramental and symbolic realities, upon the goodness and holiness we encounter throughout creation—upon all that might suggest the need for a more thoroughly Incarnational worldview that everywhere encounters the truth of the exhortation, “Christ Is in Our Midst!”