

**PAIDEIA:  
A SOCIETY FOR ORTHODOX  
THOUGHT AND CULTURE**

**FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING**

**“Orthodoxy Speaks to the Human Heart”**

**June 2 - June 5, 2026**

**Antiochian Village**

**Bolivar, PA**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 2**

*3:00*

**ARRIVAL and ROOM CHECK-IN BEGINS**  
**(Pick up materials at front desk, Upper Chapel Lobby)**

*5:30 to 6:30*

**DINNER**  
**Cedars Dining Room**

*6:30 to 7:00*

**VENDOR DISPLAY**  
**Books and other materials available for sale or display**  
**Chestnut Auditorium**  
**(Note: these will remain on display throughout the conference)**

*7:00 to 7:15*

**WELCOMING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION OF CO-SPONSORS**  
**Bruce Foltz and David Bradshaw**  
**Chestnut Auditorium**

*7:15 to 8:30*

**PLENARY TEXT SEMINAR**  
**THE PLACE OF THE HEART: READINGS FROM**  
**THE *PHILOKALIA*, ST. LUKE OF CRIMEA,**  
**AND METROPOLITAN HIEROTHEOS VLACHOS**  
**Chestnut Auditorium**

*8:30 to 11:00*

**RECEPTION**  
**Upper Chapel Lobby and Patio**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3**

*7:30-8:00*

**MORNING PRAYERS**

*Sts. Peter and Paul Chapel, beneath the Chapel Lobby*

*8:00 to 9:00*

**BREAKFAST**

**Cedars Dining Room**

*9:00 to 9:50*

**First Morning Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

Cyril (Gary) Jenkins, “The Cross as *Spectaculum* and τρόπαιον (trophy): The Classical and Pagan Roots of Dogmatic Language”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

Zosimas (Ralph) Sidway, “Orthodoxy versus ‘Diabolos’ in Contemporary Cinema and Publishing”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

Fr. Jonathan Goossen, “Tragedy, Shakespeare, and the Suffering Human Heart”

*10:00 to 10:50*

**Second Morning Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

Fr. Joseph Lucas, “For Our Sakes: Does St. Cyril of Alexandria Teach an Early Version of Penal Substitutionary Atonement?”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

Mary Ford, “Reflecting on Antinomy as the Fundamental Pattern of Reality and Way to the Heart of the Matter”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

Lawrence Dieker Jr., “Henry Thoreau’s ‘Civil Disobedience’ and the Ancient Christian Faith”

*11:00 to 11:50*

**Third Morning Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

Nicholas Chapman, “The Ludwell Commonplace Book: A Transatlantic Orthodox Family in the Late Eighteenth Century Anglosphere”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

Jesse Cone, “Ancient Education for Modern Man”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

Dylan Pahman, “The Patristic Antecedents to S. L. Frank's Orthodox Christian Social Thought”

*12:00 to 1:00*

**LUNCH**

**Cedars Dining Room**

*1:30 to 2:20*

**First Afternoon Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

Rico Vitz, “Clarifying the Grand Inquisitor’s Threat to Liberty: Reading Dostoevsky’s *Brothers Karamazov* in Light of Roman Catholic Teachings concerning Papal Authority”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

David Ford, “‘For I Vehemently Set My Heart upon Your Salvation’: St. John Chrysostom Reveals His Heart to His Flock”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

David Wilmington, “The Eros of Mystery in Orthodox Faith and Practice”

*2:30 to 3:20*

**Second Afternoon Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

Seraphim (Bruce) Foltz, “On Seeing and On Taking to Heart: Spiritual Apperception in Greek and Hebrew Antiquity”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

Fr. Kevin Kalish, “What to Do with Culture: Reject? Fear? Transform? Lessons from St. Gregory the Theologian”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

Kevin Sparks, “Penitential Epistemology: Toward Knowledge Theory’s Cardiological Imperative”

*3:30 to 5:15*

**Third Afternoon Session (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3 (3:30 to 4:20)**

Fr. Ignatius Green, “‘The Heart Is Deep beyond All Things’: The Unifying Locus of the Heart in Orthodox Spirituality and Theology”

**Chestnut Auditorium**

**Panel Discussion (3:30 to 5:15)**

**Pdn. Brian Patrick Mitchell, Helen Andrews, and Katherine Baker Hurl**

**“The Great Feminization and the Great Online Awakening to It”**

*5:30 to 6:30*

**DINNER**

**Cedars Dining Room**

*7:00 to 8:30*

**PLENARY KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**His Grace Bishop Gerasim, Title TBD**

**Ajar Amphitheatre**

*8:45 to 11:00*

**RECEPTION**

**Main Lobby and Patio**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 4**

*7:30-8:00*

**MORNING PRAYERS**

*Sts. Peter and Paul Chapel, beneath the Chapel Lobby*

*8:00 to 9:00*

**BREAKFAST**

**Cedars Dining Room**

*9:00 to 9:50*

**First Morning Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

Fr. Alexander F.C. Webster, “Four Christian Feature Films about the Human Heart”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

David Bradshaw, “A Blessed Failure: Metaphors for the Trinity”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

Fr. Thomas Colyandro, “Breathed into the Heart: Pentecost, Love, and the Orthodox Spiritual Tradition”

*10:00 to 10:50*

**Second Morning Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

R. Joseph Bussard, “The Incarnation of God the Word in the Heart of Man according to St. Gregory the Sinaite”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

Timothy Bartel, “An Orthodox Turn in American Poetry: Sherrard, Stallings, Cairns”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

Daniel Hinshaw, “From Academic Inquiry to Lived Experience: The Prayer of the Heart and the Burning Bush Movement in Communist Romania”

*11:00 to 11:50*

**Third Morning Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

Jordan Henderson, “Exhortations to the Heart and the Mind: Reading 4 Maccabees as a Commentary on the Shema”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

Fr. Johannes Jacobse, “Breaking Isolation and Resentment: Healing the Soul”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

Masamichi (Marro) Inoue, “Neither Western nor Modern: Exploring the Alter Global—Globality of a Different Kind—at the Orthodox Church of Japan”

*12:00 to 1:00*

**LUNCH**  
**Cedars Dining Room**

*1:30 to 2:20*

**First Afternoon Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

Edith Humphrey, “‘The Mother of All Blessings’ – Love and the Different Facets of the Heart in the Scriptures”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

Fr. Ambrose Inlow, “The Difference between the Psychological State and the Prayer of the Heart in St. Sophrony of Essex”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

Fr. Paul Siewers, “Orthodox Ecclesiology and Issues of Ecumenism and Ethnophyletism in the 20th Century: The Witness of Hieromartyr Hilarion Troitsky and Filmographer Andrei Tarkovsky”

*2:30 to 3:20*

**Second Afternoon Sessions (Presented Concurrently)**

• **Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2:**

Stoyan Tanev, “Adoption Happens in the Heart: Becoming Divine Children by Sharing in the Love between the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit – The Spiritual Insights of St. Dumitru Staniloae”

• **Laurel Oak Meeting Room 3:**

Mary Lowell, “Paradise Found: The Metaphysical Poetry of St. Ephrem the Syrian”

• **Aspen Pine Meeting Room 4:**

Lex Kohn, “Internet Stories and Liturgies: How Is the Internet Transforming our Affections?”

