

CSPS SPRING BULLETIN 2026/ACÉP BULLETIN PRINTEMPS 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/MESSAGE DU PRÉSIDENT

Dear Friends & Members of the Canadian Society of Patristic Studies,

It's been almost a year since I was tapped to succeed the inimitable Mona Tokarek LaFosse as CSPS president. In that time, I've learned a great deal about organizational strategy and planning acumen not just from Mona, but from our entire Executive team: vice president John Abad, secretary Don Springer, treasurer Steven Muir, comms director Eric Crégheur, webmaster Heather Barkman, and student rep Nathan Scott. Without John's boots on the ground in Toronto, Don's concise minutes and institutional memory, Steven's financial wizardry, Eric's skill at getting the word out, Heather's digital mastery, and Nathan's student-centred perspective, I don't know where I'd be.

As spring draws ever nearer to summer, we're now all looking forward to our 2026 annual meeting, set to be held May 26-28 at the St. Augustine's Seminary space on the University of Toronto campus. Our programme committee this year included Marc Bergermann, Jennifer Otto, and John Solheid, with Bergermann taking the lead in drafting our 2026 programme. Last year's Fiftieth Anniversary Conference will be a tough act to follow, but the 2026 programme as it stands looks incredibly promising. Kudos to Marc, Jennifer, & John for all the work they've put into this event.

We're happy to be able to report that this was a banner year for proposals received and accepted. This means that we'll be running concurrent sessions in two different rooms, while also welcoming speakers and other participants to join the conversation in either room via Zoom. Such a setup is only possible thanks to the indefatigable tech team at St. Augustine's. Running a fully hybrid conference increases accessibility in obvious and measurable ways, though it can also create challenges. Ultimately, though, we decided to prioritize accessibility while keeping costs as low as possible (\$45 for in-person participants; \$25 for students and remote participants). Other priorities included: increasing the number of French-language presentations; maintaining connections with our friends at the CSBS (Canadian Society of Biblical Studies) even as they run their own conference at Mount Allison; and building new bridges with other related groups, like the CAC (Classical Association of Canada). Nathan Scott and I travelled to Kingston in early May to serve as emissaries to the CAC conference at Queen's, sharing our own research on ancient religion alongside CAC secretary Christian Raschle.

I won't rehearse the title of every paper or the name of every scholar that will be featured in our concurrent sessions, but I do want to point out some particular highlights from the conference programme. We'll conclude day one (Tuesday, May 26) with an AGM, where we can chart the course of CSPS's path forward together. After that, we'll head out for a convivial banquet at Donatello on Elm Street. Wednesday will feature a special lunch for students, while Thursday will see us celebrating our two Student Essay Prize winners: Austin McCredie and Benoît Benhamou. That will be followed by a double book review session, with Charles Meeks discussing John Solheid's *Pedagogy of the Heart* and Steven Muir exploring Mona Tokarek LaFosse's *Honouring Age*.

Steven's engagement with Mona's book about aging and social dynamics in 1 Timothy has led him to propose a larger project studying such issues in patristic texts. He will be circulating his proposal to all members. With indications of interest and support, we may issue calls for papers motivated by these themes at our next few conferences. This could lead to publication, as was done with the 'Trauma and Therapy' project a few years ago. Be on the lookout for further details.

Perhaps the most exciting update I'd like to share with you is that, thanks to the generosity of our longtime and valued colleague Wendy Helleman, the CSPA received a significant donation. The intent is for us to use this in an ongoing way to subsidize travel and conference expenses for students at our annual meeting. We have invested these funds and expect to be able to draw from them up to an amount of \$600 per year (which will be split across multiple applicants). Thank you, Wendy, for this investment in the future of the CSPA! And thanks are due as well to Steven for handling all the financial dimensions involved in receiving a donation like this.

Allow me to end with a few reminders. If you're looking for venues in which to publish your research, we'd recommend [Studies in Religion / Sciences religieuses](#), with whom we've had a longstanding relationship. I'll add that we'd also love to welcome more patristics / late antiquity scholarship to the journal I edit, [Religious Studies & Theology](#). Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any follow-up questions about getting your research published in academic journals.

If you'd like to include updates about your own work in future CSPA bulletins, please reach out to the aforementioned Eric Crégheur (eric.cregheur@ftr.ulaval.ca). We'd love to share your news with our wider CSPA network.

Lastly, I'd like to end by making a case for materially supporting the CSPA. If you've not yet renewed your [membership](#), please [do so now](#). Groups like ours can only do the work we do with support from folks like you, so please support us insofar as you're able. Every little bit helps.

All the best,

Sean Hannan
CSPA President
hannans@macewan.ca

Chères et chers collègues et ami(e)s de l'ACÉP,

Cela fait maintenant presque un an que j'ai succédé à l'inimitable Mona Tokarek LaFosse à la présidence de la l'ACÉP. Durant cette période, j'ai énormément appris en matière de stratégie organisationnelle et de planification, non seulement auprès de Mona, mais aussi de l'ensemble de notre équipe exécutive : le vice-président John Abad, le secrétaire Don Springer, le trésorier Steven Muir, l'agent de communications Eric Crégheur, la webmestre Heather Barkman et le représentant étudiant Nathan Scott. Sans la présence active de John à Toronto, les procès-verbaux concis et la mémoire institutionnelle de Don, les talents financiers de Steven, les

compétences d'Eric pour diffuser l'information, la maîtrise numérique de Heather et la perspective centrée sur les étudiant(e)s de Nathan, je ne sais vraiment pas où j'en serais.

Alors que le printemps cède peu à peu la place à l'été, nous nous réjouissons tous maintenant de notre rencontre annuelle 2026, qui se tiendra du 26 au 28 mai au Séminaire Saint-Augustin, sur le campus de l'Université de Toronto. Le comité de programme de cette année était composé de Marc Bergermann, Jennifer Otto et John Solheid, Marc Bergermann ayant dirigé l'élaboration du programme 2026. Le congrès du cinquantième anniversaire de l'an dernier sera difficile à égaler, mais le programme de 2026 s'annonce extrêmement prometteur. Félicitations à Marc, Jennifer et John pour tout le travail investi dans cet événement.

Nous sommes heureux de pouvoir annoncer qu'il s'agit d'une année record en ce qui concerne les propositions reçues et acceptées. Cela signifie que nous tiendrons des séances parallèles dans deux salles différentes, tout en permettant aux conférenciers et aux autres participants de se joindre aux discussions dans l'une ou l'autre salle via Zoom. Une telle organisation n'est possible que grâce à l'infatigable équipe technique du Séminaire Saint-Augustin. Offrir un congrès entièrement hybride accroît l'accessibilité de manière évidente et mesurable, même si cela peut aussi entraîner certains défis. En définitive, nous avons choisi de privilégier l'accessibilité tout en maintenant les coûts aussi bas que possible (45 \$ pour les participants en personne; 25 \$ pour les étudiants et les participants à distance). Parmi nos autres priorités figuraient : augmenter le nombre de présentations en français; maintenir les liens avec nos amis de la SCÉB (Société canadienne des études bibliques), même si celle-ci tient son propre congrès à Mount Allison; et créer de nouveaux ponts avec d'autres groupes connexes, comme la SCÉC (Société canadienne des études classiques). Nathan Scott et moi-même nous sommes rendus à Kingston au début du mois de mai afin d'agir comme représentants auprès du congrès de la SCÉC à Queen's, où nous avons présenté nos recherches sur la religion antique aux côtés du secrétaire de la SCÉC, Christian Raschle.

Je ne passerai pas en revue le titre de chaque communication ni le nom de chaque chercheur qui participera à nos séances parallèles, mais je souhaite souligner quelques moments particulièrement marquants du programme. Nous concluons la première journée (mardi 26 mai) par une assemblée générale annuelle, au cours de laquelle nous pourrions tracer ensemble l'avenir de l'ACÉP. Nous nous rendrons ensuite au restaurant Donatello, sur Elm Street, pour un banquet convivial. Le mercredi comprendra un dîner spécial destiné aux étudiant(e)s, tandis que le jeudi nous permettra de célébrer les deux lauréats du Prix étudiant : Austin McCredie et Benoît Benhamou. Suivra une double séance de recension d'ouvrages, au cours de laquelle Charles Meeks discutera de *Pedagogy of the Heart* de John Solheid et Steven Muir analysera *Honouring Age* de Mona Tokarek LaFosse.

L'intérêt porté par Steven à l'ouvrage de Mona sur le vieillissement et les dynamiques sociales dans 1 Timothée l'a amené à proposer un projet plus vaste consacré à ces questions dans les textes patristiques. Il fera circuler sa proposition auprès de tous les membres. Si nous constatons suffisamment d'intérêt et d'appui, nous pourrions lancer des appels à communications inspirés par ces thématiques lors de nos prochaines rencontres. Cela pourrait éventuellement mener à une publication, comme ce fut le cas pour le projet « Trauma and Therapy » il y a quelques années. Surveillez les annonces à venir pour plus de détails.

La nouvelle la plus excitante que je souhaite partager avec vous est peut-être celle-ci : grâce à la générosité de notre collègue de longue date et très estimée Wendy Helleman, l'ACÉP a reçu un don important. L'objectif est d'utiliser cette contribution de manière durable afin de subventionner les frais de déplacement et de participation des étudiant(e)s à notre rencontre annuelle. Nous avons investi ces fonds et prévoyons pouvoir en retirer jusqu'à 600 \$ par année (somme qui sera répartie entre plusieurs candidat(e)s). Merci, Wendy, pour cet investissement dans l'avenir de l'ACÉP! Et merci également à Steven d'avoir géré toutes les dimensions financières liées à la réception d'un tel don.

Permettez-moi de terminer par quelques rappels. Si vous cherchez des lieux où publier vos recherches, nous vous recommandons [Studies in Religion / Sciences religieuses](#), avec laquelle nous entretenons une relation de longue date. J'ajouterai également que nous serions ravis d'accueillir davantage de travaux sur la patristique et l'Antiquité tardive dans la revue que je dirige, [Religious Studies & Theology](#). N'hésitez pas à me contacter si vous avez des questions concernant la publication de vos recherches dans des revues universitaires.

Si vous souhaitez inclure des nouvelles de vos propres travaux dans les prochains bulletins de l'ACÉP, veuillez communiquer avec le Eric Crégheur (eric.cregheur@ftsr.ulaval.ca). Nous serions ravis de partager vos nouvelles avec l'ensemble du réseau de l'ACÉP.

Enfin, j'aimerais conclure en plaidant en faveur d'un soutien concret à l'ACÉP. Si vous n'avez pas encore renouvelé votre [adhésion](#), nous vous invitons à le faire [dès maintenant](#). Des groupes comme le nôtre ne peuvent accomplir leur mission qu'avec l'appui de personnes comme vous; nous vous remercions donc de nous soutenir dans la mesure de vos moyens. Chaque contribution compte.

Avec tous mes meilleurs vœux,

Sean Hannan
Président de l'ACÉP
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NOUVELLES/NEWS

PUBLICATIONS

Kevin Clarke

St. Maximus the Confessor. *The Opuscula and the Dispute with Pyrrhus: The Theological and Polemical Works*. Introduction and translation by Kevin M. Clarke. The Fathers of the Church 151. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2026; ISBN: 9780813240824.

with Thomas Cattoi, eds., *Maximus the Confessor and the Latin West*. Brill's Studies in Catholic Theology 15. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2026; <https://doi:10.1163/9789004749955>.

