

KOINONIA

The News of SAC

Issue 10, December 2022



ST ATHANASIUS
COLLEGE



UNIVERSITY
OF DIVINITY

Emerging
Coptic
Theology
in Australia
Seminar

SAC WELCOMES
NEW ACADEMIC
STAFF IN
2022 & 2023

8 New Units in 2023

Congratulations
to SAC
Graduates 2022

SAC ICONOGRAPHY STUDENT PRESENTS HIS ICON
TO THE COPTIC PATRIARCH

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

Cover image: Icon of St Gregory the Theologian, written by SAC student Gladys Mack



KOINONIA The News of SAC

Issue 10, December 2022

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SAC – A College of the University of Divinity

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www.sac.edu.au/koinonia

Feedback: info@sac.edu.au

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Cover image: Icon of St Gregory the Theologian, written by Gladys Mack

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

Fr Dr Daniel Ghabrial

When most organisations are formulating a Marketing Plan or a way to reach out to the world, they often consider two important questions: “Who are our customers or clients?” and “How can we serve them?” The latter is a philosophy that is sometimes termed “Customer or Client-Centred Service/Care.” It stems from a Biblical teaching of “Servant Leadership” that Christ expounded to His Church in John 13:12-17. For St Athanasius College, answering the first question might simply be our clients are our students. However, it may not be as simple as that. We also have a greater mission: to create a learning community, one that serves the Church and furthers or hastens the coming of the Kingdom of God. In creating a learning community, we do indeed teach our students, not just for the pursuit of knowledge or award, but to equip them to become ministers of the Lord. We hope and trust that in exposing our students to the finest scholarship of Christian thought, they will develop, spiritually forming and maturing in Christ and become citizens of God’s Kingdom.

The learning community that St Athanasius College aspires to create, is also one where scholarly research and publication is priority. How is this Client Centred? In advancing research and contributing to the body of knowledge, St Athanasius College brings to the forefront discoveries; some from history, some from deliberation of Scripture or Theology, and some in Ministry. These all go towards one goal, equipping the Church to engage with the world and stand firm in the Apostolic faith of which it is a custodian. In creating the best possible learning community, SAC aspires to bring on board the best in scholarship. Accordingly, this year we have had the pleasure of having two renowned international scholars teach at SAC: Prof. Fr John Behr offering a face to face intensive with the students of the “St Gregory the Theologian” unit in August, and Prof. Heike Behlmer teaching an online intensive on “Sahidic Coptic” in September and October. Continuing the mission of creating a wonderful learning environment, SAC was pleased to welcome Dr Katherin Papdopoulos in February as our newest member of academic staff to teach units in History and Church History. We are proud that Katherin was awarded a PhD and university medal from the University of Divinity in March this year, having undertaken her doctorate at ALC (Australian Lutheran College) under the supervision of Prof. Wendy Mayer. In only a few short months, she has contributed significantly as a valued member of SAC. We also welcomed Dr Carolyn Alsen, a Senior Lecturer in Higher Education, Academic Programs, at the University of Divinity, as an accredited HDR supervisor in Biblical Studies and ancient languages. On the research side, we are delighted that Prof. Karel Innemée’s position as an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Divinity has been renewed until 2025. We are also delighted that (Mother) Dr Antonia St Demiana will be a valuable member of our growing research community at SAC as a Research Fellow. It gives us great pleasure to also welcome two new members in 2023: Mr Hany Takla who is renowned for establishing the prestigious St Shenouda Society for Coptic Studies in Los Angeles, and will be teaching units in Liturgy, and Ms Ireni Farag who has significant experience both as a counsellor and as a lecturer at Excelsia College and Western Sydney University, and will be offering units in Pastoral Care and Ministry.

In this issue of KOINONIA, our Student-Centred Service and the fruit it bears, shines. You will read about the display of our student’s exceptional hand-painted icons at the University of Divinity Research Day in July, and you’ll read reports and reflections by students on the units they studied this year. A student-centred initiative launched in February this year was the student journal Mathitis, which aims to celebrate and highlight the work and dedication of our talented students. The second issue is currently being prepared and will be released early in 2023.

In this issue of KOINONIA you will also read about the wonderful first joint research seminar between St Cyril’s Theological College in Sydney and St Athanasius College themed “Emerging Coptic Theologies in Australia.” This forum presented an occasion for academic staff and students at both colleges to showcase their research and ongoing scholarship in a variety of areas. When one looks at the list of papers presented, a unique picture emerges: all the papers discussed practical issues, with an application of scholarship and academic rigour to tease out the issues. Papers from hymnology and their origin, development and use; to the history of historical figures; to current theological debates and schools of thought that seek to find common grounds; to looking at contemporary saints and their theological contribution. This seminar celebrated emerging Coptic researchers and Coptic heritage. In my mind, Coptic Theology has always been practical, one that belongs to the people and not confined in libraries or just for the elite. Copts entrusted their Dogma and Theology to Liturgy and Psalmody. Our theology is a daily task. Our psalmodies are full of deep and profound confessions, revelations and typologies that reach the hearts of the deep-thinking theologian as well as the simplest peasant.

Here is the evidence of our student-centred teaching, one that helps a student take in profound truths, engage with theological thought and history, and want to apply them to the here and now. If we were not student-centred, if we were not aspiring to create a learning community, we would have seen otherwise. Thanks to our gracious God, we are forming students who want to serve the Church. I invite the reader to take all this in this edition of KOINONIA. I extend an invitation to all to partner with St Athanasius College to further our mission. Partner with us as an enrolled student. Partner with us by attending our many public lectures held throughout the year. Partner with us by supporting us financially, with a monthly contribution or a Tax Deductible donation to our [LectureShip Fund](#).

Enjoy reading KOINONIA and be inspired by its content.



Photo courtesy of Lisa Agaiby

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SAC GRADUATES IN 2022

The ceremony of conferring academic awards is a tradition that takes place at academic institutions throughout the world, and on Friday 25 March 2022, the University of Divinity community gathered at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne to celebrate the graduation of 375 students receiving awards.

This year we congratulate the academic achievements of our seven graduates from SAC:

Pamela Daams	Graduate Certificate in Divinity
Carol McDonough	Graduate Diploma in Divinity
Mary-Anne Soliman	Graduate Diploma in Theology
Marina Bassilios	Diploma in Theology (<i>awarded the Vice-Chancellor's scholar</i>)
Mina Botros	Diploma in Theology
Mariam Hanna	Diploma in Theology
Patricia Hanna	Diploma in Theology

[Click here to view the Graduation Program and Ceremony](#)

CONGRATULATIONS AND FAREWELL TO OUR REGISTRAR, REV. DR PETER DOBSON

On behalf of the SAC community, we wish to congratulate our registrar, Rev. Dr Peter Dobson on his recent appointment as the Superintendent (Bishop) of the Southern District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church by the church's National Board. This is a significant fulltime responsibility that is pivotal to the Wesleyan Church and one in which Rev. Peter will be able to serve our Lord Jesus Christ and His congregation by applying his gift in Church Leadership and organisation.

Accordingly, Rev. Peter will conclude his position as Registrar of St Athanasius College, at the end of 2022.

Rev. Peter joined SAC as the College registrar in 2016 and has contributed significantly to the growth of SAC as he journeyed with us as we expanded our units and course offerings. Over the years he has also offered a number of units in Christian Leadership that have been greatly beneficial to those in service and ministry.

We are grateful for his contribution to the College and the Coptic community over the last six years and wish him every success in his new role.



LIBRARY MATTERS by Deborah Decru

As the number of SAC students continue to study online and the number of interstate and international students grows, SAC has invested in a vast number of online tools and resources and our library repository and e-resources are being greatly utilised by staff and students.

Due to the print collection now being searchable through the Library Hub, the number of students from other colleges of the University utilising the SAC Library's resources through visits to the library or inter-library loans is growing, which is very pleasing.

The books from the Eporo Campus have now been fully integrated into the Donvale library. Space in the main room of the library has been challenged, but this is being addressed by limiting the number of print books being purchased, reducing duplicates, and focusing on e-resources.

The Librarian introduced a regular newsletter for staff and students this semester, reminding everyone of the relevant Library Hub links and providing simple snippets of library-related information. Thank you to those who provided feedback.

SAC WELCOMES NEW ACADEMIC STAFF IN 2022

DR KATHERIN PAPADOPOULOS

In January 2022, Dr Katherin Papadopoulos joined SAC as a lecturer in History and Church History and this year taught three units: "Lives and Times of the Desert Fathers", "Saints and Sinners: Women in Late Antiquity", and "St Gregory of Nazianzus: Orator, Theologian, Bishop"; a unit in which she created and facilitated, assisted by Mr Abraam Mikhail. Katherin taught this unit alongside the renowned Patristic scholar, Prof. John Behr.

Katherin studied her doctorate at Australian Lutheran College under the supervision of Prof. Wendy Mayer and Prof. Chris de Wet. Her PhD was conferred by the University of Divinity in March 2022 where she was also awarded the University Medal for her doctoral thesis on Memory Studies and Late Antique Syriac Martyrologies.

An avid researcher, Katherin's interests include Late Antique memory culture, Hagiography, history of the Mediterranean East, and Patristics. She also maintains a research interest in John Chrysostom, the Pseudo-Chrysostomica, and Severian of Gabala.

Katherin is currently developing a new unit that she will be teaching in second semester 2023: "Hidden Pearls: A Survey of Syriac Christian Literature."

DR CAROLYN ALSEN

SAC welcomed in 2022 Dr Carolyn Alsen as an accredited supervisor and lecturer in Biblical Studies, Biblical Languages, Religious Education, and Education Studies.

A Senior Lecturer in Higher Education, Academic Programs, at the University of Divinity, Carolyn has always supported SAC through her role at the University by facilitating professional development for academic staff, and quality reviews. She has significant experience in higher education teaching, curriculum design and study skills in Australian and North American Universities.

Carolyn's research and teaching interests include analysis of biblical narrative, translation studies and biblical Semitics.

In addition to her significant roles, Carolyn is currently co-editing the forthcoming volume *Perspectives on Syriac Linguistics, Colloquia of the International Syriac Languages Project* (New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2023), together with Dr Lisa Agaiby and Prof. Daniel King. Carolyn has also been working with the St Paul's Monastery Manuscript Project team translating and documenting the Syriac manuscripts and fragments.

PROF. HEIKE BEHLMER

Prof. Heike Behlmer, the director of the Department of Egyptology and Coptology at the University of Göttingen in Germany, is not a stranger to SAC. In past years she has delivered a number of public lectures on the fascinating "Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament Project" that is a long-term project funded by the Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Heike serves as Chair of the project's steering committee. This significant and pioneering project aims to provide a complete documentation of the manuscript evidence of the Old Testament in Coptic, digital editions of all Coptic Old Testament manuscripts, corpus-linguistic analyses and translations into English, German, and Arabic.

In 2022, SAC was privileged to have Heike, an ardent Coptic philologist and renowned Shenoutean scholar, teach an intensive introductory unit on "Sahidic Coptic" in semester 2 this year. Sahidic is the first and oldest Coptic dialect that Biblical texts were translated to in the 3rd century, and in which early Egyptian monastic texts and Coptic martyrologies were first composed (Bohairic Coptic being the liturgical dialect).

We are pleased to announce that Heike will be offering "Sahidic Coptic II" in semester 1, 2023, which like "Sahidic Coptic I" will be the first time it is taught at SAC.

SAC WELCOMES NEW ACADEMIC STAFF IN 2023

MS IRENI FARAG

SAC warmly welcomes Ireni in 2023. A PhD candidate at the Queensland University of Technology, Ireni's research focuses on how a shared understanding of culture between therapist and client is accomplished in therapeutic interactions.

