

New Year Newsletter / January 2011

IOCS



The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies / Cambridge



THE WAY COURSE PUBLISHED AS A MULTIMEDIA BOX SET

In a warm and celebratory atmosphere, IOCS launched its first ever published multimedia package – an Introductory Course to the Orthodox Faith, THE WAY – in the elegantly panelled Hall of St Botolph's Church without Bishopsgate, London, on 7 October 2010. This festive event took place in the presence of Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh, representing the Pan-Orthodox Assembly of Bishops with Churches in the British Isles; also present were Dr Danut Manastireanu, representing World Vision, the organisation that generously funded publication of the course, and Father Mark Woodruff, representing the Archbishop of Westminster.

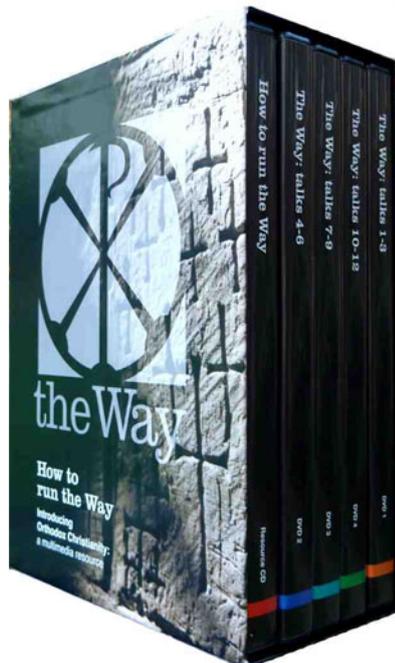


Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral of St George, Sydney, Australia. The course has been offered in Cambridge and in North London by the original team, by local presenters in Manchester, and it has been experimentally tested by parishes as far afield as Boulder, Colorado, USA and Melbourne, Australia.

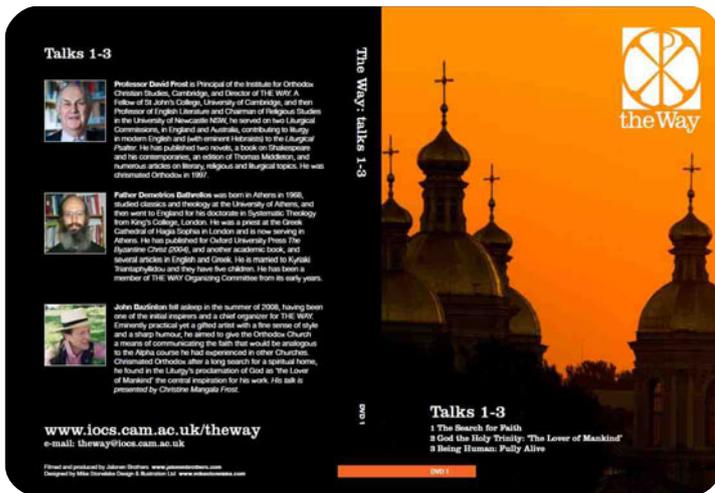
THE WAY COURSE

THE WAY is the outreach programme of the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies. It is a course comprising 12 sessions, run usually over 12 weeks, and consists of: a meal together, a talk on a central aspect of Christian belief, free discussion in small groups, and a 'question and answer' session, where members of each group put questions to a panel. The course aims to present the basics of Orthodox Christian faith in an atmosphere of friendship, free exchange and trust, where no question or opinion is treated as unworthy of attention. THE WAY course has been presented with great success in London, twice at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral (in 2004 and 2007) and at the Russian Orthodox Cathedral in 2005. Two of the team offered the course overseas in the first part of 2005, at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Resurrection, Singapore, and at the