*3:30 to 5:15*

**Third Afternoon Session (Presented Concurrently)**

**Chestnut Auditorium**

**Panel Discussion 1**

**Seraphim (Bruce) Foltz, Fr. Hans Jacobse, Richard Deibert**

**“Spirit, Soul, and Body in St. Luke of Crimea's Theology of the Heart”**

**Scarlet Oak-Yellow Oak Meeting Room 1/2**  
**Panel Discussion 2**  
**David Bradshaw, Dylan Pahman, Cyril (Gary) Jenkins**  
**Discussion of Dylan Pahman, *The Kingdom of God and the Common Good:***  
***Orthodox Christian Social Thought* (Ancient Faith Publications, 2025)**

*5:30 to 6:30*

**DINNER**

**Cedars Dining Room**

*7:00 to 8:30*

**PLENARY KEYNOTE ADDRESS:**

**Fr. Stephen DeYoung, Title TBD**

**Ajar Amphitheatre**

*8:45 to 11:00*

**RECEPTION**

**Main Lobby and Patio**

<b>FRIDAY, JUNE 5</b>
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**8:30 Orthros**

**Sts. Peter and Paul Chapel, beneath the Chapel Lobby**

**9:30 Divine Liturgy**

**Sts. Peter and Paul Chapel, beneath the Chapel Lobby**

**11:00**

**BRUNCH**

**Cedars Dining Room**

**12:00**

**Deadline to remove display items from Chestnut Auditorium**

**12:30**

**Check-out**

**2:30**

**Building closed**

## Abstracts and Speaker Biographies

**Helen Andrews.** For the abstract of the panel discussion, “**The Great Feminization and the Great Online Awakening to It,**” please see under **Pdn. Brian Patrick Mitchell.**

Bio TBD

### **Timothy Bartel, “An Orthodox Turn in American Poetry: Sherrard, Stallings, Cairns”**

While the discipline of theology is an obvious place to look for new developments in Orthodoxy's witness to the heart in the western world, such a witness is also taking place in poetry. One of the most surprising developments in American poetry in the last few decades is a turn toward Greece, both toward the Greek poetic tradition and the Greek Orthodox religious tradition. This turn is discernible in three recent figures in American poetry: Phillip Sherrard, Scott Cairns, and A.E. Stallings. While the last two names may be recognizable to readers of American poetry, Phillip Sherrard may not be. Yet Sherrard's name has appeared as translator on the most authoritative English language editions of the modern Greek poets, and it is Sherrard who, I argue, paved the way for the Hellenistic focus of the work of both Cairns and Stallings. In this paper I examine the conspicuous presence of Greek Orthodox worship and tradition in the recent poems of Stallings and Cairns and how both are indebted to Sherrard's unique vision of a sacramental cosmos and the resultant importance of Orthodoxy to the poetic act.

**Timothy E. G. Bartel**, PhD, is a poet and professor from Houston, TX, where he attends St. Joseph Orthodox Church and serves as Professor of Great Texts and Theology at Saint Constantine College. His essays and poems have appeared in *Christianity and Literature*, *First Things*, *Modern Age*, *Rule of Faith*, and *Saint Katherine Review*. Timothy's research focuses on the intersection of patristic theology and American poetry. He is the author of eight books of poetry and criticism, including most recently *The Poets and the Fathers: Theology and Poetry from Gregory Nazianzus to Scott Cairns* (2024) and *Roots and Fruit: An Introduction to the Christian Faith* (2026).

### **David Bradshaw, “A Blessed Failure: Metaphors for the Trinity”**

The Cappadocian Fathers offer two predominant metaphors for the Trinity. One is that of three persons; the other, that of mind (*nous*), word (*logos*), and breath or spirit (*pneuma*). Each of these metaphors, taken in isolation, is subject to devastating objections. For this reason it is important that they not be taken in isolation, but that each be allowed to correct and interpret the other. But doing so gives rise to a new objection: in allowing each of them to correct the other in this way, do we not effectively evacuate them of meaning? We have no idea what it is like to be a person who is also the word of another person, nor what it is like to be a person who is another person's spirit or breath. After examining these difficulties, I will consider to what extent we should expect our metaphors of the Trinity to be successful and how we should respond when we find that they have failed.

**David Bradshaw** is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Kentucky. He is the author of

*Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and the Division of Christendom* (2004) and *Divine Energies and Divine Action: Exploring the Essence-Energies Distinction* (2023) as well as the editor of three books, *Philosophical Theology and the Christian Tradition: Russian and Western Perspectives* (2012), *Ethics and the Challenge of Secularism: Russian and Western Perspectives* (2013), and *Natural Theology in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition* (2021). He and his wife Mary attend St. Athanasius Orthodox Church (OCA) in Nicholasville, KY. They are also the proud parents of Marian Adams, co-founder of Draw Near Designs (a vendor of Orthodox children's materials), [www.drawneardesigns.com](http://www.drawneardesigns.com).

**David Bradshaw, Dylan Pahman, and Cyril (Gary) Jenkins, Discussion of Dylan Pahman, *The Kingdom of God and the Common Good: Orthodox Christian Social Thought* (Ancient Faith Publishing, 2025)**

Jesus taught that whenever we feed the hungry or clothe the naked, we do that for Him (Matt. 25:40). But our economies today look very different than that of first-century Judea. Other Christian traditions have developed their own modern social thought to address contemporary economic problems as they have arisen since the Industrial Revolution. But what about the Orthodox tradition? In search of answers we will discuss the recently published work by Dylan Pahman, *The Kingdom of God and the Common Good: Orthodox Christian Social Thought*. This book surveys Scripture, Orthodox Church history, and modern economics to provide the frameworks, principles, and tools needed to fulfill Christ's teaching today.

**R. Joseph Bussard, "The Incarnation of God the Word in the Heart of Man according to St. Gregory the Sinaite"**

The Great Saints of the Orthodox Church agree that "purity of heart" is the proper goal of all Christians. Those who chose to go deeper into the mysteries of the heart include some of the great mystagogues, like St. Dionysios the Areopagite and St. Maximos the Confessor. St. Gregory the Sinaite extended their reach as "a missionary of mental prayer, who inaugurated the most celebrated mystical renaissance in the world of Byzantine history." His noetic prayer and power of illuminative contemplation refined the famous "Essence and Energy Distinction" of St. Gregory Palamas into his own much less known "Essence, Energy, and Image Distinction." The Sinaite developed the most precise study of the spiritual image of God in man as man's most authentic identity. Focusing on God the Word, he taught his disciples how to make out true orthodoxy and test it for themselves. He can be credited with awakening the noetic faculty of man, as he taught the image of God in man to be naturally and essentially hypostatic, in contrast to his predecessors. I hope to deliver five important keys toward awakening the noetic faculty of man into maturity.

**R. Joseph Bussard**, PhD published his M.Div. thesis from St. Tikhon's Orthodox Seminary on Amazon as *The Nature and Function of the Nous in the Homilies of St. Gregory Palamas: A Comparative Study in Christian and Platonist Anthropology*. He has two other published books on Amazon entitled *The Spiritual Intellect: An Introduction* and *The Experience of the Glory of God and the Humanity of Jesus Christ in the Early Biblio/Patristic Tradition*. After his time at St. Tikhon's he spent six years doing doctoral research at Aristotle University in Thessalonica, culminating in a dissertation entitled *The Experience of Theoptia in St. Theoleptos of Philadelphia: The Significance of the Image of God in Man during the Face to Face Vision of God according to the Fourteenth Century Hesychast Tradition*. He also recently completed a dissertation at the Antiochian House of Studies entitled *The Incarnation of God the Word - Θεός Λόγος - in the Heart of Man according to St. Gregory the Sinaite*.

## **Nicholas Chapman, “The Ludwell Commonplace Book: A Transatlantic Orthodox Family in the Late Eighteenth Century Anglosphere”**

Around 1760 a commonplace book was begun containing translations and adaptations of Orthodox liturgical services, freely composed Orthodox prayers and a treatise on the eucharist. The work spans three generations and a period of at least sixty years. It was authored by both men and at least one woman and was written in both Virginia and London, England. I will give an overview of its contents and likely authorship and in particular discuss what these suggest about possible ways of adapting Orthodox liturgical services and devotional practices to be more consonant with the Christian traditions and spiritual experiences of Western converts to Orthodoxy.

**Nicholas Chapman** is the Managing Director of Holy Trinity Publications, the publishing business of Holy Trinity Monastery and Seminary in Jordanville, New York. He also serves as a member of the advisory board of the Orthodox Studies Institute in Houston and as a member of the editorial board of the Orthodox History website. He is the Executive Director of the Virginia based Associates of Philip Ludwell III, a non-profit historical research company.

