

## Gifts of Finest Wheat

Fall Session 2009

Ecclesiology: Theology of the Church

### Instructor:

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### Class Objectives:

Through an examination of Sacred Scripture and Church documents, we will come to a greater understanding of the nature of the Church, her structure, and her mission. Special attention will be given to historical developments, the Documents of Vatican II, the teaching role of the Magisterium, the role of the laity, and the person of the Mother of God.

### Texts:

- Catechism of the Catholic Church **(CCC)**
- *Lumen Gentium* – Vatican II’s Dogmatic Constitution on The Church **(LG)**
- *Dominus Iesus* – The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s Declaration on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church **(DI)**
- *Mystici Corporis Christi* – Pope Pius XII’s Encyclical On the Mystical Body of Christ **(MCC)**
- *Christifideles Laici* – Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Exhortation On the Vocation and the mission of the Lay faithful in the Church and in the World **(CL)**
- *Unitatis Redintegratio* – Vatican II’s Decree on Ecumenism **(UR)**
- Called to Communion by Pope Benedict XVI

### Classes Outline:

- 1) Orientation; Definitions; Scriptural background to the Church
- 2) Origin and Nature of the Church
  - Willed by the Father from eternity
  - Instituted by Christ, animated by the Spirit
  - Complex Reality
  - Images of the Church
  - **Reading: Called to Communion part I; LG 1-13, esp. 8; CCC 748-810**
- 3) The Church is One
  - Basis for the oneness of the Church

- Divisions with Christianity
  - Genuine Catholic Ecumenism
  - The Church subsists in the Catholic Church
  - Relation to non-Catholic Ecclesial communities and non-Christian religions
  - Uniqueness of Christ as Savior
  - Necessity of the Church for salvation
  - **Reading: UR; DI; LG 14-17; CCC 811-822, 836-848**
- 4) The Church is Holy and Catholic
- The holiness of the Church from her founder, sacraments, and saints
  - The Communion of Saints
  - The universal means of salvation and fullness of the Truth found in the Catholic Church
  - **Reading: Called to Communion part V; LG 39-42; CCC 823-835, 849-856, 946-962**
- 5) The Church is Apostolic
- Apostolic succession with particular emphasis on the early Fathers
  - The Petrine ministry within the Church
  - The college of Bishops
  - Hierarchical Communion
  - **Reading: Called to Communion part II; LG 18-21; CCC 857-887**
- 6) Hierarchical nature of the Church
- The structure of the Church revisited
  - The teaching office of the Church
  - The college of Bishops and Ecumenical Councils
  - The Ordinary Universal Magisterium and select examples
  - The Pope and *Ex Cathedra* statements
  - The Ordinary Magisterium of the Pope and Bishops
  - **Reading: Called to Communion parts III & IV; LG 22-29; CCC 888-896**
- 7) The Role of the Laity | the Church in light of *Lumen Gentium*
- **Reading: LG 30-38; CCC 897-913; CL**
- 8) Mary Mother of the Church
- Mary as type of the Church
  - Marian Dogmas of the Church
  - **Reading: LG 52-69; CCC 484-511, 963-975**

### **Some Details:**

- The sessions will be predominantly lecture format with some time for discussion. Questions are welcome, but considering the large number of people attending, please save questions for designated time or during breaks.
- Notes for each session will be available before the session begins.
- Notes and audio of the sessions will be available on-line within a few days of the session.
- Sessions are self-contained. You need not make every session. If you miss a session, please take advantage of class notes and audio on-line.

### **Certificate Track Assignments:**

- 1) Attendance at all session. If you must miss a session, please see me for make-up requirements.
- 2) Complete all assigned reading
- 3) One of the following three options:
  - a. One 1500 word essay due no later than December 3<sup>rd</sup>. This essay should treat a major topic in Ecclesiology as laid out in the class syllabus. Attention should be on addressing theological problems and issues, showing knowledge of Church teaching, and connecting those teachings to one another and to practical issues of lived experience. Essay topics must be approved by course instructor in advance.
  - b. Three 500 word essays handed in periodically, all completed no later than December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Each essay should treat a specific topic covered in class with special attention given to displaying an understanding of Church teaching and its practical implications.
  - c. A 20 minute oral examination. 10 minutes of the exam would be devoted to a topic prepared by the examinee, and the remaining 10 minutes on questions from the examiner. To be completed after the last class session but prior to December 3<sup>rd</sup>.