

**IPS 531-001**  
**Christian Doctrine and Its History**  
**Grace, Christ, and the Spirit**  
**Summer, 2009 – On-Line**

**Instructors:** Robert Ludwig, Ph.D. and Heidi Russell, Ph.D.  
Lewis Towers #630,

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**Class Meets:** May 18 – August 8, 2009

**Required Texts:**

- **Hans Kung**, *Great Christian Thinkers* (Continuum, 1996—ISBN 0-8264-0848-6)
- **Robert Ludwig**, *Instructor's Essays* (available thru IPS Office: [sozuk@luc.edu](mailto:sozuk@luc.edu))
- **Karen Kilby**, *Karl Rahner: A Brief Introduction* (Crossroad, 2007—ISBN 0-8245-2428-4)
- **Elizabeth Johnson**, *Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God* (Continuum, 2007—ISBN 978-0826417701)

**Course Description:** Today many Christians have little or no understanding of how the New Testament experience became translated into Christian doctrine; many have little or no insight into how Christian theology today understands the dynamics of sin and grace, the notion of salvation, the role of Jesus Christ as understood by Christian faith. This course is an overview of fundamental Christian theology—from the New Testament, to Augustine, to Aquinas, to Karl Rahner—focused on the core doctrines of grace, Christ, and Trinity. In this course, students will pursue an understanding of the Catholic core: how God has been wedded to humanity and creation in Jesus Christ and how we are called to participate in this divine-human communion in and through incarnation and grace. We will explore the experiential foundations of Christian doctrine and see the evolution of interpretation from early centuries to the present. Much of the course will explore contemporary, pastoral understandings of Christian doctrine: How might we understand and explain the Catholic core in our ministries on the ground today? We will move between experience and doctrine and back to experience, helping students gain insight into both as they come to understand the dynamic process that leads from experience to doctrine—and, in theology, back again to experience and to ministry. What theologians refer to as “soteriology”—theology of salvation—is the heart of this course, which will involve significant reading and writing assignments as well as in-class discussions. This is a basic theology course for anyone involved in Christian ministry.

The course is divided into two sections: (1) the historical evolution of Christian doctrine and its theological interpretations through the Council of Trent and Vatican II; (2) the development of doctrine in the post-Vatican II era, including an in-depth study of Karl Rahner’s fundamental theology and contemporary theological issues—with applications to present-day pastoral ministry.

- The primary text for Part One is Hans Kung’s book, *Great Christian Thinkers*. At the end of this section of the course, there will be a mid-term exam (see below).
- The primary texts for Part Two are Karen Kilby’s book, *Karl Rahner* and Elizabeth Johnson’s book, *Quest for the Living God*. Additional readings from primary sources will be posted on Blackboard. At the end of this section of the course, there will be a final exam.

## Instructors' Expectations/Course Requirements/Grading Standards:

- **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- There are two most important learning outcomes: (1) **Insight into the connections between lived experience and doctrine, between Christian faith and how that faith is explained in different historical and cultural contexts**—the process involved in the emergence of doctrine and how theology morphs Christian understanding of that doctrine through the centuries and in various cultural contexts—this is the first critical learning for students. (2) **The ability to understand and relate the fundamental theology of Karl Rahner for faith and ministry contexts today**—this is the second critical learning outcome for students in this course.
- In order to accomplish the above, students will need to develop some strategic and procedural knowledge. They will **learn to think about how faith pushes towards understanding, articulation, and connections with how one understands self, others, and world**—how religious experience compels its appropriation and integration, and ultimately expresses itself in ecclesial forms. Students will discover the tools of historical theology and correlation—the dynamic of revising theological understanding in the light of new ways of thinking and understanding in changed historical-cultural contexts—and the hermeneutical task of translating their meaning into present contexts.
- Utilizing these methods, students will **gain a sense of the evolution of Christian faith from the world of the Apostle Paul and churches that grew up in the Jewish Diaspora, to the Hellenistic world on Greco-Roman cities, to the establishment of Christianity as official religion of the Roman Empire, and on up into the Reformation and the emergence of modernity.** Here they will see an evolution of faith according to changing contexts—an understanding of salvation and the patterns of discipleship that changes depending on the world of the people who embrace belief in Jesus risen and the Spirit present.
- Finally—and not unimportantly—**students will learn to “translate” ancient truths into their own contexts** by thinking about their own experience and the world of the faith communities in which they minister or plan to minister.
- **Please thoughtfully consider the chart below**, where the learning goals for this course are carefully outlined. Understanding the course goals and pursuing the course competencies are the main tasks of each student.

