

# PERSPECTIVE

INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

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ICS B.C. & ONTARIO  
CONFERENCES

## Risking Beautifully From Coast To Coast

Jim Olthuis might just have to get some roadies. ICS's Senior Member in Philosophical Theology has been on something of a national tour, giving the keynote addresses at ICS conferences in B.C. and Ontario this fall before moving on to locations in Alberta later this winter.

These one-day ICS conferences have been dealing with themes articulated in Jim's book *The Beautiful Risk*. In British Columbia, they titled it *Living With Passion: The Beautiful Risk Of Love*. Held in Surrey, just north of Vancouver, it was the first ICS conference in B.C. in a number of years, and the well-attended event sparked a great deal of enthusiasm for holding future conferences more often.

The Ontario conference was titled *The Beautiful Risk: Finding Our Passion, Opening Our Hearts*. Postponed from the summer due to the blackout that disrupted much of Ontario and the northeastern U.S., the event was held at Redeemer University College in

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INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES  
Christian Graduate Education since 1967

INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY LAMBERT ZUIDERVAART

## Spiritual Struggle and Earth's Lament

*"It is astonishing how few traces of human suffering one notices in the history of philosophy."*  
- Theodor Adorno (1903-1969)

It was this remark that Lambert Zuidervart, ICS Senior Member in

Philosophy, used as the basis of his Inaugural Address at this year's Convocation. In an address titled "Earth's Lament: Suffering, Hope, and Wisdom," Lambert drew from Adorno's observation to critique western philosophy's inability to connect with the groans of creation written about by Paul in his letter to the Romans.

"Having lost touch with hope, and having abandoned the project of comprehensive wisdom, contemporary philosophy is not able to let suffering speak.

And that inability casts doubt on philosophy's purported love for truth," said Lambert in his address. "To be a true friend of wisdom, philosophy has tried to be comprehensive, gathering all of reality into one theoretical system. But philosophy today has given up that project. At most it seeks specialized insight into the world right now, not comprehensive wisdom about the world's past and future. Philosophy has largely lost its speculative moment. It does not think out of hope, nor does it let intimations of a better future shape its comprehension of the present and past."

During his 25-minute address, Lambert sought to connect Adorno's work with the reformational philosophy of Dooyeweerd,

Vollenhoven and others. He identified three areas—Societal evil, spiritual struggle, and social critique—from which could be built "a philosophy committed to truth and passionate for comprehensive wisdom, a philosophy driven to express suffering out of

hope for God's future."

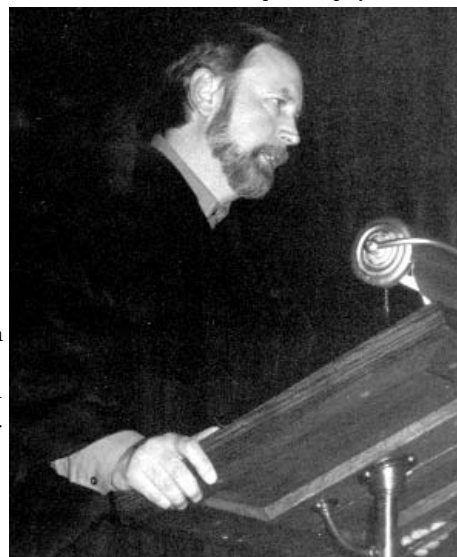
Challenging reformational philosophy's lack of movement to "plumb the depths of societal evil in the West," Lambert went on to examine the need to examine the spiritual struggle in our everyday lives, and to turn that into a broader social critique: "Precisely because there is societal evil, philosophers must come to grips with spiritual struggle."

"We must ask in which direction our society is headed. Is it headed toward a new

earth in which justice and peace embrace? Or does its direction simply prolong and intensify earth's lament? Further, in the context of such global questions, we must ask about specific practices and institutions in their current constellations. To what extent does the art we promote or the schooling we provide or the government we support bear the promise of God's future?"



