

THE HILL  
MUSEUM &  
MANUSCRIPT  
LIBRARY  
NEWSLETTER

# ILLUMINATIONS

SPRING  
2007





**Front cover:** The guardian of the manuscripts at the monastic church in Yeha, Tigray Province, northern Ethiopia, shows a nineteenth century Gospel Book to visitors from HMML. The illumination depicts the Holy Trinity.

**Back cover:** *The Saint John's Bible Exhibition Information.*

## HILL MUSEUM & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

In the Benedictine tradition of reverence for human thought and creativity, the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML) preserves manuscripts, printed books and art at Saint John's University and undertakes photographic projects in regions throughout the world.

HMML is the home of the world's largest collection of manuscript images and of *The Saint John's Bible*, a handwritten, illuminated Bible in modern English.

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# Illuminations

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*Illuminations* is a publication of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library and is published for scholars and friends of HMML twice a year.

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Dear Friends of HMML,

I am reading a lot of history these days. A taste for the past is nothing new for me, but my reading has found different pathways as I seek better understanding of the cultures that produced the manuscripts we are preserving. Our projects in the Middle East and those soon to begin in Eastern Europe illuminate the rise and fall of empires. In Lebanon and Syria we are preserving the legacies of ancient Christian communities that flourished in Byzantine times, were conquered in the 7th century by the Islamic armies of the Prophet Mohammed, and lived through successive Muslim empires until the final collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. The more recent history of the region is sadly familiar to us. Many of the surviving manuscripts were rescued within living memory from communities that no longer exist. Some communities were destroyed by genocide, others abandoned because of persecution, still others threatened by emigration as the young left to find opportunity elsewhere.

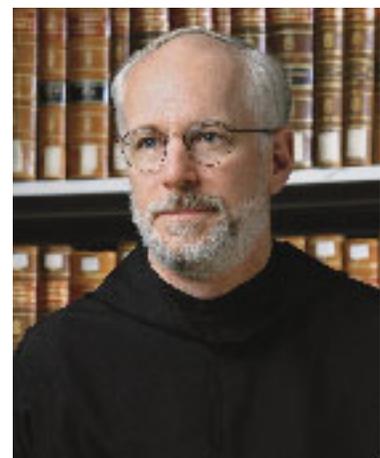
The projects we will begin this year in Ukraine focus largely on state libraries created during the Communist era. As a government hostile to religious practice closed places of worship and monasteries, manuscripts were wrenched from their cultural context and simply warehoused. In western Ukraine, I have seen manuscripts from once-flourishing Polish and Jewish communities piled into crowded libraries that struggle to find basic resources for their care. Many other treasures were lost during World War II, stolen by the Nazis or moved to libraries in Moscow. Now these facilities are being opened to HMML, and through HMML, to the world.

We focus this issue of Illuminations on a project that is both success story and unfinished business, our work in Ethiopia. This great country has known its own upheavals, including the devastating revolution and civil war that suspended HMML's work there a quarter of a century ago. We have saved much, and are determined to preserve what remains.

The lessons of the past suggest that few things can endure over the long term. Manuscripts, with their connections to monastic and religious culture, bear witness to the beliefs and ideas of times past, as well as to what remains firm and steadfast. Despite everything, they can still speak to us. With your help, we will ensure their voices do not fall silent forever.

*Columba Stewart, OSB*

Father Columba Stewart, OSB  
Executive Director



# HMML Goes to Ethiopia

By Phil Steger, HMML Deputy Director of Preservation

To save what will be lost. To preserve the wisdom of our forebears in faith. To pass it on to those who will survive times of unimaginable change.

This was the intent that inspired the founding of HMML in 1965, when the loss of European Christian culture and history through nuclear calamity was a very real danger. Our mission then was to preserve photographically the manuscripts of the ancient Benedictine libraries of Austria and Germany, regions which had known the devastation of conventional war and had become a potential flashpoint in an East/West nuclear conflict. Yet, even as this mission expanded to include more of Europe's religious legacy, the vision of HMML's leaders went

beyond Europe to the remote mountain kingdom of Ethiopia. Though Ethiopia was not among the targets for the nuclear arsenals of the Cold War, the survival of its ancient form of Christianity faced threats that were just as real. Indeed, the vulnerability of Ethiopia's manuscripts threatened not only the preservation of a Christian past but the survival of one of Christianity's unique living cultures.