“Maximus in the Latin West: Maximus and Augustine in Conversation.” Pages 15–40 in *Maximus the Confessor and the Latin West*. Edited by Thomas Cattoi and Kevin M. Clarke. Brill Studies in Catholic Theology 15. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2026; https://doi:10.1163/9789004749955_003.

with Thomas Cattoi, “Recovering the *Story* of the Fathers: Maximus the Confessor and Western Theology.” Pages 1–12 in *Maximus the Confessor and the Latin West*. Edited by Thomas Cattoi and Kevin M. Clarke. Brill Studies in Catholic Theology 15. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2026; https://doi:10.1163/9789004749955_002.

Eric Crégheur

Éd., *Nouvelles perspectives sur le Traité anonyme du codex Bruce/New Perspectives on the Untitled Treatise of the Bruce Codex (Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section « Études », 11)*, Louvain-Paris-Bristol (CT), Éditions Peeters, 2026.

« La cosmologie et la cosmogonie du *Traité anonyme* du codex Bruce démystifiées », dans E. Crégheur, éd., *Nouvelles perspectives sur le Traité anonyme du codex Bruce/New Perspectives on the Untitled Treatise of the Bruce Codex (Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section « Études », 11)*, Louvain-Paris-Bristol (CT), Éditions Peeters, 2026, p. 19-35.

Theodore de Bruyn

“To Anathematize or Not to Anathematize: That Is the Question.” Pages 269–88 in “*Brouria Has Spoken Wisely*”: *Studies in Christian Late Antiquity and Syriac Literature in Honor of Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony*. Edited by Paula Fredriksen, Oded Irshai, and Yonatan Moss. *Georgias Eastern Christian Studies* 72. Piscataway, NJ: Georgias Press, 2025.

Wendy Helleman

“Marius Victorinus on Divine Nature and Substance,” *Vigiliae Christianae* (2026) 1–44; <https://doi.org/10.1163/15700720-bja10124> (online).

Mona Tokarek LaFosse

“Canadian Society of Patristic Studies/Association canadienne des études patristiques (CSPS-ACÉP): A fiftieth anniversary tribute.” *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses* 55.1 (2026): 3–6; <https://doi.org/10.1177/00084298251388980>.

Edwina Murphy

“Second-Century Christian Women.” Pages 49–66 in *A Handbook to Second-Century Christianity*. Edited by Michael F. Bird and Scott Harrower. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2025.

with Bart J. Koet, and Esko Ryökäs, eds., *Presbyters in Early Christianity and Its Contexts*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2026.

James R. Payton, Jr.

“Invited to Wonder,” appeared in Korean translation, in *Mission Canada: A Korean Newspaper* (May 1, 2026: 6).

Annette Yoshiko Reed

“Expanding Patristic Perspectives: Thinking with 50 Years of the Canadian Society of Patristic Studies/Association Canadienne des Études Patristiques.” *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses* 55.1 (2026): 7–42; <https://doi.org/10.1177/00084298251392064>.

Don Springer

Irenaeus of Lyons on the Image and Likeness of God. McMaster Studies in Patristics 1. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2026.

Philippe Therrien

Gnose, narration et interprétation des Écritures dans les Pseudo-Clémentines : Une comparaison avec les écrits gnostiques (Judaïsme ancien et origines du christianisme, 35), Turnhout, Brepols, 2026.

Zinan Zhang

with Anthony Dupont, “Temporal Spirituality? Philosophical Inquiries into Time and Spirituality in the Early Oeuvre of Augustine of Hippo.” *Studies in Spirituality* 34 (2025): 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.2143/SIS.34.0.3294886>.

OTHER NEWS/AUTRES NOUVELLES:

Concordia University of Edmonton will be hosting a conference in July 2026, “Philosophical Insights from New Religious Movements & Alternative Spiritualities.” This conference is funded by the Global Philosophy of Religion Project 2 (which is in turn supported by the John Templeton Foundation and the Centre for Philosophy of Religion at the University of Birmingham).

On June 30, 2026, **James R. Payton, Jr.**, will retire from his position as Professor of Patristics and Historical Theology at McMaster Divinity College. At the same time, he will step away from his duties as co-director at the Centre for Patristics and Early Christianity (at McMaster Divinity College) and as one of the senior editors of *Patristic Theology* (the journal of the centre).

Defended Thesis/Défense de thèse

Zinan Zhang, successfully defended his Ph.D. dissertation titled “Time in Augustine’s Theology: A Pluri-disciplinary Study of Augustine’s Time Theory,” at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies) on December 11, 2025.

Nominations/Promotions

Julia Lillis :

- was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at Union Theological Seminary in New York City (as of July 1);
- received an ACLS fellowship for parts of 2026-2027 to continue working on a book project about genderlessness in early Christianity;
- became Co-Director of the international working group [ReMeDHe](#) (“remedy,” which supports research and teaching on Religion & Medicine, Disability, Health & Healing in late antiquity).

John Solheid :

- will hold a Visiting Scholar/Professor position in the Department of Classical Philology and Italian Studies at Alma Mater University – Bologna. He will serve as a Visiting Scholar from June 2-July 2, 2026, during which time he will complete research for his translation and commentary of Origen’s *On Prayer*.

Conferences/Colloques et communications

James R. Payton, Jr.

- “The Impact of the Council of Nicaea: ‘Already/Not Yet,’” paper presented at the conference “Defending Christ: Celebrating 1700 Years of Nicaea,” held October 3-4, 2025, at Redeemer University (Ancaster, ON).

- “Erasmus’ Endorsement of but Difference from Irenaeus’ Defense of the Apostolic Tradition,” paper presented May 4, 2026 at the conference, “Erasme & Irénée: Célébrer les 500 ans de l’*editio princeps* de l’*Adversus haereses*,” held in Lyons, France, and by livestream.

Don Springer

- “Érasme & Irénée : Célébrer les 500 ans de l’*editio princeps* de l’*Adversus haereses*,” conference organized May 4, 2026 in Lyon, France; organized with the Catholic University of Lyon.
 - Paper presented: “‘My Irenaeus’: The Ecumenical Reception of an Ancient Bishop.”

Invited Talks/Conférences invitées

Wendy Helleman

- “Introducing Marius Victorinus: Founder of the Nicene Faith for Latin Christianity,” paper presented in March 2026 at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, for the Society for Near and Middle Eastern Studies.

Steven Muir

- “The Good Serpent of Eden: Insights from Gnostic Texts,” paper presented on April 2026 at The College of Psychic Studies (London, UK) (Zoom presentation).

James R. Payton, Jr.

- “Contemporary Patristics: A Retrospective,” plenary address presented January 23, 2026, held at the Graduate Student Conference, “Exploring Early Christianity,” sponsored by the Centre for Patristics and Early Christianity, at McMaster Divinity College (Hamilton, ON).

Don Springer

- *Forthcoming Lecture*: “Early Christian Reception of the Book of Joshua.” Scripture and Hermeneutics Seminar at the [Kirby Laing Centre](#) for Public Theology at Cambridge. June 10, 2026 @ 4:00 ET. [Registration link](#).

Canadian Society for Patristic Studies – Annual Meeting 2026 Program

(as of May 19, 2026)

All sessions will take place at St. Augustine's Seminary downtown campus (Alumni Hall, 121 St. Joseph St.) in Toronto, Ontario. "**ROOM A**" stands for AH 207, "**Room B**" for AH 206.

All times are provided in EDT (Eastern Daylight Time).

A **(V)** after a presentation's title indicates that the presentation will be delivered virtually.

Zoom access:

For "ROOM A" sessions:

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87478587324?pwd=HdENhj7VNuOfkMzravuv9JiZqiaYFl.1>

Meeting ID : 874 7858 7324

Passcode: 689351

For "ROOM B" sessions:

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89930282615?pwd=mbJADVIy3uYigWiToaZRtwDKVi6jK.1>

Meeting ID: 899 3028 2615

Passcode: 190128

DAY 1 — TUESDAY, MAY 26

12:00–12:15 — **Welcome & President’s Greeting (Plenary, Room A)**

12:15–2:15 Parallel Session 1

ROOM A Panel 1 — Ascetism and Emotions	ROOM B Panel 2 — Martyrdom and Early Christian Identity
<i>Ivan Bodrožić (University of Split)</i> Asceticism as Therapy for Human Wounds According to St. Jerome’s Epistles	<i>Mona Tokarek LaFosse (University of Toronto)</i> Polycarp the Martyr: Definitely Not a Weary Old Man
<i>Alice Candy (Saint Paul University Ottawa)</i> How Do We Solve a Problem Like Macrina?: Exploring Gregory of Nyssa’s Account of Macrina’s Early Life (V)	<i>Marcin Wysocki (The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland)</i> Fathers in the Acts of the Christian Martyrs
<i>Fabrizio Vecoli (Université de Montréal)</i> La thérapie des émotions dans la littérature ascétique d’Antiquité tardive (IVe-VIe s.) (V)	<i>Katherine E. Milco (Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology)</i> How My Perspective on Early Christian Martyrdom Shifted After Investigating Contemporary Coptic Martyrdom in Egypt
<i>Philippe Therrien (Université Laval)</i> La représentation des émotions dans les récits de quête de connaissance. L’exemple des <i>Homélies pseudo-clémentines</i>	<i>Grayden McCashen (University of Notre Dame)</i> The Mind, Soul, and Inclusivity in Early Christian Community

2:15–2:30 — **Coffee Break**

2:30–4:00 Parallel Session 2

ROOM A Panel 3 — Augustine I	ROOM B Panel 4 — Developments in 2nd Century Christianity
<i>Zinan Zhang (KU Leuven)</i> Conversion, Delay, and Silence: Augustine and the Imperial Crisis after 386	<i>Eric Crégheur (Université Laval)</i> Le chair du Christ selon Apelle, disciple de Marcion
<i>Anne-Isabelle Bouton-Touboulic (Université de Lille)</i> Masculin/féminin et la question des genres de vie chez saint Augustin	<i>Lorne R. Zelyck (University of Alberta)</i> The Reception and Rejection of the <i>Protevangelium of James</i> in the Early Church
<i>Pascaline Turpin (Université Catholique de Lille)</i> La métaphysique du diable chez saint Augustin. Ontologie, psychologie et praxis du diable: le diable, un ange d’expérience (V)	<i>Andrius Valevicius (Université de Sherbrooke)</i> “The Seven Daughters of the Spiritual Life” in the <i>Shepard of Hermas</i>

4:00–4:15 — **Coffee Break**

4:15–5:15 — **Annual General Meeting (Plenary, Room A)**

6:00 — **Banquet (at Donatello Restaurant on Elm St.)**

DAY 2 — WEDNESDAY, MAY 27

9:00–11:00 Parallel Session 3

ROOM A Panel 5 — Polyphony of Theologies	ROOM B Panel 6 — Patristic Exegesis
<i>Wendy E. Helleman (University of Toronto)</i> Marius Victorinus on the Trinity as 'Double Dyads'	<i>Krisztián Fenyves (Pázmány Péter Catholic University)</i> Jerome's Veritas Hebraica and the Dynamics of Jewish-Christian Exegetical Encounter (V)
<i>Benedetto Neola (Universiteit Leiden)</i> Naming God: Eunomius, the Cappadocians, and the Shadow of Neoplatonism (V)	<i>Tiphaine Lorieux (KU Leuven)</i> The Exegesis of Gennadius of Constantinople through His Commentary on Hosea (V)
<i>Xavier Morales (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile)</i> La personnalité de Dieu, une question non posée par les Pères de l'Église?	<i>Alex Michael Trew (Tyndale University)</i> Job's συμπόσιον: The Figure of Job as Philosopher in the Homilies of Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom (V)
<i>Arthur Urbano (Providence College)</i> Dressing like God: A Sartorial Theology in the Paedagogus of Clement of Alexandria (V)	<i>Agata Sowińska (University of Silesia, Poland)</i> Papyrus Berolinensis Graeca 9794: An Anthology of Prayers and Its Hermetic Element (V)

