**“What do you Have that you have not Received?”**

**Approaches to the Relationship between Faith and Grace**

**in Early Christianity and Early Modern Theology and Philosophy**

Conference organized by the work group *Faith and Grace with the Church Fathers and in Early Modern Theology* *and Philosophy*  
of Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

*Venue*: Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, Theological Faculty

Tóth Kálmán Hall (1st floor, Faculty of Theology, Budapest 1092, Ráday street 28 (entry from Markusovszky tér)

**April 5 (Friday), 2024**

9:30: Deputy Rector Professor Dr Péter Balla’s Address

9:45: Lead Researcher Dr. habil. Gábor Kendeffy’s Address

**Section 1**: 10:00–11:00: The Concept of Faith 1. Chair: Tianyue Wu

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| 1. **Keynote:** | Mark Elliott | *The Psychology of Faith: Lutherans and Augustinians* |
| 2. | Gábor Kendeffy | *What does Saint Augustine Mean by Speaking of Faith?* |

Discussion: 11:00–11:20

Coffee break: 11:20–11:40

**Section 2**: 11:40–12:20: The Concept of Faith 2. Chair: Tianyue Wu

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| 3. | Ottó Pecsuk | *Abraham the Role Model for Believers in Ambrosiaster’s Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans and in his* Quaestiones |
| 4. | Miklós Vassányi | *The Concept of Faith in Theodore of Mopsuestia’s* Homilies *and in Philoxenus of Mabbug’s* Discourses*: A Comparison* |

Discussion: 12:20–12:30

Lunch break *in situ*: 12:30–14:00

**Section 3**: 14:00–15:00: Free Will versus Faith 1. Chair: Gábor Kendeffy

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| 5. **Keynote:** | Tianyue Wu | *Intellect and Will in the Light of Divine Providence: Augustine on the Way to Beata Vita* |
| 6. | István M. Bugár | *Christian Authors on Freedom between Justin Martyr and Origen* |

Discussion: 15:00–15:10

Coffee break: 15:10–15:30

**Section 4**: 15:30–16:10: Free Will versus Faith 1. Chair: Gábor Kendeffy

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| 7. | Emőke László | *The Relationship between Election and Salvation in 16th-17th century Hungarian Reformed Theology* |
| 8. | Dániel Schmal | *Divine Wisdom and Human Freedom in Leibniz’s concept of βάθος* |

Discussion: 16:30–16:40

Coffee break: 16:40–17:00

**Section 5**: 17:00–17:40: Christological and Trinitological Aspects. Chair: Mark Elliott

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| 9. | György Heidl | *Faith and Grace in Novatian* |
| 10. | Elisabeth Blum – Paul Richard Blum | *Self-Redeeming Platonism: Faith and Christology in Nicholas of Cusa, Marsilio Ficino, Giordano Bruno, and Tommaso Campanella* |

Discussion: 17:40–17:50

Conference dinner (external location, to be specified): 19:00

**April 6 (Saturday), 2024**

**Section 6**: 10:00–11:00: The Concept of Grace. Chair: Elisabeth Blum

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| 11. **Keynote**: | Aza Goudriaan | *Grace and Human Thinking: The Ability to Think from Augustine to Jansenius* |
| 12. | Gergely Hanula | *Chrysostom’s Teaching on Grace* |

Discussion: 11:00–11:10

Coffee break: 11:10–11:30

**Section 7**: 11:30–12:10: Anthropological Perspectives. Chair: Paul Richard Blum

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| 13. | Márton Hoványi | *The Theological Correlation between Grace and Desire* |
| 14. | Matthew Drever | *Re-entangling Augustine: Augustine and Calvin on the Divine Image* |

Discussion: 12:10–12:20

Lunch break *in situ*: 12:20–14:00

**Section 8**: 14:00–14:40: Patristicity in Early Modern Thinking. Chair: Aza Goudriaan

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| 15. | Xavier Philippart | *Calvin in Conversation with Origen: References to Origen on Grace in John Calvin’s* Institutes *(1559–1560)* |
| 16. | Andreas Bergman | *Church Fathers as Proto-Lutherans: Martin Chemnitz’s Case for the Patristicity of Lutheran Soteriology* |