THE WAY BOX SET



The course has been published by IOCS as a multimedia box set and is distributed by Gazelle Book Services, UK. Negotiations are currently underway for Conciliar Press to distribute it in the United States. The multimedia package contains a CD entitled 'How to Run THE WAY' and four DVDs of the original speakers: Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, Professor David Frost, Fr. Michael Harper, Miss Gladys Bland, Dr. Christine Mangala Frost, Fr. Raphael Armour, Fr. Demetrios Bathrellos, and Mr. John Bazlinton. World Vision made available funds for publication of the course as a box set. The instructional CD has everything to allow local organizers to run the course in their parishes. It contains the texts of all talks, all necessary materials,



version as a DVD/CD box set. The Principal then presented the first copy of THE WAY to Archbishop Elisey, representing all the bishops with responsibilities in Great Britain. Archbishop Elisey received the box set and thanked the Institute warmly for what he called 'this spiritual fruit' of the Institute's missionary work. 'I think that every diocese and every church community in Britain has a great need for this course', said Vladika, 'and every community should have a copy of it.' A second copy of the course was presented to Dr



Professor David Frost introducing the box set of THE WAY

instructions and advice on a range of topics, from publicity and brochures to catering or the handling of the 'Q & A' sessions. The four DVDs have the original speakers delivering their talks, so that they can serve as a model for those presenting the talks themselves or can be projected on screen or shown on a television if parishes feel diffident about providing their own speakers.

THE WAY derives its authority to teach from the blessing given to the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies at its foundation by those Orthodox bishops with responsibilities in Great Britain. All the initial talks were vetted by Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, the ongoing revisions and expansions have been scrutinized by him, and he has now contributed a pivotal talk himself, on 'Salvation in Christ'.

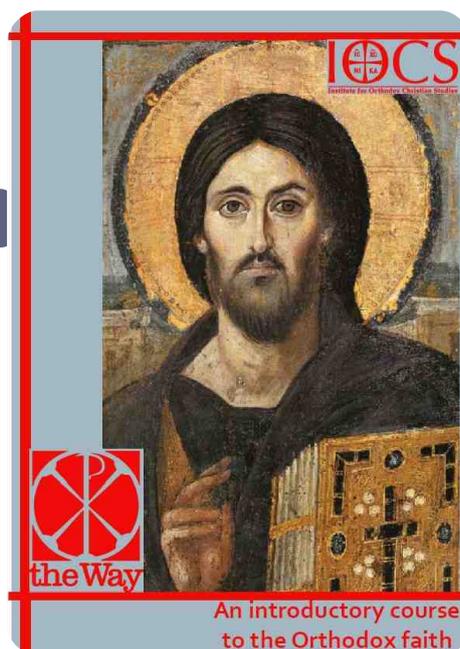
The general public may order the box set from Gazelle, <http://www.gazellebookservices.co.uk>, (who will send to anywhere in the world), or from Amazon UK. The Institute is currently organising to market in the Americas and in Australasia. The recommended

retail price in the United Kingdom is £23.50 (which includes VAT).

More information on THE WAY course can be found on the IOCS website at www.iocs.cam.ac.uk/theway

THE FESTIVITY

The Principal of the Institute, Professor David Frost, Director of THE WAY, started the festivity – appropriately for an audio-video multimedia publication – by introducing and playing the promotional video for the course box set, which has been posted on the internet on several key websites and which outlines the essential aspects both of the course and its published



Danut Manastireanu of World Vision, the organisation which sponsored and made possible the publication of THE WAY. Mr Manastireanu said in his speech that: 'This is the fulfilment of a dream for me. A number of years ago we started in Romania a programme which is quite similar to this, but is addressed to children –

'Christ to the Children'. After many years of an atheist regime the teaching of the Church has been weakened, as the communist state would not allow the Church to teach children or adults. Twenty years after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe we feel the need to bring back this most important function of the Church, the catechetical function, so, in Romania and in six other countries in the region, but also in the Middle East, in places like Lebanon, we have been working and supporting the Churches to create a biblical catechism for children.'

'I am most rejoiced', added Dr Manastireanu, 'that Patriarch



THE WAY COURSE PUBLISHED AS A MULTIMEDIA BOX SET

(continued)



Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh, delivering his thank-you speech after receiving the first copy of THE WAY

Daniel of Romania, who is a visionary, and was a strong supporter of 'Christ to the Children,' now sees THE WAY as a perfect match and as a dovetail of the catechism for the children, now addressing the parents of these children, who themselves need support in understanding the Christian faith... We now have the tools and it is our duty to make use of them to the glory of God and to the strengthening of the Church of Christ.'

