

This is the Fourth Lecture marking the special series on “Faith, Theology, and Community” commemorating 60 years of the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel

Sanctity of Place – Sanctity of Space

The Very Reverend Dr. Geoffrey Ready

Director of the Orthodox Christian Studies at Trinity College within the University of Toronto

Introduction: Dr. Gary Vachicouras

50 Years of Dialogue between Orthodox Christianity and Judaism

29 January 2026, 20:00 IST (13:00 EST; 19:00 CET) via ZOOM

You are cordially invited to a special lecture following the 12th Academic Consultation between Judaism and Orthodox Christianity on *Sanctity of Place – Sanctity of Space* (Geneva, December 2025).

Dr. Gary Vachicouras, Convener, will highlight the significance of Orthodox Christian–Jewish dialogue since its inauguration by Metropolitan Damaskinos. The Third Academic Consultation in Athens (1993) was published by the Fraternity in *Immanuel* (<https://www.etrfi.info/issue.php?i=26>) edited by Malcolm Lowe in collaboration with Gary Vachicouras.

Fr. Ready, a distinguished academic in the field of Biblical Studies and Liturgy, writes about his lecture:

“The presentation explores the theme of sacred space through a close reading of Genesis 28:10-19 (Jacob's Ladder), employing a distinctive approach to Christian-Jewish textual engagement. Rather than placing a text from the Tanakh alongside a New Testament passage as respective "Jewish" and "Christian" sacred texts, this study positions the Genesis narrative as the core sacred text shared by both traditions. Jewish midrashic sources and Christian texts—including the New Testament (John 1:51), patristic writings, and Orthodox liturgical traditions—are then read as parallel commentary traditions, both offering midrashic extensions of the foundational Scriptural text. This methodological choice reflects the Orthodox Christian understanding that the texts known variously as Tanakh, Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament remain the foundational Scriptures, whilst the New Testament functions as authoritative commentary on what the apostles and early Church simply called ‘the Scriptures.’

Originally developed for the 12th Academic Consultation between Judaism and Orthodox Christianity in Geneva, the presentation will offer both the textual analysis itself and theological reflection on the hermeneutical insights that emerge from this approach to shared text study—particularly how it reframes questions of continuity, transformation, and the distinctive yet complementary ways both traditions engage their common scriptural inheritance.”

Yours fraternally,

Rev. Dr. Petra Heldt
Director ETRFI