

THEO 60222: *Christian Doctrine for Catechists*

John C. Cavadini, Instructor

June 13 to July 1, 2016

8:30 am – 11:00 am

God is Love (1 Jn. 4.16)

“Love is the light – and in the end, the only light – that can always illuminate a world grown dim” (Benedict XVI, *God is Love*)

This course is intended to serve as a resource for catechists and religious educators, but also would serve well for anyone desiring a synthetic overview of Christian doctrine with an emphasis on articulating it to others. The course covers the material presented in the first two pillars of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, namely, Creed and Sacraments. Readings will come mainly from the CCC, with some short readings in primary sources illustrative of the theology that forms its background.

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Required Texts: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*; C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce* -- will be supplied free of charge to all students in the class. All brief readings will also be supplied in class.

Schedule of Readings

Monday, June 13

First Hour: Introductory to the Course.

Seeking a “Renewed Pedagogy of the Basics” through an “Apologetics of Love”

Texts: CCC ## 1-25; Brief Readings: Origen, *Against Celsus*, Prologue; Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 1-8, 35-36.

For further reference on the use of the CCC: *General Directory for Catechesis*, pp. 113-32. For further reference on the history of apologetics: Avery Dulles, *A History of Apologetics* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005); note especially pp. 336-38 for an approach something like the approach of this course. The best theological introduction to Christian doctrine is still Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, first published in 1968, English translation from Ignatius Press, 2004.

Second Hour: Natural Knowledge of God; CCC## 26-49

Brief Readings: Stephen Hawking, *The Grand Design*, pp.5, 28-39; John Haldane, “Philosophy Lives,” *First Things* Jan., 2011, 43-46; Plato, *Phaedo* 96a to the end (the death of Socrates)
Resources for further reference: Aidan Nichols, “The New Atheism and Christian Cosmology,” in Francesca Aran Murphy, *The Beauty of God’s House* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 205-19; for a book length resource: David Bentley Hart, *Atheist Delusions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). Also, for those interested in specifically catechetical resources: see Fr.

Robert Spitzer, S.J., at the Magis Center website: www.magisreasonfaith.org/encyclopedias.html

Tuesday, June 14

First Hour: Revelation; CCC## 50-73.

Brief Text: Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Th.* Q.1.1, on *sacra doctrina*

Second Hour: Revelation cont'd: Scripture and Tradition; CCC## 74-141

Brief Texts: 1 Cor. 15.1-7; Marcion, *Antitheses*

Wednesday, June 15

First Hour: Faith; CCC## 142-69 (fides qua)

Brief Texts: C.S. Lewis *On Miracles*, chapter 1;

Mother Teresa, Selected Letters from *Come Be My Light*, ed. by Brian Kolodiejchuk, M.C. (NY: Doubleday, 2007), on darkness.

Recommended: J. Ratzinger, *IC*, pp. 39-81.

Second Hour: Faith; CCC## 169-97(fides quae; the Creed)

Brief text: Augustine, Sermon 212; recommended, Ratzinger, *IC*, 82-100.

Thursday, June 16

First Hour: God

CCC ## 198-231;

Brief Texts: Exodus 3.1-22; 33.1-34.8; Augustine, *Confessions* 1.1-5

Recommended: Ratzinger, *IC*, pp. 103-61, an extended exegesis of Ex. 3.1-22 on the name of God, with reflections on natural and revealed theology along the way.

Second Hour: The Trinity

CCC ## 232-267

Brief Texts: Mark 14.32-42; Genesis 18.1-15

Chiara Lubich, *Essential Writings* (Hyde Park: New City Press, 2007), pp. 204-05.

Rublev's Icon of the Trinity (copies handed out in class)

Paul Ekdokimov, *The Art of the Icon: A Theology of Beauty* (ET: Redondo Beach, CA: Oakwood Publications, 1990), pp. 243-57; Recommended, Ratzinger, *IC*, pp. 162-90.