## **Fr. Thomas Colyandro, “Breathed into the Heart: Pentecost, Love, and the Orthodox Spiritual Tradition”**

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was not merely a historical event — it was the inauguration of a new mode of divine love made available to the human heart. In Acts 2, the gathered community is transformed not by argument or emotion, but by an interior fire that crossed every boundary of language, culture, and background. This paper asks: what was the nature of that love, and how does the Orthodox tradition continue to mediate it?

Drawing on the Pneumatology of Basil the Great, the experience of Seraphim of Sarov, and the philosophical reflections of Christos Yannaras, I argue that the love poured out at Pentecost is inseparable from the uncreated silence of the Holy Spirit — the unspoken, interior presence that transforms persons from within and grounds genuine spiritual communion. It is this Pentecostal love, alive in hesychastic prayer, the tradition of eldership, and the sacramental life of the Church, that explains why Orthodoxy speaks so powerfully across every human difference.

Through its ascetic and pastoral life, Orthodoxy does not merely teach about Pentecost, it perpetuates it. And in doing so, reaches the heart that every human being carries.

**Rev. Dr. Thomas Colyandro** is an Orthodox priest, a Fellow at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, the director of theological and spiritual studies at St. Athanasius College, and the former assistant director of the Center for Faith & Culture at the University of St. Thomas (Houston). He is on the steering committee of the International Orthodox Theological Association (IOTA) Asceticism and Spirituality Group, a member of the board of directors of the Orientale Lumen Foundation, and an editor at Eastern Christian Publications. Fr. Thomas has written and/or edited nine books and myriad articles on spirituality and theology as he continues to concentrate on his original work regarding the *uncreated silence* of the Holy Spirit.

## **Jesse Cone, “Ancient Education for Modern Man”**

“All men by nature desire to know.” With this claim Aristotle begins his *Metaphysics*, and to some extent, the project of education. This natural desire is an “out stretching” from the human person; much in the same way that the sense of seeing comes naturally from the functioning eye. The process

and pursuit of knowing is therefore fundamental to what it means to be human, a conviction that Christianity has long embraced. The human person, as an icon of Christ, reaches toward his or her fullness in many ways, not least through the labor of education.

This educational-theological program has found itself in need of defense—or at least, clarification—as Orthodox Christianity has sought to establish schools in the modern world. To many people the work of the Orthodox school appears indistinct, difficult to distinguish from the practical aims of vocational training on one side, or the liturgical life of the Church on the other.

I will argue that while the historical record presents us with a wide range of legitimate Orthodox schools, the mission of the school is nevertheless distinct from that of the trade school, the family, and the Church. I will further suggest that an Orthodox education is necessarily "classical" and "liberal" in character, in that it proceeds from an ancient and traditional understanding of the human person and of God. Finally, I will draw on my own experience as a teacher, professor, and Head of School to show how these educational principles can take root within the life of the Church and bring genuine formation to students adrift in a deeply disoriented age.

**Jesse Cone** has a PhD in Philosophy at the University of Dallas. He is the Head of School at The Saint Constantine School of Pittsburgh.

**Richard Deibert.** For the panel discussion on “**Spirit, Soul, and Body in St. Luke of Crimea’s Theology of the Heart**” see under **Seraphim (Bruce) Foltz.**

Bio TBD

### **Lawrence Dieker Jr., “Henry Thoreau’s ‘Civil Disobedience’ and the Ancient Christian Faith”**

This paper is a distillation of the chapter on “Civil Disobedience” from my book *A Walk with Henry: Thoreau’s Engagement with the Christian New Testament*.

What does Thoreau have to tell us about Orthodoxy? Thoreau may have been initially skeptical of Christ (he rejected “Christianity” as it was understood and practiced in his Protestant New England), but after studying the scriptures of the East, he returned to the Christian Bible with great enthusiasm. Thoreau’s search was not for religion (man-made schemes), but for Truth, a search he depicts in terms of purity and love. Thoreau’s search was for what we understand as *theosis*. He called it an “experiment.” Thoreau wanted the experience of God.

This paper will discuss: (a) references in “Civil Disobedience” to Christ and the New Testament; (b) going to jail as “action from principle” (*logos*) – faith in action that changed the way Thoreau saw the world; (c) the concluding paragraphs (Thoreau’s vision extends to a paradise on earth); and (d) Thoreau’s emphasis in the opening and closing sentences of the essay on being “prepared” (trusting God to lead our lives). Thoreau’s heart beat with passion for God’s creation and could become inflamed at social injustice (slavery and unprovoked war). This love explains “the two Thoreaus” that scholars have long struggled to unite. “Civil Disobedience” is the response that love requires in a given place and time, at least from the perspective of Henry David Thoreau.

Why is reading Thoreau from an Eastern Orthodox perspective important? This research has relevance to cultural, philosophical, and literary studies, but Thoreau wanted his work to change our lives. Thoreau’s notion of Transcendentalism meant not only to acknowledge another plane of existence, not merely to explore the region intellectually, but also to set up one’s house there and to

live off the land. As Thoreau writes in “Civil Disobedience,” the way we go about our days has eternal consequences. It is, he makes clear, a matter of life and death.

**Larry Dieker** is a lawyer and independent scholar whose interest in Henry David Thoreau goes back 30+ years. He is the author of *A Walk with Henry: Thoreau's Engagement with the Christian Bible* (forthcoming). The book evolved out of the hypothesis that if Thoreau sought the "Truth," as he writes, and if he undertook his journey in the spirit of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust, as he claims, then what he found would resemble, in significant respects, the Truth as understood by the Ancient Christian Faith. Larry and his wife, Jeannie, are members of The Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Columbus, Ohio. They have three children and one great-grandchild.

### **Seraphim (Bruce) Foltz, “On Seeing and On Taking to Heart: Spiritual Apperception in Greek and Hebrew Antiquity”**

If the ontological symbol (in the ancient and patristic sense) represents the paradigmatic relation of revealing within which we may approach what is best and highest and most ultimate, i.e. the realm of true being itself, we may take as symbolic exemplars for Greek and Hebrew spiritual traditions the ascent of Plato's cave dwellers and the figure of Moses stopping at the base of Mt. Sinai. In the former, the preparatory askesis requires the effort of arduous ascent and the strenuous training of the eyes to endure strong light for the prisoners to escape the realm of "images" and see the "originals" unaided—ostensibly transcending the symbolic realm and seeing "beyond" it altogether.

On Mt. Sinai, however, a very different askesis unfolds. Upon seeing the Angel of the Lord within the burning bush, Moses then hears the voice of God commanding him not to ascend further, but to stop and "turn aside," for he is on holy ground. Obeying the divine command to remove his sandals—providing him with a "circumcised" and purified heart that is no longer "hardened," a "heart of flesh" rather than a "heart of stone"—he is then able to hear the voice and heed it—not by exercising his own strength of vision, which would only be blinded by the divine presence, but by humble listening, by taking to heart. Ultimately, Moses is led not to a state of higher contemplation, to a life of pure *theōria*, but to the active life of leading the people of God out of captivity.

For Plato, the symbolic relation to what is highest involves a luminous seeing that requires a spiritual athleticism of sight and spiritual motility, whereas for Moses, it entails pious obedience, ritual purification, and a listening that "takes to heart" what is heard. In the latter case, although the first, visual level of the symbol is "transcended," this is only a transition to the higher and unsurpassable symbolism of a calling and a naming that more fully reveals true being, yet without compromising the radical mystery of its transcendence. Patristic spirituality, and to varying extents Western civilization as such, has drawn upon both these Greek and Hebrew understandings of symbolic manifestation in varying ways, while differing in their resolution of the dynamic tension between them.

**Seraphim (Bruce) Foltz** is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, FL. He is author or editor of six books, including *The Noetics of Nature: Environmental Philosophy and the Holy Beauty of the Visible* (Fordham University Press, 2013), more than thirty articles and translations, and more than fifty encyclopedia articles in six different reference works. He has founded or co-founded four scholarly societies, and his works have been translated into Arabic, Greek, Portuguese, Romanian, and Russian.

