

## Faith Seeking Understanding 2021

Wed 27 Jan: **God, the Father.** What does it mean to address God as ‘Father’, and what are the problems with this? For many people, this way of speaking confines us to childish dependency in our faith. And yet, this is the language Jesus used when he addressed God as “Abba” and encouraged us to do the same. Is it possible for us to speak of God as a ‘parent’ without being infantilised?

**Dr John McDade and Dr Michael Kirwan SJ**

**Dr. McDade is former principal of Heythrop College (University of London). His specialism is Christology (the doctrine of Christ), and he has a particular interest in the Jewish roots of Christianity and Jewish-Christian relations.**

**Dr. Kirwan is professor of Catholic Theology at the Loyola Institute, in the School of Religion, Trinity College, Dublin. He also has interests in contemporary political theology, in theology and literature, and the question of religion’s connection with violence.**

Wed 03 Feb: **Jesus, “risen and ascended.”** At the centre of the Christian faith is the belief that Jesus was ‘raised from the dead’ and ‘ascended to the Father’. It is very hard for us make sense of these claims, or to picture them. *Where* is Jesus, in his risen life? How do we proclaim a resurrection faith with confidence today?

**Professor Ivana Noble and Dr Michael Kirwan SJ**

**Pr. Noble is professor of Ecumenical Theology at the Protestant Theological Faculty of Charles University in Prague. Her work draws on Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox traditions of theology, and she has a keen interest in the visual arts and music as a vehicle for theology. She is an ordained minister of the Hussite Church.**

Wed 10 Feb: **God the Holy Spirit, the ‘Consoler’.** The role of the Spirit in Christian life is often overlooked. And yet it is vital that we have a keen sense of God’s active presence, animating our world, bringing creation to re-birth, but also encouraging us, and empowering us in our weakness.

**Dr. Andrew Meszaros**

**Dr. Meszaros teaches Theology at St Patrick’s College, Maynooth. He is a specialist in nineteenth and twentieth century Catholic theology, and especially the work of John Henry Newman. He is author of *The Prophetic Church: History and Doctrinal Development in John Henry Newman and Yves Congar* (OUP, 2016)**

Wed 24 Feb: **Modern Christian saints.** The life and work of two very different saints will be considered. John Henry Newman (1801-1890) was a convert from Anglicanism; Edith Stein (1891-1942), was Jewish by birth, becoming a Carmelite nun before meeting her death in Auschwitz. We will consider important aspects of their thought, and examine what led each of them to embrace Catholicism.

**Professor Peter Tyler and Dr Rebekah Lamb**

**Pr. Tyler is professor of Pastoral Theology and Spirituality at St Mary's University, Twickenham. He is co-editor of the *Bloomsbury Guide to Christian Spirituality*. He is a specialist in Carmelite spirituality, having written books on Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. He is also a registered psychotherapist. *The Pursuit of the Soul* (2016) explores the relationship between spirituality and psychoanalysis and 'soul-making'.**

**Dr. Rebekah Lamb is professor of Theology, Imagination and the Arts in the School of Divinity at the University of St Andrews. She has a particular focus on nineteenth century literature, and has written the Introduction to the forthcoming (2021) special issue of *Religion and Literature*, dedicated to John Henry Newman. She has also written for various journals and magazines, including *Convivium: Faith in Our Common Life*, *The Catholic Herald*, and *The Scottish Catholic Observer*.**