



THE TANTUR ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE

Fr. Brian Daley, S.J. Appointed Senior Ecumenical Fellow of Tantur

Fr. Daley brings a lifetime of study and 35 years' experience in Catholic-Orthodox ecumenical dialogue to the newly created position.



Fr. Brian Daley, S.J., the Catherine F. Huisking Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame, recipient of the 2012 Ratzinger Prize for Theology, has been appointed to the newly created position of Senior Ecumenical Fellow of the Tantur Ecumenical Institute.

An historical theologian who has authored numerous works, Fr. Daley has been president of the North American Patristic Society, an editor of the scholarly journal *Traditio*, and also serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*. Fr. Daley has been a member of the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation in North America since the early 1980s and is at present its Executive Secretary.

"In the 1960s and 1970s, ecumenical conversations were unknown territory, but there is a different landscape today," Fr. Daley remarks. "A lot of progress has been made from fifty years ago; people and churches are more cordial towards one another. We've done a good deal in this direction, so what is the next step?"

As Senior Ecumenical Fellow, Fr. Daley will work to develop pre- and post-doctoral fellowship programs for junior and senior scholars, and help to determine the direction of ecumenical theological studies and programs at Tantur. Fr. Daley describes his role as facilitating "a return to that question of what can be accomplished in this place at this time to benefit Christian dialogue and unity."

Tantur at a Glance

Three Month Sabbatical Program
and *Tuesdays at Tantur*



Our autumn program began with the arrival of our 2016 Three Month Sabbatical Program participants. This year's Three Month group is one of the most nationally diverse programs we have had in recent years, with participants coming from Australia, Canada, India, Indonesia, Ireland, the Philippines, Scotland, the United States and Vietnam. It is also the first group led by our new Program Director, Mr. Frederic Masson. Meanwhile, *Tuesdays at Tantur* continues in its second season as we invite local and international authorities on a variety of different subjects to attend our twice-monthly discussions at Tantur Institute, which are well-attended by both locals, international guests and program participants.



Tantur Reflections

Fr. Joseph Lourdusamy

I reached Tantur on the 4th of March. Some of my new friends in the six week Continuing Education Program, which was at its last phase at the time of my arrival, introduced me to the area by taking me along whenever they went out around Jerusalem. It was nice having met them. Then came the Easter group, which I joined for most of the field trips around Jerusalem, the Galilee and other places; visits which I will cherish for life.

These three months were also a good time of learning for me. After having finished most of the field trips, I then focused on my research. I had an undisturbed time in the library, which I found had books related to my topic of study, which I did not find in my own university. I am grateful that I could have an uninterrupted use of these books that I needed, and was also happy that I could also consult books at *École Biblique* in Jerusalem. I am deeply satisfied that my stay in Tantur not only helped me see around the holy sites of the three great religions of the world, but also enhanced my study.

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Out of Sabbatical Comes Art

2013 Three-Month Sabbatical program participant creates a dazzling array of embroidery from her experience.

Tantur residents and program participants frequent reflect upon their stay in the Holy Land through writing blogs, articles, photography and video, but every so often a more unique expression materializes. Such is the case with Deborah Mullins, a participant in the 2013 Three-Month Sabbatical. An accomplished embroidery craftswoman, Deborah drew inspiration from program visits and independent trips during her three-month stay in the Holy Land.

"A kippah shop on Ben Yehuda; the wonderful Bethlehem couching on Palestinian wedding dresses; an exhibition of photographs of Cordoba at the Hamman al Ayn off the cotton traders market in the Old City; the layers of history, conquest, and life at what is now called Sepphoris in the Galilee - all provoked something."

Three years on, Deborah still hopes to return to Tantur and the Holy Land. Perhaps next time we will see even more embroidery masterpieces created as a result of another sabbatical!

A gallery of Deborah's embroidery can be viewed on [Facebook](#).



Fr. Joseph Lourdusamy spent the spring of 2015 at Tantur as a scholar. From India, he arrived to Tantur while a student at the Theology Faculty of the Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg, Germany.



Two of Deborah's collection include a piece inspired by visiting the Haram Al-Sharif and traditional embroidery patterns found in Palestinian women's village dresses.



A Scholar by the River Jordan

Timothy B. Sailors

A theological scholar and doctoral candidate with the faculty of Catholic Theology at the Eberhard Karls Universität of Tübingen, Timothy B. Sailors was able to continue his studies while seeing first-hand the living tradition of the subject of his thesis: baptismal rites along the Jordan River.

For a few months in late spring and early summer 2016, I had the great privilege of benefiting from the Tantur Fellowship Initiative and serving as a Resident Scholar at Tantur. My specialty is Christian literature written in the first three centuries, including—but not limited to—those works that ultimately came together to form the New Testament. During my stay at Tantur, I devoted my time to examining the story of Jesus’ baptism as it appears in Christian writings of this period, which is the topic of my doctoral dissertation at the University of Tübingen in Germany. (Watch this space for news of its publication as a book!)

