

International Conference

“Eastern Catholic Churches: Preserving and Developing Their Identity in Unfavorable Conditions”

17 rue du Regard, Paris 6



**December
3 and 4
2025**

The Eastern Catholic Churches (ECCs) are an integral part of the Catholic Church's community. Their diverse theological, liturgical, and ecumenical heritage enriches the Church of the Latin tradition and world Christianity as a whole. However, Eastern Catholic theologians rarely combine their academic efforts. It seems that individual ECCs are more familiar with the theology and spirituality of the Latin Rite tradition than with the developments of their sister churches. And yet, despite the diversity within the ECCs, they all face similar challenges.

Organised by the Institut chrétiens d'Orient and the Institute of Ecumenical Studies (Ukrainian Catholic University)



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Aims of this conference

During this conference, we aim to address the pressing issue of preserving the identity of Eastern Catholics in various challenging circumstances. Throughout history and in contemporary times, Eastern Catholic communities have faced numerous obstacles that threaten their religious, cultural, and social identity. The following key challenges highlight the complexity of this issue:

- What are the key elements of the Eastern Catholic Church's identity?
- Religious and Confessional Minority Status
- Social and Political Crises
- Challenges of the Diaspora

Presentations will be given in French or English, depending on the speaker's preference.

Conditions

Attendance : in person or remote

Information : contact@institutchretiensdorient.com

Registration : [google form](#)

Fees : free

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Program December 3

9.30-10.00 : Welcome coffee

10.00 -10h40 : Greetings

Session 1

Moderator : **Dr. Antoine Fleyfel**

10.40-11.00 : **Archbishop Michel Jalakh, OAM**

“Maturity in Communion: The Living Identity of the Eastern Catholic Churches”

11.00-11.20 : **Rev. Dr Charbel Maalouf**

“At the dawn of the third centenary of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church, Melkite identity: an identity of tension?”

11.20-11.40 : **Rev. Dr Andrew Onuferko**

“Pastoral renewal in the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church: fostering a culture of mission”

11.40-12.00 : **Rev. Dr Gaby Hachem**

“Ecumenism in the Middle East. Towards a prophetic vision”

12.00-13.00 : Discussion

13.15-14.30 : Lunch

Session 2

Moderator : **Rev. Dr Roman Fihas**

15.00-15.20 : **Rev. Dr Thomas Nemeth**

“Eastern Catholics in Austria. From historical presence in the Habsburg Empire to current reality”

15.20-15.40 : **Bishop-nominee Ihor Rantsia**

“The Status of the Diaspora Structures of Eastern Catholics, with the Example of the Ukrainian Eparchy of Saint Volodymyr the Great in Paris: Challenges for Canon Law, Ecclesiology, Liturgical Identity, and Church Mission”

15.40-16.00 : **Rev. Dr Thomas Kremer**

“In search of identity between preservation, assimilation and bureaucratic obstacles: the special situation of Eastern Catholic Churches in Germany”

16.00-16.20 : **Dr. Antoine Fleyfel**

“Between homeland and exile: the identity of the Eastern Churches tested by dispersion”

16.20-16.50 : Coffee break

16.50-17.30 : Discussion following by cultural event

19.00 : Dinner

Program December 4

Session 3

Moderator : **STL Kurylets Taras**

10.00-10.10 : Short resume of the previous day

10.10-10.30 : **Rev. Dr Antony Merchery SJ**

"The ongoing repositioning of Eastern Catholics against the backdrop of emerging socio-political realities"

10.30-10.50 : **Rev. Dr Roman Fihás**

"War for Identity: The Decolonizing Mission of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Wartime"

10.50-11.10 : **Dr Pavlo Smytsnyuk**

"The Theopolitical Consequences of Focusing on Particularity: Eastern Catholic Churches in Times of Crisis"

11.10-11.30 : **Dr Antoine Arjakovsky**

"The Synod's Proposals on Synodality in Relation to the Eastern Catholic Churches: A Call for Creativity"

11.30-12.10 : Discussion

12.30 : Lunch

Session 4

Moderator : **Rev. Dr Charbel Maalouf**

14.00-14.20 : **Dr Christian Cannuyer**

"Catholic Copts: the delicate position of a small minority within the largest Christian community in the Arab Near East"

14.20-14.40 : **Dr Anatoly Babynskyi**

"Between Heritage and Horizon: The Challenges of Identity and Mission for the Church in Diaspora"

14.40-15.00 : **STL Taras Kurylets**

"The Discussion on Uniatism through the Lens of Eastern Catholics: an Opportunity to Reflect on their Ecclesiological Identity."

15.00-15.20 : **Tigrane Yeghavian**

"Beyond Etchmiadzin: The Armenian Church as a Transnational Body"

15.20-16.00 : Discussion

16.00-16.30 : Coffee break

16.30-18.00 : Conclusion following by Cultural program of the Maronite community

18.00 : Dinner