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WINTER  
NEWSLETTER  
2010

ILLUMINATIONS

HILL MUSEUM & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY



ON THE COVER: This stack of computer hardware, about the size of a household refrigerator, is the heart of HMML's digital library. Containing the digital versions of around 20,000 manuscripts, it's part of a storage area network (SAN), located in the Information Technology Department of Saint John's University. Visiting scholars at HMML can access these manuscripts over the secure local computer network.

ABOVE: Managing digital hardware and data is a never-ending task. Here, a climate sensor monitors the temperature and relative humidity for one of the hardware racks. Air conditioning systems, backup power generators, and fault-tolerant hardware comprise a sophisticated data storage facility for HMML's digital resources.

### *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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*Dear Friends,*

I'm writing this letter from the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library in Washington, DC, where I'm almost halfway through an eight-month sabbatical fellowship devoted to a projected book on early monastic culture. It has been very gratifying to be in a place where the value of HMML's work is so immediately apparent as I spend time among scholars from around the world who have spent their lives studying the texts preserved in the manuscripts we photograph. Being in Washington has other benefits as well, such as strengthening HMML's partnership with the Library of Congress and bringing HMML's story to new audiences in the academic, political, and diplomatic communities.

We have much good news to report in this issue of *Illuminations*: a major project completed in Turkey, a significant grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation that will enable HMML to catalog many of the manuscripts digitized since 2003, and new audiences for HMML's work. Media interest continues, with an excellent recent story in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* that has prompted interview requests and potential grant opportunities.

We also feature details about our upcoming trip to eastern Turkey and Syria, where we'll visit many of the sites featured in the "Where We're Working" pages of *Illuminations*. This trip is open to HMML's Millennium Club members; details about the trip and the Millennium Club can be found on page 12.

In these early days of 2010 the world situation continues to be unsettled. In such times the work of HMML becomes ever more important. Thank you for your interest and support.

*Above: Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB at the magnificent Cathedral at Mtskheta, north of Tbilisi, Georgia.*

Sincerely yours,

*Columba Stewart, OSB*

Father Columba Stewart, OSB  
Executive Director HMML

# Moving Forward by Backing Up

## Digital Versions of Manuscripts Require Preservation as Much as the Originals Themselves

By Marc Hequet



Wayne Torborg, HMML's director of digital collections, checks a disk backup worklist against the master database. Every manuscript in digital form is tracked from its arrival at HMML to the multiple archiving copies that are created and safely stored.

War? Earthquake? Tornado?  
Hard-drive failure?

The staff at the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML) worries about all of them. HMML has been preserving manuscripts using digital technology for seven years, but the preservation of the digital information doesn't simply happen by itself. "If you're going to make digital information last forever," says Wayne Torborg, HMML's director of digital collections and imaging, "you need to form a long-term plan that takes into account the changes in technology and the need for careful recordkeeping."

Torborg and his colleagues are responsible for safeguarding the digital images of the largest collection of Eastern Christian manuscript images in the world. It's a lot of data: nearly 20,000 manuscripts, comprising over 3.5 million pictures and over 50 terabytes of disk space.

In the world of hand-written manuscripts and religious traditions, thinking in terms of centuries is common. In the digital age, change happens rapidly and short-term thinking dominates. "When I'm at digital library conferences speaking about preserving digital information for centuries," says Torborg, "they look at me like I'm crazy."

### Preservation Proves Its Worth—Saving Lost Writings

But it's far from crazy—it's essential. Unlike printed books, manuscripts are by definition "one of a kind" objects. The materials being digitized today by HMML reflect a heritage reaching back to Christianity's beginnings. The digital versions, or *derivatives*, of these manuscripts arriving at HMML are treated with the same care as the originals themselves would be.

The importance of this has been demonstrated. In the 1970's HMML participated in a multi-institution project to microfilm Ethiopian manuscripts, the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (EMML). Thousands of manuscripts were photographed; soon, these became vulnerable in part because of civil unrest that consumed the country for two decades. Many of the manuscripts filmed by EMML have since disappeared from their native country, sometimes surfacing in private collections still bearing their EMML project markings. In many cases, HMML's microfilm copies are the only surviving materials available to scholars.

