

***SUMMER SCHOOL IN THE HOLY LAND/2010 (Israel, Syria and Jordan)***  
***April 27 - May 31/2010***

Down Ancient Paths is offering an extraordinary, captivating opportunity to study and travel in the Holy Land in a manner which will make the experience truly memorable. This is not 'Holy Land tourism' as many have known it. This is quite different... a holistically designed summer school which creatively integrates classroom learning with customized fieldtrips throughout *Israel*. The idyllic venue for the Israel component of *Summer School in the Holy Land/2010* is Tantur Ecumenical Institute, strategically situated on the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. Tantur (Arabic for 'hilltop') is a premiere international research institute and centre for continuing education in the Middle East operated by the University of Notre Dame. Tantur's garden-like, tranquil grounds overlook the Judean hills and nearby Bethlehem, and affords a spectacular view in all directions framed by groves of olive, pine and fruit trees. To gain a further sense of the ambiance of Tantur check [www.tantur.org](http://www.tantur.org) Costs in Israel include full room and board (3 meals per day), all tuition fees, field trips, entrance fees AND 4 days of hotel accommodation on the Sea of Galilee.

The incomparable 'Tantur experience' makes it possible for you to gain a rare, indepth, 'insider' exposure to the Holy Land as the 'fifth gospel'. The adventurous, professionally-guided fieldtrips to the major regions of Israel are a primary component of the curriculum. By attending this school you will also be the recipient of other unique educational benefits: an introduction to the world of interfaith dialogue between Christians, Jews and Muslims; an encounter with the eastern and western, ancient and modern traditions of Christianity which inhabit the Holy Land; and a political excursion into the issues which fuel the current Arab/Israeli/Palestinian conflict. This is multidimensional, transformative learning at its best which both investigates the old stones in their timeless, archaeological settings and interacts with the 'living stones' in their daily, difficult life contexts as religious minorities.

Our classroom instructors are handpicked from the Jerusalem academic community. They are themselves representatives of Christian, Jewish and Muslim faith traditions who are prepared to engage you in candid conversation on interesting and sometimes provocative topics. Tantur is widely respected as an oasis of civil discourse in a region where religious extremism abounds. Your intellectual horizons will undoubtedly be expanded by the passionate expression of opinions and perspectives.

I was a Scholar-in-Residence at Tantur in 1999 and know well what awaits those who participate in this venture. It's not an overstatement to say that it will truly be an educational experience of a lifetime which will enrich your reflections and stimulate your desire to learn for years to come.

***AND THERE' S MORE...AS A FASCINATING TWO-COUNTRY PRELUDE TO THE 'TANTUR EXPERIENCE'!***

Before arriving at Tantur we will travel for 10 days through two of Israel's neighbours...*Syria and Jordan*. Syria is a cradle of human civilization where the oldest human alphabet was discovered at Ugarit. It is the storied land of deserts, citadels, monasteries and ruined cities of antiquity. The Syrian Orthodox Church lays claim to possessing a spiritual heritage which is linguistically linked directly to Jesus Christ himself. Our travels will explore the biblical sites in Damascus; savor the cultural delights of Aleppo (once the third largest Ottoman city after Cairo and Istanbul); explore the spectacular crusader castle, Krek des Chevaliers; visit Palmyra, the Roman pearl in the heart of the desert; and return to Ma'alula, a Syrian birthplace of Christianity where Aramaic, the language of Jesus, is still spoken and ancient eastern Christian traditions converge.

The Kingdom of Jordan, with its numerous biblical sites, makes rightful claim to being part of the Holy Land. The country is blessed with beautiful, diverse landscapes and a wealth of historical/archaeological treasures. We will travel the entire length of the country from north to south before entering Israel. The cities of the Decapolis (mentioned in the New Testament including the magnificent Graeco-Roman city of Jerash), Amman (Jordan's capital), Mount Nebo (where Moses saw the Promised Land), Madaba (which possesses the 6th century mosaic map of Jerusalem), Machaerus (The Masada of Jordan), Bethany Beyond the Jordan (the most authentic site for Christ's baptism), the world famous, 'rose-red' city of Petra (A UNESCO site), the pristine desert of Wadi Rum (where we'll sleep overnite under the stars) are all on the itinerary... Jordan has so much to offer of biblical and Christian significance.

If you are seriously interested in joining us on this venture and receiving a comprehensive information package when it is available, contact Dr. Nienkirchen at [cnienkirchen@ambrose.edu](mailto:cnienkirchen@ambrose.edu). You should do this very soon as there are limited spaces. Numerous persons are already on the list and the word isn't officially out as yet. The reputation of '*Summer Schools in the Holy Land*' conducted in 2004, 2006 and 2008 continues to spread. Some participants intend to repeat...

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