

# Augustine College Summer Conference

## Roots of Medicine: Module II

THE HISTORY OF IDEAS & THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICINE  
IN THE FIRST CENTURIES OF THE CHURCH

June 5-11 2011

At Augustine College, Ottawa, Canada

### Overall Objectives

1. Be able to discuss the contribution of Galen to the development of modern medicine, especially as it relates to evidence-based medicine.  
Prof John Patrick
2. The impact of Christianity on politics and culture is remarkable even at the beginning of the Christian era.  
Prof Ed Bloedow
3. Understand the historical triumph of Christianity which, though taken for granted, cannot be understood unless we focus on just how peculiar the occurrence itself is.  
John Robson
4. Understand the complexity of the ethics advocated in the New Testament in terms of *an understanding* of the whys and wherefores of right and wrong action? Contrast this with what ethics has become in the modern period.  
Prof Edward Tingley
5. Understand the contribution of the important monastic father, St. John Klimakos and his diagnosis of spiritual maladies, how to tame the passions and acquire virtue.  
Prof Andrew Bennett
6. Understand Virgil's epic recounting Aeneas's heroic struggle to found the city of Rome after being forced to flee his native Troy. Virgil presents history as a teleological process which culminates in the evolution of a permanent city (*urbs aeterna*). Aeneas is enabled because he exudes *pietas*, the distinctive Roman quality of respect for men and reverence for the gods despite the inner conflict of human love versus love of country, and pity versus piety.  
Prof Dominic Manganiello
7. See the use of art by Christians in the first six centuries, derived as it was from the Roman culture within which Christianity spread.  
Prof Edward Tingley
8. Understand the 21<sup>st</sup> Century dilemma of evidence based management in medicine.  
Prof Jonathan Patrick
9. Discuss the ethical issues of today and the implications of the ideas described throughout this conference with an emphasis on what consequences there are in a society without a moral consensus.  
Prof John Patrick
10. Discuss and present questions and concepts raised during the conference.  
Prof John Patrick

## Lecture Objectives, Abstracts and Reading

### 1. Galen and the Fossilization of Medicine

John Patrick

#### Abstract

The following points will be discussed:

- Basic biographical facts
- Galen's approach to medicine, his indebtedness to Hippocrates and Aristotle
- The question of paradigms will be introduced because the model which Galen produced was so powerful that it influenced Islamic and Western medicine
- The role of Islamic culture in preserving Greek thought and the influence this had on the West when it was re-introduced via Spain in the 12th century
- The parallels between the dominance of Galen's ideas and the developing dominance of evidence based medicine
- The key questions: which medicine and whose evidence?

#### Reading

Lindberg, D., *The Beginnings of Western Science*, University of Chicago Press

### 2. The Impact of Christianity on Politics and Culture

Ed Bloedow

#### Abstract

Given the political and cultural character of the ancient world at the time of the earliest days of Christianity, one would not be wide of the mark in concluding that virtually everything was against it ever becoming a force in society. And yet, a closer analysis of that time and subsequent generations emphatically bears out the contention of the Apostle Paul, "But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son" (Gal 4:4a). We shall trace in overview how this exciting story unfolded.

#### [Download PowerPoint](#)

#### Reading

Robin Lane Fox, "Pagans and Christians -- in the Mediterranean World from the second century to the conversion of Constantine" (Penguin 1986) ISBN 0-14-009737-6  
"This brilliant book is a wholly unexpected and central contribution to its subject. What is more it is readable and re-readable, even gripping". (Peter Levi in the "Spectator")

### 3. Why Taking History Seriously Can Make You Very Cross

John Robson

#### Abstract

The historical triumph of Christianity is generally taken for granted as much by those who deplore as those who approve of it. The regrettable scholars' habit of making almost everything that happened historically appear probable, or even inevitable, due to "trends" and "social forces" and the like is troubling at all times and especially unhelpful when we try to make sense of what is, in fact, just about the strangest thing that ever happened. We cannot understand properly the remarkable cultural implications of Christianity's historical success unless we focus on just how peculiar the occurrence itself was.

#### Reading

Roberts, Andrew, ed. *What Might Have Been: Leading Historians on Twelve 'What Ifs' of History*. (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004) – 'fun and not too long'.

### 4. The Ethics of the New Testament

Edward Tingley

#### Abstract

What are the ethics advocated in the New Testament? While it seems that this question is easily answered in a sentence or two, and is well known to us, the answer is fascinatingly complex. What do the nine or so authors of the New Testament present as *ethics*: that is, *an understanding* of the whys and wherefores of right and wrong action? The answer marks a strong and very interesting contrast with what ethics has become in the modern period.

## Reading

If reading is desired, I would recommend participants read (and purchase):

Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996).

