

Josephinum Diaconate Institute - Distance Learning Course

Christology - Syllabus

Introduction

This course will discuss the Church's doctrine of Christ: the methods used for studying his personhood, life, and career, who he is theologically speaking, the extra-scriptural evidence and the biblical information about him, what theologians from the early church to the twentieth century have said about him, what he teaches, and the anthropological and soteriological implications of the incarnation and resurrection. The course is more intense than a catechism and covers material that properly fits in a graduate level course. A wide range of academic issues are discussed and the most recent scholarship is brought to bear on them. Knowledge of the ancient languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin are not required, though some familiarity with terms often used in church documents, creeds and the like is presupposed. Translations of these terms are provided in the notes, however.

Objectives of the Course

The *content* of this course is built around the genetic method, enunciated by the Church at the second Vatican council in *Optatum Totius*, widely used at the graduate level for course in dogmatic theology. It begins with a focus on the biblical material which is the basis for Christology, considers the history of the development of the doctrine and then discusses from a speculative point of view the key doctrinal issues involved – these being in the case of Christology: the teachings, incarnation and the resurrection. Students are expected to learn this material and develop the skill of preaching it.

The *behavioral* objective is to teach deacons to understand Christ so they can emulate him in their lives, thus witnessing to him as ordained ministers of the church whose faith is centered on and in him.

Alongside the behavioral objective is the *attitudinal* one. Here the objective is to help deacons and deacon candidates to conform themselves to Christ by learning to adopt in their own lives the docility, charity, consolation, forgiveness and peacefulness that the Son of God demonstrated in his own earthly life.

The *skills* involved include intellectual acumen, emotional honesty, forthrightness and simplicity in dealing with others inside and outside the church.

Required Readings

The textbook for this course is:

Roch Kereszty, *Jesus Christ. Fundamentals of Christology* (St. Pauls, Staten Island, 2010) ISBN: 0-8189-0917-X.

In addition, the material attached to the course are not just notes, but a comprehensive account of the field of Christology as it stands today, and a prospective book. Students are expected to read it for

every module along with readings from the required textbook. Also attached are power point presentations that summarize each module and audio lectures, both of which students are expected to utilize.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty

Students are expected to document their written work according to the commonly accepted standards used for written assignments used by colleges, universities and seminaries everywhere in the United States. See the policy on Academic Dishonesty of the Pontifical College Josephinum for details. This policy is published in the Learning Management System.

Assignments

There will be (a) **two ten question quizzes** during the semester, and (b) a **final written assignment which will be to prepare a five page homily for the feast of Christ the King**. The homily will be based on the readings for the masses for that day. Students may use any of the readings from the three year cycle for their homily.

The quizzes will ask you to identify ten terms widely used in Christology which will have been covered in the readings up to the point the each quiz is given. These quizzes will be open book; you may use any of the materials assigned for the course, including the text, the written and audio lectures or the power point presentations.

There will be no time limit for the quizzes, but once you sign off you will not ordinarily be allowed to sign back on. If for some reason a mistake has been made, permission to sign back on must be obtained from Deacon Michael Berstene, the Director of the Distance Learning Program.

There will be two forums during the semester each of which will ask a critical question to which all students are expected to respond. You are also encouraged to respond to the comments the instructor makes and to those of fellow students. The forum contributions will not be graded as such, but will be used by the instructor to improve final grades if they merit such use. In no circumstance will they be used to lower a student's final grade.

There will also be three teleconferences, one at the beginning, one before the first quiz and one at the end of the course before the final exam is given. Though participation in these conferences will not be graded, students are absolutely encouraged to attend since questions about the requirements of the course are that are of interest to all concerned are likely to be asked and will certainly be answered.

There will be (c) a final two hour exam at the end of the course. Students will be asked to write several essays from a list of options that will address the various issues raised during the course about Christ.

Grading

The point distribution for the final grade will be as follows. **Twenty percent (20%) for each quiz, fifteen percent (15%) for the homily and forty-five (45%) percent for the final exam.** To repeat, no grades will be assigned for the forums or the teleconferences. The due date for each of these assignments is the end of the week in which it is assigned. The quizzes will cover material up to but not including assignments for the week in which it is due.

Module Expectations

Week 1 – Introduction to the Course. Lecture (Written and Oral); Kereszty, 3-31.

Week 2 – Extra-Biblical Information. Lecture (Written and Oral).

Week 3 – Biblical Information. Lecture (Written and Oral); Kereszty, 32-92, 148-168.

Week 4 – Name and Titles. Lecture (Written and Oral); Kereszty, 169-186.

Week 5 – Heresies. Lecture (Written and Oral); Kereszty, 222-231. **(Quiz 1 due)**

Week 6 – Creeds and Councils. Lecture (written and Oral); Kereszty, 240-251.

Week 7 – Ancient Christology. Lecture (Written and Oral); Kereszty, 232-239.

Week 8 – Medieval Christology. Lecture (Written and Oral); Kereszty, 251-266.

Week 9 – The Teachings of Jesus Christ. Lecture (Written and Oral); Kereszty, 93-147. **(Quiz 2 due)**

Week 10 – Incarnation and Anthropology. Lecture (Written and Oral); Kereszty, 454-484.

Week 11 – Tomb, Resurrection and Soteriology. Lecture (Written and Oral); Kereszty, 397-429.

Week 12 – Twentieth Century Christology. Lecture (written and Oral); Kereszty, 299-324.

Week 13 – Final Exam and Homily due.