

# PERSPECTIVE

INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

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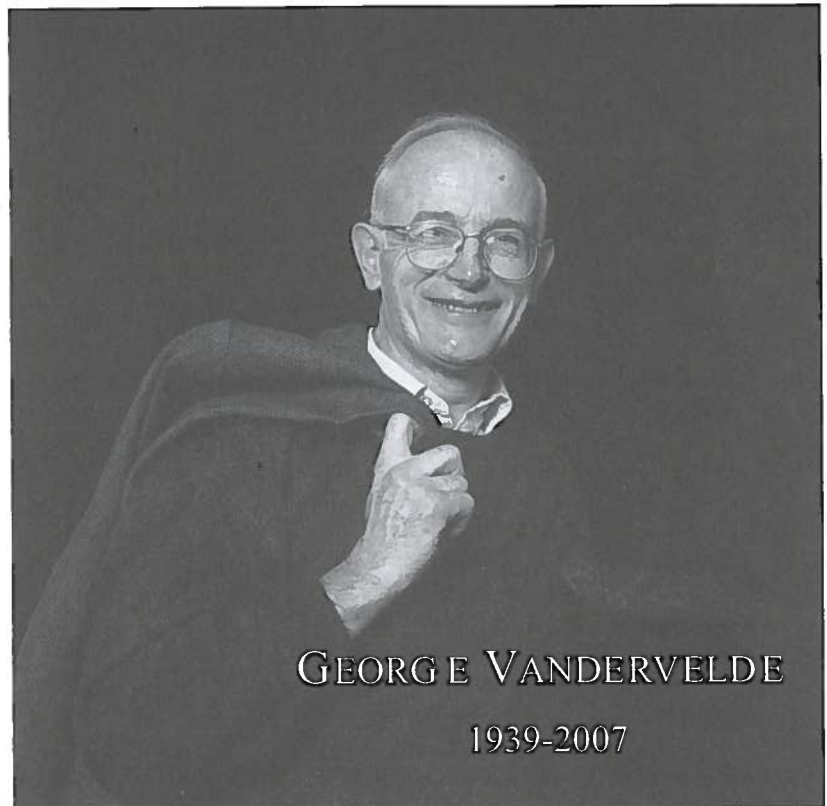


## IN MEMORIAM: George Vandervelde

by AlWolters

**D**r. George Vandervelde, who was Senior Member in Systematic Theology at ICS from 1977 until his retirement in 2005, died on January 19, 2007 after a short battle with cancer.

The statistical facts about George's life are soon told. Born in the Netherlands, he immigrated with his family to western Canada in 1952, settling in Edmonton. He earned degrees from Calvin College and Seminary, and then went on to the Free University in Amsterdam, where he completed a doctorate in theology under Gerrit Berkouwer in 1975. He subsequently taught at ICS for 28 years. During these years he became increasingly active in ecumenical dialogue. He married his wife Beatrice (nee Greidanus) in 1963, and they had three sons: Jonathan, Norman, and Stephen. But these bare facts tell us little about who George was as a person. He was a Christian, with a deep passion for Jesus Christ and the cause of the gospel. He was a family man, who deeply loved and enjoyed Bea and their three sons, and was himself beloved by them and the broader Vandervelde and Greidanus families. He was a good and true friend, as I can personally testify. He was a theologian, but one for whom theology was always



GEORGE VANDERVELDE

1939-2007

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secondary to the gospel of Jesus Christ. He was a churchman who made significant contributions to his own denomination, the Christian Reformed Church, especially through his work on its Contemporary Testimony and the revision of Question and Answer 80 of the Heidelberg Catechism. He was an ecumenist in the best sense of the word: passionate for Christian unity, but also aware of the significance of long-standing theological differences and the importance of dealing with them winsomely and at a foundational level. To an extent far

greater than many people realize, George, through his personal and intellectual gifts, enhanced the prestige and respect of the ICS and the various Reformed and evangelical bodies he represented in ecumenical dialogue. In him, they put their best foot forward.

With his loved ones, we mourn his loss and look forward to the Day of Resurrection.

Dr. Al Wolters is Professor of Religion & Theology and Classical Studies, Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario

When our kids were little, their favourite day of the year was Christmas. It's hard to argue, after all, with gifts under the tree.

But for Irene and me, there was one day even better than Christmas: Easter.

