

SCIENCE, ART AND THE SACRED SERIES



Pari Center
25th Anniversary

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BRINGING MEANING BACK TO LIFE

With **Bernard Carr**
Ya'Acov Darling-Khan
Suzannen Geiser
Parul Jani
Shoaib Malik
Therese Schroeder-Sheker*
Nick Spencer
Curated and Chaired by
John Pickering

* VIRTUALLY

Pari, Italy—September 2-9, 2025

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BRINGING MEANING BACK TO LIFE

Science has largely displaced religious accounts of our existence.

But it can make both life and death seem virtually meaningless.

Religion does not, suggesting there is a necessary opposition between them. We will move beyond that to look at how spiritual traditions, the sciences and the arts provide complementary ways of celebrating life and accepting death as parts of living authentically.

Pari, Italy—September 2-9, 2025

SCIENCE, ARTS, AND THE SACRED **BRINGING MEANING BACK TO LIFE**

Dates	September 2-9, 2025
Location	Pari, Tuscany, Italy
Presenters	Bernard Carr, Ya'Acov Darling-Khan, Suzannen Gieser, Parul Jani, Shoaib Malik, Therese Schroeder-Sheker (virtually), Nick Spencer
Curated and chaired by	John Pickering
Event	The event starts with a welcome dinner on Tuesday September 2 at 19:00 and ends after lunch on Tuesday September 9
Fee	2175,00 euros, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ a 7-night stay in private accommodation▪ breakfast, lunch and dinner at the local restaurant featuring locally sourced produce and traditional dishes▪ water, wine and coffee served with lunch and dinner▪ programmed lectures, activities and materials

The event

If the time it took for life to evolve on earth were a day, human beings wouldn't appear until fifty seconds before midnight. Evolutionarily speaking we're instantaneous.

But in that instant science has achieved a deep understanding of the world, and the technology it has made possible has greatly enhanced our lives. So much so that in last few centuries science has replaced religion as the framework for our existence.

But that understanding comes with costs. One is the ecological damage that is the darker side-effect of technology. Another, less apparent but just as damaging, is that with the loss of a religious framework, life, and therefore death as well, may have come to seem virtually meaningless.

C.G. Jung said: 'Man cannot stand a meaningless life.' Iain McGilchrist seems to agree: 'Death is not the opposite of life but its fulfilment. The opposite of life is the machine.' Like David Bohm and David Peat, McGilchrist rejects the idea that science requires us to conceive of the cosmos, and ourselves, as nothing but mechanisms.

But science is in any case changing, as it always has. Classical mechanics has been left behind, but quite what is to replace it is unclear. Religion is perhaps less apt to change, but Whitehead said: 'Religion will not regain its old power until it can face change in the same spirit as does science.'

We are moving on from the idea that there's a necessary opposition between science and religion. This year's meeting in Paris will be part of that move. It will look at how spiritual traditions, the sciences and the arts offer ways to celebrate life and accept death as complementary parts of living authentically.

It will bring together speakers from the sciences, arts, faiths and healing traditions to create an open dialogue and supportive experience in which we all can participate. We'll explore the leading edge of quantum physics, examine the relationships of science to Christianity, Islam and Vedanta. We'll also hear speakers on how Shamanism, music and ritual have and continue to have a role in facing the end of our lives.

This will be an informal meeting with presentations by experts followed by roundtable discussions.

What a typical day looks like

8:30 - 9:30	breakfast
10:00 - 13:00	formal presentation (including a half-hour break)
13:00	lunch
16:00 - 19:00	presentation or interactive/workshop session
20:00	dinner
21:00	free time (retire to your accommodation for quiet time, engage in informal discussions, or, if there is a village event such as music in the piazza, join in)

For those seeking opportunities for interaction between participants and presenters (ratio around one to four!), these occur not just in the more formal presentations—which will allow time for discussion and Q&A—but also at the workshops, mealtimes, and during the free time.



‘The future has an ancient heart.’

CARLO LEVI

Our founder David Peat compared Pari to an alchemical vessel—a place where transformation can come about—as well as an opportunity to pause for a moment and re-assess one’s life. Participating in an event at the Pari Center means not only meeting with scholars and experts but living for a week in a medieval village, mingling with the local population, eating local dishes and drinking local wines. It also means being able to view the beauty of the surrounding countryside, and participating in a very gentle way of life far from the frenzy of work and city living.

Pari today continues in a remarkable state of preservation. In the 1950s Pari’s population began to drop from 1500 to the present 100 as people left to find work in the cities. The Pari Center maintains a close relationship with the village people and supports the local economy by renting accommodation—furnished apartments—on behalf of our participants, by having the local restaurant provide meals, and by supporting the local businesses.

Pari is located a few kilometers from the main superstrada that connects Siena to Grosseto. The nearest airports are Rome, Florence and Pisa. Once you have arranged your flight, we can guide you on the best means of travelling to the village.



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