

OCAMPR Conference

Embodied Life: Perspectives on Human Personhood



SEPT. 26TH - 28TH 2024
UNIVERSITY OF ST. MARY OF THE LAKE
RETREAT CENTER
1000 E MAPLE AVE
MUNDELEIN, IL 60060



OCAMPR

Orthodox Christian Association of
Medicine, Psychology, *and* Religion

CONVERSATION. CONNECTION. COMMUNITY.

Welcome

Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine, Psychology, and Religion Fall Conference

OCAMPR exists to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and promote Christian fellowship among professionals in medicine, psychology and religion. Members pursue an understanding of the whole person which integrates the basic assumptions of medicine, psychology and religion within the Orthodox Christian faith.

OCAMPR is for those who seek to understand and experience the best relationship between theology and the healing arts and sciences in order to offer their services in the light of Christ's truth and the Church's healing wisdom.

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Map

University of St. Mary of the Lake



CAMPUS MAP

- A Chapel of the Immaculate Conception (600P)
- B Bookstore/Dining Hall/Mundelein Hall (601U)
- C Administration Building (500P)
- D Conference Center Meeting Hall (400P)
- E Conference Center Lodging & Registration (300P)
- F Liturgical Institute (101P)
 - School of Parish Leadership and Evangelization/Escuela de Liderazgo para la Evangelización
 - Information Technology
 - Marketing and Communications
- H Gymnasium (301P)
- I Column of the Immaculate Conception (DIME Statue)
- J Mall/Belvedere/Pier
- K Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, Stations of the Cross & Francis Cardinal George, OMI Memorial Garden
- L Cardinal Mundelein Auditorium (901P)
- M Feehan Memorial Library/McEssy Theological Resource Center (700P)
- W Image of Divine Mercy

Private Buildings

- N Classroom Building (800P)
- O Theology Building (900P)
- P Faculty Building (1000P)
- Q Faculty Parking
- R Greenhouse (701U)
- S Laundry (600U)
- T Warehouse (500U)
- U Powerplant (300U)
- V Boathouse (601T)

Exhibits and Vendors

Located in Room 101

Agape Circle

Agapecircle.com

The Assembly of Bishops' Mental Health Ministries

<https://www.assemblyofbishops.org/ministries/mentalhealth>

Beauty First Films

<https://www.beautyfirstfilms.com>

Family Wellness Ministry

<https://www.familywellnessministry.org>

Lift Up Uganda, Inc.

<https://www.liftupuganda.org>

St. Phoebe Center for the Deaconess

<https://orthodoxdeaconess.org>

St. Sebastian Press

<https://sebastianpress.org>

Thrive Life Skills

<https://thrivelifeskills.org>

Team For The Soul®

<https://www.teamforthesoul.com>

Orthodox Christians for Life

<https://www.oclife.org>

Orthodox Christian Mission Center

<https://www.ocmc.org>

Orthodox Youth and Young Adult Ministries

<https://www.theoym.org>

Schedule

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Embodied Life: Perspectives on Human Personhood

Thursday September 26th

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Arrive at Conference Center and Check-in	Lodge or Dining Hall
6:15 PM - 7:00 PM	Dinner	USML Dining Hall
7:00 PM - 7:15 PM	Opening Remarks Randa K. Anderson, PhD, OCAMPR President	USML Dining Hall
7:00 PM - 8:15 PM	Keynote Speaker The Right Reverend Gerasim, Bishop of Fort Worth Auxiliary to the Diocese of the South (OCA)	USML Dining Hall
8:15 PM - 9:15 PM	Reception	USML Dining Hall
11:00 PM - 7:00 AM	Lodge Quiet Hours	

Friday September 27th

8:00 AM - 8:45 AM	Breakfast	USML Dining Hall
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	Morning Prayers	Lodge Chapel
9:45 AM - 10:45 AM	Plenary Speaker: Theological The Right Reverend Archimandrite Calinic Berger, PhD Archiepiscopal Vicar for the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America (Antiochian) and Adjunct Professor of Dogmatic Theology at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology	Plenary Room
10:45 AM - 11:15 AM	Break, Exhibits, Networking	Conference Center
Workshop Session 1 (choose 1)		
11:15 AM - 12:15 PM	The Power of Silence <i>Albert Rossi, PhD</i>	Room 102
	Personhood in Co-Suffering Community <i>Sangeetha Thomas, MS and Fr. Sean Levine, D.Min, M.A.T.S, M.A.B.S, M.Div, M.S. (MFT)</i>	Room 105
	Attachment Style and Body Language <i>Mena Mesiha, MD, MTS and Silvia Farag, MSW, LSW, PsyD Candidate</i>	Room 106
	The Fullness of Personhood Through Ministry To and By Women <i>Panel: Hermina Nedelescu, PhD; Ann Marie Mecera; and Helen Theodoropoulos, PhD</i>	Plenary Room
12:30 PM - 1:15 PM	Lunch with Professional/Special Interest Groups	USML Dining Hall
1:15 PM - 1:45 PM	Group Photo with all Conference Attendees	USML Grounds
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Plenary Speaker: Psychological Pia Chaudhari, PhD Founding Co-Chair of the Analytical Psychology and Orthodox Christianity Consultation	Plenary Room
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Break, Exhibits, Networking	Conference Center

