

## Contemporary Catholic Theology

Spring 2010

Course #01 840 318 01 Meets: Mondays and Wednesdays 4:30 – 5:55pm

Location, College Avenue Campus: Scott Hall 216

Final Exam Friday May 7 in Scott 216 at 4:00-7:00 pm

Professor: E. Cleo Kearns / [cleo.kearns@gmail.com](mailto:cleo.kearns@gmail.com)

Office Hours: Mondays 2:00 – 4:00 by appointment only at #132 Loree DC

email consultations readily available

### Course Description

This course will introduce students to some major issues in Catholic theology today and to scriptural, historical and theological ways of thinking about them. The goal of the course is to open a window on Roman Catholic diversity of thought, to familiarize students with theological and analytical methods and ways of arguing, and to provide guidance for further reflection and research.

There will be one midterm (20% of grade); two short papers each involving attendance and observation of a local mass, (30% of grade); one longer paper selected from a list of topics (30% of grade); and a final exam (20% of grade).

Attendance and class participation are very important, though participation is hard to measure, and I am sensitive to the fact that not everyone is equally comfortable talking in class. I hope to create an atmosphere that makes speaking up easy, but if you have difficulty here please feel free from time to time to drop me an email with your thoughts and responses. As for attendance, it is vital. Much of the material covered will be presented only in class, and you will nevertheless be responsible for it on tests and finals. Please note that under no circumstances will it be possible to get a grade higher than B without good attendance and class participation or email response in some form.

### Books

Anchor Bible, Oxford Annotated Bible, Revised Standard Bible or Jerusalem Bible  
(if you would like to use another translation check with me)

Henri de Lubac: *Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*

Berard L. Marthaler, *The Creed*

### Syllabus

Week One (Jan 20): The Goal

Salvation and the Kingdom of God: immanent and transcendent, collective and individual

Reading: the Gospel According to Matthew (Chapters 5-7; 10; 16:9 and 18)

Concepts introduced: *ecclesia*, Petrine commission, kingdom of heaven

Week Two (Jan 25 and 27): The Goal (cont.)

The sacraments and the Church

The Gospel According to Matthew (second half, Chapters 24-28)

Concepts introduced: anamnesis, symbolic capital, patrimony, eucharist, sacrifice

Week Three (Feb 1 and 3): The Map

Concepts introduced: scripture, tradition, historical criticism, signs of the times, magisterium, *nouvelle theologie*, *ressourcement*

Reading: *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, Chapters I, II

Week Four (Feb 8 and 10): The Vehicle

Collective nature of the Church, image of God, Church as Body of Christ, invisible Church vs. tangible church, relationship between “chosen people” concept of Judaism and mission and role of Church. *concorporatio* not corporatio.

Reading: *Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, Chapter VII

Week Five (Feb 15 and 17) Israel and the Church

Readings: *Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, pp. 55- 61: “Israel According to the Spirit” and <http://www.firstthings.com/onthesquare/2007/12/john-paul-ii-and-the-jews>

Week Six (Feb 22 and 24): Catholicism and Ritual

History of baptism and eucharist, boundaries and openings Reading: *Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, Ch. V, 82-106, on the sacraments

Catherine Bell, “on ritual change,” on Sakai

**Mass Observation Paper Due February 24 See Sakai for instructions**

**Mid-Term Exam March 3 on *Christ and the Common Destiny of Man* and on the contemporary Catholic dialogue with Judaism and Islam (See study guide on Sakai)**

Week Eight (March 8 and 10): Catholicism and Islam

Readings: read and study the baseline info on Wikipedia under the following three rubrics: monotheism, Abrahamic religions, peoples of the book. Then please read the text of “A Common Word between Us and You” and Pope Benedict’s response at

<http://www.acommonword.com/index.php?lang=en&page=responses>

Week Nine (March 22 and 24): A People Adrift?

Reading: Steinfels, xiii-xix; 17- 39, *The Battle for Common Ground* and 68 -102: *The Church and Society*,

Week Ten (March 29 and 31): The Institution and the Kingdom

Steinfels, 103- 159, *Catholic Institutions and Catholic Identity*

Week Eleven: (April 5 and 7) The Nicene Creed

Marthaler: 18-36; : 53-68; Be

Week Twelve (April 12 and 14): The Nicene Creed (cont.)

Marthaler: 96-110, 167-174

**Second Mass Observation Paper Due April 14 instructions to be posted**

Week Thirteen (April 19 and 21): Mock Vatican II

Reading: Steinfels, 307 – 359: “At the Helm” and “Finding a Future”

Week Fourteen (May 3): Mock Vatican III

Reading: Thomas Berry, on sakai

**Final Exam: Friday May 7 4:00- 7:00 pm in Scott 216**