Read the text of Lambert Zuidervart's Inaugural Address on the ICS Website:  
[www.icscanada.edu/events/convocation](http://www.icscanada.edu/events/convocation)



ICS Senior Member in Philosophy  
Lambert Zuidervart

# An Advent Prayer

*Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you! As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you. (Isaiah 64:1-2)*

**T**his passage from Isaiah 64 sits in the middle of a section that begins optimistically in chapter 63, with a perspective echoed centuries later in the Advent song of Mary (Luke 1):

*I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,  
The praiseworthy acts of the Lord,  
Because of all that the Lord has done for us  
And the great favour to the house of Israel that he has shown according to his mercy,  
According to the abundance of his steadfast love.  
(Is. 63:7)*

However, since at this point 'the house of Israel' is overwhelmed by the experience of exile and oppression, this grand perspective soon gives way to despair. The last verses of chapter 63 lament the fact that "our adversaries have trampled down your sanctuary, and we have long been like those whom you do not rule, like those not called by your name." Chapter 64 continues in this vein: in living memory, no eye has seen nor ear heard of those gracious deeds God used to do. Consequently God's people feel lost, disoriented, disconnected from God's grace. They are even ready to blame God for their predicament: "because you were angry and hid yourself, we sinned. We have all become like one who is unclean and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth" (64:5-6). That's a stark portrait of a people who have lost their sense of identity and direction, a people and a world that are in need of rescue. They need to be loved by a God who shows mercy.

That's the setting for the Advent prayer of our passage: "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence – as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil..." (vs.1). If only

God would come with fire and brimstone! *That* would set things right between God and the people... wouldn't it?

This image of tearing heavens and quaking mountains calls forth memories of Israel's experience at Mt. Carmel in the days of Elijah, when God performed one of those praiseworthy acts and brought the Israelites back into a special relationship for a time. In the great contest with the priests of Baal, Elijah drenched his sacrifice with so much water that it stood in a trench around the altar. Then he prayed to the Lord to "tear the heavens and come down." And God's fire consumed the brushwood on the altar and boiled the water in the trench.

Elijah's story as a whole provides a helpful reference point for this Advent prayer in Isaiah. Shortly after the contest at Carmel, Elijah fell into despair; he fled for his life to a mountain God had shaken in the days of Moses, and asked to die because, he said, of those who serve God, "only I am left." God answered Elijah: not in a wind that shook the mountain, not in an earthquake, and not in a consuming fire, but in the "sound of sheer silence" (1 Kings 19:12). There is a similar shift in tone in the prayer of Isaiah 64. It starts with an appeal for God to



**Harry Fernhout**  
PRESIDENT

"tear the heavens." It then moves through an acknowledgment of sin, alienation, and the need for restored fellowship with the God who has hidden his face. And it concludes with a quiet appeal to the intensely personal relationship between God and his people: "yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are the potter... do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider we are all your people" (vs. 8-9).

The Elijah stories tell us that, ultimately, the mercy of God and the restoration of fellowship with God do not come through a tearing of the heavens; they come in the "sound of sheer silence" of a heart, of a people, knit to a God who is moved by love for what he has created. The movement within the prayer in Isaiah 64:1-9 echoes this perspective. Against the background of the record of God's mighty acts, Isaiah bases his final appeal for mercy on God's very personal parental love for his children. And the

dynamic of this prayer, in turn, mirrors the whole story of salvation from Moses to Jesus: from God's appearance from torn heavens on shaking mountains to the arrival, in the 'sound of sheer silence,' of a poor and helpless child-saviour. (Although God's angels couldn't resist tearing the heavens just a little, with a chorus or two of "Glory to God in the highest!")

The Revised Common Lectionary links Isaiah 64 with I Corinthians 1:3-9, a passage in which the apostle Paul characterizes Christians as people who "wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ." That's the essence of Christian Advent: we remember how people waited for the first coming of Christ, to orient ourselves as we wait for Christ to make all things new. As we wait, Paul tells us, "you are not lacking in any spiritual gift", ours can be an active and confident waiting, because "he will strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 1:8).

