

**Scholars Corner – Issue 7**  
**News, Reviews & Publications**

Prof. Asher Kaufmann, *on his forthcoming publication “Contested Frontiers: Cartography, Sovereignty, and Conflict in the Lebanon, Israel, Syria Tri-Border Region”*



Revd. Dr. Andreas Loewe, *on his time at Tantur and Jerusalem and his research on composer Johann Sebastian Bach.*



Revd. Dr. Michael Hurley, *on his book entitled “Parish Cell Communities as Agents of Renewal in the Catholic Church in Ireland,” (Mellen Press).*



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**Scholars Corner – September 2012  
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## **Prof. Asher Kaufman**

**Associate Professor of History and Peace Studies, Director of Doctoral Studies, Kroc Institute, The University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, USA**

As a faculty member of the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at The University of Notre Dame I have been coming to Tantur every summer since 2006 with students of our MA program. Additionally, it was at Tantur where I began working on my forthcoming book, *Contested Frontiers: Cartography, Sovereignty, and Conflict in the Lebanon, Israel, Syria Tri-Border Region*. In 2007-2008 I spent 9 months here, laying the foundations for this research project that will be published next spring (forthcoming from the Wilson Press in association with the Johns Hopkins University Press). Tantur, therefore, has been tightly linked to my teaching and researching at the University of Notre Dame. This book analyzes the history of the tri-border region from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. It tries to tell a micro-history of this region, which is no more than a hundred square kilometers, but at the same time draw macro conclusions about border dynamics in the Middle East. By focusing on borders, the book gives a fresh look on three issues that research has seemingly exhausted: the colonial legacy of the Middle East, the Arab-Israel conflict and inter-Arab state dynamics. I focus on the history of cartography of this region and the politics of mapping from the colonial era to independence and beyond. I also analyze different forms of border dynamics, between Jews and Arabs, between Syrians and Lebanese, and between the three states, as manifested in this unique region where Syria, Lebanon and Israel converge. Finally, the book offers a comprehensive analysis of the history and politics of current border conflicts in this region (such as the Shebaa Farms and the village of Ghajar) that since 2000 have been at the center of regional and international attention.

## **Revd. Dr. Andreas Loewe**

**Gavan Lecturer in Theology and College Chaplain of Trinity College, The University of Melbourne, Australia**

The Revd. Dr. Andreas Loewe is currently Gavan Lecturer in Theology and College Chaplain of Trinity College, The University of Melbourne, Australia. In a month's time, he will leave Trinity to take up his new responsibilities as Dean of St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral also in Melbourne. Andreas spent a week in Tantur in January, exchanging the Australian summer for a balmy Jerusalem winter (he really timed his visit very well, a week later there was snow at Tantur). On Australia Day, he gave a public lecture on his research on Johann Sebastian Bach's *St John's Passion*, exploring some of the theological themes contained in this monumental work, and how the composer is able to give voice to St. John's Passion narrative through his music. The lecture brought together visitors and Jerusalemites, academics and students, and also folks who simply loved Bach's music: an exciting forum for searching questions and stimulating discussion. In addition to his lecture, Andreas spent time in the National Library of Israel, working on a volume on Judaism contained in Bach's library in preparation for a research project on Bach's relationship with, and knowledge of Jews and Judaism. While at Tantur, Andreas not only managed to catch up with old friends, but made new friendships, including researchers in the musicology department and at the Rothberg School of the Hebrew University. While brief, his visit to Tantur will certainly not be his last: thanks are due to the Rector, Fr. Tim and his wife Lisa Lowe for their kind hospitality and the friendship of resident scholars and visitors at Tantur. Thanks are also due to resident scholar, the Revd Dr Yazid Said, an old friend of Andreas' from Cambridge, who first suggested and helped facilitate the visit.

## **Revd. Dr. Michael Hurley**

**Doctorate from Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland**

Since 1990, I have been committed to the parish cell system. I see that it changes lives and influences parishes. It promotes small faith groups of 4 to 12 friends (cells), who meet regularly, for the purposes of worship, formation in faith and evangelization in a person's home. In this way the parish becomes a community of communities, while participants find joy in believing in Jesus Christ, courage to speak about him and generosity in serving their parishes and those in need. In recent years evangelization that is new in 'ardor, methods and expression' has taken on a high profile, for example, the Synod of Bishops during October was given to this theme. It focuses upon a response, as a matter of urgency, to new pastoral situations in the Western World where, for vast numbers of people, their baptism has little or no influence, and where sections of cultures and countries have lost their Christian ethos. This book is my attempt to see the contribution of the Parish Cell System of Evangelization to New Evangelization. I began with a broad literature review of the history, purposes, meaning and approaches of New Evangelization. I then examined the theological principles, which underpin parish cells, and conducted surveys with people who participate in them throughout Ireland to assess their experience, and understanding, of New Evangelization. My research yielded a number of conclusions. Firstly, the Parish Cell System and New Evangelization call for a living friendship with Christ to motivate what people do. Personal transformation must precede authentic witness. Secondly, friendship, which seeks what is best for people and the world, is a central method. Respect of people must guide authentic sharing of faith. Thirdly, both highlight community because it expresses belonging and support. Cell participants, for example, formed real bonds within their groups, which they lived out in emotional, prayer and financial support. Community, in this sense, was itself a witness and made Christianity visible and attractive. Fourthly, the church of the home and family has deep roots in Irish Christianity. In conclusion, the Parish Cell System has much to contribute, especially in Ireland, to evangelization as an operational model for parish renewal. Rev. Dr. Michael Hurley can be contacted on [hurleymichael@eircom.net](mailto:hurleymichael@eircom.net). Book available in theological libraries