

**Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies
Saint Paul University, Ottawa**

ONLINE INTERNET COURSE THO 2131 (FALL 2013)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE EASTERN CHURCHES

Professor:
Fr. Andrew T. Onuferko

Ukrainian Catholic Priest with 24 years pastoral and teaching experience in Europe, Canada and the United States

Doctor of Sacred Theology (Biblical Theology),
Pontificia Università Urbaniana (Rome, Italy), 1984

Post-Graduate Diploma in Biblical Oriental Studies,
Studium Biblicum Franciscanum (Jerusalem), 1981

Licentiate in Sacred Theology (Biblical Theology),
Pontificia Università Urbaniana (Rome, Italy), 1980



Most Christians find the complex reality of Eastern Christianity to be confusing and mysterious. Although many Eastern Christians today make their home in Western countries, including Canada and the United States, few theology students take the time to learn about the unique heritage and particular Christian witness of their somewhat exotic Eastern Christian neighbours.

This course, offered on-line, will help you become familiar with the wide variety of Eastern Christian Churches — from the extensive family of the Byzantine-Constantinopolitan (Greek rite) Churches to the Assyrian Church of the East, from the Church of Armenia (the first Christian nation!) to the venerable Coptic Church of Egypt, from the Churches that continue to use the language spoken by Jesus (the Syriac language churches) to the so-called “Thomas Christians” of India. Some Churches are “Eastern Orthodox”, others are called “Oriental Orthodox”, and still others are “Eastern Catholic” in communion with the Bishop of Rome. This course will help you make sense of these groups and their unique and, at times, tragic history, the challenges they face at present, and their perspectives for the future.

We will give particular attention to the history and culture of the Assyrian Church of the East, the Coptic and Armenian

Orthodox Churches, the Orthodox Churches of Greece and Russia, the Maronite and Ukrainian Catholic Churches.

Afterwards we will examine the East’s distinctive approaches to liturgy, art, architecture, music, spiritual life, monasticism, social service, hagiography, mission and theology. The course ends with an assessment of the current state of these Churches in North America and their approaches to ecumenical and inter-religious relations.

Field trips to Eastern Christian communities are part of the course requirements. Students who live in a larger urban center can usually find diverse Eastern Christian communities to visit in their own neighbourhoods. If there are no Eastern Christians nearby – the professor will advise each student on the closest visiting opportunities to his or her place of residence.

A required course for undergraduate degree programs in Eastern Christianity at Saint Paul University, it comes highly recommended for any theology student, Eastern or Western. Be prepared to broaden your horizons as you grow in appreciation for your own Christian heritage, whatever that may be.

**This online course is offered by Saint Paul University.
Please call (613) 236-1393, extension 2332 or Admissions at extension 2235.
Toll free: 1-800-637-6859**