Having attained a Master's degree in counselling from the University of Southern Queensland, Ireni lectures in counselling at Excelsia College in Sydney, where she was granted the 2021 Excellence in Teaching Award, and at the School of Social Sciences at Western Sydney University. Having developed curricula for several subjects at these institutions, Ireni currently teaches Counselling Theories and Practice, Introduction to Counselling Skills, Counselling Children and Young People, and Couple and Family Therapy.

Ireni is developing a new unit that she will be teaching in first semester 2023: "The Illuminated Heart: An Introduction to Counselling Microskills for those in Service and Ministry."

MR HANY TAKLA

For Copts, Hany needs no introduction. He is the president of the St. Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society – a pioneering society he established some four decades ago in Los Angeles. He is also the Director of the Coptic Centre in Los Angeles, and Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia.

Hany is a prolific author with no less than 100 publications to his name, and in 2021 he developed, together with Mina Makar, a Coptic Bible App for iOS and Android Devices. He obtained his Master of Arts in Coptic Studies from Macquarie University during the time when Prof. Heike Behlmer was head of the department.

A project partner of the Göttingen "Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament Project," Hany also lectures part-time at UCLA Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department (Los Angeles), the University of Notre Dame (Indiana), and St Athanasius & St Cyril's Coptic Orthodox Seminary (Los Angeles), offering units in Coptic language and Liturgy.

Hany is currently developing a new unit that he will be teaching in first semester 2023: "Coptic Liturgical Manuscripts."

M. DR ANTONIA ST DEMIANA

SAC is delighted to welcome Mother Antonia, a Coptic nun at Archangel Michael Monastery for Nuns in Melbourne, as a Research Fellow. She graduated with a Master of Arts in Coptic Studies from Macquarie University and subsequently a PhD also from Macquarie. Her impressive doctoral thesis presented a study and critical edition of the Sahidic Coptic witnesses of the book of Leviticus.

We are delighted that her thesis has been accepted for publication by Brill (Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity Series) in 2023.

An passionate Coptic philologist, Mother Antonia has won a number of awards and prizes from Macquarie University for her academic excellence in Coptic language and its various dialects. She is a project partner of Göttingen's "Digital Edition and Translation of the Sahidic Coptic Old Testament" Project, and also a project team member of the St Paul's Monastery Manuscript Project, translating Coptic texts.

She has published several articles and is currently co-authoring a chapter with Dr Lisa Agaiby in the forthcoming book *Lives of Paul the Hermit*, which is a collaborative project of eleven international scholars, including four from SAC.

EMERGING COPTIC THEOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA SEMINAR

Shadi Nessim

On October 14–15, 2022, St Athanasius College (SAC) and St Cyril's Coptic Orthodox Theological College (SCC) were delighted to host their inaugural Research Seminar: Emerging Coptic Theology in Australia, held at SAC's city campus in Melbourne. The seminar showcased twelve presentations and was attended by more than 60 participants. Commemorating 40 years of Coptic theological education in Australia, this collaborative seminar celebrated the scholarship and research of emerging Coptic scholars in Australia in the areas of theology, Coptic Studies, and Christian-Arabic Studies. A number of presenters who were not able to attend in person, presented their papers via zoom.

An exhibition of Coptic icons recently written by SAC students were showcased during the event.

The history of Coptic theological education in Australia began in 1982 when His Holiness Pope Shenouda III of blessed memory delegated a group of clergy and laity to establish the first Coptic theological college outside of Egypt in Sydney. Since that time, Copts in Australia have worked tirelessly to preserve their traditions and share Orthodox teachings with the community at large through teaching and research. Today, Australia is home to two accredited Coptic theological colleges who make important contributions in disciplines like Biblical Studies, Liturgy, Patristics, Monasticism, Church History, Philosophy, Ministry and Mission, all with the aim of promoting and fostering the study of Coptic history and theology.

All the papers presented at the seminar will be published as a special edition by SAC Press in 2023. It is our hope that the next seminar of emerging Coptic scholars will be a collaborative event between the Australian Coptic Theological Colleges and those in North America.



Photos courtesy of Shadi Nessim

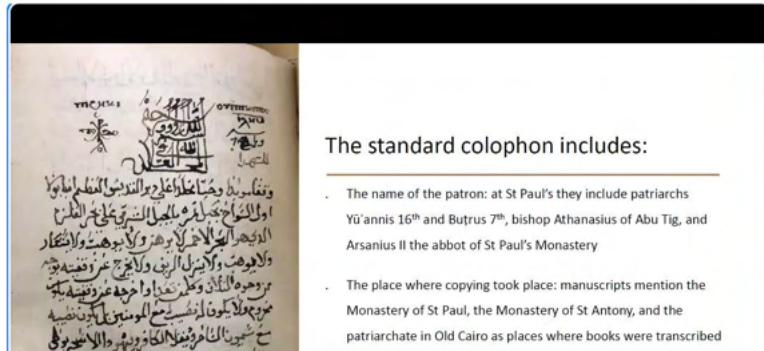


- b) The second example is the verse from Gen 1:28 (Be fruitful and multiply”.
- As God said this only once and the energy of His word is still active till now and till the end of the world, so what He said at the Last Supper, “This is My Body, ..., this is My Blood”; such words here also accomplish the same in every liturgy



Shadi Kiryakos Nessim

2022-10-14 18:20:31



The standard colophon includes:

- The name of the patron: at St Paul's they include patriarchs Yū'annis 16th and Butrus 7th, bishop Athanasius of Abu Tig, and Arsanus II the abbot of St Paul's Monastery
- The place where copying took place: manuscripts mention the Monastery of St Paul, the Monastery of St Antony, and the patriarchate in Old Cairo as places where books were transcribed



Lisa Agaby

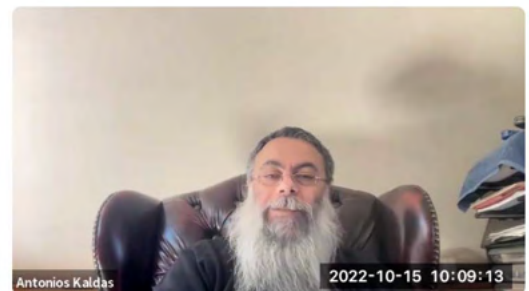
2022-10-14 21:18:10

The Problem

Adherence to mainline religions is falling in the West.

- Australian census figures. Culture Wars.
- American Greek Orthodox figures. A crisis.
- Our own experiences in pastoral service; *Aletheia*.

How do we respond?



Antonios Kaldas

2022-10-15 10:09:13

[Audio Transcript](#)

[Chat Messages](#)

2.1 | The Content of the Indwelling—The Burning Bush Image

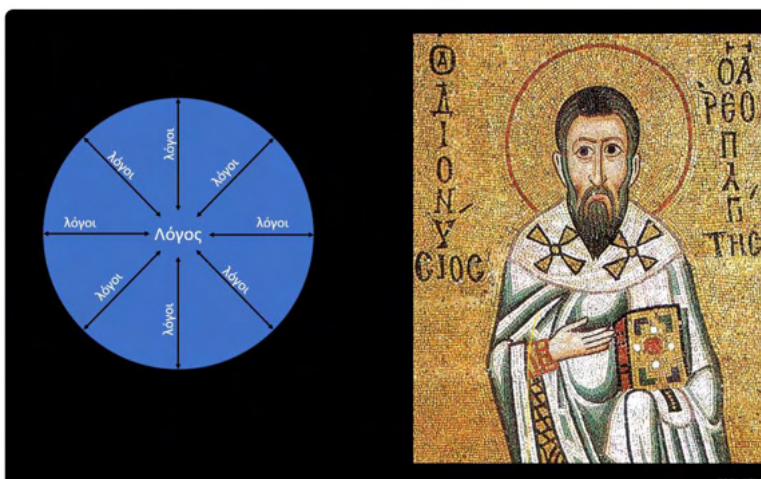
“[...]here, we are faced with a **burning bush** according to the **symbolism**, or a **union between the divine and humane nature** according to the traditional interpretation of this vision.”

“What took place in the **upper room** was **not granting of abstract power** or the haphazard bestowal of **gifts and talents** [...] but the **mystical intimation of an invisible union between the divine and human natures.**”



Wagdy Samir

2022-10-15 10:50:34



Michael Ibrahim

2022-10-15 14:23:54

[Audio Transcript](#)

[Chat Messages](#)

Q Search transcript

04:44:50 All the radii of a circle are brought together in the unity of the center, which contains all the

EMERGING COPTIC THEOLOGY IN AUSTRALIA SEMINAR

Papers Presented

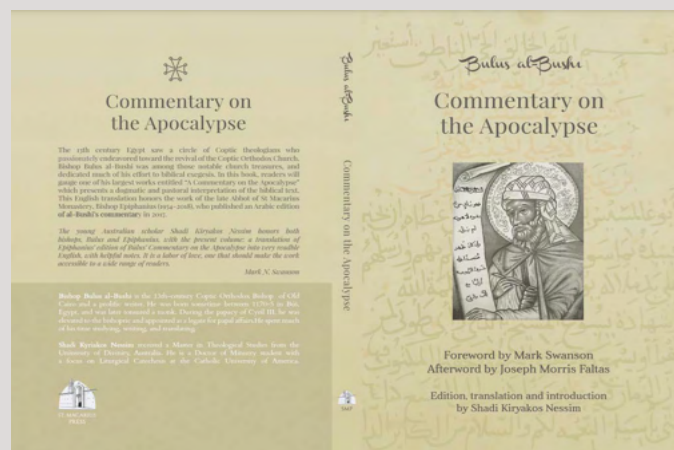
- Dr LISA AGAIBY (SAC): *Scribal Practices at the Red Sea Monasteries*
- Mr RAMSEY ANDREWS (SCC): *In Pursuit of a Patristic Understanding of Deification Within the Contemporary Coptic Orthodox Context: Evaluating the Modern Polemic Between Matta Al-Miskin and Pope Shenouda III*
- Fr Dr GREGORIOS AWAD (SAC): *The Use of the Term "Transubstantiation" in the Coptic Sacramental Tradition*
- Fr SHENOUDA BOUTROS (SAC) (D.Min Candidate): *The Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practice Prohibition Bill Passed by the Victorian State Parliament and an Orthodox Christian Response*
- Mr MICHAEL IBRAHIM (SCC) (PhD Candidate): *Schrödinger's Cat and Shenouda's Crisis: Dogmatic Polyvalence, Natural Theology and Contemporary Coptic Pedagogy*
- Fr Dr ANTONIOS KALDAS (SCC): *What Might a Modern Orthodox Apologetic Look Like?*
- Dr SAMUEL KALDAS (SCC): *Love Made Flesh: The Eucharistic Theology of St Bishoy Kamel (1931–1979)*
- Fr Dr SHENOUDA MANSOUR: *Perspectives of Coptic Identity in Australia. Is it in Crisis?*
- Mr SHADI NESSIM (SAC) (D.Min Candidate): *The Eucharistic Word and Pseudo-Sāwīrus's Kitāb al-īdāḥ (Book of Elucidation)*
- Fr MICHAEL SALIB (SAC) (D.Min Candidate): *What do Emerging Adults Need from Churches as they Make Sense of their Faith?*
- Dr WAGDY SAMIR: *Divine Participation: The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit in Fr Matta al-Miskin's Theology*
- Mr MINA SAMY (SCC): *The Hymn of the Intercessions (ⲉⲓⲧⲉⲛ) in the Coptic Liturgical Rite: History and Practice*

OTHER NEWS

New Books by Shadi Nessim

The Life of Sts Maximus and Dometius: Monastery, Hymnography & Iconography (Putty, NSW: St Shenouda Monastery Press, 2022)

Bulus al Bushi, Commentary on the Apocalypse (Wadi Natrun: St Macarius Monastery Press, 2022)



ΖΙΤΕΝ

Hymns for the virgin (ταιωρι, ψωρι, νεο πε ψωρι)

ΖΙΤΕΝ ΝΙΠΡΕΣΒΙΑ ΝΤΕ ΞΕΟΤΟΚΟΣ ΕΘΟΥΑΒ
ΝΑΡΙΑ ΝΒΟΙΣ ΔΡΙΖΜΟΤ ΝΑΝ ΝΠΙΧΩ ΕΒΟΛ
ΝΤΕ ΝΕΝΝΟΒΙ

Through the intercessions of the Theotokos
St Mary, O Lord grant us the forgiveness of
our sins

ΖΙΤΕΝ ΝΙΕΥΧΗ ΝΤΕ (...) ΝΒΟΙΣ ΔΡΙΖΜΟΤ ΝΑΝ
ΝΠΙΧΩ ΕΒΟΛ ΝΤΕ ΝΕΝΝΟΒΙ

Through the prayers of (...), O Lord, grant
us the forgiveness of our sins

ΖΙΤΕΝ ΝΟΥΕΥΧΗ ΑΡΕΕ ΕΠΩΝΑ ΝΠΕΝΙΩΤ
ΕΤΑΙΝΟΥΤ ΝΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΥΣ ΠΑΠΑ ΑΒΒΑ (...) ΝΒΟΙΣ...

