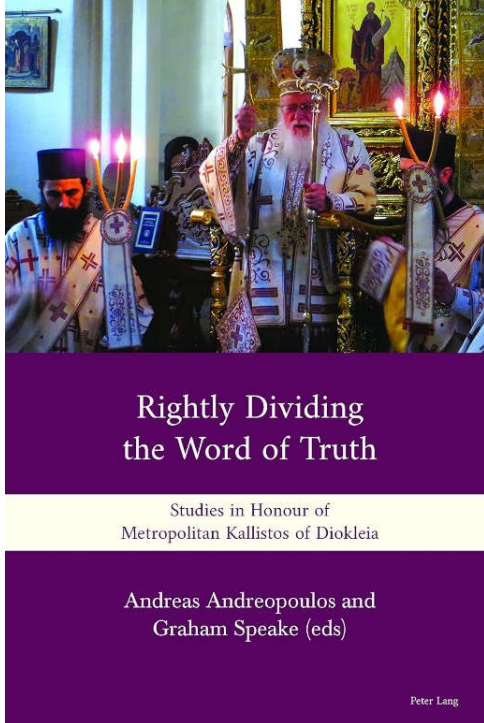


***Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth: Studies in Honour of Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia.* Edited by Andreas Andreopoulos and Graham Speake. Pp. xiv + 263. Bern: Peter Lang, 2016.**



*Reviewed by  
the Rev. S. C. Sharman, PhD*

This excellent volume was prepared and published to mark Metropolitan Kallistos' eightieth birthday. The editors note: "most of the papers in this volume were first delivered at a symposium which was held by the Friends of Mount Athos in honour of Metropolitan Kallistos' eightieth birthday at Madingley Hall, Cambridge, in February 2015" (p ix). The volume begins

with a Message from His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew (pp xi-xii), an Address by His Eminence Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain, and an Introduction by Andreas Andreopoulos and Graham Speake, the editors of the book. His All-Holiness describes the Metropolitan as "one of the most eminent hierarchs and prominent scholars of the Ecumenical Throne, who for many years has served as spiritual father, academic teacher, metropolitan bishop, monk, theologian, and author-translator." (p xi) Archbishop Gregorios echoes these sentiments and refers to the Metropolitan's 'humility but also his humour" (p xiii).

Part 1 contains tributes to Metropolitan Kallistos. The seven tributes explore different parts of the Metropolitan's life and ministry. They discuss the spiritual father, the monk, the pastor and bishop, the teacher, the translator

and writer, the theologian, and an English Orthodox Bishop. They are written by friends who knew him well, respected him and loved him. The writers are Frances Jennings, Nikolai Sakharov, Stephen Platt, Marcus Plested, Ephrem Lash, Andrew Louth, and Andreas Andreopoulos. These tributes introduce those of us who did not know him well to his life and personality. They testify to the impact that he had on his friends, colleagues, and students.

Andreas Andreopoulos, in his paper, “An English Orthodox Bishop?” (pp 41-45), discusses the significance of Metropolitan Kallistos’ status as the first English Orthodox bishop. Previous Orthodox bishops who had been resident in England were members of their ethnic communities and themselves ethnic Orthodox. One thinks of Archbishop Anthony Bloom of Sourozh and Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyateira and Great Britain. This bishop is English, born and educated in England and of English heritage and culture who became Orthodox from theological conviction. This will likely have the same significance for English ecclesiastical history as the election on the first Anglo-Saxon archbishop of Canterbury, Deusdedit, after several Italian archbishops (Bede *HE* iii 20). According to Andreopoulos, “one of the most important aspects of his contribution is Kallistos the man who reminds us that it is possible to be English – one could say *very* English – and Orthodox at the same time, as opposed to the more usual flavours of Orthodoxy (Greek, Russian, Romanian, and so forth), that may strike the average Western Christian as irrelevant, or as somewhat exotic” (p 42).

Part 2 consists of a number of very good academic papers written by experts in their fields. These papers address different aspects of the Metropolitan’s own academic interests. The papers are Sebastian Brock, “An Early Syriac *Exposition of the Holy Mysteries*” (pp 49-56), Maximos Constas, “‘Nothing is Greater than Divine Love:’ Evagrius of Pontus, St Maximos the Confessor, and the *Philokalia*” (pp 57-74), Hilarion Alfeyev, “St Symeon the New Theologian and the Studite Monastic Tradition” (pp 75 -104), Elizabeth Jeffreys, “On the Annunciation: Manganaios Prodromos, no 120” (pp 105-111), John Chryssavgis, “*Philokalia*: A Vocabulary for Our Time” (pp 113-129), Nikolaos Hatzinikolaou, “The Desert, *Hesychia*, and Ascesis: Then and Now” (pp 131 – 150), John Behr, “Patristic Texts as Icons” (pp 151 – 170), Rowan Williams, “Deification, Hypostatization, and Kenosis” (pp 171 – 187), Elizabeth

Theokritoff, “Priest of Creation or Cosmic Liturgy?” (pp 189-211), and Dimitri Conomos, “C. S. Lewis and Church Music” (pp 213-234).

Two of the papers discuss the *Philokalia* and therefore honour the Metropolitan’s participation in preparing a modern English translation of the text. In this, he worked with G. H. Palmer and Philip Sherrard. Dr Sebastian Brock introduces the readers to “one of the very earliest commentaries on the Liturgy to survive” (p 49). This paper honours a scholar-translator who, with Mother Mary, prepared translations of *The Lenten Triodion* and *The Festal Menaion*. Archbishop Rowan Williams’ paper richly repays a careful reading and rereading. These papers demonstrate the high regard which other scholars have for the Metropolitan’s scholarship.

The volume concludes with an Epilogue by the Metropolitan, “Fifty-four Yeas as an Athonite Pilgrim” (pp 237-252). The Metropolitan write about a sacred space “You are here to kneel / Where prayer has been valid.” (T.S. Eliot, “Four Quartets: Little Gidding”). This is a loving description of a place which is dear to his heart. He writes about the landscape of Mount Athos, its monasteries and hermitages, its prayerful monks, and interesting creatures. His narrative includes frogs (“I know few sounds in nature as attractive as the singing of frogs” (p 242)), wolves, wild boars, and snakes. He speaks of the recent history of the monasteries and the progress of their spiritual life. His golden moment is a sunrise seen from the summit of Mount Athos, which required an ascent through the darkness to be at the summit at the moment when the sun rose (p 238). Nature in Mount Athos joins the monks in their unending round of prayer.

This volume is the second festschrift in honour of Metropolitan Kallistos. An earlier volume was edited by John Behr, Andrew Louth, and Dimitri Conomos and published by the St Vladimir’s Seminary Press under the title of *Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West* (2003). These volumes are evidence of the respect, esteem and affection which the Metropolitan’s colleagues and friends have for him. Both volumes are highly recommended. They are full of good scholarship and are rewarding reading. Most of us met the Metropolitan and the Orthodox Church through his book *The Orthodox Church*. These volumes enrich our knowledge of both.

Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia reposed on 24 August 2022. May his memory be eternal!

*About the reviewer:* Father Stephen Sharman is a priest at St. Nicholas parish in Narol, Manitoba. He received his PhD from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in 2013. The title of his dissertation was *Visions of Light in the Writings of the Venerable Bede*.