Theology 60608: Ecclesiology

University of Notre Dame

Summer 2017- Master of Arts Program

M-F 12:20-3:00, DeBartolo 207

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## 

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the development of the church from both theological and historical perspectives. It seeks to assist students in constructing and refining critical principles of interpretation that apply directly to the mystery, mission, ministries and structure of the church. Of central concern in this course are the questions regarding how the church has understood its mission at various points in its history and what developments have impacted this understanding. Strong emphasis is placed on theological developments which occurred immediately before, during and after the Second Vatican Council as these developments are critical to appreciating the church’s self-understanding today.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To articulate an informed understanding of the church’s nature and mission which reflects an appreciation for how

major theological and historical developments have influenced its self-understanding.

1. To describe the place of ecclesiology within the nexus of systematic theology and recognize its deep

connections to Christology, pneumatology, theological anthropology, etc.

1. To identify major issues and themes in ecclesiology as well as key authors, texts and resources in this discipline.
2. To recognize the connection between academic understandings of the church and its lived reality & pastoral practices.
3. To advance student objectives related to ecclesiological understanding & overall theological knowledge.

**COURSE TEXTS**

Texts required for purchase are indicated with an asterisk [\*].

\* *Vatican Council II: The Basic Sixteen Documents,* Flannery, Austin, O.P., Editor.Northport,

NY: Costello Publishing*,* 1996. ISBN 0-918344-37-9 **[VC II]**

**\***Colberg, Kristin. *Vatican I and Vatican II: Councils in the Living Tradition* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2016).

[ISBN 9780814683149] **[VI/VII]**

\*Hahnenberg, Edward. *A Concise Guide to the Documents of Vatican II* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony

Messenger Press, 2007). ISBN 978-0-86716-552-4 **[H]**

\*note: **[E]** designates materials that are found electronically.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### Class Participation– 10% of course grade

Student performance in this category will be evaluated based on the following elements:

* Regular and punctual attendance (see “Class Attendance” below)
* Demonstrated careful preparation of reading assignments
* Contributions to group discussions and respectful attention to others

**Response Papers - 50% of course grade**

Students are required to hand in five total response papers (no more than two per week). Students can choose which assignments out of the possible assignments in a given week that they will complete based on interest, scheduling concerns, etc. Papers are to be turned in on the day that the reading will be discussed (i.e. before the lecture/discussion on the material). Because there is a choice of assignments, late work will generally not be accepted. All assignments are to be 2-3 pages, typed, written in prose (not bullet points, outline form, etc.). These assignments are not intended to be as polished and substantive as a research paper or formal essay, but they should be clearly written and not contain excessive typos. In general, response papers should demonstrate an ability to summarize the main ideas and significance of the assigned readings. Usually, the best assignments synthesize main points in the author’s own voice (your voice!) and then employ effective quotes from the readings to support particular positions. Finally, the instructor prefers not to receive work electronically except in extraordinary cases.

Response papers are graded on the following basis:

+ = exemplary work/A

Check plus = solid grasp of assignment/B+

Check = general grasp of assignment/B

Check minus = basic, but incomplete grasp of assignment/ C

NC = no credit, insufficient completion of work

**Exam– 40% of course grade**

This exam will provide students a chance to synthesize some of the major themes of the course. The exam will be given in class and all students are expected to take it on the date it is scheduled unless officially excused by the University.

**PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE (subject to change)**

**Class 1 (M 6/19): Course Introduction: The Church as Mystery**

\*Weinandy, Thomas. “Theology - Problems and Mysteries” in *Does God Suffer?* (Notre

Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press) 27-40. **[E]**

\*Colberg, Kristin. “Walter Kasper’s Gift to the Church” in *The Living Church* (Sept 2010), 6-8. **[E]**

\*Bevans, Stephen. Constants in Context, 7-9. **[E]**

\*McBrien, Richard. “Introduction: The Content and Scope of Ecclesiology” in *The*

*Church: The Evolution of Catholicism* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2008), 1-5, 15-20. **[E]**

*--How does Weinandy describe the difference between a problem and a mystery? Why is it important?*