Discussion: 14:40–14:50

Coffee break: 14:50–15:10

**Section 9**: 15:10–16:10: Grace and Nature. Chair: Emőke László

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| 17. | Dominic V. Casella (online) | *Nature and Grace: Super-Nature, Aristotle, and Maximos the Confessor* |
| 18. | Monika Frazer-Imregh | *Faith and Grace in the Third Book of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa’s* De occulta philosophia |
| 19. | Cyril Pasquier | *The Grace of Marriage in the Theology of Irenaeus of Lyon and of Erasmus of Rotterdam* |

Discussion: 16:10–16:20

Closing remarks by lead researcher Gábor Kendeffy: 16:20–16:30.

1. Andreas Bergman (University of Helsinki)

*Church Fathers as Proto-Lutherans: Martin Chemnitz’s Case for the Patristicity of Lutheran Soteriology*

Martin Chemnitz was one of the most important patristic scholars of the 16th century. In the heated polemical debates of the time, he argued that Lutherans are the true heirs of the faith of the ancient church. He maintained that any doctrine lacking a basis in the writings of the early church fathers could not be considered true. Consequently, he undertook the task of demonstrating that the central tenet of the Lutheran faith, the doctrine of justification by faith alone, was firmly grounded in the theology of the church fathers. Given his expertise on the writings of the church fathers, however, Chemnitz knew that portraying the fathers as proponents of *sola fide* was not a straightforward endeavor: while patristic works contain passages which could be interpreted to support the Lutheran doctrine of justification, other passages starkly contradict it.

In my presentation I will scrutinize patristic proof texts Chemnitz provides to make his case for the patristicity of his soteriological views. I will also analyze the strategies Chemnitz employes to cope with patristic passages that pose challenges to his theological position.

## Elisabeth Blum – Paul Richard Blum (Palacký University Olomouc / Loyola University Maryland)

## *Self-Redeeming Platonism: Faith and Christology in Nicholas of Cusa, Marsilio Ficino, Giordano Bruno, and Tommaso Campanella*

One of the foundations of grace in Christian theology is the Incarnation, that is, the temporal and local presence of God through the Son that redeemed humanity after the Original Sin. Whereas theology had easily been Platonized by the Church Fathers as far as the Trinity, creation, and governance of the world are concerned, Christology was not so easy to accommodate to Platonism. Evidence are the Renaissance philosophers who aimed at bolstering Christian faith with forms of thought inherited from Neoplatonism. In this paper we will present the ways how four philosophers addressed Christology and redemption. All of them viewed Christ as the exemplary man, the model of human strength and fulfilment. Cusanus addressed questions of grace in his sermons but rarely in his philosophical works. Ficino saw redemption as the work of the human understanding fostered by the Neoplatonic model of metaphysical hierarchies. Bruno understood Christology as a version of mythology that urges humans to rely on rationality. Campanella criticized human rationalist hybris but at the same time he solved the problem of Trinity by assigning the triadic structure to the entire creation. Consequently, Renaissance Platonism exhorted the audience to personally care for redemption.

1. István M. Bugár (University of Debrecen)

*Christian Authors on Freedom between Justin Martyr and Origen*

The alternative ‘grace or human initiative’ does not seem to have posed a problem for early Christian authors even to the extent it appears in fourth century Greek Fathers, as can be deduced from their stating that the two are compatible, or better said, cooperate (*synergeia*). Nonetheless it is telling to reconsider again what pre-Nicaean authors see indispensable to say about the significance of human autonomy. The subject appears in Justin martyr with a conceivably anti-gonstic and anti-marcionite agenda and so is it stated eloquently in Irenaeus and Origen. What I propose to look at is what we find about the question in authors between these ingenious thinkers. In my paper I plan to look more closely at Hippolytus’, Melito the Philosopher’s, Pseudo-Origen’s, and Bardaisan’s propositions concerning the subject. While we cannot expect insights original similar to those of Irenaeus and Origen, the ubiquitous statement of human freedom reveals its wide acceptance as a theological minimum.