The night before, after the kids went to bed, we'd inflate twenty or thirty balloons, blowing till our cheeks hurt too much to continue. We then tied the balloons to a stake planted deep in a pot of lilies. Next, we slipped a pot of balloons and lilies in each of our kids' bedrooms.

When they awoke, they'd be greeted by an explosion of colour and by the lilies' fragrance. A little card attached to the balloons read, "Jesus arose!"

The Easter lilies and balloons were meant to signal new life for our children's sakes. Springtime—Easter included—exudes new life. At ICS, we want to think new life, too.

At ICS we do scholarship—philosophy and theology—to signal what Jesus' new life means when it comes to considering the big ideas for this world's sake—and especially what Jesus' new life means for the big ideas that shape the world

we live in. Whether postmodernism or pragmatism, environmentalism or entertainment, our society moves to the rhythms of ideas that demand Christian consideration and evaluation.

Our senior and junior members—faculty and students—are motivated by a desire to make Jesus' new life contagious.

Besides celebrating Easter every spring, ICS junior members head for home at the end of Spring term. They'll write papers, paint houses or wait tables to earn some extra cash, and maybe take a few weeks' vacation. ICS classrooms are pretty quiet for a few months.

But that new life still needs to be nurtured. This summer, will you please remember ICS junior and senior members in prayer? Will you ask God to bless their scholarly reflection and writing? Will you support our work this summer with an extra gift to help us get through what are usually a few dry months, when people's minds are not on school?

After all, Jesus' new life—including the life of the mind—is a contagion we ought to feed!



## Burning Questions and Biblical Answers in Western Canada

by Jenny Siebring deGroot

On a February Saturday in Vancouver over 120 people crossed paths for the day to converse about some of the big questions facing Christians in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This year's ICS World-view conference was planned around the theme "Burning Questions? Biblical Answers?" with a subtext that asked, "Can an Ancient Text Guide Us?"

A two-part keynote address was presented by Richard Middleton. Middleton, who presently teaches Biblical Studies at Roberts Wesleyan College in Rochester, NY, is a graduate of the joint PhD program of the ICS and the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam.

Middleton engaged his audience with his thoughtful and thought-provoking response to the conference theme, spiced with a Jamaican accent. He began with Psalm 119: 105: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path." and II Timothy 3:16ff: "All Scripture is inspired by God..." With that as the foundation Middleton challenged his listeners to read and understand the Scriptures in its historical context. In a fresh way he again reminded

us of the major components of creation, fall and redemption in the plot of the biblical story and the necessity of understanding the context of the Story in which we are grounded in this time and place. God's intent for his people is always that they "might bring blessing



Ron Dart and Henry Krause discuss just war and pacifism

to the nations." As throughout history, biblical laws and exhortations are meant to re-orient us back to God's original true north. We are invited to "participate in the unfinished drama, a story in which we are able to make a difference, implementing the plot resolution that Jesus has already accomplished."

A mid-conference conversation on just war and pacifism gave a timely

snapshot of the complexity of responding faithfully to the Biblical directives for living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The presenters were Ron Dart, professor of political science, philosophy and religious studies at the University College of the Fraser Valley and Henry Krause, a pastor and current moderator of the Mennonite Church Canada.

The day ended with the viewing of the recently released documentary, "Manufactured Landscapes," calling its viewers to consider our legacy as creation's caretakers.

Fleetwood Christian Reformed Church provided a welcome setting for the full day event. "The Banqueting Table," a non-profit catering service that provides employment training for single mothers, served up wholesome food worthy of the gathering.

The group "Musical" led the participants in well-chosen songs and liturgies and Wilma Vanderleek opened with thoughtful devotions.

First time attendee, Patricia Field, spoke for many in commenting that "it is good to have such a genuine discussion as we seek to understand the unfolding of creation together."



## Scattergories

by Michael Mols

Recently, while waiting for my class to begin at Regis College (a wonderful Jesuit school that forms part of the Toronto School of Theology), I sat on a small bench in the hallway and watched people coming and going. Some people paused for pleasantries, but the drive to keep moving was unmistakable; they all had some destination firmly in mind. Then I watched my colleagues arrive for class, and the whole scene seemed like magic as everyone appeared from different areas: a couple of commuters, tense from an hour in the train or car, others fresh from the short walk from the subway, a few wind-blown cyclists. But within minutes, seven people from all over the region were assembled in one particular room.

