



21 May, 2022

Dear Fathers and Friends,

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

We have much to share with you regarding the important meetings of OTSA and IOTA in Volos, Greece in January of 2023, and the call for papers.

1. **Call for IOTA papers:** Many of us attended the remarkable first mega-conference of IOTA in Iasi, Romania in 2019, and we encourage participation in the second mega-conference of the International Orthodox Theological Association occurring in Volos, Greece on January 11–14, 2023. The general theme of the conference is Mission. IOTA’s twenty-seven groups invite paper proposals on the topics specified in the Call for Papers (CFP). All proposals must be submitted as pdfs and limited to 1,000 words. **The deadline for proposals has been extended to June 1, 2022.** For more information, see: <https://iota-web.org/call-for-papers2022/>
2. **Call for OTSA papers:** OTSA will be holding its annual meeting in Volos, Greece, on the day prior to the opening of the IOTA Conference—Jan. 10, 2023, to coordinate with the IOTA meeting, and will host sessions within the IOTA meeting that follows on Jan 11–14. The theme for both meetings is “The Mission of the Church.” We are now receiving proposals for papers or panels, and these fall into two categories because we will have OTSA sessions both within IOTA and, of course, on the day devoted exclusively to the OTSA meeting.
 - a. **Papers for the OTSA sessions within the IOTA meeting:** We believe the devastating events of the war in Ukraine and its consequences for the life of the Church and its mission in the world will inform papers and presentations at both conferences. The particular sessions offered by OTSA should pertain to these topics:
 - 1) **Academic and Ecclesiastical Freedom:** e.g., what is prophetic “speaking” in the Church? How do we use our academic and ecclesiastical voices in this time of turmoil?
 - 2) **Mission to North America:** e.g., ecumenical outreach, youth, philanthropy, etc. How is our preaching of the Gospel and mission to N. America impacted by the war and its aftermath?

3) **Orthodoxy in North America—Its Promise and Struggles/Tensions:** e.g., the inner dynamics of Orthodox life in N. America—ecclesial polity, social media, cradle vs. convert, immigration, the rise of nationalism, etc.

The deadline for these proposals has been extended to August 1, with notification regarding status by Sept. 15, 2022

- b. **Papers and Panel proposals exclusive to the OTSA meeting** can pertain to the theme of mission more broadly. *The deadline for these proposals is Sept. 1, 2022*

All proposals should include an abstract of less than 250 words and an abbreviated CV of the presenter(s), sent to the OTSA secretary, Helen Theodoropoulos, at secretary@otsamerica.org or helen60076@yahoo.com.

3. **Travel Grants:** In order to help defray expenses for presenters, OTSA officers have authorized up to ten travel grants of \$500.00/each for members who present at the OTSA/IOTA meetings in Volos, and submit their proposals before the deadline. Preference will be given to those without institutional support.
4. **Preliminary Plans for 2023 Business Meeting:** We will hold our annual business meeting within the annual meeting held in Volos. Our current plans are to hold the meeting during one of the lunch periods in the IOTA conference.
5. **Travel/Transportation to OTSA/IOTA:** Bus transportation from Athens to Volos will be provided for OTSA members without cost by the Volos Academy.
6. **Offer to assist the Assembly of Bishops:** OTSA members generously responded to our request for members willing to assist in the Assembly of Bishops' task force examining the reception of converts to the Orthodox Church. We shared with the Assembly of Bishops these responses, and want to thank these members for the offer of their time and expertise: Rev. Dr. Peter Baktis, Rev. Dr. John Erickson, Rev. Dr. Dellas Oliver Herbel, Dr. Paul Meyendorff, Rev. Dr. Stelyios Muksuris, Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Ready, Dr. Sarah Riccardi-Swartz, Rev. Dr. Anton Vrame. We look forward to working with our bishops on the study of this crucial topic.
7. **Future Webinars:** OTSA is planning to sponsor two webinars this year, and we are looking for volunteers to help organize and present in webinars on these two themes:
 - a. What have we learned through COVID about the life and ministry of the Church
 - b. Ministering to the "Nones" and "Dones" of the Orthodox Church.

We are hoping to offer these webinars toward the end of summer and in the early fall, although no dates are set. If you are interested in participating, please email Teva (teva@mit.edu) or Helen (helen60076@yahoo.com).

8. **Annual Report to the Assembly of Bishops:** OTSA officers have been working diligently to complete all the required reports requested by the Assembly of Bishops, due by the end of May. Included in these reports is an extensive financial audit. We are

extremely grateful to Daniel Powell for his gracious and vital assistance in preparing this audit. Going forward, we are putting in place measures to tighten our fiduciary responsibilities. We also submitted to the Assembly of Bishops our yearly report listing and explaining our activities and contributions to the work of Orthodox education and theology.

9. **Dues:** Please take the time to become current in your dues. We hope to assist members and Orthodox scholars in multiple ways, and this is possible only when we all contribute through our dues and participation in our various activities. Now more than ever Orthodox educators, theologians and scholars need to work together, and your support of OTSA can help with that. Dues can be paid here: <https://www.otsamerica.net/pay-dues/>
 - a. **Lifetime Membership:** Members who are in good standing and are 70 years of age or older are eligible for lifetime membership. Members who qualify should contact our treasurer, Fr. Nicholas Ferencz (nicholas.ferencz@gmail.com).

Respectfully submitted,

Teva Regule, PhD, OTSA President

Helen Creticos Theodoropoulos, PhD, OTSA Secretary