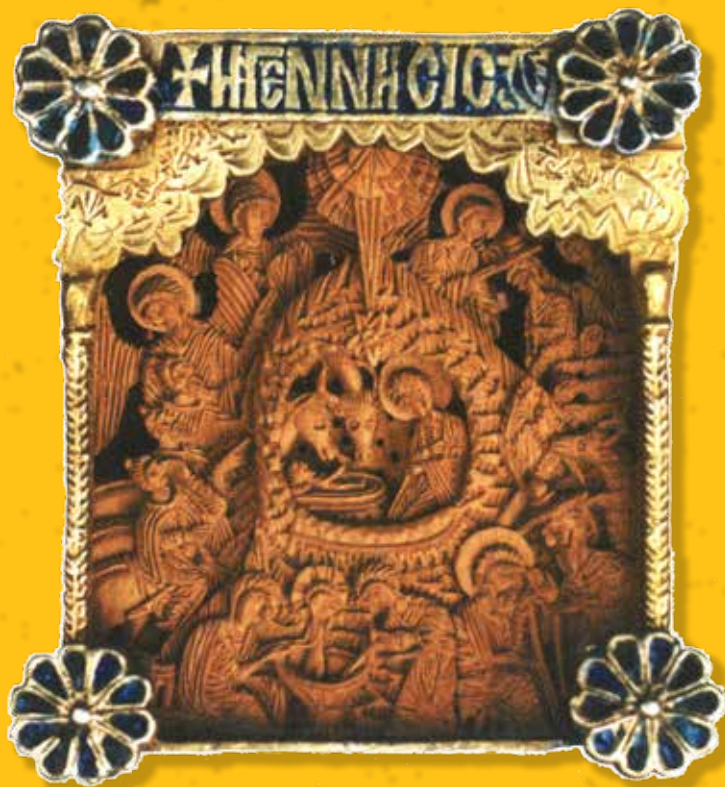


# L'INSTITUT DE THÉOLOGIE ORTHODOXE DE MONTREAL



# MONTREAL INSTITUTE OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY



## BULLETIN

HUITIÈME NUMÉRO  
MAI 2018

EIGHTH ISSUE  
MAY 2018

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ICÔNE : LA NATIVITÉ, Sculpture sur bois, le Monastère d'Iveron /  
ICON: THE NATIVITY, Wood carving, Iveron Monastery.





LA RÉSURRECTION, SAINT MONASTÈRE DE DAPHNI, ATHÈNES, 11<sup>ÈME</sup> SIÈCLE  
THE RESURRECTION, HOLY MONASTERY OF DAPHNI, ATHENS, 11<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY



L'INSTITUT DE  
THÉOLOGIE  
ORTHODOXE DE  
MONTREAL  
MONTREAL  
INSTITUTE  
OF ORTHODOX  
THEOLOGY

NOUS VOUS SOUHAITONS  
UN JOYEUX RENOUVEAU  
DANS LE SEIGNEUR  
RESSUSCITÉ

WISHING YOU A  
JOYOUS RENEWAL  
IN THE RISEN LORD

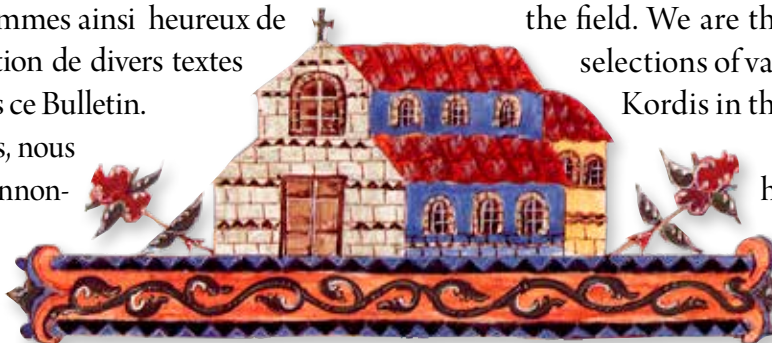
## MOT DU PRÉSIDENT

*Chers membres et amis,*

**C'EST AVEC PLAISIR** que je vous propose la huitième édition de notre Bulletin annuel. Cette année, le Bulletin est consacré à deux thèmes. Le premier est le fait que nous fêtons 20 ans d'offre de cours universitaires en théologie orthodoxe au Québec. En 1998, nous avons entrepris cet exploit unique avec le soutien de l'ancienne Faculté de Théologie de l'Université de Sherbrooke. L'Institut lui-même a été fondé en 2010 en tant qu'organisme juridique indépendant. Et depuis 2015, nous sommes affiliés à la prestigieuse Faculté de Théologie de l'Université Laval à Québec. Ce fut un voyage merveilleux, rempli de rencontres bienheureuses avec des centaines d'étudiants et d'amis au fil du temps.

Deuxièmement, ce Bulletin est également consacré au thème de notre colloque : l'iconographie. Les icônes sont un véhicule unique à travers lequel l'esthétique peut être mariée à la doctrine d'une manière complexe et raffinée. Même les points théologiques les plus nuancés peuvent parfois être mieux présentés par une expression artistique soignée. Très souvent, l'étude des icônes peut se révéler être le point d'entrée le plus efficace pour découvrir davantage la tradition profonde et multiforme de l'Orthodoxie. Le conférencier de cette année, George Kordis, est un iconographe de premier plan qui a déjà laissé une marque ineffaçable dans le domaine. Nous sommes ainsi heureux de pouvoir fournir une sélection de divers textes rédigés par M. Kordis dans ce Bulletin.

Dans d'autres nouvelles, nous sommes contents de vous annoncer que le site internet est enfin fonctionnel. Et nous avons encore réussi cette



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Dear members and friends,*

**IT IS MY PLEASURE TO INTRODUCE** the eighth edition of our annual Bulletin. This year, the Bulletin is dedicated to two items. The first is the fact that we are celebrating 20 years of offering university level courses in Orthodox theology in Quebec. In 1998, we started this unique exploit with the support of the now defunct Theology Faculty at the University of Sherbrooke. The Institute itself was founded in 2010 as an independent legal entity. And since 2015, we have been affiliated with the esteemed Faculty of Theology at the University of Laval in Quebec City. It has been a wonderful journey, full of blessed encounters with hundreds of students and supporters along the way.

Secondly, this Bulletin is also dedicated to the theme of our Colloquium: iconography. Icons are a unique vehicle where the aesthetic can be coupled to the doctrinal in a complex yet refined manner. Even the most nuanced theological points can sometimes be best presented through careful artistic expression. Very often, the study of icons can be the most meaningful entry point into the profound and multifaceted tradition of Orthodoxy. This year's invited speaker, George Kordis, is a leading iconographer who has already left an indelible mark in the field. We are therefore pleased to provide selections of various texts authored by Mr. Kordis in this Bulletin.

In other news, we are happy to report that the website is finally online. And we have also managed again this year to





année d'être en mesure de proposer aux étudiants toute une gamme de cours portants sur des sujets forts intéressants et variés.

Avec votre soutien et vos prières continus, nous souhaitons que notre Institut continue à jouer un rôle significatif dans la vie des fidèles pour encore 20 ans, et au-delà. ✚

provide a rich and varied offering of courses to our students.

With your continued support and prayers, we hope that our Institute will continue to play a meaningful role in the life of the faithful for 20 more years, and beyond. ✚

Dans le Christ / In Christ,  
*John Hadjinicolaou*  
John Hadjinicolaou



**Voilà trois ans, en mai 2015 : la signature de l'Entente entre l'Université Laval et l'Institut de théologie orthodoxe de Montréal.** — Gilles Routhier, doyen, Faculté de théologie et de sciences religieuses sur la gauche et le Dr John Hadjinicolaou sur la droite.

## COMMUNICATION DU DOYEN 2018

**E**N 2017–2018, la Faculté de théologie et de sciences religieuses de l'Université Laval célébrait une année jubilaire, le 350<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'enseignement de la théologie au Québec. En effet, c'est en 1667 que commençait l'enseignement de la théologie à Québec. En fait, cela marque également le début de l'enseignement supérieur au Québec et au Canada. Bien plus, Québec est l'emplacement le plus ancien de l'enseignement de la théologie en Amérique du Nord. Vous pouvez donc être fier, avec nous, d'être rattaché, par votre inscription à l'Université Laval, à ce grand héritage.

Pour la première fois, cette année, un cours sera offert à l'été dans le cadre du certificat et du DESS (programme court de deuxième cycle) en théologie orthodoxe. Ainsi, les étudiants seront encore mieux servis. Cette première expérience d'un cours d'été nous indiquera la voie à suivre au cours des prochaines années.

S'il faut penser aux étudiants actuels, il faut également penser aux futurs étudiants et à la poursuite des études des étudiants qui ont terminé le certificat ou le DESS en théologie orthodoxe. Le recrutement demeure ma préoccupation si l'on veut, à long terme, assurer le maintien des seuls programmes de théologie orthodoxe au Québec. Il y a sans doute encore plusieurs personnes qui ne



UNIVERSITÉ  
LAVAL

Aujourd'hui Québec, demain le monde



connaissent pas ce programme. Des orthodoxes, de diverses appartenances et juridictions, certes, mais également des non orthodoxes. Les premiers et les meilleurs ambassadeurs demeurent les étudiants. Il faut parler de ces programmes dans notre entourage.

Il faut penser également à la poursuite des études des finissants. Il est possible, après le certificat, de poursuivre des études de 1<sup>er</sup> cycle en théologie avec un accent en théologie orthodoxe. Il ne faut pas considérer la fin du certificat comme la fin des études. De même, les finissants au DESS peuvent envisager de poursuivre à la maîtrise et, qui sait, jusqu'au doctorat. Tout étudiant désireux de poursuivre est invité à prendre contact avec la Faculté ou l'Institut.