## A PATRIARCH'S DREAM

Ethiopia was still very much a manuscript-based religious culture in 1971 when His Beatitude Theophilos, the Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, expressed a desire to microfilm the



Digital camera technology allows HMML to preserve full-color, high resolution manuscript images. This image from the opening of the Gospel of John is from the recently-completed Gunda Gunde project conducted by Dr. Michael Gervers and Dr. Ewa Bailicka-Witakowska.

manuscripts of his tradition before they disappeared through deterioration, theft, or the inevitable impact of modernity. HMML's expertise in manuscript photography, cataloguing, and microfilm processing and distribution made us a critical partner in realizing the Patriarch's dream. HMML's director, Dr. Julian G. Plante, and Professor Walter Harrelson, former Dean of the Divinity School of Vanderbilt University, partnered with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the University of Addis Ababa to create the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (EMML) in Addis Ababa, which was put under the direction of Dr. Sergew Hable-Sellassie of Addis Ababa University.

Work in Ethiopia presented HMML with challenges very distinct from those encountered in central Europe. One of the project's first expenditures, for example, was the purchase of a Land Rover to transport manuscripts safely across the country's rugged terrain to the EMML in Addis Ababa. Landscape obstacles were only one challenge faced by the project. The first challenge was gaining the confidence of the manuscripts' monastic custodians. Since the manuscripts of Ethiopia were not merely museum pieces but sacred books still very much in use, their caretakers were very protective of them. The monastic guardians, who kept prayerful vigil over the manuscripts, even as they bounced over Ethiopia's rough roads, vividly manifested this protectiveness.

The team also had to contend with the Marxist-inspired, anti-monarchist revolution that convulsed Ethiopia in 1974. HMML's Cataloguer of Ethiopian Manuscripts, Dr. Getatchew Haile, a prominent academic and member of the Ethiopian parliament, barely survived an assassination attempt during this time and was forced to flee the political chaos.

Over the next several years, the project endured riots, political upheaval, the assassination of the Emperor, and even the deposition and imprisonment of Patriarch Theophilos. Yet, despite these challenges, EMML successfully photographed manuscripts from the famed monasteries Däbrä Hayq, Däbrä Libanos, and Däbrä Jämäddu, as well as from the rock-hewn churches of Lalibäla, Ethiopia's medieval capital.

With support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ford Foundation, the project eventually photographed almost 8,000 manuscripts.

### A CULTURE REDISCOVERED

The critical phase of cataloguing revealed the nature of the treasures that had been discovered. Work began by the distinguished scholar of Semitic languages Dr. William F. Macomber, soon joined by Dr. Haile. Discoveries included the oldest known texts of virtually every book of the Ethiopic Old Testament, as well as such rare intertestamental texts as the Book of Enoch, which survived in its entirety only in Ethiopia. Many previously unknown compositions of Ethiopian literature were also discovered, as were royal charters and similar documents that had been copied onto the blank sides of many of the manuscripts' pages.

Despite the successes, events eventually overwhelmed the project. In 1978, rising government opposition to international partnerships led to the resignation of EMML's Ethiopian director. Project management passed to the Ethiopian Ministry of Culture. Work continued off and on until 1991. Communication with HMML was intermittent and many films were never copied. By 1992, the very location of the EMML collection, including almost 1000 uncopied microfilms, was unknown.



Boys in Yeha, Tigray Province, northern Ethiopia, learn to read the ancient language of the Ethiopian Church, Ge'ez, by reading from a manuscript.



Terri Sixta of ColorMax and Beshawared Chemet of the National Archives and Library of Ethiopia sort the “missing microfilms.”

### RETURNING WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

A new chapter opened in 2003 when HMML returned to Ethiopia to find the missing films. Executive Director Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB, accompanied by Steve Wolfe, HMML's then Director of Development, met with high-ranking members of the post-Marxist government and reestablished links with Ethiopia's academic leaders. The trip was rewarded when the lost films were found in a cabinet at the National Archives and Library of Ethiopia. Fr. Columba promptly proposed that the films be digitally scanned. The response was enthusiastic, but the logistics again proved daunting.

