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Rev. Dr. John Chryssavgis to head Huffington Ecumenical Institute at HCHC



Rev. Dr. John Chryssavgis, Archdeacon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, has been appointed the first Executive Director of the Huffington Ecumenical Institute at Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, effective September 1. He will also rejoin the Holy Cross faculty, of which he was a member from 1995-2002, as Professor of Theology.

Upon accepting the appointment, Fr. Chryssavgis said, “I am grateful for the opportunity as the first director of the Huffington Institute to bring back an ecumenical-by which I mean global-perspective to our School and students through my ministry and experience in the wider Church over the years.”

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, Chairman of HCHC’s Board of Trustees, commented, “We rejoice at the appointment of Rev. Dr. John Chryssavgis as the inaugural Executive Director of the Huffington Ecumenical Institute. Fr. John’s eminent intellectual capacities and outstanding academic background are perfectly suited for this influential position. May his stewardship illuminate the path of Christian unity and mutual understanding.”

Fr. Chryssavgis studied theology at the University of Athens and patristics at the University of Oxford before returning to his native Australia, where he co-founded

St. Andrew's Theological College—the first accredited Orthodox institution in the country—and also taught at the University of Sydney. He has been a priest of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America since 1995, has served as senior theological advisor to the GOA's Department of Inter-Orthodox and Ecumenical Affairs, and continues to serve as theological advisor to the Ecumenical Patriarch on environmental issues. He holds an honorary doctorate from St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary and is the inaugural Honorary Professor of the Sydney College of Divinity. His numerous publications have been translated into many languages and focus on the early Church and the desert tradition, as well as on the theology of the environment and the role of the Church in the world. His latest books include *Creation as Sacrament: Reflections on Ecology and Spirituality* (Bloomsbury, 2019), *The Letters of Barsanuphius and John: Desert Wisdom for Everyday Life* (Bloomsbury, 2022), and *Theology, Ecology, and Ecumenism: Reflections of an Innocent Sojourner* (Washington Theological Consortium, 2023).

The establishment of the Institute was made possible by the generosity of the Honorable Michael Huffington, a noted philanthropist and faithful Greek Orthodox Christian, who donated \$2.5 million toward the establishment of the Institute, and by a matching gift of \$2.5 million by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of the Institute will be to foster dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches through programs, events, and other channels. The Institute will be in communication with its counterpart, the Huffington Ecumenical Institute at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California.

HCHC President George M. Cantonis said, "The extraordinary gifts from Michael Huffington and the Archdiocese have made it possible for us to establish this new Institute. The equally extraordinary gifts that Fr. Chryssavgis brings to it as a distinguished scholar and leading voice in Orthodox dialogue with other faiths will bring us closer to our vision of being the intellectual, educational, and spiritual formation center of the Church in America."

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