### **Seraphim (Bruce) Foltz, Fr. Hans Jacobse, and Richard Deibert “Spirit, Soul, and Body in St. Luke of Crimea’s Theology of the Heart”**

We read in Holy Scripture, in the Neptic Fathers, and in the *Philokalia* that it is not the brain, but the heart beating within our breast that is the seat of the “inner man,” the place where we can meet God. These readings, however, come down to us from the distant, pre-scientific past, before Harvey had discovered that the heart was just a “pump.” But it is harder to be dismissive when a twentieth century Saint of the Church—not just an Archbishop, but a prominent physician and surgeon, a medical scientist who conducted ground-breaking research, an inventor of medical technologies who authored celebrated works of medical research, and a long-time medical school professor—writes the following: the heart “is not just the central pump of the blood circulation [but] the organ of higher cognition, the organ of communication with God and with the entire transcendental world, and it never sleeps. The most important and profound [spiritual] activity takes place beyond the threshold of our consciousness and it never stops.” The three panelists will discuss these issues from the perspectives of medicine, therapy and counseling, and philosophical anthropology.

### **David Ford, “‘For I Vehemently Set My Heart upon Your Salvation’: St. John Chrysostom Reveals His Heart to His Flock”**

In this presentation, I would like to share my own translations of several of the most dramatic moments in the homilies of St. John Chrysostom when he especially reveals his heart of love for his flock – such as when he does so exuberantly in seeing them exceptionally demonstrating their devotion to Christ, or with lament when he perceives that they are not living in full dedication and obedience to Christ and to His holy precepts. I believe these passages can help us all to connect in a more deeply heartfelt way with this tremendously important Saint, as well as giving us a taste of the profound love that all the Saints have for us – love which can stir all our hearts, and which can help in bringing those outside our Holy Church into our midst. I also believe that these passages can inspire our clergy to strive to have this kind of love for their parishioners, and to have the confidence to express their love for their people in appropriate ways, as St. John Chrysostom did, as well as inspiring the laity to love our clergy with the kind of intensity with which his flock loved him.

**Dr. David C. Ford** is Professor of Church History at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Seminary, South Canaan, PA, where he has taught for 35 years. He has published a major study entitled *Women and Men in the Early Church: The Vision of St. John Chrysostom*, and translated Chrysostom's *Letters to Saint Olympia* and *Sermons from the Life of St. John Chrysostom*, both in the Popular Patristics series from SVS Press. He has also gathered and translated many especially powerful passages, all by Chrysostom, on about 60 themes; this work is called *Sing to Your Soul* (St. Tikhon's Monastery Press), in three volumes.

### **Mary Ford, “Reflecting on Antinomy as the Fundamental Pattern of Reality and Way to the Heart of the Matter”**

Since the Divine Logos, who created all things, became flesh and tabernacled among us as both God and man, it would not be surprising if a fundamental pattern found in reality is the antinomy. An antinomy can be defined as two equally necessary realities, or principles, which are apparently contradictory or seemingly incompatible, but which are actually one complete truth. In fact, they must be permanently held together in a creative tension, for the whole that they comprise is not only incomplete, but in some ways perhaps even falsified, without both parts held together.

The antinomy, reflecting as it does the Incarnation, provides a helpful model for thinking about many aspects of reality. It is a model highly favored by our Orthodox hymnographers, who seem to set up poetically as many things as possible in what we could call antinomical relationships. This is perhaps

because that reflects the Incarnation itself, and because it can inspire in us humble wonder — a feeling of reverent awe — at many aspects of our Faith, engaging our heart as well as our mind. In this way, such use of antinomies can also help us overcome an overly rationalistic approach. It can be fruitful to think of even reason and the heart themselves, as well as many other aspects of the Faith, such as the Old and New Covenants, linear and cyclical ways of understanding time, and male and female (and their agency), as antinomies. In this talk, I will consider several examples to demonstrate what I mean.

**Mary Ford** was Associate Professor of New Testament for 33 years at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Seminary, retiring in May of 2022. She taught courses on the Johannine writings, Hermeneutics, Introduction to Orthodox Spiritual Life, and an assortment of other courses. She is the author of *The Soul's Longing: An Orthodox Christian Perspective on Biblical Interpretation* and co-author of *Marriage as a Path to Holiness: Lives of the Married Saints*. Her original theme for her doctorate was on using stories to communicate theology, and she has had a lifelong interest in that topic, including collecting folk tales from many cultures.

### **Fr. Jonathan Goossen, “Tragedy, Shakespeare, and the Suffering Human Heart”**

A particularly compelling aspect of Orthodoxy in our time is its unflinching yet hopeful understanding of human suffering. The literary genre of tragedy is also innately concerned with suffering, yet both scholars of the genre and theologians have typically been skeptical about tragedy's compatibility with Christian belief, asserting that the former requires suffering to be absolute, without the redemptive explanation or reward offered by the latter. Shakespeare's tragedies are regularly seen to reflect this skepticism, despite their ostensibly Christian settings and moral frameworks. This paper will question both this skepticism and its application to Shakespeare. With the help of theologians like Donald MacKinnon and Rowan Williams, it will consider the ways that a range of Shakespeare's tragedies may speak to the human heart about suffering in a manner consonant with Orthodox theology.

**Rev. Dr Jonathan Goossen** is Associate Professor of English at Ambrose University in Calgary, Alberta, where he teaches Renaissance literature, poetry, and early literary theory. He also serves as Associate Priest at St. Peter the Aleut Orthodox Church (OCA). He is the author of *Jonson, Shakespeare, and Aristotle on Comedy* (Routledge, 2019) and various articles on Shakespeare's and Jonson's drama. He is married and has four adult children.

### **Fr. Ignatius Green, “‘The Heart Is Deep beyond All Things’: The Unifying Locus of the Heart in Orthodox Spirituality and Theology”**

Abstract TBD

**Fr. Ignatius Green** is the translator of St. Gregory of Nyssa's *Catechetical Discourse* (SVS Press, 2019) and a new liturgical translation of the Septuagint Psalter (SVS/STM Press, 2024). He is the rector of Holy Apostles Orthodox Church (OCA) in Columbia, SC.

### **Jordan Henderson, “Exhortations to the Heart and the Mind: Reading 4 Maccabees as a Commentary on the Shema”**

The philosophical treatise known as 4 Maccabees, which retells the story of the “Maccabean martyrs” (2 Macc 7), focuses especially on its readers' hearts and minds. The entire treatise centers around the

theme of “pious reason” and its ability to conquer the passions. It is through “pious reason” that Eleazar, the seven brothers, and their mother are able to endure both the suffering inflicted upon them and the sight of one another’s suffering, while remaining faithful to the point of death. This work also twice mentions devoting one’s “whole heart” to God, again in the context of conquering the passions (7:18; 13:13). These references to the mind and the heart, together with references to the soul throughout the work and the graphic depictions of the mutilations of the martyrs’ bodies, allow us to read this treatise as a commentary on the Shema (Deut 6:4–9), particularly as it is recited by Christ in the gospels (Mt 22:37; Mk 12:29–30). The martyrs’ patient endurance of unspeakable torture exemplifies loving the Lord with all of one’s heart, mind, soul, and [bodily] strength. Yet 4 Maccabees’ remarks concerning the mind and heart are not so much modes of persuasion (appeals to reason or the emotions) as they are exhortations to the proper orientation of one’s heart and mind towards God. These exhortations illustrate the universality of the book’s message: ordering one’s heart and mind towards their true desire.

**Dr. Jordan Henderson** is a scholar of ancient Mediterranean religion, specializing in Greco-Roman, Jewish, and Christian historiography. He is the Dean and Professor of Biblical Studies at St. Athanasius College (on-line). His forthcoming book, *Defeat and Deliverance: Prefigurements of the Jewish Revolt Against Rome in Josephus’ Depictions of Past Invasions of Jerusalem*, will be published later this year as part of Brill’s Supplements to the *Journal for the Study of Judaism* series.

