Orthodox Canon Law Society of North America Conference

October 30–31, 2026

at the

Maliotis Cultural Center

Brookline, MA

PROGRAM

The Orthodox Canon Law Society of North America acknowledges the generous support of the Maliotis Cultural Center, Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, the Orthodox Christian Attorney Network, a donation in memory of George and Roberta Tsempales, Emmanuel J. Melonakos, M.D., George Kounoupis, Esq., Deacon Emanuel Tsarnas, and an anonymous individual donor for making this conference possible.

We acknowledge our debt to the Byzantine Studies Association of North America for providing an excellent model for the design of our program.

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ATTORNEY NETWORK

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Registration
Atrium, Maliotis

6:30 pm – 8:00 pm
Book Exhibit
Holy Cross Orthodox Press
Atrium, Maliotis

6:30 pm – 8:00 pm
Opening Reception*
Atrium, Maliotis

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

7:00 am – 3:00 pm
Registration
Atrium, Maliotis

7:00 am – 5:00 pm
Book Exhibit
Holy Cross Orthodox Press
Atrium, Maliotis

7:00 am – 8:00 am
Coffee/Breakfast
Atrium and Kafeneio, Maliotis

* Optional ticketed dinner at refectory beginning at 5:30 pm.

8:00 – 10:00 am

Session 1: Death, the Forces of Darkness, and Last Things

Theater, Maliotis

Chair: Joan Berg

Christians Among the "Magicians of the Gentiles":
Sorcery, Demons, and Pastoral Discipline in Medieval Coptic Canon Law Reasoning"

Mena Abdelsayed, University of Oxford

"Again, I pray to you, O Lord": The Deathbed Prayer of the Deaconess St. Domnika

Laura Wilson, Antiochian House of Studies

"Chains for their Own Souls": Byzantine Women's Amulets and the Disparity between Institutional and Individual Religion

Caitlin Mims, Florida State University

10:00 – 10:15 am

Break

Atrium, Maliotis

10:15 am – 12:15 pm

Session 2: The Ecumenical Patriarchate - Today and Yesterday

Theater, Maliotis

Chair: Bartholomew Mercado

The Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Autocephalous Church of Ukraine

His Eminence Metropolitan Kyrillos of Krini, University of Athens

The Evaluation of the Term "Ecumenical Patriarchate" by the Republic of Türkiye: Nomocanonical Implications Since the Bürgenstock Summit on Peace in Ukraine (2024)

Aetios Nikiforos,
Ecumenical Patriarchate, St. Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College (Australian University College of Divinity), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki School of Law

Canon Law in Nineteenth-Century Politics: Russia and the Reforms of the Patriarchate of Constantinople (1858–1860)

Lora Gerd, St. Petersburg Institute of History, Russian Academy of Sciences

12:15 – 2:00 pm
Lunch Break

12:15 – 2:00 pm
Lunch and Legal Discussion
Sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Attorney Network
Atrium, Maliotis

Legal Identity and Religious Freedom: The Ecumenical Patriarchate Under Turkish and International Law
George Kounoupis, Partner, Hahalis and Kounoupis, PC

2:00 – 4:00 pm
Session 3A: Issues in the Russian Ecclesiastical Diaspora
Theater, Maliotis
Chair: Nicholas Ganson

Interpreting Patriarch Tikhon's Decree 348 (349): A Canonical Reassessment
Andrei Psarev, Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary

The 2007 Act of Canonical Communion and the Brazilian Dissent: A Study on Isolation, Congregationalism, and the Challenges of Reception
Roman Kuhnen, Antiochian House of Studies

The Autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America: An Examination of Opposing Views on the Extent and Purpose of the 1970 Tomos
Ethan Wayne Bucshon, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

2:00 – 4:00 pm

Session 3B: Canonical Ways and Means

East Wing, Maliotis

Chair: James Skedros

Legal Method in Cyprian: Considering *Epp.* 70 & 72 as Resources for Canonical Legal Reasoning

Emily Turner, Boston College

Redacting Severus of Antioch:
A Case Study in the Formation of Epistolary Canons

Simon Samuel Kootstra-Ford, Ghent University

The Enduring Legacy of William Beveridge

John Schroedel, St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral [OCA], Minneapolis, MN

2:00 – 4:00 pm

Session 3C: Challenges and New Interpretations

West Wing, Maliotis

Chair: His Grace Bishop Anthony of Synada

Between Legality and Canonicity: The Institution of Military Chaplains in Orthodox Canon Law in the Light of Tradition and Contemporary Challenges

Athenagoras Soupourtzis, Orthodox Theological Academy of Volyn

The Holy Canons and Disability: A Contemporary Approach to a Perennial Issue

Ioannis E. Kastanas, School of Law, University of Nicosia, Nicosia

The Other Trullan Canons Regulating Aesthetics

David Olster, Independent Scholar

4:00 – 4:15 pm

Break

Atrium, Maliotis

4:15 – 6:15 pm

Session 4A: Basic Questions of Hierarchy and Synod

Theater, Maliotis

Chair: Lewis Patsavos

The 1985 Basic Statute of the Holy Synod (*al-Lāʾiḥa al-Asāsiyya li-l-Majmaʿ al-Muqaddas*): The Constitutional Refounding of Coptic Synodality Under Pope Shenouda III

Mena Basta, Claremont Graduate University/St. Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society

Returning to the *Alma Mater*: A Case for Renewed Alexandrian Jurisdiction Over the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

Kyrillos Nashed, Hellenic College

Sede Vacante Norms in Armenia, 440–461 A.D.

Hovannes Khosdeghian, St. Nerses Armenian Seminary

4:15 – 6:15 pm

Session 4B: Questions of Pastoral Application

East Wing, Maliotis

Chair: Laura Wilson

Οἰκονομία as a Pastoral Tool in Orthodox Canon Law

Milan Sturgis, Independent Scholar

Beyond Regulation: Canon Law as Spiritual Medicine in the Syriac Orthodox Tradition

Timothy (Tenny) Thomas Varghese, St. John's University

Canonical Order and Pastoral Vitality: The Supernatural Telos of Canon Law

Vladimer Narsia, Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia

6:30 – 8:00 pm

OCLS Grand Banquet

Atrium, Maliotis