



Areopagus

*Centre for Christian Studies
and Contemporary Culture*

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Overview of Educational Activities

The Areopagus Centre's Department of Educational Programs had a fruitful Spring/Summer quarter, filled with various significant events

- weekly *forums* on current issues of special interest: creationism, human trafficking, etc.
- *theological symposium* exploring the person and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- *biblical seminars* addressing the study of Scripture for an integrated Christian life and witness.
- *missiological workshops* investigating new paradigms of song writing for contextualized Christian worship and witness.
- *book releases*, introducing two major titles in the area of recent Romanian Christian history and Christian theology and ecclesiology in this new millennium.

Round Table Discussions with Professional Groups

Aimed at gathering professionals from various fields to discuss the relationship between their profession and their Christian faith, the three round table discussions focused on three professional groups: philologists, taxi drivers, and financial consultants in the area of assets and life insurance. Each round table discussion addressed the particulars of each field in light of the integration of the Christians values, and explored the potential of creating professional associations that would further research the possibilities of such integrations.

The round table discussions with taxi drivers was of particular interest because it brought to surface a professional area of



great potential for Christian ministry because of the drivers' daily exposure to people from all strata, various religious backgrounds and sharing deep spiritual needs that these drivers have never been able to address.

Two such drivers had providential interventions, saving two unborn children from being aborted, by sharing the Gospel with the parents and providing pro-life alternatives, thus today one of the children is known to be Dennis, a one and a half year old boy.

International Conference: Counselling, Faith, Professionalism

The Areopagus Centre, in cooperation with the West University of Timisoara, organised an international conference on *Counselling, Faith, Professionalism: The role of Christian values in specialised counselling*.



The event brought together forty participants: psychologists, social workers, medical professionals, psychotherapists, spiritual counsellors, priests and pastors.

The stated purpose of the conference was to explore the relationship between Christian values and specialised counselling, facilitating an open dialogue at the professional level in the Romanian and international context.

Book Release at Areopagus

On June 13, the Areopagus Centre hosted an exceptional event, the release of the book: *Communion and Participation: Theological Reflections on the Spiritual Dimension of Existence*, written by our colleague, Daniel Oprean.



Daniel's special guests were Dr. Peter Kuzmič, and Dr. Marcel V. Măcelaru from The Evangelical Theological Institute in Osijek, Croatia.



The Little Angel of the HIV Ward

Emma is a beautiful baby girl born in October 2008. I met her in April 2009 and I visited her every week since then because she never left the hospital. The HIV ward becoming her home and the nurses and the patients her family.

Emma comes from a terrible background. Her mother was a prostitute and substance abuser and her relationship with Emma's father wasn't stable at all. Besides, we learned that the father is mentally challenged and unable to care for her. Due to her careless life style and medical condition, Emma's mother died shortly after giving birth. Without knowing for sure if Emma was HIV positive until performing the final tests at two years old, the hospital kept her in the HIV ward for observation, but also for another health problem. Emma had to undergo a colostomy, resulting from a medical condition related to the colon. She needed surgery, but the doctors cannot do it until she turns two years old.

Regarding her emotional and intellectual development, Emma is a joyful and smart baby. She has proven to have all the proper functions for her age. She can walk assisted by someone or holding on to the furniture and she knows basic words. She smiles and makes joyful noises whenever I come in and call her name from the door.

In her case the hospital provides her with basic necessities, but she needs much more than that, she craves affection, Monica Eros, our colleague shares her experience: *Every time I go to her bed she spreads her arms and I pick her up. She puts her head on my shoulder and we sing softly. She is a true miracle and she will probably brighten the lives of her grandparents that promised to take her in after the surgery.*



There are so many stories like Emma's and we are grateful for the way God is using Areopagus to bring hope and light in the lives of HIV-positive patients. Here are some of our most important results:

- Due to our regular visits, we make sure that the patients take their medication daily, which in most cases is a matter of life and death;
- There were situations when the hospitals could not provide the medication for the HIV patients for one or two months. Our role in this case was to provide medication and vitamins so they will not interrupt their treatment;
- Providing spiritual care and counsel and emotional support;
- In some cases when the patients had surgeries, we provided the medication the doctors/hospital could not provide.

- Facilitating the patients' visits to the doctors for regular check-ups and providing transportation from their villages to the city and back home;
- Providing food supplies in order to help them have a balanced diet.

Please continue to support our work with the HIV-patients through your prayers and financial support, knowing that you, through us, can make a difference in their lives!

News

- We are grateful to God for enabling us to finalise the parking lot at Areopagus. Here are two pictures that say more than words can:



- A new generation of students has successfully graduated from our Master's Programme *Values-Centered Social Work Practice*.
- Areopagus Centre in partnership with Cristian G. Rață, Ph.D. in Biblical Hebrew Languages and Literature, University of Toronto, Canada, Assistant Professor of Old Testament at Torch Trinity Graduate School of Theology in South Korea, organized a summer school on Hebrew Language. Our sixteen students enjoyed it very much and look forward to the next year's edition.

Pray for...

- Admissions to our Master's Programme „Values-Centered Social Work Practice”, which are commencing at the moment.
- The counselling team from Grace Fellowship Church, US, which will come in October to teach on Biblical counselling and small groups ministry.
- Financial support for our HIV projects so we can be able to continue reaching these people's lives not only spiritually, but in a practical way, as well.
- A new Master's Programme on Theology which we intend to start in October in cooperation with the Theological Evangelical Institute from Osijek, Croatia.
- A two year training programme in Biblical Counselling which we would like to start this autumn in order to equip leaders from various evangelical churches to be competent to counsel in their own communities.



Please direct any support for the Areopagus Centre to:

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