Professor David Frost then handed a presentation



Dr Danut Manastireanu of World Vision giving his speech

copy to the representative of Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster, Father Mark Woodruff, thanking him warmly for being present at the celebration. Father Woodruff reported to his superior that it was 'a magnificent resource', and later, on the website of the Society of St John Chrysostom,

described the course as a 'fascinating' development. Father Woodruff wrote also: 'We warmly congratulate the Institute on this magnificent resource, which will not only enable the spirituality and teaching of the Orthodox Church to be better known in the UK, now that increasingly its role in Christian life and mission alongside other Churches here is integral to the endeavours and discipleship of all, but it will also be of great value to the deepening and sharing of the faith when used in other Christian traditions.'

The Principal distributed presentation copies to Jeanne Harper, widow of Father Michael Harper, Deputy Director and one of the founders and original speakers of THE WAY, to the video editors, Ossi and Anssi Lazarus Jalonen, to the graphic designer, Mike Stonelake,

and to other people who had contributed to and supported the development of THE WAY. Copies of the course were then made available for purchase to the participants, who could also enjoy the refreshments prepared by members of staff and helpers of the Institute. Over a glass of wine or juice, around seventy guests from a variety of churches exchanged impressions, caught up with old friends and made new ones, in the very pleasant ambience of St Botolph's Hall, which is surrounded by mementoes of the charitable work done by the City of London and its churches over the centuries. Positive and enthusiastic comments from those present were an enormous encouragement for the staff of the Institute and a sign that this publication of the outreach course of the Institute may be for many the beginning of a long and fruitful journey along the way.

*The video of the event is now on line on our Video site:
<http://distancelearning.iocs.cam.ac.uk/videos/>*



Participants enjoyed refreshments in a warm and friendly ambience

Dr Christoph Schneider, Acting Director of Studies

There can be no doubt that Orthodoxy plays an increasingly important role in contemporary theological debates. In East and West alike there emerges a new generation of Orthodox scholars which not only has profound knowledge of the Church tradition, but which also possesses the expertise to engage critically and creatively with the intellectual and cultural challenges of our time. This new generation is exemplified by two Orthodox theologians and philosophers who visited the Institute in Michaelmas Term: Dr Nick Trakakis, from Australia, who delivered a lecture in which he discussed different conceptions of truth in the analytic and Continental tradition from an Orthodox perspective; and Dr Mihail Neamtu, from Romania, who taught our second and third-year BA students at the November study weekend. He lucidly explained in what way the Nicene understanding of divine kenosis constitutes an alternative to the apotheosis of political power and totalitarianism as it occurred in 20th-century Europe.

The talks given by these two young scholars illustrate well the current development of Orthodox theology, which IOCS must actively support. At the moment, the main aim of the Institute is to provide basic knowledge and understanding of the theological, spiritual and liturgical traditions of the Orthodox Church. Yet there is increasing demand for a deepening of this knowledge and for a more active engagement with the intellectual culture of our time. In the last two months a number of post-graduate students from Britain and abroad inquired about the possibility of doing a Ph.D. with IOCS. Although this is in principle possible – in collaboration with Anglia Ruskin University – we currently do not have a specific programme for doctoral students. Yet it has become clear that this is an issue we can no longer ignore. Yet we have to keep our feet on the ground. These are difficult times for universities – particularly for smaller academic institutes like IOCS. Recent changes in university policy and the imminent rise of tuition fees for home students will certainly affect us too. But it will be easier for us to face these difficulties if we establish closer links, not only with individual scholars, but also with like-minded research institutes and university departments within and without the UK. This would enable us to invite guest lecturers for our study



weekends more easily and more efficiently. Availability of suitable guest lecturers has become an even more pressing issue this academic year. Following the regulations of the Cambridge Theological Federation, IOCS for the first time offers courses in advanced Old and New Testament exegesis. We are grateful for all the help we receive with teaching a subject that has not been at the forefront of our curriculum in the last years. In order to continue and develop our projects we are dependent on the support of our faithful friends and benefactors.





