



METROPOLITAN ANDREY SHEPTYTSKY INSTITUTE OF
Eastern Christian Studies
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



March 31, 2025

This Month at MASI

Dear Friends of the Sheptytsky Institute,
Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Here at the Institute, we are preparing for the end of the Winter Term with classes ending this Friday. Our Lenten journey continues however with Lenten Sixth Hour, the Canon of St. Andrew and the Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts this last week of classes. During the Great and Holy Fast, a Sixth Hour is offered in place of our Tuesday weekly Divine Liturgy and the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts takes the place of Friday evening vespers. Our chaplaincy members have recognized the penitential and ascetic flavour of this season through these services and are learning the new and hauntingly beautiful melodies associated with them.



Back by popular demand, Fr. Jack Custer delivered an excellent seminar session on the book of Exodus, providing engaging instruction for our returning participants, as well as some new guests from the Department of Religious Studies! Kileen Sprock, one of our participants, shared these insights from the seminar:

Over the past several months I have had the pleasure of hearing Fr. Jack Custer speak and enjoying the hospitality of the Sheptytsky Institute. Fr. Custer hosted talks on the Book of Genesis and the Book of Exodus which shed new light on stories I have loved since I was a child. Fr. Custer is an engaging, thoughtful and insightful storyteller and scholar, with so much knowledge to share that was delivered with enthusiasm, grace and humour. He brought sacred scripture to life by sharing historical context on such stories as Adam and Eve, Joseph's Dreams and the flight from Egypt, while simultaneously making connections to the Gospels that were, in a manner of speaking, mind-blowing.

Sheptytsky Institute graciously provided a meal before the seminars, offering the opportunity to meet new people and enjoy fellowship in a warm, welcoming environment. It was wonderful to be part of a community united by curiosity and faith. Through these seminars, I made new friends and experienced scripture not only as text to read, but as a living conversation, and for that I am so grateful to Fr. Custer and Sheptytsky Institute. If you are reading this and are seeking to understand, engage in thoughtful discussion and build meaningful connections, I encourage you to attend future seminars and events led by gifted speakers at the Sheptytsky Institute.

Fr. Jack has enriched the term tremendously in sharing his time and talent with our theological offerings as well as providing support at St. Sophia's chaplaincy. Thank you Fr. Jack!



This year, 2025, marks an incredible milestone in that it is the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea. This Council produced the first half of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed which we continue to proclaim in the Divine Liturgy and definitively articulated the Divinity of Christ against the threat of Arianism in the fourth century. In cooperation with [Regis St. Michael's Campus Ministry](#), the Institute hosted a student event which included short presentations and a round-table discussion with four priests: Fr. David Alenskis (Anglican), our chaplain Fr. Michael Bombak, Fr. Geoffrey Ready (OCA) and Fr. Adam Hincks, S.J (Roman Catholic). The theme of the presentations and

discussion was “how to live Nicene Christianity on campus” and was well received by the students, many of whom stayed after to continue discussions over pizza!

Frs. Alexander and Andrew are currently representing MASI at the Angelicum in Rome at the “Nicaea 2025: Context, Event & Reception,” a conference the Institute has cosponsored. At the conference the Fathers will also present the new book “Eastern Catholic Theology in Action: Essays in Liturgy, Ecclesiology and Ecumenism” edited by our professors Fr. Andrew Summerson and Dcn. Cyril Kennedy and dedicated to our Professor Emeritus Fr. Peter Galadza. [Read more about the book here](#) and get your own [copy at our MASI online bookstore!](#)

As we draw closer to the end of Lent we ask that you keep our clergy in prayer. Last weekend Fr. Michael delivered a mission at St. George the Great Martyr Parish in Oshawa and has upcoming retreats and missions at the Blessed Martyr Bishops Byzantine Catholic Mission in Nashville, St. Joseph Parish in Oakville, and Holy Eucharist in Toronto.

In closing, we here at the Institute would like to warmly invite you join us this summer at [“Study Days 2025: Scripture in the Eastern Traditions.”](#) With four exemplary speakers, this promises to be the highlight of the summer. Register now and take advantage of early-bird pricing!

Finally, thank you friends for your continued support and generosity. We are only able to provide these opportunities **through your continued financial support of the Institute.** May the Good Lord bless you for your generosity and from all of us here at the Institute, a joyous Pascha in the Light of the Risen Christ!



Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Alexander Laschuk, JCD/PhD
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