

GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS - Spring 2008

Course: RELI 220: Catholicism
Credits: 3 Credits
Instructor: Don Dr. Alessandro Andreini



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PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to discover and understand catholic faith in relation with history. We live in an age in which it's really difficult to believe in an almighty God and to understand his project for humankind. God seems not to be able to solve all the problems, to answer all our questions, as perhaps we have learned to think. But God is so different from that one we usually think to: it is possible to discover his true and deeper face and find that He has still something to say to our world. His project is nevertheless open, God has nevertheless a future in our age.

In this perspective, we are going to look to the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council, the most important event of Catholic Church in XX century, as an effort to represent the substance of the ancient doctrine in new words, and to understand in a new way the commitment of believers in our time. So, starting from Bible, exactly from the early God's project described in *Genesis*, passing through Christ redemption, we'll look forward for Christian's commitment today.

As anyone can see, this is the essential structure of the Second Vatican Council in its chief four Constitutions: *Dei Verbum*, the dogmatic document about divine revelation, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, on liturgy, *Lumen Gentium*, the document about Church in itself, *Gaudium et Spes*, reflecting on Church in its relation with contemporary world.

AIMS

The course hopes to give students a serious sight of Catholic Church in our age, understanding how Catholic faith can give an answer to the new challenges of our time, above all discovering that Catholicism has still a future that is to say that Christ has really conquered the world (cfr. *John* 16.33). The problem is to understand how he has conquered the world and, above all, how he still is in train to conquer it!

REQUIRED TEXTS

The Bible

Jesus and Community by Gerhard Lohfink, Fortress Press, Philadelphia 1984

Catholicism at the dawn of the third millennium, by Thomas P. Rausch, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota 1996

The four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council (Dei Verbum, Sacrosanctum Concilium, Lumen Gentium, Gaudium et Spes)

God's project for humankind: text by Dr. Don Alessandro Andreini

COLLATERAL TEXTS

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1994

The Creed. The apostolic Faith in Contemporary Theology, by Berard Marthaler, Twenty-third Publications, Connecticut 1993

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE

1. *Class attendance* following Gonzaga University's policy regarding absences
2. *Active participation (20%)* in class discussions, through observations, thoughtful questions, above all offering of one's own insights.
3. *Mid-Term (20%)* and final essay *(30%) examinations*
4. *Paper (30%)* on one aspect of the course in the form that will be showed by the middle of February

OFFICE HOURS

By appointment only. Generally, Dr. Andreini will be available immediately after class on Wednesday and on some afternoons to discuss issues for the position paper and any other aspect of the course.