

PUSEY
HOUSE
OXFORD

The IMAGO DEI



Lecture Series

A series of Lectures and Events on theological anthropology across the theological sub-disciplines, in preparation for Pusey House's Conference *Restoring the Image: Creation, Salvation and the Human Person*, July 7th - 9th 2025

Wednesday 30th April (1st Week), 4pm

JESUS IS LORD: THE IMAGE OF GOD AND THE DISENCHANTMENT OF IDOLS'

ZACHARIAH KAHLER, Junior Research Fellow, Wycliffe Hall.



'Disenchantment' has become something of a catchword in recent times. However, what exactly is meant by it is often only vaguely defined. Equally unclear is what an alternative to it may have been or may continue to be. This lecture will follow the path of one twentieth century Swiss theologian, Karl Barth, in his own journey of being disenchanted of various idols, both ancient and modern, in his quest to see all things from a centre in Jesus Christ. From ancient philosophical god-concepts to modern political ideologies, Barth came to see the concrete reality of Jesus Christ as God's judgement against all abstract human constructs. One idolatrous construct that he saw as particularly antithetical to Jesus Christ is the modern idea of the human being as an autonomous self-determining individual. This line of critique has rich political implications that Barth was only partially able to cash in on since his doctrine of the Holy Spirit remained underdeveloped.

Wednesday 7th May (2nd Week), 4pm

'THE AFFECTIVE SEED OF CHRISTIAN HUMANISM: RETURNING TO AUGUSTINE'S INCARNATIONAL ETHICS OF THE CITY OF GOD'

DAVID BENNETT, Associate Research Fellow, Wycliffe Hall.

Augustine of Hippo provided the seed form of a Christian humanism which celebrates human feeling, desire, reason, and embodiment. This affirmation of our human nature, and the good origin of desire within us is regained through the incarnation of Jesus Christ. For Augustine, this divine affirmation of our human nature has a prophetic quality within a classical world which did not share the Christian understanding of how human flourishing and blessedness was ultimately attained. For Augustine, the incarnation did not just affirm the goodness of our human nature and emotions, but also the pathway to its recovery in the humble descent or *forma servi* of the Incarnation. In this lecture, Dr Bennett explores *City of God* XIV and other places where Augustine affirms the good nature and rational intelligence of redeemed human emotions, alongside the radical effects of the Fall on them. From this brief exploration, the lecture will illumine how Augustine can help chart a course to renew a Christian humanism through a reappraisal of the *via humilitatis*, where, as Donovan Schaefer observes, 'politics has become mere affect'.



Wednesday 14th May (3rd Week), 4pm

'BY PATIENCE WE PARTICIPATE IN THE PASSION OF CHRIST'

ERIK VARDEN, Bishop of Trondheim.



The Prologue to the Rule of St Benedict concludes with the alliterative exhortation, 'in monasterio perseverantes passionibus Christi per patientiam participemur'. In what sense does patience, apparently such a humdrum exercise, merit comparison with Christ's saving Passion? How is perseverance a key to life 'in Christ' on Benedictine and Pauline terms? These are the questions addressed in this lecture on the basis of ancient and modern texts, and of Christian experience.

This lecture will be followed by a Choral Evensong at which Bishop Varden will preach

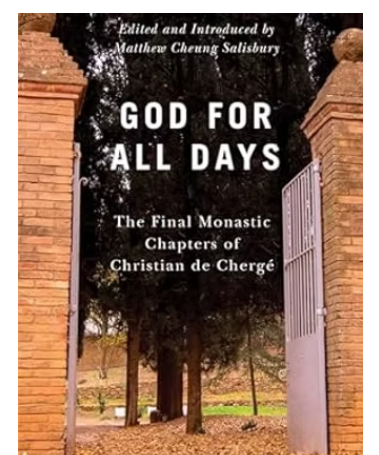
Friday 16th May (3rd Week), 4pm

Launch of: GOD FOR ALL DAYS: THE FINAL MONASTIC CHAPTERS OF CHRISTIAN DE CHERGÉ,

MATTHEW CHEUNG-SALISBURY, Assistant Chaplain, Worcester College AND JENNIFER RUSHWORTH, Associate Professor in French and Comparative Literature, UCL.

