

PRESS RELEASE

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The Healing Initiative
Third Conference on Holistic Healing in Byzantium: Modern Adaptations
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Conclusion of Spring Conference on Holistic Healing; Directions for Future Conferences

BROOKLINE, MASS: Concluding a three-year ongoing conference on Holistic Healing in Byzantium that has already spawned one book, this year's spring conference of the Healing Initiative brought together an international panel of lecturers to discuss modern manifestations of Byzantine healing practices in fields as diverse as medicine, psychology, homeopathy, sexuality, faith healing, and the arts, exploring their interdependent relationships and emphasizing the psychosomatic nature of human beings.

This year's exploration, entitled Modern Adaptations, was held on March 31-April 1 at Hellenic College's Maliotis Cultural Center. It featured health care providers, scholars, authors, and other renowned figures, including a keynote address by His Eminence Metropolitan Athanasios of Limassol of Cyprus. The Metropolitan also participated in a panel that discussed criteria for determining genuine healing and healers; the panel examined ABC-News footage of the controversial, world-renowned Brazilian healer "John of God." The Metropolitan was joined on the panel by author Kyriacos Markides, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology at the University of Maine; Jeff Rediger, M.D., Medical Director of McLean Hospital-South East and Clinical Instructor of Psychology at Harvard Medical School; Perry Carlos, D.O., Chairman of Primary Care for The Baptist Health System, Jacksonville, FL; Emily Markides, Ph.D., founder of the International Ecopeace Village; Erik Bohlin, social worker at New Hope Counseling Service in Everett, WA; and John T. Chirban, Ph.D., Th.D., Professor of Psychology at Hellenic College and Clinical Instructor of Psychology at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Chirban acted as Moderator for the panel.

The conference also included a symposium that examined the impact of healing powers of prayer on the whole person, linking Byzantine and modern studies, by Dr. John Chirban, Dr. Perry Carlos, and Erik Bohlin.

The March 31-April 1 conference at Maliotis Cultural Center served to illustrate holism as understood in Byzantium, through presentations on a diversity of modern practices. Homeopathy was discussed by Laura Josephson, C.C.H., R.S.Hom. (N.A.), homeopath, author, and former president of the New York State Homeopathic Association. The role of the Arts in healing was discussed by Maureen Lansat, L.M.H.C., Director of Healing through the Arts Internship in Palm Beach Gardens, FL. The conference also explored the impact of healing powers of prayer on the body by Joan Kakascik, Ed.D., Psychologist of Saddle Brook, New Jersey.

Examination of healing trends helped the conference point towards future directions for healing, as participants heard from a variety of speakers, including Spero Kinnas, M.D., FACS, who discussed "Healing in the Orthodox Mission Field," Emmanuel Karavasounos of Bellerose, NY, who spoke on "How and Why Are Science and Religion Both Necessary and Indispensable Elements for the Attainment of the Mystical State and Healing;" Presvetera Vasiliki Eckley, M.Div., of Galveston, Texas, who treated "The Orthodox Idea of Male and Female in Human Being and Becoming," and Joy Hathaway, M.A., C.P.A., who presented on "The Healing Power of Christ's Face."

This year's conference served to initiate the Programme on Sex, Intimacy, and Love. This project is part of a larger future study that was introduced by The Rev. Nicholas Graff, president of the Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine, Psychology, and Religion, and Panagiotis Papaconomou and Timoclia Zacharogeorgas, who shared results from their pilot study on sex education.

Previous conferences of the Healing Initiative on Byzantine Healing set the stage for this Conference's exploration of Byzantine healing practices. All three conferences have also provided the content for the forthcoming book entitled *Healing in Byzantium: Science and Faith*. Additionally, this book works to examine the relationship between "Belief and Faith Healing," exploring the holistic concepts, understanding of Christ's Healing Ministry, and other figures and theological dimensions of Byzantine healing, and epistemological and methodological issues in medicine, psychology, and religion. The manuscript is currently in production with Holy Cross Press.

In this coming year, the Healing Institute and the Institute of Medicine, Psychology, and Religion will be involved in multiple conferences that treat the topic of holistic healing. This coming month, an IMPR affiliate, the Metanexus Institute, is sponsoring a conference on *Continuity and Change: Perspectives in Science and Religion*, from June 3-7 in Philadelphia, PA. Additionally, a conference will be held in November regarding the newly-inaugurated Programme on Sex, Intimacy, and Love. This conference, sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine, Psychology, and Religion, an IMPR affiliate, will take place WHERE?? from November DATES?? More information will be posted on this website as it becomes available.

The Healing Initiative of the Institute for Medicine, Psychology, and Religion is an outgrowth of collaborative research with the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University. Sponsored in part by the Lilly Foundation at Hellenic College and

the Local Societies Initiative of the Metanexus Institute, its ethos encourages the integration of faith and healing by supporting interdisciplinary dialogue, research, and practice through publications and conferences in the field of holistic healing.

Those interested in attending future conferences are encouraged to take advantage of early registration dates. The full conference schedule and registration information will be accessible at <http://www.inmpr.org/conferences.htm>. To request more information about future events, please write to the Institute for Medicine, Psychology, and Religion, PO Box 380958, Cambridge, MA 02238. Visit www.inmpr.org for more details.