Through their prayers, preserve the life of
our honoured father, the archpriest, Pope
Abba (...), O Lord...

SĀWĪRUS IBN AL-MUQAFFĀ' (10TH C.)

- Sāwirus (Severus) ibn al-Muqaffā' was a 10th century Coptic bishop, historian, and theologian and one of the earliest known Coptic authors to write original works in Arabic.
- Titled *al-Kāteb al-Maṣrī* (The Egyptian Scribe).
- A significant pastoral leader and apologetic for the Coptic Orthodox Church during his time.



Undated Illumination of Bishop Sawirus. MS. Liturgy 104 St Antony's Monastery. (Photo courtesy of Sherif Ramzy)



Shadi Kiryakos Nessim

2022-10-15 13:36:53

Audio Transcript

Chat Messages



Shadi Kiryakos Nessim

2022-10-15 13:12:13

Audio Transcript

Chat Messages

Q Search transcript

thirteenth century manuscript belonging to the Church of the Holy Mart in Turkey.

	Middle/High School	Highschool/Emerging Adult	Emerging Adult	Adulthood
	Faith in God is through a person. It is "relational". Expectation and conformity is powerful and influential.	Faith challenges the community's assumptions of the status quo. It holds self and others to higher accountability for authenticity, congruence, and consistency. (Most difficult)	The person is learning to take responsibility for her/his own thinking and knowing.	Faith embraces both/and more than either/or. A person is more able to hold polar tensions and see truth as more complex messy, and less reductionistic.
Intellectual	(Healthy Bound) I believe because my parents, priest, servant believes	(Disrupted Transition) Why do I believe what I believe (Suspicious, critical self-reflection, questioning)	(Probing Commitment) I'm constructing and testing new perspectives about my life and faith that I consider my own	(Theolog. Commitment) I believe because I choose to believe and trust my thinking
	(Dependent)	(Counter-Dependent)	(Fragile Inner-Dependent)	(Confident Inner-Dependent)
Emotional	I desire to be loyal and faithful. I need approval and affirmation	My search makes me feel disloyal, unfaithful, and that I'm letting people down.	I desire to seek and try on new ways of expressing my faith. This is scary but hopeful	I am becoming comfortable with my faith as my own and with those who may hold different views than me
	(Conventional)	(Negative)	(Diffuse)	(Positive)
Relational	I need a group that believes what I believe	I need a group that allows me space to challenge and question the beliefs that I have previously assumed.	I need a group that helps me explore my own spirituality.	I am here for others. It's not about me. We can be in community even though we have differences.
	(Separating)	(Seeking)	(Contributing)	

Adapted from Argue, Steven C. "Undergraduate Spiritual Struggle: Perceptions of Spirituality and the Quest to Remain Faithful." *Journal of Youth Ministry* 16, no. 1 (2017).

ST ANTHONY'S COLLEGE 2017



Shadi Kiryakos Nessim

2022-10-15 11:20:16

Audio Transcript

Chat Messages

Q Search transcript



Evaluating the Modern Polemic between Matta Al-Miskin and Pope Shenouda III.





Display of icons at the *Emerging Coptic Theology* seminar, written by SAC iconography students

FEATURED ARTICLE

SAC ICONOGRAPHY STUDENT PRESENTS HIS ICON TO THE COPTIC PATRIARCH

Benjamin Ibrahim

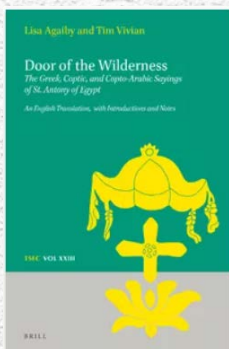
In August 2022, I had the very blessed opportunity of attending the Logos Coptic Youth Forum in Egypt. This forum is an event hosted by His Holiness Pope Tawadros II in the Papal residence in St Bishoy's Monastery in Wadi El-Natrun, Egypt. Each year His Holiness invites over a hundred youth from every Coptic diocese in the Diaspora to visit Egypt and experience their roots – the Coptic Church and Egypt, the Motherland of Copts. This year His Holiness invited to Egypt 160 youth. During this time, we met with official dignitaries, including the Prime Minister of Egypt, and His Holiness personally took us on tours to various monasteries, showed us the large scale operations the Church provides, such as with the underprivileged, and he took us to many historic sites. The youth were also tasked with discussing and presenting their views on various modern social topics that challenge young Copts in the diaspora. It was an opportunity to constructively voice opinions and thoughts on how the Church can approach these issues. And our voice will then be presented by His Holiness to the Holy Synod, on behalf of the youth in the Diaspora.

I personally had the very special opportunity of presenting His Holiness with an icon I wrote of Melchizedek. The knowledge I gained having studied "Iconography I and II" with Mr Ashraf Fayek, together with the exegetical assessment I completed on Melchizedek in the unit "Introduction to the Old Testament" with Fr Nebojsa Tumara, made the creation of this icon seem fitting.



Photos courtesy of Ben Ibrahim





BOOK REVIEW

Deborah Decru

Door of the Wilderness: The Greek, Coptic, and Copto-Arabic Sayings of St. Antony of Egypt. Translated, with introduction and notes, by Lisa Agaiby and Tim Vivian. Text and Studies in Eastern Christianity 23. Leiden: Brill, 2022.

This most interesting book provides a comparative look at the various sayings attributed to Abba Antony – the monk whose *Vita* famously appears in Athanasius’ Life of Antony – in English translations from three of the languages in which those sayings appear: Greek, Coptic, and Copto-Arabic (Copto-Arabic is an Arabic text widely used and read in the Coptic Church). Antony was a monk living in the Egyptian desert in the late third to early fourth centuries. He may well have lived a life of obscurity if it were not for his *Vita*, which attracted interest well beyond Egypt and brought many to her deserts. But we are told that the Antony of the variously translated sayings, and the ascetic depicted in the two “Lives” of Antony, was a man of “multitudes” (p. xi) and as the book explains, his sayings were not static either.

The work within this volume is shared between Vivian and Agaiby. In the first two parts of the book, Vivian looks at the Greek sayings from the Alphabetical *Apophthegmata Patrum* as recorded in *Patrologia Graeca*, and the Bohairic Coptic Sayings from *Vatican Copt 64* as recorded in Amélineau’s *Apothegmes sur Saint Antoine*. Parts three and four are the work of Agaiby, who discusses the Copto-Arabic sayings of Abba Antony found in the *Bustan Al-Ruhban* (Paradise of the Fathers) and the “manuscripts housed at the Monastery of St Antony of the Red Sea, the site believed to be where Antony the Great lived and died” (p. 85). Interestingly, many of the Copto-Arabic Sayings, either transcribed from the *Bustan* or introduced over the centuries, are unattested (not documented) in the Greek or Coptic versions, and most of those appearing here from the Monastery are published for the first time.

The extensive introductions to the three versions speak of the timeless relevance of Antony’s wisdom and spiritual and scriptural insight. In part three, Agaiby also discusses the changes and additions to the Sayings that occurred in later centuries as recorded in the manuscripts from the Monastery of St Antony, changes that showed that St Antony’s sayings were considered a living tradition, adapted and adaptable: “the tradition introduced, reinvented, or simply excluded stories and instructions to make the collection relevant to the taste and mentality of the time and place.” (p. xiii).

In addition to the body of the book are multiple aids to guide the reader, such as but not limited to: A Comparative and a Synoptic Table of Sayings Attributed to St Antony the Great – which is interesting in itself – and separate listings of the three groups of sayings with cross-references to their appearance in the other group(s), making it clear where the sayings are unique to that source. There are also beautiful images of icons from the Monasteries of St Antony and St Paul, and manuscript pages from the collection at the Monastery of St Antony. The images are of excellent quality.

This is a fascinating look at a figure from the distant past whose voice still reverberates within the Church today, particularly in monastic circles and actively in Coptic monasteries and churches (Ch. 5). An apt postscript that beautifully sums up the importance of Vivian’s and Agaiby’s endeavours: in his preface to Chapter 3, Vivian comments that “those who still find inspiration and guidance in the early monastic writings may find here food for soul, mind, and spirit.”

I invite you to read this volume which is held in the SAC Library. You will be well-rewarded.

A DISPLAY OF STUDENT ICONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DIVINITY RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Shadi Nessim

Coptic iconography is the ancient form of Christian art springing from Egypt. It is a unique form of Orthodox expression in that its influences are diverse and cultural, having implants of ancient Egyptian work with remnants of Byzantine input. For Copts, the icon is an expression of theology, and more specifically incarnational theology; that God was incarnate for us opens a window to gaze at Him in Christ Jesus.

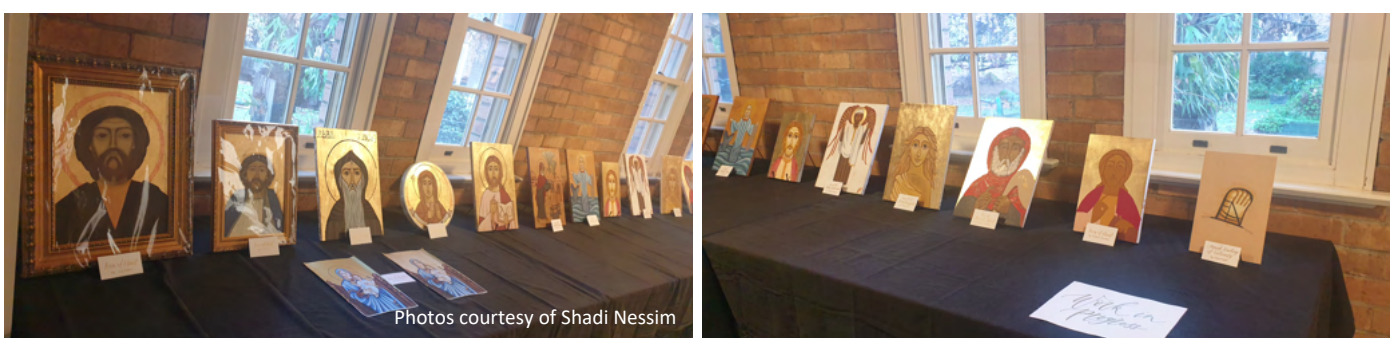
In the 20th century, an artist by the name of Isaac Fanous (1919 – 2007) was inspired to keep this expression of theology, that belonged to his cultural ancestors, alive. He reintroduced this ancient form of iconography to several Coptic churches in Egypt and America, and to ensure its preservation, discipled six artists who would later immigrate to European countries and continue to adorn Coptic churches around the world. One of these disciples is our very own Coptic Australian Iconographer, Ashraf Fayek who has been teaching and preserving this ancient technique for 30 years to this day. The University of Divinity has become the first University in the world to offer an accredited program that allows for students to become disciples and masters of this ancient technique. SAC formed the Iconographer's Working Group which brings together alumni to write icons, receive feedback, and learn new techniques.