Friday, June 17

First and Second Hours: Creation; The Problem of Evil

CCC ## 268-324

Also skim *CCC ## 325-354*, the Angels; *CCC ## 355-384*, Human Beings

Brief Texts: St. Francis, "Canticle of Brother Sun"; Thomas of Celano, *First Life of St. Francis*; Prologue; Book 1.57-62, 80-82, 94-96; Recommended: Ratzinger, pp. 149-50, on the power of God; p. 160, on the risk of evil.

Monday June 20

First and Second Hour: The Fall; Original Sin

CCC ## 385-421

Brief Texts: Two Ancient Texts on the Fall

Irenaeus, *Against all Heresies* 3.18.1; 3.20.1-2; 3.23.5; 4.14.2; 4.37.1, 6; 4.38.1, 3; 5.1.1 and Augustine *City of God* 14.10, 12-15.

Tuesday, June 21

First Hour: Incarnation

CCC ## 422-486 & 1159-61 (on images)

Brief Text: Origen, *On First Principles* 2.6.1-2

Second Hour: Christ's Whole Life is Mystery

CCC ## 512-98;

Brief Texts: John Paul II: 1986 Speech on the Occasion of the Visit to the Synagogue in Rome; John Paul II: *On the Most Holy Rosary* (selections); Recommended: Ratzinger, *IC*, pp. 193-270, offers a full exposition of the issues involved in separating the "historical Jesus" from the "Christ of faith," and thus on preserving the unique category of "mystery" to explain Christ's life. The "Excursus" on "Christian Structures" is especially relevant to a course on the "basics," complete with thoughts on surmounting Lessing's "ugly ditch" between contingent historical truth and necessary intellectual truth (analogous to the separation of the "historical Jesus" and the "Christ of faith").

Wednesday, June 22

First Hour: Atonement

CCC ##599-623

Brief Text: Augustine, *The Trinity* 13.4.13-18

Second Hour: The Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord

CCC ## 638-682

Brief Text: Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth* vol. 2, "Epilogue," pp. 278-93; Icon of the Women with Spices; Chora Icon of the Anastasis; with explanations by Paul Ekdokimov, *Art of the Icon: A Theology of Beauty* (Redondo Beach, CA: Oakwood Publications, 1990, originally published in French in 1972), pp. 317-27.

Thursday, June 23

First Hour: Resurrection of the Body, Judgment, Life Everlasting: CCC

##976-1075 (NB: this is out of sequence from the last CCC reading);

C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce* (the whole text, but if you have time for only a little: pp. 9-11, 104-22)

Second Hour: The Holy Spirit

CCC ## 683-747 (skim)

Friday, June 24 (Solemnity of the Birth of John the Baptist)

First Hour: The Mystery of the Church I

CCC ## 748-810

Brief Text: Jn 19.31-37

Second Hour: The Mystery of the Church II: The Four Marks of the Church

CCC ##811-70

Monday, June 27

First Hour: Marks of the Church, continued.

Second Hour: Mary, Mother of God

CCC ## 487-511; 963-975; re-read ## 466; 721-26.

Brief Texts: Jn. 2.1-11; 19.25-37; The Icon of Our Lady of Vladimir, and Ekdokimov, *Art of the Icon*, pp. 259-67. Chiara Lubich, *Essential Writings* p. 42, citing Pius XII. Recommended: Hugo Rahner, *Our Lady and the Church*; Karl Rahner, *Mary, Mother of the Lord*; Edward Oakes, “*Sola Gratia* and Mary’s Immaculate Conception”; Jaroslav Pelikan, “The Great Exception, Immaculately Conceived,” from *Mary Through the Centuries*.

Tuesday, June 28

First Hour: The Communion of Saints

CCC ##946-62

Second Hour: Liturgy and Sacraments in General; CCC ## 1076-1209

Wednesday, June 29 (Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles)

***First Hour: CCC ## 1210-1284, Baptism
and CCC ## 1285-1321, Confirmation***

Recommended resource: Jean Daniélou, *The Bible and the Liturgy* (ND: UND Press, 1950).