That's just one example. Another is when the Municipal Archives of Cologne, Germany, a modern building, completely collapsed in March 2009 as a result of nearby construction. HMML microfilmed the archive's manuscript collection in the 1980's—scholars needing these materials have immediate access to them through HMML's efforts. HMML is also able to replace any manuscript films destroyed by the collapse. Again, photographic derivatives of handwritten manuscripts have become the *de facto* originals due to the loss of the "real" originals.

### Back It Up or Lose It, It's That Simple

Computer users are urged to create backup copies of their data as a safeguard against hardware failure, data corruption, or something as simple as having a computer stolen. Many ignore this advice and end up losing vast amounts of their valuable digital data, which today often includes videos, music, and personal photographs.

Backing up data involves making copies of the information and storing these copies in different locations. This provides both information redundancy and physical protection in the event that one of the locations suffers some sort of destructive calamity.

HMML had been doing this even prior to its digital preservation work. Starting in 1965, HMML used the then-cutting-edge technology of microfilm to photograph manuscripts in countries situated on the front lines of the Cold War. The original camera negatives of these films are stored in an underground

vault located 85 miles away from HMML; "reader copies" are used for day-to-day research on site.

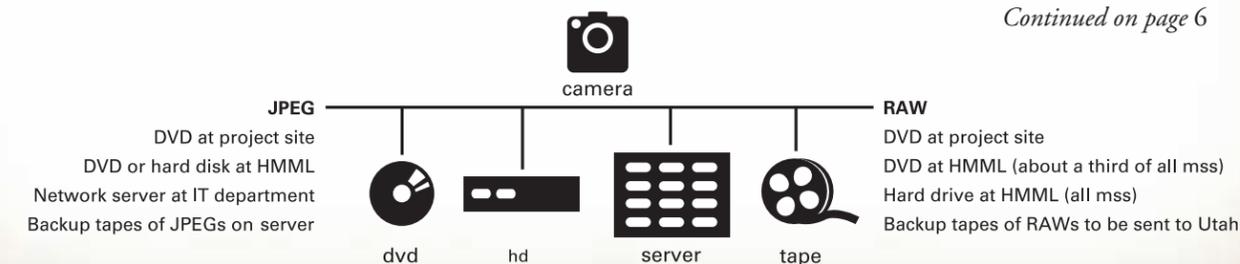
The backing up of HMML's digital image files begins from the very start. The cameras used to photograph manuscripts create two digital files for each picture taken, a "RAW" file, sometimes called the "digital negative," and a JPEG-format image file of extremely high quality that is immediately usable to scholars.

When HMML's digitization project began in 2003, the most cost-effective way to store and transport this data was on recordable DVD disks. HMML's project partners would make a set of DVDs for themselves and a second set to send to HMML. Up to 700 such DVDs per shipment would arrive in large shipping boxes from overseas. After receiving over 8500 DVD disks from its various partners, HMML transitioned from DVDs to external hard disk drives—by that time, the cost of such technology had dropped to a practical level. Project locations still create DVDs for their own use.

At HMML, the JPEG files are copied to a huge data storage system located in a secure, climate-controlled facility located at the Saint John's University Information Technology (IT) department. 3.5 million JPEG images reside on this sophisticated hard-disk array (pictured on cover). This refrigerator-sized collection of hard drives and computer server hardware runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week, providing on-campus "read-only" access to HMML's digital collections for scholars granted the proper "username" and password. The data is available on the Saint John's secure internal network—not over the Internet. Fault-tolerant hardware redundancy automatically compensates for disk failures if they occur. At regular intervals, backup tapes of the JPEGs stored on this Storage Area Network (SAN) are recorded and stored elsewhere.

The remaining RAW files are also backed up. First, there was the challenge of copying all the RAW files from that mountain of DVD disks onto new external hard disk drives. This was slow, tedious work, but after a year and a half, the task was completed. Between these and the new data drives arriving from overseas, HMML has nearly 100 high-capacity disk drives containing manuscript images—more than 52 terabytes of image data.

Continued on page 6





*Think you've got a big DVD collection? Over a period of four and a half years, over 8500 DVD disks containing manuscript images arrived at HMML from its various project locations. Data from this DVD collection has been copied to hard disks and network servers.*

These RAW files are also being taped, separately from the JPEG tapes mentioned before. In a final level of backup security, these "RAW" tapes will be sent to Utah to a storage facility tunneled into the side of a granite mountain.