SUMMER DELIGHTS

Dr Marcus Plested, Vice-Principal and Academic Director

The annual Summer School has long been the highlight of the Institute's calendar. Students from every corner of the globe come together to enjoy an enriching week of study, fellowship, and prayer. Each year, we invite a crop of eminent speakers to guide us in exploring in depth a theme of particular interest and importance to Orthodox Christians. Themes studied in the past include the Icon, the Bible, Holiness, Love, and the Passion(s). We have also often challenged ourselves by looking at issues such as Orthodoxy's relations with other faiths and its place in the modern world. Our Summer School lecturers over these years represent an

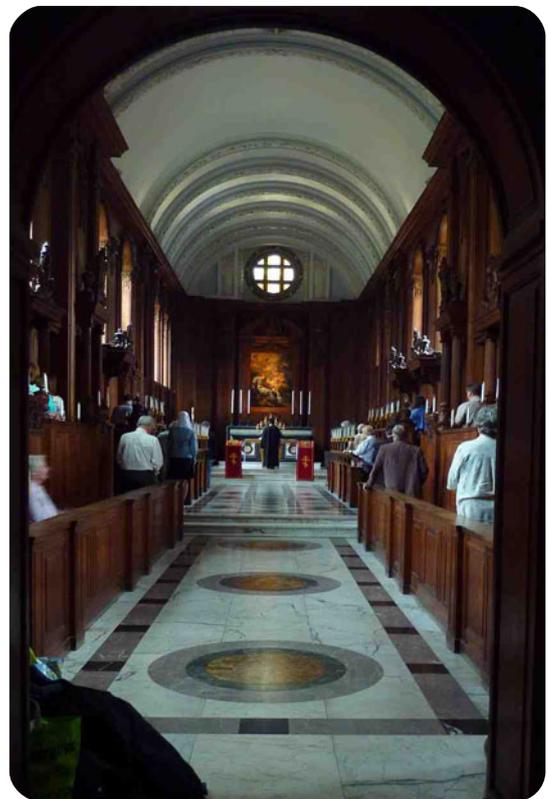


Metropolitan Kallistos Ware teaching at the 2010 Summer School



Participants in the 2010 Summer School during their visit to the Monastery of St John the Baptist, Essex

astonishing array of talent and erudition. Among them we are privileged to number Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, Fr Andrew Louth, Dr Sebastian Brock, Archimandrite Ephrem Lash, and Fr Thomas Hopko. We are also able to benefit from the immense gifts of several speakers from the nearby Monastery of St John the Baptist (Essex). It is difficult to define exactly what makes the



Vespers service in Sidney Sussex chapel



Participants and lecturers from the 2009 Summer School on 'Love'

Summer Schools so special. Perhaps it is the combination of intellectual stimulation, common meals, and a full liturgical programme that makes for such a memorable experience. The beauties of Cambridge in the summer certainly help, providing suitably scholarly surroundings and a wonderful ambience. Certainly, for many students the Summer School has been quite literally a life-changing



Festive dinner on the last evening of the Summer School

experience. Many come back time after time, while each year also sees a fresh crop of new faces.

Thinking back over the last eleven years, some highlights spring to mind. I remember first the speakers who have passed on: Elisabeth Behr-Sigel in her 90s voicing the distillation of her life's work and Archimandrite Symeon (of Essex) on his life's work: the Jesus Prayer. Also, the return of our first Principal, Fr John Jillions, in 2007; George Bebwai in the same year speaking to us by video-link from his hospital bed (from which he, thankfully, made a full recovery); music and art in the talks of Ivan Moody, Alexander Lingas, Mariamna Fortunatto, and Aidan Hart;

magnificent singing in the Chapel; pilgrimages to Essex, Walsingham, and Ely; Pimm's (an English summer drink) on the lawn; the list goes on.

As we plan the twelfth annual Summer School, we thank God for the joy and riches of the summer schools of the past and look forward to sharing that joy and those riches with many more students in the years to come.





