



AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE  
TRANSFORMING CATHOLICS FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

**THEO 501 The Creed: The Trinity, Christ and the Church**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Fall 2021**

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***A. Course Description:***

This course offers a synthetic summary of the *symbolum fidei*, the Christian Creed, with particular reference to its effective presentation in catechesis. It follows the outline of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* while making reference to the biblical, liturgical and magisterial foundations of the doctrines and how they are manifested in the life of the Church.

***B. Required Readings (Electronic editions are acceptable):***

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 1997. Paragraphs 1-1065. (Optional: *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2011. Questions 1-217. You may find this helpful because it sums up the longer CCC in a shorter question and answer format).

St. John Henry Newman, *Everyday Meditations*, Sophia Institute Press, 2013.

Frank J. Sheed, *Theology and Sanity*, Ignatius Press, 1993 or Aeterna Press, 2015.

C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*, HarperOne 2009 (or other versions).

Other reading material from the fathers of the Church, saints, and spiritual authors will be made available in PDF form on Canvas.

***C. Grading Criteria:***

Students will be evaluated in the following way:

1. Class participation and discussion (10%)
2. Assignment on the Fall (30%)
3. Assignment on *De Incarnatione* (30%)
5. Final Exam on entire course (30%)

**PLEASE READ ATTACHED RUBRICS**

**Note on due dates:** All due dates are midnight MST. They are marked on Canvas as 9:59 pm MST so that on the East Coast the date is still correct (i.e. so that it doesn't show as 2am on the day after), but so as long as it is in by midnight MST, it is on time.

**Note on extensions and late assignments:** I am understanding of real life issues and happy to grant extensions when needed. Please contact me at least 48 hours prior to the due date to arrange an extension. If you do not ask for an extension least 48 hours prior, the professor reserves the right to penalize late assignments (usually ½ grade each day – so from A to A-, etc.).

### ***Class Participation (10%)***

**On Campus:** Attend class. If you miss **more than one** please make up your participation with one of the distance options listed below. You do not need to submit a participation report unless you miss more than one class.

**Distance Education:** You need to participate in **5 of the following** to get full credit:

- 1) Online discussions (introduction week doesn't count!). There are three discussion prompts available on Canvas. To participate in a discussion, make one post of your own and respond **at least twice** to classmates (this could be twice to the same classmate). Posts and responses should fall between **150-350 words**. The discussion posts are not open for the entire semester, to encourage participation while the class is ongoing rather than all at the end.
  - a. Discussion 1: The Trinity and Catechesis (corresponds to class session 3) **Closes Nov. 12**
  - b. Discussion 2: The Incarnation and the Catholic Worldview (corresponds to class sessions 6-7) **Closes Dec. 10**
  - c. Discussion 3: A Resurrection People (corresponds to class sessions 9-10)
- 2) Coffee with the Professor (Webinar). We will host 3 open webinar sessions throughout the term for you to hang out and ask questions via Zoom.
  - a. Dates: **Oct 7 (Th), Nov 4 (Th), Dec 9 (Th)**. All at 2:30 PST / 3:30 MST / 4:30 CST / 5:30 EST.
  - b. Instructions are on Canvas. You either click a link to join via computer or call the listed phone number to join via phone. Make sure you are clicking the right link for the right date!
- 3) Listen to a Coffee with the Professor Webinar which you did not attend (they will be recorded and posted).

At the end of the class you will have to self-report your participation (i.e. you will have to submit a document that says which discussion posts you made, webinars you attended or listened to – it will be either be 3 webinars and 2 discussions or vice versa. Remember that listening to a recorded webinar counts if you cannot attend live. Please provide a numbered list of the 5 participation items and the dates on which they were completed. **[Dec 17]**

### ***Assignment on the Fall of Adam and Eve (30%) [Oct 11]***

See attached rubric.

### ***Assignment on De Incarnation (On the Incarnation) (30%) [Nov 8]***

See attached rubric.

### ***Final Exam (30%) [by Dec 17]***

The material for the exam will be cumulative for the entire semester. It is closed book. You will have two hours to complete the exam. It will be available for roughly one week (from Dec 10-17).

The exam is three parts:

- A series of T/F questions intended to test your knowledge of Catholic teaching as presented in the CCC. There will be a section dedicated to the doctrine of the Trinity.
- Multiple choice questions based on lecture and the CCC.

