

University of Notre Dame, Department of Theology. Scripture and Ethics. Course meets Monday through Friday, July 7-25, 2014.

Instructor: Anselma Dolcich-Ashley, Ph.D.

Course Description: The Second Vatican Council altered the direction of nearly four centuries of manualist-era moral theology by retrieving the central place of Scripture both in the life of the Church in general, and particularly for moral theology. "Special care must be given to the perfecting of moral theology. Its scientific exposition, nourished more on the teaching of the Bible, should shed light on the loftiness of the calling of the faithful in Christ and the obligation that is theirs of bearing fruit in charity for the life of the world." (*Optatam totius*, no. 16) At the same time, the academic specialization of both Scripture studies and theological ethics, in the 20th century and continuing through the present time, has created an additional challenge of uniting two disciplines each with respective purposes, methods and goals. In this course we will determine a proper relationship of Scripture and ethics by seeking methods to derive moral-theological claims, ethical norms and trajectories of virtue from Scripture. Of additional importance in this quest is an understanding of the relationship of Scripture to other, extra-Scriptural sources for ethics (e.g., patristic sources, medieval natural-law traditions and philosophical ethics), and the role of the local and universal Church, and the Catholic magisterium, both in interpreting Scripture and in developing moral theology.

All Scripture is divinely inspired and has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the person who belongs to God may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind. (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

Catholic exegetes then and other students of sacred theology, working diligently together and using appropriate means, should devote their energies, under the watchful care of the sacred teaching office of the Church, to an exploration and exposition of the divine writings. This should be so done that as many ministers of the divine word as possible will be able effectively to provide the nourishment of the Scriptures for the people of God, to enlighten their minds, strengthen their wills, and set persons' hearts on fire with the love of God. (Dei Verbum, no. 23.)

Course readings:

1. Required books.
 - a. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha* (2010).
 - b. Emily Arndt, *Demanding Our Attention: The Hebrew Bible as a Source for Christian Ethics*. (Eerdmans, 2011).
 - c. William C. Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise: Jesus and Ethics*. (Continuum, 1999).
 - d. Daniel J. Harrington and James F. Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology*. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2010).

2. Be sure that you can access the course reserves on the Hesburgh Library website for additional chapters and articles.
3. All readings are to be completed PRIOR to the class session for which they are assigned. A double asterisk (**) next to a reading indicates that it is on the Hesburgh Library course reserves (<http://library.nd.edu/>).

Course requirements:

1. Attendance and participation in every class session. 25% of the final grade.
2. In-class oral presentation of readings (to be assigned), and leading a discussion of that selection. Each student will have two opportunities for a presentation. 25% of the final grade.
3. Mid-term exam. Answer 3 questions out of 5 (given out earlier in the week). Two (double-spaced) pages each. 25% of the final grade.
4. Final exam. Modeled on the departmental comprehensive exam, the final exam for the course will consist only of an oral exam of 15 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of instructor feedback. 25% of the final grade.

Course syllabus: *The syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.*

Part I: Ethics and the Old Testament.

Monday, July 7.

- ***Dei Verbum*, nos. 1-26.
- **James Corkery, SJ. "*Dei Verbum*: On the Face of God 'Unveiled'."
- **Benedict Ashley, O.P. "*Dei Verbum* and Christian Morals."
- Emily Arndt, *Demanding Our Attention*, chapter 1, "The Hebrew Bible as a (Re)source for Christian Ethics."

Tuesday, July 8.

- Arndt, chapters 2-3.

Wednesday, July 9).

- Arndt, chp 4.

Thursday, July 10.

- Arndt, chapter 5.
- **Yiu Sing Lúcas Chan, "Prologue: Ten to Eight" (xv-xxxv), "Emerging Consensus" (3-8), "Reading Scripture Through the Lens of Virtue" (9-19), from *The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes: Biblical Studies and Ethics for Real Life*.

Friday, July 11.

- **Bruce Birch, "Divine Character and the Formation of Moral Community in the Book of Exodus."

Preliminary Syllabus + Scripture and Ethics + THEO 60643 + Summer Session 2014

- ** Selections from *Origins*, 2002-07: the US Catholic bishops and the sixth commandment.

Part II: Ethics and the Gospels

Monday, July 14.

- William C. Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, Introduction, chapters 1-2.
- ** Lisa Sowle Cahill, "The Bible and Christian Moral Practices." In *Christian Ethics: Problems and Prospects* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1996), 3-17.

Tuesday, July 15.

- Spohn, chapters 3-4.
- **William Lynch, SJ, "Theology & the imagination," *Thought* 29 (112), 1954.

Wednesday, July 16.

- Spohn, chapters 5-6.
- **Hans Kvalbein, "The Kingdom of God in the Ethics of Jesus," *Studia Theologica: Scandinavian Journal of Theology* 51 (1), 1997, 60-84.

Thurs., July 17).

- Spohn, chapters 7-8.
- **Allen Verhey, "Scripture and Ethics: Practices, Performances and Prescriptions," 18-44 in *Christian Ethics: Problems and Prospects*.

Friday, July 18.

- **Chan, "The Beatitudes in History," and "Some Preliminary Questions," from *The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes*.
- **Hans Dieter Betz, "Cosmogony and Ethics in the Sermon on the Mount," from *Cosmogony and Ethical Order*, ed. Lovin (UChicago, 1985).
- **Glen Stassen, "The Politics of Jesus in the Sermon on the Plain," from *The Wisdom of the Cross*, ed. Hauerwas (Eerdmans 1999).

Due Friday, July 18, by 8:00 pm. Mid-course exam.

Monday, July 21. Feature film TBA, and discussion based upon Parts I and II of the course.

Part III: Ethics and the Letters of Paul.

Tuesday, July 22.

- Harrington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology*, chapters 1-6.
- Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Sin and the World," chapter 5 in *Becoming Human Together: The Pastoral Anthropology of St Paul*, 3rd ed. (Society of Biblical Literature, 2002).

Wednesday, July 23.

- Harrington and Keenan, chapters 7-13.
- Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Alien Being," chapter 6 in *Becoming Human Together*.
- Wayne Meeks, "The Polyphonic Ethics of the Apostle Paul." *Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics*, 1988.

Thursday, July 24.

- Harrington and Keenan, chapters 15-21.
- Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Egocentric Isolation," chapter 7 in *Becoming Human Together*.

Friday, July 25.

- **Oral final exams.** Individual final exams, held with the instructor. 15 minutes per exam + 5 min feedback.