11:00–11:15 — **Coffee Break**

11:15–12:45 Parallel Session 4

ROOM A Panel 7 — Donatism in North Africa: Roots and Reception	ROOM B Special Session — Patristic Studies on Christianity Outside the Latin & Greek Speaking World I
<i>Aaron Debusschere (Université Saint Paul University)</i> <i>Ratio Unitatis</i> : Cyprian's View of Peter's Role in the Unity of the Episcopate	<i>Andrew N. A. Youssef</i> An Evaluation of Coptic Orthodox Objections to Gregory Palamas's Doctrine of Deification
<i>Emanuele Piazza (Università degli Studi di Catania)</i> The Donatist Schism: Reflections from the Fifth and Sixth Centuries by Augustine of Hippo and Gregory the Great (V)	<i>Timothy Pettipiece (Carleton University)</i> Mission and Mimesis: The Literary Erasure of Manichaeism in the Syriac Christian World (V)
<i>Jennifer Otto (University of Lethbridge)</i> Donatists Reconsidered	<i>Paul Robinson (McMaster Divinity College)</i> The Radiance Who Makes Everyone Shine: Deification as Beautification in Ephrem the Syrian's Hymns on Paradise

12:45–2:00 — **Lunch (on site) / Student Lunch (Room B)**

2:00–4:00 Parallel Session 5

ROOM A Special Session — Crisis, Trauma & Therapeia	ROOM B Special Session — Reception of Patristics I
<i>Jimmy Chan (Alliance Bible Seminary)</i> Polyphonic Therapeia in Augustine: Psalm 41(42) in <i>Confessiones</i> , <i>Enarrationes in Psalmos</i> , and <i>De civitate Dei</i>	<i>David Cholewa (Newman Theological College)</i> The Neoplatonic Foundations of Aquinas's Metaphysics: Being and Participation as grounded in Pseudo-Dionysius's <i>On the Divine Names</i> (V)
<i>Naoki Kamimura (Tokyo Gakugei University)</i> The medicinal image and the care of souls in the correspondence of Augustine	<i>Alexander Ferrant (Newman Theological College)</i> Adoro Te Devote: A Case Study of the Christian Neoplatonism of Pseudo-Dionysius in the Thought of Thomas Aquinas (V)
<i>Susan Holman (Valparaiso University)</i> Crisis Therapeutics in Theodore of Petra	<i>Monika Frazer-Imregh (ELTE University Budapest)</i> Arguments for the Immortality of the Human Soul: Ficino's References to Augustine in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of Book XII of <i>Platonic Theology</i> (V)
<i>Constantin-Ionut Mihai ("Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iasi)</i> Distress, Trauma, and Therapy in Origen's <i>Contra Celsum</i> (V)	<i>Oliver Francesco Brenna (Università Statale di Milano)</i> John Ridewall and the Reception of Augustine's <i>De Civitate Dei</i> (V)

4:00–4:15 — **Coffee Break**

4:15–6:15 Parallel Session 6

ROOM A Special Session — Reception of Patristics II	ROOM B Special Session — Patristic Studies on Christianity Outside the Latin & Greek Speaking World II
<i>Riccardo Macchioro (University of Toronto)</i> The New Life of Greek Fathers in the Medieval West: New Investigations into the Reception of Basil, John Chrysostom, and John Damascene	<i>Irene Gobbi (Pontifical Gregorian University Rome)</i> A Council Against the Empire: Ephesus and the Anti-Chalcedonian Identity in Coptic and Ge'ez Sources (V)
<i>Rachelle Haddad (St. Mary's University, UK)</i> Rewriting John Damascene: (Mis)use of Patristic Authority on Papal Primacy in the Eighteenth-Century Levant (V)	<i>Syed A. H. Zaidi (Butler University)</i> The Reception of Augustine of Hippo in the Thought of Yahyā ibn 'Adī
<i>Bogdan Bucur (St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary) (V)</i> L'«exégèse christophanique» dans l'hymnographie byzantine: un défi pour la recherche sur les auteurs patristiques des IV ^e et V ^e siècles	<i>Ilia Korchagin (Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary)</i> Exporting the Gospel Along the Silk Road: How Commerce and Politics Evangelized Central Asia
	<i>Austin McCredie (University of Pennsylvania)</i> The Necrosima: A Neglected Pseudo-Ephrem Collection

DAY 3 — THURSDAY, MAY 28

8:30–10:00 Parallel Session 7

<p>ROOM A Special Session — Then and Now (and In Between): Sociologies of Knowledge in Early Christianity and the “Study of Religion”. A Celebration of the Life and Work of Harold Remus I (a joint seminar with the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies)</p>	<p>ROOM B Predissertation Workshop I</p>
<p>Starts at 9:00 a.m.</p>	<p><i>Pablo Fernández-Garay (Universidad de Cantabria Inicio)</i> Le règne de Valentinien III (425-455): perspectives historiques et juridiques</p>
<p><i>Nikayla Reize (Trinity Bristol College / St. Mary’s University)</i> Barnabas, Jubilee Ethics, Social Location and the Stakes of Religious Identity</p>	<p><i>Jonathan Dobek (Newman Theological College)</i> Connecting St. Augustine’s Imago Dei to St. Anselm’s Understanding of Truth (V)</p> <p><i>Maja Rončević (University of Split)</i> The Concept of Friendship Between the Classical Ideal and the Evangelical Realization in Jerome’s Epistles during the First Period of His Life (347–382)</p>
<p><i>Lincoln Blumell (Brigham Young University)</i> Teaching the Psalms: Didymus the Blind and the Pedagogy of Christian Knowledge</p>	<p><i>Luis Esquivel Navarrete (Newman Theological College)</i> Call, Struggle, Holiness: The Lives of Anthony of the Desert and Benedict of Nursia (V)</p> <p><i>Alfonso Menanno (University of Vienna)</i> A Scholastic Synthesis of Patristic Angelology: From Basil the Great to The Angelic Doctor (V)</p>

10:00–10:30 — Coffee Break

10:30–12:00 Parallel Session 8

<p>ROOM A Special Session — Then and Now (and In Between): Sociologies of Knowledge in Early Christianity and the “Study of Religion”. A Celebration of the Life and Work of Harold Remus II (a joint seminar with the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies)</p>	<p>ROOM B Panel 8 — Augustine II</p>
<p><i>Tony Burke (York University)</i> When the Miracle Worker Breaks Bad: Invoking Jesus in Anathema and Maledictions</p>	<p><i>Benoît Benhamou (Aix-Marseille Université)</i> Mémoire et intertextualité: Augustin lecteur d’Origène</p>
<p><i>Robert Revington (McMaster Divinity College)</i> Which Books and Scholars Have Been the Most Influential in Contemporary Canadian Biblical Studies?: Analyzing the Results of a 2024 Survey</p>	<p><i>Sean Ulrich (Newman Theological College)</i> Creation in Progress? The Origin of Restlessness in St. Augustine’s <i>Confessions</i> (V)</p>
<p>ENDS AT 11:30 a.m.</p>	<p><i>Kevin Muico (Newman Theological College)</i> Uera Amicitia: Augustine on Friendship in <i>The Confessions</i> (V)</p>

12:00–12:45 — **Lunch (private)**

12:45–1:15 — **Student Essay Prize (Plenary, Room A)**

1:15–2:15 — **Book Reviews (Plenary, Room A)**

Mona Tokarek LaFosse, *Honouring Age: The Social Dynamics of Age Structure in 1 Timothy*
(review by Steven Muir)

John Solheid, *Pedagogy of the Heart: Grammar, Philosophy, and the Christian Reader in
Origen's Greek Homilies on the Psalms* (review by Charles Meeks)

2:15–4:15 Parallel Session 9

ROOM A Special Session — Classics and Patristics at the Crossroads (a joint session with the Classical Association of Canada)	ROOM B Special Session — Reception of Patristics III
<i>Nathan A. Scott (The Toronto School of Theology)</i> Augustine's Mouth Has Two Sides: Augustine's Nuanced Engagement with Epicureanism in his Epistula 118	<i>Pablo Irizar (Newman Theological College)</i> French Phenomenology's Neo-Thomist Augustine (V)
<i>Sean Hannan (MacEwan University)</i> Reinterpreting Augustinian Peregrinatio through the Lens of Roman Law	<i>Darren E. Dahl (Newman Theological College)</i> Approaching an Iconic Site: Jean-Luc Marion's Reception of Augustine (V)
<i>Christian Raschle (Université de Montréal)</i> Of Physicians and Theologians: Isidore of Pelusium on the Immortality of the Soul (V)	<i>Peter Steiger (Chaminade University of Honolulu)</i> The Reception of Patristics in Japan (V)
<i>Jean-Félix Aubé-Pronce (University of Quebec in Montreal)</i> Reading the Latin Josephus through Transmission: Tracing the Earliest Reception (4th-9th c.) (V)	

4:15 — **Conference Close**

CSPS Meeting 2026: Paper Overview

(alphabetically sorted by Author's name, as of May 13, 2026)

Reading the Latin Josephus through Transmission: Tracing the Earliest Reception (4th-9th c.) (Jean-Félix Aubé-Pronce)

The Jewish-Roman historian Flavius Josephus composed four works in Greek, three of which were later translated into Latin. While it is known that Cassiodorus, together with his amici, translated the Jewish Antiquities and the Contra Apionem in the sixth century, the translator, precise date, and place of the Latin translation of the Jewish War remain unknown. It is generally assumed that this translation predates Cassiodorus, thereby attesting to its existence at the time of his own translation activity. The Jewish War is transmitted in 163 manuscripts, most commonly alongside the Jewish Antiquities. Among the 191 manuscripts preserving the Antiquities, 107 also include the War. Before the fifteenth century, manuscripts containing only the Jewish War are rare, and the work is generally placed after the Jewish Antiquities. While the reception of Flavius Josephus's works can be approached through manuscript evidence, quotations, and library catalogues, their earliest reception, before the ninth century, remains difficult to trace. Apart from the first twelve books of the Jewish Antiquities, there is no manuscript evidence, no quotation, and no catalogue reference to the remainder of the Antiquities, the Jewish War, or the Contra Apionem. They are virtually absent: the latter until the eleventh century, the former until the mid-ninth century. Even the final eight books of the Antiquities make their first appearance in the middle of the ninth century. Today, we propose to explore the earliest reception of the Latin Josephus corpus through the lens of its transmission, from its inception to the ninth century. This requires not only consideration of the almost inexistent early evidence, but also a reconstruction of its transmission through an examination of the manuscript tradition as a whole, using novel approaches in the digital humanities. Only through a different method can the limits of its reception in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages be brought into focus. This perspective also highlights not only the particular importance of the first twelve books of the Antiquities, which parallel the Old Testament, whereas the remainder concerns Jewish history outside scripture, but also the role and use of the Christianised counterpart to the War, known as the De excidio or pseudo-Hegesippus. According to its anonymous author, this last work, ascribed to Josephus until the ninth century, offered an interpretation of the first Roman-Jewish conflict, which Josephus was incapable of understanding: the destruction of the Temple and, by extension, of the Jewish people had been prophesied by Christ and was the consequence of his Passion. The reception of this Christianized War appears not only to have been on a par with that of the first twelve books of the Antiquities, but in fact to have formed an integral part of the Josephan corpus, effectively functioning as the Latin War. In sum, understanding the limits of the Latin Josephus will shed light on how he was regarded as "almost a second Livy" (Cassiodorus) and how the "single most often copied historical work of the Middle Ages" (James O'Donnell) "often achieves almost the authority of a Church Father" (Heinz Schreckenberg).