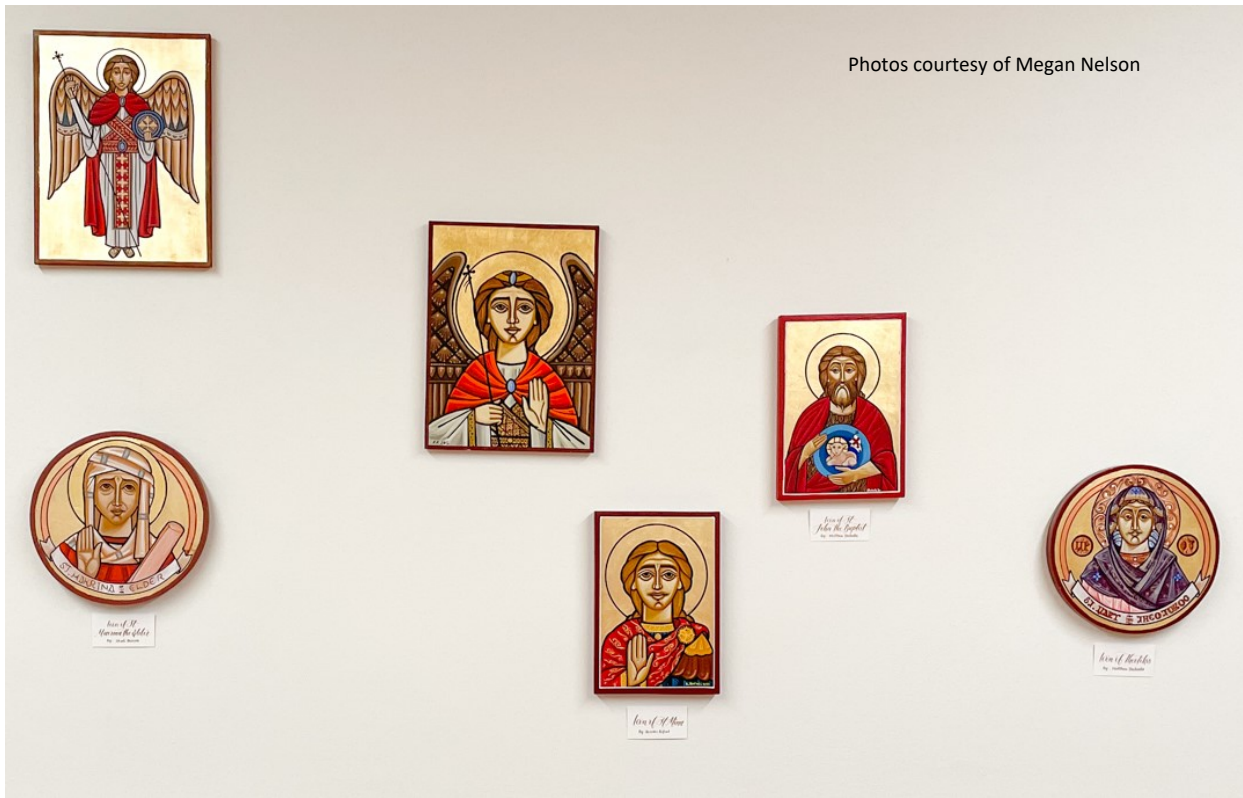
This year, SAC was delighted to display thirty-five icons written by twelve students at the UD Research Day to showcase their work. Before viewing the icons to the public, students followed a forty-eight-hour preparation technique known as "traditional gesso" which is believed to be the same practice of concocting ancient Egyptian funerary art using rabbit skin glue and calcium carbonate. The wood panel is then sanded down and students would begin mixing their rock pigments with a solution of vinegar and egg yolk to create the colours they need. Much time, patience and prayer are given to form an image that becomes a vessel for prayer, or as the Coptic icon consecration prayer states, "a harbour of salvation."

Some of the icons presented at the UD have now found their home in Melbourne local parishes. One icon now sits in the papal residence in Egypt.

Presenting at the UD Research Day were the following four papers from SAC:

- Fr Dr Nebojsa Tumara: "Power of Virgin's Milk: The Life of Theotokos Galaktotrophousa of Hilandar Monastery"
- Dr Katherin Papadopoulos: "Reading in Squares: The relationship between Eusebius's Chronicle and History"
- Fr Dr Jacob Joseph: "Holy Kiss, Exclusion, and Reconciliation: Reading from Jacob of Edessa's Liturgical Commentary"
- Dr Carolyn Alsen: "Some Linguistic and Social Observations on two West Syriac Inscriptions from St Paul's Monastery, Egypt"







REFLECTIONS OF AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

Fr Daniel Tyab

As a Coptic priest based in Cleveland Ohio, I've been studying at SAC now for a few years and I can honestly say the experience has been incredibly enriching. A pharmacist by trade, encountering essay writing when I first enrolled at the College was not only foreign, but a huge challenge. However, the lecturers were amazingly helpful in providing one-to-one assistance and coaching, and now essay writing is something I have come to appreciate and even enjoy.

This semester I studied two new units that were offered for the first time: Pastoral Ministry and Priesthood, and Introduction to Sahidic Coptic. In the Pastoral Ministry unit, Fr. Daniel Ghabrial, with his meek and gentle nature, delivered the practical lectures and weekly zoom classes in a transformative environment, and so when the unit ended, I found myself contemplating how I will apply the principles of what I have learned to my lifetime service of ministry.

Introduction to Sahidic Coptic was challenging on another level. This fascinating, fast-paced unit, taught by our world-class visiting professor Heike Behlmer, was delivered in 6 intensive weeks. It was an opportunity not to be missed. And so I would join the weekly zoom calls at 4am Cleveland time, strong coffee in hand, prepared to be challenged, even at such an ungodly hour! Rigorous, thorough, demanding, yet entirely entertaining and stimulating, my colleagues and I, under the patient and humble guidance of Prof. Behlmer, were able in just a matter of six weeks, able to read, understand, and translate paragraphs of Sahidic Coptic text! At all times, Heike went the extra mile to prepare pre-recorded lectures, course notes and weekly exercises that she made up herself, and she always made sure that in our zoom classes, everyone was able to follow and understand. I would also like to give a shoutout to my colleagues in class who were incredibly supportive and engaged.

And finally, as a student when you receive a call from the Academic Dean, Dr Lisa Agaiby, simply checking in to ask about you, it's only a reflection of the type of care everyone at SAC has for their student community in wanting to ensure they feel cared for and supported in their academic journey.

I am thankful for the mental and spiritual growth I have gained through SAC and look forward to continuing in this academically nurturing environment.

REFLECTIONS OF A CROSS-INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT

Sabine Ford-Arthur



Studying at SAC for the first time in 2022, I completed two subjects as a cross-institutional student – “Lives and Times of the Desert Fathers” and “St Gregory the Theologian.” I decided to enrol at SAC because of my interest in these two subjects, which are not offered by my home college. Coming across from St Cyril's Theological College in Sydney, I was hoping for the same high standard of teaching, content, and support, and I can say with absolute certainty that this was matched at SAC. I realised very quickly that my lecturers (Katherin, Abraam and Lisa) genuinely wanted to help me grow - not only academically but spiritually.

Having been edified by the content of the subjects themselves, these lecturers encouraged us students to find inspiration for our own spiritual lives in the weekly lectures. The lectures were concise but broad in their scope, and so I was able to get a good grasp of the theological, historical, sociological, political, and wider contextual factors influencing early Christian monasticism and the Church Father St Gregory. I thoroughly enjoyed the holistic approach my lecturers took and the freedom they gave students to find their own voice. I was able to research and learn more about the topics that particularly grabbed me - the relationship between theology and monasticism, and the Patristic understanding of suffering.

The assessment structure at SAC for these units worked really well for me and my essay writing skills significantly improved as a result of the lecturers' assistance during the writing process and their detailed feedback when marking. They cared about my work but also about me as a person, always checking in to make sure I was okay and helping in any way they could. This intermingling of pastoral support and academic teaching in the staff at SAC is very special and unique. Their love for students spills over and influences us to likewise treat each other with respect, kindness, and openness, creating a beautiful family feel within the college. Tutorial discussions were always lively, and contributions were highly encouraged. I was amazed by the humility of the lecturers – they constantly said they were learning from us students and gracefully listened to any of our differing opinions.

I look forward to undertaking future study at SAC and am so glad I chose to enrol in these two units in 2022 – if only I had time to do more!

REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT

“ST GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS: ORATOR, THEOLOGIAN, BISHOP”

Fr Peter Martin



At the beginning of Semester 2 in 2022, when we gathered around the Zoom table for the first lecture of our unit, there were a few things about the course which I picked up, and which stood me in good stead for what was to follow.

The first was from the Very Rev. Prof. John Behr (Regius Chair of Humanity at the University of Aberdeen, and Eastern Orthodox priest and theologian), who was to lead our face-to-face intensive midway through the unit and who made an introductory Zoom appearance at that first session. After introductions, Fr John led us in a rigorous exchange on aspects of how to approach the fourth century texts which we were about to study. He showed, through this skilled dialogue, how easy it is to import into the fourth century our own predetermined confessional orthodoxies, which in turn acts as a distorting lens causing us to completely miss the rich theological content in front of us. Even worse, believing to have engaged in scholarship when we may simply have been enjoying the warm glow of prejudices being reinforced.

Then there was the discussion about what theology is and why Gregory is one of only three in the history of the Church who has been given the title, “Theologian.” Mr Abraam Mikhail, one of our lecturers, made the following comment along these lines, “it is one thing to study theology, and another thing entirely to be a theologian - most of us belonging to the former group.” This stayed with me as a timely and appropriate intimation of the immense stature of the man we were about to live with, through his writings, in the months ahead.

Studying Gregory was as much about history as it was about theological ideas. In fact, during the unit it came to me over and over again that for sound scholarship the two cannot and should not be separated. A good example lies in asking the question, “why was Gregory ascribed the title ‘Theologian’ a century or so after he died?” Yes, some of what he wrote in the fourth century helps answer that question. However, a more pertinent line of enquiry would be to explore the purposes his legacy was being put to by a future generation in circumstances that Gregory could not have begun to imagine. Our unit facilitator and lecturer Dr Katherin Papadopoulos ensured that we placed Gregory and his writings in their full historical context. I found the complexity of this context fascinating, daunting, and humbling, all at the same time. Naturally, we looked at the contest of theological ideas of the time, which tended to centre on the proceedings of the Council of Constantinople in 381 and the Nicæan movement leading up to it. More broadly though, it was necessary to understand the classical literary conventions within which Gregory wrote, and was heard, along with the tumultuous social and political currents of the fourth century. Finally, as illustrated above, in the latter part of the semester we examined ways in which his legacy was taken up in subsequent centuries in new and changing historical and cultural settings.

Along with our time with Fr John Behr, we had classes with three scholars who are internationally renowned in their respective fields of research: Professor Wendy Mayer (Dean of Research Strategy, University of Divinity and a world expert on early Christian preaching and John Chrysostom), Dr Christos Simelidis (Assistant Professor of Late Antique and Byzantine Literature at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and a recognised world expert on Gregory's poetry), and Dr Maia Matchiavariani (Chief Researcher in Textology and Codicology at the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, Georgia, and an expert on Gregory of Nazianzus in the Georgian tradition).