- A long essay where you will be asked to explain one article of the Creed as if to an RCIA class (the article will not be given out of ahead of time)

Exam review is posted on Canvas.

#### ***D. Learning Goals and Objectives:***

*After completing this course, you should, among other things, be able to:*

1. Discuss the context, aims and intended uses of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)*.
2. Recognize and affirm the *CCC* as a sure norm for teaching the Catholic faith, based on Sacred Scripture, Apostolic Tradition, and the Magisterium.
3. Use the *CCC* to develop catechetical lessons.
4. Describe the function of the creed as a symbol of faith.
5. Understand and discuss the major doctrines of the first pillar of the *CCC* along with their biblical, liturgical and magisterial foundations.

#### ***E. Course Outline and Reading Assignments:***

- Readings which were not on the required reading list for purchase are posted on Canvas

<b><i>Session</i></b>	<b><i>Topic</i></b>	<b><i>Reading Assignment</i></b>
<b>1</b> Week of Aug 30	The <i>Catechism of the Catholic Church: A Symphony of Faith</i>	Listen: Jaroslav Pelikan “The Need for Creeds” from the podcast <i>On Being</i> (the mp3 can be found on Canvas, or listen here: <a href="https://onbeing.org/programs/jaroslav-pelikan-the-need-for-creeds/">https://onbeing.org/programs/jaroslav-pelikan-the-need-for-creeds/</a> )  Read: <i>CCC Fidei Depositum</i> and paragraphs 1-25 Christian Smith, “On Moralistic Therapeutic Deism,” p.1-6.
<b>2</b> Week of Sept 6 [due to labor day: in person class is <b>Fri. Sept 10, 2-5]</b>	“I believe:” Revelation and the Response of Faith	Read: <i>CCC</i> 26-197 (Compendium q. 1-35); Sheed chapters 1-2; Mk. 8:22-10:52, Letters of Mother Teresa (Selections)  Reflect: Flannery O’Connor, Two Letters to Alfred Corn (Reading)
<b>3</b> Week of Sept 13	In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit	Read: <i>CCC</i> 198-268 (Compendium q. 36-49); Sheed chapters 3-4, 6-9, Augustine <i>On the Trinity</i> (Selections), Michael Peppard “The Music of the Trinity”  Reflect: El Greco - The Trinity (Painting)
<b>4</b> Week of Sept 20	Creator of Heaven and Earth	Read: <i>CCC</i> 269-354 (Compendium q. 50-65); Sheed chapters 10-11; Gen. 1:1-2:4, Benedict XVI <i>In the Beginning</i> (1 <sup>st</sup> homily)  Reflect: Newman <i>Meditations</i> 1 and 47 (Prayer) Francis of Assisi – The Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon (Prayer/Song)
<b>5</b> Week of Sept 27	Made in the Image of God and the Fall	Read: <i>CCC</i> 355-421 (Compendium q. 66-78); Sheed chapters 13-14; Gen. 2:4-4:26; Augustine <i>The Confessions</i> and <i>City of God</i> (selections), Irenaeus <i>Against Heresies</i> (selections), Benedict XVI <i>In the Beginning</i> (4 <sup>th</sup> homily); John Paul II <i>Catechesis on Original Sin</i>  Reflect: Newman <i>Meditations</i> 14 (Prayer); Milton <i>Paradise Lost</i> Book 4 (Selection; Reading)

