

SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary

3535 Commerce Road

Orchard Lake, Michigan 48324

Course Syllabus

SS 710 The Synoptic Gospels and Acts of the Apostles

“This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand.” (Mark 1:15)

Professor: Rev. Leonard Obloy, S.S.L. S.S. D. (Cand.) lobloy@sscms.edu (248) 683-0315

Course Credits, Time and Location: 3 Credit Hours Mondays, 6:30pm to 9:20pm CAC 109

Office and Hours: Office hours by appointment. I am available every day of the week and throughout most of the day. Please email, call or simply see me in class to arrange a mutually convenient time. My office is on the first floor of the Seminary administration building at the southwest corner.

Course description

“An introduction to the Synoptic Tradition will be presented with attention to various theories regarding the so-called Synoptic Problem. The theologies and redactional critical contributions of the Evangelists will be examined. Acts will be presented due to the Lukan connection. Exegesis of selected passages will be discussed.” (*Catalog*)

Course SLOs (Student Learning Outcomes)

In accord with the SLOs of the degree programs offered at SSCMS, at the completion of the course, students should be able:

To understand contemporary Catholic biblical scholarship with regard to the Synoptic Gospels and Acts of the apostles;

To understand how these books came to be composed and the theological view points of the biblical authors and the context for the composition;

To better inform the student’s use of Sacred Scripture in homilies (where applicable), scripture study groups, teaching (both about the Bible itself and using scripture when teaching in other theological disciplines) in catechetical and sacramental programs;

To enhance one’s own spiritual life by a greater appreciation of the Bible and using it for private reading;

To become cognizant of other interpretations and their relation to Catholic positions;

To become aware of controversies about the Bible, the reasons for them and possible solutions;

To learn the process of how exegesis is done by actually researching a specific text and applying a scientific methodology.

Required Texts

The only required text is the Bible itself. Any modern English language translation may be used. Different translations are encouraged and will sometimes be referred to in class to show how certain passages may be interpreted due to how they are translated. Recommended books will be mentioned in class.

Optional Texts

Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Brown, Raymond E., ed. *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall. 1990.

Church Documents

It is presumed that the student is familiar with the following Church documents:

1. Catechism of the Catholic Church
2. *Providentissimus Deus*
3. *Divino Afflante Spiritu*
4. *Dei Verbum*
5. *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*

Course Delivery Method(s)

The course will be presented on-ground in the traditional lecture format. Questions and discussions are encouraged. Materials will be available on the Populi platform. Additional discussion topics will also be posted on this platform. In addition, audio recordings of all lectures will be posted on the PopPopuli platform for review.

Course Calendar:

Subject to change due to the pace of students and discussions.

Week 1 Monday, 11 January 2016

Lesson 1

Introduction; Reasons for the Gospels

SILs; Synoptic problem

Week 2 Monday, 18 January 2016

Lesson 2

Mark: Theology and Perspective

Messianic Secret

Week 3 Monday, 26 January 2016

Lesson 3

Sandwich technique

The 12: an example of tracing a theme

Week 4 Monday, 1 February 2016

Lesson 4

Exam 1

The Daughter of Jairus: an example of the exegetical endeavor

Jairus continued

Week 5 Monday, 8 February 2016

Lesson 5

Matthew: Theology and Perspective

Principles, Precepts, Patterns

Week 6 Monday, 15 February 2016

Lesson 6

Sermon on the Mount: Beatitudes (**Exegesis project approval**)

Sermon on the Mount

Week 7 Monday 22 February 2016

Lesson 7

Sermon on the Mount

Luke: Theology and Perspective

Week 8 Monday 29 February 2016

Lesson 8

Exam 2

Luke: the Prologue

The Sermon on the Plain

Week 9 Monday 7 March 2016

Lesson 9

Mark Passion

Mark Passion

Week 10 Monday, 14 March 2016

Lesson 10

Matthew Passion **Exegesis project due)**

Luke Passion

Week 11 Monday, 21 March 2016

Easter Break

Week 12 Monday 28 March 2016

Easter Break

Week 13 Monday 4 April 2016

Lesson 11

Exam 3

Luke Infancy

Week 14 Monday 11 April 2016

Lesson 12

Luke Infancy

Matthew Infancy

Week 15 Monday 18 April 2016

Lesson 13

Matthew Infancy

Acts of the Apostles

Week 16 Monday, 25 April 2016

Lesson 14

Acts of the Apostles: Council at Jerusalem

Acts of the Apostles: Paul’s speech at Athens

Week 17 Monday, 2 May 2016

Lesson 15

Exam 4

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

The final grade will be determined by the result of four examinations and the exegesis paper being averaged equally.

The following grade scale is published in the Catalog.

Grade Interpretation

Grade	Honor Points	Percent	Interpretation
A	4.0	100-94	Exceptional/Outstanding performance
A-	3.7	93-90	Superior
B+	3.3	89-87	Very Good
B	3.0	86-83	Good/Graduate level performance
B-	2.7	82-80	Average
C+	2.3	79-76	Below Average/Below graduate performance
C	2.0	75-70	Minimum Acceptable
C-	0	69 and below	Fail
F	0		Failing - In Pass/Fail courses no honor points
P	0		Passing - In Pass/Fail courses; no honor points

W	0	Withdrawal - No credit or honor points
I	0	Incomplete - No credit or honor points

Incomplete Grades - An Incomplete, “I,” grade is given in exceptional situations to a student whose course work has been satisfactory, but who because of illness or other unforeseen circumstances has been unable to complete all course requirements. The student must request the “I” from the instructor before the final class of the course. *A Petition for an “I” Grade* is filed with the Academic Dean’s Office and Registrar’s Office. The work is to be completed no later than eight weeks from the end of the term. If an “I” is not removed by the final designated date, it automatically becomes an “F.”