The COVID pandemic has proved true the adage, 'it is an ill wind that blows no good.' We now have video conferencing. It has been such a privilege to sit around a table, on Zoom, with these scholars. There was an immediacy to the conversations, even a type of intimacy, which for me deepened the quality of our discussion. This may have something to do with each of us speaking from the familiarity of our own homes. The online component complements the face-to-face experience, and we had both in this course. As for our face-to-face intensive with Fr John Behr, afterwards a few of us agreed that it was nothing short of transformative.

This was a new unit and I know I speak for my fellow students in thanking Dr Katherin Papadopoulos and all who had a part in envisioning, planning, and delivering the unit. Finally, a personal thankyou to my fellow students – I look forward to our next adventure. I have always been grateful for my learning community at SAC, and more so now after my experience of this unit where Aussies spread over at least four states, a student from Canada, and four world class scholars, three of whom were from overseas, gathered to study Gregory of Nazianzus, the Theologian.



Photos courtesy of Lisa Agaiby

REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “INTRODUCTION TO SAHIDIC COPTIC”

Fr Raphael Abba Antony

As an Egyptian, the Coptic language is dear to me because it is the language of my ancestors. As a Coptic Christian, the Coptic language is dear to me because it is the liturgical language of the Coptic Orthodox Church. It is the language in which our hymns and psalmodies were originally written and composed.

Sahidic was the dominant Coptic dialect between the 4th - 10th centuries. Learning Sahidic gives me access to six centuries of Coptic literature. Some original works produced in Sahidic are the writings of Pachomius and his successors Theodore and Horsiese, and Shenoute and his successor Besa, numerous lives of martyr, ascetic saints and sermons by the church fathers, as well as thousands of documentary texts, private letters, contracts, wills, etc.

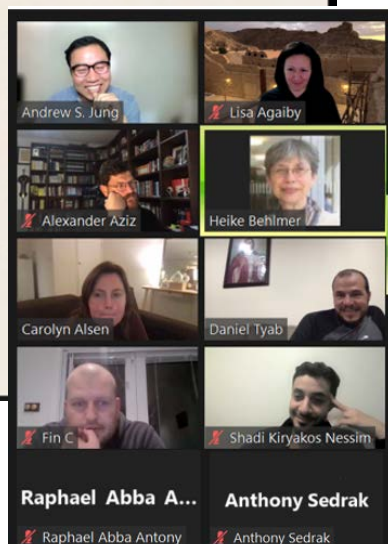
We were truly privileged to have Prof. Heike Behlmer one of the top Sahidic scholars in the world teach us this unit. Prof. Heike has a passion for teaching. She was encouraging and patient, she adjusted the material and her delivery of it according to our progress.

Sahidic I was intensive, it was crucial to remain on top of the weekly schedule so as not to fall behind, however, we were rewarded for our effort. We began with the Coptic alphabet and by the end of the unit we were translating short stories. It is quite amazing what we achieved in a short period of time.

I enjoyed this unit very much and I look forward to Sahidic II. I encourage everyone to study the Coptic language, Sahidic or Bohairic.

Exercises from Lambdin p. 20

1. ⲁⲛⲓ-ⲟⲩⲉⲙⲁⲗ ⲛⲧⲉ
ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲙⲟⲛ
I am a servant/female
servant of the Governor
2. ⲟⲩⲛ-ⲟⲩⲱⲟⲥ ⲛⲛⲁⲩ ⲉⲛ
ⲧⲥⲱⲩⲉ
3. ⲛⲧⲟⲕ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲉⲛⲥⲁⲩ
4. ⲁⲛⲟⲛ ⲛⲉ ⲛⲉⲩⲉⲥⲟⲟⲩ



REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “SAINTS AND SINNERS: WOMEN IN LATE ANTIQUITY”

Monica Mikhail



Jean Joseph Benjamin Constant, Empress Theodora, c. 1887. Public domain

This was my first ever subject completed at St Athanasius College. What a way to begin my theological studies! This unit focused on influential women, zooming in on the period between the third to eighth century. In today's society, we often voice the disparity between males and females. This unit challenged or perhaps changed my perception concerning the role of women in public and religious spheres.

Throughout the semester, we looked at the holy Virgin Mary, ascetic women, Byzantine empresses, and women in domestic life. In our weekly zoom tutorials, enriching discussions on the study material allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of women's roles in the Late Antique period. Their willpower, perseverance and influence were admirable qualities. It was eye-opening to discover women played an integral part in the foundation and development of the Early Church. As early as the third century onwards, women strove to challenge ideologies behind men's perception and authority. Encountering these significant women allowed me to draw similarities to, and differences with, what we face in this day and age.

This unit kept me captivated by the richness of history and women's respective positions in society and the Church. The unit "Saints and Sinners: Women in Late Antiquity" was a beautiful learning experience, delivered by a knowledgeable and gracious lecturer, Dr Katherin Papadopoulos, and I would highly recommend it to all students.

REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “WISDOM LITERATURE”

Br Oliver-Jonathan Bajon

As a Catholic seminarian studying for the Priesthood in the Dominican Order, it was quite an interesting semester for me, you could even say an ecumenical semester. My home college is Catholic Theological College in East Melbourne but for the purpose of my studies, I was encouraged to study Homiletics at Whitley College and Wisdom Literature at SAC with Fr Dr Nebojsa.

The unit on Wisdom Literature was very engrossing and opened my eyes to the Wisdom Literature in the Bible. Through the lectures delivered online and face to face classes, I learned great and valuable skills in exegesis in the Orthodox tradition. Coming from a Polish background, I am intrigued and fascinated by the Orthodox tradition and so the prospect of studying at St Athanasius College, really excited me! It was an eye-opening experience for me to study at another college within the University of Divinity.

A particular part of the unit that I enjoyed was exploring the person of “Lady Wisdom,” one of the main key features in Wisdom Literature. Learning about the various books of Wisdom Literature is captivating and one that stood out for me was the Book of Job. It’s a compelling book and very much applicable to today’s time. In a world where there is uncertainty, war, and other perils, we have the promise that God is there with us.



Miniature of Job. Mt Athos, Megisti Lavra Monastery Codex
B. 100, fol.18v-Job.II.7. Public domain



REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “MINISTRY TO TEENS & YOUTH”

John Saad

As a young person myself who has a deep interest in the ministry of youth, “Ministry to Teens and Youth” taught by Fr Michael Salib was exactly the unit I needed to study. It consisted of three core modules, accompanied with a half-day session for each. Between these sessions, there were plenty of opportunities to progress through the readings and share our reflections on a forum with one another.

The first module compiled my preconceived notions on the purpose of Orthodox ministry and developed them using biblical and theological readings and discussions. The midpoint of the unit was especially interesting, as it introduced me to new concepts regarding the development of youth and teens using relevant research and data. It also gave me the opportunity to identify common trends that emerge in serving young people. The third and final module was the practical application of our findings, and definitely the most exciting! We each conducted our own research investigation on a chosen youth service in a Coptic Orthodox Church by hosting interviews and surveys and interpreting our data to produce a final ministry proposal for the Church using biblical and theological justifications.

I always looked forward to each of the half-day sessions with Fr Michael and my peers; the discussions and readings were insightful and relevant. I am sure that my approach to Youth ministry will not be the same after undergoing this unit, and I highly recommend it to anyone serving youth.

REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “LIVES AND TIMES OF THE DESERT FATHERS”

Esther Rizk

When I decided to finally make the leap and begin studying at SAC, I had the sole intention of choosing subjects which I felt would deepen my relationship with Christ. Choosing "The Lives and Times of the Desert Fathers" as my first subject was the best decision I could have made. Not only was I introduced to the wonderful pastoral care of Katherin and Lisa, but a whole new world of knowledge was also made available at my fingertips.

My favourite part of the subject was learning about popular saints and monks in an entirely new dimension. Delving so deep into the lives of the most famous fathers and mothers of the Church made me appreciate them much more as I began to grasp the extent of the challenges they faced and the huge impact they had and the legacy they left behind.

Discovering the beauty and peace these saints found in the simplicity of the desert make you yearn for a simpler and quieter life with God.

I ended the subject feeling much more connected to certain saints, and even liking some less! I was quite sad to end the semester because of how much I had benefited. Highly recommend!



REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “HOLY IMAGES, HOLY RELICS AND SACRED SPACE IN THE ORTHODOX TRADITION”

Joy Adler

In choosing this unit of study my intention was to further understand the depth of spirituality that is associated with the painting of sacred Icons in the Orthodox Church. In reflecting on this, I can share that without completing this unit I could not have learned to appreciate the full significance of how the icon is venerated in terms of inclusion in Orthodox services and rites. The symbolic painted forms are integral to belief in sacred spaces and in the home. The importance given to revered saints' relics, also give clarity in valuing the traditional icon. The unit is rich in managing to blend a combination of history, belief, and knowledge in relation to the background of Orthodox design in the writing of a traditional Icon. The guided reading provided by Fr Nebosja Tumara was significant in coming to understand the power of a traditionally blessed icon.



Wall painting of St Macarius the Great, St Paul's Monastery, Egypt.
Photo courtesy of Lisa Agaiby

REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “LIVES AND TIMES OF THE DESERT FATHERS”

Sabine Ford-Arthur

"The Lives and Times of the Desert Fathers" was the first subject I completed at SAC, being a cross-institutional student currently undertaking my Bachelor of Theology at St Cyril's Theological College in Sydney. I enrolled hoping to gain a better understanding of monasticism and its origins, but what I did not expect was the embrace I received from Lisa and Katherin into the SAC community.

After my first tutorial, I knew immediately that the benefits of this unit would not only be intellectual, but also social and spiritual. I cannot thank Katherin and Lisa enough for the support they provided me throughout this unit, the time and energy they put into not only my own, but every student's academic development was second to none. Our lectures were consistently well-organised, engaging, informative and gave me an in-depth and broad understanding of the different forms of early Christian monasticism. I loved learning more about important figures like St Antony and St Shenoute because Lisa and Katherin truly made them come to life - we didn't just learn about them as historical individuals but came to see them as spiritual fathers who continue to inspire and pray for Christians today. The highlight of the course was definitely the weekly tutorials. We were given the space to ask questions, offer our own thoughts and discuss with other students all over Australia and from all different denominational backgrounds.

But Friday nights never lacked laughs, comforting words from our teachers and interesting tangents that could go on well past the set time, just because us students really enjoyed chatting! I am so glad I had the opportunity to meet Katherin, Lisa and all of the other members of the SAC family in Semester 1, it was really a transformative experience! So much so that I came back for more in Semester 2.



REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “HOLY IMAGES, HOLY RELIC, AND SACRED SPACE” Gladys Mack

I am a newbie at SAC and audited this unit prompted by a friend who knows of my love for icons. On logging into the student portal, an image of the icon of the Theotokos Galactotrophousa flooded my screen. It was a sight that filled me with awe and reverence.

Our lecturers were Fr Nebojsa Tumara and Shady Nessim who took turns at the helm; teachers and students alike nourished by the noetic milk of the Virgin Galactotrophousa or the 'Milk Feeder'. We visited St Stefan the Archdeacon Orthodox Church in Keysborough, St Mina & St Marina Coptic Orthodox Church in Hallam and St George Serbian Orthodox Church in St Albans.

Private visits, i.e., absence of congregation, meant we had a lot of time to reflect on the mystical realm of the sacred spaces filled with icons. Who is this saint and that saint? Why has the assumed Virgin got wings? Why is an icon blown upon during consecration? Is an icon a relic? We were privileged to experience the Serbian Acatistos and the Coptic Antiphonarium services, and to 'attend' a US conference on The Virgin's Milk in Global Perspective.