1. Dominic V. Casella (University of Georgia)

*Nature and Grace: Super-Nature, Aristotle, and Maximos the Confessor*

In the study of nature and grace, thinkers such as Karl Rahner and Hans Urs Von Balthazar have taken nature to be a “limiting concept,” what some have called a “vacuole for grace” or relative boundary of grace. In contrast, in Steven Long’s “Creation *ad imaginem Dei*,” he suggests that the Greek philosophical substantialism has much to offer in understanding the doctrine of obediential potency. This paper seeks to elaborate on the idea of the *imago dei*and the initial dignity of the human person in the Greek tradition by looking at the thought of Maximos the Confessor. Unlike many scholars today—notably David Bentley Hart and Maksim Vasiljević—I argue that the notion of obediential potency and the distinction between nature and grace is operative in the Greek Eastern tradition. I demonstrate that in Maximos, the marks of this distinction are drawn, even if some of the technically stark lines of the later Latin West are absent. Examining Maximos the Confessor as an exemplar representative of the tradition, I explore the concept of grace building on nature (where nature is distinctly Aristotelian) and make sense of what might appear to be contradictory passages. I look at *Ambiguum 7* and relevant selections from the *Chapter*texts and Epistle nine*,*which all treat the internal motion of creation and what it means to say that God is the only true end for all of creation.

1. Matthew Drever (University of Tulsa)

*Re-entangling Augustine: Augustine and Calvin on the Divine Image*

There is a consensus in some circles of Protestant historical theology (e.g., Powell, Grenz), and echoed within wider scholarly literature (e.g., Blumenberg, Gillespie), that opposes an Augustinian speculative model of the Trinity against anti-speculative, pietistic models developed in the wake of the Reformation. Calvin himself voices skepticism of Augustine on this issue, despite his wider admiration for him, when he warns that Augustine’s method of seeking knowledge of the Trinity through the divine image in the soul “is by no means sound” (Institutes 1.15.4). In moving to the question of the soul, Calvin’s warning intimates that this is a debate over trinitarian method and theological anthropology. This is reinforced by Protestant scholars who reject the Augustinian approach and turn instead to 20th century social trinitarianism (e.g., Moltmann) to formulate new models of the Trinity and new Christian anthropologies. With such contemporary projects in mind, this talk reexamines Calvin’s and Augustine’s account of the divine image, focusing on how they read it through their doctrines of creation and salvation. We will see that despite Calvin’s initial objection to Augustine, and against the judgment of some contemporary scholarship, both he and Augustine draw on a similar range of doctrinal, biblical, existential, and soteriological themes to develop their accounts of the divine image.

1. Mark Elliott (Wycliffe College / Royal Society of Edinburgh)

*The Psychology of Faith: Lutherans and Augustinians*

On Romans 4:3 Melanchthon argues that no amount of heroic virtues can offset God’s anger or liberate one from sin. This example (Abraham) gives comfort to the godly, for it says Abraham was not justified on account of the amount of the dignity of his own virtues. Some interpret ’faith’ to have the meaning ’obedience’, by way of synecdoche, and that it has little to do with Christ, since Abraham (who is the subject of Rom 4:3) lived long before. However, in the gospel there is to be assent and trust, by which we accept the promised mercy. We as believers are foursquare just like Abraham, since like him we look ahead, anticipating. Almost a century later on the back of having to respond to the ’Counter-Reformation’ Augustinianism of Bellarmine J. Gerhard contended: it is the righteousness of Christ that faith apprehends that is then imputed by God to the believer; it does not inhere – unlike for Bellarmine (for whom it is by God’s gift that a reality is created) that can truly deserve reward. Gerhard adds that it is important to distinguish between the facility of belief powered by the Holy Spirit and the belief itself, as a fiducial apprehension of Christ’s merit, which „pro-merits” by faith and suffering: as it were, this is ’our own part to play’. In the intervening century the response to Catholic Augustinian subjectivism had moved from a temporal one with hopeful active trust in a new reality to come, to a vertical one, with a reality in the mind of God, or conceivably in relationship and concursus.