*--What are two key characteristics of the church? Use Bevans, Colberg/Kasper and McBrien in your answer.*

Introduction to the reading: At the heart of our course is the idea that theology is about mysteries and not problems. Mysteries resist clear and finite explanations and, therefore, the Christian community must constantly work, in every age and every culture, to give effective expression to gospel message. The readings for today explore the difference between problems and mysteries and the church’s task of preserving mystery while speaking meaningfully to men’s and women’s deepest questions. Weinandy’s book is about divine impassibility (the question of whether God suffers), do not worry about his references to that topic, instead just focus on his idea of mystery and the fact that theology should try to preserve mysteries rather than seeking to prematurely resolve them. The McBrien reading underscores that ecclesiology studies the church as a mystery not merely as a historical reality.

**Class 2 (T 6/20): Ecclesiology as a Discipline**

**\***Dulles, Avery. “The Ecclesial Dimension of Faith” in *Communio* 22.3 (Fall 1985) 418-32. **[E]**

**\***Dulles, Avery. “The Use of Models in Ecclesiology,” in *Models of the*

*Church*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Press, 1974. Chapters 1 & 12. (\*note: read Rausch’s

article after chapter one of Dulles but before chapter 12). **[E]**

*\**Rausch, Thomas. “Theological Models” in *Towards a Truly Catholic Church*, 63-68. **[E]**

*-- Describe why Dulles feels that models are an effective way of talking about the church. How do models work and not work?*

*-- According to Dulles, why is an ecclesial dimension essential to Christian experience? (give 2 reasons).*

*-- Can you tie Dulles’ notion of models & his notion of the ecclesial dimension of faith to the Christian notion of mystery?*

Introduction to the reading: Today’s material builds on Tuesday’s class. Here we are focusing on the issue of language and specifically the reality that finite words cannot fully express infinite realities. Dulles’ chapters look at how we acknowledge that the church is a mystery and still try to give expression to our experience of it and God’s presence within it. While Dulles is talking about models and the ecclesial nature of the Christian faith, his focus here is on recognizing the limits of language and the search for effective means of expressing the inexpressible. In short, while Dulles is talking about models and the ecclesial dimension of faith– he is really exploring the concept of mystery. In your reading, keep your focus on the “big picture” of how Dulles’ points reveal something about the nature of the church as a mystery – then try to understand how his specific examples/argument fit together within that horizon.

**Class 3 (W 6/21): The Early Church & Augustine**

\*Acts 1 & 2

\*Kelly, J.N.D. “The Christian Community” in Early Christian Doctrines (NY: Harper Collins,

1978), 189-193. **[E]**

\*Ignatius of Antioch. “Letter to the Philadelphians,” 92-97. **[E]**

**\***Brown, Peter. “*Ubi Ecclesia*?” in *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography (*Berkeley: University of California Press,

2000) *212-25* **[E]**

\*vanBavel, T.J. “Church.” In *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*,

ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999**)** 172-5. **[E]**

\*Augustine, “Letter to the Donatists.” **[E]**

*--Describe 2-3 elements that lie at the heart of the early Christians’ understanding of the church.*

*--Summarize, briefly, the Donatists’ position & Augustine’s position. What is at stake in this debate - do you see any*

*contemporary relevance in their exchange?*

Introduction to the reading: Understanding the early church is critical because, in many ways, Christians throughout history have used this model as a measuring stick for evaluating ecclesial developments and proposed reforms. In many ways, Vatican II attempts to retrieve elements of the early church and thus understanding the council and the contemporary church requires an appreciation of the understanding of the earliest Christian communities. In your reading try to understand what these earliest Christian communities saw as uniting the church. Put another way, what do they see as the basis for the church’s unity? The debate between Augustine and the Donatists is extremely interesting because it highlights two significantly different views of the church (and, specifically, distinct views of what unites the church). Focus on how each group sees the church, who they think should be in the church, the nature of the church-world relationship & what role they see Christ playing in the church. Even though you may agree with one side more than the other, try to see strengths and weaknesses in each.

