**Christology: Early and Medieval**

THEO 60898



DeBartolo 215

June 19-July 7, 2017

Time: 8:30 – 11:10 AM

Shawn Colberg, PhD and Michael Heintz, PhD

This course will introduce students to an exploration of who Jesus is and how he is a savior. The question posed to his disciples by Jesus, “Who do you say that I am” elicited in the course of subsequent history not only a diversity of responses, but also significant debate and theological reflection.  Focusing on primary texts from the early (Patristic) and Medieval periods, this course will examine how the living tradition of the Church came to express its conviction in the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

**Required Texts**:

1. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*  ISBN 978-0881414097
2. Bonaventure, *Bonaventure*, ISBN 978-0809121212
3. Gregory of Nazianzus, *On God and Christ*  ISBN 978-0881412406
4. Julian of Norwich, *Showings*, ISBN 978-0809120918
5. Richard Norris, ed., *The Christological Controversy*  ISBN 978-0800614119

*All other readings will be available on electronic reserve [ER] through the Library Webpage portal*.

**Requirements and Evaluation**:

1. Regular class attendance and informed participation (25%)
2. One 2-page reading review presenting an overview and critical question(s) of the assigned day’s readings, submitted by 6 PM on the previous day (25%)
3. Completion of a 2-page “oration” project that engages a particular aspect of early or medieval Christology, due on Thursday, June 25 at the beginning of class (25%)
4. Completion of a take-home final exam which is comprehensive in scope and due on Friday July 7 at 12 noon (25%)

**Class Participation**:

This includes unfailing attendance and regular, insightful classroom comments. Because we are a class that meets daily and covers extensive historical and topical ground, individual preparation and participation will be pivotal to our collective success. In terms of coming prepared, students must have completed the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss their content. One way to prepare to do so is to assemble a 1-page set of notes as you read that highlights key ideas, difficult concepts, or other details worth noting so that the student can bring this short set of notes to class as an aid for discussion. Also, in preparing the reading, one might generally consider the following questions: Why was this written? For whom was it written? That is, can one identify an intended audience for this work? What is the structure of the writing? What material is covered in it? What material would one expect to find that is omitted? What sources does the author use? What is that author’s attitude towards scripture? Does he or she favor one part of scripture over another? What other sources are used and how? What is the sequence of the writer’s argument?

**Course Structure**:

This class is intended to be a seminar which requires the full participation of *all* of its members. We will begin with a discussion of the daily reading reviews, and the instructors will then guide students through a discussion of the assigned readings designed to consolidate the student reading and focus on critical ideas and advances. Ultimately attaining the goals of this course is a collaborative endeavor where the understanding of all participants is enhanced by learning from one another’s insights. These goals demand that students thoroughly read all assignments and come to class ready to discuss them. A key aspect of your participation will be your efforts to help establish the type of climate that will make our discussions and activities fruitful. Please note that active participation does not simply mean “talking a lot”; it means attentive listening to peers and to the instructor, willingness to take part in class discussions, and making contributions when you feel you have a question or insight to share.

**Reading Reviews:**

This course values the ability to read critically and cogently exposit primary texts. Each student will write a two-page reading review during the semester. The review will summarize the important ideas and content for the day’s assigned readings, and when appropriate, it will raise questions for further discussion or clarification. Reviews of the reading will be submitted no later than 6 PM the day *before* the assigned class day, and the writer will circulate the review to the other members of class via e-mail. During the first class meeting, students will sign up for reading reviews following a schedule; the class will receive, basically, two reviews per class meeting. The reading review will be graded according to the review’s comprehensive scope, detail, and attention to major ideas. Because these assignments are intended to introduce the class to a given set of readings, the reviews *must be submitted on time*.

**Oration Project:**

Students will explore the way in which key Christological insights can inform the work of preaching and Christian witness. Students may pursue this project in one of two ways. **Option #1:** Students may identify, read, and exposit an early or medieval sermon on either Christmas or Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Easter). Students should prepare a 2-page review of the sermon which examines and evaluates places where the sermon relies on ideas studied during the semester. Option #1 is interpretive and evaluative of a primary text in Christian liturgical life, and the student is responsible for identifying an appropriate sermon/oration for use. **Option #2:** Students may write a 2-page oration of their own design. The sermon should correspond to a specific feast day (Christmas or Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Easter)), and it should identify a lectionary text from which it is working. The sermon/oration should then integrate concepts from the first two weeks of class into a homily for present-day churchgoers. Under both of these options, the project will be graded, primarily, on its use and understanding of key Christological themes from the semester as found or deployed in the oration.

**Course Schedule**

*(Subject to modification)*

**Week of June 19: Early Christian Approaches to Christ**

Monday: Introduction to the Course and Apostolic approaches to Christ

* New Testament Christological Canticles [ER]
* Ignatius of Antioch, *Ephesians* 18, *Trallians* 9, and *Smyrnaeans* 1 [ER]
* Origen, *On First Principles*, Norris, 57-63

Tuesday: Gnosticism and the catholic response

* Irenaeus us of Lyon, *Against Heresies,* Norris, 37-45
* Tertullian, *Against Praxeas* & *On the Flesh of Christ*, selections, Norris 47-55

Wednesday: Arianism and the person of Christ

* Arius, letters, [ER]
* Athanasius, *Orations Against the Arians*, BK I, Norris, 65-85

Thursday: An Emerging Picture of Early Christian Christology

* Athanasius, *On the Incarnation of the Word,* sections 1-32

Friday: What Can Be Said of Christ

* Gregory of Nazianzus, *Theological Orations* 2-4, Nazianzus, 37-115
* Gregory of Nazianzus, *Letter 101*, “To Cledonius,” Nazianzus, 155-164

**Week of June 26: Chalcedon and Early Medieval Christology**

Monday: Nestorianism and Chalcedonian Christology

* Nestorius, Sermon, Norris, 95-101
* Cyril of Alexandria, “Second Letter to Nestorius,” Norris, 101-104
* Leo the Great, *Tome to Flavian*, Norris, 111-118
* *Definition*, Council of Chalcedon, Norris, 118-122

Tuesday: Medieval Christology and Soteriology

* Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur Deus Homo*, Book I, Chapters 1-7, 9-14, & 19-25 [ER]
* Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur Deus Homo*, Book II, Chapters 1-2, 6-11, & 14-22 [ER]

Wednesday: Thomas Aquinas, the Humanity of Christ

* Thomas Aquinas, *Sermon Conferences on the Apostles’ Creed*, Chapters IV-X [ER]

Thursday: The Exemplarity of Christ

* Bonaventure, *Tree of Life,*  *Bonaventure,* 117-176

Friday: Christ in the Sacraments:

* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, IV:61-64 [ER]
* Bonaventure, *Breviloquium VI: The Sacramental Remedy*, Chapter 9 [ER]
* **Oration Project Due**

**Week of July 3: Late Medieval Christology and Course Integration**

Monday: Mystical Christology and Soteriology

* Julian of Norwich, *Showings* (The Short Text), Julian, 123-170

Tuesday: No Class, Independence Day

Wednesday: Integration Day

* Patristic and Medieval Art on Union with God, Lecture by Dianne Phillips

Thursday: Integration Day

* Visit to Notre Dame Special Collections / Rare Books
* **Review for Final Examination**
* **Take-Home Examination Circulated**

Friday:

* **Submission of Take-Home Exam due by Friday, July 7, at 12 Noon.**