1. Monika Frazer-Imregh (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary)

*Faith and Grace in the Third Book of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa’s De occulta philosophia*

This lecture is going to examine the question of faith, and grace in the third book of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa’s *De occulta philosophia.* While staying in Italy between 1511 and 1515, Agrippa studied the works of Ficino and Pico, as well as Ficino’s translations and commentaries, for a long time, traces of which can be found throughout all three books of the work. The huge work consists of three books. The First Book (74 chapters) quoting many ancient authors discusses *natural magic*. The Second Book (60 chapters) deals with *celestial magic*. The Third Book (65 chapters) deals with *ritual magic* and the purification of the human soul, so it partly parallels the themes of the Fourth Book of *Picatrix*, but its context is much more complex and philosophical than that of *Picatrix*. Despite the magical theme, Agrippa tries to discuss the set topics from a Christian approach, and sets the ultimate goal – even if in a syncretistic way that incorporates Kabbalah and Hermeticism – the mystical exaltation of man, that is, his elevation to God, through purification and magico-religious ceremonies.

As in the books of the *Picatrix*, in the Third Book of Agrippa, the introductory chapters lay the theoretical foundations: Chapters 1–10: why religion is necessary; knowledge of God is essential for the magician; the teachings of the old magicians and philosophers concerning God; the divine trinity according to ancient thinkers; the Holy Trinity according to Christianity; the divine emanations, which the Jews call multitudes, the pagans gods, the ten sefirot, the ten holiest names of God, and their interpretation. After the discussion of more specific topics, Chapters 34–65 then lead you along the path of magical exaltation by describing the various ways of inspiration, the various methods of purification and the ceremonies that bring you closer to the divine sphere. So the lecture will looking for an answer to the question whether, according to Agrippa, in addition to faith and will, man also needs divine grace in order to reach his goal, the mystical union with God. Furthermore, how the concept of faith is outlined in him and what the human will is capable of.

1. Aza Goudriaan (Protestant Theological University Amsterdam)

*Grace and Human Thinking: The Ability to Think from Augustine to Jansenius*

This paper focuses on the relation between grace and human thinking in several episodes of the history of Christian theology. A key biblical passage on the theme has been 2 Corinthians 3:5, translated as saying that we are not “sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God” (*KJV*). This text on the dependence of human thinking upon God played a role (a) in Augustine and in ramifications of the Pelagian controversy, including the canons of the Council of Orange (529). In the late Middle Ages, the text was quoted, for example, (b) in Gregory of Rimini’s commentary on the *Sentences*, and in Johannes Capreolus’s assessment of Gregory’s position. In the 17th century, the Pauline passage was cited (c) during the Arminian controversy and at the Synod of Dordt (1518–1519), and (d) in Cornelius Jansenius’s opposition against contemporary ideas about *cogitationes congruae*. A comparative study of these selected conversations on grace and knowledge makes visible both developments in the theology of grace and the functions that the Pauline passage had in different contexts.

1. Gergely Hanula (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary)

*Chrysostom’s Teaching on Grace*

John Chrysostom, a prominent figure in Orthodox Christianity from the late 4th century, left a lasting legacy, partly due to his orthodox teachings and partly due to the nature of his writings concentrating on the interpretation of Scripture. The Chrysostom corpus, found in Migne's Patrologia Graeca, spans 18 volumes (over 10,000 columns), not counting the 23 volumes published in the Sources Chretiennes series. As his legacy primarily consists of homilies, where he presents his teachings not in a systematic manner but intertwined with the text of Scripture, it is a bold endeavor to provide a thematic presentation, keeping in mind that he himself never addressed the topic with such an abstract approach.

In my work, I utilize the digital search capabilities of the TLG corpus. However, I also consider the methodology of biblical exegesis employed by the Golden Mouth and the rhetorical determination inherent in the homily genre. The examined texts encompass various text types within the corpus, ranging from extensive homily series to thematic homilies and letters.

Due to his didactic approach, Chrysostom does not sharply distinguish the use and semantic field of the noun 'kharis' from the etymologically related verb 'kharizomai' and the term 'kharisma,' understood as spiritual gifts. Therefore, one of the main questions in my presentation is the role of etymological approach in shaping the meaning conveyed during the teaching. Additionally, I explore the interpretations of grace related to human will and action in the context of the Antiochian Church Father.

