



St Irenaeus Orthodox
Theological Institute



Radboud University



Are you interested in studying Orthodox Christianity at university level?

You can do so at St Irenaeus Orthodox Theological Institute, based at Radboud University in Nijmegen. There is the option of the full Pre-Master Orthodox Christianity programme or of a minor consisting of several courses of the pre-master. Upon completion you may continue with two related master's programmes.

Pre-master programme

The Pre-Master Orthodox Christianity provides students with an introduction to Orthodox Christianity as it is lived in its rich diversity. The programme focuses on what is shared by the Orthodox of both families: the 'Eastern Orthodox' (Greek, Slavic, Arabic, Romanian etc. traditions) and the 'Oriental Orthodox' (Armenian, Coptic, Syriac, Ethiopic and Eritrean traditions). Students will study Orthodoxy in its own right, rather than highlighting the differences with the other two forms of Christianity (Roman Catholicism and Protestantism).

Although this programme prepares students for continuing with a master's programme offered by Radboud University, some students use the pre-master as a 'mini bachelor' in Orthodox Christianity without continuing their studies at master's level.

To enrol you need a Dutch bachelor's degree (university or HBO) or a foreign degree recognised in The Netherlands. The fees for the programme are approximately the same as for a regular university bachelor.



Minor

Students at any Dutch university may incorporate courses of our pre-master as a minor in their main programme. Students at an HBO institution can (under certain conditions) do the same. You will probably need permission from the exam committee of your main institution.

Programme

The pre-master programme consists of eleven courses. In nine of these courses various aspects of the Orthodox traditions are examined. These courses are taught in English by the teaching staff of St Irenaeus: Fr John Behr (professor), Fr Michael Bakker (rector), Fr Joan Lena (lecturer). The two remaining courses are a general course and a research project (in Dutch) taught by our faculty colleagues.

Blended Learning

We use the innovative ‘blended learning’ format, which allows students to participate almost entirely online. Each course consists of nine study weeks. During the first seven weeks you will study reading materials and videos available in the electronic learning environment Brightspace (see screenshot to the right). You will participate in weekly online meetings (‘virtual classrooms’) and answer questions in writing. You complete a course by writing a final paper in the remaining two weeks. In the middle of these there is a live meeting at Radboud University, during which the drafts of the final papers are presented. This form of teaching allows you great flexibility and minimises travel time. The virtual classrooms are scheduled at 6-7 PM (18:00-19:00) on Wednesdays or Thursdays, which usually does not interfere with work or other activities.

The screenshot shows the Brightspace interface for the course '2223 Orthodox Theology I (SEM2 V)'. The main content area under 'Overview' includes a 'Content' section with a description of the course and a 'Table of Contents' with two modules. The 'Aims' section lists several learning objectives.

Master programmes

Students who have completed the pre-master may continue their studies with the Master Geestelijke Verzorging (Spiritual Care) or the Educatieve Master Godsdienst en Levensbeschouwing (Educational Master), both of which are taught in Dutch. After completion you have many opportunities to work as a chaplain or teacher.

Schedule Pre-Master Orthodox Christianity (2025-2026)

The table below shows the part-time study schedule (combining both years results in a full-time programme):

Programme Pre-master Orthodox Christianity 2025-2026

YEAR 1			First Semester				Second Semester		CLASSROOM	PRESENTATIONS	KICK-OFF
Course	Code	Teacher	EC	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Time	On-line	On campus	On campus
								Weeks	Date & Time	Date & Time	Date & Time
History 1	FTR-RSPMO105	Joan Lena	5	█				Th 18-19	36-42	Fr 24 Oct 10-14	Mo 1 Sept 14-18
Scripture	FTR-RSPMO104	John Behr	5		█			We 18-19	36-42	Fr 24 Oct 14-18	Mo 1 Sept 14-18
History 2	FTR-RSPMO106	Joan Lena	5			█		We 18-19	45-51	Fr 16 Jan 10-14	
Theology 1	FTR-RSPMO103	John Behr	5				█	Th 18-19	45-51	Fr 16 Jan 14-18	
Liturgy 1	FTR-RSPMO101	Joan Lena	5				█	We 18-19	5-11	Fr 20 March 9-12	
Anthropology	FTR-RSPMO100	Michael Bakker	5				█	Th 18-19	16-23	Fr 12 June 10-14	
YEAR 2			First Semester				Second Semester		CLASSROOM	PRESENTATIONS	
Course		Teacher	EC	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Time	On-line	On campus	
History 3	TBD	Joan Lena	5			█		We 18-19	5-11	Fr 20 March 13-15	
Theology 2	FTR-RSPMO107	Michael Bakker	5			█		Th 18-19	5-11	Fr 20 March 15-17	
Liturgy 2	FTR-RSPMO102	Joan Lena	5				█	We 18-19	16-23	Fr 12 June 10-14	
Bible: Introduction	FTR-THBA101	Carly Crouch	5	█	█			TBD	36-51		
Onderzoeksproject	FTR-RTIBA103	Faculty collective	10	█	█	█	█	Th 10:30-12:15	36-51 & 5-23		
Total			60								

More information

If you are interested, please visit our website for more information at www.irenaeus.nl or send an email to office@irenaeus.nl.