

Call for Papers
The 2026 Conference of the Orthodox Canon Law Society of North America
Deadline: May 31, 2026

The Orthodox Canon Law Society of North America (OCLSNA) holds an annual forum for the presentation and discussion of papers on every aspect of Orthodox canon law and on related topics relevant to the discipline. Orthodox canon law includes the entire field of Eastern Christian canonical history and practice, including the Oriental and Eastern Catholic traditions. The discipline extends beyond the review of formal legislation and includes a vast scope of practice and literature. The canonical and legal life of the Church is reflected in such diverse areas as hagiography, liturgy, art, hymnography, church history, and pastoral practice.

Conference attendance is open to all. Although blessed by Orthodox hierarchy, the society is academic in nature and not affiliated with any Orthodox jurisdiction or with the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States.

The society aims to foster growth in the study of the Orthodox canonical tradition by gathering scholars, professors, graduate students, attorneys, seminarians, and interested clergy in academic conferences to provide an avenue for the presentation of papers embodying current research in a professional setting.

The location of this year's conference will take place on **October 30–31, 2026** at the Maliotis Cultural Center located on the campus of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, 50 Goddard Avenue, Brookline, MA 02445.

The Program Committee invites proposals for papers on all topics and in all disciplines related to Orthodox canon law, as described above broadly construed. Since this year's conference is being held on Halloween, papers will also be welcomed on related themes dealing with subjects such as death, the forces of darkness, the overcoming of evil, and the last things. Scholars, professors, graduate students, attorneys, seminarians, and interested clergy are encouraged to contribute. Since the society is academic in nature, all are welcome to submit proposals without any consideration of denominational affiliation.

Paper proposals for the 2026 conference may be in the form of individual papers and complete panels. In both cases, abstracts for proposed papers must not exceed 500 words and must be written in a manner comprehensible to the members of the Program Committee. All proposed papers must be substantially original and, for the most part, not have been published previously.

Each author is permitted to deliver only one paper at the conference. Papers will not be published in any publications/acts of the Society. The text of presented papers will not be distributed. Only the accepted abstract will be published for the conference. Absent extenuating circumstances, the submission of the accepted abstract for publication constitutes an agreement to present the paper at the conference.

The deadline for submissions is May 31, 2026.

Absent extenuating circumstances, the submission of the accepted abstract for publication constitutes an agreement to present the paper at the conference. Only members of OCLSNA in good standing are permitted to deliver papers at the conference. **All are welcome to fulfill the membership requirement by paying dues at the same time when registering online for the conference** (the 2026 conference registration page will be made available on the OCLSNA website).

The Committee Program Chair will provide notice of acceptance and rejection by June 15, 2026, via email.

OCLSNA Blind Review Process

All members of the 2026 Program Committee will review each abstract. The members of this year's Program Committee are:

Patrick Viscuso, Professor of Canon Law, The Antiochian House of Studies
Despina Prassas, Independent Scholar
Justin Bosl, Independent Scholar

The review process is anonymous. Before the abstracts are read and reviewed, all personal information will be removed from the paper by a designated member of the governing board, who will not be delivering a conference paper. The Program Committee will have no knowledge of the author's identity and past work on the specific topic treated in the abstract. Consequently, critical for success during the review process is a strong abstract that covers each of the following four criteria: 1) a clear and informative introduction to the topic; 2) the major points of the argument, and an overview of the evidence supporting the argument; 3) a convincing statement on the significance and originality of the work; and 4) a description of the conclusions proposed.

Instructions for Organized Panel Proposals

OCLSNA welcomes proposals for entire panel presentations. Each presenter prepares and submits an individual abstract which first lists the panel title, skips two lines, and then follows the Abstract Format instructions below for the title and abstract of their specific paper. Each

presenter provides contact information for the panel organizer (name and email) on a separate page.

The Program Chair will notify all proposed participants on the panel as well as the organizer(s) regarding the Program Committee's decision on each abstract. If the organized panel is accepted in part or whole, then the organizer(s) may also propose a session chair. Please note that the session chair cannot also be a speaker on the panel.

If the majority, but not all, of the panel papers are accepted, the Program Chair will alert the organizer(s) and will make every effort to keep the remaining accepted papers together. However, if the majority is rejected, then the remaining accepted paper(s) will be placed elsewhere in the conference program.

Submission Instructions for All Abstracts

1) Abstract Format

File format: PDF

Length: 500 words maximum

Font: Times New Roman, size 12

Margins: 1-inch margins

Spacing: Single-spaced

Title: Center the title on the top of the page and bold it. Title is capitalized.

Skip 2 lines and enter your abstract (single spaced)

Separate paragraphs by one line

Do not indent the beginnings of paragraphs.

There should only be one space after a period.

Do not include your name.

2) How to submit: send all abstracts to **orthodoxcanonlawconference@gmail.com**

To ensure anonymity, it is important not to contact any member of the Program Committee during the submission and evaluation process. Please direct all your **questions** to Bartholomew Mercado at **orthodoxcanonlaw@gmail.com**

Regarding the use and structure of a blind review, panel proposals, and submission procedures, the OCLSNA gratefully acknowledges its inspiration from previous announcements of Byzantine Studies Conferences (The Byzantine Studies Association of North America).

Frequently Asked Questions

1) Do I need to submit a completed paper before or at the conference?

No. Completed papers are never submitted. Papers are read at the conference but not submitted.

Only proposals for papers are submitted to program committee. These proposals take the form of abstracts. Please follow the instructions for their submission. The criteria for their acceptance are listed in the instructions.

2) Will the accepted abstracts be published?

Yes. All accepted abstracts will be published for the conference.

3) How long should a conference paper be?

The presentation of the paper must not exceed twenty-five minutes. The expected average time for reading a paper is twenty minutes. Please ensure beforehand that your presentation does not exceed the allotted time limits.

Typically, three papers will be assigned to a panel. The presentation of the three papers and a question and answer/discussion time that follows will be allotted a maximum of two hours total.

4) Will the papers be published in a conference volume?

No. Papers will be read at the conference but not published. The text of the paper will not be distributed.

Only the accepted abstract will be published for the conference. Absent extenuating circumstances, the submission of the accepted abstract for publication constitutes an agreement to present the paper at the conference.