Mémoire et intertextualité: Augustin lecteur d'Origène (Benoît Benhamou)

Cette contribution se propose de mettre en évidence une influence origénienne éludée par les commentateurs dans la description de la mémoire par Augustin (Confessions X, 12, 26). La démonstration s'organisera en quatre points: d'abord, en montrant qu'il est raisonnable d'affirmer, sur un plan historique, qu'Augustin a lu le passage d'Origène en question (Homélie sur Luc XXI, 6-7) ; ensuite, en confrontant les deux passages, et en procédant à leur étude lexicale ; puis à leur étude philosophique, en soulignant la place

de la mémoire dans les deux œuvres ; enfin, une réflexion sur la manière de concevoir cette « influence » sera proposée, en recourant aux outils de la critique littéraire et à l'intertextualité.

Teaching the Psalms: Didymus the Blind and the Pedagogy of Christian Knowledge (Lincoln Blumell)

This paper examines Didymus the Blind's Lectures on Psalms (Pss 20–44), delivered in Alexandria around A.D. 370, as a rare witness to the social production and transmission of Christian knowledge in late antiquity. As the earliest extant Christian lecture series, these lectures preserve not only exegetical content but also the pedagogical strategies by which Christian knowledge was conveyed, authorized, and contested within a late fourth-century educational setting. Drawing on insights from the sociology of knowledge, particularly as articulated in Harold Remus's work on early Christianity, this study analyzes how Didymus negotiates contemporary Greco-Roman discourses of knowledge while simultaneously reshaping them within a Christian framework. Didymus regularly appeals to what is "known," "self-evident," or conventionally accepted, even as he redefines the grounds and limits of authoritative knowledge through scriptural exegesis and theological instruction.

Asceticism as Therapy for Human Wounds According to St. Jerome's Epistles (Ivan Bodrožić)

In his letters, St. Jerome speaks on multiple occasions about spiritual health, using the imagery of medicine. He particularly points out that spiritual disease known as lust is especially dangerous for a person, as it destroys an individual from within. One can combat it only through serious asceticism, which also involves choosing food as part of a diet regimen. Jerome also emphasizes that even physicians like Galen have confirmed that not all foods are equally suitable for everyone at every age. Thus, it is all the more necessary to pay attention to the spiritual dimension of food, as it builds the soul, serving as a remedy for the development of personality and the attainment of salvation: "We seek not the cultivation of the body, which had flourished in such foods, but the strength of the soul, which becomes stronger through the weakness of the flesh."

Masculin/féminin et la question des genres de vie chez saint Augustin (Anne-Isabelle Bouton-Touboulic)

Cette communication vise à interroger la distinction entre les genres masculin et féminin chez Augustin, à l'aune de la question classique des genres de vie. Nous questionnerons l'articulation qu'il peut y avoir chez Augustin entre ces deux thématiques, qui sont au croisement des gender studies, de la théologie et de la philosophie. Comment la distinction masculin/féminin peut-elle interférer avec celle des genres de vie, ou bien l'éclairer ? La vie contemplative est-elle réservée aux hommes et les femmes sont-elles considérées comme un obstacle à celle-ci, ou bien comme des partenaires pour réaliser cette vie contemplative (dans une expérience d'accession au divin partagée) ? La distinction entre vie contemplative et vie active doit-elle être nécessairement pensée sur le modèle du pôle masculin féminin ou bien peut-elle renvoyer à deux idéaux-types de féminin ? Dans le corpus augustinien (traités philosophiques, Confessions, commentaires exégétiques, Lettres), nous interrogerons différentes figures féminines, réelles ou bibliques.

John Ridewall and the reception of Augustine's De Civitate Dei (Oliver Francesco Brenna)

In the 14th century, we suddenly see the emergence of different commentaries written by friars on the works of Augustine, especially on the *De civitate Dei*. A smaller group of these commentaries were written by scholars interested in ancient history and mythology. One such scholar was John Ridewall O.F.M.. Although his commentary is known, a critical edition had never previously been produced. This paper summarises the results of a Master's thesis on the critical edition of the first book of the commentary. This work aims to study the sources of the commentary and understand the relationship between the two known manuscripts, in order to better situate the author within his cultural and theological background. Ultimately, it seeks to shed light on how friars approached classical texts to interpret scriptural and patristic texts for preaching purposes and personal interest.

L'exégèse christophanique » dans l'hymnographie byzantine: un défi pour la recherche sur les auteurs patristiques des IV^e et V^e siècles (Bogdan Bucur)

L'« exégèse christophanique »—c'est-à-dire l'identification directe, sans ambiguïté, du « Seigneur » dans les textes théophaniques de la Bible hébraïque avec le « Seigneur » de la révélation chrétienne, Jésus—est une caractéristique bien connue de la réflexion théologique pré-nicéenne, telle qu'elle s'exprime chez Justin Martyr, Irénée, Tertullien, Novatien, etc. On présume qu'elle est devenue obsolète face à l'argumentation plus élaborée et à la terminologie plus précise développées durant l'époque post-nicéenne. Mais l'identification paradoxale de Jésus de Nazareth au Seigneur du Paradis, au Dieu d'Abraham, d'Isaac et de Jacob, à l'interlocuteur de Moïse au buisson ardent et au Législateur du Sinaï, au Seigneur qu'Isaïe vit siégeant dans la gloire et adoré par les séraphins, qu'Ézéchiel décrivit comme montant un trône porté par des chérubins, que Daniel discerna sous les figures à la fois du Fils de l'homme et de l'Ancien des jours—bref, cette « exégèse christophanique »—figure également en bonne place dans l'hymnographie byzantine, autrement dit dans les compositions hymnographiques depuis Romain le Mélode. Il est fort improbable que ces hymnographes, formés à la lecture de Grégoire de Nazianze, de Jean Chrysostome, de Cyrille d'Alexandrie, etc., aient ressuscité cet élément de l'exégèse et de la théologie du « christianisme primitif » de Justin Martyr et Tertullien. Une meilleure conscience de la présence diffuse de l'exégèse christophanique dans l'hymnographie byzantine impose une relecture des sources patristiques des hymnographes—relecture qui, selon moi, révèle la persistance de cette tradition chez les auteurs post-nicéens. Il semble qu'il existe un angle mort dans les études patristiques, car la question des théophanies et de leur exégèse christologique est tout simplement absente de la plupart des articles et études consacrés aux auteurs patristiques des IV^e, V^e et VI^e siècles.

When the Miracle Worker Breaks Bad: Invoking Jesus in Anathema and Maledictions (Tony Burke)

Back in 1995, I was a student in Harold Remus's course on Magic and Miracle. From discussions in that course I became interested in the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, which depicts the young Jesus using his powers both to bless and to curse his neighbours in Nazareth. Despite scholars' frequent smearing of the text as "crude" and "ridiculous," it was clear to me, thanks to Harold's guidance, that whoever wrote the text believed that these stories were appropriate for telling what happened in Jesus' early years. The childhood tales are not the only examples from Christian literature of a Jesus who curses. The broadening of the definition of curse to include oaths and woes demonstrates that even the biblical Jesus performed more curses than many modern readers would expect—and be comfortable with. Jesus also curses, or is expected to curse, in two other sources: "magical" formulae and book curses. There are a number of

examples from the magical papyri of both God and Jesus being invoked, either explicitly or implicitly (e.g., in the crosses that frame the invocation), to maim or to kill the curse's intended target. Scribes similarly call upon God (see e.g., Rev 22:18–19) or Jesus in order to safeguard books against harm or theft. While most Christian book curses threaten anathema (excommunication, though this can lead to harm), some explicitly invoke the “curse of Jesus” against would-be malefactors. Both the magical curses and the book curses demonstrate that Christians felt no hesitation about calling upon the name of Jesus to cause harm upon another person. Modern Christians associate Jesus more with turning the other cheek and being kind to children, but earlier Christians had a more multi-faceted view of Jesus, one more suited for helping them in the dangerous and capricious world in which they lived.

How Do We Solve a Problem Like Macrina?: Exploring Gregory of Nyssa's Account of Macrina's Early Life (Alice Candy)

Gregory of Nyssa's *Vita sanctae macrinae* recounts how his older sister, Macrina the Younger, embraced virginity and won her family over to ascetic life before founding an influential double monastic community. In chapters 1–5, he observes the first ‘symptoms’ of holiness that were discernible in Macrina's life, although questions remain about Gregory's adherence to the literary conventions of his time. Reading these chapters in conversation with other ascetic vitae of the period, this paper explores the literary evidence we have about Macrina and what Gregory's depiction of her girlhood reveals about how he understood the trajectory of her life to have unfolded.

Polyphonic Therapeia in Augustine: Psalm 41(42) in Confessiones, Enarrationes in Psalmos, and De civitate Dei (Jimmy Chan)

This paper argues that Augustine's therapeia of crisis is a polyphonic, responsorial script learned from Psalm 41(42): lament is neither suppressed nor absolutized but is resolved into persevering hope by re-ordering desire toward God within the Church's voice. It begins with *Confessiones* 4.4.9, where bereavement fractures selfhood (“I had become a great question to myself”) and Augustine addresses his soul along the psalm's movement from disquiet to hope, while admitting that hope does not immediately secure inward assent. In *Enarrationes in Psalmos* on Psalm 41(42), the resolution is enacted: tears become pilgrim “bread,” the taunt “Where is your God?” is answered by confessing praise and durable hope in the *totus Christus*. Finally, *De civitate Dei* 1.29 reprises “Where is your God?” and scripts the Church's public reply amid civic trauma.

The Neoplatonic Foundations of Aquinas's Metaphysics: Being and Participation as grounded in Pseudo-Dionysius's On the Divine Names (David Cholewa)

The philosophy of Thomas Aquinas has historically been portrayed as a project of Christianizing the philosophy of Aristotle; however, this view suggests a hermeneutic of discontinuity in the development of Christian philosophy between the Patristic and late medieval eras. This research paper will explore the Neoplatonic foundations of Thomas Aquinas's metaphysical system by considering two key principles that Aquinas inherits from the Christian Neoplatonic tradition: the nature of being in God and Platonic participation. Aquinas's commentary on Pseudo-Dionysius's *On the Divine Names* will serve as the primary text indicating Thomas's engagement with these Neoplatonic principles, revealing that Aquinas proposes a

genuine development by synthesizing Aristotelian concepts in order to achieve greater philosophical concord with Christian revelation.

Le chair du Christ selon Apelle, disciple de Marcion (Eric Crégheur)

Cette communication propose d'examiner la christologie d'Apelle, disciple de Marcion, en s'attachant plus particulièrement à sa conception de la chair du Christ. Après un aperçu du personnage et des principaux traits de sa doctrine tels qu'ils ressortent des sources hérésiologiques, l'exposé se concentrera sur la position singulière qu'Apelle adopte à l'égard de l'incarnation. Contrairement à Marcion, qui niait toute chair au Christ, Apelle affirmait la réalité de son corps tout en refusant sa nativité. À partir des témoignages de Tertullien et d'Épiphane, l'étude montrera comment cette affirmation d'une chair véritable, mais non issue de la génération humaine, s'inscrit dans une réflexion plus large sur la corruption de la matière et sur l'origine supra-mondaine du Sauveur. L'analyse portera sur la cohérence interne de cette doctrine, ses possibles influences et ses parallèles au sein des débats christologiques des IIe–IIIe siècles, mettant en lumière l'originalité de la position d'Apelle dans l'histoire du christianisme ancien.