With Isaiah, we pray for the Lord God to come to our hurting world in mercy and love. With the Corinthians, we wait for the reign of God that will come with Christ's

**Will God tear the heavens today or tomorrow to reclaim his world? Or will God come, for now, in the way of the potter, bringing a quiet and gentle transformation?**

return. Will God tear the heavens today or tomorrow, to reclaim his world? Or will God come, for now, in the way of the potter, bringing a quiet and gentle transformation? Whatever God's approach, we live with Paul's assurance that God provides all the resources we need to see us through to the end. Why is Paul so confident about this? "God is faithful," he says in 1 Cor. 1:9, and by this faithful God "you were called into the fellowship" of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's confidence is predicated on one of the deepest motifs of the Old Testament: God can be counted on to fulfill his promises. That takes us right to the start of the Isaiah passage:

*I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,  
The praiseworthy acts of the Lord,  
Because of all that the Lord has done for us  
And the great favour to the house of Israel that he has shown according to his mercy,  
According to the abundance of his steadfast love.*

This is the spirit of Advent. 🌿



(above:) a workshop at the Ontario Conference; (below:) Jim Olthuis gives the keynote address

Ancaster with an enthusiastic group of participants who braved the pre-winter cold.

No matter the name of the conference or the setting, both events were highlighted by Jim Olthuis' keynote address. Jim immediately connected to his audiences, speaking from his heart and using many anecdotes from his experience as a psychotherapist and teacher. Jim examined the way different facets of the self are constructed, and the barriers people put up between these facets. Jim discussed the way these barriers can be broken down so that people can reach their "authentic self," learning to become passionate for their lives once more.



This was supplemented by workshops that examined the role that passion plays in our lives. Each conference took a slightly different tack in exploring this theme. In B.C., the approach was pragmatic, with workshops that explored sexuality, drug addiction, health, and movement and dance, while Ontario focussed more broadly on various fields of interest: business, education, children and popular culture.

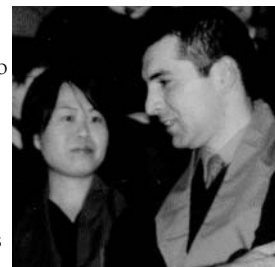
Music was intrinsic to both conferences. In B.C., the group Musicale provided music for worship and performed songs of their own. In Ontario, worship was provided a group of young musicians led by Ruth Ann Shuringa and also featured a concert by classical guitarist Kevin Ramessar.

Both conferences concluded with evening banquets. At the Ontario one, John Hulst, President Emeritus of Dordt College and Chair of the ICS Board of Trustees gave an evening keynote on the topic of "The Beautiful Risk of Higher Education." Drawing from his long history in Christian higher education, John spoke of the long-term need for Christian higher education and ICS in particular.

While both the British Columbia and Ontario conferences were highly regarded, the experience doesn't conclude there. ICS's "The Beautiful Risk" conferences continue in Calgary in February and Edmonton in March. Both will have Jim Olthuis giving the keynote, and both will take their own unique approach to the idea of rekindling one's passion for living and loving. ☺

# Graduates Honoured

This year's Convocation, held at Knox College at the University of Toronto, saw the graduation of five ICS students, three of whom were present for the ceremony. **Michael Nyhof-DeMoor** was presented with a Master of Philosophical Foundations (see profile, pg. 5) as was **Sam Gassanov**. Sam's thesis, entitled "The quest for rational agreement: a critical assessment of Alasdair MacIntyre's attempt to overcome relativism" explored the ideas of the controversial political thinker. Born in Azerbaijan in the former Soviet Union, Sam also managed to successfully guide his parents through the complex process of immigration to Canada while completing his studies at ICS. Sam is now studying law at the University of Windsor.



Mieko Higashinaka and Sam Gassanov

Three students were presented with Masters of Worldview Studies. **Mieko Higashinaka** explored in her year of studies how a vision of a faith which is all-embracing can guide Christians in a society characterised by deep religious pluralism, especially one—like Japan—where Christians find themselves in a tiny minority. Mieko came to Convocation from Japan where she has returned after completing her studies at ICS.

Receiving their MWS in absentia were **Nicholas Hunter**, who wrote a paper drawing on his experience in prison ministry on Girard's theory of scapegoating, entitled "Scapegoats and the Criminal Justice System" which illustrated how the present criminal justice system is actually a mechanism for scapegoating and punishment, and **Jonathan Chan**, who has since returned to his work as a Christian educator in Hong Kong. ☺

## ICS IN WESTERN CANADA

# Risking In Alberta

By Jenny Krabbe

ICS Western Canada Advancement Officer

"A one day treat. A splendid idea! Especially so if we get Jim Olthuis."