Creating and safeguarding multiple copies of data isn't enough, though. Without careful recordkeeping, it would be impossible to keep track of it all. Torborg maintains a number of important database lists containing information about every manuscript, DVD disk, hard drive and backup tape that HMML possesses. Lists of data management activities are also kept—disk copying, tape backups, etc. "Essentially, you need to keep lists of what you have and what you've done," says Torborg. "This keeps things from getting lost and makes sure that important tasks aren't skipped or done twice." These databases are backed up and safeguarded to the same degree as the manuscript images themselves.

All of this represents a major, if largely hidden, expenditure of resources by HMML. "When technology is functioning properly, it's like an invisible magic that's taken for granted," says Torborg. "People only notice when it isn't there or stops working. It's expensive on a number of levels—hardware, electricity, storage fees, and the cost of skilled technicians." It's a big commitment, one that HMML is determined to keep.

What sort of technology will exist in the future? Will HMML's data ever need to be retrieved from its mountain backup storage facility because of some disaster in central Minnesota? Such scenarios need to be considered. "Thinking in centuries" is a trait that HMML inherits from its Benedictine origins. "I think of it as digital stewardship," says Torborg. "You're constantly migrating data, adapting to change, and keeping track of everything as you move forward."

In fact, it's the same sort of stewardship that allowed those 20,000 one-of-a-kind manuscripts to survive and be preserved by HMML in the first place.

## Multiple Backups Enhance Data Safety

HMML has adopted a strategy to safeguard its digital data by creating backup copies and having these copies in different places. Here's how it works:

Inside the camera, two files of each photograph taken are created simultaneously, a RAW image file (digital negative) and a high-quality JPEG image file. The JPEG image is immediately usable and the RAW can be converted into a new JPEG if need be.

Technicians at HMML's project location make a set of DVDs containing RAW and JPEG images for their own use.

A second set is copied to an external hard drive for shipment to HMML (RAW and JPEG)

When the hard drive arrives at HMML, the JPEG files are copied to the on-campus secure server (pictured on cover).

JPEGs on the server are backed up on digital tape.

RAW files on hard drives are backed up to digital tape; these are shipped out of state for safekeeping.

For the first few years of the projects, data was shipped to HMML on DVD, adding an extra level of backup for those manuscripts. About one third of HMML's RAW files have an additional level of backup, copied on DVD *and* hard drive.

# HMML News

## Calligraphy Connection Highlights Artists of *The Saint John's Bible*

This year marked the 29<sup>th</sup> annual Calligraphy Connection, an international conference of lettering artists and a tradition which began at Saint John's Abbey and University almost three decades ago. The conference was sponsored by the Calligraphy Connection — a non-profit organization with membership open to anyone with a love of lettering and related arts.

The Calligraphy Connection drew over 300 visitors to Saint John's campus representing 37 states and 9 countries. Over the seven-day conference, 22 faculty members presented classes ranging from *Celtic Hybrid Script* to *Lettering on Canvas*.

A highlight of the conference was the Sunday night presentation in which a 20 minute video by Donald Jackson, artistic director of *The Saint John's Bible* project, was presented to the Colleagues. Donald shared his experiences in working on *The Saint John's Bible* — his challenges as well as his triumphs.

The evening continued with a panel discussion involving the three American artists who have contributed to *The Saint John's Bible*: Suzanne Moore, Thomas Ingmire and Diane von Arx. The discussion was facilitated by Christopher Calderhead, calligraphy teacher and author of *Illuminating the Word: The Making of the Saint John's Bible* (<http://www.litpress.org/>). The artists expressed their ideas on what it meant to be involved in such an inimitable project. They talked about the collaborative interpretation process, the technical challenges of working on vellum and how the project has helped them to grow in their craft.

This is the sixth time the Calligraphy Connection has convened on the Saint John's campus since the first conference in 1981, where Donald Jackson was an instructor. "We've been at 17 colleges, and I can say without any fear of contradiction that Saint John's University is the place to come," conference founder Jo White said, citing Saint John's "history and sense of place" as two reasons the connection belongs here. The seclusion and serenity of Saint John's campus make it the perfect place to focus on the careful art of calligraphy.

The Colleagues were also able to view the exhibit of folios of *The Saint John's Bible* at the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (<http://www.hmml.org>), which serves as its permanent home. HMML also hosted special tours where participants were granted access not open to the general public, including an up-close, uncovered look at the Bible folios.