Approaching an Iconic Site: Jean-Luc Marion's Reception of Augustine (Darren E. Dahl)

In both his most recent work on revelation (*Revelation Comes from Elsewhere*, 2024) and his revised and expanded *Gilson Lectures* (*In the Self's Place: The Approach of Saint Augustine*, 2012), Jean-Luc Marion finds in the work of Augustine a distinct manner of theological thinking. At the centre of this thinking is the notion of the icon. Importantly, for Marion, to think the icon is, precisely, not to think an image, where the latter signals the representation of the invisible in the visible. Instead, to think the icon is to recognize that “the eikōn is not captured by an image, because it does not presuppose any likeness of visible to invisible, but a relation of a visible . . . to an invisible” (RCE, p. 252). For Marion, it is insofar as Augustine's theology not only thinks this relation but, even more so, thinks from this relation, that it remains an open question for us today. In other words, he asks: what might it mean to think with Augustine if that means understanding theological rationality in terms of an approach and, thus, a referral in relation to One who precedes me, summons me, and constitutes me within an icon site? By exploring this key issue in Marion's recent thought, this paper highlights the ongoing significance of his readings of Augustine.

Ratio Unitatis: Cyprian's View of Peter's Role in the Unity of the Episcopate (Aaron Debusschere)

Cyprian of Carthage is well known for his conflict with Stephen of Rome—even approaching the brink of schism—and his insistence on the sovereignty of the bishop. Yet, Cyprian maintained a high regard for communion between bishops as evidenced by his use of councils and his refusal to break communion with those who disagreed with him on rebaptising heretics. One example of his emphasis on unity is the use of the phrase, “origo et ratio unitatis,” to describe Peter's role in the Church and the episcopate. This paper examines Cyprian's use of ratio in reference to Peter and presents some implications of the phrase.

Connecting St. Augustine's Imago Dei to St. Anselm's Understanding of Truth (Jonathan Dobek)

St. Augustine, in his work *De Trinitate*, forms a holistic understanding of what it means for Christ to be the true image of God and mankind to be made in the image of God. St. Anselm, being deeply steeped in St. Augustine, accepts and utilizes this understanding in a wide range of his works, however, there is a lack of explicit connection made between the inherited idea of the 'imago Dei' (image of God) and Anselm's understanding of 'the Truth.' The goal of this project is to connect the 'imago Dei' to Anselm's *De Veritate* (On Truth) to understand both Christ's claim that He is 'the Truth' and the calling for us to live our lives by the truth. This connection will be made through the role of signification in both imagery and truth.

Jerome's Veritas Hebraica and the Dynamics of Jewish-Christian Exegetical Encounter (Krisztián Fenyves)

This paper explores the Jewish-Christian exegetical encounter through the lens of Jerome's principle of *Veritas Hebraica*, situating his work within the broader hermeneutical dialogue between rabbinic Judaism and patristic Christianity. Building upon recent scholarship on late antique exegesis, it examines how Jerome's engagement with Hebrew Scripture and Jewish interpretive traditions reflects both dependence and differentiation. Far from a purely philological concern, *Veritas Hebraica* functioned as a theological program: by privileging the Hebrew text as the truest form of divine revelation, Jerome sought to reconcile philological precision with orthodox Christology. His *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* and *Commentary on Isaiah* reveal not only a conscious use of Jewish sources but also an effort to delimit Christian identity vis-à-vis rabbinic exegesis. Through this dual posture of appropriation and critique, Jerome embodies a complex model of intertextual encounter in which Jewish learning served as both resource and rival. The study argues that *Veritas Hebraica* thus represents a pivotal moment in the history of Christian hermeneutics—one that encapsulates the tensions and possibilities inherent in early Jewish-Christian scriptural dialogue.

Le règne de Valentinien III (425-455): perspectives historiques et juridiques (Pablo Fernández-Garay)

N'ayant suscité qu'un intérêt historiographique limité, le règne de Valentinien III a principalement été étudié à travers d'autres figures impériales ou sous l'angle des mutations institutionnelles de l'Antiquité tardive, telles que le gouvernement des empereurs-enfants. La rareté et la fragmentation des sources narratives invitent toutefois à reconsidérer ce gouvernement à partir des sources juridiques. En particulier, l'analyse de la législation religieuse —notamment celle relative à la réorganisation ecclésiastique en Gaule et à l'affirmation de la primauté romaine— permet d'interroger les fondements du pouvoir du dernier Théodosien et d'éclairer les dynamiques politico-religieuses du Ve siècle.

Adoro Te Devote: A Case Study of the Christian Neoplatonism of Pseudo-Dionysius in the Thought of Thomas Aquinas (Alexander Ferrant)

This presentation is an attempt to show how the Christian Neoplatonism of Dionysius the Areopagite shapes the thought of Thomas Aquinas, by analyzing one of his personal prayers, now popularly recognized as the Roman Catholic Eucharistic hymn, *Adoro Te Devote*. This analysis seeks to identify in the prayer key Dionysian threads, in particular those surrounding the role of desire in divine ascent. The goal is to use the prayer as a test case of how deeply the Angelic Doctor is influenced by Christian Neoplatonism, and how Christian Neoplatonism might be shaped by his reception of it.

Arguments for the Immortality of the Human Soul: Ficino's References to Augustine in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of Book XII of Platonic Theology (Monika Frazer-Imregh)

Marsilio Ficino's most significant work on religious philosophy is the eighteen-book Platonic Theology (1469–1474). The work is subtitled *On the Immortality of the Soul*, which refers to Proclus' work of the same title(s), and it opposes Averroes' thesis that the human soul itself disintegrates at death. Ficino was not satisfied with Proclus' arguments regarding the immortality of the human soul, so he tries to prove the thesis of the immortality of the soul based on a more extensive, and at the same time Christian, system of arguments. He also calls upon the works of the early Christian church fathers to prove his proof, including Augustine, whose work of the same title (*De immortalitate animorum*) he also used. Ficino even emphasizes in the titles of chapters 6 and 7 of Book XII that he refers to Augustine. In my lecture, I want to show how Ficino uses Augustine's arguments to justify his own thesis regarding the immortality of the soul.

A Council Against the Empire: Ephesus and the Anti-Chalcedonian Identity in Coptic and Ge'ez Sources (Irene Gobbi)

The Council of Ephesus has always been viewed and judged through the lens of Greek and Latin documentation, primarily from within the Chalcedonian tradition. This paper aims to challenge this perspective through the voices of some marginalised sources, coming from a Miaphysite background both in terms of culture and language and usually ignored by Western scholars. The aim of this research is to outline, for the first time, a picture of the most significant and recurring themes and narratives in this little-known literary milieu. Alongside analysing key examples of Coptic historiography, the paper will offer fresh translations of the Coptic Acts of Ephesus and the homily *On the Hour of Death* by Pseudo-Cyril of Alexandria, as well as the Ge'ez masterpiece known as the *Treasury of Faith*. The analysis proceeds from the premise that even hagiographic imagery and pseudepigraphical works can reveal crucial insights for reconstructing the socio-theological memory of Non-Chalcedonian Christians regarding Ephesus as a bulwark against Chalcedon.

Rewriting John Damascene: (Mis)use of Patristic Authority on Papal Primacy in the Eighteenth-Century Levant (Rachelle Haddad)

The writings of the Greek patristic authors were central to the Catholic-Orthodox theological debates of the 16th-19th centuries in the Ottoman Levant. Several surviving manuscripts confirm their prevalent importance. One such work from the 18th century is found in the archives of the Missionaries of Saint Paul in Lebanon. Beyond the actual words of John Damascene, text editing and ink residue points to the (mis)use of patristic authority in the debate on Papal Primacy. In acknowledging how patristics shape theological debate, this paper analyzes how theological debate reciprocally shapes the reception of patristic thought.

Barnabas, Jubilee Ethics, Social Location and the Stakes of Religious Identity (Nikayla Reize)

By placing Barnabas' Isaianic usage alongside Luke's programmatic employment of Isaiah in Luke 4:16–22, this paper positions the Epistle of Barnabas as an important early witness to the reception of Isaiah's Sabbath-Jubilee theology in Christian interpretation. The findings suggest that Barnabas advances a

materially grounded, justice-oriented Christology that integrates eschatological hope with concrete socio-economic practice. Focusing on Barnabas' use of Isaiah 1:13-15, 58:3-9, and 61:1-2, this paper demonstrates that Barnabas critiques cultic practices, such as the Sabbath and the Day of Atonement, that neglect the material flourishing of the poor while simultaneously reconfiguring Jesus' identity through Isaiah's servant and Jubilee traditions. The paper further argues that Barnabas' eschatological reading of the Sabbath in chapter 15 does not spiritualize Sabbath theology but instead situates present socio-economic obligations within a future-oriented framework. By allegorizing creation and Sabbath rest, Barnabas envisions a coming Sabbath age inaugurated by Christ, while simultaneously insisting that ethical participation in Sabbath-Jubilee realities must begin in the present. Attention is given to Barnabas' rhetoric of slavery, debt imagery, communal sharing, and social equality, which together reflect latent Jubilee themes of release and restoration.

Reinterpreting Augustinian Peregrinatio through the Lens of Roman Law (Sean Hannan)

Augustine of Hippo's use of the word *peregrinatio* (and related terms) has been subject to some debate in the field of patristics. Too little attention has been paid in such debates, however, to the status quaestionis regarding *peregrinatio* in classics generally and in Roman legal studies in particular. This is likely due to a lingering sense of separation between the two fields or disciplines. It feels right to call classics a discipline; it feels less apt to call patristics a discipline. Even the nomenclature of 'patristics' remains up for debate, with continued calls to pivot to a name that would more adequately describe what scholars in the field actually do: viz., study late ancient Mediterranean Christianity as situated in the context of other religious and cultural traditions in that region during that era. Redescribing patristics in that way is regrettably wordy, but it does more accurately convey how close the field is to the world of classics proper. This paper aims to help build more bridges between patristics and classics by making a case for the relevance of scholarship on the ancient Roman legal category of the *peregrinus* (Ando 2011; Richardson 1990; Roselaar 2012; Schermaier 2023; Sehlmeier 2013; Sehlmeier 2025) for those attempting to figure out what Augustine was trying to accomplish by placing *peregrinatio* at the heart of the account he gives of human existence across his corpus, though most obviously in *De ciuitate Dei*. There he argues that all human beings ought to understand themselves as *peregrini*: as refugees or migrants or resident aliens, necessitating a special moral duty to demonstrate *caritas* to those experiencing forced displacement in a more this-worldly sense. And in the wake of Alaric's sack of Rome in 410 CE, when Augustine was composing *De ciuitate Dei* and displaced persons were migrating around the western Mediterranean, the invocation of the 'refugee' would not have been read as simply a metaphor. The problem with much previous patristics scholarship on Augustinian *peregrinatio* is that it treats the term as simply equivalent to 'pilgrimage,' as in the journey of cultic pilgrims to a shrine, after which they would return back home. Such an interpretation might fit better with certain theologically motivated notions of moral progress or advancement toward the eschaton (Stewart-Kroeker 2017), but it does not do justice to the fact that Augustine is drawing on the Roman legal designation of the *peregrinus* as a resident alien. By connecting the specialist literature on Roman law to work done by historians of Christianity on the figure of the refugee (O'Donnell 1979, Lemos 2025), my goal is to demonstrate that Augustine's use of *peregrinatio* aimed not simply to convey a vague notion of pilgrimage, but rather to stake a claim on behalf of displaced communities who nevertheless retain a legal right to migrate and dwell (*ius peregrinandi et degendi*), in this life and in the next.