For a moment, I imagined everyone as individual molecules of gas floating around in some ephemeral space—millions of people in the Greater Toronto Area, bouncing off each other and flying in random chaotic directions, often beyond their control. Somehow, the same group of molecules congealed on a regular basis at the same time and in the same place with the help of schedules, calendars, and PDAs.

Traditionally, ICS has a unique spin on this concept. Sure, people rotate around the classes we offer each semes-

ter, but they “hover” more intentionally. Most people show up a significant amount of time before class begins and stay for a while after it ends. They loiter to have conversations with each other about projects and about life in general. They have tea at 3 p.m. They play checkers. They sit in the lounge and make fun of an article in the latest periodical.



ICS reception as gathering place

Against the better judgment of the administrators who value professionalism, the front desk is a popular gathering place for everyone at ICS. People hang around, make comments about faculty, the fax machine, the weather, the book you're holding, your hat; pretty much anything. PhD junior member Jeff Hocking once told me that the reception area is a natural place to gather

because it doesn't force you to make a choice or a firm commitment to doing anything in particular. If you sit in the lounge, you have staked out a position to socialize, and there is no backing out prematurely. Not that this is a bad thing; it simply rules out so many other potential decisions. But if you stand near Reception, there is room for the unknown, the surprising. Maybe you will stay...or walk away. Maybe you want to chat. Maybe you want to look at the art hanging on the wall or wait for someone or something. You might loiter without express intent. Whatever it is, you do not have to define your agenda and cut off all other possibilities, since the reception area is a transitional place but can also be a place where you make your home for a little while.

From what I understand, ICS started with a bunch of people hanging out in Toronto listening to each other talk about life. Now, we might own a building (or 30 percent of one), pay people, and bestow degrees, but I don't think the heart of the Institute is in the classroom or even the lounge. It's in the hallways—the wild spaces where we molecules arrive from hundreds of different places to come together for a short time, then scatter to hundreds of unknown destinations. These spontaneous encounters are the ones that change us.

## TRANSITIONS & EVENTS

Vice President of Advancement **John Meiboom** has left ICS after 17 years. His contributions to ICS's work have been characterized by a deep commitment to Christian scholarship and to those who walk alongside ICS in support. Senior and Junior Members and staff will miss John's warm, open approach. We wish him God's blessing as he takes on new opportunities.

On March 16, Professor **Dale Van Kley** Reformational historian specializing in 18<sup>th</sup> century European history at Ohio State University, presented a symposium, “Religion and the Age of ‘Patriot’ Revolutions.”

**John Kok**, Dean of the Humanities, Dordt College, led a discussion at ICS on the late Christian philosopher D. H. Th. Vollenhoven's Problem-Historical Method on March 21.

ICS enjoyed a return visit from the UK by former Senior Member, **Jonathan Chaplin** on March 28. In an “OJ with JC” morning session, Senior and Junior Members and staff discussed ideas in his recently published article on “‘Liberal Pluralism’ to ‘Christian Pluralism’” in *Christian Scholars Review* 35/2 (Winter 2006), 143-176.

ICS **Board of Trustees and Senate** will meet on May 10-11 in Toronto.

## ICS Appoints New Associate Dean

By Allyson Dziedzic

Henriette Thompson joined ICS as Associate Academic Dean in August. Before coming to ICS, she worked for many years with World Vision, a Christian relief, development, and advocacy organization, where she was involved in multiple ways to promote the working together of academics and workers in the fields of global policy and community development. "Academics and practitioners need each other to ensure that what they are saying and doing is relevant," she argues. One can believe it from the examples she gives: the unprecedented global changes in recent years, entrenched systemic poverty, religious and cultural shifts, increasing violence toward women, children, and those in conflict zones across the world, as well as an increase in corporate power and the expansion of the role of technology. Similarly, in order to remain relevant as a school, she says, ICS must be aware of all these things and their meanings for humans.

She is excited about her new position at ICS because it gives her a chance to engage with the groundwork that frames and analyzes these social, political, and economic issues, albeit now through interaction with an academic



Henriette Thompson

community. Henriette sees a lot of opportunity for ICS, as an institution situated in the Reformed tradition, to add meaningful dialogue to the wider conversation. She is especially hopeful for the impact of such things as the digitization of our library, through which we can expand ICS's global reach and share our resources.