### **Daniel B. Hinshaw, “From Academic Inquiry to Lived Experience: The Prayer of the Heart and the Burning Bush Movement in Communist Romania”**

In its evolution the culture of the West has created challenges, if not insurmountable barriers, for the encounter with mystery. The analytical approach so characteristic of Western scholarship has enabled extraordinary scientific discoveries and technological development. But when the Western mind encounters ineffable mysteries that resist deconstruction or verification by empirical science it is often left on the outside looking in with perplexity. A powerful example of this tension between indirect knowledge about and direct knowledge through experience is reflected in the Burning Bush Movement which occurred in Romania during the 1940s and 50s. In those turbulent times, catalyzed by the charismatic personality of Sandu Tudor (later hieroschemamonk Daniil), this resurgence of intense interest among Romanian intellectuals and students in the Prayer of the Heart began as intellectual inquiry but ultimately found its fulfillment in the Communist Gulag of Romania. Using the Burning Bush Movement as a model, this presentation will explore the challenges facing the person grounded in Western patterns of thought when encountering the mystery of a direct encounter with the Living Christ in the simplicity of this ancient prayer of the Church.

**Daniel B. Hinshaw, M.D.** is professor emeritus of surgery and consultant in palliative medicine at the University of Michigan. He has taught palliative care to medical professionals and clergy in multiple international settings. Besides many scientific articles and chapters, he is the author of several books: *Suffering and the Nature of Healing* (2013), *Touch and the Healing of the World* (2017), an historical novel, *Neither Bond nor Free* (2019), *Thriving in the Face of Mortality: Kenosis and the Mystery of Life* (2023), and *Journey to Simplicity: The Life and Wisdom of Archimandrite Roman Braga* (2024).

### **Edith Humphrey, “‘The Mother of All Blessings’ – Love and the Different Facets of the Heart in the Scriptures”**

St. John Chrysostom famously dubbed love “the mother of all blessings,” speaking specifically of *agapē*, but also recognizing the importance of love in its varied expressions. In our own era C. S.

Lewis spoke of the “four loves.” Although the distinctions between *agapē*, *philia*, *erōs*, and *storgē* can be exaggerated, it would seem that the ancients were well aware of their differing semantic ranges. In contemporary understanding, such different types of love are all connected with “the heart”—that is, with the emotions. Both Scripture and the Church Fathers likewise link love with the heart, by which they mean the center of the person, and not primarily the passions. However, *philia*, which involves affection, is commended in the Scriptures, and even used to describe love between the Father and the Son. While *erōs* tends to be used negatively in the LXX for disordered sexual love, it also is used positively by later Church Fathers to speak of desire for God. *Storgē* is less prominent, but may be found in domestic descriptions of the seven martyrs and their mother in the Maccabean literature, as well as in compounds in the NT, where natural familial affection is taken as a created good, and Christians are encouraged to bond with each other as members of the same family. One might think that maturity in Christ means to move from lower creational loves to the highest form, but the interplay is more complex, as we see in the progression prescribed in 2 Peter 1, where brotherly friendship is not set aside for *agapē*, but the latter is added to the former. In this paper, we will consider this intriguing scriptural and patristic interplay, observing how all four forms of love are enacted in lively metaphors, so as to encourage us to love with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. The ability of creaturely, familial, and conjugal loves to be assumed into *agapē* mirrors the telos of the Incarnation—not that our personhood and human hearts be set aside, but that they be transfigured by the true God-Man.

**Edith M. Humphrey** is the William F. Orr Professor Emerita at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, a grateful member of St. Nicholas Church in McKees Rocks, PA, co-chair of the Biblical section of the International Orthodox Theological Association, a grandmother to nearly 24 children, and wife to Chris Humphrey. She has written 11 books on subjects as varied as theological anthropology and C.S. Lewis, including two novels for children or young adults on the saints, and plays piano duos with a friend.

**Katherine Baker Hurl**. For the abstract of the panel discussion, “**The Great Feminization and the Great Online Awakening to It,**” please see under **Pdn. Brian Patrick Mitchell**.

Bio TBD

**Fr. Ambrose Inlow**, “**Transforming Personal Pain into All-Embracing Love according to St. Sophrony of Essex**”

St. Sophrony articulates the experience of the prayer of the heart in common with previous Holy Fathers and also in a unique manner which speaks to the modern man. He differentiates between first, the psychological experience; secondly, the confusion of the psychological experience with the spiritual state; and thirdly, the authentic spiritual state of the prayer of the heart. I hope in this paper to lay out these three distinctions as articulated by Sophrony. I hope to demonstrate how he guides his reader from the experience of the isolated soul, through the intermediate and mixed experience of prayer, and ultimately, toward the more authentic experience of the prayer of the heart. In this progression, we transform psychological energy into spiritual energy. How can we most properly navigate this progression?

**Fr. Ambrose Inlow** is the rector of Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church in Syracuse, NY (OCA). Father of four children, graduate of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Seminary, he has studied, written, and given conference presentations on many of the Greek Fathers, especially on St. Maximos the Confessor. Most recently he has been enchanted by the writings and spiritual tradition of St. Sophrony of Essex.

## **Masamichi (Marro) Inoue, “Neither Western nor Modern: Exploring the Alter Global—Globality of a Different Kind—at the Orthodox Church of Japan”**

While embracing Western civilization and modernity, Meiji Japan (1868-1912) carefully removed Christian influence from it by inventing the Japanese Emperor System as the spiritual foundation of the country’s social transformation. Meanwhile, introduced from Russia to Japan in the 1860s, Orthodox Christianity was first accepted by former samurai who, having been defeated by and excluded from the emerging power structure of Meiji Japan, developed a certain, often critical, distance from the direction the country was taking. This marginal origin, combined with a series of ecclesiastical and related practices developed during and beyond the Meiji period, has helped the Orthodox Church of Japan (OCJ) express what I tentatively call the alter global, a totality of decentered, transnational Christian life-forms that are neither Western nor modern. Standing today at the endpoint of Japan's westernization-modernization (or globalization, as commonly perceived), my project explores this “globality of a different kind” and its theological-theoretical implications through fieldwork and archival research at OCJ. Special attention is paid to OCJ’s sustained allegiance to the changing Japanese Emperor System, as it has variedly shaped the alter global in a broader historical context. My presentation is based on this ongoing project.

**Masamichi (Marro) Inoue** is Professor in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures & Cultures at the University of Kentucky, having taught various courses pertaining to Japan, Asia, and the world. Professionally trained in cultural anthropology (Duke, 1999), he has investigated U.S. military base issues in Okinawa from an ethnographic-historical perspective. His second book on this subject was recently published. He has also conducted fieldwork-based ethnographic research with a police department on a U.S. university campus. Baptized in May 2024, Inoue is developing a new ethnographic project on the Orthodox Church of Japan as a service to God.

## **Fr. Johannes Jacobse, “Breaking Isolation and Resentment: Healing the Soul”**

Abstract TBD

**Fr. Johannes Jacobse** is the priest of St. Peter Antiochian Orthodox Church in Fort Myers, FL. He is the spiritual advisor to the Antiochian Men of the Miami Diocese and the founder of the St. Paisios Brotherhood, a ministry geared toward Orthodox young men seeking to stabilize their lives.

## **Cyril (Gary) Jenkins, “The Cross as *Spectaculum* and τρόπαιον (trophy): The Classical and Pagan Roots of Dogmatic Language”**

At the beginning of every Matins service we beg the aid of Christ ἀήττητον τρόπαιον, a reference to the Cross which the Church draws directly from the kontakion for the veneration of the Cross: τὴν συμμαχίαν ἔχοιεν τὴν σὴν, ὄπλον εἰρήνης, ἀήττητον τρόπαιον (they carry Thy defense, the weapon of peace, the unconquerable trophy).

Allusions to the Cross as trophy go back as far as St. Justin Martyr. Our modern trophies are essentially ancient laurels, while the trophies in the classical world meant something completely different. What exactly did the saints and hymnographers mean by this allusion, and what connection did it have with the ancient Greek term? At the same time that we see the language of trophy, we also see the notion of spectacle, a term (θέατρον) which St. Paul employs of the disciples, which corresponds to the Latin *spectaculum*, a term associated with crucifixion, and a notion of spectacle that St. Paul also gives to the Cross. The ancient Church happily appropriated both of these terms in

explaining what the Cross of our Lord effected. Unpacking the language of these words and their relation to our salvation is this paper's theme.