For more information about the Colleagues of Calligraphy, visit their website at: <http://www.colleaguesofcalligraphy.com/index.html>

## Manuscripts in the Media

The work of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library continues to attract the attention of national media. Recently, HMML's executive director, Father Columba Stewart, was featured in The Chronicle of Higher Education in a December 4, 2009 article titled "A Monk Saves Threatened Manuscripts Using Ultramodern Means." A web reprint of the article can be downloaded at:

<http://www.hmml.org/happenings/06/IPA11781-web.pdf>

Father Columba has also been telling HMML's story on a number of recent radio interviews:

New Hampshire Public Radio's "Word of Mouth" program (December 14, 2009)  
<http://www.nhpr.org/node/28287>

Boston Public Radio's "Here & Now" program (December 24, 2009)  
<http://www.hereandnow.org/2009/12/digitizing-monk/>

*Note: when typing these internet addresses into your web browser, everything is on one line of text with no spaces.*

*HMML News  
continued on page 15*

# Where We're Working

## Church of the Forty Martyrs, Mardin, Turkey



*The Ascension of Christ, from a set of illuminations prefacing a liturgical Gospel Lectionary. Note the use of both Syriac and Greek captions: Greek was honored in the Syriac tradition as the original language of the New Testament and of many theological and philosophical texts later translated into Syriac. Although the Greek words (in white letters) are given the more important, horizontal, alignment, the words are spelled incorrectly. The vertical Syriac captions (in yellow/gold paint) are correct, indicating much greater familiarity. MS. CFMM 37/2, fol. 5r. Manuscript on vellum, ca. 13<sup>th</sup> century. 41 x 30 x 10.5 cm. Copyright: Syriac Orthodox Diocese of Mardin, Turkey.*

HMML recently completed the digitization of one of the most important Syriac manuscript collections in the Middle East, at a church in Mardin, Turkey. The Syriac Orthodox Church of the Forty Martyrs dates to 569 AD. Now the only active church in a city that until a century ago was largely Christian, the “Kirkklar Kilesesi,” as it is known in Turkish, continues to witness to the ancient tradition of Syriac Christianity in northern Mesopotamia.

The Church was originally dedicated to Mar (“Saint”) Behnam, a 4<sup>th</sup> century Assyrian prince. Behnam and his sister Sarah were put to death by the Sassanian Persian authorities for converting to Christianity after the cure of Sarah’s leprosy by the famous monk Mar Mattai (or Matti). Monasteries dedicated to Mar Mattai and Mar Behnam still exist near Mosul in northern Iraq.

In 1170, relics of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste were brought to Mardin, prompting the rededication of the church to their memory. This cult is one of the most important in the Christian East, honoring a group of early 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman soldiers killed for their Christian faith by being left to die on a frozen pond near Sebaste (modern Sivas), in northeastern Turkey. They are frequently depicted in frescoes and icons, standing on the ice with golden crowns hovering above their heads.

The Church of the Forty Martyrs holds the historic manuscript collection of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch, who had been based at the nearby Monastery of Deir Ulzaferan until the persecutions of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1915 and 1923, much of the Christian population of Mardin was killed or forced into exile, including the Armenian Catholic Archbishop Ignatius Maloyan, who was shot with hundreds of his parishioners in 1915. What was left of a once-thriving Christian community representing many different traditions gradually grew even smaller through migration to Istanbul or abroad. Today there are less than a hundred Christians in a city of more than 65,000 mostly Kurdish inhabitants.

By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, most of the manuscripts from Deir Ulzaferan had been moved to Mardin, where they were cared for and studied by the famous Syriac Orthodox monk and Metropolitan of Mardin, Yuhanna Dolabani. The collection now numbers some 1250 manuscripts, mostly in Syriac, with an important sub-collection in Garshuni (Arabic written in Syriac script). A very small selection of manuscripts was microfilmed in the 1960s by the Estonian scholar Arthur Vööbus, with little access to the collection available to western scholars since.

With the gracious permission of the present Metropolitan of Mardin, Archbishop Philoxenos Saliba, HMML began its project in Mardin in 2006, working closely with the local priest, Abouna Gabriel Akyüz. His sons Efrem and Mattai have served as the technicians throughout the project. HMML has also digitized the manuscripts remaining at Deir Ulzaferan and will feature examples in a future issue of *Illuminations*. Participants in the HMML trip to the region in June 2010 will visit both sites.



*Chorepiscopus Gabriel Akyüz of the Church of the Forty Martyrs in Mardin celebrates the liturgy for the Feast of the Ascension in May 2009. He is the only priest still working in Mardin, a largely-Christian city until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

# Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibition to Include *The Saint John's Bible*.