Second Hour: Eucharist, the Sacrament of Love;

CCC ## 1322-1419

Brief Texts: Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, sections 1-16; Augustine, *City of God*, 10.1-6

Thursday, June 30 (First Martyrs of the Church of Rome)

***First Hour: The Sacraments of Healing: Penance and
Anointing of the Sick;***

CCC ## 1420-1532 (cf. ##2559, 63, 72-73, 81, 83, on prayer and conversion)

Second Hour: The Sacraments at the Service of Communion

Holy Orders

CCC ## 1533-1600;

Also: Brief Text from Louis Bouyer, *Introduction to the Spiritual Life*.

Friday, July 1

First Hour: Matrimony

***(also including a brief treatment of consecrated virginity); CCC ## 1601-1666,
and re-read ##369-73***

Brief Text, unpublished, from J.C. Cavadini, “Marriage: At the Service of Life”

***Second Hour: A Brief Discussion of Controversial Issues Related to the Sacraments at
the Service of Communion.***

The catechist has the obligation of explaining properly the Church’s position on all issues, including those that are controversial. On the reservation of the ordained priesthood to men, the best resource for understanding the Church’s position is Sara Butler, MSBT, *The Catholic Priesthood and Women* (Chicago: Hildebrand Books, 2007). See especially Chapter 3, “Three Objections to the Church’s Teaching,” and Chapter 6, “More Objections to the Church’s Teaching.” On same-sex marriage, see JC’s “A catechetical response to same-sex marriage,” *Our Sunday Visitor*, Feb. 16, 2014, here:

OSVNewsweekly/Article/TabId/535/ArtMID/13567/ArticleID/14030/A-catechetical-response-to-same-sex-marriage.aspx

Another resource: Sherif Girgis, Ryan T. Anderson, Robert P. George, *What is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense* (New York and London: Encounter Books, 2012). The Catholic position, which assumes that male and female are naturally complementary and not simply cultural constructions, is creatively interpreted in the essays in Michelle M. Schumacher, ed., *Women in Christ: Toward a New Feminism* (2004), especially Schumacher's own essays in the volume and especially "The Nature of Nature in Feminism, New and Old," pp. 28-33. For a hostile secular witness to the natural male/female complementarity and its potential sign value, see Andrea Dworkin, *Intercourse* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), chapter 7, "Occupation/Collaboration, 153-82. Compare to Sr. Prudence Allen, R.S.M. in the Schumacher volume, "Philosophy of Relation in John Paul II's New Feminism," esp. pp. 93-104, and her earlier article "Integral Sex Complementarity and the Theology of Communion," *Communio* 17 (1990), 523-44.

Course Requirements

1. Preparation of Assigned Readings and Attendance at all Classes
2. *Brief Written Assignments*, due most class days (80%); see explanation below
3. Final Exam (20%). This is an **open-book take-home** final, due 5:00 pm on Fri., July 3.
4. Class Participation will be used to adjust grades upward where applicable.

"Brief Written Assignment" Explanation

The CCC is punctuated at certain places by sections called "In Brief." These sections are summary sections, attempting to encapsulate the doctrine in a brief way, perhaps suitable even for memorization. Our brief written assignments in this class take their cue from these sections. For any given segment of text we study from the CCC, the assignment is to write your own "In Brief" summary. When I say "any given segment," I am thinking of the segments assigned for any given hour of the class in the list of readings above. Sometimes, for a very long segment, a part of the assigned segment is acceptable.

Your "In Brief" summary should:

- (1) Provide "access" to the essential teaching
- (2) for a *particular audience* which you will specify each time (for example: *RCIA class at a suburban parish; business associates; college students sitting around talking about faith matters; Confirmation class in a predominantly Hispanic parish; eleventh graders in a rich suburban high school who could care less about religion; suburban parish women's or men's bible reading group for young adults; etc.*). NOTE: audiences NOT ALLOWED: any audience in age or ability below high school students. The primary emphasis in this class is on *learning and understanding the doctrine of the Church* and the first requirement of the "In Brief" is that it demonstrates a clear and precise understanding of the doctrine. It is difficult to determine how precise an understanding of the doctrine one has if it is simplified to an elementary level.