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Workshop Session 2 (choose 1)		
3:30 PM - 4:30 PM	Reflections on Autonomy and Total Personhood <i>(Kayla) Elizabeth Fresco, MD</i>	Room 105
	An Orthodox Pastoral Model of Anxiety <i>Layla Ilene Laubach, MTS and Philip Mamalakis, PhD, LMFT</i>	Room 106
	Self-Sufficiency and Interdependence: The Path To A Healthy Community <i>Fr. Simon Menya, MDiv</i>	Room 102
	Trauma, Embodiment, and Personhood in the Light of the Resurrection <i>Corina Gheorghiu, LMFT, DDS and Ioan Gheorghiu, MDiv</i>	Plenary Room
4:30 PM - 5:00 PM	Break, Exhibits, Networking	Conference Center
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Paraklesis	Lodge Chapel
6:15 PM - 7:00 PM	Dinner	USML Dining Hall
11:00 PM - 7:00 AM	Lodge Quiet Hours	
Saturday September 28th		
8:00 AM - 8:45 AM	Breakfast	USML Dining Hall
9:00 AM	Check out of Lodge if leaving Saturday	
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	Morning Prayers	Lodge Chapel
9:45 AM - 10:45 AM	Plenary Speaker: Medical Reverend Deacon Sampson (Ryan) Nash, MD, MA The Hagop S. Mekhjian, MD, Endowed Chair in Medical Ethics and Professionalism & Director of The Ohio State University Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities	Plenary Room
10:45 AM - 11:15 AM	Break, Exhibits, Networking	Conference Center
Workshop Session 3 (choose 1)		
11:15 AM - 12:15 PM	Trauma Transfigured: Beauty from Pain <i>Lydia Bailey, MA, LPCC</i>	Room 105
	(Re)Connecting With What Truly Matters in the Midst of Daily Stressors as a Servant Leader <i>Ioana Popa, MD, BCC, MTS</i>	Room 106
	Death Anxiety and the Life of Faith <i>Sarah Byrne-Martelli, DMin, BCC-PCHAC</i>	Room 102
	Artificial Intelligence and Human Distinctiveness <i>Panel: Gayle Woloschak, PhD, DMin; Brenda O'Reilly, PhD; Helen Theodoropoulos, PhD; Catherine Creticos, MD</i>	Plenary Room
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Lunch and Annual Membership Update	USML Dining Hall
1:30 PM - 2:00 PM	Free Time. See program for activity ideas.	USML Grounds

Schedule

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Paper Session (choose 1)		
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Group 1	
	A Passionate View of Health Behavior <i>Mark D. Faries, PhD</i>	Room 105
	Illuminating Human Personhood Through the Writings of Saint Ephrem the Syrian <i>Fr. Timothy Thomas, PhD</i>	
	Group 2	
	An Exploration of How an Orthodox Christian Theology of the Body Informs its Bioethics <i>Elizabeth Hawkins, MDiv, MA</i>	Room 106
	Beauty as a Therapeutic Goal <i>Russell Hall, PhD</i>	
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM	The Autonomy of Patients from an Orthodox Christian Perspective <i>John B. DuBois, PhD, DSc</i>	
	Group 3	
	Psychosurgery and Human Personhood <i>Behrang Amini, MD, PhD</i>	Room 102
	"Neither in the liver nor in the heart" Healing The Soul (Psychotherapeia) in An Age of Neuroreductionism <i>Peter Abdelmalak, MD</i>	
	Personal Identity is the Foundation of Each and Every Interaction <i>Azizeh Elias Constantinescu, MTh</i>	
	Group 4	
3:30 PM - 4:00 PM	The Impact of AI on Orthodox Liturgical and Pastoral Practices <i>Fr. Eugen V Rosu, DMin</i>	Plenary Room
	Beyond Cultural Humility: Embodying Humility to Facilitate Healing Across Differences <i>Lory Barsdate Easton, JD, MPsy</i>	
	Holy Attachment: Sharing in Christ's Experience of Nurture by the Mother of God <i>Fr. Isaac Skidmore, PhD, MDiv</i>	
3:30 PM - 4:00 PM	Break, Exhibits, Networking	Conference Center
Workshop Session 4 (choose 1)		
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Turning the Other Cheek: Humility or Masochism <i>John Azer, MD</i>	Room 102
	Healing Wounds of Abortion and Wounded Eros <i>Nancy J. Brown, MA, LMFT; and Cindy George, RN MA</i>	Room 105
	What is Orthodox Psychotherapy and Life Coaching? <i>Panel: Thomas Perkins, LCSW M.Ed. CGP; Fotini Birbilis, MA; and Deacon Markos Nickolas, MDiv, PhD</i>	Plenary Room

Schedule

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page	Break, Exhibits, Networking	Conference Center
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM	Vespers & Blessing of Hands	Lodge Chapel
	Dinner on your own. See program for list of local restaurants.	
11:00 PM - 7:00 AM	Lodge Quiet Hours	
Sunday September 29th		
9:00 AM	Check out	

Visit the OCAMPR website to view the Conference Program with more details about the presentations and presenters.



Visit the new OCAMPR store



During the Breaks

Enjoy all the retreat center has to offer

- Visit the exhibit and vendor tables in room 101
- Walk the 5K trail around the retreat center
- Visit the Lodge Chapel for personal prayer
- The Feehan Memorial Library and the McEssy Theological Resource Center are open to conference attendees. Enjoy the small gathering spaces or quiet reading.
- Visit the USML bookstore
- Meet and network with colleagues in the conference center break room, where beverages are available



Keynote Speaker



The Right Reverend Gerasim, Bishop of Fort Worth Auxiliary to the Diocese of the South (OCA)

Bishop Gerasim was born in 1961, in Torrance, California. He graduated from University High School in Irvine in 1979. He studied at both UC Irvine and UC Santa Cruz, focusing on Spanish literature. He speaks fluent English, Spanish and Russian.

He entered the St Herman of Alaska Monastery in 1981, was tonsured a monk in 1992, ordained to the priesthood in 1995, and elevated as Abbot of the monastery in 2000. He served as Abbot until August 2009.

In 2012 he graduated from St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary magna cum laude with a Master of Divinity degree. He was the class valedictorian and also received commendations for contribution to community life and for his thesis, "Russian Icons in a Native Church: Conflict in Culture in Western Alaska."

In 2013 Archbishop Benjamin elevated him as Archimandrite. Later that year he was assigned to Saint Seraphim Cathedral in Dallas, Texas, where he serves as cathedral dean. On May 18, 2021, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America elected Archimandrite Gerasim as Bishop of Fort Worth, Auxiliary to His Eminence Archbishop Alexander and the Diocese of the South. He was consecrated to the episcopacy on Tuesday, June 29, 2021, at Saint Seraphim Cathedral in Dallas, Texas.