**Dr. Cyril (Gary) Jenkins** is a Senior Editor at the *Touchstone Journal*, the Director of the St. Basil Center for Orthodox Thought & Culture at Eastern University in St. Davids, PA, the Van Gorden Professor in History (Emeritus) at Eastern University, co-editor-in-chief of *Rule of Faith: A Journal of Orthodox Thought and Culture*, executive editor of Basilian Media & Publishing, and a Reader at St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church in Emmaus, PA. He also hosts two podcasts on Ancient Faith Radio. His most recent publication is *A Perilous Realm: Confronting Dragons, Angels, and Saints in the Ordering of the Soul* (Basilian Media & Publishing).

**Fr. Kevin Kalish, “What to Do with Culture: Reject? Fear? Transform? Guidance from St. Gregory the Theologian”**

While we turn to the Fathers for guidance on theology, the spiritual life, and worship, there is another area where we can be guided by the Fathers. That is the issue of culture. For the Fathers of the fourth century, this became a critical question when the Emperor Julian excluded Christian teachers from partaking in Hellenic culture by forbidding them from teaching. How the Fathers responded has lessons for us today, as Orthodox Christians navigate questions of secular culture, and in particular the place of education, which is at the heart of culture. This paper will focus on St. Gregory the Theologian's two orations against the Emperor Julian (Orations 4 and 5) to uncover what lessons we can gather for our current situation.

Bio TBD

**Lex Kohn, “Internet Stories and Liturgies: How is the Internet Transforming our Affections?”**

I propose to give an overview of contemporary scholarship on our growing understanding of the formative power of liturgy, including prevailing theories as to how liturgical formation operates. I will conclude with a brief discussion highlighting some of these patterns online, including which patterns are genuinely dangerous, and which are mistaken as dangerous.

Bio TBD

**Mary Lowell, “Paradise Found: The Metaphysical Poetry of St. Ephrem the Syrian”**

*I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp. Ps 48 (49)*

The theology of the Orthodox Church is embedded in her hymnography—the depth of her poetry chanted and sung which penetrates the heart. The constant washing of the heart with Biblical text and inspired odic compositions is the primary instrument of the Church's preaching, catechesis and evangelism. In the tradition of God's greatest poet King David, the liturgical poets of the Orthodox Church have produced works that convey the fullness of the Christian revelation. St. Ephrem the Syrian (c. 306–373 AD) is one of the most prolific writers of theological poetry. Selections from his hymns are included in the “vast festal hymnaries designated to cover the whole ecclesiastical year” (Sebastian Brock). His versification of realities that cannot be described in empirical categories of time, space and materiality relies on poetic idiom to traverse the impassible “ontological gap between God the Creator and his creation.” Even quantum physicists like Niels Bohr default to the agency of poetry: “When it comes to atoms, language can be used only as in poetry.” The genius of St. Ephrem to express an interpenetration of the material and transcendent flows from his gratitude for the

plentitude of divine opportunity by which he composed three million homiletic verses. “Blessed is He who has appeared to our human race under so many metaphors” (*On Faith*, 31st Hymn).

**Mary Lowell** is the founder and manager of Hexaameron, a non-profit ecclesial arts education organization, established in 2003. In addition to her articles on iconography in on-line journals such as *Orthodox Arts Journal* and *Another City*, she has written two books on religious art: *Revelations: Visions of the Second Coming from the Old and New Testaments*, published by Viking Penguin Press in 1994, and *Treasure in a Box: A Guide to the Icons of St. Andrew*, published in 2019 by Archway Publisher, a subsidiary of Simon & Schuster.

### **Fr. Joseph Lucas, “For Our Sakes: Does Cyril of Alexandria Teach an Early Version of Penal Substitutionary Atonement?”**

It has been suggested by some scholars that Cyril of Alexandria espouses an early form of Penal Substitutionary Atonement, rooted in his exegesis of passages pertaining to the work of Christ. Emphasis has been given to his use of sacrificial terminology, frequent appeal to substitutionary language, and occasional reference to a "penalty" appropriated by Christ. We will examine the merit of this interpretation of Cyril, placing such passages within the larger context of his corpus and his overarching soteriological framework to assess whether his thought aligns with the narrow forensic categories of later Scholastics and Reformers, or rather offers the reader a broader and more sublime vision of salvation.

**Archpriest Joseph Lucas** is the Rector of Christ the Saviour Orthodox Cathedral in Miami Lakes, FL and Adjunct Professor of Theology at St. Thomas University in Miami Gardens. He received his PhD in Theology at Radboud University (Nijmegen) and his MDiv from St. Tikhon's Seminary. He is the author of *How to Read the Holy Fathers: A Guide for Orthodox Christians* (Ancient Faith, 2025).

### **Pdn. Brian Patrick Mitchell, Helen Andrews, and Katherine Baker Hurl Panel Discussion: “The Great Feminization and the Great Online Awakening to It”**

The Western world has now endured more than half a century of state-forced feminism impacting virtually every aspect of public and private life. What effect has this had on our public institutions including the Church, our private associations including marriage and parenthood, and our personal well-being, mentally and spiritually? We are now also witnessing a great awakening in online commentary by both men and women on male-female relations challenging everything feminists have forced us to believe. How does what we find online coincide with or contradict what we find in Holy Scripture, Holy Tradition, or our Holy Fathers?

This panel will seek Orthodox answers to each of these questions. **Helen Andrews** will address the effect of the “Great Feminization” on our public institutions including the Church; **Protodeacon Brian Patrick Mitchell** will assess the value of the great awakening of online anti-feminist thought on marriage and parenthood in light of patristic teaching; and **Katherine Baker Hurl** will reflect on the distinctive natures of the man and the woman and on the effect of feminism’s inversion of those natures on the mental and spiritual health of women and children.

**Protodeacon Brian Patrick Mitchell** is a former Washington bureau chief of *Investor’s Business Daily* and the author of seven books on politics and religion, most recently *Origen’s Revenge: The Greek and Hebrew Roots of Christian Thinking on Male and Female* (Pickwick, 2021). His 2006 book *Eight Ways to Run the Country* has been used to teach politics at Yale and Catholic University

of America. He holds a PhD in theology from the University of Winchester and serves at St. John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Cathedral (ROCOR) in Washington, D.C.

### **Dylan Pahman, “The Patristic Antecedents to S. L. Frank's Orthodox Christian Social Thought”**

In his vocation as an Orthodox Christian philosopher, S. L. Frank faithfully contributed three decades of work spanning ontology, epistemology, theodicy, and social ethics, all while surviving exile from his homeland by the Soviets, the rise of antisemitism in Germany, and the fall of Paris to the Nazis. Though Frank writes in the idioms of German Idealism and owes some debt to it, his thought more accurately reflects a modern, Orthodox expression of Dionysian mystical theology. Frank is not just modern in his terminology, however, but also in his attention to unique social challenges of our modern era, such as totalitarianism, socialism, utopianism, and utilitarianism.

While his technical language likely accounts for Frank not being a household name among Orthodox Christians today, many of his works were translated into English, and a notable secondary scholarship exists in English as well. This paper will contribute to that scholarship through an exploration of Patristic antecedents to Frank, whether explicitly acknowledged (e.g., St. Augustine, [Ps.-]Dionysius the Areopagite, St. Dorotheus of Gaza, and St. Maximus the Confessor) or resonating but unacknowledged (e.g., St. Irenaeus, St. John Chrysostom, St. John Cassian, and St. Isaac the Syrian), arguing that Frank's social thought in particular could bear much fruit for a “neopatristic synthesis” attuned to the challenges of our social worlds today while remaining faithful to Orthodox Holy Tradition. As such, Frank's work merits greater propagation and popularization.

Note: for the panel discussion on **Dylan Pahman, *The Kingdom of God and the Common Good: Orthodox Christian Social Thought* (Ancient Faith Publishing, 2025)**, see under **David Bradshaw**.

