

Makarios:
Love of Neighbor and Human Flourishing

31 May – 2 June 2025

The bi-annual *Makarios* conference is a joint undertaking of the [Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry](#) at Australian Catholic University, the [Human Flourishing Program](#) at Harvard University, the [Loneragan Institute](#) and the Colloquy in Historical Theology at Boston College, and the [Institute for Studies of Religion](#) at Baylor University. The conference promotes research and discussion of the relationship between Christianity and human flourishing in historical and contemporary perspective, and across the humanities and social sciences.

The aim of this second Makarios conference is to convene scholars from across these disciplines to explore the past, present, and future of Christianity's complex engagement with the theme of neighbor-love and its implications for human flourishing today. This topic is not only of intrinsic interest to the intellectual traditions nourished by Christianity but is also of central relevance to contemporary debates about the causes of and potential solutions for the developed world's epidemic of loneliness and isolation; the nature of civic belonging; the moral implications of climate change and environmental degradation; the obligations of the rich to the poor; and much else.

We have an exceptional array of plenary speakers and panel sessions. We are delighted to welcome Rowan Williams, Judith Wolfe, David Campbell, and Stephen Pope to deliver keynote addresses on the theme of neighbor-love and flourishing. Our panels this year focus on themes from ancient and contemporary issues, from theological, philosophical, and empirical studies, from literature and the arts to the assessment of educational structures in global contexts.

Logistical details

All sessions will be held at ACU's Rome Campus at Largo Giovanni Berchet 4, 00152 Roma, either in the Conference Room (basement level) or Classroom 2 (Level 1). Further information about ACU's campus is available at <https://www.acu.edu.au/locations/rome>. Lunch will be provided on-campus on days 2 and 3 of the conference (Sunday and Monday) in the dining room (basement level). Evenings are free for you to make your own dinner plans. A list of nearby restaurants, cafes, and bars can be found at the end of the conference programme. In addition to those listed, there are many more restaurants in Trastevere, one of Rome's most iconic districts, which is a short 10-minute walk from campus down the Janiculum Hill.

Questions about the campus and accommodations can be directed to the IRCI Coordinator Julie Carpenter (julie.carpenter@acu.edu.au), cc'ing Matthew Crawford (matthew.crawford@acu.edu.au). Questions about the program can be directed to Matthew Crawford and Alex Fogleman (Alex_Fogleman@baylor.edu).

Conference Schedule

Saturday, 31 May

17:00-17:30

Coffee and tea

17:30-18:00

Welcome

18:00-19:00

Plenary lecture

Location: Conference room

Chair: Matthew R. Crawford, ACU

“The Coherence of Love”

Judith Wolfe, University of St Andrews

19:00

Reception with drinks/canapes

Location: Courtyard

Sunday, 1 June

10:00-11:40

Session 1: Love of Neighbor in Ancient Christianity

Location: Classroom 2

Chair: Matthew Crawford, ACU

“A Family of Mercy: The Christian Vision for Neighbor Love according to the Gospel of Matthew”

Jonathan Pennington, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

“Not ‘Your Neighbour,’ and Not ‘Your Enemy’: John’s ‘Love One Another’ against the Synoptics”

Blake Wassell, ACU

“Holy Barbarians: Irenaeus of Lyon’s Love for the Gauls”

Philip Abbott, Brigham Young University

“From Imperial Benefaction to Christian Charity: Coins, Neighbour-Love, and the Transformation of Social Ethics in Late Antiquity”

Michael Theophilos, ACU

Sunday, 1 June

10:00-11:40

Session 2: Practicing Neighbor Love

Location: Classroom 2

Chair: Michael Champion, ACU

“Loving Your Violent Neighbor”

Lisa Merchant, Abilene Christian University

“Forcing Forgiveness? Legal Mandates, Neighbor-Love, and Human Flourishing”

Chris Riley, Abilene Christian University

“Tough Love in Tough Neighborhoods: Renewing Social Order and Hope through Sacrificial Love”

Ben Peterson, Abilene Christian University

“Fostering Flourishing: Strengths-Based Approaches to Loving Our Forcibly Displaced Neighbors”

Katelin East & Kelly Barneche, Abilene Christian University

11:40-12:00

Coffee/tea

12:00-13:00

Plenary lecture

Location: Conference room

Chair: Jonathan Teubner, Harvard

“TBA”

Rowan Williams, University of Cambridge

13:00-14:30

Lunch

14:30-16:10

Session 3: Love of Neighbor in Modern Theology

Location: Conference room

Chair: Thomas Breedlove, Baylor

“Friendliness without Communication: A Phenomenological Investigation of the Breakdown of Neighborly Love”