To read His Grace Bishop GERASIM's extended biography with details of his journey to Orthodoxy and monastic life please visit, <https://www.oca.org/holy-synod/bishops/the-right-reverend-gerasim>

Plenary Speaker

Theology



**The Right Reverend Archimandrite Calinic Berger, PhD
Archiepiscopal Vicar for the Diocese of Wichita and
Mid-America of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese and
Adjunct Professor of Dogmatic Theology at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox
School of Theology**

The Right Reverend Archimandrite Calinic Berger is the Archiepiscopal Vicar for the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. He has served as Adjunct Professor of Dogmatic Theology at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, and as visiting professor of dogmatic theology at St Vladimir's Seminary in New York. His teaching, research and academic publications have concentrated on Chalcedonian Christology and contemporary Orthodox dogmatic theology, most especially that of Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae. He is a graduate of Santa Clara University (1988), Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (1994) and the Catholic University of America, where he obtained his Ph.D. in historical theology (2003).

Plenary Speaker

Psychology



Pia Chaudhari, PhD

Founding Co-Chair of the Analytical Psychology and Orthodox Christianity Consultation

Dr. Pia Sophia Chaudhari holds a doctorate in theology from the department of Psychiatry & Religion at Union Theological Seminary in New York. She is the author of *Dynamis of Healing; Patristic Theology and the Psyche* (Fordham University Press 2019), as well as numerous articles, including on marriage and theosis, the unconscious and prayer, and healing and the Theotokos. Her research interests include theological anthropology, depth psychology, processes of healing, the feminine, aesthetics and beauty. She spent two years working as a chaplain intern in a psychiatric hospital, and has trained and worked extensively in Jungian psychoanalysis. She is a founding co-chair of the Analytical Psychology and Orthodox Christianity Consultation (APOCC) which was started in order to promote dialogue across the fields of Orthodox theology/pastoral care and analytical psychology after Carl Jung, and which has hosted several gatherings as well as having presented at OCAMPR in the past. Dr. Chaudhari served as a Steering Committee member of the Assembly of Bishops' Mental Health Task Force.

Plenary Speaker

Medicine



Rev. Dn. Sampson (Ryan) Nash, MD, MA

The Hagop S. Mekhjian, MD, Endowed Chair in Medical Ethics and Professionalism & Director of The Ohio State University Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities

The Rev. Dn. Sampson (Ryan) Nash, MD, MA is the Hagop S. Mekhjian, MD, Endowed Chair in Medical Ethics and Professionalism and the Director of The Ohio State University Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities. He also holds appointments as adjunct Professor of Christian Ethics at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary and Professor of Medicine at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary. In addition to being an active educator, administrator, and serving as a healthcare ethics and clinical bioethics advisor and consultant, Dr Nash continues to be active in Palliative Medicine caring for patients primarily with advanced cancer. Dr Nash's scholarship focuses on practical, procedural, and policy issues related to Medicine, Clinical Bioethics and Palliative Medicine. He also explores ethics foundations at the nexus of medicine, ethics, theology, religion, and culture. Dn Sampson serves at St. Gregory of Nyssa Orthodox Church (OCA) in Columbus, Ohio. He is the grateful husband of Sarah and proud father of four daughters. He occasionally helps them run their small farm north of Columbus. Dr. Nash received his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical School at Houston and his master's degree in Bioethics from Trinity International University. He completed an internal medicine residency at the University of Texas Medical School, a fellowship in palliative medicine at the University of Alabama School of Medicine and was a fellow and visiting scholar at the MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics at the University of Chicago's Pritzker School of Medicine. Dr. Nash has been recognized as a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, Fellow of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Care, and Fellow in the Academy of Fellows of the Center of Bioethics and Human Dignity. He has repeatedly been named to the "America's Best Doctors" and "World's Best Doctors" lists.

Workshops

Session 1

The Power of Silence

Albert Rossi, PhD, Clinical Psychologist, St Vladimir's Seminary

In my experience, personal silence is an often overlooked asceticism within Orthodoxy. Silence has a power to allow an inner stillness to develop. Inner and outer stillness can be a gateway to more intimacy with Christ. The theology of silence includes a transformation of the person into more Christ-likeness. Through silence we have an opportunity to become more centered, more focused, more in touch with our humanity.

Personhood in Co-Suffering Community

Sangeetha Thomas, MS, Psychotherapist, AoB Director of Mental Health Ministries, Assembly of Bishops

Fr. Sean Levine, D.Min, M.A.T.S, M.A.B.S, M.Div, M.S. (MFT), Priest, Military Chaplain

In this workshop, we will explore how a fundamental understanding of Orthodox Christian personhood can shape how we form a co-suffering community within our parishes. Participants will be challenged to compare the theological underpinnings of individualized spirituality versus collective spirituality and discuss how these differing approaches at a personal level can impact an entire parish or community. Upholding our core understanding of the Person of Christ at the center of this discussion, we will explore our interconnected nature and our call to be compassionate towards fellow persons, the environment, and suffering around the world. This portion of the presentation will also briefly explore concepts such as supportive relationships and meaning making from a psychological and theological lens. This workshop will include group activities that demonstrate how we are spiritually and biologically wired for co-suffering, collective thinking, and empathy. These activities will equip participants with tools to use in small group ministries to facilitate discussion, build a greater sense of community, and cultivate a spirit of shared responsibility to the wellbeing of oneself and others.

Workshops

Session 1

Attachment Style and Body Language

Mena Mesiha, MD, MTS

Silvia Farag, MSW, LSW, PsyD Candidate

Medical patients and therapy clients show up for their care with a complex history and identity that affects their diagnosis and treatment. In this workshop, we will consider how paying attention to body language may be just as informative as what is said in a visit. Specifically, we will focus on attachment styles as a helpful framework for how patients and clients engage with their environment and how their body language may give us insight into their attachment style.

While it may not be critical to assess each patient or client's attachment style, we will use these examples to highlight how the body, soul, and spirit are connected with the body being the physically embodied expression of the soul. We will take our participants through a role play that helps them to feel and act out what it looks like and hopefully even what it feels like to be avoidant or anxious. We hope this will be a valuable exercise, and a starting point for enriching discussion on embodiment.

