

Pontifical College Josephinum
B1713DE Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of Saint Paul
Instructor: Father Paul Schenck, EdD
Developer: Chris Seeman, PhD

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:

- *The Catholic Study Bible*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

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:**
 - Brown, R. E., et. al., *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, NY: Prentice Hall, 1990).
 - Farmer, William R., *The International Bible Commentary* (Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 1998).
- **Concordances:**
 - For the New American Bible, see <http://www.catholiccrossreference.com/bible/nab-search.cgi>
 - For the RSV, use Ellison, John W. [John William], *Nelson's Complete Concordance of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible* (New York: Nelson, c1957) FUS Ref: BS425 .E4.
 - 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.)
 - Léon-Dufour, Xavier. *Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. 2nd ed. New York: Seabury, 1973.
 - Freedman, David Noel, ed. *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
 - Vanhoozer, Kevin, et al. *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
 - J. J. Collins and D.C. Harlow (eds.), *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* Grand Rapids and Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2010.
 - Sakenfeld, K. D. et. al., (eds.), *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. [multivolumes] Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.
 - McKenzie, John L., S.J., *Dictionary of the Bible*. New York: McMillan, 1973.
 - Spicq, Ceslas, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*. Trans. & ed. James D. Ernest. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
 - Halfmann, Janet, et. al. (Eds.) *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. Detroit: Thomson/Gale (ongoing supplements as well; 1907 edition still useful).
 - *Jewish Encyclopedia 12 Vols, Jewish History Ancient Scholarship* (Jewish background).
 - <http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/encyclopedia.php?lst=P>