"New may be good! Let's hope so!"

"I'm happy to have this development come about and look forward to the events."

That is how my email reads these days as word spreads that ICS will be holding two one-day conferences in Calgary and Edmonton, February 21, 2004 and March 13, 2004 respectively.

Jim Olthuis, the keynote speaker, will address the theme, **The Beautiful Risk: Finding our passion, opening our hearts.**

Participants will be challenged to find and follow their passions. It may be through exploring the spiritual tradition of Ignatius, story telling and healing, or perhaps the looking at the healing of wounds in the movies.

Those attending the Vancouver ICS conference in late September had just this experience. Participants could recognize God's truth in what they heard through their own hearts' tugging and connecting with the stories shared. We explored our passions through *lectio divina*, a meditative way of reading scripture, exploring our healing through movement, discussing sexuality and spirituality and a number of other ways. The plenary discussion session acknowledged that when we don't own our feelings, hurts and sins they leak out, into our bodies. Finding our own passion includes suffering with others.

For more information on the upcoming conferences, visit the ICS website or contact Jenny Krabbe at [jkrabbe@icscanada.edu](mailto:jkrabbe@icscanada.edu). ☺



# Open For Business

November 21, 2003 saw the completion of a transformation of ICS's facilities. The completion of extensive renovations to the first and second floor of 229 College Street was celebrated with an Open House held during the day of, and into the long evening hours after, Convocation. That evening, to a packed house, the renovated facilities were dedicated with a liturgy led by ICS President Harry Fernhout, Chancellor Barbara Carvill, Vice-President John Meiboom and Chair of the Board of Trustees John Hulst.

The Open House provided ICS with an opportunity to "show off" after four and a half months of dust and displacement. Renovations of ICS's facilities began in July, and added new classroom and meeting space and enhanced ICS's kitchen and lounge on the second floor. Renovations on the first floor, which took most of September and October, added much needed space for administrative offices and expanded the Library considerably.

The second floor renovations in particular now provide ICS with excellent gallery space to show the work of artists, and the Open House was enhanced by an art exhibition. The exhibition, titled "Dwelling Places," featured the work of artists Klaas Hendrik Hart, Laurie Zinkand-Selles and Joyce A. Recker, whose installation "Earth's Lament" at the event provided the title (and central metaphor) for Lambert Zuidervaart's inaugural address earlier that evening. 🌍



ICS President Harry Fernhout and the ICS community dedicate the new facilities

Renovations on the first floor, which took most of September and October, added much needed space for administrative offices and expanded the Library considerably.

## FAITH & LEARNING NETWORK

# Putting Resources Together

"The purpose of the Faith and Learning Network is to try and alleviate the difficulty many Christian scholars have in identifying and accessing resources on the integral role of faith in learning ..."

- Harry Fernhout, *Perspective* December 1999

It's here.

The Faith & Learning Network, long in development, finally went live in mid-November. Spearheaded by ICS and supported through the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education, the Priscilla and Stanford Reid Trust and other donors, the Faith & Learning Network brings together the knowledge of scholars who are exploring a Christian worldview in their academic work. The Faith & Learning Network includes a bibliographic database and special library collection that puts important Christian resources together in one physical and virtual location, alongside a "Knowledge Base" of scholars whose work is included in the bibliography.

The bibliography is a comprehensive database of resources related to "faith and learning" accessible to scholars around the world via the Internet, incorporating materials produced by scholars whose academic work is rooted in their Christian faith, materials that explicitly address the role of faith in learning, and materials that, while not addressing this matter directly, embody an effort to engage in

scholarly work as a Christian.

Through the Faith & Learning Network, ICS students now have access to bibliographic records of both the library and the Faith & Learning Network bibliography. Instead of sheepishly asking library staff to look up items for them, students can now do their own research from library workstations, their Toronto apartments, or even their homes in Korea.

This will benefit Christian scholarship far beyond ICS. ICS has begun to build a Faith & Learning library collection. These items are integrated into the ICS Library, and supplement our current collection practices. Furthermore, many of the books and articles listed in the database are available to North American scholars via inter-library loan or document delivery. Document delivery is also available internationally at substantially subsidized rates for people in developing countries.