Workshops

Session 1

The Fullness of Personhood Through Ministry To and By Women

Panel: Hermina Nedelescu, PhD, Neuroscientist and Student of Theology

Ann Marie Mecera, BS, Clinical Pastoral Care Intern

Helen Theodoropoulos, PhD, Professor/Educator, St Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology

The theology of our Orthodox faith boldly proclaims both the equality of persons before God and their absolute uniqueness, and both these dimensions of what it means to be a person affect the healing ministry and service to one another that we as Church are to offer. This panel explores the way the Church's teachings about personhood direct it to both include women among its healing ministers and to recognize the particular needs and gifts of women when ministering to them.

While the first presenter of the panel will lay the theological groundwork for our discussion, the second presenter will examine how actions that exclude women are particularly painful and damaging to human personhood and identity. The third presenter will call for a woman-to-woman ministry grounded in pastoral and spiritual counseling to meet the unique needs of more than half of the Church's faithful, for the building up of the entire Church body today.

Workshops

Session 2

Reflections on Autonomy and Total Personhood

(Kayla) Elizabeth Fresco, MD, Internal Medicine Resident Physician, Penn State Hershey Medical Center

The “principles” of modern medical ethics, as described by Tom Beauchamp and James Childress, are justice, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and autonomy. Among medical trainees and professionals, these “principles” are used to reinforce priorities in medical decision making. The workshop will highlight limitations of such a framework, namely those of relativism and a narrow understanding of human personhood. Autonomy, as understood in modern medicine, neglects the gift of the embodied person: endowed with body and soul, fulfilled in theosis. There remain challenges in creating a framework to process difficult clinical scenarios as caregivers, providers, and patients work together amid the realities of a fallen world. There exists a concept of “total pain” in the field of palliative care which recognizes the human beyond the physical and isolated which may provide a useful framework to incorporate the Orthodox understanding of body and soul duality, healing, and theosis which will guide our discussions.

Self-Sufficiency and Interdependence: The Path To A Healthy Community

Fr. Simon Menya, MDiv, Priest, Orthodox Holy Diocese of Gulu and All Northern Uganda

This workshop will explore the somewhat conflicting concepts of being self-sufficient (able to care for oneself) and the importance of combining resources for a common good—both of which pave the way to a healthy and thriving community. As we work with individuals who are struggling to survive, yet anticipating a way forward, we are intently aware of their physical and spiritual personhood. This reality influences the decisions and actions taken that will impact the well-being of their future at every level. As we attempt to open doors for the future, we must be compassionate and attune to the suffering and scars from the past.

Workshops

Session 2

Trauma, Embodiment, and Personhood in the Light of the Resurrection

Corina Gheorghiu, LMFT, DDS, Marriage and Family Therapist

Ioan Gheorghiu, MDiv

“No conscious being exists except in hypostases or persons: the divine essence in three Persons, the human in many persons. Otherwise, neither God nor humans would fulfill the destiny of loving existence and, through this, achieve eternal happiness.” (Fr. Dumitru Staniloae) As counselors, coaches, and clergy we are called to bring Christ’s light into the hell of wounded souls—a hell that can be transformed through the Resurrection. How can we put the Orthodox Christian understanding of the person or hypostasis as inseparable from the nature it hypostasizes in dialogue with the modern psychological understanding of embodiment to seek healing for traumatized, fragmented individuals? How can we as psychotherapists help them grow into fully embodied persons in communion with God and others, despite the seemingly insurmountable pain trapping them in a self-enclosed individualism? Here, Schemanun Siluana Vlad and Rev. Dr. Dumitru Staniloae shed light on healing the deepest layers of the human psyche by bringing all things—the good, the bad, and the ugly—into the unfading light of the Resurrection.

Workshops

Session 2

An Orthodox Pastoral Model of Anxiety

Layla Ilene Laubach, MTS Student, Hellenic College Holy Cross (MTS), Regis College (MCMHC)

Philip Mamalakis, PhD, LMFT, Hellenic College Holy Cross

This workshop will aim to address a common shortcoming in pastoral care for people who are experiencing anxiety. This shortcoming stems from the disparities between different models of anxiety found inside and outside the Church, resulting in a conceptualization of anxiety that is often oversimplified and inadequate for use in pastoral care. In psychological literature, anxiety is reduced to a two-dimensional medical phenomenon: a nervous system interacting with its environment. In Orthodox literature, anxiety is often presented narrowly, as an exclusively spiritual state. Neither approach is comprehensive – each is lacking in different ways. While the psychological literature doesn't address any form of Orthodox spiritual understanding, the overly-spiritualized approach often found in Orthodox literature is also incomplete, for it frequently neglects to discuss the reality of the body and a person's environmental circumstances. This narrow view easily lends itself to misinterpretation, and it actually departs from the Orthodox patristic tradition of holistically regarding the person as a relational and psycho-somatic entity. Both conceptualizations, therefore, are inappropriate models for Orthodox pastoral care; the one with true spiritual insight speaks too narrowly, and the other with useful scientific knowledge neglects the soul entirely. To address this, we are proposing a model of anxiety which explicitly presents it as a three-dimensional phenomenon, consisting of body, soul, and the environment (which also includes interpersonal relationships,) remaining loyal to the patristic conceptualization of the human person. In this model, anxiety can originate in any of these dimensions, and each origin will necessitate different forms of care and/or treatment.

Workshops

Session 3

Trauma Transfigured: Beauty from Pain

Lydia Bailey, MA, LPCC, Psychotherapist, Breathe & Become Counseling, LLC

“Trauma Transfigured: Beauty from Pain” will conceptualize traumatic memory and the process of healing trauma from an Orthodox lens. The workshop will integrate the perspectives of polyvagal theory, Internal Family Systems (IFS), and posttraumatic growth with Orthodox theology, ethics, and practice, setting forth a vision of discovering Beauty and Light in (seemingly) unlikely places.