J'en suis persuadé, le développement et le rayonnement de la théologie orthodoxe au Québec passent par une formation de qualité dispensée au plus grand nombre d'étudiants possibles, une formation qui ne s'arrête pas au terme de programmes courts, mais qui se poursuit jusqu'aux études supérieures.

Je vous souhaite une bonne fin d'année universitaire, une bonne session d'été pour ceux et celles qui poursuivent et de bonnes vacances. Je vous souhaite également un bon colloque qui marque, suivant la tradition, la fin de la session d'hiver. ✚

*Gilles Routhier*

Gilles Routhier  
Doyen

Faculté de théologie et de sciences religieuses Université Laval, Québec

## ORGANIGRAMME DE L'INSTITUT

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE INSTITUTE

### Board of Directors / Conseil d'administration

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*Chairman / Président*  
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**Olmedo Foncesa**  
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*President / Président*  
**Rev. Dr. Athanasios Giocas**  
*Secretary / Secrétaire*  
*Director of Communications and Public Relations Officer /*  
*Directeur des communications et responsable des relations publiques*  
**Paul Pasarivakis**  
*Treasurer / Trésorier*  
**M<sup>e</sup> Stuart Iversen**  
*Strategic Planning / Planification stratégique*

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**Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I /**  
**Patriarche Œcuménique Bartholomée I**  
*Patriarcat œcuménique*  
*Ecumenical Patriarchate*  
**Metropolitan / Métropolitain Sotirios**  
*Métropole grecque orthodoxe de Toronto (Canada), Ecumenical Patriarchate /*  
*Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto (Canada), Patriarcat œcuménique*  
**Metropolitan / Métropolitain Kallistos Ware of / de Diokleia**  
*Patriarcat Œcuménique /*  
*Ecumenical Patriarchate*  
**Bishop / Évêque Alexander**  
*Archidiocèse orthodoxe d'Antioche en Amérique du Nord /*  
*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America*  
**Bishop / Évêque Jean Cassian**  
*Archidiocèse orthodoxe roumain des deux Amériques /*  
*Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas*  
**Archbishop / Archevêque Irénée**  
*Archidiocèse du Canada, Église Orthodoxe en Amérique /*  
*Archdiocese of Canada, Orthodox Church in America*  
**Dean / Doyen Gilles Routhier**  
*Faculté de théologie et sciences religieuses, Université Laval*  
**Affiliated Theologians / Théologiens affiliés**  
*(In Alphabetical Order / Par ordre alphabétique)*  
**Dr. Andreas Andreopoulos**  
**Fr. / P. George Dragas**  
**Dr. Athanasios Papathanasiou**  
**Fr. / P. Vasileios Thermos**

### Affiliation or Cooperation Requested / Affiliation ou coopération demandée

*(In Alphabetical Order / Par ordre alphabétique)*

**Aristotle University of Thessaloniki**  
**Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople**  
**Friends of Mount Athos**  
**Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology**  
**Institut de Théologie Orthodoxe Saint-Serge**  
**Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of**  
**Eastern Christian Studies**  
**Moscow Patriarchate**  
**National and Kapodistrian University of Athens**  
**Saint Andrew's College in Winnipeg**  
**Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary**  
**Service Orthodoxe de Presse**  
**St. Stephen's Course in Orthodox Theology**  
**St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary**  
**Toronto Orthodox Theological Academy**  
**University of Munich**  
**University of Winchester**  
**Voix Orthodoxes (Radio Ville-Marie)**

### Internal Committees of the Institute / Comités internes de l'Institut

**Committee of Studies / Comité d'études**  
**Students Committee / Comité des étudiants**  
**Communications and Research Committee /**  
**Comité des communications et de la recherche**

**Iconography Committee / Comité en iconographie**  
**Byzantine Music Committee / Comité de musique byzantine**  
**Medicine and Science Committee / Comité en médecine et science**  
**Annual Colloquium Committee / Comité du colloque annuel**



## LE PROGRAMME ACADÉMIQUE + ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

### CERTIFICAT DE 1<sup>ER</sup> CYCLE EN THÉOLOGIE ORTHODOXE (30 CRÉDITS)

Le certificat vise à former des personnes capables de lire les fondements théologiques et culturels des communautés chrétiennes orthodoxes. Il permettra également de mieux comprendre la contribution religieuse et culturelle des orthodoxes dans une société multiculturelle.

À l'aide de cours bien structurés, les enseignants guident les étudiantes et étudiants dans leurs apprentissages des éléments fondamentaux de l'orthodoxie, et dans l'analyse et interprétation de la théologie, de la spiritualité et des pratiques liturgiques de la tradition chrétienne orthodoxe. En les exposant aux principaux courants théologiques et auteurs orthodoxes, leur esprit critique est développé. Les étudiantes et étudiants sont également introduits à se servir des outils et de la documentation disponible.

#### Objectifs du programme

Le programme vise à permettre aux étudiants et étudiantes :

- ✦ de mieux connaître la tradition orthodoxe;
- ✦ de situer l'orthodoxie relativement aux autres confessions chrétiennes; et
- ✦ d'enrichir ses connaissances théologiques, spirituels et liturgiques, et d'élargir sa culture générale.

#### Structure du programme

Les cours sont offerts sous sept grands thèmes :

- ✦ Histoire de l'Église
- ✦ Théologie dogmatique
- ✦ Spiritualité
- ✦ Théologie liturgique
- ✦ Études bibliques
- ✦ Théologie patristique
- ✦ Questions particulières de théologie orthodoxe

### UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY (30 CREDITS)

The Certificate programme is designed to familiarize students with the theological and cultural foundations of the Orthodox Christian tradition. Students also acquire a better understanding of the unique religious and cultural contributions Orthodox Christian communities make in a multicultural society.

Through well-structured courses, students are introduced to the study of the basic elements of Orthodoxy, and are guided through the analysis and interpretation of Orthodox Christian theology, spirituality and liturgical practices. The main theological currents and authors within Orthodox theology provide the context for the development of critical thinking skills. In addition, students are introduced to the available resources for theological research.

#### Programme Objectives

The Programme aims to enable its students to:

- ✦ Learn more about the Orthodox tradition;
- ✦ Compare Orthodox Christianity to other Christian groups; and
- ✦ Enrich their knowledge of theology, spirituality and liturgy in the Orthodox tradition, and broaden their general knowledge base.

#### Programme Structure

Courses are offered according to seven major themes:

- ✦ Church History
- ✦ Dogmatic Theology
- ✦ Spirituality
- ✦ Liturgical Theology
- ✦ Biblical Studies
- ✦ Patristic Theology
- ✦ Specific Topics in Orthodox Theology



## LE PROGRAMME ACADÉMIQUE + ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

### DIPLÔME DE DEUXIÈME CYCLE EN THÉOLOGIE ORTHODOXE (30 CRÉDITS)

Le diplôme de deuxième cycle offre un savoir spécialisé des aspects clés de la tradition orthodoxe et du destin de l'orthodoxie au 21<sup>e</sup> siècle. Bien ancré dans la tradition millénaire de l'orthodoxie, le programme initie les étudiants et étudiantes aux grands auteurs anciens et contemporains de l'Église orthodoxe, leur procurant ainsi une connaissance accrue des grands défis actuels de l'orthodoxie.

#### Objectifs de formation

Le programme vise à permettre aux étudiantes et étudiants de :

- ✦ se construire un portrait actuel de l'orthodoxie dans le monde;
- ✦ acquérir les connaissances sur les problèmes et défis contemporains de l'orthodoxie;
- ✦ se familiariser avec les textes fondateurs de l'Église orthodoxe;
- ✦ mieux comprendre l'histoire et la théologie de la tradition orthodoxe;
- ✦ réfléchir sur les grands thèmes de la spiritualité et des pratiques liturgiques orthodoxes; et
- ✦ élaborer un projet de recherche en théologie orthodoxe.

#### Structure du programme

Le programme est structuré selon quatre modules : cours obligatoires; textes fondateurs de l'orthodoxie; aspects historiques et théologie de la tradition orthodoxe; et culture et spiritualité orthodoxe.

#### Perspectives d'études avancées

Les étudiants qui complètent le Diplôme de 2<sup>e</sup> cycle en théologie orthodoxe peuvent avoir leurs crédits reconnus envers une Maîtrise en théologie de l'Université Laval. Les exigences supplémentaires pour l'obtention d'une Maîtrise comprennent la rédaction d'une thèse supervisée. Il est également possible de poursuivre un Doctorat en théologie dans un domaine lié à la théologie orthodoxe. Pour de plus amples renseignements sur les possibilités d'études supérieures, veuillez communiquer avec l'Institut de théologie orthodoxe de Montréal.

### GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY (30 CREDITS)

The Graduate Diploma provides more specialized knowledge of key aspects of the Orthodox tradition, and aims to engender a broad reflection on the destiny of Orthodox Christianity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Strongly rooted in the age-old tradition of the Orthodox Church, the programme initiates students to both ancient and modern-day authors in order to provide a solid basis for understanding the major contemporary challenges facing Orthodoxy.

#### Programme Objectives

Through the use of well-structured seminars and lectures, the programme aims to enable students to:

- ✦ Assess the current status of the Orthodox Christian world;
- ✦ Learn about contemporary issues and challenges faced by the Orthodox Church;
- ✦ Familiarize themselves with the founding texts of the Orthodox tradition;
- ✦ Improve their understanding of the history and theology of the Orthodox Church;
- ✦ Reflect on major themes of Orthodox spirituality and liturgical practice; and
- ✦ Develop a research project in Orthodox theology.