Andrew Barrette, Boston College

“Oneself For Another: Love of Neighbor and the Mediation of Christian Selfhood”

Jerónimo Ayesta & Michael Costas, Boston College

“Deification and the Practice of Neighbourship”

Andrew Mercer, St. Louis University

“Framing Sociological Research on Neighbour Love in Three Theological Worldviews”

Helen Alford and Michał Paluch, Pontifical University of St Thomas

Sunday, 1 June

14:30-16:10

Session 4: Love of Neighbor in Educational Contexts

Location: Classroom 2

Chair: Michael Champion, ACU

“A Thriving Minority: Pathways to Success for Religious Minority Students Attending Christian Institutions of Higher Education”

Ryan Richardson, Abilene Christian University

“Intercultural Education and Attitudes Promote Student Wellbeing and Social Cohesion: Evidence from 58 Countries”

Geetanjali Basarkod, ACU

“School Influences on Adolescent Depression: A 6-Year Longitudinal Study Amongst Catholic, Government and Independent Schools, in Victoria, Australia”

Bosco Rowland, Monash University

“Student Flourishing in Morocco: A Case Study from Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane”

Farah Tolu-Honary, Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane

16:10-16:30

Coffee/tea

16:30-18:10

Session 5: Philosophical Reflection on Neighbor Love

Location: Conference room

Chair: Jeremy Wilkins, Boston College

“Loving One’s Neighbour from the Original Position: Early Christian Asceticism and Rawlsian Liberalism”

Samuel Kaldas, University of Notre Dame, Australia

“Kierkegaard and the Love of God: The Unity of Agape and Eros”

Jeffery Hanson, New College of Florida

“The Rationality of Christian Neighbor-Love vs. Naturalistic Ethics”

Omar Sultan Haque, Harvard University

“The Nova Effect, Fragilization, and Neighbour-Love in Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*”

Aden Cotterill, Cambridge

Sunday, 1 June

16:30-18:10

Session 6: Love of Neighbor in Literature

Location: Classroom 2

Chair: Jonathan Teubner, Harvard

“Education as Milk and Honey: Wendell Berry’s *Hannah Coulter*”

Nicholas Eastman, Ripon College

“Tragic Knowledge and Neighbor-Love”

Jason Crawford, Union University

“Providence, Prudence, and Alyosha Karamazov the ‘Makarios’”

Paul Contino, Pepperdine University

“Community and the Love of Neighbors in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *The Pearl of Orr’s Island*”

Maire Mullins, Pepperdine University

Monday, 2 June

9:00-10:00

Plenary lecture

Location: Conference room

Chair: Alex Fogleman, Baylor

“The *Ordo Caritatis* Today: A Contemporary Interpretation of an Ancient Christian Theme”

Stephen Pope, Boston College

10:00-10:30

Coffee/tea

10:30-12:35

Session 7: Theories & Applications of Neighbor Love

Location: Classroom 2

Chair: Matthew Crawford, ACU

“Love of Neighbor Assessment: Validity, Reliability, and a Template for Measurement”

Tyler VanderWeele, Harvard

“From Places to Relational Spaces: Towards a New Epistemological Framework to Understand Neighbor Relationships and Enhance Human Flourishing Strategies”

Marta Bertolaso, Università Campus Bio-Medico di Roma

Monday, 2 June

10:30-12:35

Session 7 (ctd.)

“Give It the Plus-Sign: University Students’ Experiences of Ignatian Spirituality in a Civility Course”

Jonathan Camp, Abilene Christian University

“Cultivating Self-Knowledge as the Foundation for Neighbor-Love and Human Flourishing: Biblical and Psychological Perspectives on Reducing Disconnection and Division”

Deborah Owen, George Fox University

“Does Charity Require Privacy?”

Edward Epsen, St. Mary’s University

Session 8: Patristic & Medieval Sources on Neighbor Love

Location: Conference room

Chair: Alex Fogleman, Baylor

“Love of the Poor Neighbor in Chrysostom’s Vision of Human Flourishing”

Samantha Miller, Whitworth University

“Philanthropy and a Flourishing Society in Byzantine Healthcare”

Jonathan Zecher, ACU

“The Complexity and Possibility of Loving Neighbors Equally in the Ascetical Ethics of Maximus the Confessor”

Paul Blowers, Milligan University

“Who and How to Love: The Relationship Between Action and Contemplation in the Middle Ages”

Erin Zoutendam, Seton Hall University

13:00-14:30

Lunch

Monday, 2 June

14:30-16:10

Session 9: Augustine on Love of Neighbor

Location: Classroom 2

Chair: Jonathan Teubner, Harvard

“Augustine, Friendship, and the Visible Church: Locating Love of Neighbor in the Pursuit of Human Flourishing”

