

Theology Professor Paul Gavrilyuk explains meaning of IOTA acronym



The internationally respected historian of early Christianity and Orthodox theologian Dr. Paul L. Gavrilyuk explained the IOTA acronym chosen for the International Orthodox Theological Association at the inaugural conference held in Iasi.

In his presidential address delivered at the opening ceremony on Wednesday, January 9, the Association's President and Founder Paul Gavrilyuk noted that IOTA points to humility and ministry.

The Association's IOTA acronym refers to humility, because iota is the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet, the Theology Professor explained.

'As scholars and professionals we wish to contribute our iota to the life of our Church, and to do so with due humility,' the IOTA President said.

'Our second reason for choosing our acronym,' he said, 'is because iota is the first letter of the word Jesus in Greek.'

'When we think about leadership, we turn to the One who came not to be served

but to serve,' Paul Gavriilyuk said quoting the Gospel of Mark 10:45.

'And IOTA stands for the servant leadership.'

Gavriilyuk thanked the board, the advisory council members, the group chairs, and the steering committee members for 'generously offering their time and expertise.'

'IOTA will flourish as long as we have your unfailing support and servant leadership.'

'IOTA will succeed as long as Jesus Christ remains the foundation of our work,' Paul Gavriilyuk added.

The Inaugural Conference of the International Orthodox Theological Association began on Wednesday, January 9, 2019, with a Te Deum Service officiated by the Metropolitan Teofan of Moldavia and Bukovina at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Iași.

The overarching theme of the Inaugural Conference is Pan-Orthodox Unity and Conciliarity.

The Conference will conclude on Saturday evening, January 12.

Dr. Paul Gavriilyuk

Dr. Paul L. Gavriilyuk is an internationally respected historian of early Christianity and Orthodox theologian.

Translated into ten languages, his publications include *The Suffering of the Impassible God: The Dialectics of Patristic Thought* (Oxford University Press, 2004), *Histoire du catéchuménat dans l'église ancienne* [A History of the Catechumenate in the Early Church] (Le Cerf, 2007; Russian edition in 2001) and *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance* (Oxford, 2013).

Several of his books were translated in Romanian and published by the Doxologia Publishing House of the Iasi Archdiocese.

Dr. Gavriilyuk holds the endowed Aquinas Chair in Theology and Philosophy at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA.

His professional experience includes directing international collaborative research projects, including the Spiritual Perception Project ; organizing conferences and symposia; advising several leading university presses; publishing edited volumes; and serving on the Board of Directors of the Pappas Institute, Brookline, Massachusetts.

His church-related activities have included missionary and catechetical work.

He is the Founding President of the International Orthodox Theological Association.

(Photography courtesy of *Doxologia*)