6 Week of Oct 4	The Son of God Became Man (Why?)	Read: CCC 422-463 (Compendium q. 79-100), Thomas Aquinas <i>Summa Theologiae</i> 3.1.1-6, Origen <i>Contra Celsum</i> (selection)  Optional: Athanasius <i>On the Incarnation</i> (p. 1-51 – but you will need to read this at some point for your assignment)  Reflect: Newman <i>Meditations</i> 23 and 25 (Prayer)
7 Week of Oct 11	The Son of God Became Man (How?)	Read: CCC 464-511; Sheed chapter 5; Cyril of Alexandria <i>Second Letter to Nestorius</i> ; Thomas Aquinas <i>Summa Theologiae</i> 3.2.11  Reflect: Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence (Song)
8 Week of Oct 18	The Mysteries of Christ's Life	Read: CCC 512-570 (Compendium q. 101-111); Sheed chapters 15-16  Reflect: Fyodor Dostoevsky "The Grand Inquisitor" in <i>Brothers Karamazov</i> (Reading)
9 Week of Oct 25	Christ's Redemptive Death in God's Plan of Salvation	Read: CCC 571-637 (Compendium q. 112-124); Sheed chapters 17-19; Brian Daley "He Himself is Our Peace" (Ephesians 2:14); Early Christian Views of Redemption in Christ"  Reflect: Newman <i>Meditations</i> 9 (Prayer)
10 Week of Nov 1	The Risen One and the Sending of the Spirit	Read: CCC 638-736 (Compendium q. 125-146); Pope Benedict XVI General Audience "The Decisiveness of the Resurrection"  Reflect: Gustav Doré – Vision of the Cross (Etching) Dante <i>Paradiso</i> Canto XIV (Reading) Newman <i>Meditations</i> 36-39 (Prayer)
11 Week of Nov 8	The Mystery of the Church	Read: CCC 737-810 (Compendium q. 147-160); Sheed chapter 22, Augustine Sermon 137 and on Psalm 34  Reflect: <i>Odes of Solomon</i> 3 (Prayer)
12 Week of Nov 15	The One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church	Read: CCC 811-945 (Compendium q. 161-193); Sheed chapter 23; Augustine Sermon 272  Reflect: Raphael – The Disputation of the Sacrament (Painting) Francisco Podesti – The Proclamation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception (Painting)
<b>Break</b> (Week of Nov 22)		Thanksgiving
13 Week of Nov 29	<i>Sancta Sanctis</i> : The Communion of Saints	Read: CCC 946-987 (Compendium q. 194-206)  Reflect: Gustav Doré – The Emphyreon (Etching) El Greco – The Burial of Count Orgaz (Painting)
14 Week of Dec 6	Some Last Thoughts and the Last Things	CCC 988-1065 (Compendium q. 207-217); Sheed chapters 24-25; C.S. Lewis <i>The Great Divorce</i> (whole text)  Reflect: Francisco Pacheco – The Last Judgment (Painting)

Week of Dec 13	FINALS WEEK	
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## ***F. Rubrics***

### **Citation Style and Formatting**

If you are citing an assigned text, do a simple inline citation with the author and section or page number. If that author has multiple texts assigned in this class, also include the text. E.g. (Augustine *Confessions* 3.2.2).

Word count includes **all words** – title, name, footnotes, etc. One exception: if you use any additional texts, then provide full footnote and bibliography, done in style of your choice (e.g. Chicago) - these do not count against your total words.

No cover page is needed for any assignment. I do not care about other style considerations as long as you are consistent and don't do anything wild like use size 18 font.

Please double-space your assignments and submit as a PDF file if possible.

### **Original Sin Essay Assignment Rubric**

#### **Description**

The goal of this assignment is for you to learn to use and synthesize texts to help you explain a theological idea. Your essay must be 1000-1250 words; these words counts are absolute and you will be penalized if you do not fall within this limit.

- 1) Pick **one** of the following two essay prompts (make it clear which one you are answering):
  - a. What is the Original Sin of Adam and Eve (pride, envy, covetousness, a childlike rebellion)? What difference does it make to us today (intellectually and/or spiritually)?
  - b. How and why is Original Sin inherited by the rest of the human race? What difference does it make to us today (intellectually and/or spiritually)?

It might make sense in either of these essays for you to begin by explaining the Fall story or the concept of Original Sin in the *CCC*, but this is not required.

- 2) Pick **two** of the authors we read in class to help answer your prompt; one ancient and one modern. You must cite each author at least twice, but ideally they will influence your entire essay. They may disagree with one another, they may help you get a broader perspective, they may agree and build on one another – just use them constructively to answer your question. The texts you may choose from are selections we read in class and on the syllabus. They are:
  - a. Ancient: St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*; St. Augustine, *City of God*; St. Augustine *The Confessions*
  - b. Modern: Pope St. John Paul II, *Summary on Original Sin*; Ratzinger (aka Benedict XVI), “*In the Beginning...*”