(Re)Connecting With What Truly Matters in the Midst of Daily Stressors as a Servant Leader

Ioana Popa, MD, BCC, MTS, Spiritual Care Life Coach, Physician, Speaker, Co-founder Team For The Soul®

Join this workshop to learn about the hidden impact of daily stress as you live a life of service in Christ and to (re)connect with what truly matters for you through contemplation and Jesus Prayer. This way, by using similar practices on a daily basis, you can recharge and renew and continue to give to others in Christ with joy and energy.

Death Anxiety and the Life of Faith

Sarah Byrne-Martelli, DMin, BCC-PCHAC, Palliative Care Chaplain, Massachusetts General Hospital

A hallmark of being human is the awareness of our mortality and the pondering of questions related to life and death. Some amount of death awareness can be spiritually helpful, insofar as it inspires humans to repent, to love God and others, and to live life as fully as possible. The Christian practice of the remembrance of death teaches us that this awareness is part of the nuanced spiritual life. All people experience some measure of death anxiety as they navigate serious illness, the death of loved ones, or other existential challenges. In this workshop, we will explore aspects of death anxiety and engage our rich Orthodox Christian theological and liturgical framework, as a means toward a healthy, non-anxious remembrance of death.

Workshops

Session 3

Artificial Intelligence and Human Distinctiveness

Panel: Gayle Woloschak, PhD, DMin, Scientist, Northwestern University

Brenda O'Reilly, PhD, Clinical Psychologist

Helen Theodoropoulos, PhD, Professor and Educator, St Sava Serbian Orthodox School of Theology

Catherine Creticos, MD, Physician

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning have become commonly used in the world today for a large number of biomedical applications including analysis of large patient databases to identify patients who are likely to be responsive, to predict biological responses, to create infobots to help guide patients through decision-making, and more. As the uses of AI and ML continue to grow, examination of how humans interface with these technologies become important. This panel will: (1) define AI and ML, (2) explore benefits and limitations of the technologies, (3) examine regulation of AI now and how it could be changed for the future, (4) awareness of the limitations of the technologies, and (5) discussion of these technologies in light of human uniqueness, what makes us human and makes us distinct from machines.

Workshops

Session 4

Healing Wounds of Abortion and Wounded Eros

Nancy J. Brown, MA, LMFT, Marriage and Family Therapist, Retired

Cindy George, RN, MA

This workshop will have two parts: one dealing with wounds from abortion and one with the consequences of unchaste eros. Is there any event of human life in our culture that more calls out for and to embodied personhood, both for the aborted child and the aborting mother, than that of abortion? First we shall look at the embodied personhood of the child and then turn our attention to the severe wounding of personhood for those who undergo abortion. Special emphasis will be placed on the bodily impacts. Then we will turn our attention to the healing of post abortion wounding to personhood. This healing will be grounded in acknowledging the reality of the personhood of the aborted child and the personhood of the person who has chosen abortion. This healing of personhood will involve the restoration of some of the functions of personhood, the reconciliation of relationships, and bringing forth transformations of the psychosomatic unity as the fruits of repentance. This healing has the potential to birth a more embodied undergoing of one's own personhood. Dr. Timothy Patitsas states in his book, *The Ethics of Beauty*: "True desire, that which is actually endemic to our nature, is not satisfied with the pleasures sought by the passions. It will go to extreme measures, even deep into pain, in order to be found by what it seeks." When we seek this true desire through avenues other than the Orthodox faith and Her Sacraments, great pain, wounding, and distortions develop. Our continued insistence on traveling this path will lead us to the gates of Hell. If we allow God to lead us to repentance, immeasurable healing and joy become the reality of our life. But to get there, we must trust God and trust another. To be a trusted other necessarily means that we have traversed this great and frightening, often shame-filled path, of healing ourselves. We do that through chaste eros. By answering the call to turn toward God alone, no matter the pain or the shame, we can become wounded healers for others in their quest for chaste eros. We can become one who is willing to carry the pain of another until she or he is able to accept the healing that God has for her or him.

Workshops

Session 4

Turning the Other Cheek: Humility or Masochism

John Azer, MD, Psychiatrist and Psychoanalyst, Austen Riggs Center

Since its inception as a term characterizing sexual behavior to its eventual expansion into moral psychological categories, masochism is a concept that has been popularized through psychoanalysis and is hospitably received in a culture where values of self-indulgence are espoused at the expense of values of self-denial and asceticism. How it converges and diverges with the Christian value of humility has been an important point of understanding for all Christians of this age, as manifestly the behaviors characterizing masochism are indistinguishable from those which would be identified as humble. Freud clearly notes that the “the true masochist always turns his cheek whenever he has a chance to receive a blow.” (1924) Otto Fenichel adds that masochism is essential to the “psychology of asceticism.” (1945) The tension between these two concepts captures some of the overarching tensions Christian therapists grapple with as they attempt to reconcile their Christian values and the values of their therapeutic discipline. What is distinctly at stake in this tension is our understanding of the self-emptying, kenotic love of God, which is essential to our understanding of who God is and His saving work. Furthermore, in our own lives we are called to become “imitators of God” (Ephesians 5:1), even “slaves to God” (Romans 6:22), as we are called to follow Christ to the Cross, the point of ultimate self-emptying and denial. How are we to understand this radical calling of obedience? Are we to understand it as an unhealthy act of self-immolation? Or as an act of love? I hope to use Christ’s saving work, most specifically His incarnation and crucifixion in this workshop to help us explore and work through these questions and clarify the differences between the phenomena masochism and humility.

Workshops

Session 4

What is Orthodox Psychotherapy and Life Coaching?

Panel: Thomas Perkins, LCSW M.Ed. CGP, Psychotherapist, The Therapy Collective in New York, NY

Fotini Birbilis, MA

Deacon Markos Nickolas, MDiv, PhD, Mental Health Counselor

What does it mean to be an Orthodox Christian psychotherapist or life coach? How is this different from being a regular or secular psychotherapist or life coach? Is it necessary to make a distinction? If so, how would one's work change by integrating whatever definition(s) or illustrations we come up with today into CBT, DBT, EMDR, and other techniques? What are the implications for self-disclosure with clients who are Orthodox? What are the implications, risks, and/or rewards of disclosing Orthodox identity to clients who are non-Orthodox? This panel will include personal reflections from several Orthodox therapists and one life coach. Audience members can then feel free to add their insights during the question and answer session.