#### Programme Structure

The programme is structured according to four modules: Required Courses; Foundational Texts of the Orthodox Church; Historical Aspects and Theology of the Orthodox Tradition; and Orthodox Culture and Spirituality.

#### Advancement Perspectives

Students who complete the Graduate Diploma in Orthodox Theology can obtain credit towards a Master's Degree in Theology from Université Laval. Additional requirements for a Master's Degree include a supervised thesis. It is also possible to pursue a Doctorate in theology in an area related to Orthodox theology. For more information concerning the possibilities of advanced graduate studies, please contact the Montreal Institute of Orthodox Theology.





## LE PROGRAMME ACADÉMIQUE • 2018-2019 • ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

### Certificat de théologie orthodoxe Université Laval – MIOT

**Cours offerts / Courses offered 2018-2019**  
**Automne / Fall 2018**

THL-1238 – Introduction to the New testament

*Prof. David Goodin* (IN ENGLISH)

**Hiver / Winter 2019**

THL-2229 – Orthodox Spirituality II

*Prof. Paul Ladouceur* (IN ENGLISH)

**Été / Summer 2019**

THL-2231 – Fathers of the Church III

*Prof. John Hadjinicolaou* (IN ENGLISH)

### Diplôme en théologie orthodoxe Université Laval – MIOT

**Cours offerts / Courses offered 2018-2019**  
**Automne / Fall 2018**

THL-6227 – Origins and Development of Liturgical Rites:  
the other sacraments

*Prof. John Hadjinicolaou* (IN ENGLISH)

**Hiver / Winter 2019**

THL-6220 – Biblical Foundations of the Orthodox

Tradition : Homiletics-Christian Rhetoric

*Prof. Athanasios Giocas* (IN ENGLISH)

**Ete / Summer 2019**

THL-6219 – Fathers of the Church II

*Prof. John Hadjinicolaou* (IN ENGLISH)

## COURS OFFERTS AUTOMNE 2018 • COURSES OFFERED FALL 2018

### Certificat en théologie orthodoxe Certificate in Orthodox Theology

THL-1238 – Introduction to the New testament

**Professor: David Goodin**

Tel : 5514-594-0195

david.goodin@montrealorthodoxinstitute.ca

Thursdays, 7 – 10 PM (subject to change)

550 Sherbrooke West, 3rd Floor Classroom

(Downtown Montreal Campus)

This course examines the history and the theology of the apostolic church and the New Testament from an Orthodox perspective.

The course aims at offering students with an easily approachable introduction to the history and theology of the New Testament, with the aim of enhancing their own experience of Orthodoxy, and providing an objective foundation to guide future studies.

This is to be accomplished through classroom lectures, in-class discussion, and a weekly reading journal in which students will explore the themes and theology of each book of the New Testament. We will be reading the New Testament in its entirety: An Orthodox Study Bible is required; the individual volumes of the Orthodox Bible Study Companion Series are only recommended for purchase.

Our course will guide students through the theology of the apostolic church, showing how the Old Testament substantiates and reveals the full power and significance of the New Testament within the Orthodox tradition.

New students, and students of all education levels and faith backgrounds are welcome!

**No prerequisites required**

**Continuing education and non-degree seeking students are welcome to enroll**

To enroll, contact: Director Dr. John Hadjinicolaou (johnhadjinicolaou26@gmail.com)

### Diplôme de théologie

### Diploma in Orthodox Theology

THL-6227 – Origins and Development of  
Liturgical Rites: the other sacraments

**Professor: John Hadjinicolaou**

Johnhadjinicolaou26@gmail.com

Monday evenings from 7-10 pm

Starting September 10, 2018

This course will study some of the most important Sacraments in the liturgical life of the Orthodox Church apart from the Divine Liturgy.

The content of the course will include :

- Baptism
- Chrismation
- Marriage
- Unction
- Confession ( Penance)
- Ordination

Establishing their origins, their historical developments, their meaning, importance and theological significance for the spiritual and liturgical life of the Orthodox Church and its tradition.

Associated with our approach to the sacraments will be references and discussions in relationship with modern problems, concerns and challenges on the eve of the 21st century.

Video presentations enriched by patristic and neo-patristic references, will present the essential elements of the faith of the Church in the Sacraments and the Eucharistic expression of its living experience and tradition.

## A BRIEF NOTE ABOUT GEORGE KORDIS

George Kordis, whose writings appear on the following pages, is a celebrated contemporary master iconographer and scholar of the aesthetics and theology of Byzantine art. Born in Greece in 1956, he studied theology at the University of Athens, gaining his MA in theology at Holy Cross Theological School in Boston, where he specialized in both theology and the aesthetics of Byzantine painting. In 1991 he became a Lecturer, and in 2008, an Assistant Professor of Iconography in the Faculty of Theology there.

In addition to his academic work, he also studies and teaches the art of icon painting and paints both icons and secular works. In the 1980s he worked with the Cypriot master iconographer, Fr Symeon Symeou, and also undertook courses in painting technique at The School of Fine Arts at The Museum of Boston. Upon his return to Athens in 1990, he continued studies in painting and engraving under Fotis Mastichiadis.

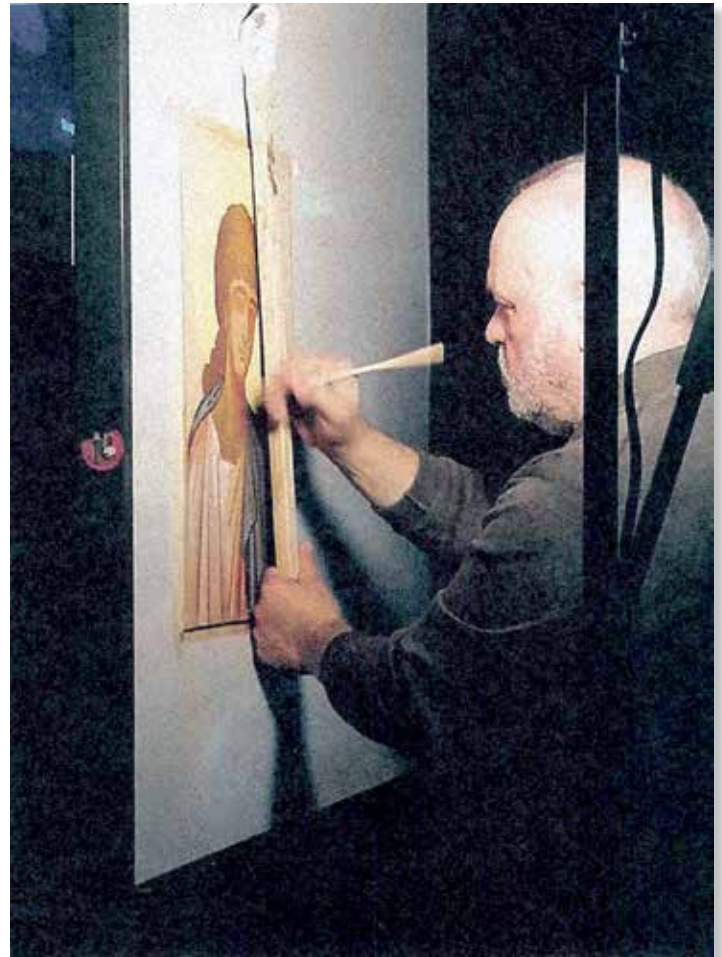
George Kordis has exhibited widely and has painted many portable icons and frescoes in churches and other holy places. His most important commissions include: Monastery of Docheiariou, Mount Athos, St George Cathedral, Beirut, Lebanon, Monastery of the Mother of God, Voiotia, Greece, Monastery of St. Anargyroi, Lakonia, Greece, Monastery of The Ascension of Christ, Voiotia, Greece, Church of the Annunciation, Beirut, Lebanon, St Nektarios Chapel, Athens, Greece, Church of the Transfiguration, Athens, Greece, Church of the Dormition of Mary, Athens, Greece, Church of St Nicholas, Beirut, Lebanon, Church of Presentation of Christ to the Temple, Athens, Greece, Holy Trinity Church, Columbia, South Carolina, St. Sofia Church, Valley Forge, Penn., Holy Trinity Church, Carmel, Indiana, Holy Trinity Church, Pittsburgh, St. George Church, Fishers, Indiana. and is being commissioned to work in The Sign of the Theotokos, in Montreal. ✚

## GEORGE KORDIS ON BYZANTINE ICONOGRAPHY & MODERN PRACTICE

### Creating a Christian Image in a Post-Modern World<sup>1</sup>

When I was asked to present a paper on this theme, I started wondering whether this is a subject that one can approach in a scientific way and whether it would be possible to use research methodologies and criteria to arrive at a conclusion that would not be based on personal experience and that would not simply reflect personal views and thoughts. My reservations stem from the following:

1. The icon, its elements and its creation are approached today in a primarily dogmatic way. In particular, the pictorial image, created through artistic processes, is perceived as exclusively expressing Christian dogma. This leads to a conceptual connection between the icon and its elements and the ideas or truths it represents. It is not difficult to observe the dissemination of this hermeneutic approach in religious and academic circles. A possible explanation for this phenomenon is the need to clearly distinguish between icon, religious painting and secular forms of art. Viewed in this perspective, icons are charged with theological meaning and become areas of manifestation and revelation of transcendent realities. The icon becomes a ladder that leads from the Earth to Heaven and reveals, in the manner of cataphatic theology, the reality of God. In such an environment, one might wonder how it is possible to talk about artistic creation in the field of icon painting when the icon is identified with dogma and the revelation of transcendent concepts and is therefore perceived as a dogmatic, invariable event. When the icon is seen as a reflection of dogma, any change to its form or content is perceived as a potentially harmful modification of that dogma. In the same way that the language of dogma needs to remain unchanged so that dogmatic accuracy and the expression of the truth can be maintained, it is



George Kordis painting the Holy Archangel Michael in the Serbian Church dedicated to St. Michael, Saratoga, California, egg-tempera on wooden board, 2016.

considered necessary for the icon and its elements to be preserved intact. How is it possible, therefore, to discuss artistic creation and production in this connection? How can one even begin to think about creating icons in the post-modern world?

