

You are invited To a short course about

An ancient Christian Controversy: “Melee at Nicaea” When Santa Punched a Priest!

Bishop Nicholas, who was later to become Saint Nicholas, was famous for being something of a gift-giver. His name eventually morphed into today’s Santa Claus, with the focus squarely on gift-giving, not punch-ups.

Nicholas was on one side of a critical argument concerning belief in God that a special meeting of Christian leaders 1700 years ago tried to resolve. The chap he slapped in frustration, a priest called Arius, was on the opposing side.

Melee at Nicaea: Giovanni Gasparro’s depiction of St Nick giving Arius what for



Fisticuffs aside, this significant politically and religiously charged meeting was held in the town of Nicaea in the year 325. It had been convened by the Roman emperor, Constantine. Why?

Some three centuries after Christ, the “Council of Nicaea”, as it is called, was something of a new beginning for the Christian movement. But what sort of “beginning” was it? And what is its relevance today? Come along and find out!

Presented by Prof Douglas Pratt, a short course exploring the issues and implications of this meeting will be held at St Andrews Anglican Church (cnr of Donegal and Blyth Streets) on four Tuesdays: April 29, May 6, May 13, and May 20.

There are two parallel streams to choose from:

Morning Stream: 10.15 am – 11.30 am

Evening Stream: 7.15pm – 8.30 pm

For more information and to register your interest (Morning or Evening stream) please email Prof. Douglas Pratt at g.douglaspratt@gmail.com or call 021 414403.

Douglas is a former professor of Religious Studies (Waikato University) and currently an honorary professor in Theological and Religious Studies, University of Auckland. He resides in Cromwell.