If you have very little time, read ch. 10. If you have more time, start with ch. 10 then read as much as you can of chs. 1 to 9

The reason this book is worth buying is this. The ten chapters of interest to us constitute *part one* of the book but *part four* of the book is an application of the New Testament moral outlook (our topic) to five issues of contemporary life: *violence in defence of justice, divorce and remarriage, homosexuality, ethnic conflict, and abortion.*

We will not have time to look at these contemporary applications but you are indeed welcome to ask questions about the character of New Testament thought relative to such issues – which is exactly what Hays intended: first look at how followers of Christ are taught by the New Testament to think, then apply that thinking to moral issues in your own lives. Part four offers “test cases” in that application.

## 5. The Spiritual Diagnosis of John Klimakos

Andrew Bennett

### Abstract

The working title for my presentation is "The Spiritual Diagnosis of St. John Klimakos: the Ladder of Divine Ascent". It will be a focus on one particular work by this important monastic father and his diagnosis of spiritual maladies, how to tame the passions and acquire virtue.

### Reading

#### Pre-conference

John Climachus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* Trans. Colm Luibheid.

Classics of Western Spirituality series. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1982.

(at a bare minimum read the Introduction by Met. Kallistos Ware)

#### Post-conference

John Mack, *Ascending the Heights: A Layman's Guide to the Ladder of Divine Ascent* Ben Lomond, CA: Conciliar Press, 1999.

## 6. Virgil's *Aeneid*: A Roman Tale of Two Cities

Dominic Manganiello

### Abstract

Virgil's great national epic recounts Aeneas's heroic struggle to found the city of Rome after being forced to flee his native Troy. Though based in part on the Homeric model, the hero's search for an imaginary homeland reversed not only the narrative trajectory of the *Odyssey* but also the wanderer's primary goal of returning home. This paradigm shift in the structure of the foundational tale also signaled a radical change in the historical outlook reflected in the *Iliad*. Instead of dwelling on the painful and tragic past, Aeneas is urged to look forward to a future history that, once written, will turn the losers of the Trojan War into victors bent on establishing a new world order. Virgil sounds the note of imperial destiny throughout the *Aeneid* by presenting history as a teleological process which culminates in the evolution of a permanent city (*urbs aeterna*). The principal human protagonist in the unfolding universal drama can accomplish his divinely ordained mission because he exudes *pietas*, the distinctive Roman quality of respect for men and reverence for the gods. Despite possessing the highest degree of civic virtue, Aeneas is nevertheless torn between competing claims on his sense of duty. We will examine at least two of the main themes which emerge from the inner tension he feels: human love versus love of country (immortalized in the famous palindrome, *Amor/Roma*), and pity versus piety. To help contextualize these antithetical elements we will consider briefly why the Roman poet, Ovid, and later Augustine both challenged the Virgilian theory of

historical progress. Of particular interest for our discussion will be to ponder the question of how the *Aeneid* anticipates some of the contemporary debates surrounding the issue of compassion and human suffering.

### **Reading**

#### **Pre-conference**

Virgil, *Aeneid*

W.A. Camps, *An Introduction to Virgil's Aeneid* (1969)

Louis Markos, From Achilles to Christ: Why Christians Should Read the Pagan Classics (Part Three: "Virgil") [2007]

#### **Post-conference**

Charles Norris Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought from Augustus to Augustine* (Part I, chapter 2: "*Romanitas: Empire & Commonwealth*") [1940]

Patrick Henry Reardon, "The Apostolic Epic: The *Aeneid* and the Acts of the Apostles," *Touchstone* (March 2003), 30-35.

## **7. Art of the Early Christians**

**Edward Tingley**

### **Abstract**

In this talk we will look at the use of art by Christians in the first six centuries, derived as it was from the Roman culture within which Christianity spread. Topics to be considered include life and death, symbol and image, and the nature and purpose of art and worship in the Roman Christian world.

### **Reading**

To those who wish to do some preparatory reading there is no book I can think to recommend on early Christian art. What would likely be far more illuminating of the meaning of this art than any art historical account would be to understand the early Christians who made this art. To that end I recommend the same text suggested for the talk on the ethics of the New Testament": chs.1 to 10 of Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*.

## **8. When will we have Evidence-based Management in Medicine? Jonathan Patrick**

### **Abstract**

This will be an interactive discussion with Dr. Jonathan Patrick who teaches statistical analysis in the business school at the University of Ottawa with a particular interest in the administration of health care. He will outline briefly what he sees as the major needs for change and what he thinks physicians need to understand and then he will invite your questions.

## **9. Ethics and Conscience 2011**

**John Patrick**

### **Abstract**

A review of the ethical issues of the year with an emphasis on the difficulties of ethics in a 'society' without a moral consensus.

### **Reading**

Hart, David, *Atheist Illusion: The Christian Revolution & its Fashionable Enemies* Chapter 3, *Faith and Reason*, contains a description of early medical care.

## **10. Questions of the Week Answered by Speakers of the Week**

**John Patrick and other conference speakers**