

PAPERS AND PUBLICATION

Those who wish to present a paper should send a summary (400–500 words) by email to St. Andrew's Institute by 1 September 2017. The Organizing Committee selects papers for the Conference and sends invitations to the speakers. The working language of the conference will be English.

Upon arrival at the conference every participant will receive summaries of all the papers and the conference programme. Papers are scheduled for 20 minutes each. Some of the papers will be published in St. Andrew's quarterly *Pages: Theology, Culture, Education*. Registration form can be found on St. Andrew's website www.standrews.ru. Registrations, summaries and papers should be sent to:

Mikhail Tolstoluzhenko
St. Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute
Jerusalem St. 3, Moscow, 109316, Russia
Tel/Fax: +7 495 6702200; +7 495 6707644
Email: standrews@yandex.ru, info@standrews.ru

ORGANIZATION AND ACCOMMODATION

The Conference will assemble on Wednesday 25 October for the opening ceremony and the first session in the evening. Participants will depart after breakfast on Saturday 28 October.

The Conference will be held in the well-known spiritual and academic centre, the Monastery of Bose. Accommodation and meals will be provided by the organizers.

St. Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute

PATRONS: METROPOLITAN KALLISTOS OF DIOKLEIA, LORD RICHARD HARRIES,
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ST. ANDREW'S
BIBLICAL THEOLOGICAL
INSTITUTE

(Moscow, Russia)



MONASTERY OF BOSE

(Magnano, Italy)

Invitation and Call for Papers

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

REFORMATION IN ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

dedicated to the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation
and the 100th anniversary of the 1917–18 Local Council
of the Russian Orthodox Church

25–28 October 2017
Bose, Italy

Visit our web-site
WWW.STANDREWS.RU

THEME OF THE CONFERENCE

Reformation is a phenomenon that takes place in every church, although in very different ways depending on the historical situation and cultural context. Not all churches favour the idea of *reformation* or the term itself, which is usually associated with the 16th century split in western Christianity and is often regarded as a break with *tradition*. Ancient churches, such as the Orthodox Church, consider preservation of their ancient doctrines and practices (believed to go back ultimately to the apostles) to be a task of the utmost importance, and look with suspicion at any kind of change that might threaten well-established customs and beliefs. This kind of conservatism is regarded by many, both among the Orthodox themselves and among other Christians, as the hallmark of the Orthodox Church and can be regarded with sympathy by conservative representatives of other confessions (even leading sometimes to their conversion to the Orthodox Church). On the other hand, such an attitude makes any dialogue aimed at mutual understanding and restoration of Christian unity difficult or even impossible, because at least one of the parties comes to this dialogue only to “witness” to its own faith and refuses outright to probe its tradition critically.

However, any church at times is faced with the pressing need to change some aspects of its structure, life and even teaching, which finds expression in movements within the church initiating some kind of reform. In most cases these reformation movements do not intend to break with tradition; on the contrary, they usually rediscover (or reinterpret) ancient ideals and seek to restore earlier practices that would match these ideals. Such were the Cluniac reforms within the medieval western church, focused on restoring traditional monastic life. The 16th century Reformation too strove to return to what was believed to be the original Christian faith held by the apostles and church fathers.

At the same time, no reform can be purely a restoration of earlier customs and practices. Any church always has to resolve current problems and to answer contemporary challenges, which can never be done solely by means of returning to ancient ideals. “To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often,” as John Henry Newman put it in his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. The most notable example here is Vatican II, which initiated a reform unparalleled in modern church history. Another example is the 1917–1918 Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, which also attempted to respond seriously to the challenges of its time but whose many important decisions have never been implemented because of historical circumstances.

In the today’s globalized world a church can hardly live without taking into consideration what is going on in other churches. Even in the past, changes in other religious bodies affected (often not directly but through cultural or political influences) even the most closed and conservative church communities. Today the majority of churches are engaged in interconfessional and interreligious dialogue on various levels. This helps them to know and understand each other better, and allows them to use other churches’ experience in order to make necessary changes in their own life. Is it possible, in this regard, to talk today about reformation in an ecumenical perspective? How can interchurch dialogue shape the form and reform of today’s Christianity? What are the obstacles to this dialogue? Can churches approach their own traditions critically? Is it possible to draw a clear line between *tradition* and *traditionalism* in the sense of the well-known aphorism by Jaroslav Pelikan: “Tradition is the living faith of the dead, traditionalism is the dead faith of the living”? Can both the idea of *reformation* and the concept of *tradition* be present in church consciousness without contradiction? These are the issues to be addressed in the course of the forthcoming conference.