

From Matthew Spencer

New Courses and Payment Options, May 2021

Contact Matthew Spencer: intensivepali@gmail.com

Dear Latinists and Graecists,

I am able, finally, to unveil the below details: (1) a new Greek course (2) the highly-reduced new Yearly Subscription offer which I hope you will consider for your journey.

(1) Contemplation in Aristotle and Plato: A new Greek course

Contemplation in some form or other, whether saying the Rosary, or engaging in other forms of Christian meditation, is likely to have been part of all Catholic and many Christian lives. But the place of Contemplation within the specifically ethical parts of life has received less attention.

This is a pity as the ancient Greeks engaged in vigorous debate on the matter of Contemplation and these debates came to a head between Aristotle and Plato above all.

Across three celebrated texts – Plato's *Republic*, the *Symposium* and Aristotle's *Ethics* – we see the fault lines of the debate emerge. Plato, on the one hand, holds that Contemplation is fundamentally necessary for the good life, at every stage of that life. Meanwhile Aristotle, according to the majority of scholars, holds that Contemplation must be delayed until such time as the virtuous life has been learned in all its ways.

The linguistic imagery on which both the Aristotelian and Platonic models of philosophic Contemplation are built involve, predominantly, metaphors of sight, and vision, and viewing. The Greek verbs that each of the philosophers employs are therefore central to their corresponding accounts and so to the philosophy of Contemplation they describe.

Since that philosophy is of central interest to the Christian tradition, this course will look linguistically at the sight images in Plato and Aristotle and at how they are employed differently.

"Graduates" of Beginning / Intermediate Greek; and those who have done a substantial part of that work; and of course those with similar or greater experience of this language, are in an excellent position to consider the relation of Contemplation to Ethics in Aristotle and Plato by delving into a linguistic frontline that has received some, though not enough recent scholarly attention. That this frontline is not without significance for the Church is, it goes without saying, a bonus for the Christian reader of the relevant texts.

Please note that this 4-week course forms one of several that I am offering as part of the Yearly Subscription offer (priced at £600).

(2) The "Yearly Subscription"

As I have begun to communicate recently, this offer has a limited reduction for sign-ups before the end of May. The Early Bird offer of £500 will permit the subscriber to take up to four courses, with 16 hours of class time as usual, throughout the year that starts with the beginning of their subscription.

I can offer (among several other courses) a Beginning Greek route to those who wish to read the Greek New Testament and who might be interested in the above course or similar courses (Patristic and ascetic-monastic Greek, for instance) at a future stage so please do enquire if this describes, or might at some future point describe you. These courses are ideal preparation for the Latin Mass Society's residential course that some of you have contacted me about!

And please remember that the up-to-four-courses Yearly Subscription (already enormously discounted at £600 instead of £1000*) is only reduced to £500 — for up to sixteen weeks of Latin or Greek classes, across one year — until the end of May.

I have already received booking for this new offer and, on a personal note, I am looking forward, after a satisfying and very personally rewarding first year of these course, to continuing into a second year and to thereby helping to make the riches of these texts available at first hand in as immediate a way as possible. I hope you will consider supporting this new initiative and see it as a good way to develop independent reading habits in the ancient languages of western tradition.

(3) Other courses you may be interested in, and some of which are returning by demand, include but are not necessarily limited to: **(a) the ever-popular Psalms course**, ideal if you have already taken "Beginners" as lots of assistance and encouragement is given, as you learn to spread your language wings **(b) beginner's Greek** (optionally with an additional "intermediate" 4 weeks at a small extra charge) **(c) Latin poetry (d) Aquinas**. Other courses are available on request and can even, in niche cases be taken solo (mainly by recorded material and occasional face time, allowing the learner to follow a more independent path that might well fit your schedule).

I will hope to be contacting you individually, if you are a former or current student, over the coming fortnight to hear of your further impressions of these courses; to receive ideas for additional courses; and to encourage if I can your continuing Latin and Greek journey.

With very best,

Matthew

*The basic cost of a 4-week (16 hour) course rises very slightly from £240 (to £250) from June.

Contact Matthew Spencer: intensivepali@gmail.com