As Associate Dean, Henriette sees both the opportunities and challenges facing ICS, and notes they are sides of the same coin. Asked what one of our big opportunities is now, she responded, "to preserve and value the uniqueness of reformational scholarship, and to let it breathe; to continue with our focus on interdisciplinarity and dialogue with others." What about our main challenge? That, she believes, is to expand our resources so that we can increase our teaching, researching, and writing and get more people involved in reformational scholarship.

Henriette looks forward to facilitating the fruitful development of ICS in her role as Associate Dean. "God lovingly invites all of us to a life of wholeness, and our scholarly work is also to reflect the irresistible nature of this invitation."

### BOOKS

ICS offers a variety of books from scholarly and academic to popular and devotional titles. For a full list, visit:

[www.icscanada.edu/bookshop/](http://www.icscanada.edu/bookshop/)

Or, please email us at:

[bookshop@icscanada.edu](mailto:bookshop@icscanada.edu)

for a list or contact us at:

416-979-2331

(toll-free 888-326-5347)

## Good Neighbours Move On

For 40 years, ICS and Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) have been "roommates"—we've shared space at 229 College Street, celebrated and mourned together, and held a mutual vision for being salt and light in our world. Soon our kinship ties will be stretched as CPJ moves to Ottawa and opens its doors in the nation's capital, appropriately enough on July 1, Canada Day.

We support the reason for this move. CPJ needs to be in closer proximity to federal politicians, civil servants, and policy makers to allow for conversations around values, priorities, and a particular understanding of Jesus' gospel of love and justice.

We will miss the easy camaraderie and shoulder-to-shoulder work. Our prayer is that CPJ's prayerful response to this call will yield blessings for all Canadians and for the pursuit of public justice.



L-R: Bruce Voogd, Greg deGroot-Maggetti, Harry J. Kits, Chris Pullenayegem, Michael Krakowiak, Claire Veenstra, Marian Heinen Missing: Patricia Hayward



## FACULTY FOCUS

Adjunct faculty **Sylvia Keesmaat's** article, "If your enemy is hungry: love and subversive politics in Romans 12 and 13" will be published in *Character Ethics in the New Testament*, Robert Brawley (ed.), 2007.

**Sylvia Keesmaat and Brian Walsh** led worship and workshops at the Festival of Faith and Music at Calvin College on March 30, 31.

**Bob Sweetman**, Senior Member in the History of Philosophy will present a lecture, "Exemplary Care: Story-telling and the 'Art of Arts' Among the Thirteenth-Century Dominicans" on two occasions in April. The first will be to the School of History at St. Andrew's University, Scotland on

April 16. The second will be at the Department of History, University of Aberdeen on April 18. Bob also plans to attend the 42nd International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, May 10 to 13.

A collection of essays written by **Nicholas Wolterstorff** (ICS Senator) and co-edited by **Clarence Joldersma** (ICS alumnus and Senate chair) entitled, *Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education* (2004) won the 2006 Inaugural Lilly Fellows Program Book Award. The project was sponsored by the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship.

In spring scholarly thoughts turn to continental and analytic perspectives on philosophy.

Two significant philosophy conferences in March and April feature the work and thought of ICS Senior Member of Philosophy, **Lambert Zuidervaart**.

The 25th annual symposium on Phenomenology and Critical Theory at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh on March 16, 17 was an occasion for Lambert's delivery of the opening session keynote lecture, "Truth in Phenomenology and Critical Theory."

One month later, on April 19, Lambert will present the Kenneth Konyndyk Memorial Lecture on "Truth and Interpretation: Science, Religion, and Culture." The late Kenneth Konyndyk was Chair of the Philosophy Department at Calvin College and died in 1994; he was a respected colleague of Lambert.

The lecture is sponsored by the Society of Christian Philosophers (SCP) in conjunction with the Central Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association. SCP was co-founded by Kenneth Konyndyk and today has over 1000 members.



## DISTANCE COURSES 2007-2008

### Fall 2007

#### Worldview Foundations

Area IV CSTC\*  
Kenn Hermann

### Winter 2008

#### Leadership: Vision and Mission

Area II & IV CSTC\*  
Lee Hollaar

#### Christianity and Ecological Crisis

Area IV CSTC\*  
Ron Kuipers

## SUMMER COURSES 2007

Register Now!

### Paul: Story and Empire

ICS 2232 SM07 Area 1 CSTC\*  
Sylvia Keesmaat  
July 2 - 13, 2007 on campus

This course will focus on Paul's interpretation of his own tradition and the way in which it challenges his social context. We will read Paul's letters while exploring the various ways in which the Bible was interpreted in second-temple Judaism, the symbolic universe and narrative substructure of first-century Judaism and early Christianity, and the social context within which Paul was writing, particularly that of the Roman Empire.