Bio TBD

### **Zosimas (Ralph) Sidway, “Orthodoxy versus ‘Diabolos’ in Contemporary Cinema and Publishing”**

Orthodoxy’s current “cultural moment” is beginning to shine through the fog of secular hegemony in film, print, and other media, presenting the radical, and radically appealing, traditional Christian worldview to audiences hungry for alternative creative works which ennoble and exalt the heart.

A brief survey of Orthodox films which meet this bar through their presentation of “ancient teachings, liturgies, and ascetic practices of the Church” begins with *Ostrov (The Island)*, directed by Pavel Lungin) in 2006, and considers several more recent titles and filmmakers as well, most of them probably familiar to the conference audience.\* Edifying Orthodox works in print and video are contrasted with concerns over poor or unedifying online content. Orthodox writers such as recent converts Paul Kingsnorth and Martin Shaw are featured for their ability to express from a traditional ascetical centeredness robust and unique critiques of contemporary culture and trends through their non-fiction works, as well as for their creative storytelling. A consideration of Irenaeus of Lyons’ Mosaic of Christ is applied to a select few diabolical cultural touchstones, showing how they distort Christian anthropology, purification of the heart, and eschatology. Practical suggestions for helping fund Orthodox creative endeavors conclude the paper.

\* E.g.: *Man of God* (2021, Yelena Popovic), *Sacred Alaska* (2023, Simon Scionka), *El Tonto Por Cristo* (2025, Josh David Jordan), *Moses the Black* (2026, Yelena Popovic).

**Ralph H. (Zosimas) Sidway** is a graduate of Transylvania University, Lexington, KY (BA, Philosophy) and is a member of St. Symeon Orthodox Church (OCA) in Birmingham, AL. His photographs were first accepted into juried exhibits in 1983 and thereafter in galleries across Kentucky and Southern Indiana. His images have won numerous awards and been featured in a variety of publications and coffee table books. His books include *Pursuing the Light: Forty Years of Photography* (2014) and *The North American Thebaid: Orthodox Christian Monasteries in the United States and Canada* (St. Tikhon's Monastery Press, 2025).

### **Fr. Paul (Alfred) Siewers, “Orthodox Ecclesiology and Issues of Ecumenism and Ethnophyletism in the 20th Century: The Witness of Hieromartyr Hilarion Troitsky and Filmographer Andrei Tarkovsky”**

This paper will explore aspects of Orthodox approaches to ecclesiology in the 20th century, especially in Russian Orthodox tradition that spread across the world in exile. The effects of the Bolshevik persecution and the fragmentation of the diaspora had great impacts, including friction with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. A deep dive into Orthodox ecclesiology evidenced by the early 20th-century Hieromartyr Hilarion Troitsky, and the later film Andrei Rublev by Russian director Andrei Tarkovsky, offer different types of insights into the challenge to tradition posed by globalization and "cultural Marxism" in a new ascendant secular “global West.” As the latter order is now faced by its own severe challenges, an effort will also be made to suggest lessons from this earlier era for Orthodox Christians seeking to navigate today's global civilizational turmoil.

**Fr. Paul Siewers, Ph.D.**, is a priest at St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco Russian Orthodox (ROCOR) Mission in Lewisburg, PA and Associate Professor of Literary Studies at Bucknell University. The author or editor of six books, including *Strange Beauty: Ecocritical Approaches to Early Medieval Landscape* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), he is also former Urban Affairs Writer at the *Chicago Sun-Times* and editor of the [PAIDEIA Review](#).

### **Kevin Sparks, “Penitential Epistemology: Toward Knowledge Theory’s Cardiological Imperative”**

How might the saying that “the heart has its reasons which the mind does not know” (Pascal) interact with the Fathers’ sense that “the mind must be brought down into the heart?” What might we glimpse regarding prayerful repentance as an organic part of sound knowing and epistemology, as a healing for the unwell knowing to which we’re prone? Tragically, the Edenic knowledge tree became a locus of seemingly ‘ex nihilo’ reactionary, suspicious, selfish, and reductionist lenses and senses. These modes haunt thought like anti-teleological signs flickering in Plato's cave. Philosophy has become sophism over and over again; wisdom’s love has variously become knowledge, power, and control, called truth-neutral information.

In terms of our general engagement with things like meaning or knowledge or understanding, Genesis-like roots and Eschaton-like branches have been hermeneutically amputated from the now trunk-like tree. A serpentine logic there yet compels our noetic poverty, by its poverty. We’d ask what it is in the fearfully and wonderfully made divine icon that is so sadly drawn by such. Though called toward divine likeness, we are so typically blocked from glimpsing let alone fulfilling such. Might we yet work and pray toward the synergy that registers the understanding’s synergetic necessity? In the prayer of the heart, one presumably leans toward the beautifully compact sense of ultimate knowledge spoken about by The Lord in old and new covenantal revelation.

**Kevin Sparks** is a jazz performer and painter originally from northern New Jersey. He taught in the visual arts for a number of years at Asbury College in Wilmore, KY. Later teaching a variety of seminars in drawing, fallacy, and creative problem solving (at Miami International, Midway University, and The Pittsburgh Art Institute), Sparks was the top scholarship award winner at the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts (IDVSA), an institute for PhD work in arts and philosophy. His work explores how the studio might become a non-negligible lab for philosophy.

**Stoyan Tanev, “Adoption Happens in the Heart: Becoming Divine Children by Sharing in the Love between the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit – The Spiritual Insights of St. Dumitru Staniloae”**

Fr. Dumitru Staniloae (1903–1993) is one of the most recently canonized saints in the Orthodox Church, proclaimed as a saint in February 2025. He is widely regarded as one of the most important Orthodox theologians of the 20th century, known for his work on the *Philokalia* and his dogmatic theology. In addition to his multi-volume dogmatic theology, Fr. Dumitru published two of the most profound works on Orthodox spirituality in the 20th century which are now both available in English – *Orthodox Spirituality: A Practical Guide for the Faithful and a Definitive Manual for the Scholar* (2002, St Tikhon’s Seminary Press) and *Spirituality and Communion in the Orthodox Liturgy* (2025, Holy Cross Orthodox Press). There have been many works focusing on the Trinitarian theological insights of Dr. Dumitru but his works on spirituality, despite their spiritual depth and practical relevance, remain significantly understudied.

The present text will reflect on the theological insights of Fr. Dumitru Staniloae on the human heart as expressed in his *Orthodox Spirituality*. In this book our adoption as sons of God is described as experienced and realized in the heart, where Christ and the Holy Spirit dwell and make us share in the Son’s own filial relation to the Father. From Baptism, Christ “enters” and dwells in “the innermost sanctuary” or “place behind the icon screen” of our being, identified with the deepest heart. Spiritual life is described as a gradual discovering and opening this heart, so that we consciously meet Christ there and live in personal communion with Him. The Holy Spirit is the hypostatic “comforting sensitivity” of the Father for the Son, poured out also on us in Christ so that we can respond with a filial sense and love. The heart is “the power of love” and the place where the Spirit softens us, makes the “walls of the soul transparent,” and awakens our love so that “God’s love wakes up our love.” In this awakened, purified heart, our love for God becomes participation in the Son’s own filial love; we respond to the Father’s love “stimulated by the same comforting sensitivity of the Spirit, along with the Son,” which is precisely the inner content of adoptive sonship. The Father “wants to extend His paternal love to other sons, united with His Son,” and “in the Son made flesh we are all adopted by the Father”; this adoption is not abstract but is interiorly lived as the heart becomes the dwelling of Christ and the Spirit. Through the mysteries (especially Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist) Christ comes to dwell in us and the Spirit “raises” us into the divine world; in that process the heart is the personal locus where deification and adoptive sonship are tasted and consciously appropriated.