Papers

Group 1

A Passionate View of Health Behavior

Mark D. Faries, PhD, Professor & Extension Specialist in Behavioral Medicine, Texas A&M University

To be truly human in the likeness of God comes only with the union of body, soul, and Holy Spirit—not a perfection of man, but of God in man.^{1,2} Thus, true “well-being” is seen as partaking of the Spirit of God dwelling in us, acquiring the image and likeness of God in which we were made.³ However, to forego this Spiritual life, unwilling to control the belly with its carnal passions, the soul images the inhuman, irrational brute creation, rather than the Divine—a descent from the Spiritual to the sensual.^{4,5} The present paper seeks to explore and apply this ancient Christian view of the carnal passions to the common struggle to adopt healthful lifestyles and the subsequent burden of chronic disease. Framed as a ‘War for Control,’ four levels will be discussed: (1) War of Body, (2) War of Flesh, (3) War of Soul, and (4) War of Spirit. This approach toward well-being of the whole person challenges contemporary, theoretical approaches to self-regulation of health behavior, while also providing perspectives and suggestions for application in clinical and community settings.

Illuminating Human Personhood Through the Writings of Saint Ephrem the Syrian

Fr. Timothy Thomas, PhD, Priest/Assistant Professor, St. Gregorios Orthodox Church/St. John's University

This paper aims to explore the theme of ‘Embodied Life: Perspectives on Human Personhood’ from the theological perspective of Saint Ephrem the Syrian, a prominent fourth-century Church Father and theologian. Saint Ephrem’s hymns and theological writings offer a profound understanding of the human person, articulated through the lens of Orthodox Christian theology, which can contribute significantly to contemporary discussions in medicine, psychology, and religion. The question of personhood is pivotal within both the secular and religious academic disciplines. *(Continued on the next page.)*

Papers

Group 1

(Illuminating Human Personhood Through the Writings of Saint Ephrem the Syrian Continued.)

Saint Ephrem's extensive corpus, characterized by its rich imagery and profound insights into the human relationship with the divine, offers valuable perspectives on the nature and destiny of the human person. This paper proposes to analyze key aspects of Saint Ephrem's thought, particularly his understanding of the body-soul unity, the importance of the Incarnation, the impact of sin, and the transformative potential of divine grace.

Papers

Group 2

An Exploration of How an Orthodox Christian Theology of the Body Informs its Bioethics

Elizabeth Hawkins, MDiv, MA, Chaplain, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

An especially beautiful facet of Orthodox theology is the understanding that our very personhood is comprised of both soul and body. This symbiotic relationship is echoed throughout Patristic writings, hymnography, and liturgical practice. More than just a tacit belief, this conceptualization of personhood offers real and practical implications for faithful Orthodox Christians. Perhaps nowhere is this truer than in the realm of healthcare use and utilization, broad categories contained within the purview of bioethics. This paper will briefly review some of the foundational theology of personhood. It will then explore how this understanding of personhood through an Orthodox lens frames pertinent questions common to contemporary bioethics. Rather than parrot theory and theology, the paper invites the reader to contemplate ways that an Orthodox phronema impacts one's relationship with healthcare, medicine and even mortality.

Beauty as a Therapeutic Goal

Russell Hall, PhD, Psychologist and Educator, Asbury Theological Seminary

In the writings of the early church fathers, beauty is understood not merely as an aesthetic quality, but as an ontological reality that permeates all of creation, reflecting God's goodness and truth, and drawing us toward the divine. Contrasted with our contemporary cultural views that often reduce beauty to a subjective experience, the church fathers viewed beauty as a bridge connecting the transcendent God to imminent divine experience with the appreciation and pursuit of beauty transforming hearts and minds. The purpose of this paper is to explore the transformative nature of beauty as a therapeutic goal to address the mental health needs of clients. We examine how beauty can intentionally integrate into the therapeutic process as a pathway to client well-being and spiritual growth. By drawing upon the insights of the early church fathers, this project contributes to the discourse on the role of aesthetics and spirituality in mental health treatment.

Papers

Group 2

The Autonomy of Patients from an Orthodox Christian Perspective

John B. DuBois, PhD, DSc, Professor of Medical Ethics, Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

Consider these everyday scenarios in healthcare:

* A nurse who works in the Employee Health Department of a hospital is confronted by an employee who refuses to receive a vaccine that their employer requires. She experiences moral distress in reporting this noncompliance because she knows the employee may be fired.

* A 15-year-old woman requests a long-lasting contraceptive. Her gynecologist knows that according to state law she does not need parental permission to implant the contraceptive. But she also knows sex with a 15-year-old is statutory rape and wonders what the parents think of this plan.

* A 60-year-old patient with stage 3 cancer decides to forego chemotherapy and move directly into hospice. His oncologist thinks his chances of survival are not bad if he were to undergo chemo and radiation. He feels the patient may be giving up too quickly.

* A client asks a therapist to help her find the courage to leave her husband and two small children to pursue her life's dream. The therapist feels the client is being impulsive, and a quick divorce or even separation could be harmful to her and her family.

Each of these situations raises questions about the duties and rights of both the patient and the healthcare provider. Within the secular field of bioethics, a patient's right to consent to treatments—and sometimes even to demand specific procedures—is grounded in autonomy or the right to self-determination. For the philosopher Kant, autonomy means that the human will is a law unto itself as long as it acts according to “pure reason.” Within contemporary bioethics, the right to autonomy has been largely detached from reason while growing even more absolute.

(Continued on the next page.)

Papers

Group 2

(The Autonomy of Patients from an Orthodox Christian Perspective Continued.)

