

Glenstal

Liturgical

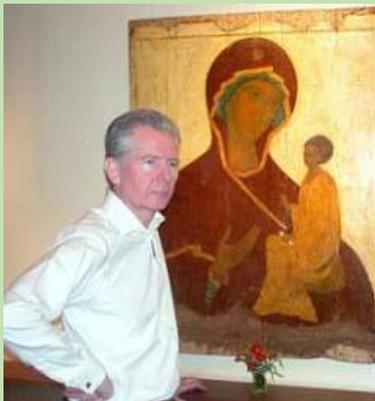
Conference 2019

Liturgy and Art

Friday Nov 15th – Sunday Nov 17th



Our Speakers:



Icons: Tradition and Symbolism

Born of the Virgin Mary, A study in Esoteric Christianity

Christ in Majesty

Cosmological Symbolism in 14th century Icons and the School of Constantinople

Sir Richard Temple

Icons: Tradition and Symbolism

This lecture discusses the origin of icons when Christianity first spread through the Late Roman Empire. The intellectual training of the great theologians of the 4th century (Saint Augustine for example) was based on the philosophy of Plato and the later schools of Platonic thought. Early Christian art was not a matter of decoration, or narrative or aesthetics, it was a vehicle for understanding the universal ideas at the heart of all religion and philosophy: the meaning of human life on earth and in eternity.

The slides show some Byzantine icons from the 6th century but many of the ideas are illustrated with Russian icons of the 15th and 16th centuries. The art of Orthodox Christianity is universal and timeless.

Born of the Virgin Mary, A study in Esoteric Christianity

The lecture considers Mary's cosmic status and identifies stages in her journey from human existence to her higher life in Eternity. The tradition of

the Virgin Queen of Heaven long predates Christianity and manifests in various goddesses whose feminine qualities become attributes of Mary. The Byzantine epithet Theotokos, 'Bearer of God', implies celestial events on a scale we cannot fathom. All this can be inferred from a reading of the symbolism in icons and reference to apocryphal writings. Orthodox sacred imagery illustrates Mary's rôle in sacred tradition, her practice of contemplative prayer and her ascent to the highest levels of realisation and enlightenment. The talk will also look at the role and symbolism of Joachim and Anna.

Christ in Majesty

Traces the cosmological, mathematical and symbolic origins of the imagery of Christ. A general survey of Byzantine and early Slav images of Christ from Late Antiquity to the 16th century. An exploration of what Christ mystically symbolizes. The second part will discuss the great feast images where Christ is the intermediary conducting energies between Heaven and Earth in the cosmic exchange in which we human beings can find the meaning of our lives.

Cosmological Symbolism in 14th century Icons and the School of Constantinople

The contemplative or Hesychast tradition of the early Christian monasteries, drawing on universal traditions of knowledge including Gnostic and Neo-Platonist spirituality, encouraged practices that could lead to mystical insight. The 'revival' of Hesychasm in the 14th century coincides with the development in icon painting in the period known as the Paleologan Renaissance. A distinctive new style and mannerisms were established that set the tone for the next three hundred years and echoes of which can still be found in some 19th century Russian icons.

Academic art historians and academic theologians have mostly overlooked the significance of this innermost or mystical aspect of Christianity though it can be found in the writings of the Desert Fathers and the Athonite Fathers and it can be found in the symbolism of the abstract forms and expressions in icon painting.

Icons are cosmic diagrams referring us to the laws that govern Creation – the Macrocosm – which are the same laws that govern the Microcosm – ourselves.

Speaker:

Dr Sir Richard Temple Bt., PhD founded the Temple Gallery in 1959 as a centre for collectors and for the study, restoration and exhibition of ancient icons and sacred art.

He is a member of the Advisory Panel of the National Art Collections Fund of Great Britain and has been active in the acquisition of icons by several major museums, among them the British Museum, the Musée du Louvre in Paris, the Timken Art Gallery in San Diego, California, the Gallerie di Palazzo Leoni Montanari in Vicenza, Italy, the Museum of the Church of Christ the Redeemer in Moscow and the Museum of Russian Icons, Clinton, MA. He has played a major role in the formation of several highly important private collections such as that of Mr. Eric Bradley, which passed into the Museum of the Menil Collection in Houston, Texas. The collection of Charles Pankow in San Francisco which is now in the Patriarchal Collection Museum of the Church of Christ the Redeemer in Moscow and the collection of the late Mrs. John D. Rockefeller III.