The Spirit of adoption is poured out in the Church through the mysteries, but it is in the heart—softened, illumined, and opened by the Spirit—that we actually stand as sons with the Son before the Father:

According to the Apostle, ‘you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba, Father!”’ (Rom 8:15–16). In patristic perspective, this Spirit of adoption is given sacramentally in the Church, inserting us into Christ and granting us filial access to the Father; yet the same Spirit is also the One who “dwells in the heart” as light and “softens” it,

awakening love and making our inner cry correspond to that of the Son. Thus our adoption is both an ecclesial and Trinitarian act in the Holy Spirit and a reality experienced in the heart, where, as Basil says, it is “impossible to call upon the Father except in the Spirit of adoption,” that is, in the very milieu of the Spirit in whom we stand before the Father as sons.

The paper will provide a more detailed analysis of Staniloae’s insights on the human heart. The objective is to use his insights as an exploratory lens into the Orthodox spiritual understanding of the heart. The understanding of the human heart as a temple of Divine love and the place of our adoption as children of God turns spirituality into an experiential and existential endeavour for every human being.

**Stoyan Tanev**, PhD in Physics and in Theology, MSc, MEng, MA Theology, is Associate Professor of Technology Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. He is also Adjunct Professor in the Faculties of Theology at St. Paul University in Ottawa and Sofia University in Bulgaria. His theological interests are in contemporary issues in Orthodox theology and the dialogue between science and theology. He is the author of *Energy in Orthodox Theology and Physics: From Controversy to Encounter* (Pickwick Publications, 2017) and served as guest editor for two special issues of *Analogia: The Pemptousia Journal for Theological Studies*, “Science and Orthodox Theology,” Vol. 12/13, 2020 and “Physics and Theology,” Vol. 21, 2024.

### **Rico Vitz, “Clarifying the Grand Inquisitor’s Threat to Liberty: Reading Dostoevsky’s *Brothers Karamazov* in Light of Roman Catholic Teachings concerning Papal Authority”**

My principal aim in this paper is pedagogical: i.e., to offer insights for teaching one of the most important elements of Dostoevsky’s *Brothers Karamazov*. More specifically, I explain how understanding Roman Catholic teachings concerning papal authority helps to clarify the threat to liberty posed by the Grand Inquisitor. To do so, I elucidate papal decrees that Dostoevsky seems to have had in mind and highlight some that he does not address but which are essential for understanding the nature and scope of the Inquisitor’s threat.

**Rico Vitz** is professor of philosophy and Director of the [Honors College](#) at Azusa Pacific University, and a Research Fellow at the [St. Nicholas Cabasilas Institute for Orthodoxy & Liberty](#). He is the author of *Reforming the Art of Living: Nature, Virtue, and Religion in Descartes's Epistemology*, co-editor of *Hume's Moral Philosophy and Contemporary Psychology* and of *The Ethics of Belief: Individual and Social*, and the editor of *Turning East: Contemporary Philosophers and the Ancient Christian Faith*. He has served as the Executive Vice President-Treasurer of the Hume Society and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Society of Christian Philosophers. His current research focuses on compassion, community, and culture in the works of David Hume and classical Confucianism. He and his family are members of St. Peter the Apostle Orthodox Christian Church in Pomona, California.

### **Fr. Alexander F.C. Webster, “Four Christian Feature Films about the Human Heart”**

The films we will discuss are:

(1) *The Chariots of Fire* (1981), a magnificent, Oscar-winning film about two Cambridge University track stars in England preparing for the Olympic Games in Paris in 1924, one an embittered Jew reeling from the antisemitic bigotry of the elites at Cambridge, and the other a humble, unassuming, devout Scottish minister whose best line in the film is this gem: “I believe God made me for a purpose—but He also made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure.”

(2) *The Island* or *Ostrog* in Russian (2006), a character-driven film about a humble, simple monk in a small Russian monastery on a bleak, treeless island in the White Sea who, among other quiet loving things, performs a miraculous exorcism of a possessed young woman from across a stream.

(3) *Man of God*, a beautiful biopic about the great St. Nektarios of Aegina (+1920)—teacher, monk, and eventually bishop—who was unjustly slandered, exiled from the Greek Orthodox Church in Egypt, and persecuted by fellow clergy including some bishops, none of which deterred this humble, loving, generous, always faithful servant of the our Lord Jesus Christ, even to the extent of performing a miracle of healing from his deathbed just before he dies for an embittered man in a bed next to his!

(4) *The Chosen* (1981), a very moving story about an anti-Zionist Hasidic Jewish sect in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY, led by Reb (Rabbi) Saunders played by Rod Steiger—a mystical, separatist, and anti-Zionist leader who believes in waiting for the Messiah rather than creating a secular Jewish state—and his first-born son and heir as the chief rabbi played by Robbie Benson. The penultimate scene where Reb Saunders tearfully speaks to his son for the first time in his life (!) and agrees to let his beloved son leave the community and go to Columbia University in Manhattan to study psychology instead of Torah with both of them in tears of love and joy is priceless!

I hope to carve out time, perhaps, for a very short but powerful film clip from each of the films to demonstrate the power of film to touch our hearts and minds.

**Chaplain (Colonel) Alexander F. C Webster**, US Army (Ret.) served for 25 years in military uniform beginning at the age of 34 including the first Joint Plans & Operations Chaplain for JFHQ-NCR at Ft. McNair in DC and 12 one-month deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, and / or Qatar as the Orthodox theater asset for Third Army / US Army Central Command from 2005 to 2010.

Fr. Alexander earned academic degrees from the U. of Pennsylvania (*Summa cum Laude*), Columbia University, Harvard Divinity School, and the University of Pittsburgh (PhD), and has written 5 books, co-authored 1 book, and co-edited 2 more books, and published 57 scholarly articles and 60 op-ed articles on issues of war and peace, the U.S. armed forces, church-state relations, religious liberty and oppression, and other ethical topics. He has served as parish priest for three Orthodox parishes as well as a college / university professor for multiple years at George Washington University (Honors Program) and George Mason University among others. He has been married for 53 years to Kathleen Mary Webster (also born in Jersey City, New Jersey) and is father to four grown children and grandfather to three grandchildren.

### **David Wilmington, “The Eros of Mystery in Orthodox Faith and Practice”**

Sociologist Rodney Stark reports that churches and faith traditions that demand more from their members have more committed and growing congregations. While Orthodox practice certainly demands far more than most other faith traditions in several obvious, superficial ways, the grounds for and context of these greater demands is key to the appeal (i.e. the mere fact of being more rigorous or demanding cannot account for the growth and intensity of Orthodox parishes).

This essay will draw from Gregory of Nyssa and Maximus the Confessor to argue that the mystical aspect of our knowledge and worship of God is at the core of what draws our hearts to Orthodox practice and community. Both Gregory and Maximus explain how the mystical character of faith

affects our “erotic disposition” - a crucial element for the purification of heart and the development of virtues which make movement toward theosis possible.

Thus, while the constant variations experienced in worship due to cycling feast days, hymn tones, and liturgical seasons make the basic practice on any given day mysterious and surprising - on a deeper level, the complexity of even what is repeated and “common” in Vespers and Liturgy is such that the “norm” is endlessly mysterious - and thus calls to us and draws us in all the more.

While there are certainly legitimate elements that align more easily with popular and familiar notions of “the heart” and do in fact attract people sincerely to Orthodoxy - the aesthetic beauty of music, icons, architecture, as well as certain kinds of emotional reactions and intensity - I will argue that priests, deacons, and other teachers and leaders should highlight and encourage the eros of mystery as well.

**Dr. David M. Wilmington** will join the faculty of St. Constantine College as Associate Professor of Great Texts and Theology this summer. He has published on mystical theology, virtues ethics, Trinitarian doctrine, critical theory, and popular culture—often drawing from music (especially jazz) as a fruitful model for re-imagining moral and intellectual formation. David has taught at the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as serving as a Dean and secondary teacher for a Classical Christian academy. He was an Ignatius Brady Lecturer for the series at St. Bonaventure University, served as Editor for a de Gruyter encyclopedia project and for special journal issues, and has designed multi-year Masters curricula integrating theology, ethics, arts, and history. He earned his Ph.D. from Baylor University, his M.T.S. from Duke, and his B.A. in Music (Performance - Saxophone) as a University Scholar at Washington and Lee University.