2. If the icon, with all its individual elements, is conceived as a locus of dogmatic revelation, how can one speak of the contemporary character of the icon? How can the icon function in and express the post-modern world? What qualities would the icon painter need to include in his or her images to express the contemporary world while maintaining the icon's traditional character?

I believe that the way the icon and its role are approached today does not aid the discussion of such issues and therefore does not aid the creation of the conditions required for examining the artistic creation of icons in the post-modern

<sup>1</sup> George D. Kordis, "Creating a Christian Image in a Post-Modern World," pages 45–64 in: Neda Cvijetić and Maxim Vasiljević, *Seeing the Invisible: Proceedings of the Symposium on Aesthetics of the Christian Image*; Stanford University, March 5, 2016. Sebastian Press, Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Alhambra, California, in collaboration with Indiktos Publishing Company, Athens, 2016. Note: for the sake of brevity, the footnotes and several illustrations have been omitted here.



world using scientific methodologies. In order to be able to discuss the creation of a contemporary icon, one needs first to provide answers to the following questions, using adequate research methodologies:

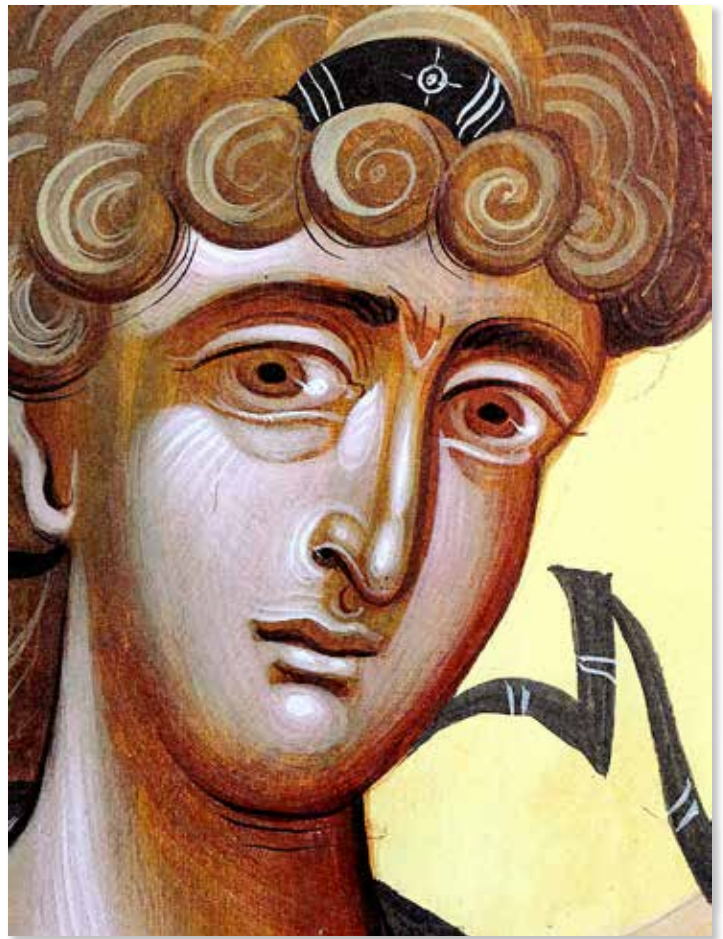
1. Can the icon's form change, and if so, which are the elements that can be changed and under what conditions or circumstances?
2. On what theoretical and theological foundation should the approach to this issue be based?
3. What does the religious icon have to offer to the post-modern world and how can the icon painter express his or her artistic profile through the creation of an icon without altering its role in the life of the Church?

In this paper, I focus on discussing the above issues. To accompany the paper I will also present a series of images from my work in Orthodox Christian churches.

The theoretical/theological foundation on which this paper is based is the theology of the Fathers. The theology of the Fathers was formulated during the Iconoclastic period to respond to iconoclastic arguments, which advocated the abolition of icons of Christ and the saints as theologically incorrect. The patristic theological approach, which forms the basis of my paper, was validated by the 7<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council of 787 a.c. as the official position of the Church towards religious icons and has continued to function as such ever since.

The theology of the Fathers, responding to the iconoclastic arguments, defines with precision what the icon is and what constitutes the representation-depiction of Christ. In this way, it demonstrates why it is possible to represent Christ's theandric hypostasis and therefore indirectly defines the role and character of art and the function of the artistic aspects of the icon. I believe that the theology of the Fathers can aid in the understanding of certain distinctions that need to be made in order to be able to discuss the limits of artistic creation in the field of icon painting. I will start by explaining how the icon and the representation-depiction of Christ are defined by the Church Fathers.

The theology of the Fathers presupposes, of course, the arguments on the iconoclastic side, which I will briefly set out. Initially, the basic iconoclastic argument derived from the Old Testament ruling that God could not be depicted in icons. However, the main theological argument of the Iconoclasts, put forward by emperor Constantine the Fifth, was based on



*George Kordis painting the Holy Archangel Michael in the Serbian Church dedicated to St. Michael, Saratoga, California, egg-tempera on wooden board, 2016.*

the idea that the anthropomorphic icon of Christ, venerated by the iconophiles, was a false image and therefore should not be venerated. Constantine argued that depiction should be an expression-description of the essence of the object represented. In the case of Christ, therefore, depiction should illustrate both His natures, divine and human. However, since the divine nature of Christ cannot be portrayed, as it is completely inexpressible, an icon could only be perceived as a portrait of the human nature of Christ. Therefore, according to emperor Constantine the Fifth, the icon painter either separates the natures of Christ and portrays only His human nature, or he attempts to portray both, which would be considered theologically incorrect and consequently heretical. Using this argument, iconoclasts attempted to establish that icons are simply representations of the human nature of Christ and therefore cannot be venerated as true images of Him.

The response of the Church Fathers can be traced in the theology of icons formulated by John of Damascus all the way to the more sophisticated arguments of Theodore of Stoudios.

Unfortunately, there is not enough space here to follow the journey of theological thought from John to Theodore, so we will focus on the final and more advanced form of the iconophile arguments as presented by Theodore of Stoudios.

John of Damascus had already clarified that representation after the Incarnation is possible not because Deity can be represented but because as humans we can now represent the “likeness of that which has been seen”—the form of Jesus of Nazareth through which He became visible in human history. John’s definition, focusing on the representation of the visible form and not on the representation of the two natures in which Christ’s Hypostasis participates, was however no longer sufficient to enable iconophiles to tackle the iconoclastic argument of Constantine the Fifth. It was necessary at that point to demonstrate why the anthropomorphic image of Christ is His icon or, in other words, why Christ can be portrayed in the form of his Hypostasis.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council clarified that representation does not relate to the natures of Christ and that portraying Christ is not an act of separating His natures and thus perceiving the human nature as non-divine. The icon is nothing other than the form of Christ and participates in the prototype through the likeness of its parts and the name of the Portrayed. That likeness, according to the definition of the Council, is what allows veneration to be transferred from the icon to the prototype.

St. Theodore of Stoudios defines the limits of representation in an even clearer and more sophisticated manner in order to explain why the image of Christ is His icon and why the anthropomorphic icon portrays Christ’s theandric Hypostasis without describing or separating His natures.

Firstly, Theodore focuses on the distinction between essence/nature and Hypostasis, the cornerstone of Christian theology. He clarifies that the Hypostasis is the sum of the characteristic idioms through which similar elements of one nature are distinguished from each other. He then goes on to suggest that that which is represented is not the nature/essence of the Represented but its Hypostasis. For example, in an icon of a man, it is not the nature of the man, which is common to all humans, that is represented, but the particular mode of existence of his nature, the Hypostasis. In the case of Christ, He is both divine and human but has only one Hypostasis that possesses a particular external

form-face, which makes Him different from every other person. Therefore, what is represented in the icon of Christ is His special form and not His natures.

Theodore, a very important theologian, clarifies that representation of the Hypostasis does not equal expression of Christ’s divine nature, which is always inexpressible. That which is represented is the form of His body and not His inexpressible divine essence. In this way, Theodore arrives at the conclusion that, given that Christ’s bodily image is His icon, He was therefore born depicted. Naturally, Theodore adds, everyone has to accept the representation of Christ’s image as His icon. Christ’s man-made icon is therefore defined as His bodily image that exposes His external characteristics.

The theology of the Fathers has clearly proven that Christ can be represented in the same way as any other human, and that His representation becomes possible through depicting the bodily image of His form. That unique form is His icon. What needs to be clarified here is that in patristic theology, the image of Christ’s form is an icon in itself and the contribution of art is not required for the authentic depiction to be achieved. The image of Christ’s form is His true icon in and of itself, and for this reason He was born depicted. Therefore, the authenticity of representation is not related to art, in contrast to contemporary approaches to the subject, according to which art (in the sense of technique or style) is a vital part of the icon and without it representation would not be authentic or complete.