**Class 4 (Th 6/22): The Shift from Witness to Monarch**

\*Schatz, K. “Rome as Privileged Locus of Tradition,” in *Papal Primacy from its Origins to the Present*

(Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996) 7-28**. [E]**

**\***Pottmeyer, Hermann**.** “From Witness to Monarch: Development of, or Change in, Papal Primacy?”

13-35. **[E]**

\*Kasper, Walter. “A Discussion on the Petrine Ministry” in *That They May All be One*, 136-49. **[E]**

Recommended **=** McBrien, Richard. “The Papacy,” 315-36. **[E]**

*--Describe the witness and monarch models as well as what caused the shift from one to the other.*

*--Drawing on all of the readings - what is the purpose of the papacy?*

Introduction to the reading: While the titles from today’s readings give the impression that our class is about Rome or monarchs or witnesses– at the most fundamental level these readings are about the role of the pope and what the pope’s role says about the church’s self-understanding. What we say about the pope reflects our understanding of the nature of tradition, Christ’s promises to the church, the church-world relationship, etc. In your reading strive to understand *what* each model is and *why* it was seen as effective in its day.

**Class 5 (F 6/23): Medieval Ecclesiology**

**\***Norman Tanner, "Papacy and Councils." **[E]**

\*Christopher Bellitto, "Councils v. Popes:  Constance and Basle-Ferrera-Florence-Rome." **[E]**

\*Peter of Ailly, *"Propositiones Utiles*" **[E]**

\*Jean Gerson, "*Ambulate*" **[E]**

\*Council of Constance, *Haec Sancta* and *Frequens* **[E]**

Choose two:

*\* What image does Ailly use for the church and how does this make a council superior to a pope?*

*\* What is the extent of conciliar authority in* Ambulate *and on what basis does a council have such power?*

*\* Does*Haec Sancta *claim authority to do more then resolve the schism and why?  How does*Frequens

*institute a larger program of conciliar life in the church?*

*\* What are images and biblical passages which Torquemada uses to support papal authority?  How does*

*this depart from conciliar images in the earlier texts?*

Introduction to the readings: The medieval period witnesses many key debates about the nature of the church and, in particular, the balance of authority between the pope and the bishops. Various authors seek to provide theological arguments to support their view of the proper structure of the church. In your reading, try to develop an appreciation for the historical context of these debates and an understanding of the theological commitments undergirding various positions.

**Class 6 (M 6/26): Reformation & Counter Reformation Views of the Church**

\*Althaus, Paul.  *The Theology of Martin Luther* (287-93, 333-44) **[E]**

\*Luther, Martin.  "The Three Walls" (406-17) **[E]**

\*de Sales, Francis. The Rule of Faith (157-172) **[E]**

\*Bellitto, Christopher.  "Trent" 101-11. **[E]**

\*Council of Trent, Sections from the Sixth Session (29-35, 46-50) **[E]**

Recommended= O’Malley, John. *Trent: What Happened at the Council*, 49-76. **[E]**

*--Describe Luther's view of the church.  What does he see as the center of the church?*

*--What is de Sales' response to the challenges of the Reformers?*

-- *What is important about the manner of Trent's response to the Protestant movement*?

Introduction to the readings: Luther and the Reformation thinkers present important ideas about the nature of the church. It is difficult to find any one reading which encapsulates Luther’s thought on this topic. Read Althaus first as he lays out some of Luther’s central theological commitments and, in particular, some of his views on the church. Then read Luther’s “The Three Walls” – not so much to have a clear idea of what each of the three walls are, but rather to get a sense of some of what he thinks is critical to the church. Many students spend too much time trying to come away with a clear sense of what each of the walls represents – for our purposes that is not necessary- instead, try to come away with a sense of some of what Luther thinks is essential to the church. Francis de Sales tries to respond to the Reformers and, in particular, to the critique that the papacy is not necessary. Focus here on how he argues for the necessity of the papacy. Finally, the Council of Trent provides an authoritative response to Luther. What I want you to see here is that the Catholic Church recognizes that responding to the Protestant reformers and preventing further schism requires dealing with both *abuses in the church* and *shoring up theological points*. Note how the Sixth Session of Trent deals with both types of issues.