Alexander Pierce, North American Lutheran Seminary

“Augustine, Eudaimonia, and Loving Migrants as Neighbours”

Sean Hannan, MacEwan University

“Augustine’s Theology and Ethic of (Alms-)Giving toward Human Flourishing”

Helen Rhee, Westmont College

“The Name We Must Defend: Neighbor Love and Reputation in Christian Communities”

Matthew Lee Anderson, Baylor University

Session 10: Historical and Modern Sources in Dialogue

Location: Conference room

Chair: Michael Champion, ACU

“Rethinking a Contemporary Christian–Aristotelian Model of Human Flourishing and Love of Neighbour”

William Hallam, Deakin University

“All You Need is Love: Marsilio Ficino’s Rewriting of Plato’s *Symposium*”

Eileen C. Sweeney, Boston College

“From Ancient Citizenship to Christian Brotherhood”

Paola Iadaresta, Università Campus Bio-Medico di Roma

“Hearts Knit in Unity & Love: The Concept of Love in the Book of Mormon”

Daniel Becerra & Emily Jewkes, Brigham Young University

16:10-16:30

Coffee/tea

Monday, 2 June

16:30-17:45

Session 11: Love of Neighbor in Global Contexts

Location: Conference room

Chair: Jeremy Wilkins, Boston College

“Love Thy Neighbor, But Not Too Much: Neighborly Love and Suspicions of Christianization in Indonesia”

Michal Quinlan, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies/Baylor University

“Reconstructing a Flourishing Society without Religious Discrimination and Criminalization”

Dicky Sofjan, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS), Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) Graduate School, Yogyakarta

“The Importance of Networks for the Sisters of Mercy in Aotearoa, New Zealand”

Anna Nicholls, Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Session 12: Love of Neighbor in the Arts

Location: Conference room

Chair: Thomas Breedlove, Baylor

“Thelonious Monk, ‘Icon of the Eschaton’: (Re)Imagining the Rhythm of the Gospel Beyond an ‘Aesthetics of Otherness’”

Raymond Carr, Harvard

“‘Love Your Crooked Neighbour with Your Crooked Heart’: The Metaphysics of Poetic Feeling”

Lexi Eikelboom & Benjamin DeSpain, ACU

“The Challenges of Loving a Literary Text”

Todd Womble, Abilene Christian University

18:00-19:00

Plenary lecture

Location: Conference room

Chair: Jeremy Wilkins, Boston College

“Social Capital in a Secular Age: What A Changing Religious Landscape Means for Civil Society”

David Campbell, University of Notre Dame

Restaurants, Cafes, Bars

For coffee, breakfast, light lunch, aperitifs – atmospheric, roomy indoor seating and outdoor under umbrella seating as well.

Bar Tabacchi
Via A. Poerio 21/23 Roma
(tel. 065810380)

Pizzeria “da Simone” Via Giacinto Carini 50 Trastevere
(tel. 065814980)
<https://carlafortebracci6.wixsite.com/pizzeriadasimone>

For excellent breakfast etc, and tavola calda for lunch. Roomy indoor seating and outdoor as well.

Caffe Gli Archi Via F.lli Bonnet 4 Roma
(tel. 0658030881004)

Excellent full-service restaurant serving pizza, seafood, Mediterranean, European, Romana, Lazio, Central-Italian, with options that are vegetarian friendly, vegan, and gluten free.

Ristorante-Pizzeria Focolare Via Gabrielle Rossetti 40/42 Roma
(tel. 06 5818395 or 06 5894332)

Slightly upmarket, but still good value – outdoor and indoor dining

Osteria Poerio
Via Alessandro Poerio 27 Roma
(tel. 06 58332851)
<https://www.osteriapoerio.it/>

Il Mulino ai quattro venti
Via Andrea Busiri Vici, 48, 00152 Roma
(tel. +39 342 802 2846)
<https://ilmulinoaiquattroventi.metro.rest>

Ristorante Il Cortile dal 1929
Via Alberto Mario 26 Roma
(tel. 06 5803433)
<https://www.ilcortiledal1929.com/>

L’antica Roma,
Via Alberto Mario, 17, Roma
(tel. 06 5816809)

Another Pasticceria-Gelateria worth trying is

Nonna Nani
Via Giuseppe Carini 35 (tel. 06 5809370)

For wonderful pastry and gelati, the name says it all:

Dolci Desideri
Via Antonio Giulio Barrili 56 Roma
(tel. 06 5897709)

A pub with no food that stays open late

The Sleeping Dog
Via Giuseppe Dezza 15 Roma

Makarios Conference Programme
Last updated 14 April 2025