The distinction between art and representation as suggested by the Church Fathers is crucial. The essential part of the icon is the form-image of the Hypostasis. For a true icon to exist, the only thing required is the representation of the image of the external form and nothing more. Art, as patriarch Photius of Constantinople proposes, plays an important but not an essential part, as it is not art that ultimately creates the icon. Art, following the principles and tradition of the Church, takes care of two things:

1. It removes from images material elements of human curiosity, that is, elements that do not play a theological role in the icon.
2. It represents the purified images of Christ and the saints (that is to say, their icons) in ways that do justice to their sanctity and holiness.

Based on the above definition, the role of art in icon painting is important but not essential. It presents the icon



of the holy persons but it does not create the icon. Art, style and technique are simply ways of representing the holy persons, and not the essence of the icon itself. Art, as a mode of representation, can change and transform through the centuries without altering the authenticity and true character of the icon. What would truly alter the icon would be the abandonment of the unique image of the form and the use of different, non-authentic form-faces, a technique that was widely used during the Renaissance when painters used models to depict holy persons. Changing the artistic mode of representation, such as style or technique, cannot alter the authenticity of the icon. A non-suitable mode of representation might not create the most aesthetically pleasing icon but it does not alter it as long as in the icon one can trace the unique form of the hypostasis of the person represented.

Perceiving art as a mode of representation and not as the essence of the icon can help us provide answers to the questions posed at the beginning of this paper. Art, in the sense of style and technique, understood as a mode of representation, can change without affecting the authenticity and character of the icon. Needless to say, altering the style of a technique should not be performed in a subjective manner, without adhering to the theological and ascetic tradition of the Church.

In order to set out the criteria for a discussion around originality and innovation in icon painting, one first needs to outline the main characteristics of the technical part of icon painting and their traditional function. In this way, it will become possible to evaluate possible changes in technique and style:

1. Mediations of form: the elements that icon painters add to icons in order to interpret persons and events and highlight their theological dimension or significance. Characteristic examples are halos, garments of ancient philosophers used to clothe Christ, the skull of Adam at the base of the cross in the image of the Crucifixion, the position and pose of Joseph in depictions of the Nativity, etc. In using those elements, some of which do not comply with historical events or are even counter to history, for example the presence of St Paul in the image of Pentecost, the Church has attempted to elevate the theological level and interpret events in a meaningful way. For this reason, such elements are not easily added



*George Kordis painting the Holy Archangel Michael in the Serbian Church dedicated to St. Michael, Saratoga, California, egg-tempera on wooden board, 2016.*

to icons and of course cannot be easily removed. Managing such elements in a subjective manner could result in theological inaccuracies.

2. The pictorial system: in simple terms, this is what we call Byzantine painting. It is a system of pictorial solutions and principles used to compose images and make them relate to the beholder in a certain way. In particular, Byzantine painting has three main principles:
  - a) Pictorial space does not extend behind the surface of the painting, as is the case with Renaissance images, but in front of it. In this way, figures and objects seem to exist in the same space as the beholders.
  - b) A certain type of perspective is used to project pictorial elements from the surface towards the space (and timeframe) of the beholders. In this way, figures and objects appear to share the beholders' space and time-frame, giving the impression that they are present here and now. This projection becomes possible through a system of axes that governs the design and movement of pictorial elements as well

as through color management. The particular type of color and movement management in Byzantine painting can be thought of as its *rhythm*.

- c) Bringing that which is imaged into the present of the beholders is the ultimate goal of Byzantine painting. By facilitating interaction between what is imaged and the beholders, the icon perfectly expresses Orthodox ecclesiology—that is, the way in which members of the Church relate to Christ and communicate between themselves.
3. The third element of icon painting technique is style. Style is the specific way in which each icon painter manages the pictorial system in order to present an icon. This is what is ultimately visible to the beholder and defines the icons look and character. This element is not clearly defined and for that reason it is changeable. Through the centuries, one can observe a number of different icon painting styles, each of them thought of as a different school of icon painting. However, even within the limits of each school, there are differences in style since every icon painter has his or her own distinctive way of painting. The style of the icon reflects to some degree the personality of the icon painter, his or her spiritual position, as well as the cultural environment of the era. It is therefore not a coincidence that the Cretan school of icon painting, formed in Venice-dominated Crete, adopts elements of Renaissance painting and expresses the unsettled spiritual environment of the time. Even though the Cretan school follows the Byzantine pictorial system strictly, it develops a unique style that became a fertile space for icon painters to express their own personalities through their icons. So next to Theophanes' unadorned and uncomplicated icons, one can observe the development of a very different style—airy and translucent—the style of Zorzes the Cretan. The elaborate, decorative work of Fragos Katellanos is another characteristic example of originality in icon painting within the Cretan school.

Style, therefore, is a fluid, ever-changing element and allows the icon to adapt successfully to new theological, cultural and personal conditions. Style is the element that allows the icon to remain relevant and able to express every era and Church community.

Based on the above, we can draw the following conclusions:

1. The way that the icon has been defined by the Church Fathers suggests that its authenticity is not linked to technique or style, which therefore remain changeable. Thus, icon painters are able to develop a creative relationship with the icon painting technique without the risk of ruining the character of the icon.
2. Of the three main characteristics of the icon painting technique, mediations of the form are of high theological significance and cannot easily change. The same applies to the pictorial system to the degree that it expresses Orthodox ecclesiology.
3. Style is an element that changes relatively easily and for this reason it can be thought of as the creative domain of icon painters. However, as icon painters need to speak for the members of the Church, they need to function as the voice of that community and respectfully speak for the community as a whole and not simply express themselves. For this reason, style needs to be managed in a community-conscious manner.

## WHAT CAN THE CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX ICON OFFER IN THE POST-MODERN WORLD?

According to Patriarch Germanos of Constantinople, the Orthodox Christian church is a heaven on earth, where God resides and walks. The church building as a whole is for Germanos a representation of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ. Germanos stresses that the church needs to express the presence of God in the world and therefore to express Orthodox ecclesiology—that is, the way the faithful relate to God and to each other. Understandably, Orthodox Christian icon painting has the same aim and this is exactly what icon painting can offer to the contemporary world.

In a fragmented, self-centered society, the art of icon painting suggests a way of being that projects love and unity and defines life as a communion of love and peace. Let us explore how this is achieved and how the icon painter works towards this goal while producing original pieces of art at the same time.

Nicholaos Messaritidis in one of his texts describes the Pantocrator of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople and explains how the image functions in the space



of the church. He points out that Christ looks as though He is leaning from Heaven towards earth while looking at everyone and each person separately at the same time. In this description one can trace the fundamentals of icon painting and the functional goal of icons. Christ comes to us and relates to each one of us separately and to all of us at the same time, uniting everyone and everything in Himself. That sense of unity is the main aim of any Orthodox Christian church, the ultimate sense that can be projected onto the beholder. The faithful feel that they enter a space-time where God is present, visible and accessible and works to unite everything and everyone in Himself. That sense needs to be experienced by the senses and not just conceived in the mind. In order for this to happen, the icon painter needs to work according to tradition and his or her own experience of church space.

Icon painters, whose aim is to project a sense of divine presence and God-inspired unity inside church space, should attempt to identify artistic solutions that would help them achieve that goal. The Byzantine pictorial system should be used to render present, here and now, that which is imaged. As explained earlier, icon painters should imbue their images with rhythm, the heart of the Byzantine pictorial system, in order to bring their icons to life.

Rhythm is a way of managing movement and energies on the pictorial surface. Movement and energies, created through shapes and colors, need to reconcile and become united, acquiring a common purpose of being. This can be achieved through the use of rhythm, and when that happens, in the icon and in church space as a whole, there is only harmony, unity and balance of movements, energies and forces. Everything and everyone exists in peace and loving dynamic balance. Church space acquires a scent of Heaven.

In order for this to happen, however, it is not enough for the icon painter to simply copy old icons. Decorating a church with copies of old icons will deprive that space of the vividness and immediacy of original artwork. It will be a copy of a different personal, social and cultural testimony and not an expression of the needs of a contemporary community. The contemporary icon painter, like any believer in any era, functions as an Apostle of Christ and loves Him dearly, and, as a unique person, has a unique experience of the Church and its space. That exact experience is what



*George Kordis painting the Holy Archangel Michael in the Serbian Church dedicated to St. Michael, Saratoga, California, egg-tempera on wooden board, 2016.*

needs to be included in an icon so that the icon becomes a true testimony of faith that expresses the icon painter's soul and spiritual life. Of course, as I have already said, an icon painter's work will always need to be based on the traditional techniques of Byzantine painting, albeit managed in a personal manner to produce an authentic piece of art.

Under these conditions, an icon becomes a contemporary icon. It is an authentic icon that attests to the truth of the Gospel, and at the same time highlights how the post-modern world can be perceived within the tradition of the Church, revealing the way to Heaven. Icon painters record their experience of Church life and, based on the tradition of the Church, convey contemporary culture through icons in a mystical way. However, within the icon, contemporary culture and the spiritual circumstances of the post-modern world are transformed and acquire a different meaning. The colors of the big cities and the shapes of contemporary buildings are reflected in icons but at the same time are transformed through the use of rhythm into harmonious ensembles. The pictorial elements of icons are united in harmony and do not aim at overpowering and dominating each other. All elements exist to serve a purpose in life and rejoice in the reality of Christian community life, revealing, without describing, qualities of Heaven. ✚

## Icon as Communion

### Introduction<sup>1</sup>

**I**s it possible to teach Byzantine art? Can it be circumscribed within a set of artistic rules and principles that can be explained and demonstrated? Even more importantly, where should one begin if one wants to understand the thought system underlying Byzantine art—with line or color? ...

