

I grew up in a multi-confessional family: my mother was Methodist and my father was Roman Catholic. I went to catholic school through 4<sup>th</sup> grade, but for various reasons my parents transferred me to a public school, and at the same time we generally stopped going to church. As a freshman studying Architecture at Washington State University, I met an Orthodox Christian in my first studio class. Then in the spring I attended my first Divine Liturgy. I became Orthodox in 2003 on Holy Saturday. On that occasion I was given the book *Monastic Wisdom*, which is a translation of the letters of Elder Joseph the Hesychast into English. That book made a profound impact on me. The inner world of prayer that it described seemed so foreign at first. But over time as I read more, and learned more about Orthodoxy, and tried putting what I learned into practice, the world of prayer described in *Monastic Wisdom* gradually started to seem more natural.

My spiritual progress was concurrent with my progress in academics. The spring of 2003 was also my last semester in Architecture school. I was so disillusioned with academia at the time that I took a full year off before starting again as a math major at the college where my parents worked in New York state. I completed my undergraduate studies in 2007 with a minor in Photography. During 2007-2008 I had a Fulbright and worked in Mainz, Germany, doing a translation of the collected works of a German mathematician named Adolf Hurwitz. From 2008-2014 I was in the graduate mathematics program at Indiana University. On Holy Friday of 2014 my advisor emailed me to say that I could work as a postdoc at the Einstein Institute at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Even before going over there I was convinced of the reality of Orthodox Christianity, but God had a very particular plan which eventually became clear to me. I did not have a job initially on return to the US, so I used the extra time to complete my book on the Holy Land, while also reapplying everywhere. This time I received an offer...first from the University of Bristol in the UK, and then a counter offer from UCONN.