

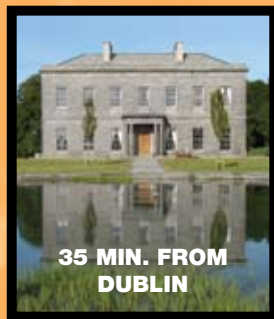
24th year of

# A DAY WITH PLATO

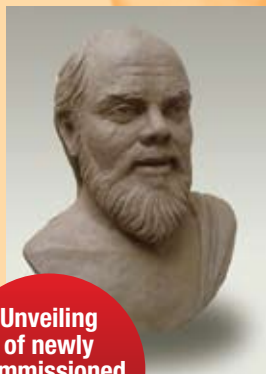
**AT TOWNLEY HALL**  
SLANE ROAD, NEAR DROGHEDA

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*Saturday 26th and  
Sunday 27th March 2011*

9.15 am to 5.30 pm each day



35 MIN. FROM  
DUBLIN



*A Day With Plato* is a celebration of the wisdom of Socrates as handed down to us through the writings of Plato. This stimulating and highly enjoyable day introduces you to the words of Socrates in a friendly and easy atmosphere within the magnificent classical setting of Townley Hall.

This is a day for everyone.  
No prior knowledge of Plato is required.

Unveiling  
of newly  
commissioned  
bust of  
Socrates

**Admission: €50 per person**

**Presented by the School of Philosophy and Economic Science**  
49 Northumberland Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. Tel 660 3788

The School is a registered educational charity (CHY 5791)

## A Day for Everyone

*A Day With Plato* is a day for everyone. No prior knowledge of Plato is required. All that's needed is a willingness to enter into the spirit of the day. People find this easy in the friendly relaxed atmosphere. The one-day programme on Saturday 26th March is repeated the following day Sunday 27th. See Booking Form.



## The Magic of Plato

The day begins with a short informal talk from David Horan, head of Platonic Studies in the School. He will set the scene for our theme this year, the Trial of Socrates. Next come

a series of short video clips depicting extracts from Socrates' trial, each of which is followed by reading and discovering Plato for ourselves in small groups, both before and after lunch. The day finishes with a talk summarising what we have heard, and taking questions. Although many will not have read or discussed the subject before, everyone will discover the magic of Plato for themselves and almost certainly become a fan.

## Getting There

Townley Hall is 35 mins drive from Dublin, heading north on the M1. Exit immediately after crossing Boyne suspension bridge, take the N51 slip road toward Slane for 2 kms. Entrance to Townley Hall is on the right at the gate lodge, then uphill winding avenue for 1 km. There is ample free parking.

Alternatively, a special coach will depart each day from the School at 8.30 am, arriving at Townley Hall in good time for registration and refreshment before starting. The same coach will make the return journey at 5.30 pm, arriving back at the School by 6.15 pm.



**Plato is philosophy and philosophy Plato”**

**EMERSON**

## Lunch & Refreshments

Fresh tea and coffee will greet you on arrival in the spacious front hall, together with two glorious open fires. Lunch in Townley Hall is a treat, with a freshly prepared delicious meal and dessert, all included. The day finishes with a convivial wine reception, after which we bid farewell to an enlightening and rewarding day with Plato at Townley Hall.

## Booking

Advance pre-paid booking is essential. Numbers are limited to 100 per day. Early booking is advised as this year's event is expected to sell out. See Booking Form.