1. György Heidl (University of Pécs)

*Faith and Grace in Novatian*

The first Roman Christian author to write in Latin was Novatian in the mid-3rd century. In the turbulent ecclesiastical situation following the persecution of Decius, Novatian became antipope and caused a schism with his increasingly rigorous position on church discipline. Therefore, only a few of his works have survived under the names of Cyprian and Tertullian.  By far the most important is the treatise known as De Trinitate, which stands out among the theological works of the 3rd century for its terminological consistency and the logical coherence of its argumentation, but which, with few exceptions, has not yet received the attention it deserves. It is in De Trinitate that the doctrines of the eternal birth of the Son, the communicatio idiomatum of the Holy Trinity, the prominent role of Phil 2,6-11 in Christology, and the incorporation of Mt 5,8 into the trinitological argumentation appear for the first time as clearly articulated doctrines. In this lecture I will show what the terms of “regula veritatis”, “regula credendi”, “fides” and “gratia” mean and how they are embedded in a theological “system” in Novatian’s treatise.

1. Márton Hoványi (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

*The Theological Correlation between Grace and Desire*

In my paper, the approach to the correlation between grace and desire is historically  
well-founded and reflects the perspective of constructive theology. From a historical  
point of view, my research results mainly concern Gregory of Nyssa’s *Homilies on the  
Song of Songs* and its theological context. From the point of view of constructive  
theology, I examine divine and human intentions regarding man’s salvation.  
According to my hypothesis based on the theology of the early Church  
Fathers, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and Gregory of Nyssa from Antiquity and  
primarily on the theology of Bernard of Clairvaux from the Middle Ages, there is desire  
in God. A possible way to elaborate this dogmatically challenging statement is to  
examine the Catholic theology of grace. Thus, Early Christianity and Early Modern  
Theology may be compared through the analysis of the doctrine of grace. Relying on  
the allegory of chess (CE 24,3) included in the first publication of Teresa of Ávila’s  
work entitled *The Way of Perfection* from the Early Modern Period, I outline a  
possible model of correlation between grace and desire. This is how the two historical  
periods of Christianity can be connected in constructive theology.

1. Gábor Kendeffy (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary)

*What does Saint Augustine Mean by Speaking of Faith?*

The paper focuses on two main points: (1) what is the epistemological context of the concept of faith in Saint Augustin and (2) how to interpret Augustine’s recurrent statements that faith is volitional and that – what is more, faith is a kind of volition. Regarding point (1), I will analyse Augustine’s early work *On the Usefulness of Believe*, where the church father finds the solution of the argument of disagreement as used against Christianity. He begins with the question of how to find the appropriate master among humans and finishes by inviting the reader to rely on the authority of Christ, who unites human and divine natures. The paper also examines how Augustin, still in the same treatise, tries to define religious faith in terms of hellenistic epistemology as a mental act which is different either from knowledge or opinion. He regards faith to be a kind of reflected belief, which, on the one hand, does not rely on strong evidence, and, on the other hand, is concious about this very fact. Nevertheless, to Augustin, faith has a certainty of its own, distinct from that of knowledge. Concerning point (2), it is not difficult to see that Augustine, when defining faith as a kind of will, he classifies it into the sub-category of assent or preference (*consensio*). I intend to show that, in doing so, Augustine means two kinds of assent. Sometimes he identifies faith with a spontanous assent, exempt both from justification and purposiveness. This is the case when he explains Romans 7,16 with the opposition of two wills or assents, that of the faith and that of the desires (*Ad Simplicianum* I.2,9). On the other hand, in a great number of occurrences, Augustine rationalizes and instrumentalizes the act of faith, by considering it as an assent conscious of not only of its own reasons but also of the purpose it serves.