You can see the Faith & Learning Network for yourself at [www.icscanada.edu/library/](http://www.icscanada.edu/library/) 🌍



# Suffering Made Meaningful

By Robert Brink

ICS M.Phil.F. Student

On November 14, a dozen ICS students and faculty, as well as a few guests engaged a distinguished scholar on a topic of importance at the first ICS Symposium of the academic year. Presenting was Young Ahn Kang, Professor of Philosophy at Sogang University in Seoul, Korea and Visiting Professor at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Professor Kang unpacked French philosopher Immanuel Levinas' views on suffering as something that is absurd, senseless and useless; something completely passive, and something



Professor Young Ahn Kang

that is impossible to bring into unity, but yet is the beginning of ethics. After looking at some challenges to Levinas' claim that suffering is useless, Professor Kang took a look at theodicy – which is the common western response to suffering – as a "making sense" of suffering in reference to an *end*.

Levinas suggests that suffering is made meaningful by the suffering of 'me' for the suffering of others, which lead Professor Kang to bring up a number of issues regarding whether one can find meaning in one's own suffering (like Job), whether suffering can bring peace, and whether Christ's suffering precedes our suffering for others.

This led to a very fruitful discussion. Jim Olthuis took the opportunity to propose that thinking about suffering *for others* might not be as helpful as thinking of suffering *with others*. Lambert Zuidervaart brought up the fact that Levinas' "suffering without sense" might not be clear enough in its distinction between pain and suffering, and that perhaps for pain to be suffering, interpretation – a making sense of – has to have taken place. Professor Kang used these questions to further explore Levinas' views.

The symposium was incredibly insightful, not only for the junior and senior members who study the thought of Levinas, but for everyone in attendance. Beyond the important insights and questions raised, Kang's presentation brought to the centre suffering—a topic central to human existence which, as Lambert Zuidervaart stressed in his inaugural address the next week, has been all but ignored by western philosophy. 🌍

# A Leap Forward

By John Meiboom


Vice-President, Advancement

ICS has received a commitment of \$1,500,000 US for reGeneration! The Campaign for ICS. This generous pledge will fund three aspects at ICS, the Runner Chair, scholarship funding and library funding in support the work of the Faith & Learning Network.

This commitment comes in the form of a bequest agreed to by Lowell Andreas, a brother of H.Evan Runner's close friend, Glenn Andreas. In the early 1960's Glenn Andreas funded the publication *Christian Perspectives*, a series of books containing the lectures given at the "Unionville conferences" sponsored by the AACCS. When the Institute was opened in 1967, he took a special interest in the development of the new graduate school's library.

Lowell Andreas has been committed to the development and funding of Christian graduate education at ICS for many years. His interest in Christian scholarship began when, as a university student, a philosophy professor directly challenged his Calvinistic faith. This experience helped convince Lowell of the need for a place where, at the most advanced levels of university education, professors and students could work from a shared faith commitment. For some years Lowell followed his brother Glenn's interest in ICS, and eventually became a very significant financial supporter.

Lowell Andreas has demonstrated strong commitment to the Institute's vision and mission over the years, and his commitment through this eventual bequest will make a significant contribution to providing stable funding for core programs at ICS as well as new scholarship funding for qualified students.

We praise God for this important development that puts ICS within reach of the goal of reGeneration! The Campaign for ICS. 

## Alumni News

ICS has begun a new, twice-yearly publication for ICS alumni called **AlumniCS**. The first issue is distributed to alumni with this issue of **Perspective**. To obtain a copy, contact Graeme Burk at 416-979-2331 ext. 225 or [gburk@icscanada.edu](mailto:gburk@icscanada.edu)

# 'More Fun Than I Thought'

Every year, at ICS conferences across Canada, a collection is taken to provide a scholarship which is offered annually to a returning full-time student who has demonstrated a high level of commitment to the study and development of the reformational approach to Christian scholarship that is taught at ICS

This year, the ICS Conference Scholarship went to Michael Nyhof-DeMoor. Michael finds himself an interesting position—no sooner had he finished this Master's of Philosophical Foundations thesis than he began working on his Ph.D. jointly with ICS and the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. "It's almost underwhelming," he says, "because by the time I finished my (M.Phil.F) thesis, I was taking classes (for the Ph.D.) again!"

