



**ST THEOSEVIA CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY
OPEN STUDY DAYS IN MICHAELMAS TERM 2011**

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

Saturday 22 October, 10.30 am – 4 pm

**Carmelite Mystical Spirituality in C16th and C20th:
Teresa, John of the Cross, Titus Brandsma, Edith Stein**

**Revd Dr Colin Thompson, Fr Wilfrid McGreal O.Carm.
and Revd Dr Liz Carmichael**

Saturday 12 November, 10.30am – 4pm

**Developing Consciousness: Enlightenment and Christianity:
a Workshop with Revd Nicholas Vesey**

Director of the Norwich Christian Meditation Centre,
author of *Developing Consciousness – A Roadmap of the Journey to Enlightenment*

*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).*

**Director: Revd Dr Liz Carmichael, St John's College
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From the Director

Revd Dr Liz Carmichael

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September 2011

Dear Friends of St Theosevia's,

Thank you for supporting last term's programme, with its well-attended Memorial Evening for Canon Donald Allchin and Study Days on Cyprus, Armenia and Georgia.

The two forthcoming Study days in Michaelmas Term both illustrate the strong links between tradition and contemporary life, prayer and action. We are delighted to welcome Fr Wilfrid McGreal and Revd Dr Colin Thompson for the first Study day, on Carmelite spirituality, on 22 October. Carmelite friars began their life of contemplative prayer in crusader times on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. They found new homes in England and other parts of Europe after the fall of the crusader kingdom, and a women's order developed alongside the friars. The day explores themes in the writings of the two great reforming Spanish Carmelite mystics of the c16th, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, and the lives of two much more recent Carmelites, Titus Brandsma and Edith Stein, both killed in Nazi concentration camps.

The second Study Day, on 12 November, is a workshop linking the modern search for spirituality with the Christian tradition. Nicholas Vesey is an Anglican priest, vicar of St Luke's with St Augustine's Norwich and Director of the Norwich Christian Meditation Centre. Following a life-changing experience, he has spent the last 30 years exploring the nature of consciousness and enlightenment. He has led many groups and seminars on this subject, out of which he has just published a book, *Developing Consciousness*. He is touring the country this October and November with a workshop that explores the nature of consciousness and the way it links to spirituality. This study day will be a short workshop, with the usual three addresses.

LIZ CARMICHAEL

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newsletter subscriptions for 2011-12: Please send at least £3 (cheques to 'St Theosevia Trust') to Newsletter, St Theosevia House, 2 Canterbury Rd, OX2 6LU. |
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- If you would like to receive newsletters and reminders by email, you can subscribe by sending a blank email to: theosevia-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
 - Free tea and coffee are available at Study Days, from 10am 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

DETAILS OF EVENTS IN MICHAELMAS TERM

Saturday 22 October, 10.30 am – 4 pm

Carmelite Mystical Spirituality and Life, C16th and C20th

with **Revd Dr Liz Carmichael, Revd Dr Colin Thompson**
and **Fr Wilfrid McGreal O.Carm.**

Liz Carmichael will present an engaging illustrated introduction (with slides) to the mystical classic, the ‘Interior Castle’, on seven stages of spiritual development, by St Teresa of Avila (1515-82). Teresa was a mystic, reformer of the Order, energetic leader, writer and founder of convents. **Colin Thompson** will speak on Teresa’s protégé and colleague in reform, St John of the Cross (1542-91). This Spanish Carmelite mystic and poet is best known for his teaching on the ‘dark night of the soul’, derived from his own commentary on one of his poems, telling of the lover’s flight at night and her journey to union with the Beloved. His teaching is influenced by the ‘negative theology’ associated with pseudo-Dionysius. The talk discusses his teaching on the dark night and the balance in his spiritual theology between the negative (apophatic) and the affirmative (cataphatic) ways. **Fr Wilfrid** will speak on the lives and influence of Titus Brandsma (1881-1942), a Dutch Carmelite priest, professor of mysticism in Nijmegen and opponent of Nazism, and Edith Stein, Sr Teresia Benedicta of the Cross (1891-1942), German convert from Judaism via atheism, philosopher, and scholar of St John of the Cross. Both were deported from Holland and died in concentration camps after the Dutch Catholic Church spoke out against Nazism in 1942.

Saturday 12 November, 10.30am – 4pm

Developing Consciousness: Christianity and ‘Enlightenment’ **A workshop with Revd Nicholas Vesey**

How do you approach the subject of spiritual ‘enlightenment’ from within a Christian context? It seems to fall naturally into the traditional Eastern Religions, but is there a place for it in Christianity? Nicholas Vesey, an Anglican priest in Norwich, has been running workshops on enlightenment and consciousness for many years, and has just published *Developing Consciousness – A Roadmap of the Journey to Enlightenment*. He writes: “The language of contemporary spirituality and that of the Christian tradition do not sit easily together. Consequently many spiritual seekers will not consider Christianity as something that they are prepared to explore. This event will be ideal for both Christians and non-Christians and is designed to facilitate a deeper understanding of the way we create our reality through our senses and our minds.” His three addresses will cover ‘Enlightenment within a Christian Context’, ‘The Nature of Reality’, and ‘The Tradition of Mystical Reality’.

OTHER EVENTS IN MICHAELMAS TERM

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUP

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

Inquiries: Brenda Newey, 792838, 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, 21 October: Archbishop Malkhaz Songulashvili TSSF (Head of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia, Anglican Franciscan tertiary and researcher at Regent's Park College): **Title TBC**

Friday, 4 November: Shirley du Boulay: **God is One, But His Names are Many**

Friday, 18 November: Laurence Sach (former director of the Medieval Players, freelance writer and lecturer): **Medieval Liturgical Drama**

Friday, 2 December: **Christmas Celebration with buffet**. Please bring your favourite seasonal verse or short pieces of music.

Enquiries (no booking needed): Lynda Ellis, 01491 875446, ellislynda@sky.com

MEDIEVAL ARTS GROUP & BYZANTINE STUDIES CLASS

The **Medieval Arts Group** with Dr Nicholas Gendle will focus on **Art and Architecture of Venice**. Meetings take place on Tuesdays at 2pm from 4 October, at the House of St Gregory & St Macrina, 1 Canterbury Road.

The **Byzantine Studies Class** with Dr Gendle will focus on **Art and Architecture of Sicily**, on Wednesdays from 5 October, 10.30am, at 9 Fyfield Rd.

Enquiries: Valerie Sansom, 0118 9479471

FELLOWSHIP OF SS ALBAN & SERGIUS (OXFORD BRANCH)

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