*The Community Rule scroll, or the Manual of Discipline, contains a set of rules by which the people of Qumran conducted their lives. It gives us a glimpse into the community's way of life and world view. The fragment pictured here will be featured in The Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition, which opens on March 12, 2010 at the Science Museum of Minnesota. Fragments of the Community Rule scroll, dated to the first century BCE, were found in Cave 4. A complete copy was discovered in Cave 1, and additional copies were recovered from other caves. The large number of copies of this document signifies its importance among the members of the group. Image courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority.*

An exciting juxtaposition of ancient and modern Biblical manuscripts is coming to Saint. Paul, Minnesota this spring.

Opening at the Science Museum of Minnesota on March 12, 2010, the exhibition, titled, "The Dead Sea Scrolls: Words that Changed the World," will feature examples of the world-famous Dead Sea Scrolls along with original folios of *The Saint John's Bible* and other materials from HMML's collections.

The Dead Sea Scrolls are one of the great archaeological discoveries of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, consisting of the earliest Biblical writings yet found. They were discovered between 1947 and 1956 in 11 caves along the cliffs above Qumran, an ancient religious compound on the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea in what is now modern Israel. They consist of around 900 documents, including nearly all of the Hebrew Bible, some of them dating back to 100 BCE.

Written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, the scrolls are of great religious and historic significance. Prior to their

discovery, the oldest Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible dated to the 9<sup>th</sup> Century. Research on the scrolls' contents has shed new light on Old Testament scripture prior to its canonization around the year 100 CE. The Science Museum will display three sets of five scrolls each during the run of the exhibition, for a grand total of 15. These ancient fragments are archived and conserved by the Israel Antiquities Authority.

*The Saint John's Bible* is a contemporary work commissioned by Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minnesota. Following the traditions of medieval manuscripts, it is the first handwritten, illuminated Bible commissioned by a Benedictine monastery since the advent of the printing press over 500 years ago. Working with a team of theologians from Saint John's and artists from both the United Kingdom and the United States, the Bible's artistic director, Donald Jackson, has spent the last eleven years working in Wales, scribing and illustrating the manuscript. In their work on *The Saint John's Bible*, Jackson and his team have used feather quills, hand-ground inks, and

gold, silver and platinum leaf. 28 pages from *Prophets* and *Wisdom Books*, the most recently-completed volumes of *The Saint John's Bible*, will be on display.

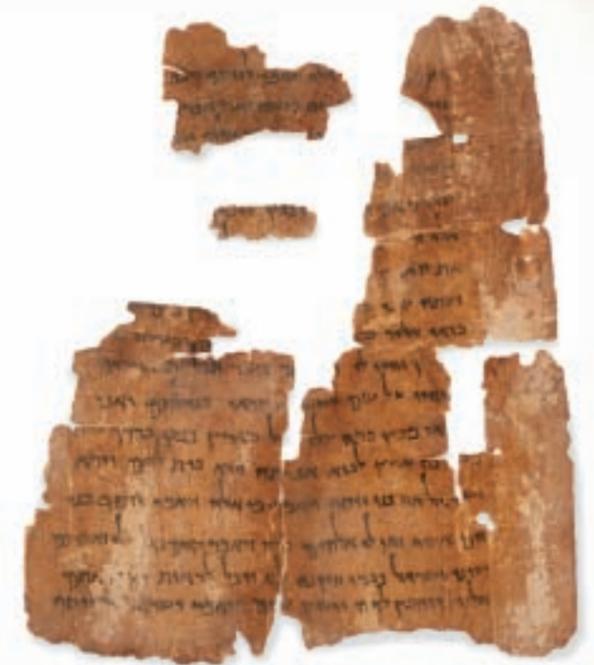
"We're thrilled to include *The Saint John's Bible* in our exhibition of The Dead Sea Scrolls," comments Mike Day, senior vice president of museum enterprises at the Science Museum of Minnesota. "Not only is it stunning in its beauty and splendor, but it also provides incredible context for our visitors. Many of the same techniques used to transcribe the Dead Sea Scrolls more than 2,000 years ago are still being used today on *The Saint John's Bible*. At the same time, though, *The Saint John's Bible* is an extremely meaningful example of a biblical manuscript for today's contemporary world."

