Course Objectives:

- The lasting influence of these early witnesses to Christ on the Church today
- The central tenet that these witnesses stress knowing Christ, not merely knowing about him.
- The growth of Christianity into a world-wide community of disciples.
- The lasting influence of these early witnesses to Christ on the Church today
- The central tenet that these witnesses stress knowing Christ, not merely knowing about him.
- The growth of Christianity into a world-wide community of disciples.

Required Texts:


Course Content:

- MODULE 1: Acts 1-9
  - Forum: How does Acts 1-9’s portrayal of the Church illustrate the four “Marks of the Church” (one, holy, catholic, apostolic)?
- MODULE 2: Acts 9-15
  - Forum: Based on the biblical background of James’ decision regarding Gentile believers, what does Acts 15 tell us about the Church’s relation to Israel?
- MODULE 3: Acts 16-28
  - Forum: What accusations were brought against Paul by his opponents? How does Acts attempt to discredit those accusations?
- MODULE 4: Galatians
  - Forum: How does Paul’s solution to the issue of Gentile inclusion differ from that of James in Acts 15?
- MODULE 5: Philippians
  - Forum: What implications does Paul’s theology of citizenship have for Christians’ in today’s society?
- MODULE 6: 1 Corinthians
  - Forum: How does Paul’s understanding of the Church as the Body of Christ inform his responses to the divisive behavior of Corinthian Christians?
- MODULE 7: Romans 1-8
  - Forum: How should Paul’s teaching concerning the transformative power of the Holy Spirit inform our understanding of the sacraments of initiation?
- MODULE 8: Romans 9-11
  - Forum: What are the implications of Paul’s theology of Israel for contemporary Jewish-Christian relations?
- MODULE 9: Romans 12-16
  - Forum: Is Paul’s teaching concerning secular authority an adequate foundation for Christians’ relationship to the state today?
- MODULE 10: Colossians
  - Forum: How might Paul’s hymn to the cosmic Christ inform contemporary Christian reflection on the Church’s relationship to society and to the environment?
• **MODULE 11: Ephesians**
  - **Forum:** How does the theology of marriage in Ephesians 5 differ from that found in 1 Corinthians 7? Can the two theologies be reconciled?

• **MODULE 12: 1 & 2 Timothy**
  - **Forum:** Are there insights from Paul’s teaching concerning ordination that can be applied to parish leaders today?

**Coursework:**
- **Quizzes (30%):** There will be a weekly, multiple-choice quiz for each module. Each quiz is worth 2.5% of your course grade.
- **Forums (60%):** There will be a discussion forum for each module. Each forum is worth 5% of your course grade.
- **Homily or Essay (10%):** You will compose a homily or devotional essay based on a topic present in one or more of Paul’s letters.

**Bibliography:**
**General Bible Commentaries:**

**Concordances:**
- For the New American Bible, see [http://www.catholiccrossreference.com/bible/nab-search.cgi](http://www.catholiccrossreference.com/bible/nab-search.cgi)
- NB: Concordances used for finding out where words occur in the Bible should match the translation you are using

**Dictionaries and Reference Works:** (Some of these are older works but still valuable.)
- Jewish Encyclopedia 12 Vols, Jewish History Ancient Scholarship (Jewish background).