Over the years he has published many catalogues and scholarly articles. In 1990 his book *Icons and The Mystical Origins of Christianity* was published by Element Books. It was reprinted in 1992. A new edition, published in 2001 by Luzac Oriental, is now out of print (but available at amazon.com). A fourth edition may be published soon. A Greek edition is available and a French edition is in preparation. In March 2004, his latest book, *ICONS Divine Beauty*, published by Saqi Books, is out of print.

Richard was educated at Stowe and at the Sorbonne and served during National Service in the Royal Horse Guards. He was awarded a PhD at the Prince's School of Tradition Arts, University of Wales, for his thesis *The Esoteric Tradition and Peter Bruegel the Elder*. (He inherited his family baronetcy in 2007.)

Interested in ancient sacred traditions, he has studied Neoplatonism, Christian Hesychasm and the emergence of Christianity from Hellenistic culture. *When You Hear a Dog Bark*, his account of Vipassana meditation retreats in South Asia is privately available. He is also interested in the sacred music of the Mevlevi Dervishes and the choral traditions of both the Russian, Greek Orthodox churches and the Catholic and Anglican traditions of the Renaissance.



Celebrating Arts: Ritual and Performance in Monastic Liturgical Life

Prof. Dr. Thomas Quartier osb

Monasteries are liturgical in their very essence. According to the Rule of Saint Benedict, “God may be glorified in all things” (RB 58,7). This not only includes the monks celebrating the liturgy, but also the artists (artifices) who express their search for God through their particular craft. An abbey forms a laboratory for celebrating arts. It is a

space for exploring the relation between performative arts and liturgy. This relation works fruitfully in both directions: first, performance enriches liturgical ritual (*ars celebrandi*); second, performative arts can gain a liturgical dimension emerging from their ritual character (*ars ritualis*). In this paper, we discuss several central concepts from Ritual Studies relating to the liturgical life of Benedictine monks: space, time, roles and symbols. Furthermore, we give examples of musical, theatrical and visual performances that enrich and express monastic liturgical spirituality. Music, theatre, poetry and the visual arts can offer a performative frame for spiritual experience both inside and outside monasteries and churches. Celebrating arts means engaging in a dialogue with artists from different backgrounds to share and deepen one another's longing for inspiration.

Speaker:

Prof. Dr. Thomas Quartier osb (1972) is a monk of St. Willibrord Abbey in Doetinchem (NL). He is the director of the Benedictine Centre for Liturgical Studies (BCL) at Radboud University Nijmegen (NL), a professor for Liturgical and Monastic Spirituality at the Catholic University of Leuven (BE), a guest-professor at the Benedictine University of Sant Anselmo in Rome and researcher at the Titus Brandsma Institute.

Researcher:

The research presented in this paper is done in cooperation with Br Stijn Krooshof, who is also a member of the monastic community of St. Willibrord. He studied Religious Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen and is affiliated to the BCL.



Glenstal Icon Collection

Stefan Harlacher

Anne Dietrich

Stefan and Anne will introduce us to the icons, which are located in the Glenstal Icon Chapel. They will take us through the restoration process of these icons and help us appreciate and read what is to be experienced in our Icon Chapel.

Speakers:

Stefan is an art restorer who has lovingly restored the icons in the Glenstal Icon Chapel Collection. His wife Anne is an archaeologist. Participants will have an opportunity to visit the Chapel themselves during the Conference to see the icons at first hand.



Art as Theology

Br Emmaus O'Herlihy osb

Br Emmaus will discuss liturgical art in terms of visual theology. In presenting a selection of his own artwork on display at the Abbey, Br Emmaus will consider what it means to expand the vocabulary upon which the relationship between art and liturgy is based today.

Speaker:

Br Emmaus O'Herlihy osb, a monk of Glenstal and artist, is a doctoral student of theology and art in Toronto, Canada.



Final Session

Fr Martin Browne osb

Fr Martin will close the Conference by summing up the material presented and helping the participants assimilate and digest all we have heard over the weekend.

Speaker:

Fr Martin Browne osb is currently the Headmaster of Glenstal Abbey School.