



**ST THEOSEVIA CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY
OPEN STUDY DAYS IN MICHAELMAS TERM 2016**

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

Saturday 22 October 10.30 am – 4 pm:

**Art and Architecture of Armenia:
Mediaeval Churches, Illustrated Manuscripts**
Illustrated talks by Dr Nicholas Gendle

Saturday 19 November 10.30 am – 4 pm:

**Love: compassion, mercy, desire, and friendship
in Christian and Muslim Spirituality**
*Prof. John Cottingham, Dr Sebastian Brock,
Dr Minlib Dallh, Dr Liz Carmichael*

Saturday 26 November 10.30 am – 4 pm:

**Worship in stone: exploring the Norman and Gothic
Churches of Worcestershire**
Illustrated talks by Dr Nicholas Gendle

*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

*Enquiries: Asst Director of Studies: Fr Tikhon Vasilyev, Wolfson College,
Tikhon.vasilyev@wolfson.ox.ac.uk, 01865 310341*

The St Theosevia Centre for Christian Spirituality

2 Canterbury Road, Oxford OX2 6LU Tel (01865) 310 341

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From the Director

Revd Dr Liz Carmichael

Tel (01865) 277351

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September 2016

Dear Friends of St Theosevia's,

Thank you for your support of last term's programme, exploring the Byzantine art and architecture of mediaeval Serbia, and the transition of sacred texts from manuscript to printed media.

This term we have two illustrated study days presented by Dr Nicholas Gendle, one on mediaeval Armenia and the other on mediaeval Worcestershire, offering a fresh look at what we might consider familiar. These days offer an intriguing comparison and contrast, looking at a period in history when church architecture developed in very different ways in Britain and Armenia.

In between the above two days comes an exploration of some of the many dimensions of love, an absolutely central topic in spirituality. Dr Sebastian Brock needs no introduction; Prof John Cottingham is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Reading, and writer on Christian belief and the moral life. Dr Minlib Dallh, from Burkina Faso, is a Dominican lay brother and the first lecturer on Love in Religion at Regents Park College.

We look forward to welcoming you to these Study Days. All are welcome.

LIZ CARMICHAEL

<p>Newsletter subscriptions for 2016-17: Please send at least £3 (cheques to 'St Theosevia Trust') to Newsletter, St Theosevia House, 2 Canterbury Rd, OX2 6LU.</p>
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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 10 am and at lunch-time. Lunch break is about one hour, 1-2 pm. Bring packed lunch, or you can find 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 would like to help in this way.

DETAILS OF EVENTS IN MICHAELMAS TERM

Saturday 22 October 10.30 am – 4 pm:

Art & Architecture of Armenia: Mediaeval Churches, Illustrated Mss *Illustrated talks by Dr Nicholas Gendle*

This day explores the glories of Armenian mediaeval church architecture and manuscript illustration. The churches and monasteries are often in spectacular landscape situations in the Caucasian foothills, and offer a fascinating and elegant evolution from the C6th to the C15th, often with pleasing sculptural decoration. Not many frescoes survive, and the place of painted icons is largely supplied by intricately carved stone crosses, *katchkars*, the principal objects of veneration. Painting is focussed in great lavishly illustrated manuscripts, especially Gospels and Psalters, of which many survive.

Saturday 19 November 10.30 am – 4 pm:

Love: compassion, mercy, desire and friendship **in Christian & Muslim Spirituality**

Prof. John Cottingham, Dr Sebastian Brock, Dr Minlib Dallh, Dr Liz Carmichael

Sebastian Brock presents passages on love from the Syriac Fathers, both poets including St Ephrem, and monastic authors including St Isaac the Syrian. Liz Carmichael briefly explores how love, *agapē*, has been interpreted as open friendship in Christian writers past and present. John Cottingham considers ‘Loving Kindness and Mercy’: “The deep impulses of love and compassion depicted in some of the biblical narratives are ones we can recognize as a part of our human makeup (albeit a fragile and easily displaced part). But can they be understood in purely secular terms? ... only a theistic picture of the cosmos can do full justice to the moral imperatives of mercy and loving kindness.” Minlib Dallh brings in the Sufi tradition in Abu Hamid and Ahmad al Ghazali's Treatises on Mystical Love: “Abu Hamid al-Ghazali's (d. 1111) *The book of love, desire, and contentment*, found in his magnum opus *'Ihya' 'ulum al din* can hardly compare to his younger brother Ahmad al-Ghazali's (d. 1126) *Sawanih (Inspirations from the World of Pure Spirits)*, the sophistication and depth of which make it one of the most revered texts in Sufism. These treatises show how love has been an integral aspect of Sufism since its inception.”

Saturday 26 November 10.30 am – 4 pm:

Worship in stone: exploring Norman & Gothic churches of Worcestershire *Illustrated talks by Dr Nicholas Gendle*

Dr Gendle shares the fruits of a recent study tour in the Severn Valley, Malvern Hills and Vale of Evesham, illustrated by the fine photography of Dr Jean Harrison. Pride of place goes to Worcester Cathedral and two Benedictine foundations: Pershore Abbey (superb early Gothic chancel) and Great Malvern, famous for mediaeval stained glass. Fine churches include Croome (C17th monuments), Dodford (Arts & Crafts), Romanesque Holt, and Ripple (misericords). Some country houses also feature: Croome Ct (a rare example of Capability Brown as architect), Gt Whitley (shell of a huge mansion), and Hagley Hall (Palladian, with Rococo interiors).

THE UNICORN GROUP

An Ecumenical group founded by Professor Nicolas Zernov in 1959

Friday 21 October "Hope for the Holy Land" Canon Roger Humphreys, former Rector of Woodstock and Bladon, will speak about Bishop Elias Chacour, who has worked tirelessly to bring reconciliation between people of all faiths in Israel.

Friday 4 November Revd Mervyn Puleston, having spent time in Geneva, will speak about **"Life of an Anglican Chaplain in the Ex-Pat community"**

Friday 18 November Martin Goodman, Professor of Jewish Studies, Fellow of Wolfson College, President of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies and expert in Greek and Roman History, speaks on **"Judaism Then and Now"**

Friday 2 December All are invited to enjoy our Christmas spread, after which Photini Riches, classicist, teacher and creative arts therapist will give a short exploration of the theme, **"Hunting the Unicorn"**

The meetings are open to all and are held on Fridays in the House of St Gregory and St Macrina, 1 Canterbury Road, Oxford. We welcome everyone from **12.30 pm** when tea and coffee are served. Packed lunches may be brought. The talks, followed by discussion, run from **1.00 pm to 2.00 pm**. Donations to cover expenses are welcome. **Enquiries** (no booking needed) to Judith Baker 07981 345 125, jpbaker@hotmail.co.uk

MEDIEVAL ARTS GROUP

The Medieval Arts Group with Dr Nicholas Gendle, will not be meeting this term; but please note the two Study Days with Dr Gendle, on Armenia and Worcestershire
Enquiries: Valerie Sansom, 0118 947 9471, Ann Weizmann 0118 948 1884

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUP

This group meets every Tuesday evening at 7 pm at St Theosevia House, 2 Canterbury Rd, for one hour of reflection and silent prayer, 7 - 8 pm. All are welcome. Please contact Patricia Simon, patriciasimon@tiscali.co.uk

FELLOWSHIP OF SS ALBAN & SERGIUS (OXFORD BRANCH)

Enquiries: fr.stephen.platt@googlemail.com

OXFORD CENTRE FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

For programme please contact info@ocsg.uk.net or call 07803 031 977