On October 23, Michael successfully defended his M.Phil.F. thesis "Not Ideas About the Thing but the Thing Itself: Thomas Reid's Epistemology in the Light of Aristotle's *De Anima*" which looks at the relationship between the Scottish philosopher and Aristotle. As with all thesis defences, Michael had to respond to questions given by his mentor, Bob Sweetman, as well as an internal examiner, Hendrik Hart, and an external examiner, Nicholas Wolterstorff.

And yet, Michael's lasting impression was "It was more fun than I thought it was going to be."

Michael's M.Phil.F thesis had an interesting gestation process. "I'm a little bit of a philosophical dilettante," says Michael, "and I'm interested in a lot of things." He was talking with Bob Sweetman and noted in his reading that reformed epistemologist Nicholas Wolterstorff and reformational theologian John Vander Stelt came to dramatically different conclusions in their assessment of Thomas Reid. "Bob said he hadn't read any of Reid's work but he knew that Reid was about Common Sense, and Bob said, 'Do you know who first put that term into philosophy? That was Aristotle.'" This led to Michael reading Aristotle's *De Anima* and Reid and others, after which he "developed a hunch. A year and a half later I wrote the darn thesis."


Michael considers the past three and a half years at ICS a positive experience. "Formally and informally I have learned a lot.

I have not necessarily chosen my own course through ICS. A lot of things have fallen that way and all of them have been providential as far as I can tell." He says, "When I said stupid things, it was pointed out that it wasn't entirely stupid and that I was onto



Michael's thesis Committee (L-R): Hendrik Hart, Bob Sweetman, Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin, Michael Nyhof-DeMoor and Nicholas Wolterstorff

something—I just needed to do more work." Michael sees "the informal learning, the space made for people" as a key strength of ICS. "ICS is an academic community of a sort where we can spark off each other even if we don't have the same projects."

ICS is pleased to be able to support the work of inventive and original scholars like Michael Nyhof-DeMoor through its scholarship program. For more information about qualifying for a scholarship to attend ICS please contact Pam Trondson at [ptrondson@icscanada.edu](mailto:ptrondson@icscanada.edu). For more information about funding a named scholarship (or to help fund general student financial assistance) at ICS please contact John Meiboom at [jmeiboom@icscanada.edu](mailto:jmeiboom@icscanada.edu). 

## ICS Scholarships 2003

ICS Conferences Scholarship  
**Michael Nyhof-DeMoor**

The Wilma Lorraine Northrop Cumming  
Scholarship

**Michele Leaman**

Laura Dale Memorial Scholarships

**Jennifer Neufeld-Luyms  
& Tanya Weber**

Pete Steen Scholarship

**Branson Parler**

Bernard Zylstra Memorial Scholarship  
**Adam Smith**

# Totally Radical (Orthodoxy)

By Jason Postma

ICS M.Phil.F. Student

Although I entertained the fantasy that the life of a graduate student would be similar to the whimsical and leisurely life I enjoyed as an undergrad, I soon awoke from my dreams with a cold splash of reality. From the inception of my graduate school journey, I was caught up in the whirlwind of academic life. After a week of orientation,



Participants at Radical Orthodoxy (L-R): James K.A. Smith, John Milbank, Graham Ward and Jim Olthuis

classes began at a breakneck pace and suddenly I found myself attending my first academic conference the first weekend of the school year.

This baptism by fire sparked a conversion process from naive schoolboy to scholarly apprentice. Being totally unprepared and unsure what to expect, I, along with some ICS compatriots, embarked on the journey to Grand Rapids to experience the first academic conference of the school year. We left with a cocktail of mixed feelings from enthusiasm to uncertainty. Yet, by the final day of the event, each of us was filled with a new perspective and zeal for learning. The ride back to Toronto was one brewing with the fermentation of new ideas.

Entitled "Creation, Covenant, and Participation: Radical Orthodoxy and the Reformed Tradition", the conference was hosted by the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship in collaboration with ICS, Calvin College, and Baker Books, and chaired by ICS alumnus, Dr. James K.A. Smith and ICS Senior Member Jim Olthuis. Held from September 11-14 2003 at the newly constructed Prince Conference Center, the conference brought together students and scholars from North

America and Europe with the intent of opening and maintaining discussion between reformational thought and Radical Orthodoxy.