THE PROGRESS OF A DISTANCE LEARNING SUCCESS STORY

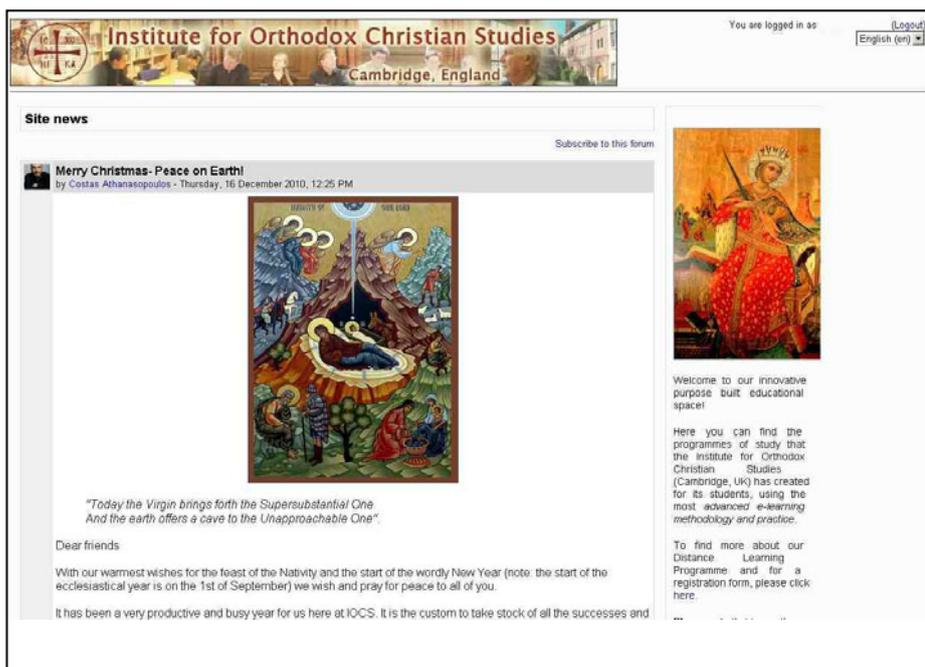
Dr Constantinos Athanasopoulos, Director of Distance Learning

The IOCS Distance Learning Programme (which has a strong emphasis on e-learning and is exclusively on-line) started its operation and student intake in October 2009 and within little more than a year of operation we already have some great news: students like it so much that they cannot think about doing anything else in the next two years or so (some even register again and again in their beloved modules to gain more and more), tutors find that the support they provide to students who are spread across the globe really does matter and helps in the transformation of lives and belief-systems, while parish priests speak enthusiastically about the students we look after and about the progress they have noticed in their understanding of Orthodox Dogma and Church History and Practice. Most of our distance learning students have already started applying their studies with us in their parishes, teaching small groups of adult learners and transmitting the knowledge and experience they have gained. Some even add their assessment essays to their blogs and their parish newsletters, "spreading the word" even further. The quality of the DL students' essays improves more and more as they progress in their studies and the feedback we receive about the support they receive from tutors and the anonymous markers encourages us to do more and more for them on a daily basis. Some statistics will demonstrate our successes so far: from October 2009 till November 2010 we had at all times an average of twenty students registered in the programme (generating a significant income for IOCS). There were many intakes which had a significantly



higher number (sometimes as many as twenty-eight students) and some others (for example in the Summer) had only sixteen. Most of our students are from the Americas, but the UK students currently are on the increase (currently we have fourteen students from the UK). A very good recent development is the number of Orthodox clergy among our students. Currently we have registered five Orthodox priests and three more who are considering ordination. Our student population is ecumenical: we have enrolled seven non-Orthodox students (most of whom belong to the Anglican or the Roman-Catholic Churches) on average in each intake. Our students come from

various social and educational backgrounds; three currently hold PhDs, four have MAs or MThs, ten have a university education and three have no post-secondary education. Four students in the past year had to withdraw from their studies with us because of financial difficulties, and three because they had family commitments. In the last year more than sixty students registered with us, of whom eight remain from the very start of the programme, and so are going to finish their studies for the Certificate in Orthodox Theology that we offer in October 2011. Our tutors (currently four) are all experienced Orthodox theologians (three with PhDs in Orthodox Theology and one who is enrolled as a doctoral candidate), while three of them are Orthodox priests. All of them tutor our students on a weekly basis and all report great student enthusiasm for what we have on offer.