The residential nature of Tantur, its proximity to Jerusalem and to Bethlehem, its outstanding research library, and the exceptional staff all made for a productive and thoroughly enjoyable research visit. I was also grateful to be invited to accompany one of Tantur’s Continuing Education Program groups on their trip to the traditional site of the baptism of Jesus at the Jordan River. There, standing on the Palestinian bank and looking across the narrow, torpid river to churches in the Kingdom of Jordan, I spoke to the group about the story of the baptism and how ancient Christians of various theological persuasions used, retold, and adapted it.

As an alumnus of the University of Notre Dame, where I earned a Masters degree in theology, I was delighted both to see how Notre Dame’s presence in the region, through Tantur, has evolved over the years and, particularly, to be part of the community at Tantur. In the course of my time there, this community included not only students of biblical studies and theology, as well as seminarians from Moreau Seminary, but also Notre Dame undergraduate and graduate students representing a wide variety of departments and disciplines.

Particularly valuable too was the opportunity to interact with other Resident Scholars at Tantur: Colleagues from India, China, and the United States. Moreover, ecumenical breadth is, unsurprisingly, a hallmark of life at Tantur. Program participants, students, scholars, and visitors come from a variety of Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Christian traditions. This, and interaction with Jewish and Muslim colleagues, creates a unique atmosphere that can be seen in microcosm in the *Tuesdays at Tantur* program of talks and discussion, which was inaugurated near the beginning of my stay. During my tenure at Tantur, I also learned for the

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A Scholar by the River Jordan

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first time of the significant role New Testament scholars played in the history of that institute "On a Hill" between Bethlehem and Jerusalem. To name only a few: Oscar Cullmann was instrumental in the foundation of Tantur, and Paul S. Minear, George MacRae, and William Klassen each served as rector or dean of Tantur during the 1970s or 1980s.

It was an honor to have been able to join the ranks of so many specialists in New Testament and early Christian literature—and countless others, including readers of this newsletter—who have been part of the Tantur family. I truly look forward to my next visit!



Tantur Reflections

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A stay at Tantur is special. You meet people from a variety of denominations and cultures. Though between scholars and continuing education program participants, interaction is limited, one still carries home the seeds of this exposure which I think will help transcend the human-made boundaries. The casual chats at the dinner table teach you as much about the place you are in as would many of the field trips. It was in Tantur that I came to know about Bruderhof communities and kibbutzim; it was in Tantur I came to know about and had the taste of Canadian ice wine; it was in Tantur I came to know about and had for the first time tasted the famous 'Vegemite', which the entire Tantur community "loves." The kindness of each of the staff serving here made my stay in Tantur a very memorable one.

I thank God for making my dream of visiting the Holy Land come true. Thanks to Tantur for making three months of my life an unforgettable experience.

Staff Shot

Benoit Tessawak



In the late summer of 2015, Tantur Ecumenical Institute hired Benoit Tessawak to fill the newly position of Storekeeper.

As Storekeeper, Benoit is responsible for inventory control and processing invoices of purchased foodstuffs, beverages and other material for the kitchen, cafeteria, restrooms and hospitality needs of Tantur.

Benoit is no stranger to working in administrative roles for Christian organizations. A graduate of Saint Demetrios Secondary School in the Old City of Jerusalem, he has a High Diploma (equivalent of an Associate Degree) in the field of Special Education from Ramat Gan College near Tel Aviv. Benoit is also employed at Saint Vincent's Home for Special Needs in Ein Karem, a charitable institute for peoples of all faiths and nationalities that is operated by the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul. He is married to his wife Adelle, and has a baby girl, Vania, and lives in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Benoit is happy to join the Tantur team, and is looking forward to getting further accustomed to the work and our community. In his words: "This work is in my field and I like it. I love this job."

NEW PRESIDENT OF CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN IS NO STRANGER TO TANTUR

Noted theological lecturer, scholar and author Prof. Thomas O'Loughlin elected to lead theological association for a two-year term.

The Catholic Theological Association of Great Britain held their AGM at the annual conference in early September and elected a new president: Prof. Thomas O'Loughlin of the University of Nottingham. The president's term of office is two years.

Speaking after his election, O'Loughlin said: 'It is always a humbling moment when one is elected by an assembly of one's peers. Doing theology is both a vocation and a challenge, and I hope that while your president I shall help to promote the health of

the discipline among us, help us to be as a community of scholarship of service to the People of God, and, as we approach Luther Year in 2017, that we may promote fruitful dialogue between all the churches."

O'Loughlin has visited Tantur on many occasions and led a group studying Marks's Gospel in its Holy Land setting in September 2011. Tantur Ecumenical Institute congratulates Professor O'Loughlin on his new position, and looks forward to continued partnership and collaboration in theological study with both O'Loughlin and the Association.



Professor Thomas O'Loughlin, President of the Catholic Theological Association of Great Britain, is Professor of Historical Theology at the University of Nottingham in the UK and maintains a robust regimen of publishing and editing articles on a range of subjects related to his fields of research.

Tantur is an institute for ecumenical and theological studies, situated on a beautiful hill in Jerusalem near Bethlehem. It serves as a welcoming place in the Holy Land for visitors who come from all over the world seeking an oasis of learning, community, and hospitality.

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Tantur has begun the process of transitioning its e-list for events and the newsletter to an automated email system. Our local event announcements will now be distributed through the e-service "Mailchimp," with the possibility of the newsletter list also being delivered as such in the near future.

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