The films could not be taken out of the country and Ethiopia lacked the facilities either to duplicate or digitize microfilm. So, in October 2005, HMML secured the support of the Mildred H. Kellogg

Trust of Minneapolis and shipped a state-of-the-art Italian microfilm scanner to Addis Ababa. HMML's Director of Digital Collections and Imaging Wayne Torborg, with project partners Cal and Terri Sixta of ColorMax in Paynesville, MN, set up and operated the studio. Deftly navigating customs regulations, complex banking systems and frequent power outages, the HMML team salvaged as many as 800 of the recovered films. While many of the films proved to be beyond recovery, the recovered films yielded 137,000 images and more than a quarter of a million manuscript pages.

### LOSSES AND NEW BEGINNINGS

Sadly, there were also losses. While the preservation work had saved much that would have otherwise disappeared, the revolution and ensuing civil war had devastated Ethiopia's manuscript culture. Collections were destroyed, manuscripts stolen from monasteries, important works simply lost. Many were sold for a pittance by families who had treasured them for centuries. Today the visitor to Ethiopia will find manuscripts for sale in hotel gift shops and local markets.

Having pushed the “reset” button on the Ethiopia project, HMML has been eager to get back into the field. In November-December 2006, HMML sponsored a pilot project under the direction of Dr. Michael Gervers of the University of Toronto and Dr. Ewa Bailicka-Witakowska of the University of Uppsala. After receiving training at HMML, the team took new digital imaging equipment, fashioned into a mobile studio by Wayne Torborg, to the remote monastery of Gunda Gunde in northern Ethiopia. Despite working in an area so difficult to reach that they were forced to trade in their jeep for donkeys, this team photographed, and thus preserved, 219 more important manuscripts.

HMML's experience in Ethiopia proves that decisive, visionary, and innovative action can preserve the written wisdom of the past and make it available to those who will inherit the future. We hope that Gunda Gunde will be only the first of a new round of preservation campaigns throughout that extraordinary country.

# Meet a HMML Researcher



**STEVE  
DELAMARTER,  
PH.D.**

Professor of Old Testament, George Fox University, Portland, Oregon

**Educational Background:** B.A. Seattle Pacific University, M.A.R. Western Evangelical Seminary, M.Div. Western Evangelical Seminary, M. A. Claremont Graduate School, Ph.D. Claremont Graduate School.

**Current research at HMML:** Cataloguing and digitizing previously unknown Ethiopian manuscripts in North America. Professor Getatchew Haile has worked closely with us in this project.

**Why did you choose to study this topic?** I had been to Ethiopia in the spring of 1994 studying the sociology of scribal communities. A man near Portland with an old manuscript from Ethiopia called and wanted my help in figuring what the manuscript was. It was a 17th-century Ethiopian psalter. In checking with various dealers on the value of the manuscript, I asked who was interested in allowing their manuscripts to be digitized, catalogued, and copies of the images deposited at HMML. Surprisingly, many immediately agreed. In the last two years we have digitized 288 manuscripts.

**What has been the most surprising thing you've uncovered in your current research?** 1) The number of manuscripts that are being moved out of Ethiopia and into North America; 2) the complex set of scribal practices in evidence in the manuscripts; 3) the changing dimensions of books in Ethiopia across time

**What can we learn from that?** When it comes to manuscripts of their sacred texts, communities of faith take great care to get the correct content, put

it on the correct material, in the correct process, to produce the correct product, all of this by scribes who have been duly trained. Eventually it becomes clear that communities of faith invest their very identity (including their differentiation from other communities) into their manuscripts of sacred texts.

**Why did you decide to come to HMML for this particular research?** Professor Haile is the world's leading authority on Ethiopian manuscripts. Fr. Columba and the staff are helpful and generous. HMML has the largest collection of Ethiopian manuscript images in the world.

