

How to Book

By far the easiest way to book a place on the course is to use the online booking facility at the www.EarlyChurch.co.uk website.

The website shows full details of this, and future courses, and the online booking facility ensures that the administration overheads are minimal – please use it if possible!

To book a place using the website, you simply need to select the course, supply an email address and indicate the number of places you wish to book. There is no need to send any money beforehand – just pay on the day.

How else can I book?

If you do not have Internet access, then please send a note of your name and the number of places you wish to book to - EarlyChurch.co.uk, One Bell Cottage, 109 Church Street, Chesham, Bucks. HP5 1JD

Please note: unless an SAE is enclosed, no booking confirmation will be sent.

EarlyChurch.co.uk Website

New courses will be offered throughout 2006. Full details of all courses will be posted on the EarlyChurch website www.EarlyChurch.co.uk

Thanks To...

The image of Origen is © Mark Dukes and used by kind permission of the St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church, San Francisco.

Location

The Chapel, All Hallows Convent, Belsey Bridge Road, Ditchingham, Bungay, Suffolk, NR35 2DT



Parking - either around the **St Michael's** building or in the **St Gabriel's** car park (indicated on the map).



Please recycle this leaflet.

EarlyChurch.co.uk

An introduction to...

Origen



Saturday 1st April 2006

10.30am – 4.00pm

The Chapel, All Hallows Convent,
Ditchingham

The Early Church Fathers

“Early Church Fathers” is the collective title given to the leading figures involved in the shaping of Christianity in the few hundred years after the first century (c.100–500 AD). This time period saw the clarification and formulation of the essential Christian doctrines accepted by all mainstream churches today.

But besides being occupied with doctrinal issues, the Fathers were also engaged in taking the teaching passed on by the first apostles and working out its implications for the culture in which they found themselves. The study of the Fathers is, therefore, not merely of academic interest, but can also provide inspiration for us in the continuing task of wrestling with the message of Christ in contemporary society.

This course is the second in a series of short courses aiming to introduce some of the major figures from Early Church history to a wider audience, especially to those with no previous background in the subject. Additional courses are planned for later in 2006 covering such figures as St Athanasius and St Cyril of Alexandria. If you'd like to be notified of new courses as they're scheduled, you can use the “Keep in Touch” feature on the EarlyChurch.co.uk website (see overleaf).

Origen

Origen (c.185-254 AD) was undoubtedly an ascetic scholar, teacher, priest, mystic and prolific author whose achievements and influence were unsurpassed in the Early

Church. Called upon as a theological troubleshooter to resolve disputes in the world-wide Church of his day, in old age he was tortured and died a confessor of the faith and virtually a martyr. His legacy had an enormous impact, especially on the Eastern Church.

Some scholars, however, also brand Origen as a heretic of the first order - a Platonic philosopher in Christian clothes and the chief cause of the 4th century Arian controversy. They point to his condemnation by St Jerome at the start of the fifth century, by an Ecumenical Council in the middle of the sixth century, and the fact that his books were ordered to be burned by the Emperor Justinian.

Regardless of the varying opinions of those who study Origen and his works, his influence on later authors and the emerging monastic movement means he cannot simply be ignored.

Course Outline

This course will provide an overview of Origen's life and work, as well as his approach to key topics such as the interpretation of Scripture and the doctrine of free will. Mention will also be made of his positive contribution to Christian spirituality as well as some of his more controversial ideas.

The course will be divided into three sessions with short refreshment breaks in between. The first two sessions will be delivered in a traditional teaching format, but the format of the third session will be slightly different.

Rather than merely learning *about* Origen, the third session will provide an opportunity for us to engage with some of his (orthodox!) ideas, and approach to the spiritual life, on a more personal level, using a number of selected passages from his works. There will be time to chew over these extracts on the day.

Who is the course aimed at?

Anyone who's read this far through the leaflet and is still interested! No previous knowledge, experience or study is required.

How much does the course cost?

The full cost is £10 per person, with a concessionary rate of £7 also available.

Lunch

There will be a one and a half hour break to allow time for lunch, and to join with the Sisters in the short midday service (if you wish). Please bring a packed lunch.

Speaker

Russell Jefford has been fascinated with the Early Church period for a number of years - an interest which led to him recently taking an MA in Patristics (Early Church history) at King's College London.

He sees much in the writings of the Early Church Fathers (especially the Eastern Fathers) which is inspirational and of relevance to contemporary Christianity. This course is one of a series attempting to spread that inspiration further afield.