



ST. ATHANASIUS & ST. CYRIL

Coptic Orthodox Theological School Newsletter



SAVE THE DATE

21-23 September 2023

The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC - Heritage Hall

THE LITURGIES OF THE CHURCH OF ALEXANDRIA

Public lectures with
His Grace Bishop Kyrillos and
Rev. Canon Dr. Maxwell E. Johnson



Uncover the roots and growth of liturgical traditions in Alexandrian Christianity. Discover with experts and enthusiasts as we unravel our vibrant liturgical heritage.

PUBLIC LECTURES:

Maxwell Johnson, "The Study of Early Egyptian Liturgy: the Status quaestionis"
Thursday, September 21 - 6:00 p.m.

Bishop Kyrillos, "From Conference to Sanctuary: How Modern Scholarly Research Contributes to the History, Theology and Practice of Coptic Orthodox Liturgy"
Saturday, September 23 - 11:00 a.m.

REGISTRATION & MORE INFORMATION:

Scan QR Code



THE DIOCESE HONORS YOUTH ACHIEVEMENTS AT AWARDS CEREMONY

The Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Los Angeles, Southern California, and Hawaii came alive with celebration as the highly anticipated awards ceremony for the Youth Spiritual Competition, Mahrgan El-Keraza, and Bible Summer Camp took place on Saturday, August 12, 2023. The event was held at the prestigious UCLA Pauley Pavilion Stadium and was graced by the presence of His Eminence Metropolitan Serapion, along with Their Graces, His Grace Bishop Suriel, His Grace Bishop Abraham, and His Grace Bishop Kyrillos.

The ceremony served as a testament to the dedication, commitment, and spiritual growth of the youth within the diocese. Under the guidance and leadership of the esteemed clergy and the support of the local churches across the entire Diocese, the Youth Spiritual Competition, Mahrgan El-Keraza, and Bible Summer Camp have become integral platforms for fostering spiritual development, knowledge, and community engagement.

The UCLA Pauley Pavilion Stadium provided a fitting backdrop for this grand celebration, symbolizing the unity and strength of the Diocese as it gathered together in joyous fellowship. The awards ceremony was a culmination of weeks of dedication and hard work put forth by the participating youth in the various competitions and programs.



Project to catalogue the Coptic and Arabic manuscripts at Dayr al-Suryān



From July 4th to 18th, Fr. Arsenius Mikhail joined a global team of researchers on a mission to create a detailed catalogue of Coptic and Arabic manuscripts housed in Egypt's ancient Dayr al-Suryān Monastery. Supported by grants from Yale University's William K. and Marilyn M. Simpson Endowment for Egyptology, under the direction of Prof. Stephen J. Davis, this decade-long effort aims to provide comprehensive print catalogues for the monastery's 1,200 manuscripts. This catalog will offer thorough insights into their physical condition, descriptions, and contents, increasing accessibility to the monastery's cultural treasures—dating back to the 12th century—containing valuable Biblical manuscripts, theological works, ascetic compositions, and liturgical texts in Coptic and Arabic.

Fr. Arsenius collaborated with esteemed mentors and peers like Stephan Davis, Prof. Mark N. Swanson, Fr. Arsany Paul, and Dr. Lasse Løvlund Toft. He leads the cataloguing of 470 manuscripts, constituting to volumes 7, 8, and 9 of the catalogue series to be published in Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium Subsidi by Peeters Publishers in Belgium. For more information on this project, please scan the QR codes below:



SCIENCE AND FAITH

These are two spheres of ideas: Faith deals with philosophical concepts while Science deals with empirically discovered laws or processes. The thinking process involved in both of these fields is not entirely different, for it deals with the flow of thoughts from upper-level concepts down to the data. It's called "top-down" flow of ideas. In addition to that, there is a flow of information or data in order to form higher level concepts, and this flow is called "bottom-up" direction of information.

The Mind behind Faith and Science is God the Creator. During the Renaissance period, partly due to restrictions that the Western Church put on scientific conclusions, led to the perception that the Church is an opponent to science, to the freedom of drawing experiment-driven conclusions through the scientific method of inquiry. Scientists indeed have been punished by the clergy leadership in the West, such as Giordano Bruno who was burned in Rome in 1600 for insisting on the Galilean shocking conclusion that Earth is in motion.

Charles Darwin's Evolution Theory has led the scientific community to eliminate the "God of the Bible." While Evolution is a sound scientific theory, manifested in all species, Darwin's Origin of the Species has become the new bible of science, and has rendered his Evolution Theory as the author of all Biology. Now, since Science made a certain conclusion of the absence of God, Faith must respond to this claim. The response must be from science not from the Bible, and it must use a scientific process in this endeavor.

One such response is that the discovery of the DNA happened after the Darwinian Theory, and DNA is the agreed upon fact that it is the molecule that carries all the species information, and it encodes the data by which proteins are synthesized. So, in answering what is the origin of life, the question becomes what is the origin of the DNA?

By Fr. Gregory
Bishay



Can DNA be built by itself, by forces of nature, through Biochemistry? If the assumption is that God does not exist, therefore it must be the case that DNA came into existence only by forces of nature. DNA is formed of a "sequence" of base-pairs (A-T, T-A, C-G, or G-C), and the "sequence" of these base-pairs is what defines a species type. Therefore, "can the sequence be created by Biochemistry?" is an essential question!

Similarly in Cosmology, the "Origin" of the Big Bang is occluded by the study of what happened in the infinitesimal time that followed that event. Sincere physicists describe certain conditions (Laws) that must exist for the Big Bang to happen. These are laws of Conservation of Energy and Conservation of neutrality of electric charge. So, there is still the question of where these mandatory Laws come from. The Origin of Life and that of Origin of Matter are the keys to honest Scientific endeavors as pertaining to the existence of an Initiator or not.

As a conclusion: "If the "non-existence" of God is impossible, then that in a sense is a proof of His existence".

If one looks at the DNA one would find that there is no Biochemical forces between a certain base-pair and the one following it or the one preceding it. In other words, if one is standing at an A-T base pair, there is no law that can tell you what is the next base pair, and what was the preceding one either. Hence the sequence comes from another source other than nature!

What or Who is that source? God is. That source has to have the ability to provide information because the DNA is information in the form of a sequence, exactly has a sequence of letters and words that form a rational article.

Ways to Support ACTS Theological School

Online: www.actslibrary.org/donate or scan the QR code

Mail: 3901 Westerly Place, Newport Beach, CA 92660

Scan the QR code to donate or to set up an automatic monthly payment schedule, please contact our office today and we will gladly assist you.



*Thank you
for being a
cheerful
giver*