**What do you read for leisure?** I am an amateur astronomer with an interest in cosmology. My wife, Beth Habecker, is a neurobiologist and we talk a lot about the created order and the place of humans in that created order. Recently we heard a lecture by Francis Collins, head of the National Institute of Health's Human Genome Project. Collins is himself a vibrant Christian and is working hard to model an integration of faith with the results of his science. Beth and I are teaching a class at our church. One of our primary resources is Collins's book, *The Language of God*.

**If you could travel back in time, what event would you like to experience in person? Why?** As a Christian, it would be very tempting to want to experience the original Holy Week. But for any of a number of reasons, I don't think I'm ready for that. I think I'd choose something more modest and something in which I could intervene, with the advantage of hindsight, to make things better. It would be something like getting to the caves with the Dead Sea scrolls in them before their Bedouin discoverers in 1947. I'm not sure it would be my place to try to ward off the events of 9/11, but I would certainly try to communicate to Americans the results of responding to 9/11 in the ways that we have.

# Where We Are. What We've Preserved: *HMML's Current Projects*

by Columba Stewart, OSB



Beginning of a *Qundaq* (Greek: *Liturgikon*), the book containing the prayers of priest and deacon at Vespers, Orthros (the morning office of prayer), and the Divine Liturgy (the Eucharistic celebration). Parts of the manuscript are bilingual, providing the Greek text of certain prayers in addition to the Arabic. The manuscript was copied in 1682; the right-hand page features an ownership inscription from 1695 as well as someone's label in scrawled Greek that this is a book of *leitourgia*, "Liturgy." GCAA 25, fol. 1 and front pastedown. Manuscript on paper.

## Aleppo, Syria

Astride ancient trade routes, Aleppo is Syria's most cosmopolitan city. It has the highest percentage of Christian residents of any city in the Middle East apart from Beirut, including descendents of Armenian and Syriac Christians who fled Turkey a century ago. HMML is currently involved in several projects in Aleppo. Here we showcase an Arabic manuscript from the Melkite Greek-Catholic tradition, copied in 1682, from the

collection of the Greek-Catholic Archbishopric.

The Melkite Greek-Catholic Church is a branch of the ancient Church of Antioch, with roots in the Greek and Syriac traditions. The Syriac adjective "Melkite" ("of the king") was given to the group remaining in communion with the Byzantine emperors during the theological disputes of the 4th and 5th centuries that divided eastern Christianity into the many churches still found today. The liturgy still in use dates to the tenth century. Though the rite is Byzantine, Syriac remained the



This manuscript is a copy of the *Shbimo*, the book of chants used for the Liturgy of the Hours celebrated at intervals throughout day and night. These poetic compositions are a great treasury of Syriac theology and spirituality, and are still sung in monasteries throughout the Middle East, India, and the Syriac diaspora in the west. Shown here are the opening pages of an undated *Shbimo*. The words in red on the right-hand (first) page are the scribe's personal dedication. SOAA 0087, fols. 002r-001v. Manuscript on paper.

liturgical language until the early modern era when Arabic finally supplanted it. In the 18th century, a large group within the church sought union with Rome. (Those who did not are known today as the Antiochian Orthodox Church, whose manuscripts in Lebanon have been photographed by HMML). Today, the community in Aleppo remains one of the most important—both historically and numerically significant—in the Melkite Greek-Catholic Church. HMML is delighted to be working with Archbishop Jean Jeanbart on the preservation of their several hundred manuscripts.

#### Syriac Orthodox Metropolitanate

The Syriac Orthodox Church represents those who rejected the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon in 451, a position taken also by the Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox, and Armenian Apostolic Churches. Like the Melkite

Greek-Catholics, the Syriac Orthodox trace their origins to the original Church of Antioch. Their historic center was Edessa, now the city of Sanliurfa in southeastern Turkey. Missionaries were sent to India as early as the fourth century, and India is now home to the largest community of Syriac Christians in the world. The Syriac Orthodox patriarch now lives in Damascus, having left Turkey during the persecutions of Christians during and after World War I. Syriac remains their liturgical and theological language. The community in Aleppo is both ancient and modern, having grown considerably since the late 19th century with the influx of Syriac Christians from Turkey. The manuscripts in Aleppo include some ancient and highly significant texts featuring the outstanding illuminations often found in Syriac manuscripts. Metropolitan Yuhanna Ibrahim, himself a scholar, has been a warm supporter of HMML's work in the region.