**Grading Rubric; Assignment has 25 total points**

Evaluation Item	Points awarded	Evaluation Method
Accurate and engaging theology	10	10 – Student understood the theology of Original Sin very well, explained with clarity and even made some deeper observations 8-9 – Student had a high level of theological understanding and clarity 6-7 – Student got the basics and expressed them 4-5 – Student got some points but missed major ideas and was unclear 3 and below – Student was vague and/or missed or misunderstood major points
Use of ancient and modern source texts	10	9-10 – Student understood and employed both texts very well 7-8 – Student had a good understanding of source texts and employed them 5-6 – Student understood some points, but missed others and/or did not employ the texts 4 and below – student failed to use assigned texts or had major misunderstandings
Structure and clarity	5 points	5 – Paper structured, clear, easy to follow 3-4 – Paper has some structure but not executed well 1-2 – Paper has little structure and/or was hard to follow
Total	25 points	20% of grade

**POINTS FOR GRAMMAR:** I will take off one point for each typo or grammatical error *after the first three*, up to a maximum of *three points* (in other words: you get three free errors, and can lose up to three points for errors after the first three). Please hand in a clean, clear, concise assignment!

## Athanasius *On the Incarnation* Reading Assignment Rubric

### Description

The goal of this assignment is to foster your ability to read a classic theological text (Athanasius' *On the Incarnation*), and to communicate its main points. I have provided a PDF of the text for you on Canvas. For this assignment you will:

- 1) Summarize the most important point of discussion or the key argument being made in each numbered section of the reading (Athanasius' *On the Incarnation*) in **no more than 65 words** per section. There are **31 numbered sections**. Do not go even **one word** over. Your total word count for the summaries will therefore be around 2000 words (31 sections x 65 words).

You do not need to say "Athanasius writes..." at the beginning of each summary, but you may if you wish, as I have done in the example below.

- 2) At the end of the assignment, summarize what you think is the main theological point that Athanasius is trying to make. It may help you to think of the summary in terms of the main question Athanasius is asking (for example: why did the Word become incarnate?), and then how that question is answered. This summary is to **be no longer than 300 words**.

### Grading Rubric; Assignment has 41 total points

Task	Points awarded	Evaluation
Summarize the argument in each numbered section	1 point per numbered section (31 points total)	<p>1 – Student has understood clearly the direction of the argument, and has stated it clearly.</p> <p>.5 – Student understood some of the argument, and has stated it with some clarity</p> <p>0 – Student misunderstood the argument, or did not state it in an intelligible way.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> I will only credit you max .5 if you exceed 65 words.</p>
Summarize the overall theological argument	10 points	<p>9-10 – The student has a synthetic and clear understanding of Athanasius' theological ideas, and has stated a vision of the scope of the text clearly.</p> <p>7-8 – The student has a good understanding of Athanasius' theological ideas, but lacks</p>

		<p>some clarity or sense of the whole. Student does not make major errors with respect to Athanasius' argument.</p> <p>5-6 – The student has made a strong effort to synthesize the text, but with serious lack of scope. May emphasize some minor points at the expense of major points. May misrepresent Athanasius' arguments at points.</p> <p>Under 5 – The student does not show a good understanding of the scope of the text, lacks clarity, and emphasizes minor points at the expense of more important ones. Misrepresents Athanasius' arguments at points.</p>
Total	41 points	20% of grade
<p><b>POINTS FOR GRAMMAR:</b> I will take off one point for each typo or grammatical error <i>after the first five</i>, up to a maximum of <i>five points</i> (in other words: you get five free errors, but can lose up to five points for errors after the first five). Please hand in a clean, clear, concise assignment!</p>		

**Example Summaries**

Below is an example of how the assignment would look if I were completing it for Augustine's *On The Trinity* (from the selection we read earlier in the semester). I just completed the first two sections from that reading, as an example.

Book XII.5.5

In this section, Augustine is discussing whether the image of a family (a father, a mother and a child) is a helpful one for understanding the doctrine of the Trinity. Augustine explains that he will go on to reject this image, but he does not reject it simply on the basis that it is too corporeal or uses fleshly ideas.

Book XII.6.6

Augustine does not reject the family analogy because he finds the idea that Love is the spouse of the Father to be distasteful, but because he considers it unbiblical. Every individual human being is made in the image of God (Gen. 2:14), and therefore it is not right to think of three people added together (father, mother, and child) as the image of the Trinity.