### Visitor Information

The display of *The Saint John's Bible* will be included in The Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition, which opens Friday, March 12, 2010, at the Science Museum of Minnesota. Tickets are \$28 for adults and \$22 for children and seniors. (Ticket price includes museum admission, The Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition, and a Dead Sea Scrolls audio tour, which features adult and family versions.) As with past exhibitions, admission to The Dead Sea Scrolls will be timed and dated; visitors will be asked to choose a specific date for their visit when they purchase their tickets, as well as a time to enter The Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit.

### Additional Insights Available on Web

Rev. Michael Patella, OSB, Acting Director of HMML, has written an in-depth analysis of the Dead Sea Scrolls, their meaning, and its relationship with *The Saint John's Bible*. Read it on the HMML website at: <http://www.hmml.org/dss>



*This scroll fragment from the book of Genesis will appear in The Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition, which opens on March 12, 2010 at the Science Museum of Minnesota. This fragment depicts Genesis 48: 8-10, which describes the patriarch Jacob and his blessing of Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Below is a translation of an excerpt of this fragment: When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." And he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." This scroll was found in Cave 4. It is dated to the first century BCE. Image courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority.*



*Visitors to HMML view selected pages of Gospels and Acts from The Saint John's Bible. At the Science Museum of Minnesota, visitors will be able to compare this modern Bible with the oldest known Biblical manuscripts, the Dead Sea Scrolls.*

HMML Millennium Club Members\*

## Experience the Ancient Culture and Heritage of Eastern Turkey and Northern Syria with HMML Executive Director Father Columba Stewart, OSB

June 1 - June 15, 2010

*Optional Armenian Heritage Tour*

May 29-June 1, 2010\*\*

*Deposit Deadline: March 1, 2010*

Participants will arrange their own travel to Istanbul, arriving no later than May 28 if joining the optional Armenian Heritage Tour, or no later than June 1 if joining for the main tour only.

### *Itinerary*

**May 31:** departure from USA, arrival in Istanbul the next day

**June 2:** Evening flight from Istanbul to Diyarbakir. Overnight in an historic renovated caravanserai hotel.

**June 3:** Tour churches and various sites in Diyarbakir. Drive to Hasankeyf, an astonishing ancient city perched above the Tigris river. Lunch at a restaurant along the Tigris. Drive to Midyat and visit its churches and monuments. Overnight in Midyat.

**June 4:** Visit the Syriac Orthodox monastery of Mor Gabriel, one of the oldest monasteries in continual existence, where HMML is digitizing 250 manuscripts. See the 5<sup>th</sup> century church with extraordinary 7<sup>th</sup> century mosaics. Tour local villages and churches. Overnight in Midyat.

**June 5:** Drive to Nusaybin, then to the Roman /Byzantine military settlement of Dara, then to the Monastery of Mor Augen. Overnight in Mardin, a formerly largely Christian city built around a natural fortress overlooking the plain.

**June 6:** Visit the 4<sup>th</sup> century Monastery of Deyrulzaferan (the "Saffron Monastery"), seat of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In Mardin itself, visit the 6<sup>th</sup> century Church of the Forty Martyrs (Kirkklar Kilesi) and other places of interest. Drive to Urfa, ancient Edessa. Overnight in Urfa.

**June 7:** Edessa was the center of Syriac Christianity in the early centuries and then an important Islamic pilgrimage center. Visit the Museum, the Pool of

Abraham with its sacred fish and surrounding gardens, surviving Christian sites, the Citadel, and the famous bazaar. Overnight in Urfa.

**June 8:** Drive to the Syrian border, pass through border formalities, and drive to Aleppo (ancient Beroea). Overnight in Aleppo.

**June 9:** Tour Aleppo, an ancient and cosmopolitan city with several vibrant Christian communities. Visit the churches where HMML has worked, including the 15<sup>th</sup> century Armenian Cathedral of the Forty Martyrs, the ancient Citadel, Great Mosque, and superb Bazaar.

**June 10:** Drive to Qala'at Simaan, site of the magnificent four-naved basilica of St Symeon the Stylite, with stunning views across the northern Syrian plain. Visit one or more of the Byzantine "Dead Cities" in the region, with their surprisingly well-preserved ancient churches, monasteries, and civic buildings. Overnight in Aleppo.

**June 11:** Drive to Hama to see the famous Noria (water wheels), then to Homs for the ancient Church of the Virgin, where HMML has digitized almost 500 manuscripts, continuing on to Palmyra (modern Tadmor), the extraordinary ancient city of Queen Zenobia (another UNESCO World Heritage site). Overnight in Palmyra.