# News from HMML

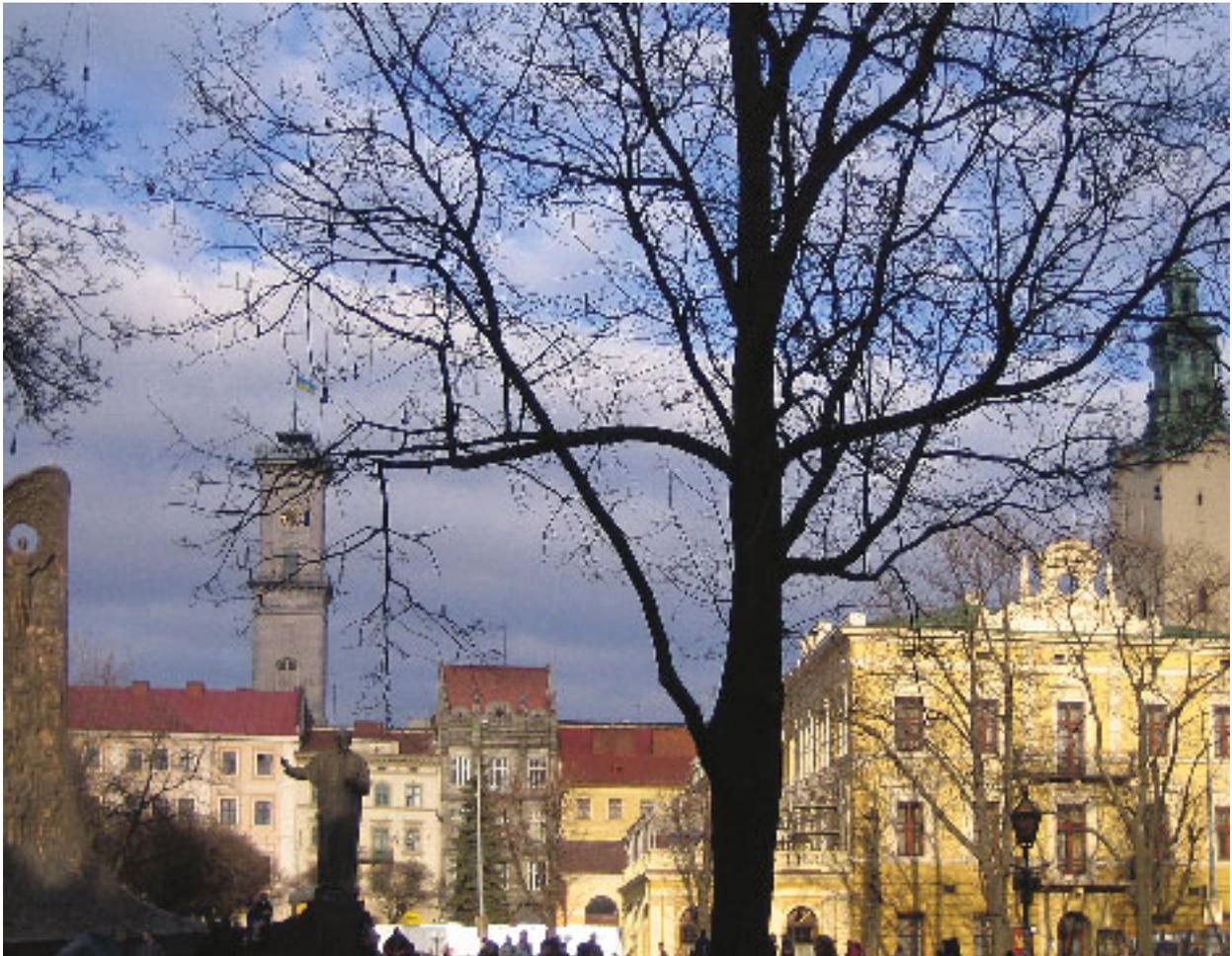
## PRESERVATION WORK TO BEGIN IN UKRAINE

The Balkans, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union constitute the largest and most populous region of Eastern Christianity. Though largely inaccessible to scholars from the west throughout much of the twentieth century, this has been a strongly Christian region for a thousand years. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the majority of Eastern European libraries are on precarious economic foundations in shaky and evolving political systems.