### History of Christian Political Thought

ICS 1624/2624 SM07 Area IV CSTC\*  
James Skillen  
July 9 - 20, 2007 on campus

An engagement with selected classic texts in the history of Christian political thought from the patristic era to the early modern period. Central themes include the origin, nature and destiny of the political community, the relation of the political and ecclesial communities, and the scope and purposes of political authority.

James Skillen is president of the Center for Public Justice in Washington, DC.

\*Christian School Teacher Certificate offered by OCSTA (Ontario Christian School Teachers' Association)

To register, go to <http://www.icscanada.edu/students/> or call 416 979 2331 ext 234.

## STUDENT PROFILE: Sara Gerritsma

by Lorraine Voorberg

Sara Gerritsma's laugh can be heard throughout the second floor of 229 College Street on most days. Sara loves studying in a small community where classroom discussions continue over lunch and in the hallways. Growing up in St. Catharines, Ontario, and completing a Bachelor's degree at Dordt College in Iowa, she enjoys the intimate atmosphere a school like ICS can provide.

A first-year, MA junior member, Sara is interested in political theory. In fact, her interest in political and social matters made her a candidate for a scholarship from the Christian Labour Association of Canada. She received the award after writing a ten-page essay about "the significance of labour unions from a Christian perspective." When she has

completed her Masters at ICS, Sara hopes to attend law school with the goal of practising immigration or hu-

man rights law, "or something like that."



Sara Gerritsma

Although the complexity of reformational philosophy discussions sometimes make her feel overwhelmed, Sara has jumped into the ICS community whole-heartedly. She represents the Junior Members on Academic Council, is part of the Enrollment Development Committee, and has a work-study position that has her working at the ICS reception desk and preparing for events like Convocation. She also participates in the Christian Reformed Church's Committee for Campus Ministry at the University of Toronto. She shows genuine interest in everyone and is always willing to help.

## STUDENT FOCUS

Junior Member **Stephen Zylstra** presented a paper at the 12th Annual Graduate Student Interdisciplinary Conference, Concordia University, Montreal on February 8. The conference theme was "Crime and Punishment: Consequences in This Life and the Next"; Stephen's paper was on "Duns Scotus on the Fall of the Devil and the Ends of Happiness." Stephen will also present a paper at the 24th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society for Aesthetics in Saskatoon, May 29-31. His topic will be: "On Society and the Cultivation of Taste in Kant's Critique of Judgment: An Assessment of Gadamer's Interpretation."

Junior Member **Janet Read's** art exhibition, "Ocean as Vessel" was displayed from January to March at the Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa. A catalogue with essay by curator, David Aurandt, accompanied this exhibition.

A session on "Modernity and the Market" was chaired by Junior Member **Dan Jesse** at a conference, "Modernity: Yearning for the Infinite," at Notre Dame University's Center for Ethics and Culture in December.

**Michael and Stephanie Nyhof-DeMoor** celebrated the birth of Liesbet Johanna Nyhof-DeMoor, born January 13, 2007.

## Successful MA Thesis Defenses

### Kristina Jung

"Rosa Luxemburg: First Socialist Feminist"

on November 11, 2006

### Benjamin Groenewold Van Dyk

"Kingfishers and Criteria: A New Approach to the Engineering Design Method"

on December 1, 2006

### Tricia Groenewold Van Dyk

"Nativity from Chaos: Hannah Arendt and Democratic Education"

on January 19, 2007

## Contemplating the Other

Standing there on the last bit of something,  
It's clear the light goes farther than you can.  
But light in an abyss falls  
On nothingness.

Contemplate the problem  
Light, to be light, must illumine.  
Light, falling on nothing, would illumine  
Nothing.

An abyss cannot, after all, annihilate.  
So is light that illumines nothing—something?  
But still standing over there  
How could you possibly be sure?

--Benjamin Groenewold Van Dyk



## GRAD PROFILE: Matt Bonzo

On March 8, 2007 (James) Matthew Bonzo defended his doctoral thesis at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam and was awarded a PhD. His dissertation is entitled "Indwelling the Forsaken Other: The Trinitarian Ethics of Jürgen Moltmann" and will be published in 2007 by Wipf & Stock.

