

News & events: Spring Term January to April 2012



Pasolini's Strange Gospel Saturday 25 February 2012

We can often believe that Christians 'own' the Bible and have the monopoly on its interpretation. Yet sometimes profound insights into its truths can come from unlikely quarters. This session will take a look at the 1964 film *The Gospel according to St Matthew* by Pier Paolo Pasolini. We will explore some of the themes that were important to this unlikely Christian sympathiser and see how they might be relevant to our own time.

Tutor: Revd Dr James Walters, *Chaplain LSE*
Venue: The Chapter House Crypt, St Albans Abbey
Time: 10.30 am to 1.00 pm **Cost:** £12

God through the lens Saturday 31 March 2012

This morning offers a further chance to see God through the photographic lens, following the successful workshop last year, *God is at eye level*. After an introductory reflection, we will use the Abbey and surrounding park to wander and reflect with the aid of a camera, then share insights. No photographic experience necessary, just some sort of camera (a phone will do), and no need to have been on the last workshop.

Tutor: Roy Gregory, *Tutor in Christian Spirituality*
Venue: The Chapter House Crypt, St Albans Abbey
Time: 10.00 am to 2.00 pm **Cost:** £12

Short evening courses

The venue for both courses is the Chapter House at St Albans Abbey.

What do Christians know? Tuesdays 10 to 31 January 2012

"What do Christians know?", or perhaps "Christianity is just stupid", is often about as far as people get in a philosophical critique of Christian faith. But are they right? Is it impossible to talk about Christian faith in a manner which is understandable and credible to the modern mind? Or does any such attempt reduce Christianity to something with no worthwhile content? Or is it that the modern mind needs to change? Come and find out.

Tutor: Revd Dr David Munchin, Rector, Welwyn Team Ministry, and author of *Is Theology a science?*
Time: 8.00 pm-9.30 pm **Cost:** £32

Donne undone Tuesdays 7 to 21 February 2012

Three evenings with the poetry, preaching and personal biography of John Donne, Dean of St Paul's 1621 to 1631, and one of the greatest religious poets and writer of love poetry in the English language.

Tutor: Revd Dr Dave Dickinson, *Director StACCS*
Time: 8.00 pm –9.30 pm **Cost:** £24

Lady Chapel Lectures

The venue for both lectures is the Lady Chapel at St Albans Cathedral. The lectures begin at 7.30 pm and tickets cost £5.

An Introduction to the Gospel of Mark Thursday, 26 January 2012

In the church year beginning on Advent Sunday 2011, Mark's Gospel is read semi-continuously in the Revised Common Lectionary. In this one-off lecture **Dr Jeffrey John, Dean of St Albans**, will introduce the main themes of the Gospel, helping your hearing of the Gospel through the year become clearer and more enriching.

Dickens and Christianity Monday, 20 February 2012

2012 sees the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens and to mark the occasion StACCS is delighted to welcome an acknowledged Dickens expert, **Professor Valentine Cunningham**, a fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, to explore with us Dickens' own spirituality and the representation of Christianity in his writing.

Further information

For more information on all our courses, venues and teaching staff, please go to

www.christianstudies.org.uk

St Albans Centre for Christian Studies
Sumpter Yard, St Albans, AL1 1BY
01727 890205 or info@christianstudies.org.uk

St Albans Centre for Christian Studies is an ecumenical centre for Christian learning and the adult education division of St Albans Cathedral Education Trust Registered Charity No. 299317

A large print version of this leaflet is available on request.

Spring Term 2012

Application form

Please enrol me/us on the following course(s):

Name(s).....

Address.....

Post code.....

Tel.....

Email.....

Church attended (if any).....

The Old Testament (Certificate course)

Great contemporary moral issues

What do Christians know?

Donne undone

The Gospel of Mark

Dickens and Christianity

Heavenly reading

Augustine in a day

How to read *Job* as a Christian

Pasolini's strange gospel

God through the lens

I enclose payment of £.....