A response to these questions is difficult because the art of the icon, at least in the Byzantine world, constituted an artistic system with its own philosophy (or theology) and ideals, which, notwithstanding the variety of stylistic solutions produced by the masters of Byzantine art, remained constant and unchanging. Furthermore, we know from the Fathers of the Church, particularly St. Photius, that icon painting is an art of divine inspiration, that the hand of the icon painter is guided from above, and that the wondrous works achieved in all periods are the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

With all this in mind, how, then, can Byzantine art be taught, and what method should be used? Should we simply copy icons from earlier periods, as in a photocopy? Or, to put it in a different way, can icon painting be understood solely in terms of technique?

When we examine the work of earlier iconographers, however, we see that there is continual development in their approach to artistic creation, yet this fluidity does not break the continuity of the artistic system that we identify as Byzantine.

What seems to stand out is that this continual flow in the creative process applies primarily to certain artistic elements, while others remain unaffected and unchanged. Furthermore, a wonderful thing can be observed: great variety is possible without necessarily changing the artistic method itself.

These observations gave rise to various thoughts about the method of icon painting and how it might be taught.

The immutability of Byzantine technique means that there has to be an artistic system with specific rules and principles governing the execution of icons throughout all periods and stylistic trends; and, because such a system exists,

it must be possible to discover and set out its principles. These principles obey an inner logic, and describing them is the first stage in learning the art of icon painting. They can be described without endangering Byzantine iconographic style because they are constant and so unchanging.

Thus, it is possible to study the method of composition, the system of perspective, and the role and function of line and color, because they are all “set” elements. The main problem, however, concerns style, because this changes from period to period, school to school, and even from painter to painter. Variation in style is what shaped the history of Orthodox icon painting and gave rise to its various trends. Careful and detailed examination of Byzantine iconography reveals that there are great stylistic differences between the different “schools.” We see, for example, that in the Comnene period the proportions of the figures differ greatly from those of the Palaeologan period and the Cretan school. The slight, towering, and spiraling figures depicted in the churches of St. George at Kurbinovo and the Holy Unmercenary Saints at Kastoria bear little resemblance stylistically to the average-sized, broad, and robust figures of Panselinos.

However, if one attempts to rationalize this great variety on the stylistic level and subject it to rules and principles, a major difficulty is encountered. A good deal of study over several years was needed before I was able to perceive the unity within the variety, and it took even longer for me to realize that it was impossible to explore completely the elements that characterize each different trend in exclusively rational terms. At the same time, however, I realized that it is possible to study the art of the icon without subjecting style to rationally defined principles. Style changes, yet inability to define it in rational terms does not fundamentally affect understanding of the Byzantine manner of painting; similarly, knowledge of humankind does not depend on an awareness of the unique characteristics of a particular human person in which the whole of human nature is expressed.

Thus, I came to formulate the following proposal for teaching icon painting.

Apart from the theory and theology of the icon, and the meaning of iconographic conventions, teaching icon painting on the artistic level is concerned primarily with fundamental

<sup>1</sup> George Kordis, *Icon as Communion: The Ideals and Compositional Principles of Icon Painting*, Holy Cross Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2010. First published as *Εἰκονισμός. Το ἥθος της γραμμῆς στη βυζαντινὴ ζωγραφικὴ*.



## On the origin of the artistic principles of Byzantine art

artistic principles. This is because those principles contain, as it were, the essence of the particular artistic mode that we identify as Byzantine. Most especially, it involves recording the processes that govern Byzantine artistic thought.

An account of these thought patterns allows the student to understand the basic artistic choices made by Byzantine artists: the reasons for linearism and “*colorism*”; how composition works and the function and role of line and color—in other words, to grasp why the Byzantines painted in one way and not in another.

One could say that through such an account the student of Byzantine art learns a language, both grammar and syntax and how to exploit the vocabulary of that language (the types, that is), in order to paint icons. Knowing the rules of grammar and syntax does not, of course, make one a writer or a poet. Similarly, knowledge of the underlying thinking behind the artistic principles of Byzantine art does not turn a student into an icon painter. What it does do, however, is help the student understand how earlier artists worked, to be aware of both their wisdom and their divine inspiration, to learn, even, that true artistic creation demands not only such knowledge but also the right spirit of approach, the right attitude—that one needs to struggle spiritually as well as to study.

Despite the fact that style cannot be satisfactorily expressed in rational categories, it is essential to study the stylistic variety of the masters of the art, as well as the philosophy underlying their artistic principles. This allows the student to acquire knowledge of the great stylistic variety of the past and also enables him, with the help of God, to paint icons of Christ and the saints in a creative way but without, however, altering the iconographic tradition of the Orthodox Church.

It was with these presuppositions in mind that I gained the courage to go ahead with the publication of this small-scale study of Byzantine icon painting. It largely consists of notes and observations on the drawing stage in icon painting, that is, on the execution of the lines. The chief objective was to present the thought underlying the Byzantine artistic system, and how this is expressed in the handling of the face, the human figure, and the composition. My main aim was not to write an academic work, but to set down the thoughts that came to me during my research into and study of Byzantine sources, panel icons, and especially frescoes. ...

We mentioned ... that the second and equally important purpose of this sacred art was to mediate the presence of people and events, and that Byzantine iconographers employed artistic methods in pursuit of this aim. Yet instead of devising their own solutions, they turned to the great inheritance of classical and Hellenistic art as well as to that of late antiquity. It was the art of these periods that provided them with the answers they needed. Taking away depth, and using line and local color to construct a form in sculpture or painting, was a technique already prevalent in the second century AD. They turned to this period not so much for elements of style as for the fundamental artistic principles on which to base their art, which had its own specific objectives. It was from this important period, the expressionism of late antiquity, that they borrowed the vertical system of perspective, linearism, and of course compositional method.

However, Byzantine iconographers also sought to express movement and rhythm in their art. For this they looked to the classical naturalistic tradition, from which they borrowed—quite apart from many stylistic elements—plasticity, the dynamic manner of drawing figures on the surface, and the philosophy of rhythm.

They took their fundamental artistic principles from these two main sources and used them to construct their own artistic system. This is what we recognize as Byzantine art, and it bears the following characteristic features:

1. The absence of artistic depth (there is no movement behind the artistic surface);
2. The essential role and fundamental importance of color in rendering form: forms are defined through color and not through the use of black or shadow. The *centrality of color*, or “*colorism*,” to use this term in a new way;
3. The essential role and fundamental importance of line, which determines how color is applied. The *centrality of line*, or *linearism*;
4. The plasticity of artistic form (the juxtaposition of light and dark) in order to give the feeling of movement outward from the artistic surface toward the beholder;
5. The pursuit of rhythm (the sense of movement that relates the figure to the viewer, uniting the two).

Byzantium, as the natural heir to Greek antiquity, also

took on board its philosophical ideas. Mathew has argued that even if they accepted the emission of the light from the sun and understood the process of drawing shadow, as far as sight is concerned the Byzantines adopted Euclidean optics, as expounded by Theonas of Alexandria in the fourth century bc.<sup>2</sup> According to this theory, we are able to see because “optical rays” effuse from the eye toward the object. The image is thus perceived and sent to the imagination, which is located in the frontal lobe of the brain, where images are stored. One can find references to this idea in both St. Photius and Eustratius of Nicaea. St. John of Damascus also testifies that we see as a result of the flow of optical rays from the eye toward the object. This is a valuable piece of information given to us by one of the chief apologists on icons, for it helps to explain the position of different elements in a composition.

This understanding of sight undoubtedly influenced how iconographers thought about their art and most probably contributed to the formation of their system of perspective, about which we have spoken above. It certainly played a role in the development of their compositional method, for the notion that something is visible if the optical rays emitted from the eye can reach it forced them to “expand” composition, so as not to obscure any of the “visible” elements. This *lucidity of image* is a fundamental principle, and it is due in large part to this understanding of sight.

However, we should not make too much of this theory of optics. As we have already emphasized, the other factor that plays an equally decisive role in how composition works is the energy exerted by the subject matter of the icon, the way it moves outward into architectural space. In Byzantine art both the viewer and the icon must respond to each other. The icon moves toward the third person (exactly how will be described shortly), who actively, as opposed to passively, receives the images that reach him. The spectator must engage with the icon in order to meet the image. Elements in the iconographic scheme of a church presuppose this interaction on the part of the beholder for them to be viewed fully. Such is the case with the Annunciation, which is often divided between the upper left and right portions of the apsidal arch. Taking in the dome also involves turning around.

Before closing this brief discussion of optics, an important point should be made. The theory of sight according to

which optical rays are emitted from the eye is not sufficient to explain *relational perspective* in Byzantine art. One could argue that objects are inverted in order to render them more lucid, that is, so that they might be displayed as well as possible. Yet this is not the whole story; there is movement in the Byzantine system of perspective, for objects such as roofs and mountain tops are not simply depicted, they are directed out toward the viewer.

## The fundamental principles of composition in Byzantine art

**B**ecause we have established the reasons for decorating the interior of churches with iconography, we are now in a position to set out the principles governing composition.

The compositional process is concerned mainly with the drawing stage and the application of color. As we have already mentioned, however, it is line that defines the existence of color, and that is therefore the principal building block of composition. So line will once more be the chief object of discussion.