In December 2006, HMML Executive Director, Father Columba Stewart, OSB signed preliminary

agreements with the four major libraries in Lviv, Ukraine which together hold over 5300 manuscripts. Lviv has a rich multi-cultural history as a city that was under Austrian, Polish, German, Soviet and now Ukrainian rule. Its religious history is correspondingly unique, with substantial communities of Roman Catholics, Ukrainian Catholics, Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox, and Armenians leaving their traces in the manuscript collections. Lviv was also a major center for Ukrainian Jewish life.

Between 1939 and 1945 this variegated legacy was destroyed. The Roman Catholic religious



Lviv, Ukraine

# NEWS FROM HMML

communities that flourished under Austrian and Polish rule were suppressed. The Ukrainian Catholic Church was forcibly integrated into the Russian Orthodox Church and all non-Ukrainian national groups were deported. Lviv's once flourishing Jewish culture was entirely destroyed. Although the Nazis and Soviets were hostile to religious groups, they saved the manuscripts. Under Soviet rule, all religious manuscripts were gathered into state repositories, where they remain to this day—many of them uncatalogued and inaccessible.

Now that religious practice is officially permitted, Lviv has become the center of the rebirth of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The curators of the manuscript collections want their holdings to become known and used by scholars, but they lack the scholarly resources to interpret and catalogue particularly the Latin manuscripts that constitute the greater part of the collections in Lviv.

The photographic preservation of at-risk manuscripts in Eastern European countries addresses the danger of destruction, the problem of access, and the proper rights of ownership. In addition, HMML can offer the libraries where the digitizing

is being done, technological training and support, as well as photographic security for their treasured manuscripts.

Expansion into other Eastern European and Balkan countries will bring new challenges and possibilities in establishing partnerships with local institutions.

## *PROPHETS: WORD AND IMAGE* EXHIBITION AT THE HILL MUSEUM & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY, FEBRUARY 12 – JUNE 1, 2007

The Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML) is currently featuring the exhibition “*Prophets: Word and Image*” from *The Saint John's Bible*. This is the first time 28 original pages from *Prophets* have been available for viewing in Minnesota, and is the greatest number of original pages ever displayed on campus. The exhibition begins February 12 and runs through June 1, 2007. Many of the pages will remain on display throughout the summer.

*Word and Image* features pages from *Prophets*, the fourth completed volume of *The Saint John's Bible*. Among the pages on view are Ezekiel's Vision of



The *Prophets: Word and Image* exhibit at HMML.

# NEWS FROM HMML

the New Temple, Suffering Servant, Valley of the Dry Bones, Daniel's Vision of the Son of Man and the jubilant Messianic Predictions. Also on view are artists' sketches of the illuminations, as well as tools and materials from the scriptorium such as quills, hand-ground pigments, gold leaf, calfskin vellum, and ancient inks from China.

According to Carol Marrin, the Executive Director of *The Saint John's Bible*, "*Prophets: Word and Image* calls each of us to appreciate the beauty of this hand-written and illuminated text while listening to the challenge, the gut wrenching questions that surface from these passages and accompanying images."

*Prophets*, a trade book released in January, is available for purchase at HMML. HMML is open Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Guests are welcome to view the exhibition at their leisure. There is no entrance fee. Interpretive tours and presentations are available for groups wishing to book in advance. Information and booking requests may be directed to Linda Orzechowski by calling 320-363-3514 or by email at [lorzechowsk@csbsju.edu](mailto:lorzechowsk@csbsju.edu). For more information about *The Saint John's Bible* visit [www.saintjohnsbible.org](http://www.saintjohnsbible.org).

