

Press release

Cathedral lectures will consider the nature of religious fundamentalism

‘Competing religious fundamentalisms’ is the title of a series of free public lectures being delivered by the theologian Dr Sathianathan Clarke in October 2009.

The public addresses will form this year’s Bray Lectures, which are held every two years in honour of the Revd Thomas Bray, founder of **SPCK** and the Anglican mission agency **USPG: Anglicans in World Mission**.

Clare Amos, Director of Theological Studies at the Anglican Communion Office and theological consultant for USPG, said: ‘Dr Clarke will be addressing such issues as the factors that have led to the rise of religious fundamentalism, as well as exploring what Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism can teach us about peace-making.’

Dr Clarke said: ‘The twenty-first century has brought religion back on to the main historical stage. But not all of this return to religion has been good news. The gods seem to be back with a vengeance: religious fundamentalisms, rooted in fiery and furious gods and goddesses, are taking birth and demonstrating growth. They operate dangerously at key global locations and mature into an assortment of violent local expressions.

‘Against this backdrop, my lecture will first lay out some theories that explain the rise and spread of religious fundamentalism. The lecture then explains the competing dimension that fuels this phenomenon. Religious sources within religions, opportunities presented by expanding secularisation, and the aggressive spirit brought about by capitalistic market economies contribute to the vigor of this precarious global movement. The lecture concludes by offering solutions for taming and healing the destructive consequences of religious fundamentalisms.’

Lectures will take place on the following dates:

Tuesday 20 October, 4pm

Garry Weston Library, Southwark Cathedral
For more info, call 020 7378 5657

Monday 26 October, 3pm

The Mirfield Centre, Stocksbank Road, Mirfield WF14 0BW
Please RSVP to Rachael on 01924 481920 or rsalmon@mirfield.org.uk

Tuesday 27 October, 7.30pm

Blackburn Cathedral, South Transept
Please RSVP to Janine on 01254 503084 or janine.brown@blackburn.anglican.org

Ends

Sathianathan Clarke (Sathi) is Bishop Sundo Kim Professor in World Christianity at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC, USA. He is an ordained presbyter of the Church of South India. He also serves as Mission Pastor at Christ Episcopal Church, in Kensington, MD, USA. He has taught in India and USA, both in university and seminary settings. Dr Clarke has published numerous academic articles and is the author of *Dalits and Christianity: Subaltern Religion and Liberation Theology in India* (Oxford University Press, 1998). He also co-edited *Religious Conversion in India: Modes, Motivations, Meanings* (Oxford University Press, 2003). Dr Clarke is a member of the Archbishop's commission for Theological Education for the Anglican Communion (TEAC) and the House of Bishops Theological Commission of the Episcopal Church. He was a member of the Bible Study Group that was responsible for designing, preparing and coordinating the bible studies for Lambeth 2008.

For further information about Dr Clarke and this year's Bray Lectures, contact Clare Amos on 020 7313 3938 or email clare.amos@anglicancommunion.org

For details of venues and information about USPG, contact Mike Brooks on 020 7378 5692 or email clare.amos@anglicancommunion.org