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Marius Victorinus on the Trinity as "Double Dyads" (Wendy E. Helleman)

Victorinus' understanding of the Trinity in terms of "double dyads" is widely recognized as an original and unique feature of his trinitarian theology. With other theologians of the time, Victorinus focused on the relationship of the Son with the Father, but also recognized the Son "double," together with the Holy Spirit (thereby affirmed as fully divine). Hadot recognized such a trinitarian position to be integral to Victorinus' argument of the Trinity as a philosophical/theological triad (*esse, vivere* and *intellegere*),¹ but did little more to explain the source of the "double dyads" conception, or the significance of such a trinitarian model. The philosophical background may be traced to the Middle Platonist Numenius; other scholars suggest a gnostic source, but there is little scholarly discussion of the double dyadic model as such. In this essay I explore its role in the context of the contemporary theological controversy regarding Marcellus of Ancyra's *miahypostatic* Trinity, emphasizing God as *Monad*.

Crisis Therapeutics in Theodore of Petra (Susan Holman)

This paper will explore crisis responses that integrate theology and *therapeia* with environmental concerns in the works of Theodore, sixth-century bishop of Petra and author of the *Vita* of Theodosius, his monastic abbot near Jerusalem. It will highlight (1) Theodore's textual focus on healthcare, particularly for monks found wandering, mentally ill; and (2) archaeological evidence in Petra dated to Theodore's episcopacy suggesting how he used material culture in response to climate extremes such as drought, again through a theologically 'therapeutic' lens. Theodore's apparent support for art, color, spatial control and theological rhetoric in troubled places and along the remote border of empires invites us to consider how similar practices continue to shape religious responses to trauma today.

French Phenomenology's Neo-Thomist Augustine (Pablo Irizar)

Since the 1990s, Augustine has been a prominent interlocutor for central figures in French phenomenology, including Ricoeur, Marion, Chrétien and Falque. This Augustinian presence has a well-established German lineage via Scheler, Husserl, and Heidegger. There is a second, less-recognized French lineage: the French Catholic Neo-Thomist and existential-metaphysical tradition of Gilson and Maritain. This paper examines the context and distinctive interpretative features of Augustine in this French lineage and briefly considers how this might have shaped contemporary French phenomenology.

The medicinal image and the care of souls in the correspondence of Augustine (Naoki Kamimura)

Within the expanding field of scholarship on the ancient history of medicine, certain patristic writers are regarded as having played a pivotal role in intertwining the themes of illness and medical care with those of sin and spiritual care. Some scholars argue that their approach to these issues made a significant contribution to the development of medical analogy and metaphor. Others suggest that this development can be explained by their interest in the close correlation between medicine, ethics, and rhetoric in late antiquity. It is interesting to note that North African Christian writers such as Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine drew on medical imagery in particular. For example, Augustine “tells his hearers that it was by the Divine Physician’s humility that mankind was cured of the deadly tumor of pride” (R. Arbesmann, “The Concept of ‘Christus Medicus’ in St. Augustine,” *Traditio* 10 (1954): 1–28 at 9). He urges the congregation to follow the spirit of Christ the humbled physician in his sermons. Do these treatments work in his letters as they do in his sermons? In this paper, I will explore Augustine’s perception of the medico-religious conception in his correspondence. In the process, I will pay particular attention to the use of the medicinal image in these treatments, as well as to his approach to the care of souls.

Exporting the Gospel Along the Silk Road: How Commerce and Politics Evangelized Central Asia (Ilia Korchagin)

The 2015 discovery of medieval Nestorian artifacts in Kazakhstan reinvigorated a longstanding discussion about Christianity’s influence on the far East in its early centuries. Despite seldom being an area thought of with respect to Patristic witness, Central Asia became a prominent home to non-Chalcedonian Christians where important bishoprics and metropolises formed between the 5th and 7th centuries. This study seeks to connect these developments, about which we continue to learn rapidly, with the underlying social causes that made them possible. In particular, the economic realities of Silk Road trade coupled with the politics surrounding Christological controversies farther West of the Christian world can answer how we got here, and why Christianity ultimately died out in these regions.

Polycarp the Martyr: Definitely Not a Weary Old Man (Mona Tokarek LaFosse)

Despite stereotypes (ancient and modern) of old age being associated with weakness, Polycarp, who is at least eighty-six year years old, is portrayed as decidedly not “frail” in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*. Indeed, he is depicted as strong, able, wise, and articulate. Physiognomy and ideal old age provide frameworks for this depiction. This paper contrasts the elder Polycarp with other more negative Roman stereotypes of old men and their socio-cultural contexts, with comparison to the elders (old men) in 1 Timothy 5:17.

The exegesis of Gennadius of Constantinople through his Commentary on Hosea (Tiphaine Lorieux)

My paper seeks to shed light on the little-known figure of Gennadius I, Patriarch of Constantinople (†471), through his only complete surviving exegetical work: a commentary on Hosea, of which I am currently preparing the first critical edition. I will analyse his exegetical methods, positioned between the Antiochene tradition (historical and literal interpretation) and Alexandrian influences, especially that of Cyril. I will also examine his christological positions, still debated among scholars, in order to clarify their coherence. By situating Gennadius within the intellectual landscape of the fifth century, this paper aims to refine our understanding of the theological and cultural atmosphere of Constantinople in his time.

The New Life of Greek Fathers in the Medieval West: New Investigations into the Reception of Basil, John Chrysostom, and John Damascene (Riccardo Macchioro)

Across the late twelfth and the early thirteenth century, innovative Latin translations of theological writings by Basil of Caesarea, John Chrysostom, John Damascene, and other Greek Fathers were produced. Among the translators involved, prominent scholarly figures such as Burgundio of Pisa (1110-1193) and Robert Grosseteste (1175-1253) stand out. The new Latin versions of Basil's Hexaemeron (by Grosseteste), Chrysostom's Homilies on the Gospel of John (by Burgundio), and John Damascene's On the Orthodox Faith (by both Burgundio and Grosseteste) exerted a profound influence on contemporary theological and scholastic practice. Despite their significance, however, these major intellectual undertakings remain insufficiently studied. In this paper, I examine the reception and influence of the Greek Fathers through these translations. I present new findings that allow me to attribute to Burgundio further, previously unidentified translations – most notably (ps.) Basil's Commentary on the Book of Isaiah and Victor of Antioch's Commentary on the Gospel of Mark. I also introduce the aims of the recently funded SSHRC Project The Digital Burgundio Project, which will make the translations of Burgundio and Grosseteste, as well as their reception, accessible through purpose-built digital tools.

The Mind, Soul, and Inclusivity in Early Christian Community (Grayden McCashen)

Scholars have long debated whether early Christians viewed themselves as a third ethnicity, and recent years have seen an increased interest in the extent to which early Christian ideas anticipate later discourses on ethnicity and race. Contributing to this discussion, the present paper identifies a network of passages in second-century literature that contain logical connections between specific views of the nature and function of the mind or soul (the former being a part or faculty of the latter) and ethnic inclusivity in early Christian communities. It concludes by considering the implications of these passages for our understanding of ethnicity in early Christian communities and discourses.

The Necrosima: A Neglected Pseudo-Ephrem Collection (Austin McCredie)

The Necrosima are an understudied collection of 85 funerary hymns and homilies attributed to Ephrem the Syrian (d. 373). They were gathered together in the 18th century, when the Maronite Assemani family, commissioned by the Papacy, acquired the manuscripts, and edited, compiled, and translated the texts. In examining the Assemanis' work on and Latin translation of the Necrosima, it becomes readily apparent that a major goal of their efforts was to demonstrate Ephrem's alignment with Roman Catholic theology, namely: the judgment of souls at death; the purification of sins in Purgatory; and the immediate ascension of just souls to Paradise at death. However, a more detailed look at the Necrosima demonstrates that they present a variety of afterlife narratives. This paper will place some of the constituent texts of the Necrosima in conversation with each other and, more specifically, put Necrosima 59 in conversation with the Apocalypse of Paul. These comparisons will demonstrate how the Necrosima participated in the developing diversity of afterlife narratives in Late Antiquity.

A Scholastic Synthesis of Patristic Angelology: From Basil the Great to The Angelic Doctor (Alfonso Menanno)

This paper traces the reception of patristic angelology from Basil the Great to Thomas Aquinas. Beginning with Gregory of Nazianzus, Augustine of Hippo, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville, and John of Damascus, I survey Greek and Latin writings on angelic creation, the trial of grace, and the angelic governance of the world. I then follow this tradition's medieval reception in Anselm of Canterbury, culminating in Thomas Aquinas's clear, systematic, and holistic scholastic synthesis of patristic sources.

Distress, Trauma, and Therapy in Origen's Contra Celsum (Constantin-Ionut Mihai)

As Origen himself informs us, one of his aims in writing the *Contra Celsum* was to confirm weak Christians in their faith (*Cels.*, Praef. 4) by applying a 'spiritual medicine' that could heal the 'wound' (τραῦμα) made by Celsus' work in the souls of its readers (*Cels.* V, 1). In trying to counteract the state of mind of those who had been distressed by Celsus' treatise or by other opinions like his (*Cels.* IV, 1), Origen employs a variety of arguments and rhetorical strategies designed both to strengthen their faith and provide psychological support that could help them face the prospect of imminent persecution, suffering, and death with dignity and mequanimity. By focusing on these aspects, the paper aims to place Origen's treatise in constructive dialogue with Greco-Roman philosophical essays on the therapy of emotions written by authors such as Chrysippus, Plutarch, Galen, and others, showing to what extent this long-standing philosophical tradition inspired Origen's discourse on psychological afflictions and their cure.

How my Perspective on Early Christian Martyrdom Shifted After Investigating Contemporary Coptic Martyrdom in Egypt (Katherine E. Milco)

This paper analyzes what I discovered as a Patristic scholar investigating contemporary Coptic martyrdom in Egypt for a year. With the support of H.E. Metropolitan Thomas of Qussia, I interviewed roughly fifty Coptic Christians whose family members have been killed in attacks in Egypt (2011-2017). The goal of this research was not only to learn how Coptic Christians interpret martyrdom today but also to compare my findings with early Christian representations of martyrdom so that both continuities and discontinuities may be brought to light. This paper will outline the ways in which this comparison may challenge and enrich Patristic scholars' understanding of martyrdom in the early Church.

La personnalité de Dieu, une question non posée par les Pères de l'Église? / The personality of God, a question not asked by the Fathers of the Church? (Xavier Morales)

La question : "En quel sens est-il légitime pour les chrétiens d'affirmer que Dieu est une personne ? » est une question centrale de la théologie contemporaine. En revanche, comme le signalait déjà Karl Barth en 1932, elle n'a pas été posée par les théologiens anciens ¹. Il semble donc, a priori, que la patristique n'a rien à apporter à la question, ce qui est pour le moins paradoxal, puisque le concept de personne à partir duquel est posée la question est en grande partie le résultat des débats trinitaires et christologiques de l'époque patristique. Dans cette communication, j'évaluerai la contribution qu'une relecture de ces débats peut apporter à la question de la personnalité de Dieu. J'examinerai trois exemples : la description de l'agence de Dieu dans le monde chez les Apologistes du II e siècle ; la personnification du concept de logos

par son identification avec Jésus-Christ dans la Logoschristologie ; la question de la personnalité de l'Esprit saint à la fin du IV^e siècle.