**June 12:** Tour Palmyra, walk its colonnaded main street, see temples and the unique burial towers. Overnight in Palmyra.

**June 13:** Drive to Damascus via the Christian village of Sadad and the Monastery of Mar Musa, both with famous 12<sup>th</sup> century frescoes, among the finest in the Middle East; stop in Maaloula and Saidnaya, ancient Christian villages. Overnight in Damascus.

**June 14:** Visit the Great Mosque with magnificent mosaics, the Christian Quarter and the Church of Saint Paul, the Bazaar, the National Museum. Overnight in Damascus.

**June 15:** Tour ends. Drive to Beirut or fly home from Damascus.



*The "Pool of Abraham," in Urfa with its sacred fish. Urfa, in southeastern Turkey, is identified as the birthplace of Abraham.*

**\*\*May 29-June 1: Optional Armenian Heritage Tour** (May 27: departure from USA, arrival in Istanbul the next day)

**May 29:** Fly from Istanbul to Kars in the morning. Kars was a medieval Armenian city and later came under Russian control in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. See the 10<sup>th</sup> century Armenian church of the Apostles, now used as a mosque, and the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian buildings and homes.

**May 30:** Drive from Kars to Ani, the former capital of an extensive Armenian kingdom and a UNESCO World Heritage site famous for its well-preserved classical Armenian buildings. Overnight in Kars.

**May 31:** Drive from Kars to Dogubeyazit to see the Ishak Pasha Saray, a haunting 17<sup>th</sup> century mountain palace. Continue to Van, capital of the Iron Age kingdom of Urartu, through beautiful mountainous scenery. Overnight in Van.

**June 1:** Visit the ruins of Old Van, destroyed in 1915 during the Armenian Genocide, and the ancient Urartian citadel above the city. Boat to Akdamar Island to see the recently-restored Armenian Church with its famous exterior carvings.

**June 2:** Drive to Diyarbakir to join the main tour.

### **Approximate Package Price**

(final price depends on the size of the group)

- Main tour: \$2,750 USD per person on a double sharing basis
- Optional Armenian Heritage Tour: \$900 USD per person on a double sharing basis
- \$450 single person supplement for Main Tour; \$150 for Armenian Heritage Tour

### **Price includes:**

- Orientation packet prepared by Fr. Columba
- English-speaking Turkish and Syrian guides; special guiding in the Tur 'Abdin from Sébastien de Courtois, author of *The Forgotten Genocide: Eastern Christians, the Last Arameans*
- Domestic airfare in Turkey
- Airport transfers beginning with arrival in Diyarbakir (or Kars)
- Double room accommodations
- All meals, entrance fees, hotel and restaurant tips, local taxes

### **Price does not include:**

- Airfare from the USA to Istanbul, or from Damascus or Beirut to the USA
- Transfer to Istanbul airport for domestic flight
- Travel from Damascus at the end of the tour (HMML can arrange overland travel to Beirut for a modest charge)
- Drinks and other personal expenses
- Insurance
- Visas: Turkish visa may be obtained at the airport in Istanbul (\$20 for US passports); visa for Syria MUST be obtained in advance from the Syrian Embassy in Washington, DC (HMML will provide information about the process); visa for Lebanon can be obtained at the Syria-Lebanon border (free for US passports)

### **Checklist**

- February 1, 2010 RSVP to Linda Orzechowski, lorzechowsk@csbsju.edu
- March 1, 2010 50% of trip cost due to HMML
- May 1, 2010 Balance of trip cost due to HMML

HMML accepts VISA, MasterCard, Discover and American Express. Checks should be made out to Hill Museum & Manuscript Library.

### **Questions about the trip?**

Please contact Linda Orzechowski  
Phone: 320-363-2217  
Fax: 320-363-3222  
E-mail: lorzechowsk@csbsju.edu  
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Collegeville, MN 56321-7300  
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\* Millennium Club members contribute \$1,000 or more annually in support of HMML's preservation mission.  
Go to <http://www.plan.gs/Home.do?orgId=5312> to make your Millennium Club contribution on-line now.

# Historical Books from *The Saint John's Bible* arrives on Campus



Linda Orzechowski and Tim Ternes review each folio from *Historical Books* at Donald Jackson's Scriptorium in Wales in preparation for transporting the newest volume to Saint John's.