The idea is to communicate the essentials of the doctrine you are summarizing, in a way that does not “water down,” but *grants access*, to the teaching. Creativity encouraged; precision required. Be creative about being precise.

The best “In Brief’s” will

- (1) Key the exposition of doctrine to the relevant sections of the *CCC* as you go along. This can be done in parentheses in your text.
- (2) *Preserve* the language of the *CCC* where the language carries precision of expression that cannot be altered without erasing the precision. For example the word “person” in the doctrine of the Trinity cannot be replaced by “part” or “aspect.” To do so would be to change the doctrine itself. The point is to help the reader understand what “person” *means* in the context of Trinitarian teaching, not to replace the word.
 - a. So: *Use* the language of the *CCC* in a way that preserves its precision but engenders understanding. For example, suppose you chose a Q and A format for an “In Brief”: Q. What is faith?
 - b. A. “Faith is the “adequate response” to revelation (*CCC* #142).
 - c. Q. What makes it “adequate”
 - d. A. It is “adequate” because it is more than simply believing that what is revealed is true. It means believing it is true and accepting it as God’s invitation to be received as friends into His own company (*CCC* #142)
 - e. Q. How is this done?
 - f. A. By entrusting oneself to God wholly, in a way that would not be appropriate for any human being (*CCC* #150).
 - g. Q. What does this mean?
 - h. A. It means that, following the example of Abraham (*CCC* #146), and, even more, of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*CCC* ## 148-49), one “submits one’s intellect and will to God” (*CCC* #143), freely assenting to the whole truth that God has revealed, and embracing the trusting “obedience” to which faith invites us.
- (3) In some way, connect the doctrine to the experience of the person or group you have chosen to address:
 - a. In this case, perhaps the idea of “trust” provides opportunity for an analogy which both has points of comparison (for example, we submit ourselves or follow someone we “believe in”)
 - b. As well as points of contrast (we never believe in any human being as fully as we “believe in” God, which is why we can say that faith is “certain” (*CCC* #157) while still remaining “faith.”
 - c. The Scriptural examples of Abraham and Mary can be used to connect to our own experience, but from a Scriptural perspective. Use Scripture as encouraged by the *CCC* to fill out a catechesis that is full of image, person, story that *connects* to our experience without being *reduced* to our experience.
- (4) *Learn* the doctrine yourself *by* attempting to communicate it to someone else.

- (5) “In Brief” means BRIEF. What is/are the one, two or three most important points? The ones that are essential, and that should be memorized, if anything were going to be memorized? And then what are subsidiary points that aid in understanding? What would you say in a brief conversation with someone who wanted to know what you believed about X, Y or Z? Then, if you had more time, what else would you add?

Whether or not you receive the full 80% of credit for this course requirement depends in part on how many of these assignments you turn in, and in part on their quality. In terms of quantity:

10 assignments turned in = A for this course requirement (see below, however)*

9 = A- (see below, however)*

8 = B+

7 = B

6 = C

fewer than 6 = various levels of F, with 6 points of the overall 80 points credit for each assignment turned in.

In terms of quality: The assignments will be graded \checkmark , $\checkmark+$, $\checkmark-$. For the first three assignments graded $\checkmark+$, and then for the next two, you get credit for one additional assignment (meaning that for the first 3 $\checkmark+$'s, you have to complete only 9 total for an “A,” and for the next two, only 8 total for an “A.” An assignment graded $\checkmark-$ does not count towards the total; but if revised and turned in can be counted if the revision is graded higher. Only two such revisions will be accepted.

No “A-” grade will be assigned unless at least one of the assignments turned in is graded $\checkmark+$, and no “A” grade unless at least two of the assignments are graded check plus. If 10 assignments are turned in, but fewer than 2 $\checkmark+$ have been assigned, the grade will be A-. If 9 assignments are turned in and no check plus is assigned, the grade will be B+.

Assignments will be returned to students the next day, with suggestions for improvement.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is required. Unexcused absences will lower the grade by one half-grade assigned for the number of assignments turned in (10 = A-; 9 = B+; etc.). These cannot be made up by accumulated check plusses.