## HIS HOLINESS ARAM I, CATHOLICOS OF THE GREAT HOUSE OF CILICIA OF THE ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH, RECEIVES SJU'S PAX CHRISTI AWARD

Saint John's Abbey and University presented its highest honor, the Pax Christi Award, to His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia of the Armenian Apostolic Church, on Wednesday, Dec. 6, 2006.

The event began with Evening Prayer in honor of Saint Nicholas at 5 p.m. at the Abbey Church and was followed by a reception and dinner. A rousing piano performance by Stepan Khachatryan and his family members featured classical and traditional music from their home in Yerevan,

Armenia. Currently, Khachatryan is the director of the Saint Sahag's School of Music, in Saint Paul, Minnesota. The award ceremony and public address, "Challenges Facing Christianity in the Middle East" followed the dinner.

"His Holiness was our first Armenian partner in the Middle East. His exceptional leadership facilitated the opening of the manuscript collection of the Catholicosate to the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library," said Fr. Columba Stewart, executive director of HMML.

In his public address His Holiness Aram said, "I would like to express my deep appreciation to this university...working with us in order to preserve our intellectual, theological and spiritual heritage not only to preserve our heritage but to create the possibility of presenting it to the world."

As the highest honor awarded by Saint John's, the Pax Christi Award recognizes those who have devoted themselves to God by working in ways akin to the tradition of Benedictine monasticism to serve others and to build a heritage of faith in the world.

The award has been presented to 53 individuals, including Cardinal Leo Jozef Suenens of Belgium; Archbishop Jean Jadot, the former representative of the Holy See in the United States; Eugene McCarthy, the former senator, presidential candidate and SJU graduate; Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of the Chicago Archdiocese; and His Beatitude Ignatius IV Hazim, Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch.



From L to R: Abbot John Klassen, His Holiness Aram I, and SJU President Br. Dietrich Reinhart at the Pax Christi ceremony.

# NEWS FROM HMML

## EARLY PRINTED EDITIONS OF THE QUR'AN AND ARABIC BIBLE ON EXHIBIT AT HMML

HMML is fortunate to have a large collection of rare printed books as a complement to its vast collection of manuscript images. An exhibition now at HMML features books indicative of early European interest in Islam and the Arabic language. On display is the first printed edition of the Qur'an, printed in 1543 from the 12th century Latin translation made at the command of Abbot Peter the Venerable of Cluny. Martin Luther contributed a preface to the 1543 publication urging westerners to learn more about Islam. Luther's motive was polemical, responding to the Turkish military threat that had brought Muslim armies to the gates of Vienna. Also on display is the first available Arabic printed edition of the Qur'an (the very first survives in only one copy), commentaries on the Qur'an by westerners who made use of the classical Arabic traditions of Quranic interpretation, and landmark editions of the Bible in Arabic. Some of these books have been at Saint John's since before 1900, while others are recent acquisitions. The exhibition runs through June 15, 2007.



A woodcut by Antonio Tempesta from the Arabic Gospels printed in Rome in 1591. The book has been at Saint John's since the late 19th century.

## BIBLE EXHIBITION NEWS

### “ILLUMINATING THE WORD” EXHIBITION AT LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

On October 5th, the Target-sponsored exhibition of *The Saint John's Bible*, “*Illuminating the Word*,” opened at the Library of Congress in Washington and remained there through December 30, 2006. As the world's largest library and a center for cultural, artistic and historic enterprises, the Library of Congress provided an inspiring environment in which to host *Illuminating the Word*.

Opening events included a lecture by Donald Jackson on October 3rd, and a reception for friends of the Library of Congress, Saint John's University and Target on October 5th.

### “PROPHETS” ON BROADWAY

The Museum of Biblical Art (MOBIA), located near Columbus Circle in New York City, curated an exhibition entitled “*Gilded Legacies: The Saint John's Bible in Context*” using folios from the Prophets volume of *The Saint John's Bible* as well as several of the Bibles from the collection of the American Bible Society. The exhibition of pages from the Prophets opened at MOBIA on September 6th and remained open to the public through December 2006.

While in New York, Donald Jackson gave two lectures at MOBIA, one of them exclusively for New York's calligraphic community, a group of lettering artists with whom he has had a thirty year relationship focused on the lettering arts.