The philosophical basis of composition is the *mediation of the presence of the subject matter*. This was why Byzantine artists *abolished artistic depth* (or movement behind the artistic surface), which would otherwise distance the forms. What they did instead was develop their forms on the wall surface and move them rhythmically toward the time and space of the viewer. Byzantine composition is therefore not just a painting on a wall. It is a stable synthesis of several elements that starts out from the plaster, extends out into the architectural space of the church, and relates to the spectator, who is considered to be an organic part of it. An example will make this clearer. Byzantine composition is like a woven piece of cloth, with the wall and the viewer its two ends. If the viewer is removed, the material is destroyed. He forms such an integral part of the composition that without him whatever happens on the artistic surface is meaningless.

Thus two factors—the elimination of artistic depth and the movement of the icon outward into architectural space—form the fundamental framework for Byzantine art and gave creative rise to its principles of composition. Equally fundamental is the way in which a work is referred outward to the person and time of the viewer. . . . ✚

<sup>2</sup> Gervase Matthew, *Byzantine Aesthetics*, (London, John Murray, 1963), p. 153.

## [Selected] Sketches with Commentary<sup>3</sup>

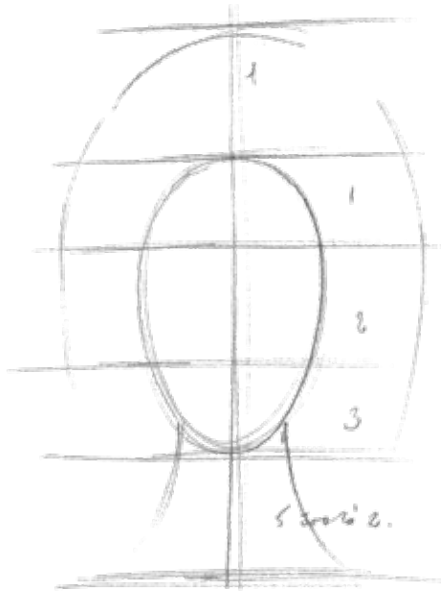


Fig. 3.1 Head in frontal pose.

### Fig. 3.1. Commentary

The oval shape of the face is placed symmetrically on the surface. The curve of the hair moves in the same direction as that of the head.

The face is divided into three equal sections (the nose, the middle section, is often larger). The hair and the throat are the same size as the middle section.

Section 5 is the same size as section 2. +



Fig. 3.2. Head in frontal pose.

### Fig. 3.2. Commentary

When the face is drawn in a frontal pose, it is placed symmetrically on the vertical axis that divides the figure.

This symmetry gives it balance, albeit static balance. The form seems inert, lacking in energy, and the gaze suspended, for it does not meet that of the viewer. It goes beyond and focuses on something behind him.

One could say that this frontal pose gives the face objectivity, in the sense that it remains opposite the viewer without exerting energy on or moving toward him.

This pose is frequently met in the pre-iconoclast period, but after iconoclasm it becomes less common and is replaced by poses in which the face is placed in a dynamic manner on the surface. Therefore, we will not concern ourselves with the frontal pose any further. +

### FIG. 3.3. Commentary

The right side of the face is broadened, as can be seen in the *a* sections. This gives the sense that it is coming out to the left. Positioning the face asymmetrically in this way on the axis gives the feeling of movement from the surface outward. Given that there is no depth of perspective, the figure goes out toward the space occupied by the beholder. The figure's gaze moves in the opposite direction to that of the head. Thus there are two opposite forces or energies that counterbalance each other, and a state of dynamic balance is created. The face goes to move away and yet is always there: although it is always present, it always tends to move away. The movement is time.



Fig. 3.3. Dybanuc frontal pose.

The stillness is eternity. Their meeting is the moment of here and now.

With the *dynamic frontal pose* the figure is united to the viewer, so that the gaze follows him everywhere. In this way the saint becomes *everywhere present*, he not only occupies the same space as, but also exists in the time of, the third person. He exists with reference to, thanks to, and through the beholder. An optical cone is created in front of the icon through the forces that emanate from the surface and flow out from the figure. The viewer enters into this optical cone, and in doing so is joined to the icon and forms part of the work.

The forces at work here are the movement of the head and the counterbalancing movement of the gaze. Color also plays its part, as we shall see below. Finally, the lines themselves and their quality have an important role in projecting the figure toward the viewer and in bringing the two into communion. This is what I intend to demonstrate immediately below, through an account of the final stage of creating the dynamic frontal pose. +

<sup>3</sup> From: George Kordis, *Icon as Communion*, Chapter 3.



# THE ⬦ ORDINATION ⬦ OF FR. ATHANASIOS ⬦

## AXIOS!

**I**n March of this year, the Montreal Institute of Orthodox Theology had the joy to witness the ordination of one of our members and former students. Athanasios Giocas, who among other things currently serves as the Secretary and Communications Director of the MIOT, was ordained by His Eminence Metropolitan Sotirios of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto (Canada) to the Diaconate on Friday, March 23, 2018 at the Evangelismos Tis Theotokou Greek Orthodox Church in Montreal. The following day, on March 24, Deacon Athanasios was ordained to the Priesthood at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Laval..



### A Short Biography

**F**r. Athanasios Giocas has studied engineering, law and theology, most recently earning a doctorate in law. In total, he holds six university degrees, as well as a license to practice law. He has been involved with the administration of the Montreal Institute of Orthodox Theology (MIOT) since 2010 and is an Executive Board member of the Hellenic Scholarships Foundation. A specialist in the area of law and religion, Athanasios has participated in many conferences, and has published numerous articles and one book. He currently teaches Homiletics (The Art of Christian Rhetoric) and Orthodox Canon Law in the context of the Orthodox theology programs administered by the MIOT. Athanasios is married to Polyxeni Kontarini. They live in Montreal with their three children: Christos, Vasiliki and George. ⬦

**On behalf of all of the members and friends of the MIOT, we proclaim that Fr. Athanasios is worthy (Axios!) and wish him a blessed ministry in the service of our Lord!**

#### Avis de convocation à l'assemblée générale

L'Institut de théologie orthodoxe de Montréal (ITOM) invite tous les membres à son assemblée annuelle qui aura lieu au siège social de l'association au 2875, av. Douglas, Montréal (Québec), H3R 2C7, samedi le 26 mai 2018 à 19h00. ⬦

#### Notice of Annual General Assembly Meeting

The Montreal Institute of Orthodox Theology (MIOT) invites all current members to attend the association's annual meeting, which will be held at the MIOT head office at 2875 Douglas Ave., Montréal (Québec), H3R 2C7, on Saturday, May 26, 2018 at 7:00 PM. ⬦

#### Vos commentaires sont importants!

Pour des commentaires généraux ou d'autres questions, s'il vous plaît communiquez avec notre Directeur des communications et responsable des relations publiques, Athanase Giocas (courriel : agiocas@gmail.com). ⬦

#### Your Feedback Is Important!

For general feedback or other questions, please contact our Director of Communications and Public Relations Officer, Athanasios Giocas (info@montreal-orthodoxinstitute.ca). ⬦

#### Appel de fonds

Des sources stables de financement s'avèrent nécessaires pour permettre à l'Institut de mener ses objectifs à terme. L'Institut a été accordé le statut d'organisme de bienfaisance enregistré auprès des autorités compétentes. S'il vous plaît profitez du coupon de don fourni dans le Bulletin. ⬦

#### Funding Appeal

Stable sources of financing will enable the Institute to carry out its objectives. An application for registered charity status has been approved by the relevant government authorities. Please take advantage of the donation slip provided in this Bulletin. ⬦







# SITE WEB DU ITOH • MIOT WEBSITE

## Website Finally Online!

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**MIOT NEWS**

The academic year 2017-2018 is currently under way. A course description for our Summer 2018 offering is available.

The 2018 Colloquium programme featuring leading iconographer George Kordis is now available. Please confirm your registration.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Stay tuned for our next annual general meeting scheduled for May 2018.

**Orthodox News from Around the World:**

- Acts of the Apostles 10:44-48; 11:1-10  
Source: Online Chapel RSS | Published on 2018-05-04
- John 8:21-30  
Source: Online Chapel RSS | Published on 2018-05-04
- Pelagia the Nun-martyr of Tarsus; Hilary the Wonderworker; Euthemios, Bishop of Madytos; Athanasios, Bishop of Corinth  
Source: Online Chapel RSS | Published on 2018-05-04
- Mgr. Hilarion : « Je redoute de penser à ce qui se passerait si l'autocéphalie était accordée aux schismatiques »  
Source: Orthodoxie.com | Published on 2018-05-02
- Réunion du Saint-Synode du Patriarcat d'Antioche  
Source: Orthodoxie.com | Published on 2018-05-02

**Icon: Saint Porphyrios (the Kapsokalyvia), † 2 December 1991, glorified November 27, 2013.**

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**UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL**

After several years of planning and organizing, the Institute's website is finally online. The website can be accessed at [montrealorthodoxinstitute.ca](http://montrealorthodoxinstitute.ca) or [instituteorthodoxemontreal.ca](http://instituteorthodoxemontreal.ca). The development of the website was the work of several volunteers, especially Nicholas Turnbull, Serguei Ploujnikov and Fr. Athanasios Giocas. The website is a work in progress and a lot of information

and documents still need to be uploaded. So far, the website has been quite popular, with over 1,000 unique visitors since January 2018, mainly from the United States, Canada, the Ukraine, Brazil, China, Israel, Spain, Colombia and Russia. Members are invited to visit the website and submit their suggestions and feedback to [info@montreal-orthodoxinstitute.ca](mailto:info@montreal-orthodoxinstitute.ca). ✚



## PROFIL D'UNE ÉTUDIANTE AU CERTIFICAT EN THÉOLOGIE ORTHODOXE

### JULIE LEHOUX

**J**eus la chance de grandir près d'un lac, au sein d'un petit village entouré de montagnes, et de forêts. Je ressentis très rapidement les effets de la grandeur de cet environnement, et je pris conscience que silencieusement, Dieu nous parle tendrement à travers toute cette surabondance de bienfaits. Lorsque la température chaude de l'été le permettait, étendue sur le sol dans la nuit noire éclairée par les étoiles, j'observais et admirais l'étendue colossale de notre univers.