Uera Amicitia: Augustine on Friendship in The Confessions (Kevin Muico)

In the Confessions, Augustine articulates a developing theology of friendship that charts its movement from an anthropocentric attachment to the theocentric uera amicitia. While his early understanding is shaped by Ciceronian and Aristotelian frameworks, Augustine ultimately judges these formative bonds as “unfriendly” insofar as they became conduits for disordered desire. Through the transformative work of grace, however, friendship is reconstituted as a participation in the life of the Holy Spirit. By examining the pivotal friendships narrated in the Confessions, Augustine unpacks how authentic friendship becomes a sanctifying medium through which persons are drawn into communal rest in God.

La métaphysique du diable chez saint Augustin. Ontologie, psychologie et praxis du diable : le diable, un ange d'expérience (Pascaline Turpin)

Cette communication examinera la place du diable dans la pensée de saint Augustin, en abordant le défi consistant à rendre compte du mal sans recourir à un dualisme incompatible avec le monothéisme chrétien. Marqué par sa rencontre avec le manichéisme, Augustin rejette fermement toute substantialisation du mal et cherche à expliquer l'existence du diable sans postuler un principe du mal autonome au côté de Dieu. Nous examinerons d'abord le statut ontologique du diable : le diable est-il une puissance réelle, ou simplement une figure allégorique représentant la faiblesse de la volonté humaine et la lutte spirituelle intérieure ? Ensuite, nous explorerons la portée de l'action diabolique, la possibilité d'une influence démoniaque sur les êtres humains, et la relation entre cette influence et la responsabilité morale humaine. Enfin, nous aborderons la tension entre la réalité du diable, la toute-puissance divine et l'affirmation d'Augustin selon laquelle le mal n'est rien d'autre qu'une privation du bien, afin de clarifier la cohérence de la métaphysique du mal chez Augustin.

Call, Struggle, Holiness: The Lives of Anthony of the Desert and Benedict of Nursia (Luis Esquivel Navarrete)

The present work is a comparison and contrast between the hagiographies of Anthony of the Desert and Benedict of Nursia, as written by Athanasius and Gregory the Great. The purpose of this work is to understand how the lives of these monks influenced their hagiographers, by analyzing three moments in the lives of these holy monks: their call, struggle, and death, to the hagiographical literature of the time.

Naming God: Eunomius, the Cappadocians, and the Shadow of Neoplatonism (Benedetto Neola)

This paper revisits one of the most intriguing intra-Christian debates of the fourth century: the controversy over the divine name(s) between Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa, on one side, and Eunomius of Cyzicus, on the other. After a concise reconstruction of each figure's position, the paper turns to a more speculative inquiry, focusing on Gregory of Nyssa's claim that the names of God do not express the divine essence, but only God's powers and activities. This theory will be set in dialogue with a strikingly similar, and ipso facto fundamentally different, view developed by the Neoplatonist Proclus. Engaging with Jean Daniélou's well-known thesis regarding Gregory's dependence on the Platonic tradition, the paper argues

that the late antique Christian debate de divinis nominibus cannot be fully grasped without situating it within the broader philosophical discourse on divine naming, particularly as shaped by Neoplatonic interpretations of Plato's Cratylus.

Donatists Reconsidered (Jennifer Otto)

In the sixteenth century, opponents of infant baptism were condemned as "re-baptizers" or "Anabaptists," and accused of reviving the practices of the fourth-century Donatists. This paper traces the evolving responses of those labelled "Anabaptists" to this association with the ancient heresy. In the aftermath of the Anabaptist Kingdom in Münster's defeat in 1535, Menno Simons, a Frisian priest turned evangelist of adult baptism, consistently denied any relationship between his church and the Donatists. His Dutch successors in the seventeenth century, however, posited a historical link connecting the so-called Anabaptists of the fourth and the sixteenth centuries. This paper argues that the later Anabaptists' receptivity to being associated with the Donatists reflects changing political circumstances and cultural attitudes towards the "heretical" in the Dutch Republic.

Mission and Mimesis: The Literary Erasure of Manichaeism in the Syriac Christian World (Timothy Pettipiece)

In Book One of his famous History of the Church, Eusebius of Caesarea foregrounds a curious tale about the arrival of Christianity at Edessa. The story of the apostle who came to be known as Addai would go on to serve as a template for how proto-orthodox Christians in the Syriac-speaking world came to understand their apostolic origins. However, scholars have long noted the apparent overlap between this tradition and the activities of the Manichaean missionary Adda. This paper will survey the sustained effort by Syriac authors, from the 4th century CE onwards, to reimagine the hagiographic landscape through an erasure and reappropriation of the legacy of Mani and his disciples.

The Donatist Schism: Reflections from the Fifth and Sixth Centuries by Augustine of Hippo and Gregory the Great (Emanuele Piazza)

This paper aims to explore the views of Augustine of Hippo and Gregory the Great on the Donatist schism in Africa. The confrontation that the Churches of Africa and Rome maintained with heresy and its protagonists, and the methods they used to combat the Donatists – including military ones – emerge from the vast literary corpus of these two Church Fathers.

Of Physicians and Theologians: Isidore of Pelusium on the Immortality of the Soul (Christian Raschle)

Despite the sustained editorial efforts of the late Pierre Éviéux, whose publication of letters 1214–2000 in the Sources Chrétiennes series (1997–2017) substantially advanced the textual basis of Isidore of Pelusium's correspondence, its author remains a marginal figure within Patristics and even more in the wider Classics community. Recent scholarship has largely privileged the theological and exegetical dimensions of his letters, as well as their relationship to the Apophthegmata Patrum, thereby overlooking their relevance for social and intellectual history (L. Larsen, "The letter collection of Isidor of Pelusium". In:

Chr. Sogno et al., *Late antique letter collections: a critical introduction and reference guide*, Berkeley 2016, p. 286-308). Among the nearly 2,000 extant letters, six are addressed to physicians—publicly appointed medical practitioners serving major urban centers of the Later Roman Empire (A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, Oxford 1964, 1012 and 1416), in which Isidore shows clearly his familiarity with the relevant medical literature, such that he could provide advice even to one of Pelusium’s doctors (cf. letter 1475 [Évieux] = 5, 191, PG 78). Yet, this paper focuses on the Letters 1791 (Évieux = 4.125, PG 78, 1197C-1203A) and 1792 (Évieux = 5.412, PG 78, 1571C), both sent to the scholasticus and doctor Prosechius, in which Isidore engages the physician in a pointed debate on the nature and immortality of the soul, explicitly confronting positions derived from Galenic medical theory (Galenus, *Quod animi mores corporis temperamenta sequantur*, cf. Galien, *L’âme et ses passions*. Introduction et traduction par Vincent Barras, Terpsichore Birchler, Anne-France Morand, et préface par Jean Starobinski, Paris 1995). Far from opposing medicine from an external theological standpoint, Isidore demonstrates a nuanced command of contemporary medical psychology (as in letter 1792), enabling a technically informed exchange with a professional interlocutor. Through a close philological and contextual analysis of the letter, supplemented by relevant medical literature, this paper reconstructs the physician’s implicit arguments. It situates the exchange within broader late antique discussions of the body, the soul, and medical knowledge. In doing so, it contributes to current interdisciplinary debates on the entanglement of medical, philosophical, and Christian discourses in the cultural history of the ancient Mediterranean world.

Which Books and Scholars Have Been the Most Influential in Contemporary Canadian Biblical Studies?: Analyzing the Results of a 2024 Survey (Robert Revington)

Harold Remus was one of the most important biblical scholars in Canada in the twentieth century. In keeping with this panel’s emphasis on “positionality and the study of religion in Canada, especially from the perspective of scholarship in the areas of early Christian history,” this paper analyzes the results of a 2024 survey that was distributed to biblical scholars both within and outside the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies. The survey was modeled on a similar survey Mark A. Noll distributed to American evangelical biblical scholars in his 1986 book *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America*. Our survey compiled demographic information, information on whether scholars had a faith background, and information on where scholars had completed their degrees. Other questions asked which books and scholars had most influenced respondents—as well as which specifically Canadian books and scholars had most influenced them and which Canadian scholars had made the biggest contribution to the discipline. (Incidentally, Remus received some votes in the survey.) Finally, respondents were asked which scholars in Canada had made the biggest contributions to addressing antisemitism in biblical interpretation. The survey provides a useful sample of the state of Canadian biblical studies today.

The Radiance who Makes Everyone Shine: Deification as Beautification in Ephrem the Syrian's Hymns on Paradise (Paul Robinson)

As a theologian of beauty, St. Ephrem the Syrian (c. 306–373) approached his teaching on deification from an aesthetic angle. In *Hymns on Paradise*, Ephrem describes the beauty of God as the food which satisfies and sustains humanity, and by which human beings themselves become beautiful. As humanity beholds and experiences God’s beauty in Paradise, humanity is nourished by that beauty and becomes beautiful as God is beautiful. Thus, I argue, for Ephrem, salvation—imagined as humanity’s return to Paradise—is a matter of deification as beautification, becoming beautiful as God is beautiful.

The Concept of Friendship Between the Classical Ideal and the Evangelical Realization in Jerome's Epistles during the First Period of His Life (347–382) (Maja Rončević)

This project examines Jerome's understanding of friendship based on letters written during the first half of his life, up to 382 CE. It analyzes how Jerome gradually moves away from classical notions of friendship (*philia*, *amicitia*) toward a Christian model grounded in moral and spiritual values. Through close reading of selected letters as primary sources, I analyze how the three classical types of friendship—utility, pleasure, and the good of the friend—are reshaped through ascetic practices, moral obligations, and openness to a wider community. The project explores the foundations, goals, and ways to sustain and renew Christian friendship, highlighting how Jerome seeks to align his friendships with evangelical ideals. As an early-stage study, feedback on the interpretive approach and structure is welcome.

Augustine's Mouth Has Two Sides: Augustine's Nuanced Engagement with Epicureanism in his Epistle 118 (Nathan Scott)

According to current consensus, in Augustine's *Epistula* 118 he wrote Dioscorus to praise Platonism and critique Epicureanism. This paper argues that Augustine's *Epistula* 118 is complex, and the current scholarly assessment has missed nuances. The first cue to complexity is Augustine's citation from Persius' *Satire* 1.27, which suggests that the supposedly harsh comments Augustine made to Dioscorus were meant as didactic rebuke in dialogue rather than annoyance. This paper will analyze the nuanced ways that Augustine explicated Cicero's critique of Epicureanism (i.e., DND 1.10.25ff.) and will argue that Augustine defended Anaxagoras' *sentient mens* (νοῦς) against Cicero's (i.e., Velleius') critique through adapting atomistic physics, i.e., Augustine's attitude toward Epicureanism was nuanced. The way he was able to defend Anaxagoras was through his subtle use of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*. This paper thus argues that Augustine was able to critique and support ideas at the same time, i.e., he condemned Epicureanism and drew support from it. In other words, Augustine spoke out of both sides of his mouth.

