

Hermeneutics and Biblical Interpretation
Course Syllabus
Diocese of Crookston

Date and Times

Term: Fall/Spring 2010
Class Dates: Friday, September 11, 2009-April 16, 2010
Class Time: 6:00-9:00

Instructor

Prof. Joseph Hollcraft. M.A.
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Course Notes: stjohnthebaptistchico.org (click the Catholic Hour)

Course Description

An examination of the content and structure of Sacred Scripture, including a review of its historical development and authentic interpretation that will provide the student with the foundational tools necessary to study, understand, pray, live, and hand on the sacred text from a Catholic perspective.

Course Objectives

The course will provide an overview of Catholic Methodological Principles applied to Sacred Scripture. These principles will include Revelation, Inspiration, Inerrancy, the Senses of Sacred Scripture (understanding how to read the unity of the Two Testaments), Sacred Tradition, and Liturgy (where Tradition dwells). With an understanding of these tools to interpret Scripture, we will then apply them to the texts to understand the “how” behind the “what”. Essentially, this course will challenge us to be better readers of Sacred Scripture to be better listeners to sacred realities. Our response to God’s Revelation of Himself will also pervade each teaching.

Required Textbooks

Catholic Bible Suggested trans. Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd Edition.

Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation: Dei Verbum.
November, 1965. (on-line)

Pontifical Biblical Commission. *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*. Boston:
Pauline Books and media, 1993.

Pope Benedict XVI. *Jesus of Nazareth*. New York: Doubleday, 2007.

--*God's Word*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005

Hahn, Scott. *Letter and Spirit: From Written Text to Living Word in the Liturgy*. New York: Doubleday, 2005.

Congar, Yves, S.J. *The Meaning of Tradition*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004.

In House Duplicate: *Letter and Spirit journal excerpts*.

Recommended Textbooks

Reno, R.R.; O'keefe, John. *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2005.

Cavaletti, Sofia. *History's Golden Thread: The History of Salvation*. Chicago, IL: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Publications, 1999.

Commentaries and suggested Long Term Resources

St. Ignatius Series/Navarre Series/ New Jerome Biblical Commentary/Bible Dictionary

Grading Policy: See Grading manual

Full attendance is expected. If you miss a class for any reason please let me know via email.

Required reading between classes

Approximately 12-15 hours per month will be required for the reading assignments and homework outside of class. The reading is essential in order to come to appreciate the beauty and scope of Sacred Scripture and will be necessary to enter into classroom discussion.

Assignments

Each student is responsible for two papers (the second will be an extension of the first), a reading log, and a final exam.

For the papers described below, be sure to write cohesive essays. What is required of the writer is a critical and prayerful exercise of the mind and heart that should result in an intelligent, thoughtful, and coherent interpretation into Scripture. Aside from that, you should observe the following.

- (1) Papers should be typed and stapled.
- (2) Observe proper grammar, syntax, and spelling. Proofread for typos.
- (3) Demonstrate critical thinking through analysis, synthesis and clear conclusion.
- (4) MLA or Turabian is standard

Reading Log: 10%

You will be responsible to turn in a reading log, which will show me that you have been reading the assignments at the appropriate time. Furthermore, this reading log is for you to keep track of what you have read and measure how much time you will need to be spending with this course.

First Paper: 20%

Reflecting upon class notes, *Dei Verbum*, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, *Letter and Spirit: Written Test to Living Word in the Liturgy*, and *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, write a 2-3 page essay that discusses the meaning and interrelation of the senses of Sacred Scripture. How does this meaning and interrelation provide for the foundation of reading Sacred Scripture? See example.

Second Paper: 30%

The second paper is a development of the first paper. It will be roughly 6-8 pages (which includes the pages from the first paper). I will have a handout for this assignment at the midway point of the course.

Final Exam: 40%

You will receive two essay questions in which you are to respond in a thorough manner, demonstrating your understanding of the key principles from the course. I will give you some questions to review for this later in the year.

Course Outline

Session I-September 11 (Ordinary Time): Reads: Hugh of St. Victor (V I: 159-166); Cardinal Avery Dulles (V II: 17-26); Jesus of Nazareth (forward); Dei Verbum (paragraphs 1-13)

- Course Overview
- Revelation Itself: Faith and Reason
 - Economy of Revelation
 - Man's Response to God

Session II-October 9 (Ordinary Time): Reads: Dei Verbum (paragraphs 14-26); Letter and Spirit (Hahn:7-70); Jean Cardinal Danielou, S.J. (V II, 203-215).

- Handing on Divine Revelation
- Sacred Scripture: Inspiration and Interpretation
- Senses and the Hermeneutic of Mystagogy
- The Bible and the Liturgy
 - The Sabbatical Pattern

Session III-November 13, 2009 (Ordinary Time): God's Word (Benedict XVI: 13-39); Letter and Spirit (Hahn: 123-142); Hans Urs Von Balthasar (VII: 189-201); The Meaning of Tradition (Congar:1-46...47-81)

Apostolic Succession
Deposit of Faith
Nature of Tradition
Tradition and Liturgy
First paper Due

Session IV-December 4 (Advent): Reads: Pope Benedict XVI (V III: 189-209); Jesus of Nazareth (PBXVI: 1-24)

The Hermeneutic of Faith (Christological)
The Mystery of Jesus and the Baptism of Jesus

Session V-February 5 (Ordinary Time): Reads: Mary Healy (V II: 27-41); Jesus of Nazareth (PBXVI, 25-45)

Inspiration and Incarnation (more reflections on the hermeneutic of faith)
Sacramentality of Christ, Heart of Christ and the future of exegesis
Reading the Temptation of Jesus with Pope Benedict and the Senses of Scripture

Session VI-February 26 (Lent): Scott Hahn (VII: 97-140); Jesus of Nazareth (PBXVI: 183-194; 202-211)

Interpreting Sacred Scripture with Pope Benedict XVI
Reading Parables with Pope Benedict and the Senses of Scripture
The nature of the parable
The Prodigal Son and the Good Father

Session VII-March 19 (Lent): Jesus of Nazareth (PBXVI: 238-272)

Reflecting upon the Principle Images of the Passion with Pope Benedict XVI
And the Senses of Sacred Scripture
The Hour
Water, Wine, the Vine, and Bread

Second paper Due

Session VIII-April 16 (Easter).

Final Exam
Reading Log Due