The home page of the Moodle platform used for the IOCS Distance Learning course

OIKOYMENIKON
HATPIAPXEION



ECUMENICAL
PATRIARCHATE

ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΙΑΣ
ARCHDIOCESE OF THYATEIRA & GREAT BRITAIN
5, Craven Hill, London W2 3EN . Tel: 020-7723 4787 . Fax: 020-7224 9301
E-mail: mail@thyateira.org.uk . Website: www.thyateira.org.uk

Dr C. Athanasopoulos, FHEA
Director of Distance Learning
Institute for Orthodox Studies
Wesley House
Jesus Lane
CAMBRIDGE CB5 8BJ

Dear Dr Athanasopoulos,

I feel that it is very important for the people to learn by correspondence the word of God and the teaching of the Orthodox Church. In our times we are privileged to enjoy the new scientific technical inventions which we must use for the Christian Faith. Do not forget the words of St. Paul to the Christians of Rome, "But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they going to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they going to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they going to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'" (Rom. 10:14-15)

I am very pleased and impressed by your effort to bring the Good News to those who are both near and afar. I am sure that God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will guide you and give you the strength and the wisdom to do whatever pleases Him and help the faithful to draw near to Christ our Lord and Saviour.

London, 20th July 2009



Gregorios, Archbishop of
Thyateira and Great Britain

The letter of support from Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain

Our technical infrastructure has significantly improved. We now have two dedicated web servers (one for backing up our systems), a video streaming website (with more than 120 videos, 65 of which are with log-in access and can be watched only by registered IOCS DL students), a Moodle site and a distance learning portal, the gateway to all our distance learning efforts:

<http://distancelearning.iocs.cam.ac.uk/>

A further development (which I envisage taking place in the Spring of 2011) will include a tag category system for all our videos, by which a student can find all videos relevant to a given theme (e.g., 'Divine Liturgy', or 'Triadology').

Advertising has been a major challenge but we have managed to overcome difficulties by using widely the internet and by having the Director of Distance Learning visit parishes and present our work (if you are a priest and you would like Costas to visit your parish, please send an e-mail to ca356@cam.ac.uk). We have also created a promotional video (in two versions: twenty minutes for the unified one and three shorter versions of five-eight minutes each), which has received very good feedback so far both from potential students and e-learning specialists (you can watch the videos on our video streaming website). We hope that, with the achievement of an agreement between IOCS, CTF and

Recent Comments from our DL students (from their Personal Statements of Learning)

On the Module on the Ascent to Holiness:
Again the depth of the material we were given to study was commendable. There was so much material that it was a good exercise to have to reflect on all the lectures in order to produce my essay. The whole unit portrayed a comprehensive understanding of holiness and put into their right context the practice of asceticism and the importance of being in fellowship with all people.

On the Module on Prayer:
I had no problem grasping the basic features of Eastern Orthodox theory. Regarding the practice of prayer, I have learned a lot on an academic as well as on personal level. I studied with great interest the works of various early Church fathers. I discovered for myself that subjects discussed many hundreds years ago are very much relevant to our contemporary everyday lives. Although I struggled with the language of some of the early Christian treatises, I found them very informative and useful for my spiritual development. I am very grateful to my tutor who was very helpful in elucidating some of the more obscure passages.

Anglia Ruskin University for the integration of our Distance Learning in a degree programme, our advertising efforts will prove even more successful in the future.

All in all, our Distance Learning Programme looks like a success story, despite limited resources and staff. With the prayers of our students, staff and friends, we have every confidence that God will allow us to achieve even greater success in the future.

For information about the IOCS Distance Learning or if you would like to help in any way our Distance Learning efforts please send me an e-mail at ca356@cam.ac.uk or call me on: 07925136422 (UK mobile number).





A HOME FOR IOCS

Professor David Frost, Principal

WHY DO WE NEED A HOUSE?