I have thoroughly enjoyed this unit, humbled by the sustenance of the noetic milk. As St Ephrem the Syrian puts it, "Though Most High, yet He sucked the milk of Mary, and of His goodness all creatures suck!" (Hymn 3).

Photos courtesy of Shadi Nessim



REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “JESUS CHRIST AT THE MARGINS”

Carol McDonough

Fr Jacob Joseph in his "Jesus Christ at the Margins" unit takes us not only to re-experience the life of Jesus at the margins told in the Gospels, but also to the lived experience of marginalised post-resurrection Christian communities, from New Testament days to right now. We humans are described as multicultural multinational multi-Christian multireligious. Studying on zoom with, and learning from, students from Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand, week by week we were challenged gently, mightily by Fr Jacob. From the New Testament and by carefully chosen early to modern Christian scholarship, he showed us this Jesus, of Judea of his earthly life and the risen Christ present throughout world geographies, peoples, powers and economics. How?

We learnt of life and ministries of churches and persons bearing Christ to all people in and through their own struggles on the edge, also with people discarded. We were humbled by recent stories of persecuted displaced Christian peoples, of martyrs. We reflected on structured marginalising impacts of gender, of changing climates. From scholars and practical Christianity in Latin America, Oceania (including Australia), Asia, Middle East, Africa, Europe, whether or no we personally had, or are, experiencing marginalisations, we were being disrupted from our culture/s' ways of making meaning. We grew. We realised anew the Gospels' Jesus Christ is still at the Margins. This life is lived in the lives of each of us, his baptised disciples. Creating, sustaining all (John 1:3-4), He loves and leads us. He is who we worship, who we follow through graced faithfulness in our chaotic, current planetary era of 8 billion people, of 197 UN nations, super-rich to 'comfortable', to resourceless, powerless, homeless people. Christ cares that humans desecrate essential earth habitats for species endangered, some extinct.

Jesus Christ at the Margins gave me opportunity to re-view my long life being lay Christian usually working in marginal communities (including twice as missionary - 1960s & 80s). I have become marginal by disabilities and age. Housebound, I still pray, live and work at the margins. Through this subject, I have been being taken freshly to be with fully human, fully divine Jesus, the hidden Jewish carpenter formed as a man of prayer, lead and sustained by Spirit into life threatening mission and ministry. From these deep new learnings, I have been reflecting and writing to minister. Part is climate change activism for all creation. With a parish zoom, I bring a lens given us in the Gospel according to Luke (named 'beloved physician' by St Paul - Col 1:14). We behold Jesus the man at prayer and work. Risen, he is Jesus Christ – always re-creating new life for all billions at the margins.

REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “JESUS CHRIST IN THE ASIAN CONTEXT”

Joy Adler

This unit addresses Christianity as it comes to Asia. Its development there as well as the multi-racial, multi-religious and class structures that affect and inhibit the growth of Early Christian belief. The unit was of particular interest to me initially in terms of the history of peoples migrating to the Asian continent. But with a scriptural approach and the seeking for an image that could define Jesus Christ for the vast and very different populace, direction quickly changed my perspective in learning. This course is rich in information from many perspectives and Fr Jacob Joseph guided the reading and discussion with a depth of philosophy that was enlightening in terms of recognising the growth of a form of interfaith for the many who seek Christ in their present world of cultural and economic change.



REFLECTIONS ON THE UNIT “SEEKING CHRIST IN SCRIPTURES: SCRIPTURE AND ITS EXEGESIS IN THE ORTHODOX TRADITION”

Fr Isaac Wissa

As an Orthodox Christian, this unit was rich in teaching us how to interpret Scripture from an Orthodox perspective. As a priest I am often placed in the situation of teaching and preaching about Scripture and Christian life, and so the aims and learning outcomes of this unit were particularly relevant. Through the different methods of exegesis, we encountered Patristic writings, liturgical texts and beautiful iconography, which together with the expert facilitation by our lecturer, Fr Nebojsa Tumara, we were able to explore the Orthodox understanding of Scripture. One of the highlights of the unit was attending St Stephen's Serbian Orthodox Church in Keysborough, Melbourne, to discover exegesis through Orthodox Iconography. This unit was also beneficial in helping me discover aspects of Scriptural exegesis through the Liturgy. I am grateful to Fr Nebojsa for his guidance throughout this eye-opening unit.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SAC's VETA MORPHUS STUDENTS

Congratulations to the 28 Year 11 & 12 SAC students for completing their VETA Morphus: Certificate III in Christian Ministry and Theology. Students were required to engage in weekly Bible reflections, parish ministries, discipleship, and seminars. They were supported by Peer Group Supervisors: Fr Isaac Wissa, Fr Michael Salib, Fr Shenouda Boutros, Fr Anthony Mikhail, Shadi Nessim and Rebecca Nessim. Several parish servants played an important role in mentoring them.

The ceremony was held in Trinity Uniting Church, Brighton. They were conferred with the words: "We are wholeheartedly proud of the spiritual gains and Christian virtue that you have developed throughout your time in the VET program this year. To quote the late spiritual father of the Coptic Orthodox Church, Pope Shenouda III, who once said 'A church without youth, is a church without a future.' All of you are called here today, not just to receive an award, but to be reminded that you are all evangelists in this world, ministers to one another, and icons of Christ in a society that deeply needs you. So be like the Apostle Mark, proto-evangelist of Egypt, guided by the spirit, and gift the kingdom of God, Christ, to all."



Photos courtesy of Shadi Nessim

PRIESTLY ORDINATION OF REV. FR KYRILLOS TAWADROS

Our sincere congratulations to SAC alumni Rev. Fr Kyrillos Tawadros (Aiman Tawadros) on his ordination to the holy priesthood. Ordained by His Grace Bishop Daniel, the abbot of St Shenouda Monastery in NSW, the ceremony took place on Saturday 26 February 2022, at St Mary's Coptic Orthodox Church in Kensington, Melbourne, where Fr Kyrillos is now serving as a parish priest.

Fr Kyrillos received a Diploma of Theology from the University of Divinity in 2021.

"Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the Mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one is found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:1-2).



Photos courtesy of St Mary's Church, Kensington

PRIESTLY ORDINATION OF REV. FR SALIBA NOORI

Our sincere congratulations to SAC alumni Rev. Fr Saliba Noori (Noor Noori) on his ordination to the priesthood. He was ordained as a priest of the Syrian Orthodox Church by His Eminence Mor Maltious Malki Malki, the archbishop of the Syrian Orthodox Vicarate of Australia and New Zealand. The ceremony took place on (19/02/2022), at Mor Yacoub Syrian Orthodox Church in Mickleham, Melbourne. He now serves as a parish priest at St. Ephrem Syrian Orthodox Church in Reservoir, Melbourne.

Fr Saliba received a Diploma in Theology from the University of Divinity in 2019.

"But you will be called the priests of the Lord; you will be spoken of as ministers of our God" (Isaiah 61:6).



Photos courtesy of Shadi Nessim



CONFERENCES AND RESEARCH SEMINARS

This year SAC continued to promote the College and University of Divinity by showcasing recent scholarship at a number of national and international conferences, and with the easing of travel restrictions, a number of them were attended in person.

13 January: Fr Dr Nebojsa Tumara presented at the *Saints in the Slavic Christian world (900-1400) - Assessing culture, power, religion, and language in Slavic hagiographies and religious literature Seminar*, online, organised by Lund University, Sweden. Fr Nebojsa presented the paper on "'Eat Straw, Wear Straw, Sleep on Straw, and you Will Be Saved' – Apophthegmata of St. Paul of Thebes according to the Visual Culture of Nemanjić Serbia." The paper focuses on the reception of St Paul of Thebes' vita in the visual culture of Medieval Serbia, exploring how the visual image of the saint is appropriated to serve different theological and political predispositions. This paper is incorporated into a chapter Fr Nebojsa will be contributing to the forthcoming book on *Lives of Paul the Hermit*, edited by Dr Lisa Agaiby and Prof. Tim Vivian.

8-11 February: Dr Katherin Papadopoulos presented at the *Australasian Society of Classical Studies Annual Meeting*, Hobart/online. This is the annual ASCS conference which includes an early Christianity and Late antiquity stream. Katherin presented a paper on "Reading in squares: the relationship between Eusebius' Chronicle and History."

16-19 February: Dr Katherin Papadopoulos presented at the *Festival of Learning, Australian Lutheran College*, online. This was convened by Michelle Eastwood, Research Co-ordinator, ALC. The 2022 Festival was ecumenical in scope and built around the theme "Speaking Many Languages, Hearing One Voice." It included introductory sessions to the biblical languages, theology, practical and applied theology, Lutheran doctrine and thought, and dialogues with the wider church traditions. Katherin presented two interactive online sessions, "Introduction to NT Greek."



20-22 April: Dr Katherin Papadopoulos presented at the *New Trajectories in Australian Research on Late Antiquity and Early Christian Studies*, Melbourne. This conference was convened by Matthew Crawford, Institute for Religion & Critical Inquiry at ACU. The symposium aimed to disseminate knowledge generated by research currently being done in Australia and New Zealand in the fields of late antique studies and early Christian studies and encourage inter-disciplinary dialogue with a view to potential cross-institutional collaboration in future. Katherin presented some findings from her doctoral research in a paper titled "Patterning the past: Research for the future."

11 May: Fr Dr Nebojsa Tumara presented at *The Virgin's Milk in Global Perspective: On the Fluidity of Images and the Politics of Divine Presence Conference*, Amherst College, USA. This conference brought together leading scholars in the field of Marian Iconography. Fr Nebojsa's presented a paper on "Noetic Milk of the Virgin: Theotokos Galaktotrophousa of Hilandar Monastery," one of the canonised miracle-working icons that is particularly revered in Russia and Serbia.

9 July: Fr Dr Jacob Joseph presented at the *15th International Association for Mission Studies Conference*, Sydney. Fr Jacob presented a paper on "'Patristic Symbiosis' – Beyond 'Neo-Patristic Synthesis': A Methodological Inquiry for the Orthodox Mission Theology of Margins."

21-23 July: Dr Lisa Agaiby presented at the *23rd UCLA/St Shenouda Society for Coptic Studies Conference*, Los Angeles. The topic of her paper was "Scribal Activity in Manuscripts at the Red Sea."

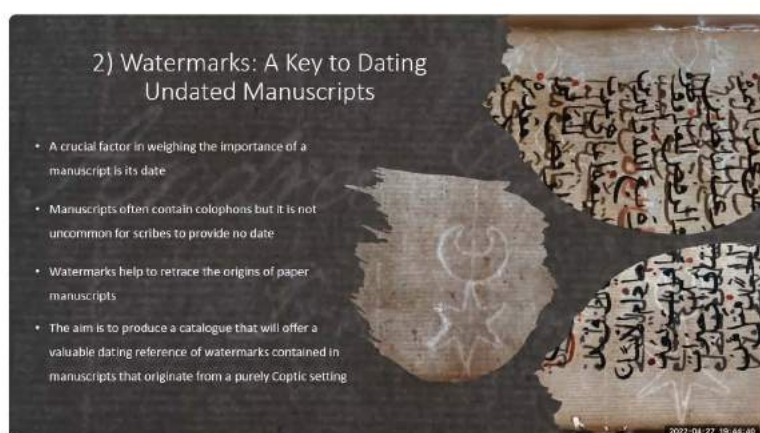
30 Sep-1 Oct: Dr Katherin Papadopoulos presented at the *17th International Conference of the Australian Early Medieval Association*, ACU Canberra + virtual. Katherin presented a paper on Syriac Martyrologies.



