

IMPORTANT DATES

- 02 May - L7 Semester 1 Classes resume**
- 06 May - CTC Leadership Team meeting**
- 13 May - College Foundation Day Mass**
- 13 May - Opening and Blessing of new CTC Auckland campus**
- 20 May - L7 Auckland staff meeting**
- 20 May - Library Committee meeting**

ANNOUNCEMENT / PANUI

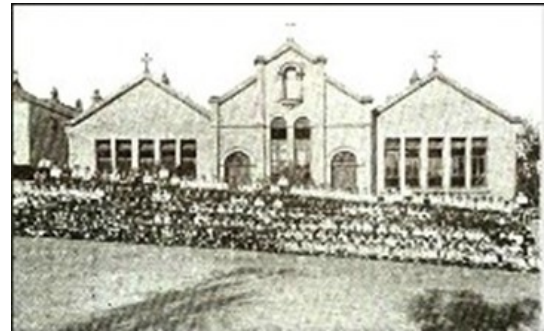
Enrolment for 2022 Second Semester for Bachelor of Divinity and Graduate Diploma in Theology is now going on.

Message from the Dean

Dr John Evangelista

We hope you all had a blessed Easter.

Our Auckland campus have finally moved from our old site at 20 Ponsonby Road to 40 Vermont Street (the St Columba Centre; also, in Ponsonby). It had been an exciting move, and everyone is looking forward to having the students back in our new premises.



*Marist Brothers' School
Vermont Street Ponsonby (circa 1913)
Renovated as St Columba Catholic Diocesan Centre*

The century old premises with its high ceilings, timber floors and ceiling are a testament to the rich history of the building. St Columba Centre was originally a Marist brothers' primary school (opened 1913). In the 1980s the Centre and hall housed the Vermont Street Catholic School.

You are all invited to join us for the official opening and blessing of our new site on the 13th of May (Friday). Bishop Steve Lowe will officiate the College Mass (Feast of the Good Shepherd) at 12:10pm at Sacred Heart Church. A procession will follow leading to St Columba Centre where the blessing of the building will take place. Light lunch will be served afterwards.

Are you keen to work for the Church?
Or interested in a leadership role?
Or want to deepen your understanding of the Faith?

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Enrolment for Semester 2 starts on 02 May

Enquire at admin@ctc.ac.nz
Or call (09) 3611053
Auckland campus:
40 Vermont Street Ponsonby
www.ctc.ac.nz

Presentation to New Staff of Hamilton Catholic School

In April, Cynthia Piper (CTC Lecturer) and Paul Shannon (Secondary Schools REA for Hamilton Diocese) did a presentation for all teaching and support staff at Sacred Heart Girls' College, Hamilton. The college has a large number of new teachers in 2022, some in their first year of teaching, most new to teaching in a Catholic school. The presentation included cov-

erage of the expectations of teachers in a Catholic school, Catholic Special Character, and an introduction to charism and spirituality for teachers. For part of the day, the teachers worked in subject groups to discuss how they might integrate aspects of Catholic Special Character into their subject areas.

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What's new at Colin Library

Mark Hangartner



The Colin Library is on its way to the new site at 40 Vermont Street. We are currently moving books but you can still browse our catalogue online [here](#) or you can call or text Mark at 0277153987 or email at library@ctc.ac.nz for assistance.



CTC Staff Feature

Dr Christopher Longhurst

Know more about your lecturers and staff. In this issue, we talked to Chris and here are his answers to our questions.

Tell us something about yourself.

I was born in Ahuriri/Napier/Aotearoa/New Zealand, great grandson of English and Irish immigrants in the 1850s. I am a Roman trained Catholic theologian, a lay person, with primary research interests in theological aesthetics.

What professional activity/research are you busy with these days?

Currently, I am working on a book titled 'Æsthetic Soul: Pictorial Art as Source of Theology Across Religious Borders.' It attempts to raise pictorial art to a source of normative and non-contextual global theology.

If you could write a book about your life, what would the title be?

If I were to write a book about my life, I think its title would probably be something like 'Job: Part II.'

Who is/are the persons that have made the most impression on you?

I have to credit the Berenstain Bears with making one of the greatest impressions on me. I still remember their stories from childhood.

What is your favourite Gospel passage/scene?

My all-time favourite gospel passage is Matthew



Chris at his great grandparents' grave in Makara, Wellington

11:29-30: "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." However, from a theological view my favourite passage would be the Vulgate's John 1:1: "*In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum.*" To me, this verse is the richest and most remarkable utterance of divine revelation ever. I also like its assonance.

Name 3 books that you have really enjoyed reading.

The last really good book I read was *Real Presences* by George Steiner. Two other favourite books of mine are James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and Rainer Maria Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet*.

What would we most likely find you doing on the weekend?

On the weekends you will often find me at one of Hawke's Bay's scenic reserves, alone.

What's the top destination on your must-visit list?

A top destination on my must-visit list is the Serengeti in Tanzania.

What's one of your favourite memories from the past year?

One of my favourite recent memories was being with such an inspiring group of religiously diverse people at the KAICIID International Fellows graduation in Lisbon, Portugal, this past February.