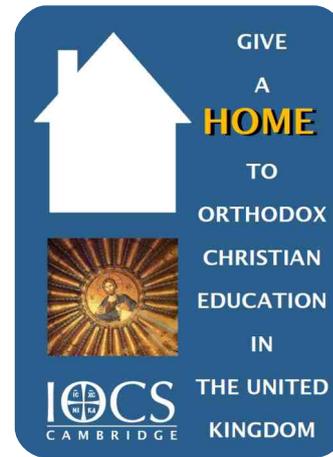
For its first ten years, the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies has been in rented accommodation as a paying guest of the Methodist Church in Wesley House, Cambridge. Our students and staff have hired rooms, we rent a flat for offices where our library overflows, and where students have no common room. We use the Wesley House chapel for our services and the space for teaching is offered by fellow houses in the Cambridge Theological Federation. We have however reached a point in our development when we need a place of our own. Our activities are expanding to such a degree that we need space to provide facilities appropriate to the only institution in Western Europe that teaches, in English, all aspects of the Orthodox faith at pre-university, undergraduate and graduate level. Above all, we need to fulfil the aims of our constitution by placing learning in the context of continuing worship in the Orthodox tradition, with a chapel of our own, facilities to house and feed our students and an ongoing fellowship suitable to the training of those who will play a leading role in the Church of tomorrow.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

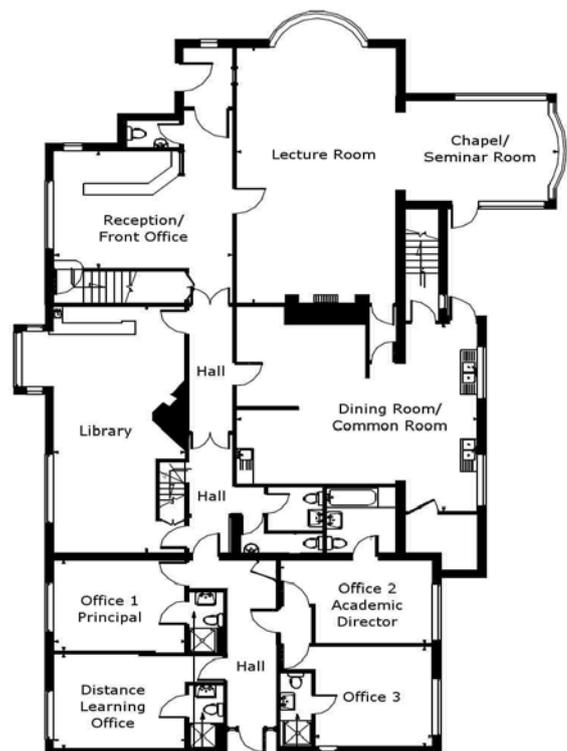
At present, property, especially in Cambridge, represents a safe haven for whatever gifts and legacies we begin to accumulate, as against other investment. The ever-present need for student accommodation guarantees a secure income, whatever the ebb and flow of Institute numbers. The facilities would also allow us to contribute to the resources of the Theological Federation and to supplement the capacity of the city to stage conferences out of term-time and to benefit from the income. We would cease to divert income to rent and would be in the happy position of most of the other Cambridge theological colleges, which largely maintain their activities out of student rentals.

BROADER HORIZONS

The Orthodox Church is one of the fastest-growing churches in the UK and its newly

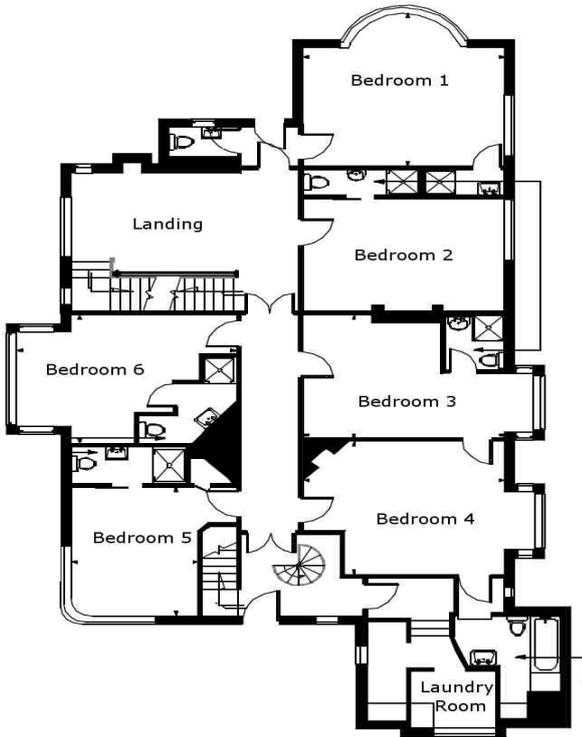


established Pan-Orthodox Assembly of Bishops provides a focus for unity and cooperation among the branches of Orthodoxy. The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies has been ahead of its time in being pan-Orthodox and is now poised to be one centre for the educational activities to be coordinated by the Assembly of Bishops. Established in an ecumenical context, it trains Orthodox clergy and laity to cooperate, dialogue with and share with other Churches in propagating the Christian message to an increasingly secular and pluralist world.