To insiders, it will not be surprising that an Orthodox Christian response to all of this is somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand, Orthodox Christianity is a strong defender of human freedom. Freedom is a characteristic of the spiritual dimension of the person, the dimension where humans most closely image God. It recognizes the central importance of freedom in the spiritual life: There can be no true love, virtue, or repentance without freedom. Further, it is unclear how much the Church wishes the secular state to be directive in matters of morals, and accordingly to restrict the freedom of patients and providers. This is obviously true when the state supports and funds immoral choices, but it may be true quite in general when the state is divorced from the Church. On the other hand, a case can be made for properly understanding the limits of freedom in the context of healthcare. In part, this is because the right of patients to demand treatments may impinge on a Christian provider's right to refuse. In part, it is also because Christian patients require guidance on the range of legitimate choices they may make. This paper will explore these issues through both a secular and Orthodox Christian lens, offering specific guidance on the scope and limits of self-determination in healthcare.

Papers

Group 3

Psychosurgery and Human Personhood

Behrang Amini, MD, PhD, Radiologist, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

The medical profession's understanding of human personhood is revealed in how it treats people with disorders of the psyche and is seen most dramatically in the most invasive therapeutic procedures. The term psychosurgery is traditionally reserved for direct interventions on the brain (for example, lobotomy or deep brain stimulation for schizophrenia, depression, and sexual disorders). However, there are surgical interventions on the body that are performed to address disorders of the psyche that should also be considered under this umbrella term. These include bariatric surgery to address psychiatric and spiritual issues that result in disordered eating, as well as cosmetic and gender reassignment surgeries to address body dysmorphia. This workshop will examine the medical profession's changing understanding of human personhood as reflected in its application of psychosurgery from the 1800s to the present.

“Neither in the liver nor in the heart” Healing The Soul (Psycho-therapeia) in An Age of Neuroreductionism

Peter Abdelmalak, MD, Family Physician, Guelph, ON, Canada

In an age of neuro-reductionistic dogma, we are inundated with messages about neurotransmitters, pleasure centres of the brain and the obviating of a doctrine of free will. We have become ‘neurochemical selves’ (Rose 2003) as neuroscience and neuroimaging come to unseat notions of personhood and agency from their traditional Christian framework in Western society and most societies that use these mental health classifications. As ‘being good’ in God migrated to ‘being healthy’ and subsequently to ‘feeling good’ in the age of psychological man (Rieff 1987), soul-healing (psycho-therapeia) abrogated its original vocation of inculcating virtue and bringing the human being back to Divine communion with the Trinity.

(Continued on the next page.)

Papers

Group 3

("Neither in the liver nor in the heart" Healing The Soul (Psycho-therapeia) in An Age of Neuroreductionism Continued.)

While the physicalist promises of yesteryear have not brought forth healing in the lives of the populations they lord over, reclaiming an Orthodox understanding of the human being as union of body and soul will form the basis for true healing in Christ. Seeking wholeness as the embodied being we have been gifted is the basis for curing the ever-present 'malaise of modernity' (Taylor 1991). Situated in this context, rediscovering Orthodox spiritual teaching on the passions, the virtues and asceticism, we can return to health of body and soul.

Personal Identity is the Foundation of Each and Every Interaction

Azizeh Elias Constantinescu, MTh, Business Leader and Change Agent, UL Solutions

The idea of "identity" is found in secular discourse today, and there is confusion on the subject. The idea of identity is not political, nor is it limited to sexual orientation, nor is it limited to affiliation, nor is it limited to personal preferences and habits. It is rather a question about personhood: What does it mean to be a human being? The answer to this question is the foundation of each and every interaction with our self and with other persons. As Christian leaders, we need to care about this subject beyond the secular discourse today.

Papers

Group 4

The Impact of AI on Orthodox Liturgical and Pastoral Practices

Fr. Eugen V Rosu, DMin, Priest/Adjunct Faculty, Rio Salado College

The primary objective of this research, which has the potential to impact religious studies, theology, and technology significantly, is to critically analyze the impacts of AI on the practices and experiences within Orthodox Christianity. I will focus on two main areas: liturgical services and pastoral care. This study seeks to understand how AI could potentially enhance or disrupt these practices and to evaluate the theological and ethical implications of AI's involvement. With its rich liturgical traditions and deep theological foundations, Orthodox Christianity offers a unique and invaluable context for exploring the relationship between religion and modern technology. AI in religious settings raises profound questions about authenticity, tradition, and the human aspect of worship and spiritual guidance. The study will contribute to a broader understanding of technology's role in religious practices and its limits by investigating these themes.

Beyond Cultural Humility: Embodying Humility to Facilitate Healing Across Differences

Lory Barsdate Easton, JD, MPsy, Consultant, Coach, Retired Attorney

“Cultural humility” has become a key aspect of multicultural orientation in the healing professions. Mental health professionals, physicians, healthcare workers, and pastors must be able to form therapeutic bonds across socially relevant differences including race, religion, socioeconomic status, mental and physical ability, gender, sexual orientation, and age. Orthodox Christian theology illuminates both why we struggle with cross-group encounters and how humility can help us to serve others through being open to God and to all others made in His image. Recent research in psychology has demonstrated that elements of humility including seeing one’s own limitations with clarity, considering others before self, and being teachable all facilitate orientation to others even across differences. Embodying cultural humility and the virtue of humility more broadly may help healing professionals be more effective, specifically in the context of cross-group interactions.

Papers

Group 4

Holy Attachment: Sharing in Christ's Experience of Nurture by the Mother of God

Fr. Isaac Skidmore, PhD, MDiv, Therapist (LPC), Priest, Professor

Soteriology often focuses on the implications of the Christian's possibility of participation in the divine nature through union with Christ. Thus, we are "baptized into" his death, and his resurrection now informs our own potential as well. In him, we call God our Father. Less frequently do we reflect on the implications of the fact that, in Christ, his Mother is also our Mother. On the biological side, this suggests the possibility that the intergenerational developmental factors—culminating in the Mother of God's birth-giving and nurture—that prepared Christ's humanity for its role in the hypostatic union are part of the endowment of which we partake. If true, one aspect of Christian theosis could include the healing of our own developmental wounds and attachment schema, not just to satisfy the "good enough" conditions requisite for resilience as defined by humanistic models of wellness, but to satisfy (or approach) the conditions necessary for realization of personal transcendence of the fallen human condition, the telos of divine communion, and participation in divine life. This paper is a theoretical exploration of how rhythmic, aesthetic, somatic, auditory, tactile, and paralinguistic elements of Church life might be seen as opportunities for participation in theologically-informed schemata of dependence, autonomy, and intimacy that the author will term **Holy Attachment.** This perspective has potential to enrich our appreciation of the epithet **Mother,** as applied to the Church, and help us reconsider the differences and relationship between applications of psychology in secular and ecclesiastical settings.

