

**ST THEOSEVIA CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY  
OPEN STUDY DAYS IN MICHAELMAS TERM 2010**

*An Ecumenical Centre for Christian Spirituality in Oxford  
at St Theosevia House, 2 Canterbury Road, Oxford OX2 6LU  
www.theosevia.org*

**Saturday 6 November, 10.30am – 4pm**  
**Drawing from the Wellsprings of the Desert**  
with **Sr Dr Benedicta Ward SLG, Dr Elena Ene D-Vasilescu,**  
and **Revd Dr Liz Carmichael**

*Hermits in Egypt and Anglo-Saxon England; Orthodox monastic spirituality in icons;  
Pilgrimage ancient and modern in the remarkable documentary film  
'The Baptism of Jesus Christ: discovering Bethany beyond the Jordan'*

**Thursday 11 November, 8.15 pm, Auditorium, St John's College**  
**Spirituality and Practice of Christian-Muslim Interfaith Peacebuilding** *Pastor James Wuye & Imam Mohammed Asafa (Kaduna, Nigeria) première their new documentary on peacebuilding, 'An African Answer'*

**Saturday 27 November, 10.30am – 4pm**  
**Spirituality and Theological Insight in Dostoevsky**  
with **Revd Canon Professor George Pattison** and **Mrs Irina Kirillova**  
*'Death, Immortality and Eternal Life'; 'Spiritual Symbolism in Dostoevsky's work'  
'The Idiot: Christ figure or Holy Fool?'*

*St Theosevia House, 2 Canterbury Road, left off Banbury Rd just after North Parade. Study days FREE for students with card. Non-students £5 (on door). No booking needed, just come, for all or part of the day. Lunch break 1-2 pm (please provide your own lunch).*

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*From the Director*  
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September 2010

Dear Friends of St Theosevia's,

Welcome to a new academic year and the new Michaelmas Term programme. Thank you for your support of the Study Days last term. We now look forward to two study days and one evening meeting, all on richly contrasting themes.

On Saturday 6 November we explore some aspects of drawing from the living waters of the desert. We are happy to welcome Sr Benedicta SLG, writer, translator and one of the oldest friends of St Theosevia's, to speak on St Cuthbert and St Guthlac in Anglo-Saxon England and the inspiration they drew from St Anthony of Egypt. Dr Elena D-Vasilescu presents iconography inspired by *The Ladder*, the classic work of St John Climacus of Sinai on abandoning vices and acquiring virtues. We go to the Holy Land in a remarkable film, both spiritual and archaeological, on the Baptism site identified by Byzantine pilgrims as the place of St John the Baptist, which today is experiencing rediscovery and revival.

On the evening of Thursday 11 November at 8.15pm in St John's College, the Imam and the Pastor, whose film on their work together in northern Nigeria has become something of a modern classic, will be present in person to show and discuss the new film on their peacemaking and peacebuilding methodology. Don't miss this unique opportunity.

On 27 November we are glad to welcome two writers, Anglican and Orthodox, contributors to the Cambridge volume, *Dostorvsky and the Christian Tradition*, to explore the thought of Dostoevsky, a rich mine of reflection on the meaning of Christian life and belief amid the complexities, struggles and suffering of this world.

If you have ideas for future topics or speakers, or would like to receive extra newsletters or posters, please let us know.

LIZ CARMICHAEL

**Newsletter subscriptions** for 2010-11: Please send at least £3 (cheques to 'St Theosevia Trust') to **Newsletter, St Theosevia House, 2 Canterbury Rd, OX2 6LU.**

If you would like to receive newsletters and reminders by email you can subscribe by sending a blank email to: [theosevia-subscribe@yahooogroups.com](mailto:theosevia-subscribe@yahooogroups.com)

Free tea and coffee are available at Study Days, from 10 am and at lunch-time. Lunch break is about one hour 1-2pm. Bring packed lunch, or you can buy food nearby in North Parade.