Christian de Chergé was the prior of the Trappist community of Our Lady of Atlas in Tibhirine, Algeria, until his assassination with six of his fellow monks in 1996. Drawn from the last two years of his life, these chapter talks to his brothers offer deeper insight into the monastic search for God in community during tumultuous times. These talks are a treasury of inspiration for those interested in Benedictine spirituality and Christian dialogue with other faiths. We celebrate the publication of the first book-length translation of Christian's writings in conversation with the editor and translator of God for All Days, Fr Matthew Salisbury and Jennifer Rushworth.

There will also be a screening of the film *Des hommes et des dieux* (2010, dir. Xavier Beauvois), which is set in the community at Tibhirine during the same time period covered by the chapter talks, at Worcester College on 17 May at 2 pm.



Wednesday 21st May (4th Week), 4pm

‘WHAT IS A MONASTIC THEOLOGIAN? THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE DOING OF THEOLOGY’ - GREG PETERS, Professor of Medieval and Spiritual Theology, Torrey Honors Institute, Biola University and Servants of Christ Research Professor of Monastic Studies and Ascetical Theology, Nashotah House.



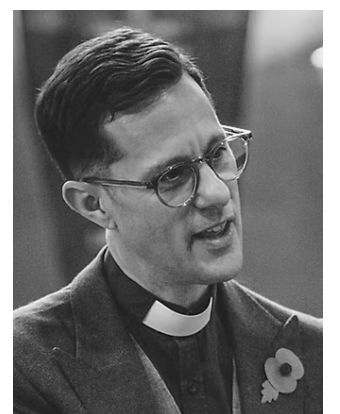
Up until the thirteenth century, most theology was done by monks who lived in monasteries but all of that changed with the founding of the universities. With the rise of these new institutions, theological methodology itself changed from one described as ‘monastic theology’ to ‘scholastic theology.’ And with that change came a new vision of who could be considered a “theologian”; that is, a new vision of theological anthropology emerged to accommodate the new way of doing theology. This talk will lay out that development but argue that we should return to the methodology of the monastic theologian, built upon a monastic theological anthropology.

Tuesday 27th May (5th Week), 4pm

‘THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEOLOGY IN THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL’

C. A. STRINE, Secretary for Theology and Theological Adviser to the House of Bishops.

Three issues have dominated discussion of anthropology in the book of Ezekiel: the traumatic experience of involuntary migration to Babylonia; the capacity or incapacity of humans to act correctly of their own volition; and the role of the *imago Dei* concept in Ezekiel’s understanding of human beings. Unlike existing work, this paper will integrate these three topics into a single argument. These three foci, when woven together, indicate that the book of Ezekiel holds an optimistic view of human capacity to act correctly, which is separate from the *imago Dei* concept, but still thoroughly theological. Furthermore, the book projects these human features onto YHWH, resulting in a divine figure who closely resembles the human ideal advocated in the book. Ezekiel, in short, contains a theological anthropology and an anthropological theology.



Thursday 29th May (5th Week), 4pm

‘NINIAN COMPER AT PUSEY HOUSE’

HARRY SPAIN (*The event is Part of the Pusey 140 celebrations*)



In 1935, Frederic Hood, the House’s then Principal, commissioned his friend Ninian Comper to reorder the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament at Pusey House. The resulting scheme, complete with its golden ciborium, is a perfect example of Comper’s later style: ‘unity by inclusion’ - a stylistic conclusion that Comper arrived at having realised that all religious art was consonantly connected through the same divine inspiration.

This lecture, presented by the architectural historian (and former Sacristan of the House), Harry Spain will examine the theory and significance of Comper’s work here, tracing his sources of inspiration from 4th century Algeria to Botticelli, whilst also exploring Comper’s connexion to Oxford and the work of Pusey House itself.

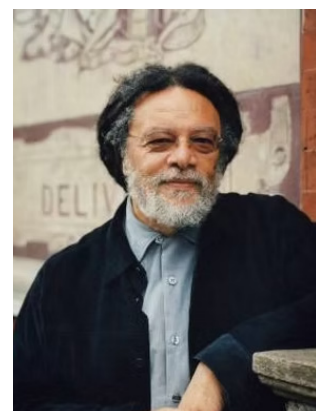
Thursday 5th June (6th Week), 6pm

‘CHRISTIAN HUMANISM AND THE BLACK ATLANTIC’

PAUL GILROY, Emeritus Professor of Humanities and Founding Director of the Sarah Parker Remond Centre for the Study of Racism and Racialisation, UCL.