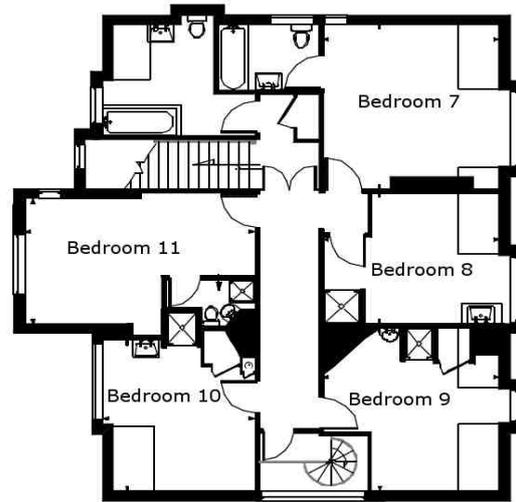


The ground floor

Far left, left and below: A possible plan for a future building of the Institute, based on a property recently on offer in Cambridge



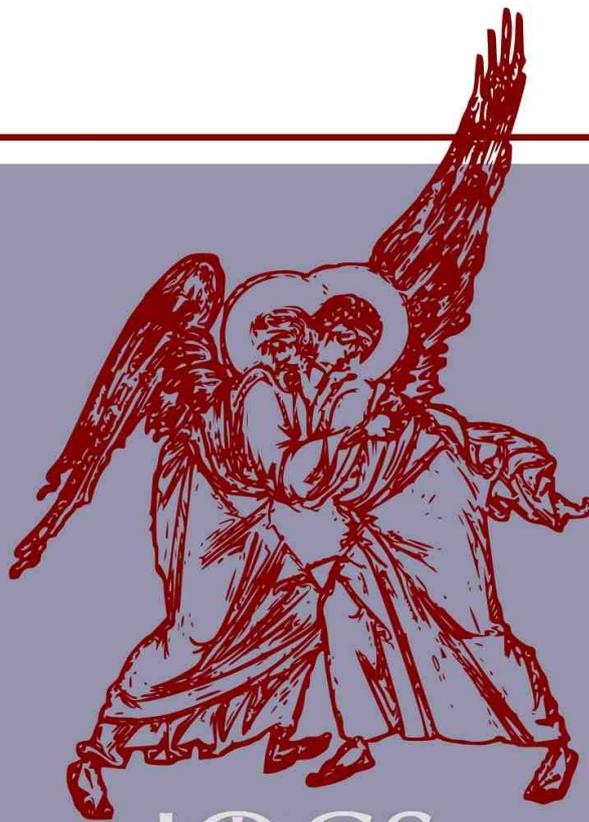
The first floor



The second floor



Photo credits: Dan Avasilichioaie (cover, page 5); Paul Harkin (page 9); Razvan Porumb (pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7); Dragos Herescu (pages 2, 4, 7).
Layout & Design: Razvan Porumb & Dragos Herescu



IOCS

12th Summer School

24 - 29 July 2011

The Challenge of a Secular Age

This year's Summer School investigates the genesis and nature of secularism and reflects on the role of the Christian faith in the contemporary world. Recent debates have shown that secularism is a complex and multi-layered phenomenon that defies easy analysis. An undifferentiated rejection of secularism is thus as unconvincing as its uncritical embrace. The following questions will be addressed: when and why did modern secularism come into being? In what way does secular thought influence our way of perceiving the world, and how is this influence manifest in the different spheres of public and private life? How are Christians to meet the 'Challenge of a Secular Age'?

Speakers will include: Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, Dr Jonathan Chaplin, Dr Andreas Andreopoulos, Dr Mihail Neamtu

Venue: Sidney Sussex College - Cambridge

Full programme and further details coming soon on the IOCS website: www.iocs.cam.ac.uk