Prayers

Prayer for the Blessing of Hands

Almighty Lord, the true Physician, bless and sanctify this oil which Thou hast ordained for the anointing of Thy servants and for the healing of soul and body, so that, when they are restored in health, they may give thanks to Thee, the living and true God.

Grant, we pray, that those who are anointed with this oil may be delivered from all suffering, all infirmity, and all wiles of the enemy.

May each one, created in your image and likeness and redeemed through the divine economy of Thy Son, be filled with Thy compassion, and walk daily in the light of Thy commandments; through the intercessions of the Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, the Healing Unmercenary Saints Cosmas and Damian, and of all the Saints, for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages.

Amen.

Holy Wonderworking Unmercenary Physicians Cosmas and Damian of Rome

Troparion

Holy unmercenaries and wonderworkers, Cosmas and Damian, visit our infirmities. Freely you have received; freely give to us.

Kontakion

Having received the grace of healing, you grant healing to those in need. Glorious wonder workers and physicians, Cosmas and Damian, visit us and put down the insolence of our enemies, and bring healing to the world through your miracles.



Local Churches

St. Basil Of Ostrog Church

27450 North Bradley, Lake Forest
V. Rev. – Fr. Nikola Radovancevic,
otacnikola@gmail.com
847-247-0077
<https://stbasilchurch.org/>
Divine Liturgy 10am

St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church

1400 N. O'Plaine Rd, Libertyville
Rev. Fr. Thomas Alatzakis
Rev. Fr. John Sardis
224-513-5530
saintdemetrioslibertyville@gmail.com
<https://www.saintdemetrioslibertyville.com>
Orthros 8:30am
Divine Liturgy 9:30am

St. Mary's Coptic Orthodox Church

2100 West Frontage Rd, Palatine
847-485-8933
Fr. Yohanna Meshreki
Fr. David Hanna
nabil_girgis@stmarychicago.com
<https://www.stmaryofchicago.org/>
Arabic Liturgy 8:30am
English Liturgy 8:30am

St. Sava Monastery

32377 N. Milwaukee Ave., Libertyville
847-362-2440
eparhija@newgracanica.com
<https://www.stsavamonastery.org/>
Divine Liturgy 10am (Sunday)
Call for other service times
Note: the reliquary of St. Mardarije of Libertyville is open for veneration during Liturgy and afterwards until about 2pm.

Sts. Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church

1401 Wagner Rd, Glenview
Rev. Fr. Richard Demetrius Andrews
847-729-2235
FrRick@ssppglenview.org
<https://ssppglenview.org/>
Orthros 8:15am
Divine Liturgy 9:30am

Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church

1449 North Quentin Rd, Palatine
Very Rev. Alexander Kuchta
holyresurrectionpalatine@gmail.com
<https://www.hroc-oca.org/>
Divine Liturgy 9:30am

Local Restaurants

Taste of Paris - <https://tasteofparismundelein.com/>

Hours: Tues-Sat: 6am-9pm, Sun: 8am-2pm

Mundelein

Park Street Craft Kitchen & Bar - <https://parkstreetrestaurant.com/>

Hours: Tues-Thurs: 11am-9pm, Fri/Sat: 11am-9pm, Sun: 11am-8pm

Mickey Finn's Brewery - <https://mickeyfinnsbrewery.com/>

Hours: Thurs: 11:30am-11pm, Fri/Sat: 11pm-12am, Sun: 11am-9pm

Milwalky Taco - <https://milwalkytaco.com/>

Hours: Thurs: 11am-9pm, Fri/Sat: 11am-10pm, Sun: 12pm-6pm

Morgan's - <https://morganslibertyville.com/>

Hours: Thurs: 11:30am-12am, Fri/Sat: 11:30am-1am, Sun: 11:30am-6pm

Casa Bonita - <https://www.casabonitalibertyville.com/>

Hours: Sun-Thurs: 11am- 9pm, Fri/Sat: 11am-10pm

Pizzeria Deville - <https://pizzeriadeville.com/>

Hours: Sun-Thurs: 11am-9pm, Fri/Sat, 11am-10pm

Libertyville

Firkin - <https://www.firkinrestaurantlibertyville.com/>

Hours: Thurs: 11:30am-10pm, Fri/Sat 11:30am-11pm

Sweet Home Gelato - <https://www.sweethomegelato.com/>

Hours: Thurs: 12pm-9pm, Fri/Sat: 12pm-10pm

O'Toole's - <https://www.timothyotooles.com/>

Hours: Thurs: 11:30am-10pm, Fri/Sat: 11:30am-1am, Sun: 11:30am-9pm

Culver's - <https://www.culvers.com/restaurants/libertyville>

Hours: Sun-Thurs: 10am-10pm, Fri/Sat: 10am-11pm

City Works - <https://www.cityworksrestaurant.com>

Hours: Mon-Thur: 11am-11pm, Fri: 11am-12pm, Sat: 10am-12am, Sun: 10am-11pm

Lazy Dog - <https://www.lazydogrestaurants.com>

Hours: Mon-Fri: 11am-12am, Sat/Sun: 10am-12am

Vernon Hills

Portillo's - <https://www.portillos.com/locations/vernon-hills/>

Hours: Sun-Thurs: 10am-11:30pm, Fri/Sat: 10am-12:30am

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Our heartfelt thank you to the volunteers of the 2024 OCAMPR Conference Committee. Their invaluable support and vast expertise enabled OCAMPR to improve and expand different facets of the conference this year, while maintaining alignment with our commitment to Orthodox education and fellowship.

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Join us in 2025

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We are excited to return to the same location next year

University of St. Mary of the Lake

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Mundelein, IL 60060



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