Augustine's Mouth Has Two Sides: Augustine's Nuanced Engagement with Epicureanism in his Epistle 118 (Nathan A. Scott)

In Augustine's *Epistula* 118 he apparently gave an ode to Platonism and a scathing critique of Epicurean atomism, which was driven by an exposition of Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*. The common reading is that Augustine was angrily and reluctantly replying to the rash young Dioscorus who demanded Augustine explain Cicero's texts. This paper argues that Augustine's *Epistula* 118 has a complex intent, and that the current scholarly assessment has missed these nuances. The first cue to this interpretation is Augustine's citation from Persius' *Satire* 1.27, near the beginning, which signaled that Augustine crafted the letter much like Persius' didactic poem, namely, Augustine was the wise poet and Dioscorus was the foolish interlocutor. In other words, the supposedly harsh comments Augustine made to Dioscorus were meant as a didactic rebuke from a caring teacher to a foolish student. This new interpretive framework helps us see that Augustine's praise for Platonism in this letter was actually a harsh critique wherein he equated Platonism with pride (i.e., the worst sin). Whereas Epicureanism almost seems less misguided by comparison. The bulk of this paper will analyze the nuanced ways that Augustine explicated Cicero's critique of Epicureanism in his history of philosophy (i.e., DND 1.10.25ff.). This paper will argue that Augustine defended Anaxagoras' *sentient mens* (νοῦς) against Cicero's (i.e., Velleius') critique and

positively incorporated it into Epicurean atomistic physics, i.e., Augustine's attitude toward Epicureanism was nuanced. Near the end of the letter Augustine even suggested that Epicurean atomism could be true if it was connected with divine providence. The way he was able to defend Anaxagoras was through his subtle use of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*. There are many striking similarities to Lucretius' poem that Augustine used in support of his rhetoric throughout this letter. This paper thus argues that Augustine was able to critique and support ideas (from various schools) at the same time, i.e., he condemned Epicureanism and drew from it in support of his critical arguments. In other words, Augustine spoke out of both sides of his mouth.

Papyrus Berolinensis Graeca 9794. An Anthology of Prayers and Its Hermetic Element (Agata Sowińska)

The Berlin Papyrus 9794 is a collection of liturgical prayers (hymns) intended for ecclesiastical use. The papyrus dates from the 3rd/4th century CE and presents content originally associated with a system that some assume rivaled Christianity. The purpose of my speech is to emphasize examples of borrowings of pagan texts for liturgical use or private devotion. A significant example of this type of content is a hymnal fragment of a Hermetic (and therefore pagan) text appearing on the early Christian Berlin Papyrus 9794. During the presentation, I will analyze the Hermetic hymn in comparison to other texts found on the Greek papyrus 9794.

The Reception of Patristics in Japan (Peter Steiger)

The goal of this paper will be to present some of the unique and fascinating features of the development of Patristics and Early Christian Studies in Japan. Though the contours of this historiography are known to scholars in Japan, it is less familiar to western scholars. In particular, the paper will address how study of early Christian documents first came to Japan, the first Japanese proponents of Patristics, and the historical circumstances that have impacted the development of early Christian studies in Japan for the past one hundred fifty years.

La représentation des émotions dans les récits de quête de connaissance. L'exemple des Homélies pseudo-clémentines (Philippe Therrien)

Les Homélies du Pseudo-Clément intègrent une théorie de la connaissance philosophique et religieuse à un cadre narratif dans lequel des personnages interagissent et entrent en conflit. À l'intérieur de cette gnoséologie narrée, les personnages éprouvent différentes émotions à des moments-clés du récit. Cette communication cherche à explorer la représentation des émotions dans l'Antiquité en situant les Pseudo-Clémentines dans leur contexte intellectuel et théologique. En quoi adoptent-elles ou transforment-elles les conceptions qu'on retrouve chez les philosophes anciens et les Pères de l'Église? Il pourrait ainsi être possible de mieux comprendre le rôle des émotions dans la construction de la connaissance et de la piété.

Job's συμπόσιον: The Figure of Job as Philosopher in the Homilies of Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom (Alex Michael Trew)

Although the book of Job was not widely commented upon by patristic authors, one common trope – first evidenced in Origen and continued in Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom – was to cast Job as an ‘athlete’ who virtuously endures the greatest suffering. However, surprisingly little attention has been paid to how in their preaching both Gregory and Chrysostom depict Job as a philosopher who reflects deeply on the meaning of his adversities. This paper examines the identity of Job ‘the philosopher’ and explores possible connections to the athletic dimension.

Creation in Progress? The Origin of Restlessness in St. Augustine’s Confessions (Sean Ulrich)

The theme of “restlessness” (inquietudo) features prominently in St. Augustine’s Confessions, but there is limited scholarship on his meaning of the term. This paper will examine St. Augustine’s use of the term in the Confessions and its thematic connotations (such as distress, mutability, and conversion), with particular emphasis on creation ex nihilo and fallen creatures’ failure to adhere to form, as outlined in Books XII–XIII. By analyzing this account in brief conversation with St. Augustine’s other works, this paper will aim to establish whether or not inquietudo is inherent to a created order which is still incomplete.

Dressing like God: A Sartorial Theology in the Paedagogus of Clement of Alexandria (Arthur Urbano)

Clement of Alexandria’s commentary on clothing and the instructions he gives to Christian women and men on what to wear and what not to wear are well-known and have received considerable scholarly attention. These sections of the Paedagogus are often read through the lens of costume history, gender studies, and the social and economic contexts of ancient Alexandria. This paper proposes analyzing Clement’s fashion exhortations from what I am calling a “sartorial theology,” with a focus on how clothing serves as a vehicle for theological thinking. Rich with scriptural citations, Clement’s discussion reveals that clothing is a matter of outward appearance, a vehicle of theological meaning, and a manifestation of the reality of life in Christ. Clement weaves together word and cloth, through exegesis, theological reflection, and fashion commentary to construct a “look” for the Christian that is built upon divine clothing in the scriptures. In this way, Clement provides a sartorial mode of expression and living that identifies a person redeemed in Christ and restored to the image of God.

“The Seven Daughters of the Spiritual Life” in the Shepard of Hermas (Andrius Valevicius)

This paper will investigate the “Seven Daughters of the Spiritual Life” as presented in the third vision in the Shepard of Hermas. Despite the importance and the popularity of the Shepard of Hermas in the patristic era and throughout the ages, after a preliminary search, it seems that no one, meaning, no major Christian author, has picked-up on them (the Seven Daughters). There are many instances of “seven daughters” in ancient, medieval and spiritual tradition symbolisms such as referring to them as the ‘dark night of the soul,’ challenges to spiritual growth such as darkness, dryness and desolation, etc., or to the ‘seven faculties’ such as sight, hearing, smell, etc. The Seven Daughters are also represented as the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as wisdom, understanding, fortitude, etc. However, in the Shepard of Hermas, they are quite different and very beautiful. Why have they been seemingly overlooked?

La thérapie des émotions dans la littérature ascétique d'Antiquité tardive (IVe-VIe s.) (Fabrizio Vecoli)

On propose de présenter le résultat de notre plus récente recherche sur le concept d'émotion dans la doctrine ascétique du monachisme primitif (IVe-VIe s.). Le terme grec (πάθος) est le plus souvent traduit en français par passion, mais nous allons néanmoins parler d'émotion en référence à l'objet d'étude, afin de le réinsérer dans le cadre des réflexions théoriques offertes par la littérature scientifique actuelle, qui parle effectivement d'émotions. L'intérêt que l'on porte au sujet est ici éminemment théorique, au sens de la théorie monastique primitive : il s'agit de mieux comprendre l'émotion en tant que terme technique du lexique des premiers moines. La problématique qui anime cette recherche est ce que Larchet appelait la « thérapie des maladies spirituelles » et que nous appellerons plutôt techniques de transformation du soi : les stratégies de guérison des émotions humaines.

Fathers in the Acts of the Christian Martyrs (Marcin Wysocki)

The role of the father in the life of every human being is undeniably fundamental and significant, and it manifests itself in particular and decisive moments of life. For all Christians—and especially for those of the first centuries—such a moment is undoubtedly the moment of professing the faith and, consequently, the willingness to give one's life for it. In the extant acts of early Christian martyrs, we also find information concerning the fathers of those who were persecuted. The aim of the proposed paper is therefore to present the meaning and role of the father in life, and above all at the moments of interrogation, imprisonment, or death for the faith, of the first Christians whose witness of life, faith, and self-sacrifice for Christ has been preserved in the acts of their martyrdom. An important element of the study will be to determine whether the figure of the father played a significant role in the martyrs' life of faith and what significance the paternal figure had in the process of bearing witness to the faith.

An Evaluation of Coptic Orthodox Objections to Gregory Palamas's Doctrine of Deification (Andrew N. A. Youssef)

The doctrine of deification has sparked a significant debate among Coptic Orthodox hierarchs and monastics such as Pope Shenouda III, Metropolitan Bishop of Damietta, and Matthew the Poor. With political, linguistic, and theological undertones, the debate has ostracized and vilified various figures including Byzantine theologian and saint of the Eastern Orthodox, Gregory Palamas. Interestingly, both sides of the debate, namely, Pope Shenouda and Metropolitan Bishop whose side vehemently questioned and scrutinized the doctrine of deification and Fr. Matthew the Poor whose side embraced the doctrine from its patristic roots, found Gregory Palamas's formulation of the doctrine either questionable or outright heretical. In this paper, I present the objections each side had to Gregory's doctrinal formulations and evaluate their validity against his claims as well as modern Eastern Orthodox interpretations of his writings.

The Reception of Augustine of Hippo in the Thought of Yaḥyā ibn ‘Adī (Syed A.H. Zaidi)

The Baghdādī Christian, Yaḥyā ibn ‘Adī (d. 974) was responsible for translating Plato and Aristotle from Greek into Arabic. Ibn ‘Adī was familiar with Augustine of Hippo and cites Augustine’s *On the Trinity* and *On Christian Belief* in his *Treatise on the Unity of God*, “Augustine said: ‘The One is not that which has no multiplicity in any respect, but rather that which is not divided within itself’” and “Augustine said that the soul knows itself by itself, not through the mediation of a body.” While Augustine borrows from Christian thinkers, many of these ideas were also borrowed from Greek philosophers. I argue that a direct influence of Greek thinking can be established from Plato and Aristotle into Augustine and therefore in the writings of Ibn ‘Adī who transmitted Greek thought to the Islamic World.

The Reception and Rejection of the Protevangelium of James in the Early Church (Lorne R. Zelyck)

The Catholic dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary is the result of exegetical confrontations in the fourth century CE. Epiphanius of Salamis defended this doctrine against the ‘Antidicomarians’ around 370 CE, as did Jerome of Stridon against Helvidius around 385 CE. However, Epiphanius and Jerome disagreed about the virginal status of Joseph. Epiphanius depicted him as an aged widower with numerous sons and daughters, while Jerome considered Joseph to be a virile, righteous virgin. These divergent understandings are directly influenced by the authority these respective authors placed on the second-century Protevangelium of James. Epiphanius considered it a ‘history,’ while Jerome believed it to be ‘apocryphal nonsense.’ This paper will examine the patristic reception and rejection of particular details in the Protevangelium of James – Anna and Joachim; Jesus’s birth in a cave; the presence of a midwife; the virginal status of Mary and Joseph; and the relationship between the brothers and sisters of Jesus. It will conclude by offering hypotheses on why this text continued to influence Christian tradition and doctrine, despite its condemnation by Pope Innocent I in 405CE.

Conversion, Delay, and Silence: Augustine and the Imperial Crisis after 386 (Zinan Zhang)

Augustine’s decision in 386 to resign from his position as the professor of rhetoric at Milan and to embrace Christianity takes place under the shadow of religious tension in the western part of the Roman Empire, a context he later narrated in *Confessiones* through the conflict between Ambrose and Justina. Yet this celebrated autobiography remained silent on the subsequent political crisis: the imperial civil war that begins in 387. The war obstructs Augustine’s return to North Africa and compels him to reside in Rome for roughly a year. By reading the works during this period together with his later retrospective remarks, this paper reconstructs Augustine’s situation within the crisis and his responses.