After a series of couriers, customs agents, security officers, and a long flight from Wales, 80% of *Historical Books*, the sixth volume in *The Saint John's Bible*, was delivered to the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library on July 21, 2009. These 220 pages are the first new pages to arrive on the campus since the delivery of *Wisdom Books* in 2007; the remaining 55 pages of *Historical Books* are due to arrive in March of this year. "The delivery of a new volume is always an exciting event for those of us who work with *The Saint John's Bible*," comments Tim Ternes, director of the project. "People are always eager to see new pages and delve into the meaning behind the passages and imagery created by the artistic team and illumination committee."

Despite the often heavy and violent passages found in *Historical Books*, these new pages provide much for the viewer to enjoy. Donald Jackson and his team have managed to bring color, poignancy, and even a bit of light humor to these often uncomfortable stories. Some of the most unique and colorful capital letters seen in the project thus far start each chapter. Natural history illustrations depict troublesome bugs and critters crawling over the pages, while illuminations filled with gold punctuate line after line of elegant script.

Currently, the pages are resting securely in the Arca Artium storage room awaiting their exhibition debut in the HMML gallery next summer. Watch the Bible website ([www.saintjohnsbible.org](http://www.saintjohnsbible.org)) for announcements about the exhibition so you can plan your own visit to enjoy the newest additions to *The Saint John's Bible*.

HMML News continued

## HMML Creates "Friends of the Malta Study Center"

HMML's Malta Study Center has many friends who benefit from its programs in preservation, cataloging, and outreach. But the Friends (with a capital F) are a group of special people who have stepped forward to help the Malta Study Center and its curator, Dr. Theresa Vann, fulfill its mission. "We recognized a need for the Friends while we were working to fulfill the NEH Challenge Grant for the Center's endowment," says Vann. "The grant application process required us to describe how the Center would use the endowment money to enhance the humanities, and to envision its activities for the next ten years. These included new digitization programs, outreach, education, and cataloging. We realized that the Center would need focused support and guidance to remain true to the vision of the challenge grant."

The result was the Friends of the Malta Study Center, an advisory committee that reports to the HMML Board. Its responsibilities include developing ideas for expanding, improving, and promoting the Center; advising the curator on program policy and implementation; serving as advocates for the Center and its mission; and planning for the future of the Center. The Friends have a deep interest in the Center's preservation work in Malta, especially its connections with the archives of the Knights of Malta located in Malta and in Rome. The best Friend of the Malta Study Center for more than thirty-five years has been Joseph S. Micallef, who played an integral role in its foundation. Micallef, a long-time member of the HMML board and now Founder Emeritus, is the chairman of the Friends of the Malta Study Center. The other members of the Friends share similar close connections with the Center: HMML Board Members Nicky Carpenter, Lucy Jones, and Robert Shafer; Frà Elie de Comminges, Curator, Grand Magistral Archives and Libraries, Rome; Robert Weyerhaeuser; and Fr. Eric Hollas OSB, former Executive Director of HMML. The first meeting of the Friends will take place on the campus of Saint John's University in late Spring 2010.

## Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Awards \$343,000 Grant to HMML

The Hill Museum & Manuscript Library has been awarded a \$343,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support the cataloging of more than 15,000 Eastern Christian manuscripts digitized in the Middle East and Ethiopia.

This project builds on a Mellon-supported HMML project that began in the 1990s that developed standards for electronic cataloging of manuscripts. A 2008-2009 Mellon grant laid the groundwork for this most recent award by refining those cataloging standards for use with non-western manuscripts and devising a model for distributed cataloging of these collections by scholars located in the Middle East, Europe, and North America.

"HMML's practice is to photograph all manuscript books (codices) in each collection. Unless the manuscripts are cataloged, however, they remain unknown and inaccessible," said Father Columba Stewart, OSB, executive director of HMML. "HMML has published numerous printed catalogs of its holdings and has become a leader in the electronic cataloging of manuscript collections, providing web-based access to both legacy and newly-created metadata associated with the hundreds of collections photographed in its field projects around the world."

Most of these collections have never been cataloged. Some have been visited by western scholars and are of obvious significance, but have been little studied. Others have been cataloged in Syriac, Armenian, or Arabic in rare, out-of-print catalogs created a century ago. None have been cataloged electronically.

In its breadth and depth, HMML's digital archive has become the world's most significant resource for the study of Eastern Christian manuscripts.