1. Emőke László (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary)

*The Relationship between Election and Salvation in 16th-17th century Hungarian Reformed Theology*

In Hungary, the Reformed branch of Protestantism quickly developed and strengthened. A relatively large number of Peregrinians studied theology in Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that the teaching of the Council of Dordrecht had a rather limited resonance in contemporary theological works. This does not mean, however, that there was a substantial divergence from the position of the canons of Dordrecht on the question of election and predestination. This is partly due to the fact that by the early 17th century a tradition had already become established which was in line with the teaching of the great figures of Reformed theology. In this lecture, I will use a few examples (based on the writings of the Debrecen-Egervölgyi Creed, István Kis Szegedi, David Helopoeus Szikszai, Benedek Nagyari, and Paul Ember of Debrecen) to show how the question of election and predestination was discussed by Hungarian theologians before and after the Council of Dordrecht.

14. Cyril Pasquier (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest / Université de Strasbourg)

*The Grace of Marriage in the Theology of Irenaeus of Lyon and of Erasmus of Rotterdam*

*Anno Domini* 1526: Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam publishes two major books with the same publisher (Froben, Basel): *Christiani Matrimonii Institutio*, his own innovative theological treatise on marriage, and the first ever printed version of *Adversus haereses* by Irenaeus of Lyon, a 2nd century author, who had sunk into oblivion for more than a thousand years.

Is this a mere historical coincidence? Or are there theologically rooted connections between Irenaeus and Erasmus on the question of marriage? In other words, did Irenaeus inspire Erasmus on this issue?

It is said that Erasmus’ *opus magnus* on marriage is mainly influenced by humanistic philosophy. And at the same time, he published Irenaeus’ major work because of the humanist interest for Antiquity rarities. And so, it does not mean that Erasmus wrote his matrimonial treatise under Irenaeus’ theological influence. The humanist culture of that time may have overshadowed the bishop of Lyon’s ancient teaching. But still, the coincidence between these two novelties – Irenaeus’ revival and Erasmus’ original teaching on marriage – is striking.

The purpose of this lecture is to enquire on possible connections between Irenaeus’ teaching on marriage and Erasmus’ understanding of the same topic. It will first summarize Irenaeus’ matrimonial contribution. It will then focus on Erasmus’ main ideas on the grace of marriage. Finally, we will try to discover to what extent Erasmus depends on Irenaeus for matrimony issues. And if a meeting did not really happen between these two authors, what can they mutually bring to each other on this theological question?

15. Ottó Pecsuk (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary)

*Abraham the Role Model for Believers in Ambrosiaster’s Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans and in his Quaestiones*

In my presentation, I will examine the image of Abraham as a role model of faith in two writings of the 4th-century Roman presbyter, Ambrosiaster. In chapter 4 of the *Epistle to the Romans*, the apostle Paul explains the typological importance of Abraham in understanding the nature and process of faith and justification. Abraham, who lived more than four centuries before Moses, did not earn his righteousness before God by his following the law (that is, circumcision), but through his obedience to God (that is, faith). Because of this obedience, he became an example and a model for the believers of all ages to come. In his commentary on the Epistle, Ambrosiaster assigned a special role to the will of Abraham. His will or determination was the starting point of his faith. Ambrosiaster also claims that – consequently – the will of the believer plays an important role in the process of coming to faith. Will is also an instrument, through which God’s grace works. In the *Quaestiones*, Ambrosiater also assigns an important role to Abraham, who symbolizes events such as the liberation of the Jews from Babylonian captivity while Abraham also becomes a forerunner of personalities such as Melchizedek, David or his final descendant, Jesus Christ. Following in the footsteps of the apostle Paul, Ambrosiaster also introduces Abraham as a role model for contemporary Christians. This is how he formulates the mission of the contemporary Christian in *Quaestio* 117: “Si enim fidelissimus Abraham in re tam gravi et aspera oboediens invenitur, quanto magis nos, quibus illa praecipiuntur quae possunt portari!” (“If the most faithful Abraham was obedient in such a terrible and harsh issue, how much more should we, for whom the prescribed things are bearable?”)

16. Xavier Philippart (Faculté Universitaire de Théologie Protestante, Bruxelles)

*Calvin in Conversation with Origen: References to Origen on Grace in John Calvin’s Institutes (1559–1560)*

This paper examines John Calvin's use of Origen’s thought in the last edition of the *Institutes* (1559–1560), especially references to Origen in Calvin’s analysis of prevenient grace. We first look at Calvin’s general knowledge of Origen’s thought. We then turn to the references to Origen in the various editions of Calvin’s *Institutes*, analysing references to Origen in Calvin’s notion of grace, with particular attention to the specific works of Origen which Calvin might have used. Our aim is to determine Calvin's position in conversation with Origen on the doctrine of grace.