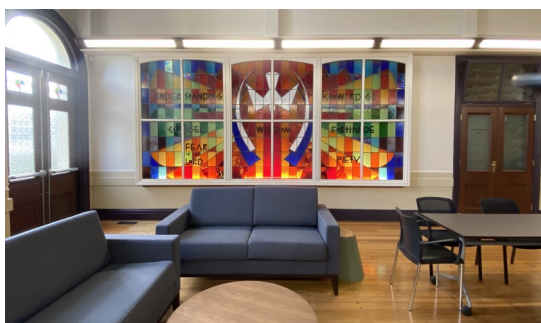
If you could make one rule for everyone in the world to follow, what would it be?

If I could make one rule for everyone to follow, it would be, 'Learn from him.'

Dr Christopher Longhurst is a Lecturer in Theology for the Certificate and Diploma programmes.

We have moved!!!

It has been an exciting Easter break for the faculty and staff ... moving to our new site at 40 Vermont Street. Here are some photos of the new Auckland campus ...





“Ignorance of scripture is ignorance of Christ.”

Mark Bond



Fadi Yalda

Inspired by these words from St. Jerome, Fadi Yalda has been studying and teaching Biblical Studies for the last nine years. Fadi formally began his studies when he entered seminary in 2013, and both his vocational discernment and his academic efforts were testaments to a lifelong, rich, and resilient faith. When asked if there were any moments that influenced him and his current vocation, Fadi told a story about a Syriac Orthodox priest who welcomed a ten-year-old Fadi and his family—who were refugees in Syria—into the church to stay for two weeks. “We slept inside the Church, ate what was provided for us, and were sheltered and well looked after,” Fadi recalled. It was around that time that he began reading the Scriptures. “I started reading the New Testament [...] and realised that Jesus had suffered a lot, and he understands our frailty and weakness. This was a trigger to pursue Jesus more, academically and spiritually.” The youngest of six children, and moving between Iraq and Syria, Fadi could certainly identify with the suffering Christ. “My dad faced many challenges,” he said. “Persecution, and fear for his family, was his daily worry. My mum worked hard to bring us up with the love of God and attending Church.” Fadi did more than just attend Church: he served as an altar boy, and later a subdeacon in the Eastern Chaldean Catholic Rite, ministries which allowed him to see “the beauty of the faith.”

It was in his most challenging moments that Fadi felt God speaking to him, and in true biblical scholar fashion, Fadi quoted Romans 5:3-5 as he likened his hardships to those of the Apostle Paul. “Suffering and

hard experiences, though unpleasant at the time, can be really rewarding in the bigger picture, as they allow the grace of Christ to work from within,” he said. “I got to understand experientially what Paul means when he said, ‘we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.’” These days, Fadi feels God’s presence in silence and stillness. “I love nature and remote places,” he shared. “It is what keeps me sane and motivated. Jesus went up alone to the mountain many times in a deserted place to pray. This is much needed in today’s busy lifestyles.”

Upon this foundation of Christ-centred faith, Fadi pursued God through the Scriptures. After leaving the seminary in 2016, he finished his Bachelor of Theology at Good Shepherd College (what is now Catholic Theological College), and then completed a Graduate Diploma in Teaching in 2018, so as to work as a Religious Education Teacher. In 2019, he taught at Sacred Heart Boys’ College in Glenn Innes, and went on to teach at Sancta Maria College in 2020 and 2021. During these years, Fadi realised that he was drawn to Biblical Studies, especially considering his two-fold advantage of speaking Aramaic and having a familiarity with biblical territories. It wasn’t long before he decided to deepen his biblical knowledge, and thus began a Masters in Biblical Studies through Yarra Theological Union, under the umbrella of the University of Divinity in Melbourne. As if starting a new degree wasn’t enough, Fadi also got married to Ruth Barrow, and moved to Hamilton in order to work as a relief teacher for St. John’s College; he says he is committed to “studying full time within the married life for the next

two years.” His goal? To eventually lecture and research in Biblical Studies at a tertiary level. “I know it will be a challenging journey,” he admitted, “[but] I am certain that my love for the Bible as the Word of God will be my motivation.” To this, he simply added, “I pray and hope that I preach the gospel through education.”

For those who might be interested in undertaking a degree in Biblical Studies, Fadi had some words of advice: “A love for the Word of God should be the main motivation for this journey. It can be challenging to learn different languages and do research, but it is rewarding as you study the word of God with more depth, [which] will lead to a deeper faith in the person of Jesus, and a conversion of heart and mind.” When asked how he would respond to the age-old question commonly directed at non-STEM degrees—“all you can do after getting the degree is teach, so why bother?”—Fadi replied that Biblical Studies was and is “an integral part of my faith,” an academic yet spiritual discipline that has helped him to “know my faith better and understand it [...] to defend the faith with reason, and be able to explain the reasons for my hope in the Word of God.” Fadi added that “if I truly believe that Christ gives me an opportunity to live eternally in heaven with him, then I am willing to invest the time in this life to know more about the Bible and be an instrument to deliver this to others.”

In a fast-paced and secular world, being able to meditate on Sacred Scripture is a grace in itself. Having been touched and inspired by this grace, Fadi is ready for whatever God has in store for him, and when asked for a phrase to sum up his vocational journey, he kept it short and hopeful: “Persevere, Jesus is real!” Fadi wishes to thank the New Zealand bishops for his scholarship, and the opportunity to deepen his knowledge of the Bible. He continues to pray that he may always remain faithful to the call of Christ in his life.

Fadi Yalda was interviewed by Mark Bond who wrote this feature article. Mark is a seminarian from Auckland diocese and a CTC student.