

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Professor Publishes Comprehensive Study on Issue Separating Eastern and Western Churches

Haddonfield Resident Edward Siecienski Publishes New Book

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Galloway Township, NJ- Dr. Edward Siecienski, an assistant professor of philosophy and religion at Stockton College, has accomplished something few before him have tried.

Siecienski, a resident of Haddonfield, is the author of *The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy*, which his publisher, Oxford University Press, calls “the first complete English language history of the filioque written in over a century.”

The term *filioque* is Latin for the phrase “and the son.” While Churches worldwide honor the ancient profession of faith called the Nicene Creed, differing versions of the creed (with or without the filioque) have resulted in a divide between Eastern and Western churches.

In the Orthodox East, the faithful believe that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father. In the West, the faithful profess that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father *and the Son*, (*filioque*).

Siecienski describes his work as “one man’s effort to advance the reunion of churches.”

He said, “Having been separated for over a thousand years by this issue, my hope was to try to move the churches of the West and East closer together.”

The book tells the entire story of the *filioque* controversy from a historical and theological perspective, beginning with the biblical material and moving into the twenty-first century. Siecienski’s exploration of the past and his insightful look into the future reveal how the division came about and how the separation continues to evolve.

Despite being a scholarly work, the book’s narrative format makes it accessible to a wide audience and has been widely praised. Although aspects of the doctrine have been studied before, while writing his dissertation, it became clear to Siecienski that a complete English history of the doctrine had not been written in more than 100 years. He immediately thought to himself “that’s my book.”

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Siecienski earned his bachelor's degree in theology and international relations from Georgetown University in 1990 and then a Master of Divinity and a Bachelor of Sacred Theology from St. Mary's Seminary and University. In 2005, Siecienski earned his Ph.D. in historical theology from Fordham University, where he later worked as a postdoctoral fellow.

In 2008, after two years of teaching at Misericordia University, Siecienski came to Stockton where he has been a faculty member in the School of Arts and Humanities. He teaches in the philosophy and religion programs, and he specializes in Byzantine culture and religion. He is also a member of the College's Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies (ICHHS).

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