17. Dániel Schmal (HUN-REN Research Institute of Philosophy – Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest)

*Divine Wisdom and Human Freedom in Leibniz’s concept of βάθος*

At one point in his brief Latin summary of his *Essays on Theodicy,* Leibniz refers to a key text in the theology of grace and salvation, the famous exclamation of St Paul: *O depth of the riches, wisdom and knowledge of God!* (Rom 11:33) In Leibniz’s interpretation, the depth of God’s wisdom (βάθος) evoked by the apostle reveals the deepest roots of the problem of evil, pointing to its metaphysical foundations deep in the nature of the essences. Leibniz concludes at the end of his argument that the depth of divine wisdom is nothing other than the preestablished harmony. In this talk, I will argue that this identification is revelatory because it highlights an ambiguity at the heart of Leibniz’s theodicy: what is the direction of his argument here? Are the expressions of the Bible meant to interpret the philosophical notion of harmony, or con­versely, is the anthropomorphic language of Scripture reduced to mathematical and logical relations? This ambiguity is crucial to the interpretation of the whole programme of theodicy, because it has far-reaching implications for the scope of human freedom. The fact that the inscrutable nature of the depth of wisdom is replaced by Leibniz’s *harmonia praestabilita* leads to an impersonalized perspective in which human destiny is based on mathematical calculations that go beyond one’s personal power.

18. Tianyue Wu (Peking University)

*Intellect and Will in the Light of Divine Providence: Augustine on the Way to Beata Vita*

In *Confessiones* VIII.12.30, Saint Augustine writes, “When I seek for you, my God, my quest is for the happy life (*beata vita*).” For Augustine, all intellectual and volitional activities dependent on grace are directed to this ultimate end of life. This thorough eudaimonism is a most crucial key to Augustine’s philosophy.

In this paper, I will carefully examine the role of intellect and will in our journey to beatitude, from its starting point to its attainment. First, I will address Augustine's conception of *beata vita* in his early works to present the intellectual and volitional elements in the state of beatitude. Then, I will scrutinize Augustine’s depiction of the initial state of actual human beings in this world, especially those characteristics inherited from our first ancestors as the punishments for the first sin. This examination aims to disclose what kind of difficulties—intellectual, volitional, or both—should be overcome with the aid of divine grace in order to obtain the ideal state of human existence. Finally, I will treat the actual operation of grace in our mind and revisit Augustine's reflections on knowledge, will, and love in his controversial writings against the Pelagians.

19. Miklós Vassányi (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary)

*The Concept of Faith in Theodore of Mopsuestia’s Homilies and in Philoxenus of Mabbug’s Discourses: A Comparison*

In the contribution I am proposing to read at the conference, I am aiming at describing and analyzing the concepts of faith of Theodore of Mopsuestia (cca 350–cca 428), and, respectively, of Philoxenus of Mabbug (cca 440–cca 523), both belonging under the jurisdiction of the Antiochene patriarchate, and in the tradition of the Syriac Church of the East. Of Theodore, I shall look into his major work, a commentary – surviving in Syriac – on the Nicene Creed, in order to determine what he understood to be the definition of faith; while on the side of Philoxenus of Mabbug, I will go to his *Ascetic Discourses* – composed in Syriac –, the first two of which concern faith (*haymonuto’*), also in order to see what faith means to the bishop of Mabbug. While Theodore and Philoxenus will be the main targets of this inquiry, parallels will be drawn with the conception of faith developed by Aphrahaṭ, “the Persian Sage” (IVth century) in his first *Demonstration* (*taḥwito’*), on faith; and the *Hymns on Faith* by St Ephrem (†373), “the Harp of the Holy Spirit.” On a final note, I shall try to find out whether Theodore or Philoxenus may have exerted some influence on Pseudo-Denys the Areopagite’s understanding of faith as it is outlined in Part VII of *On the Divine Names* and elsewhere.