<b>Thinking about Competencies</b>	
<p><b>Strategic Knowledge</b> The thinking strategies and processes students will need to develop in this course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategy of “critiquing present presuppositions and assumptions” about fundamental categories in faith: How to retrieve past understandings by discovering them in their original historical contexts and assessing the gains and losses as the tradition morphs its understandings of the human, the world, salvation, and God</li> <li>• The strategy of translation: How to connect the meanings and values manifested in earliest Christianity to the present day contexts of faith and ministry</li> </ul>
<p><b>Procedural Knowledge</b> Procedures, techniques, and methods taught in this course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical-critical theology, contextual correlation, and the science of hermeneutics (how faith experience and theological understanding connect)</li> <li>• Assessment and critical thinking in theology—developing criteria and process for evaluating strengths and weaknesses in theological expression</li> </ul>
<p><b>Factual Knowledge</b> Knowledge of facts, details, concepts, and terminology that students will become familiar with in this course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factual understandings of Christian doctrine interpreted in key historical moments resulting in theological paradigms: the Greek Fathers, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, the Council of Trent, and 20<sup>th</sup> century theology, especially the thought of Karl Rahner</li> </ul>

- **REGULAR ON-LINE PARTICIPATION:** It is very important that students work with the course in a regular and consistent manner by spending several hours on-line each week, viewing videotapes and PowerPoint lectures, listening to pod casts, posting written assignments, responding to others’ postings, and participating in our “live” on-line discussions on Tuesday evenings, 7:00-8:30 PM Central Daylight Time. Not participating in the course on a regular basis will create serious problems for students wanting to complete the course successfully. If you need to absent yourself due serious illness or other very important reasons, you need to call the instructor’s voice-mail (312/915-7467 for Robert Ludwig and 414/412-5276 for Heidi Russell) to explain your situation.
- **CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Each week students will be engaged in on-line discussion boards: posting written assignments and responding to others’ postings. These on-line discussions (as well as the synchronos discussion on Tuesday evenings) presume that students have done the readings for that week. Doing the assigned readings is preparation for the significant on-line work, including viewing and listening to the instructor’s on-line postings, the on-line discussions, etc. There will be weekly postings relative to the readings. Student participation in these is worth **50 points** each toward final grade.

- **MIDTERM EXAM:** Following Part One of the course, students will write essay responses to several questions. This exam, with several extended essays, will be worth **25 points** of the final grade.
- **FINAL EXAM:** At the conclusion of the course, students will write essay responses to several questions. This exam will be worth **25 points** of the final grade.

**How to Write Essays for EXAMS:** There will be several questions posed. Students must respond to these questions with thoughtful essays. Sometimes students can choose between and among questions to answer. Students are expected to write thoughtful, focused, and well-organized essays in response to each question.

The process includes:

- 1) Read the question carefully—then review readings and class notes with this question in mind.
- 2) Reflect and think (take a walk)—find your own voice: what is the main thing you want to say in response to this question?
- 3) Create a brief outline to develop your focused response.
- 4) Write your paper, utilizing the outline.
- 5) Review and edit. Check for writing errors.
- 6) Move to the next question and repeat this process.

**Each essay should have its own title, imaginatively and succinctly stating the essay’s focus. Use Arial 11 point type face. When referring to the required texts, simply do so parenthetically (author, page numbers)—no lengthy quotes from the texts. If you are utilizing additional resources, be sure to clearly cite the sources in endnotes. No bibliography is needed.**

<b>Grading Grid:</b>				
94-100 = A	92-93 = A-	90-91 = B+	87-89 = B	85-86 = B-
83-84 = C+	81-82 = C	80 = C-	Below 80 = F	

**Plagiarism, Cheating, Academic Dishonesty:** Students are hereby advised of the strong sanctions against plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" in the course and possible expulsion from IPS. ***If you have any questions about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials, you should consult the instructor.*** Proper citation procedures are provided in all standard writing manuals. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see the instructor.

**Reading Schedule:** Readings should be completed prior to on-line postings and discussions:

**5/18-24** – Course Introduction: Biblical Foundations for Christian Doctrine  
 Instructor’s Essay on “Pauline Theology” and Kung’s first chapter,  
 “Paul: Christianity Becomes a World Religion”

**5/25-31** – The Greek Paradigm  
 – Instructor’s Essay, “Experience and Doctrine: Earliest Fundamental Theology,”  
 and Kung’s second chapter, “Origen: The Great Synthesis of Antiquity and the  
 Christian Spirit”

- 6/1-7** – Augustine, Pelagius, and Donatism—The Latin Catholic Paradigm  
 – Kung, chapter 3 (“Augustine: The Father of All Western Latin Theology”)
- 6/8-15** – Thomas Aquinas  
 – Kung chapter 4 (“Thomas Aquinas: University Science and Papal Court Theology”) and Instructor’s Essay “From Augustine to Thomas Aquinas”
- 6/16-22** – Kung’s chapter 5 on Martin Luther and the Reformation and Instructor’s Essay on the Reformation and Trent
- 6/23-29** – Exam #1 Due [Discussions on Key Developments in the Evolution of Doctrine]
- 6/30-7/6** – Karl Rahner, Grace  
 – Kilby, pp. 1-37; Rahner readings #1
- 7/7-7/13** – Karl Rahner, Christ  
 – Kilby, pp. 50-73; Johnson, Ch. 2; Rahner readings #2
- 7/14-7/20** – Political and Liberation Theology  
 – Johnson, Ch. 3-4; Liberation Theology readings
- 7/21-7/27** – Liberation Theologies  
 – Johnson, Ch. 5-7
- 7/26-8/3** – Contemporary Issues  
 – Johnson, 8-10
- 8/4-8/7** – Exam Due on 8/6