**Class 7 (T 6/27): Vatican I and the Development of Doctrine**

\*Colberg, K. *Vatican I and Vatican II: Councils in the Living Tradition*, vii-xii, 1-71. (pages 72-84 are

recommended). **[VI/VII]**

\*Vatican I, *Pastor Aeternus*, chapter 4. **[E]**

\*Colberg, Kristin. “Newman on the Development of Doctrine and Papal Infallibility.” **[E]**

\*Newman, John Henry. “To Robert Whitty, S.J.” & “To Mrs. Helbert.” **[E]**

*--*Why *was Vatican I called?* What *does it teach? What misunderstanding prevails regarding the council’s teachings?*

*--What does Newman think about papal infallibility and the nature of doctrine?*

Introduction to the reading: Vatican I, in many ways, represents the climax of the monarch model/centralized model described by Pottmeyer. However, Vatican I is often misunderstood as being solely about securing power for the pope and failing to understand modern sensibilities. To appreciate Vatican I (and, in fact, any council) one must recognize its historical and theological context. John Henry Newman lived at the time of Vatican I and was invited to attend the council as an advisor multiple times, but he refused every invitation (always providing a different reason!). The piece by me is an unpolished, unfinished draft of an article that I am working on. Forgive its “warts” but I cannot find another article that is saying what I think is important here (which is why I think I need to write such an article!). The letters by Newman are beautiful and full of profound ideas – they are regularly a student favorite – take the time to read them carefully.

**Class 8 (W 6/28): The Historical and Theological Setting of Vatican II**

\*Alberigo, Giuseppe. *A Brief History of Vatican II* (New York: Orbis, 2006) 1-20

\*O’Malley, John. “Big Perspectives on a Big Meeting” in *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge: Harvard

University Press, 2008 (33-52). **[E]**

**\***Colberg, Kristin. “*Vatican I and Vatican II*,” 100-14.

\*Pope John XXIII. “*Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*” (opening speech of VC II).

In *Council Daybook: Vatican II*, 25-9. Wash, D.C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1965. **[E]**

Recommended: Colberg, K. *Vatican I and Vatican II*, 85-99. **[VI/VII]**

*--Why was Vatican II called?*

*-- How is Vatican II unique? How is the style of the council’s documents unique/important?*

*--After reading* Gaudet mater ecclesia *– how would you describe John XXIII’s vision for this gathering?*

Introduction to the reading: Vatican II offers a renewed view of the church that draws both on the earliest Christian tradition (witness model) and on many twentieth century developments in liturgy, notions of human personhood and scriptural interpretation. In your reading note that Vatican II presents a more dynamic and mysterious view of the church than Vatican I. It seeks to open the church up to a dialogue with the world rather than denouncing its errors. No document reflects the overall goals for Vatican II better than John XXIII’s opening address at the council (*Gaudet mater ecclesia*). As you read his speech think about the posture towards the world that is represented here. Finally, a lens that we will develop for examining Vatican II is that it has *unique goals* which lead to a *unique style* which require a *unique mode of interpretation*. Think about this as you read – especially the connection between unique goals and unique style.

**Class 9 (Th 6/29): *Lumen gentium* – The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church**

*\*Lumen gentium,* read all of chapters 1-3, look through chapters 4-8 to get a sense of what is there. **[Vat II]**

\*Hahnenberg, Edward. “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” 37-55.**[H]**

\*Komonchak, Joseph. “The Significance of Vatican Council II for Ecclesiology.” **[E]**

Recommended: Colberg, K. *Vatican I and Vatican II*, 115-136. **[VI/VII]**

*--How does* Lumen gentium *advance/reflect the overall goals of Vatican II?*

*-- Describe one or two key elements of Vatican II’s presentation of the church.*

(note: you can answer these questions in either order).

Introduction to the reading: While all of Vatican II’s documents are mutually interpreting and must be read together, theologians often note that *Lumen gentium* serves as an important lens for understanding the council’s theology. In reading *LG* think about how it advances the overall goals of Vatican II that we talked about on Wednesday – both in terms of its style and its content. While some of you may have read this text or excerpts from it before – take the time to really read the first three chapters to get a good sense of how Vatican II presents the nature of the church. Look at all the other chapters and think about what aspects of the church’s identity are being highlighted.