To see a review of the Prophets exhibit that appeared in the November 10th *Wall Street Journal*, type this link into your browser:

<http://www.opinionjournal.com/taste/?id=110009228>

# HMML Sets Strategic Direction

Today, hundreds of at-risk manuscript collections related to Christian thought, culture and history remain unphotographed, unstudied and perhaps even unknown. Most of these manuscripts are in locations or institutions challenged by their economic, geographic or political circumstances. The HMML Board of Overseers views this situation as a challenge and call to action.

HMML is uniquely positioned among expanding preservation opportunities. Possessing the technology, the experience, and a record of high satisfaction among its past institutional partners and participating researchers, HMML has become the partner of choice for manuscript imaging. Given the magnitude of the need for its services, however, HMML must continue to expand its activity and generate a greater awareness of HMML's paramount skills in manuscript preservation.

In September 2005, the Board initiated a strategic planning process to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Library and to chart a course for accelerating HMML's digital preservation activities to match the scale and urgency of the need throughout the world. After a year-long planning marathon that included two extraordinary meetings of the entire Board, the Overseers approved – unanimously and by acclamation – a strategic plan for the next five years with an ambitious but achievable expansion of manuscript digitization on a global scale.

## AMBITIOUS GOALS

HMML is the only institution of its kind with the freedom to go where manuscripts are most in need of photographic preservation. Within five years, the HMML vision is to become the first and most trusted choice for institutions seeking to preserve their manuscripts through digital imaging. Toward this end, the Board developed the following baseline objectives:

- In the Middle East increase the scale and

pace of manuscript preservation and establish new preservation sites.

- Open a “second front” of preservation activity in a new geographical region.

The Board also specified several 5-year aspirational goals.

- Digitize all known Christian manuscripts in the Middle East.
- Begin preservation projects in Armenia, Georgia, the Balkans, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union.
- Reestablish active manuscript preservation work in Ethiopia.

Fulfilling HMML's mission is more than a matter of taking pictures of manuscripts. It embraces all of the activities that enable the manuscripts to tell their story: cataloguing, web hosting, accessibility and searchability, and providing services to visiting scholars and researchers. A key factor is the continuing development of the Library's web platform, through which people around the world learn the history and scope of HMML's work, access the manuscript catalogue, and view images of manuscripts, printed books, and works of art on *Vivarium*.

The development of *The Saint John's Bible* is intimately connected to HMML's preservation activity. Bible-associated sales represent a major revenue source in HMML's operating budget. In addition, achieving HMML's aspirational goals in manuscript preservation requires building an endowment from sales of the Heritage Edition of *The Saint John's Bible*. The plan recognizes that HMML must also build upon the awareness that is being generated by *The Saint John's Bible* through exhibitions and educational programming.

## *The Saint John's Bible* Exhibition Information

*The Saint John's Bible* began its national and international tour in April 2005 with the opening of *Illuminating the Word* at The Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Since then, *The Saint John's Bible* has been exhibited at the Joslyn Museum Omaha, NE, the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, the Tyler Museum of Art, Tyler, TX, the Museum of Biblical Art, New York, NY, the Naples Museum of Art, Naples, FL, and the Library of Congress, Washington, DC. *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible* exhibition will continue at the following venues:

### **Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ**

December 9, 2007 - March 7, 2008

<http://www.phxart.org/>.

### **Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg, Canada**

April 11 - June 8, 2008

<http://www.wag.mb.ca/>.

### **Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma, WA**

July 11 - September 5, 2008

<http://www.tacomaartmuseum.org/>.

### **Mobile Museum of Art, Mobile, AL**

October 10, 2008 - April 10, 2009

<http://www.mobilemuseumofart.com/>.

### **Other Exhibition Activities**

#### **British Library, London**

(April 27 – September 23, 2007): **A folio from the Gospel of Mark** will be shown alongside the Lindisfarne Gospels, <http://www.bl.uk/>.

#### **San Diego Natural History Museum**

(July through December 2007): Three two-page openings from Prophets will be included in an exhibition featuring the Dead Sea Scrolls, <http://www.sdnhm.org/>.

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