**Please send cheques payable to
St Albans Cathedral Education Trust to:**

The Secretary, St Albans Centre for Christian Studies
Sumpter Yard, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 1BY

We do not want anyone to be deterred from attending any events for financial reasons. If you find the fees prohibitive, please contact the Centre on 01727 890205. Your details will not be disclosed to any third party. If you would prefer not to receive information about future events at the Study Centre, please tick this box

St Albans Cathedral Education Trust is a registered charity no. 299317

Certificate in Theology

The six-module St Albans Certificate in Theology can be taken in full or you can opt to study the modules that interest you. Those who attend a module receive a certificate of attendance and participation, whilst those who successfully submit a short assignment receive a certificate of achievement. We welcome both levels of interest and commitment. On completion of all 6 modules the St Albans Certificate in Theology is awarded. **For more details see our certificate leaflet and web site.**

An Introduction to the Old Testament

This ten week course (module 2 in the programme) will introduce the books of the Old Testament and explore questions about their authorship, meaning and content. It may be taken as part of the certificate programme or as a stand alone course.

Tutor: Revd Dr Kevin Walton, St Albans Cathedral

Venue: Marlborough Road Methodist Church, St Albans

Dates: Tuesdays from 10 January (no session on 14 February)

Time: 8.00 pm **Cost:** £85 (£75 if signing up for the whole certificate programme, please ask for details)

Ten week study course

Great contemporary moral issues

Among issues which are of great moral concern today are the family, animals, abortion, euthanasia, multiculturalism, immigration, freedom of speech and religion, capital punishment, war, and world hunger. This course is an intelligent and comprehensive introduction to these issues. Dr Esmail lectures at Oxford and Cambridge, and is an Advisor to Birkbeck College, London.

Tutor: Dr Karim Esmail **Venue:** St Albans Cathedral

Dates: Wednesdays from 11 January 2012 (no session on 22 February)

Time: 7.30 pm **Cost:** £75

Saturday study mornings and days

All events include morning coffee. Please bring a packed lunch for events continuing beyond 1.00 pm.

Heavenly reading: spirituality & study Saturday 28 January 2012

Exploring the special relationship between spirituality and

study, Br Patrick will trace the history of the library, illustrating his lecture with slides of many ancient libraries. He will also look at figures like Dr Johnson, Jonathan Swift and Oliver Goldsmith. 'Disciple' literally means 'learner', but you will have a different understanding of 'study' after this lecture.

Tutor: Br Patrick FSC

Venue: The Chapter House Crypt, St Albans Abbey

Time: 10.30 am coffee, lecture 11.00 am-12.30 pm

Cost: Donations on the day, please book in advance.

Augustine in a day Saturday 11 February 2012

Augustine of Hippo (354-430) was arguably the greatest Western theologian, yet his voluminous output and precision of thought mean that the subtlety of his doctrinal positions is often hard to grasp. The day will start by discussing Augustine's life and influences, partly based on his well-known *Confessions*. We will then examine his thought concentrating particularly on the areas of Trinitarian doctrine; church and sacraments (Donatist controversy); and the Fall, original sin and grace (Pelagian controversy). It will be seen that, from papal centralisation through Luther to modern evangelicalism, Augustine's ideas essentially define Western Christianity.

Tutor: Revd Isabella Image, Diocese of St Albans

Venue: The Chapter House Crypt, St Albans Abbey

Time: 10.30 am to 3.30 pm **Cost:** £18

How to read *Job* as a Christian Saturday 18 February 2012

The Book of Job describes the travails of a man of the ancient near East, who measures his wealth in livestock and probably was not even an Israelite. He is praised more highly than any other character in the Old Testament, but then loses everything, including his comforting image of God's benevolence. How can modern Christians read and relate to this book and to a man who rails against God? Is Job an example to follow or avoid? This morning grapples with these questions as we take a closer look at Job's wrestling with God.

Tutor: Dr Will Kynes, Keble College, Oxford

Venue: The Chapter House Crypt, St Albans Abbey

Time: 10.30 am to 1.00 pm **Cost:** £12