# One-Day Programme

- 9.15 am Registration**  
Morning Tea /Coffee (25 mins)
- 9.45 am Introduction**  
by Michael Ryan, Chairperson
- 9.50 am Setting the Scene:**  
David Horan on “Why they killed Socrates”
- 10.05 am Theme for the Day:**  
Plato’s Apology: Socrates’ speech at his trial:  
video clip – 10 mins.
- 10.15 am Discovering Plato 1:**  
1st extract from Socrates’ speech in  
discussion groups.
- 11.15 am Morning Coffee and  
unveiling of newly commissioned bust of  
Socrates by Prof. John Dillon**
- 11.50 am All assemble in the Library:**  
2nd video clip -10 mins  
**Discovering Plato 2:**  
2nd extract from Socrates’ speech in  
discussion groups.
- 1.15 pm Lunch**
- 2.15 pm All assemble in the Library:**  
3rd video clip -10 mins
- 2.30 pm Discovering Plato 3:**  
3rd extract from Socrates’ speech in  
discussion groups.
- 3.45 pm Afternoon Tea**
- 4.15 pm Discovering Plato 4:**  
Concluding talk with David Horan, including  
questions and discussion.
- 5.00 pm Reception**
- 5.30 pm Cloaks and Depart, including coach departure  
for Dublin from the Front Door**



David Horan



Michael Ryan



## Townley Hall

Townley Hall is a magnificent Georgian mansion built in the classical style over 200 years ago on a hilltop setting, and a wonderful venue for A Day With Plato. It stands on 60 acres of parkland overlooking the Boyne valley, close to the site of the famous battle. The location is strikingly beautiful and peaceful. The House is an architectural jewel, renowned for its exquisite interior, wonderful proportions, the quality of the materials and craftsmanship used in its construction, and, in particular, its magnificent staircase – of which Country Life magazine once said “*There is nothing lovelier in the Georgian architecture of these islands than the rotunda and staircase at Townley Hall*”.

See [www.townleyhall.ie](http://www.townleyhall.ie)

## The Trial of Socrates

Socrates, the central character of Plato's dialogues was a philosopher who lived in Athens in the 4th century BC as the city went into decline and political and civil strife reigned.

He was brought to trial in 399 BC on charges of impiety and of corrupting the youth. He denied these charges and was vigorous in conducting his own defence. Said to be the wisest of the Athenians, Socrates presents an extraordinary and highly challenging defence to the people of Athens.

He explains his entire life and work, stands uncompromisingly for truth and justice and continues to expose those men who pretend to be wise, but are not really wise. Claiming that he himself knows nothing he declares that "God is wise and the wisdom of men is worth little or nothing."

## Plato and the Academy

Plato was 28 when Socrates died, an event that changed his life. Although an aristocrat by birth, he was a devoted follower of Socrates and philosophy, the love of wisdom. He began writing his famous philosophical dialogues in which Socrates is the hero in nearly all.

Socrates appears not to have written anything. Almost everything we know about him comes from what Plato tells us. The dialogues deal with many subjects including politics, education, rhetoric, love, life and death, and of course philosophy. Love of wisdom



**An unexamined life is not worth living"**

**SOCRATES**



**Wonderful day. Uplifting and insightful."**

**COMMENT FROM 2010**

and truth, a masterly and easy prose style and a keen sense of drama are the hallmarks of Plato. It is astonishing that all his dialogues have survived and are readily available today to everyone in good translations.

Some years after the death of Socrates, Plato bought a house and garden in a public park called Academia on the outskirts of Athens and founded a school there. The school took its name from the park – the Academy. It soon became a centre of learning, drawing men from afar in pursuit of wisdom and truth. Aristotle was a pupil. Plato lived 80 years; his Academy in Athens lasted 800.

## Platonic Tradition

The Platonic tradition spread from Athens and schools were eventually established across the ancient and later medieval worlds. John Scottus Eriugena, the 9th century Irish scholar, was the leading Platonist of his day in Europe; the tradition which he founded in France gave rise to Platonic schools in Paris and Chartres. A Platonic school also flourished in Renaissance Florence.

Why read Plato today? Because, says Scott Buchanan, editor of *The Portable Plato*\*, "...the reading of Plato's dialogues by a large number of people could make the difference between a century of folly and a century of wisdom for the world."

\* *The Portable Plato*, Penguin Classics, available in paperback from bookshops and through Amazon.