Mes cousines ainsi que mes tantes, des chrétiennes convaincues et imprégnées par leur foi en Dieu et leur amour du Christ, me menèrent régulièrement avec elles à la messe du dimanche. Ainsi, elles me transmièrent leur foi. C'est beaucoup plus tard, que je m'interrogeai profondément sur cette foi, et que je pris la résolution de marcher de façon engagée dans les pas du Christ. Dans la foulée, il me mena vers l'église Orthodoxe d'Antioche, et quelque temps plus tard, j'y reçus le mystère et la grâce de la confirmation.

Un prêtre de ma paroisse, le Père Jean El-Murr de l'église St-George, me fit découvrir l'Institut de théologie orthodoxe de Montréal. Depuis, je m'y abreuve des




Julie Lehoux

connaissances acquises dans le cadre du certificat, qui y est offert conjointement avec l'Université Laval. Ce qui m'importe est d'y trouver, des outils qui m'aident à croître et à m'engager dans l'amour de mon prochain et de son humanité. J'aime aussi croire qu'il m'est plus facile maintenant de comprendre notre époque et d'en appréhender son sens profond. Suivant le titre d'un livre d'Élisabeth Behr-Sigel, une théologienne orthodoxe que j'admire beaucoup, il s'agit de discerner les signes du temps.

Les défis de nos Églises Chrétiennes Orthodoxes ont énormément varié suivant leurs époques;

aujourd'hui, nous nous devons de soigner l'âme de ce monde, qui s'est tant et tant éloigné de sa dignité originelle. Cette âme que nous devons sanctifier et dont nous avons égoïstement abusé. Et pour que nos efforts ne soient pas en vain, il nous faut mettre de côté nos différends et nous unir dans une même communion du Corps et du Sang du Christ, dans cette communion qui commande l'amour infini de notre prochain. C'est en nous sanctifiant les uns et les autres que nous régènerons la grâce perdue de ce monde. +






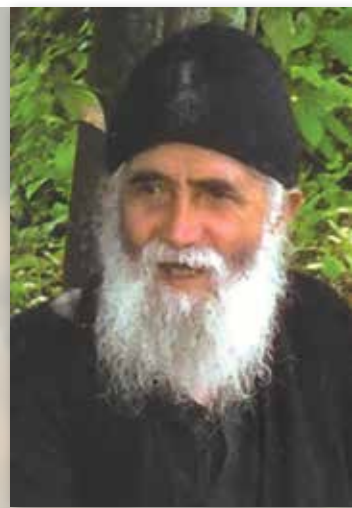
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"Elder Paisios struggled intensely against his own passions and the demons. He especially struggled to acquire the virtues of obedience, humility, repentance and love. Because of these virtues he achieved such great sanctity that the Holy Spirit came to dwell in him, and he was granted the greatest gift of all: discernment. It was with this gift that he was able to help and guide a great number of people."  
—Hieromonk Kosmas

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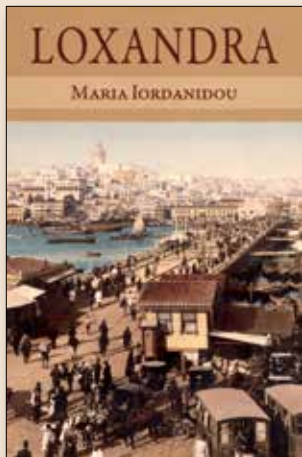


# Spiritual Counsels

## of Saint Paisios of Mount Athos

## Loxandra

by Maria Iordanidou



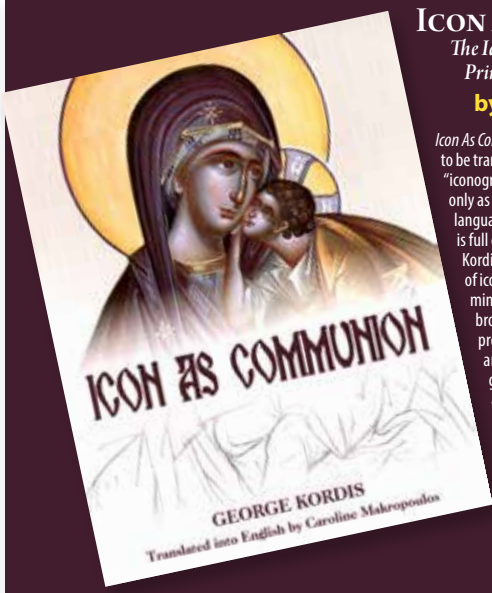
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The 19th century was also marked by a period of rising nationalism in the Balkans but Loxandra was only partially aware of external events that did not immediately intrude on her life. Her life was centred on caring for her extended family. Brought up in the Anatolian tradition of love of good food, culinary delights flowed from her hands and her kitchen as from the horn of plenty and her generosity and enthusiasm for life and food was not confined solely to her family but spilled over to whomsoever she had contact with. However, Loxandra is not simply a story about Loxandra herself: more it is an evocation of an epoch — its historical events, the spirit of those times, the customs, life in that 'Queen of Cities' — a background against which the irrepressible Loxandra, almost larger than life, sailed like 'an armed frigate before the wind'.

**Published by**  
Sebastian Press,  
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**ICON AS COMMUNION**  
by George Kordis  
Translated into English by Caroline Makropoulos

**ICON AS COMMUNION**  
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by George Kordis

*Icon As Communion* is the first book of Kordis to be translated into English. Kordis discusses "iconographic drawing and composition not only as a technical skill, but as an inner living language of visual relationships. The book is full of sketches and finished drawings by Kordis, his sketches dissect the elements of iconographic drawing from its most minute elements of how rhythms are broken down into segmented lines to how projected space is generated by curved and diagonal lines and culminating into general composition guidelines." (from a review by Jonathan Pageau)

**Published by**  
Holy Cross Orthodox Press,  
Brookline, Mass. 2011,  
102 pages, soft cover  
ISBN: 1-935318-09-1  
**Order from**  
Alexander Press,  
**\$20<sup>00</sup>**



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# AVIS DE PUBLICATION + PUBLICATION NOTICES



Published by  
Alexander Press  
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**"The people live next to the spring, but suffer from dehydration; they are next to Life and yet are dying. What a tragedy."**

*I visited some hermitages on various islands, where once the poverty of these places of asceticism pointed to another logic, and I found them now renovated by the secular authorities. The buildings had been restored in external ways using modern technological methods, but their inner beauty had been lost. From being places that expressed the inner nature of the ascetic life they were now simply visual stimuli that satisfied one's curiosity. The spiritual life is no longer a mother tongue in our country. Everything needs translating into the barren dialect of our spiritless and lifeless age.*

**If There is Life I Want to Live**  
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## DREAMING HOLINESS

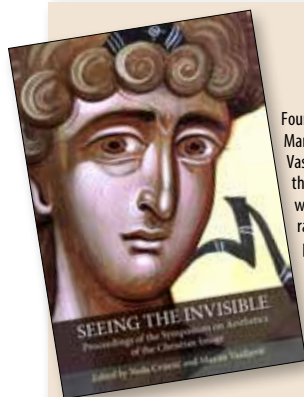
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Published by  
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77 pages, soft cover  
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**ARCHIMANDRITE VASILEIOS**  
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Published by  
Alexander Press  
2016, 40 pages, soft-cover  
ISBN: 1-896800-75-0  
\$10<sup>00</sup>

The great and holy duty placed upon the Orthodox is not just to do something, but to manifest the riches of grace that we experience liturgically in the Church. This remains unmoved, though the earth be shaken and the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea.

The Orthodox Church has the consciousness of being the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. That is not simply an assertion, but rather a blessing that stems from the God-man's sacrifice on the Cross which culminates in the Resurrection.

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## LE COLLOQUE ANNUEL DE L'ITOM + THE MIOT ANNUAL COLLOQUIUM

### Le colloque de l'année dernière (2017)

Un colloque au sujet du Grand Conseil de l'Église orthodoxe de 2016 a eu lieu le 29 avril 2017. L'Évêque Maxim Vasiljević et Paul Ladouceur ont notamment exploré les défis contemporains à l'expression de la conciliarité de l'Église aujourd'hui. +

### Last Year's Colloquium (2017)

On April 29, 2017, a colloquium on the Great Synod of the Orthodox Church of 2016 was held. Bishop Maxim Vasiljević and Paul Ladouceur discussed among other things the contemporary challenges of expressing the Church's conciliarity in the world today. +

### Colloque 2017 / Colloquium 2017



Conférenciers et organisateurs du Colloque 2017 / Speakers and organizers of the Colloquium 2017

### Laureat (2017) / Award Recipient (2017)

### Bishop Maxim's Presentation (2017)



Luc Lalonde receiving the Award from Archbishop Irénée



Bishop Maxim speaking on Skype

### Le colloque pour cette année (2018)

Prévu pour le 12 mai 2018, le colloque pour cette année est dédié aux icônes. Les conférenciers incluent George Kordis ainsi que les Pères Lambros Kamperides et Andreas Andreopoulos. Pour plus d'information, consultez le programme du colloque. +

### This Year's Colloquium (2018)

Scheduled for May 12, 2018, this year's Colloquium is dedicated to iconography. Speakers include George Kordis, and Frs. Lambros Kamperides et Andreas Andreopoulos. For more information, see the available Colloquium Program. +