

Churches in a Pluralist World:

A Centenary Conference on
The Theological Legacy of John Neville Figgis CR
(1866-1919)



Speakers:

Paul Avis

William Cavanaugh (USA)

Mark Chapman

Elaine Graham

Andrew Grosso (USA)

Jeremy Morris

Ephraim Radner (Canada)

Peter Sedgwick

Stephen Spencer

Tuesday 2nd - Thursday 4th April, 2019

Residential prices starting from £185.00.

Students registered for a higher degree at university £100.00

Day delegate rates available on application

01924 481920

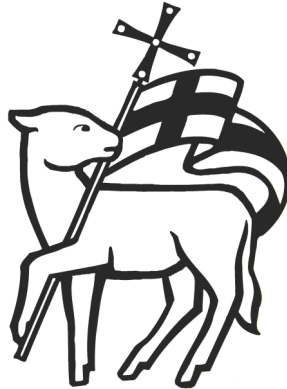
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**MIRFIELD
CENTRE**

John Neville Figgis CR (1866-1919)



Brilliant historian, political philosopher and theologian, J. N. Figgis CR was one of the great minds of the early twentieth century. He was also a lovable if slightly eccentric priest whose own scepticism helped him to understand the problems that other people had with belief, but whose sense of the absolute priority of God and the love of God lent rare power to his writing and preaching.

Although Figgis died before the worst manifestations of twentieth-century totalitarianism, he was implacably opposed to all forms of absolutism. He favoured a broadly distributist and bottom-up view of authority that respects the integrity of individuals and of the communities and institutions that make up civil society, including the Church. Figgis is a prophet of subsidiarity, pluralism and of dispersed, not centralised, authority.

Figgis was crossing the Atlantic in 1918 when his ship was torpedoed. Although he survived, the only manuscript of his *magnum opus* sank to sea-bed. The whole experience wrecked his already fragile health and he died in April 1919, aged only 53.

The conference will combine a critical retrieval of Figgis' thought with constructive reflection on the mission of the Church in our pluralistic world. By interacting with his thought we can refresh our own vision of how the Christian Church can respond to contemporary challenges.

"It is perhaps true to say, not that civil liberty is the child of religious liberty, but that liberty, whether civil or religious, was the work often reluctantly, sometimes unconsciously, undertaken by communities of men who had an end higher than political, who refused to submit religion to politic arguments, who fought for ends never entirely utilitarian."

John Neville Figgis, *Studies of Political Thought from Gerson to Grotius 1414-1625*

(Cambridge University Press, 1907)

Speakers and Subjects

- Paul Avis, 'The credibility of the Church in a pluralist world'
- William Cavanaugh, 'The Road Not Taken: Figgis, Subsidiarity, and Catholic Social Teaching'
- Mark Chapman, 'Figgis and the First World War'
- Elaine Graham, 'Without Privilege, without Prejudice: Public Theology in a Pluralist World'
- Andrew Grosso, 'Figgis, modernity and postmodernity'
- Jeremy Morris, 'Figgis and the religious roots of modern conservatism: a comparison with Christopher Dawson and T. S. Eliot'
- Ephraim Radner, 'Figgis and Roman Catholicism'
- Peter Sedgwick, 'Figgis as a public intellectual: Burke, freedom, and an organic society'
- Stephen Spencer, 'J. N. Figgis and William Temple: A common tradition?'

The conference starts with tea at 4 pm on Tuesday 2nd April and ends with lunch at 1 pm on Thursday 4th April 2019. There will be daily offices and celebration of the Eucharist in the beautiful Community of the Resurrection Church.

A full conference timetable will emerge in due course.

To reserve your place please contact:

Beth Harper on 01924 481920 or Mike Street on 01924 483346.

Email: centre@mirfield.org.uk.

A deposit of £50.00 on booking is required to secure your place.

Full payment is due by Tuesday 5th March 2019.



Paul Avis is Honorary Professor in the Department of Theology and Religion, University of Durham and Honorary research fellow in the Department of Theology and Religion, University of Exeter, UK.



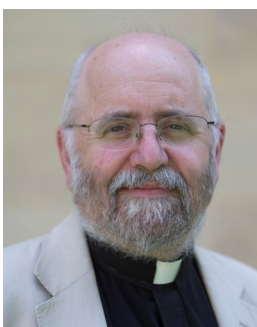
Jeremy Morris is Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, UK. He was previously Dean of Chapel of King's College, Cambridge



William T. Cavanaugh is Professor of Catholic Studies and Director of the Center for World Catholicism and Intercultural Theology at DePaul University in Chicago.



Ephraim Radner is Professor of Historical Theology at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, where he has served since 2007.



Mark Chapman is Vice-Principal of Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Professor of the History of Modern Theology at the University of Oxford and Canon Theologian of Truro Cathedral.



Peter Sedgwick taught theology at the Univs of Birmingham and Hull, and was Theological Consultant to the North-East Churches from 1979- 1994, the C of E's policy officer on criminal justice and mental affairs 1996-2004. He was Principal of St. Michael's College, Llandaff, 2004-2014.



Elaine Graham is Grosvenor Research Professor of Practical Theology at the University of Chester, a position she has held since 2009.



Stephen Spencer is Director for Theological Education for the Anglican Communion and was previously Vice-Principal of St Hild College, Mirfield. He has served in parishes in England and Zimbabwe and has worked in theological education.



Andrew Grosso currently serves as Canon to the Dean at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral (Columbia, SC); he has also been the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Nashotah House Theological Seminary (Nashotah, WI).

Full biographies are available on the website:

www.mirfield.org.uk