**Class 10 (F 6/30): *Gaudium et spes –* The Pastoral Constitution on the Church**

\**Gaudium et spes*, Chapters 1-4. **[Vat II]**

**\***Hahnenberg, E. “The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.” **[H]**

\*Congar, Yves. “The Role of the Church in the Modern World” in *Commentary on the*

*Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 5, Herbert Vorgrimmler, ed.(New York: Herder and

Herder, 1969), 202-23**. [E]**

Recommended= Tanner, Norman. “Major Points” in *The Church and the World* (New York: Paulist,

2005) 38-60. **[E]**

Recommended= Tanner, Norman. “Pt 1: The Document” in *The Church & the World* (New York:

Paulist, 2005) 3-37. **[E]**

--*How does* Gaudium et spes *reflect/advance the goals of Vatican II?*

*--How does* Gaudium et spes *describe the church and the nature of the church-world relationship? What does Congar*

*say is the basis of this relationship?* (note: You can answer these questions in any order)

Introduction to the reading: *Gaudium et spes* has been referred to as “Noah’s ark” because every topic that couldn’t find a home in another Vatican II document got added to this text. In your reading of GS for our course focus on what the document says about the nature of the church and, specifically, the church’s relationship to the world. Another key lens for approaching this text is that *Gaudium et spes* is a very anthropological document – it takes the nature of the human person as a key starting point. How does the character of human personhood inform/shape the nature/task of the church today? The Congar piece was written shortly after the council as part of an authoritative commentary which gathered leaders from the council together to explain the council’s theology. It is a powerhouse piece!

**Class 11 (M 7/3): *Nostra Aetate* & the Reception of Vatican II**

\**Nostra Aetate* (entire document – it’s short!) **[Vat II]**

**\***Hahnenberg, E. “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions,” 156-63. **[H]**

\*Knitter, Paul. “The Breakthrough of the Second Vatican Council” and “Greater

Openness and Dialogue” in *Theologies of Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002)

63-79, 89-93. **[E]**

\*Pottmeyer, Hermann. “A New Phase in the Reception of Vatican II” in *The Reception of Vatican II*, 27-43 **[E].**

*--*Nostra Aetate *has been called a document full of tension. Describe a tension you see in* Nostra Aetate*.*

*--Describe one interesting point you took from Pottmeyer’s chapter.*

Introduction to the Reading: Today’s reading is divided into two sections – *Nostra Aetate* and the reception of Vatican II. The readings are not necessarily related so do not read everything looking for it to fit into one whole. Instead, read *Nostra Aetate* to get a sense of 1) how it advances the overall goals of Vatican II and 2) what it says about the church’s relation to non-Christians. In class we will discuss how the advances made in regard to the salvation of non-Christians shed light on our understanding of the nature and mission of the church. During the second half of class we will think about the reception of Vatican II. Read the Pottmeyer article to get a general sense of some of the issues involved in Vatican II’s reception and why reception is not just the “transmission of information,” but a process rooted in deep theological commitments. This is a great piece with lots of interesting ideas – take some time to read it and think about it.

**NO CLASS ON THE FOURTH OF JULY – ENJOY!**

**Class 12 (W 7/5):** Readings to be announced

**Class 13 (Th 7/06): Pope Francis’ View of the Church and Review for Test**

\*Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* – #19-49 (Chapter 1), #102-121 and #186-216.

[www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va/) (under apostolic exhortations)

\*Pope Francis, “Papal Address Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod

of Bishops, October 17, 2015.” **[E]**

            \*Pope Francis, “General Audience – October 9, 2013.” **[E]**

*--Describe two key elements of Pope Francis’ vision of the church*

*--Identify two themes or ideas from our course that you see reflected in Pope Francis’ description of the church*

**\*\*Note: All students are asked to review their notes before coming to class. Please identity one or two particularly important ideas, themes, points that you have encountered in this course – we will use these for an in class exercise.**

**\*\*Note #2: Our exploration of Francis will largely be a discussion not a lecture so please come to class ready to discuss your thoughts about the readings.**

**Class 14 (F 7/07): Final exam**