Radical Orthodoxy is a significant theological movement that seeks to call Christians back to the tradition of the church. Focusing on a return to classical Christianity, Radical Orthodoxy seeks to engage and critique postmodern philosophers, while formulating faith as the answer to postmodern

thought. In many ways, reformational scholarship and Radical Orthodoxy share similar pursuits and commitments, although their respective approaches and methodologies differ. Hence, the importance of interaction between scholars of each tradition. ICS Junior Member Tom Atfield comments: "It was interesting to see someone as allegedly important as John Milbank and his radical Anglicans - a type of creature I did not believe in the existence of prior to the conference. While

perhaps less radical than some theological groups (none of them appeared to be armed), their orthodoxy was admirable, and their lack of theological weaponry, as it were, meant that they played nicely and fought fair with our own delegates, who fielded a strong team at the conference."

It is always refreshing and interesting to see one's professors and fellow classmates "enter the ring," sparring with fellow scholars outside of the classroom setting at ICS. ICS Senior Members Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin, Jonathan Chaplin, Jim Olthuis, Bob Sweetman, George Vandervelde, and Lambert Zuidervaart each presented papers at the Conference. In addition, ICS Junior Members, Neal DeRoo and Brad Wortz served as presenters on a student panel at the conference. Representing Radical Orthodoxy, John Milbank and Graham Ward presented and responded to papers.

Following the interdisciplinary nature of the headline event, students were also invited to participate in the "Engaging Radical Orthodoxy" discussion that was held at Calvin Theological Seminary. Graduate students from various universities were given the opportunity

to engage each other in a methodology corresponding to the larger conference. ICS student Neal DeRoo was invited to present a paper on Levinas and John Milbank, which was well received. Similar to playing dress-up, students were afforded the opportunity to emulate their mentors and experience the stresses and successes of taking part in academic deliberation.

Both the reformational tradition and Radical Orthodoxy drew from an impressive interdisciplinary background throughout the conference. Topics for discussion ranged from Aesthetics, Political Theory, Normative Critique, Metaphysics to Theology. Observing and participating in such discourse, one cannot help but feel a deep sense of respect for the dialogue partners - it was a veritable feast to be able to relish the combined abilities and accomplishments of those in attendance while digesting their contributions.

In some ways the encounter was overwhelming for me. However, attending conferences is an integral (though expensive) part of graduate education. The experience provided an exciting glimpse into the inner-workings of the academy and demonstrated the importance of scholars from all backgrounds joining together in dialogue in an effort to further knowledge and praxis. 🌐

## Upcoming Events

### ICS Conference

*The Beautiful Risk: Finding Our Passion, Opening Our Hearts*  
Calgary and Edmonton, AB  
February 21, 2004 (Calgary)  
March 13, 2004 (Edmonton)

### ARIHE Lectures

Given by Dr. Brad Breems  
ICS, Toronto, ON  
March 18 & 19, 2004

### ICS Alumni Dinner

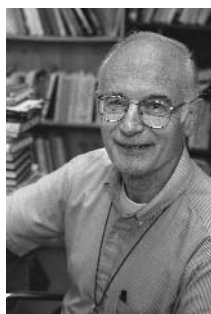
Wycliffe College, Toronto, ON  
March 19, 2004

### Art Talks!

With Ron Reid, Playwright  
Toronto, ON  
March 26 & 27, 2004



**George Vandervelde** has spent a fair amount of time this fall doing his part for ecumenism. From September 26-28 he attended the Annual Conference of the North American Academy of Ecumenists in Montreal and as part of a panel discussion presented a paper on “Faith and Witness in Canada.” This was followed up by attending the meeting of the Continuation Committee of the Global Forum of Churches and Ecumenical Organizations on October 17-20 in Rome, planning the next steps in the efforts to develop a “table” large and inviting enough to bring together Pentecostals, Evangelicals, Roman Catholics, as well as present members of the mainline ecumenical movement. On November 12 in Toronto he addressed the Roman Catholic Diocesan Ecumenical Officers of Ontario, on “Evangelical-Roman Catholic Relations: Current Developments and Prospects.” On November 14-15 in Baltimore, George attended meetings of the Board of the Foundation for a Conference on Faith and Order in North America. Finally on November 27, he was at a Redeemer University College mini-Conference where he responded to a paper by Al Wolters on “Nature and Grace and Catholic Biblical Scholarship.”



**Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin** presented a paper entitled “The Invisible and the Sublime: A Critical Reading of the Aesthetics of Radical Orthodoxy” at the “Creation, Covenant, and Participation: Radical Orthodoxy and the Reformed Tradition” conference at Calvin College, September 11-13. Her paper was responded to by Graham Ward. On November 5-7 she attended the International Symposium “Situation of Contemporary Aesthetics: German and European Heritage in the Philosophy of Art” in Montreal.

**Sylvia Keesmaat** taught a week-long course on the Biblical Foundations of Creation Care for the Creation Care Studies Program in Belize in October. In November she presented a paper entitled “Crucified Lord or Conquering Saviour: Whose Story of Salvation?” at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting in Atlanta. During the fall term she also led three bible studies for the Graduate Christian Fellowship at the University of Toronto entitled “Which Story?

Always in the Shadow of Empire,” “What Kind of Story? Love, Suffering and the Image of God” and “Whose Story? Widows, Orphans and Jesus.”

**Jonathan Chaplin** gave a paper entitled “‘Suspended Communities’ or ‘Covenanted Communities’? Reformed Reflections on the Social Thought of Radical Orthodoxy” at the Radical Orthodoxy conference at Calvin College, September 11-13. On October 18, he attended a ‘visioning conference’ of the Christian Labour Association of Canada’s Ontario General Workers Solidarity, held at Redeemer University College. He also served as a reviewer for a paper by Ronald Sider, on “Rights, Justice, and the Role of Government,” as part of a process on ‘An Evangelical Framework on Public Engagement,’ organised by the National Association of Evangelicals (USA), and served as external reader for a manuscript on religion and pluralism for a leading Canadian University press. Finally, his response to a conference paper by Professor Robin Lovin (Southern Methodist University, USA), on “Consensus and Commitment: Real People, Religious Reasons, and Public Discourse,” is to be published in a book arising from the conference. The conference was on “Theology, Morality and Public Life,” and was held at the University of Chicago Divinity School last February.

**Doug Blomberg** was recently advised of the awarding of his second doctorate—a Doctor of Education from Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. His dissertation was entitled, “Wisdom and curriculum: Christian schooling after postmodernity.” He will now submit a proposal for the publication of the manuscript.



**Hendrik Hart** recently submitted two articles to the *New Dictionary of Christian Apologetics*, one on K. J. Popma and one on D. H. Th. Vollenhoven. Henk also received word from his co-author William Sweet that Sweet has recovered from his long period of illness and that their joint book in Philosophy of Religion can now be finished.

**Lambert Zuidervaart** has had several speaking engagements this fall. In September he presented the paper “Good Cities, or Cities of the Good? Radical Augustinians, Social Structures, and Normative Critique” in a

conference on “Radical Orthodoxy and the Reformed Tradition” at Calvin College. In November he spoke on “Creative Border Crossing: Artistic Authenticity and Social Responsibility in New Public Culture” at the international symposium “Situation of Contemporary Aesthetics” organized by the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal. He also served as a consultant and panelist for the symposium “Adorno: Cultural Theory, Political Thought and Social Change” hosted by the Goethe-Institut in Toronto. Lambert presented his inaugural address “Earth’s Lament: Suffering, Hope, and Wisdom” as part of ICS’s annual convocation on November 21.

**Bob Sweetman** gave ARIHE lectures at Dordt College in Sioux Center IA on October 27-28. The lectures were titled “An Embarrassment of Difference: Integral Christian Scholarship and the Diversity of Traditions,” “An Embarrassment of Difference: Integral Christian Scholarship and the Aristotelian Way” and “From Neutral Ground to Common Ground: Inner Reformation and the Differentiation of Integral Christian Scholarship.” On November 27, he responded to a paper by Ed Echeverria, “Nature and Grace in the Thought of Etienne Gilson: Point of Convergence with Reformational Thought” at a Conference entitled “Aspects of Nature and Grace in Roman Catholic Thought” sponsored by the Dooyeweerd Centre for Christian Philosophy and Redeemer University College in Ancaster ON.



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