Winner of the highly prestigious Holberg Prize in 2019, Paul Gilroy is an eminent public intellectual and one of the world’s leading scholars of race and racism. Professor Gilroy will reflect on the need to recover a notion of shared humanity and what he calls ‘reparative humanism.’

This Public Lecture is presented by the McDonald Centre for Theology, Ethics and Public Life, to open its Annual Conference 2025.



Friday 6th June (6th Week), 4pm

THE ANNUAL MATRASZEK LECTURE:

‘BOETHIUS AND THE CONCEPT OF THE PERSON’

JONATHAN PRICE, Matraszek Fellow, Pusey House & Pusey Fellow, St Cross.



You are a person, I am a person, but what is a person? (and why does it matter?) Fourteen-hundred years ago Boethius said ‘person’ is the ‘individual substance of a rational nature / *rationalis naturae individua substantia*’. Boethius’ Aristotelian conception of the person was then re-affirmed by St Thomas Aquinas in the high middle ages, and thereby carried through into the modern age as a necessary part of Latin Trinitarian theology. For us, ‘person’ still means ‘an individual rational being’. But it also implies much more, such as the dignity and the relationality and --lately but most importantly -- the unicity, of such a creature. This lecture will ask how native are these scholastic and modern developments to the Boethian definition of ‘person’, and whether the Boethian definition is still fit for purpose.

This lecture will be followed by a Choral Evensong, at which Professor Charles Foster will preach.

Wednesday 11th June (7th Week), 4pm

‘THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING HUMAN’

CHRISTOPHER SMITH, Vicar, St Albans, Holborn.

English theologian E.L. Mascall wrote in a number of his works on what it means to be human in a fallen and redeemed world, beginning in his very early work *Death or Dogma*, and a little later in *Via Media*. But he treats the matter most fully in his ‘American Bampton’ of 1958, which were published in Britain under the title, *The Importance of Being Human*. Is man nothing more than ‘the successful cosmic bandit’, or is he ‘the uniquely favoured creature upon whom God has stamped his own image’? We will see how Mascall answers his own question!



Saturday 14th June (7th Week), 10am – 4pm

Study Day: ‘BEGOTTEN NOT MADE: THE FOURTH CENTURY FORMATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY’

Led by RUSSELL JEFFORD, ordinarytheology.com

‘Begotten not made, of one being with the Father’... is a crucial but perplexing phrase in the Nicene Creed. What does it mean, why was it so important (and controversial) and how did we end up with the doctrine of the Trinity? The answers are to be found in the heated 4th century debate which arose following the condemnation of the preaching of a popular Egyptian priest named Arius.

Beginning Pusey House’s series of events marking the 1700th Anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, (which will continue in Michaelmas 2025), this Study Day will commence by providing an overview of what Arius taught and why, before examining the initial response of the Church and the text of the original Nicene creed. However, within a few years, the ‘consensus’ reached at Nicaea was rejected by a number of different groups within the Church, and over more than 50 years, the search for alternative formulations continued. Numerous councils were held during this time, often resulting in one or more “better” creeds which were received with varying degrees of success. An overview of a number of these additional councils, and their alternative formulations, will be provided, in order to bring out the different sides of the debate. The end of this period of intense debate and controversy was marked by the classical expression of Trinitarian faith in the creed produced at the council of Constantinople (in 381 AD). The course will therefore end with a comparison of this creed with the one produced at Nicaea.

Who is the course aimed at? Anyone who’s read this far and is still interested! A complete lack of previous experience or study is assumed, although clergy, lay readers or others with some knowledge will still find much of interest. For more information and to sign up, see ordinarytheology.com

Wednesday 18th June (8th Week), 4pm

‘RAISING CHRIST’S VOICE: PERSONHOOD AND VOCAL IDENTITY IN AUGUSTINE’S THOUGHT’

ALBERTO GARZONI, DPhil Candidate in Theology, University of Oxford.

This lecture will explore how Augustine’s understanding of the voice and its relevance for a Christian public presence interacts with a broader Christological understanding of the human person and its forms of expression. Traditional sources like *Confessions* and scholarly milestones like P. Burnell’s *The Augustinian Person* (CUP 1992) will be combined with fresh insights drawn from Augustine’s sermonic commentaries on Scripture.



These events prepare for our conference this summer: *Restoring the Image: Creation, Salvation and the Human Person*, July 7th - 9th 2025. For more information and booking go to puseyhouse.org.uk/2025conference or scan the QR-code.