If you are willing to help serve coffee for a study day you will have a free place. Please contact the Assistant Director of Studies if you'd like to help in this way

## DETAILS OF EVENTS IN MICHAELMAS TERM

Saturday, 6 November, 10.30am – 4pm

### **Drawing from Wellsprings in the Desert**

with Dr Benedicta Ward SLG, Dr Elena Ene D-Vasilescu, Revd Dr Liz Carmichael, and the film 'The Baptism of Jesus Christ: discovering Bethany beyond the Jordan'

**Sr Benedicta:** 'Cuthbert, Guthlac and the Life of St Antony': Christians far from Egypt have drawn inspiration from the *Life* of St Antony, including England's two most popular pre-Conquest hermit saints: Cuthbert of Lindisfarne (c.634-687) and Guthlac (c.673-714) whose hermitage in the fens became the Abbey of Crowland. **Dr Elena:Vasilescu:** 'St John Climacus of Sinai and the Ladder of Spiritual Ascent in Iconography': a pictorial exploration of this formative text for Orthodox monasticism, the work of 'St John of the Ladder', Abbot of St Catherine's monastery, Sinai in the late sixth century. Liz Carmichael introduces Mustafa Gouveneur's film on the archaeological and spiritual rediscovery of the **traditional site of Jesus' baptism**, now in the Kingdom of Jordan.

Thursday 11 November at 8.15pm, Auditorium, St John's College

### **'An African Answer': the Spirituality and Practice of Christian-Muslim Interfaith Peacebuilding.**

This is the Oxford première of the new documentary on the peacemaking methodology of 'the Imam and the Pastor' from Kaduna, northern Nigeria, James Wuye and Mohammed Asafa. Made in Kenya during the post-election violence, this film is aimed both at a general audience and to train grassroots peacebuilders. Voice-over by Rageh Omar. **Pastor James and Imam Asafa** will personally introduce the film and lead discussion.

Saturday, 27 November, 10.30am – 4pm

### **Dostoevsky: Spirituality and Theological Insights**

with Canon Professor George Pattison and Mrs Irina Kirillova

A day on the great C19th Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881), a thinker who has been influential in debate about God, and humanity's experience of God, in East and West. **Professor Pattison** speaks on 'Death, Immortality, and Eternal Life'. **Irina Kirillova** gives two talks. 'Spiritual symbolism in Dostoevsky's work' (Dostoevsky is a novelist in the realist tradition but his realism is both physical, concrete and spiritual); and 'The Idiot: Christ Figure or Holy Fool?' (in *The Idiot* Dostoevsky portrays his hero as a 'positively good' Christ-like figure, but such a figure cannot be the hero of a realist novel, so who and what is he?)

## OTHER EVENTS IN MICHAELMAS TERM

### CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUP

The Christian Meditation Group meets on Tuesday evenings from 7.25pm in St Theosevia's (2 Canterbury Road) for a period of quiet, meditation and fellowship.

**Inquiries:** Brenda Newey, 792838, [brendanewey@talktalk.net](mailto:brendanewey@talktalk.net)

### THE UNICORN GROUP

*An ecumenical discussion group founded by Nicholas Zernov in 1959*

The meetings, open to all, are usually held on Friday lunchtimes at the **House of St Gregory & St Macrina, 1 Canterbury Road**. The talks, followed by discussion, run from 1-2pm. Coffee is served from 12.30pm, packed lunches may be brought. Donations are invited to cover costs.

**Friday, 22 October:** Revd Dr Donald W. Norwood (once minister in the Ecumenical Parish of Wolvercote with Summertown): **Rome, Reform and Reunion**

**Friday, 5 November:** Dr Beatrice Groves (Lecturer at Trinity College, Cambridge): **'With Odd Old Ends, Stolen Forth of Holy Writ': Shakespeare and the Bible**

**Friday, 19 November:** John Duncan (formerly Archdeacon of Birmingham): **God and Mammon: The Church Commissioners and the Church**

**Friday, 3 December, beginning at 12 noon: Christmas Party** (Please bring friends), with a Meditation of Bishop Kenneth Cragg

**Inquiries (no booking needed):** Revd Canon Martin Coombs, 01865 243865

### MEDIEVAL ARTS GROUP & BYZANTINE STUDIES CLASS

The **Medieval Arts Group** with Dr Nicholas Gendle will focus on **Medieval Byzantine Art and Architecture**. Meetings on Tuesdays at 2pm from 5 October, at the House of St Gregory & St Macrina, 1 Canterbury Road. The topic of the following term will be "The Painted Churches of Cyprus".

The **Byzantine Studies Class** with Dr Gendle will focus on **Coptic Art and Architecture**, on Wednesdays from 6 October, 10.30am, at 9 Fyfield Rd.

**Inquiries:** Valerie Sansom, 0118 9479471