Drop/Add Withdrawal - A student may drop, add or withdraw from this course only after having complied with all the procedures outlined in the current Catalog.

General Guidelines

Guidelines for Academic Study - Students are expected to devote at least 2-3 hours of study per week, per credit. A normal reading load is about 500 pages per credit and research writing of about 5 pages per credit.

Standards for Written Assignments - Class assignments must be submitted electronically and in hard copy, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor, and proofread for proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and form. In preparing research papers requiring documentation, students are to follow the guidelines in Kate L. Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, (latest edition). The manual is available in the Campus Bookstore and Library. Students are required to reference the *Student Writing Guide* posted on the Seminary Web Site. The Writing Center is available to aid students in preparing written and/or oral assignments. Non native English speaking students must use the Writing Center located in the Campus Academic Center, Room 107.

Disabilities Accommodation – Students enrolled in this course who have documented disabilities should contact the professor at the first class session. Reasonable accommodations will be made to ensure that students with disabilities have access to course materials and interaction in modes in which they can receive them.

Class recording – Prior permission to record class lectures must be obtained. A signed affidavit may be required. Consult the professor before any recording takes place.

Class Attendance – Seminarians are required to be punctual and regularly in attendance at class sessions. Non seminarian students enrolled in online courses may chose, at their discretion, to attend classes in person or online in real time or time shifted. At the opening of a term, instruc-

tors will inform students of any specific policies governing attendance. Frequent absences may result in an academic penalty and/or failure in the course. Students should confer with the instructor concerning foreseen absences.

Inclement Weather - Students are expected to exercise good judgment and precaution in determining the safety of travel from their areas. Classes that have resident faculty and students exclusively will meet.

Academic Integrity - Students are expected to maintain personal honesty and professional integrity in examinations, assigned papers, and research projects. Source materials and citations used in the preparation of papers are to be indicated by proper documentation. Copyright laws should be honored when duplicating materials. Plagiarism and cheating are a breach of academic integrity. Plagiarism is defined as: “to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (a created production) without crediting the source: to commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source” (*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary 9th ed*, Springfield, MA: Merriam, 1981, p. 870). Violations in this area are considered a serious offense. If a student is suspected of plagiarism, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. When the instructor *suspects* a student has plagiarized an assignment, the instructor may confront the student.
2. If the instructor has *evidence* that a student has plagiarized an assignment, the instructor should confront the student with the evidence. The student has an opportunity to explain what happened.
3. If the instructor is convinced that plagiarism has occurred, the instructor may suggest a course of action: e.g. rewrite the assignment and receive a grade or the student may take a “0” for the assignment and not rewrite the assignment.
4. The Academic Dean should be informed of the outcome of this discussion and a note will be placed in the student’s file. The respective formation mentor is informed by the Academic Dean.
5. If there are repeated offenses, the student will fail the course.
6. The student who fails a required course must repeat it.
7. A student who plagiarizes or cheats consistently in the academic program will be dismissed from the program.
8. For dismissal from the academic program, a board consisting of the Rector, Academic Dean, the student’s mentor, the faculty member(s) affected by the student’s plagiarism and a faculty member of the student’s choosing will be convened and a decision rendered. This decision will be communicated to the student by the Rector.

Cheating is defined as “to deprive of something valuable by the use of deceit or fraud; to influence or lead by deceit, trick, or artifice; to elude or thwart by or as if by outwitting <cheat death>*intransitive verb*: to practice fraud or trickery; to violate rules dishonestly <cheat at cards><cheating on a test> (“cheat.” Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2010. Merriam-Webster Online. 5 May2010 <http://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/cheat>). In short,

“cheating is defined as the intentional act of breaking the rules, or attempting to achieve personal gain through fraud or deceit. With children, cheating usually refers to academic fraud, such as copying answers from another student while taking an exam, or breaking the rules in a game” (Dianne K. Daeg de Mott, Thomson Gale, Detroit, Gale Encyclopedia of Childhood and Adolescence,1998).

Examples of cheating in an academic setting include, but are not limited to:

- a. copying answers for an exam from another student;
- b. writing out the answers to an exam beforehand and turning them in at the time of the exam;
- c. obtaining the answers to an exam prior to the exam and using them during the exam in some way;
- d. having another person take an exam or write a paper for you;
- e. continuing to write answers to an exam after the time has expired (timed examinations);
- f. obtaining copies of an exam or answer key to aid in studying for the exam or preparing an assignment;
- g. passing notes to another student during an exam;
- h. asking another student for help during the writing of an exam;
- i. using another person’s paper, presentation, reflection, etc. and handing it in as your own work;
- j. using electronic devices such as computers or mobile phones to obtain answers during an exam.

(The term “exam” may be substituted with “quiz,” “paper,” or “presentation” as the case

Notice of Change

The information in this syllabus is subject to change. The professor reserves the right to make any necessary changes.

Bibliography

Students are encouraged to use the many on-line resources available through the campus library or any other modern library.

The following works are especially recommended:

Anchor Bible

Anchor Bible Dictionary.

Brown, R. E. *An Introduction to the New Testament.* New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Brown, R. E. *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary.* Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall. 1990.

Elenchus of Biblica. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Press.

Hermaneia

Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible

New Testament Message Series

Obloy, Leonard G. *Infancy Narrative Mini-series.* Hamilton, VA: The Catholic Distance University. 1991.

Obloy, Leonard G. *Witness: A Journey Through the Passion Narratives.* Hamilton: Hamilton, VA: The Catholic Distance University. 1994.

Sacra Pagina Series