Eastern Suburbs Research Seminar

In 2022 we continued with the Eastern Suburbs Research Seminar series, a research collaboration between Stirling Theological College, Eva Burrows College, St Athanasius College, and Yarra Theological Union. The goal of the seminar is to showcase current research and enhance research collaboration, quality, and output among these four colleges. Presenting from SAC in 2022 were:

- Dr Katherin Papadopoulos (28 April) on “Early Syriac martyrologies as sites of memory”
- Fr Dr Jacob Joseph (30 June) on “‘Patristic Symbiosis’ – Beyond ‘Neo-Patristic Synthesis’: A Methodological Inquiry for the Orthodox Mission Theology of Margins”
- Mr Shadi Nessim (25 August) on “The Eucharistic Word in Pseudo-Sawirus’s Book of Elucidation”
- Fr Dr Nebojsa Tumara (24 October) on “St Paul the First Hermit among the Slavs: Textual and Visual Hagiography”

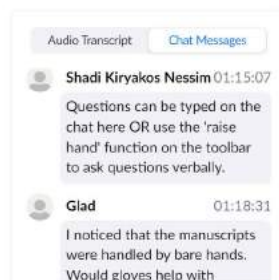


AN UPDATE ON THE UD-FUNDED PROJECT: *Watermarks: The Key to Dating and Validating Manuscript Production*

In June 2021, Dr Lisa Agaiby on behalf of SAC was awarded an “Extraordinary Large Grant” of \$141,408 from the University of Divinity to carry out research on a component of the larger St Paul the Hermit’s Monastery Manuscript Project. The grant awarded was to document the watermarks contained in the manuscript collection as a means to dating and validating manuscript production.

Manuscripts contained in monastic libraries are one of our most important witnesses to cultural heritage and one of the most crucial factors used in weighing the importance of a manuscript is its date. But when manuscripts are not dated, watermarks can prove an invaluable means of ascertaining dates. They are also valuable in offering a window into the history of human networks and trade practices in the medieval and early modern Mediterranean world.

Over the past 18 months, a fantastic team of students have been working diligently with Dr Agaiby to collect data according to specific data-sets for about 500 manuscripts. Results of the research are forthcoming in a catalogue that will be the first of its kind of watermarks in manuscripts that originate from a purely Christian-Egyptian setting.



THE LARGER ST PAUL'S MONASTERY MANUSCRIPT PROJECT UPDATE

In parallel to the “Watermarks” project, the larger Manuscript Project has been ongoing with a dedicated project team focusing their attention on documentation of codicological detail from the digitised manuscripts and data entry. To date, just under half the collection (about 500) has been digitised by the team. After an absence of three years, due to travel restrictions and the pandemic, the project team will resume fieldwork at the Monastery of St Paul in January 2023.

SEVEN NEW UNITS OFFERED IN 2022

For the first time, SAC offered the following exciting new units in 2022

Holy Images, Holy Relics and Sacred Space in the Orthodox Tradition

Lecturers: Fr Dr Nebojsa Tumara & Mr Shady Nessim

The Orthodox Tradition testifies that the holy relics of saints and their iconographical representations play one of the most essential elements of the liturgical life of the Church. At the same time, relics and icons have their place in the personal devotional life of believers. The faithful believe that some icons as well as saints' relics serve as a channel of divine grace and can perform miracles. Accordingly, the faithful kiss and touch holy images and relics and thereby participate in a unique visual and sensory experience of faith.

At the same time, as scholars we are challenged to critically evaluate the cult related to icons and relics and observe how it developed and was challenged throughout history. To understand this, the unit will use the concept of *hierotopy* to ask the question how holy icons and relics articulate holiness, both in the past as well as the present and how they participate in the creation of holy space in both Oriental and Byzantine Orthodox traditions.

A unique aspect of this unit included field-trips to both Byzantine and Oriental Orthodox Churches in Melbourne where students experienced sacred space and rituals, as well as met and conversed with iconographers in both Russian and Coptic Church traditions.



Photo courtesy of Shady Nessim

Pillars of Orthodoxy: The Alexandrian Fathers

Lecturer: Mr Abraam Mikhail

The Early Church Fathers were powerful and influential theologians and their writings determined the intellectual and doctrinal foundations of Christianity. Their writings have established the framework for Christian tradition, way of life, and provided a door to a deeper understanding of faith. A number of these Fathers lived and wrote and flourished during the fourth century; one of the most dynamic eras in history when Christianity was establishing itself as the recognised religion of the Roman Empire.

In this unit, students were introduced to the literary works of some of the most prominent early Alexandrian Fathers; namely, Didymus the Blind, Clement, Origen, Cyril, and Athanasius. By reading primary texts, students gained an understanding of the social, cultural, theological, and political contexts in which the Fathers were engaged, in order to appreciate how Alexandrian theology developed against the backdrop of controversies at the time.



Fragments from the Pauline epistles. Liturgical codex Louvre
Public domain

Coptic Language: Sahidic I

Lecturer: Prof. Heike Behlmer

There are various Coptic dialects; the first and oldest being the Upper Egyptian dialect known as Sahidic. It was this dialect that the Biblical texts were translated to in the 3rd century, and early Egyptian monastic texts and Coptic martyrologies were first composed. In this intensive unit, students studied vocabulary and grammar of Sahidic Coptic, and explored some of the various sources of Sahidic.

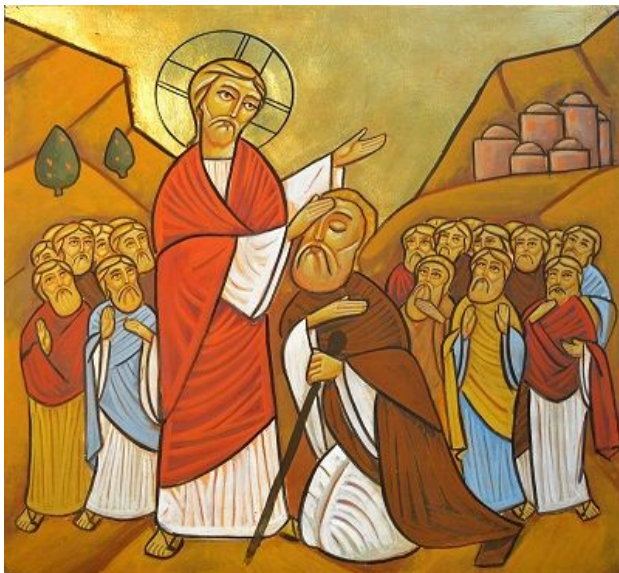
Jesus Christ at the Margins

Lecturer: Fr Dr Jacob Joseph

This compelling new unit on Christology and contemporary mission addressed the question “How do we understand Christology today?” After reviewing the various Christological interpretations in history, one receives in-depth knowledge about the divine (transcendent) nature of our Lord. Here, many often remain within the knowledge of the incarnated God alone, ignoring the significance of the human (immanent) nature of Christ. Indeed, in Christian history, the immanent nature of Christ has not gained as much as the transcendent one has. As the miaphysite Christology envisions, one cannot separate Christ's divine and human nature into two.

Upon the above fundamental principle of Christology, this unit explored the meanings of the transcendent and immanent nature of Christ within our ecclesiastical and social context as well as understand the immanent nature of our Lord and its corresponding purpose without separating the transcendent nature. This unit, therefore, critically examines Christ's engagement with people, especially those who are categorised as social margins.

Through a biblical and patristic survey, the students determined how contemporary theologians appropriated to articulate a contextual Christology. By tracing this perspective from the Gospels, ante-Nicene and post-Nicene teachers, and modern theologians, this unit sought to estimate the missional significance of conceiving Christology through the life of vulnerable communities.



Icon of St Gregory, written by Gladys Mack. A "montage of progress"

St Gregory of Nazianzus: Orator, Theologian, Bishop

Lecturers: Dr Katherin Papadopoulos,
Prof. Fr John Behr, Abraam Mikhail

This illustrious fourth century Church Father (329–391) was one of the most prolific theologians in the history of Christianity. A bishop, theologian and poet, his theology of the Trinity and the Incarnation in particular, shaped Christian spirituality, and the depth and beauty of his writings offer practical wisdom even to the present day. Through his unique poetical autobiography and eloquent confessional works, his vivid and utterly human personality is revealed.

In this unit, students undertook a detailed study of the life and afterlife of Gregory of Nazianzus (the Theologian), and studied Gregory's theological, ecclesiastical, and literary contributions in their historical context and study his impact and legacy from his death to the present day. This unit featured a 2-day intensive face to face component with Prof. John Behr, during which students were guided through a close reading of primary texts. Three international scholars who are subject matter experts, also engaged with students via zoom tutorials on a range of topics from preaching in Late Antiquity, to Gregory's writings, to hagiography.

Students were exposed to the key genres in which he Gregory wrote—epistolary, poetry, and homiletic—and examined conciliar, hagiographical, and liturgical texts, documents, icons, and other sources to explore his impact and legacy.

Pastoral Ministry and Priesthood

Lecturer: Fr Dr Daniel Ghabrial

In Orthodox Churches priesthood is a holy sacrament and is performed by the laying on of hands by the bishop on the elected candidate, and by the invocation of the Holy Spirit. Following ordination, the priest becomes a minister of the mysteries of God and has the authority to officiate all the Church Sacraments, with the exception of ordination, which is the role of the bishop. But not only is the priest an officiator of Church Sacraments, he is also an administer, teacher, and father.

In this unit students explored the pastoral role of the priest within a parish, and in the process investigate the life of a parish with respect to its growth, development, administration, community participation and philanthropy.

Students discussed practical applications of the Church's vision and experience to issues of priestly and pastoral life and service in the Church today, and examined questions such as: How does the unique priesthood of Christ relate to the priesthood of all Church members and to the specific priesthood of the presbyter/bishop? How do we understand the Church to be both hierarchical and conciliar? And how are we to understand the role of women in the Orthodox Church?



Photo courtesy of Fr Alexander Aziz



Jesus Christ in the Asian Context

Lecturer: Fr Dr Jacob Joseph

Asia received Christ in the first century itself — even before much of the Western world welcomed Him. We see the earliest Orthodox traits of Christology in the Asian context. Sadly, the later over-emphasis of the stereotyped depiction of Christ repressed Asian Christ for centuries. However, it has come under renewed scrutiny by Asian people who initiated to interpret Jesus Christ from their day-to-day life experience.

Based on the above context, this unit critically examined the Christological developments in the Asian context. Primarily, it demonstrated 'who is Jesus Christ' to the people of the multi-faceted milieu of Asia. The stimulant of Asian Christology, namely religious, ethnic, cultural, gender, and economic phenomena, was an important area of discussion in this unit. The deliberations in this unit included a methodological reading of 'theology from below' and 'theology from above.'

This theological approach is not intended to invalidate the foundation of the Christian doctrines, but rather to critically consider the impact of the faith in Jesus Christ among the people who endure various challenges and embrace the meaning of Jesus Christ as equally God and human. This unit challenged the participants to broaden their passion for the true Gospel and mission by exploring the face of Christ in multi-religious and cultural contexts.

ΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ

STUDENT JOURNAL OF ST ATHANASIUS COLLEGE

Vol. 2 2023

This Journal celebrates exceptional essays written by students of SAC. Each volume consists of a selection of essays from the various disciplines taught at SAC, selected by the College's editorial board. Look out for Volume 2 in February 2023.