Matt reflects on his life since his early days at ICS in the late 1980s when he embarked on studies in philosophical theology. He credits the guidance of Senior Members emeriti Jim Olthuis and Henk Hart in his academic journey. His life has had its valleys and peaks. Through the death of three loved ones, his own near death, his wife's multiple miscarriages, the birth of a son, the restoration of a house and an old farm, the joy of students' awakening, and the relief of finishing a thesis, he is humbled and grateful to God as well as to the family, colleagues, and students who have accompanied him along the way.

The words of Wendell Berry capture Matt's feelings: "Time, then, is told by love's losses, and by the coming of love, and by love continuing in gratitude for what is lost.

It is folded and enfolded and unfolded forever and ever, the love by which the dead are alive and the unborn welcomed into the womb."

Today, Matt continues to teach philosophy at Cornerstone University in Michigan as he has done for the past nine years. In that time more than ten of his students have gone on to study at ICS. He also has

another book coming out this year with colleague Michael Stevens, entitled *At Home in Creation*. It will be published by Brazos Press.

Matt, Dorothe and Matthias live on a small community supported agriculture farm near Grand Rapids, Michigan.

## ICS ANNUAL CONVOCATION

Institute for Christian Studies invites you to hear the Inaugural Address of

DR. RONALD A. KUIPERS  
Senior Member in Philosophy of Religion

**"Faith as the Art of the Possible:  
Invigorating Religious Tradition in an Amnesiac Society"**

and to celebrate the graduation of

JUNIOR MEMBERS  
who have successfully completed their graduate programs

Friday, May 11, 2007 at 7:00 pm  
Church of the Redeemer,  
162 Bloor Street West (at Avenue Road), Toronto

Reception following in lower hall







## Marinating in the Story

by Lorraine Voorberg

Mark Roques was no sooner through the door when ICS Senior Member Nik Ansell saw him and the reunion of two blokes from England started. Nik introduced me, but I was soon eclipsed by their interest in last night's football game (or soccer, for North Americans) and a reliving of the high-lights.

A passionate conversation about football with ICS alumnus Mark Roques is not surprising. In 2003 he published a book called *Fields of God: Football and the Kingdom of God*. Linking football and religious discussion was inspired by Mark's experience as a religious education teacher in England. In one class he decided to hook the students into a discussion of the previous night's match, which included an amazing new move called the scorpion kick. Mark told them that God is excited that humans have finally figured out how to do the scorpion kick. God loves creation and he loves football. The students listened, spellbound, for the entire 40-minute class.

That class exemplifies how Mark is able to enrapture his audience on topics they might otherwise find dull. He uses stories—vignettes, really—to reach teens and adults in worldview discussions that otherwise tend to be abstract and academic. He likens his approach, hovering back and forth between

the everyday and the academic, to that of a bumblebee moving between flowers. Understanding that God loves creation and that we should enjoy it, too, is one of the ways in which ICS impacted Mark during his studies here from 1983 to 1986. He reiterates how influential his studies at ICS have been in the living out of every day experiences. He recalls a remark made by Nik: "You don't have to choose between God and creation."

Mark wants to get that message across to the youth of England and help them embrace culture in a positive way. No longer a high school teacher, Mark now works with West Yorkshire School of Christian Studies (WYSOCS), an organization chaired by his wife Anne Burghraef. Recently Mark teamed with a group called Urban Saints to help youth workers talk to kids about worldview, consumerism, and asking questions using culturally relevant stories. His passion is for youth to catch the importance of using worldview to understand culture. In the coming months he will be speaking to over 5,000 youth leaders in 18 different locations, telling them stories of real people who live life with joy and love. Mark knows that the people who hear his message will "marinate" in the stories, and hopes they will eventually "metabolize" the way of living that the stories represent.

Mark emphasizes that his ministry is not just about telling stories or keeping it simple. He sees a real need for places like ICS where people reflect on hermeneutics and engage in academic scholarship. Such academic endeavours are essential to the growth of human understanding, but "storytelling must be part of your armoury and a resource—especially with young people."

Mark certainly has a gift for storytelling. To read some of his stories, and for more information about his workshops such as "Crocodiles and Christian Philosophy?", see his website at [www.markroques.com](http://www.markroques.com)

## ICS CALLING!

"Therefore encourage one another..."  
1 Thessalonians 5:11

ICS's annual phone campaign runs from April 16 – May 11. Please prayerfully consider in advance how you might be able to increase ICS's provision of scholarships to students.

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