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SAC
PRESS

EIGHT NEW UNITS ON OFFER IN 2023

SAC is pleased to offer the following exciting new units in 2023

The Illuminated Heart: An Introduction to Counselling Microskills for those in Service and Ministry

Lecturer: Ms Ireni Farag

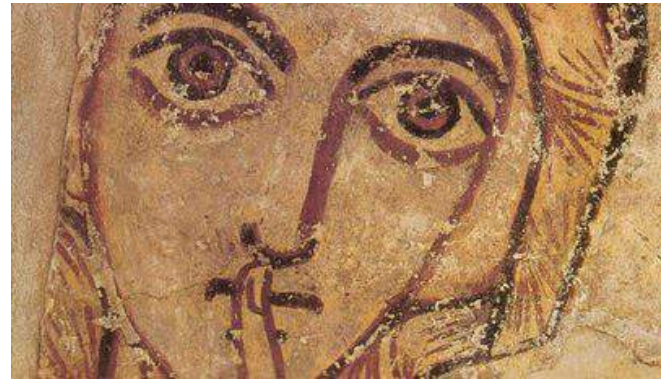
This introductory unit will provide students with an overview of basic counselling micro-skills and is designed to provide experiential learning opportunities that will equip students with skills necessary for fostering and facilitating effective communication and conversation in a variety of ministry and pastoral service settings within the Orthodox Church.



Coptic Language: Sahidic II

Lecturer: Prof. Heike Behlmer

This unit builds upon "Coptic Language: Sahidic I" which introduced students to the vocabulary and grammar of Sahidic Coptic, as well as introduced some of the various sources of Sahidic. This unit now consolidates and advances students' knowledge of the Sahidic Coptic language through a study of a range of Sahidic texts.



"Women are to be silent"? Voices of Women in the New Testament and in Orthodox Christianity

Lecturer: Dr Amir Malek

The position of women in the New Testament, especially in the epistles of the Apostle Paul, may appear contradictory. Some passages command women to be submissive, remain silent and not teach. Yet in other passages women were praised, spoke with authority, prayed, prophesied, owned property, managed finances, and headed households. In this unit we will unravel the conflicting evidence by undertaking an in-depth socio-cultural, historical, and literary study of the role of women in the New Testament, and how this image sheds light on the position of women in Orthodox Christianity.



Coptic Liturgical Manuscripts

Lecturer: Mr Hany Takla

Coptic liturgical books comprise the texts used for the performance of the Church's mysteries and services; and include several genres currently in use. The liturgical texts contained in these books are often heavily influenced by Scripture and the writings of the Fathers, and as such embody the beliefs of the Coptic Orthodox Church. This unit will introduce students to the evolution of Coptic liturgical books through surveying the manuscript tradition as well as the modern published editions.

Mary in the Coptic Tradition

Lecturer: Fr Dr Gregorios Awad

This unit will explore the understanding of the Virgin Mary in ecclesiology, Christology, iconography and liturgy within the Coptic tradition. A critical engagement with Scripture through a patristic lens will be developed to understand the Virgin Mary's position in the Christian tradition throughout the centuries. Students will examine Marian doctrines as observed and expressed in Copto-Arabic literature as well as reappraise the liturgical tradition and practice surrounding Mary in the ancient, medieval and modern Coptic tradition.



Icon by Kirolos Kilada

History, Nature, and Development of Indian Christianity

Lecturer: Fr Dr Jacob Joseph

This unit provides an account of the history of Christianity in India from its inception until the current period. From the earliest period, the movement has been associated with St Thomas, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ. Further, it explores the historical blending of Syriac Christianity (first and second Syrian migration), Nestorian Christianity (Nestorianism), Portuguese Christianity (Catholicism), and Dutch and English missionaries (Protestantism) with Indian Christianity. It especially examines the nature and development of Syriac/Orthodox/Jacobite Christians and the modern Western mission in India.



Hidden Pearls: A Survey of Syriac Christian Literature

Lecturer: Dr Katherin Papadopoulos

This unit surveys the main genres of Syriac Christian literature in the first six centuries AD, commencing with the origins of Syriac literature and the Syriac Bible and ending with the first Syriac historiography of the sixth century. In addition to biblical and apocryphal literature, students will be introduced to the writings of Syriac-speaking authors from the Classical, West and East Syriac traditions such as Ephrem, Narsai and Jacob of Sarug, and explore ascetical and mystical works; poetry (soghyatha, memre, and madrashe); lives and acts of martyrs; exegetical and polemical literature; and histories and chronicles.



Photo courtesy of Shadi Nessim

The Liturgies of the Oriental Orthodox Church

Lecturers: Fr Dr Jacob Joseph & Mr Shadi Nessim

This unit will explore the various liturgies of the Oriental Orthodox tradition: Coptic, Syrian (East and West), Armenian, and Ethiopian. A survey of four distinct liturgical rites that still exist today will complete a foundational understanding to the diverse observances of these cultural traditions. It will enable students to engage and compare ancient and modern liturgical texts, specifically the anaphoras, as well as analyse theological representations expressed in each tradition.

SEMESTER 1 TIMETABLE

All classes will be offered in ONLINE (synchronous & asynchronous) mode, with the exception of "Coptic Art & Iconography I" which is a face-to-face unit

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE (BS3920A/BS9920A) Fr Dr Nebojsa <u>Tumara</u> 6:30pm - 9:30pm	INTRODUCTION TO SYRIAC LANGUAGE (AL1700A/AL8700A) Fr Dr Nebojsa <u>Tumara</u> 6:30pm - 9:30pm	INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT (BA1100A/BA8100A) Fr Dr Nebojsa <u>Tumara</u> 6:30pm - 9:30pm	"WOMEN ARE TO BE SILENT"? VOICES OF WOMEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AND IN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY (BN1500A/BN8500A) Dr Amir Malek 6:30pm - 9:30pm	*COPTIC ART AND ICONOGRAPHY I (DL1410A/DL8410A) Mr Ashraf Gerges 6:30pm - 9:30pm * Face-to-face classes at Donvale campus
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY
JESUS CHRIST AT THE MARGINS (CT3720A/CT93720A) Fr Dr Jacob Joseph 6:30pm - 9:30pm	COPTIC LANGUAGE: SAHIDIC II (AL2300A/AL9300A) Prof. Dr. Heike <u>Behlmer</u> 6:30pm - 9:30pm	ILLUMINATED HEART: AN INTRODUCTION TO COUNSELLING MICROSKILLS FOR THOSE IN SERVICE AND MINISTRY (DP1400A/DP8400A) Ms <u>Ireni Farag</u> 6:30pm - 9:30pm	HISTORY, NATURE, AND DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN CHRISTIANITY (CH2/3310A/CH9310A) Fr Dr Jacob Joseph 6:30pm - 9:30pm	COPTIC LITURGICAL MANUSCRIPTS (DL1510A/DL8510A) Mr Hany <u>Takla</u> 9:00am-12.00pm

SEMESTER 2 TIMETABLE

All classes will be offered in ONLINE (synchronous & asynchronous) mode, with the exception of "Coptic Art & Iconography II" which is a face-to-face unit

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
PASTORAL MINISTRY AND PRIESTHOOD (DP2500A/DP8500A) Fr Dr Daniel Ghabrial 6:30pm - 9:30pm	HIDDEN PEARLS: A SURVEY OF SYRIAC CHRISTIAN LITERATURE (CH1110A/CH8110A) Dr Katherin Papadopoulos 6:30pm - 9:30pm	THE LITURGIES OF THE ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCH (DL1210A/DL8210A) Fr Dr Jacob Joseph & Mr Shadi Nessim 6:30pm - 9:30pm	MARY IN THE COPTIC TRADITION (DL3330A/DL9330A) Fr Dr Gregorios Awad 6:30pm - 9:30pm	*COPTIC ART AND ICONOGRAPHY II (DL2410A/DL9410A) Mr Ashraf Gerges 6:30pm -9:30pm * Face-to-face classes at Donvale campus
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
SEEKING CHRIST IN SCRIPTURES: SCRIPTURE AND ITS EXEGESIS IN THE ORTHODOX TRADITION (BS3000A / BS9000A) Fr Dr Nebojsa Tumara 6:30pm - 9:30pm	MAJOR PROPHETS (BA3400A/BA9400A) Fr Dr Nebojsa Tumara 6:30pm - 9:30pm	UNDERSTANDING THE FAMILY: A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE (DP1610A/DP8610A) Dr Samir Ibrahim/Fr Abanoub Attalla 6:30pm - 9:30pm	INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL HEBREW (CH2/3310A/CH9310A) Fr Dr Nebojsa Tumara 6:30pm - 9:30pm	JESUS CHRIST IN THE ASIAN CONTEXT (CT/DM3/9710A) Fr Dr Jacob Joseph 9:00am-12.00pm

2023 KEY DATES

Key Event / Activity	Calendar Date
Enrolments open for 2023 new admissions and re-enrolment	Nov 14 2022
Semester 1 Classes 2023	Feb 27 – June 2
College Opens	Jan 9
Final Date for New Admissions	Feb 17
Final Date for Re-enrolment	Feb 17
Census Date	Mar 21
University of Divinity Graduation	Mar 24
Non-teaching Period (Easter)	April 3 – Apr 14
Final Date for New Admissions for Semester 2, 2023 Domestic students	Mar 21
Final Date for New Admissions for Semester 2, 2023 International students	April 15
Study Week	June 5 – June 9
Examination Week	June 12 – 16
Results Published	Jul 14
Semester 2 Classes 2023	July 31 – Nov 3 2023
Final Date for Domestic Coursework	Jul 21
Final Date for International Coursework	Apr 15
Census Date	Aug 22
Non-teaching period	Sept 25 – Oct 6
Study Week	Nov 6 – Nov 10
Examination Week	Nov 13 – 17
Enrolments open for 2024 new admissions and re-enrolment	Nov 14
Final Date for New Admissions Semester 1 2024 International HDR Students	Domestic and Overseas Higher Degree by Research Admission applications are open throughout the year for February, May, August and October intakes.
Final Date for New Admissions Semester 1 2024 Domestic HDR students	
Results published	Dec 15

HOW TO APPLY TO STUDY AT SAC



1. DECIDE ON WHAT INTERESTS YOU

What are your areas of interest? Are you aiming to complete a particular academic qualification? Would you like to study full-time, part-time, face-to-face, or online? Check out our timetable and unit descriptions, as well as the awards we offer to decide a possible starting point for your studies.

2. TALK TO US

We would love to meet you in person and discuss options for your study, or alternatively to have a conversation with you over the phone. To organise a time, email us at enquires@sac.edu.au or call us at (03) 8872 8450. Together we can look at study options you maybe interested in and decide on a suitable starting point and pathway to your circumstances and interests.

3. SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FORM

- Complete an Application for Admission form
- Complete an application form for FEE-HELP or authorise payment of fees. Provide the following necessary supporting documents:
 - Proof of citizenship in your current name (e.g. birth certificate, Passport)
 - Academic transcripts (Year 12 transcript if applying for the Dip.Theol.)
 - IELTS results if you are an overseas student

4. YOU'RE READY TO GO!

- Application for Admission approved by SAC's Academic Dean and processed by the Registrar
- Receive enrolment confirmation and welcome emails
- Receive access to the online Learning Management System (ARK)
- Receive an admission letter from the University of Divinity
- Enjoy the journey of learning!



CONTACT US

Web: www.sac.edu.au
Email: enquiries@sac.edu.au
Phone: +61 3 8872 8450
Facebook: fb.com/SACtheology/

Principal: Fr Dr Daniel Ghabrial (frdaniel@sac.edu.au)
Academic Dean: Dr Lisa Agaiby (lagaiby@sac.edu.au)
Registrar: Registrar@sac.edu.au
Librarian: Mrs Deborah Decru (ddecru@sac.edu.au)
VET Program: Fr Michael Salib (frmichael@sac.edu.au)

Donvale Campus: City 100 Park Rd, Donvale VIC, 3111
Campus: 285 La Trobe St, Melbourne VIC, 3000