**Course Description**

The course will introduce to the former pope’s theological vision of the Roman Catholic Church in interaction with contemporary thought. It will do so by way of a hermeneutic that parallels his central work as theologian, *Introduction to Christianity* (1968) with successive writings, including *Jesus of Nazareth* and the Encyclical Letters (*Deus Caritas Est*, *Spe Salvi* and *Caritas in Veritatem*), published during his pontificate. A focus will be placed on topics which are situated at the intersection of Church and modernity and as such pave the way for the agenda that the current pontificate stands for, e.g. Catholic Tradition versus Reform in time (*Aggiornamento*), the Quest for Justice and economy models and Christian Faith in dialogue with Atheism/Agnosticism and other Religions.

If numerous portraits label Joseph Ratzinger as conservative or hardliner, at closer inspection it appears that his thought requires careful and measured analysis, revealing the acute awareness of the need to articulate a theology which aims at engaging with the most pertinent incentives and issues that theological thought received from the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) in which Ratzinger himself participated as adviser to highlight the essence of Christian doctrine in dialogue/confrontation with contemporary thought. **Classes will be a combination of lecture, discussion, papers and exams.**

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of the course students should be able to:

- analyze and determine Joseph Ratzinger’s theological stances towards the “dialectics of secularization”, in particular his emphasis on the requirement to (re)build relations between Faith and Reason.
- develop an understanding and articulate a personal judgment regarding the points of continuity and change in Ratzinger’s thought over time, in dialogue and dispute with contemporary thought and different theologies.
- assess key concepts found in theological texts and apply to concrete contemporary issues

**Required Text / Materials**


All additional material (required readings) will be made available through Loyola SAKAI (https://sakai.luc.edu).

**Attendance Policy**

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy:

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
This course meets once a week, thus a total of 1 unexcused absence(s) will be permitted. Prompt attendance, preparation (Students are expected to complete all assigned reading before the relevant lecture or discussion section. 2 questions based on the weekly reading assignments to posted on Sakai/FORUM) and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

Unexcused absences beyond these, as well as failing to submit preparatory questions more than twice, will result in a lowering of your final grade.

Assessment Components

- Participation 30%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Paper 25%
- Final Exam 25%

Grading
94-100: A
90-93: A-
87-89: B+
84-86: B
80-83: B-
77-79: C+
74-76: C
70-73: C-
67-69: D+
60-66: D
59 or lower: F

Academic Honesty
Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards here: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml. You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

Late or Missed Assignments
Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor.

Accessibility Accommodations
Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.
**SCHEDULE OF LESSONS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

*Introduction*

1. Jan 28  *Introduction* to the course; biographical and bibliographical information concerning Joseph Ratzinger.

   **I. Humanity Facing God in Today’s World**

2. Feb 04  “I believe – help my disbelief” (Mk 17,24) – Presuppositions of belief

   **Required Readings:**
   
   “Belief in the world of Today”, *Introduction to Christianity* (German original 1968), pp. 39-81

3. Feb 11  “I believe – we believe” Faith in a communion of believers

   **Required Readings:**
   
   “The Ecclesiastical Form of Faith”, *Introduction to Christianity*, pp. 82-100
   
   “The spiritual basis and ecclesial identity of theology”, in *The Nature and Mission of Theology. Essays to Orient Theology in Today’s Debate* (German original 1993), pp. 45-72

4. Feb 18  “I believe – I think rationally” – Christianity as co-existence of faith and reason in regard with God

   **Required Readings:**
   
   “Christianity, the Religion according to Reason”, lecture given by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in the convent of Saint Scholastica in Subiaco, Italy, April 1st 2005
   

   **II. God Facing Humanity in Today’s World**

5. Feb 25  The meaning of “Triune God”

   **Required Readings:**
   
   “Faith in God Today”, “Belief in the Triune God”, *Introduction to Christianity*, pp. 162-190
   
   *Encyclical “Deus Caritas est*, Part 1
   

6. Mar 04  MID-TERM EXAMINATION
III. Jesus Christ

7. Mar 18 The “heart” of Christianity: Jesus the Christ

Required Readings:

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord*, *Introduction to Christianity*, pp. 193 - 270

*Jesus of Nazareth*, Foreword and Introduction, pp. Xi-XXIV; 1-8

8. Mar 22 The “beating of the heart”: Jesus Christ according to the Christological articles

Required Readings:

“The development of Faith in Christ in the Christological Articles of the Creed”, *Introduction to Christianity*, pp. 271-327

**LAST DATE TO Submit TERM PAPER TOPICS for approval**

IV. The Church as Temple of the Holy Spirit

9. Mar 25 The dynamic (eschatological) understanding of the Church’s interaction with the world

Required Readings:

“The intrinsic unity of the last statements in the Creed”, “Two Major Questions posed by the articles on the Spirit and the Church”, *Introduction to Christianity*, pp. 331-359


*Encyclical, In Spe Salvi*, no. 1-15
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi_en.html

10. Apr 01 The Commun(i)al and Liturgical structure of the Church’s interaction with the world

Required Readings:


“Liturgy and Life: The Place of the Liturgy in Reality” in *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (German original 2000), 13-61

*Encyclical, Caritas in veritate*, no. 21-42, 68-79

11. Apr 08  Israel and the Church/The Church and World Religions

    Required Readings:

    The Sermon on the Mount in Jesus of Nazareth, pp. 64-127.

12. Apr 15  From Benedict XVI to Pope Francis

    Required Readings:

    Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, I. A Church which goes forth, numbers 20-49
    http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium_en.html#I_A_Church_which_goes_forth

    TERM PAPER DUE on this DATE

13.        FINAL EXAMINATION (as scheduled by the JFRC)

    Examples of paper topics

    Faith and Reason: A Return to an Augustinian Perspective in the Theology of J. Ratzinger

    The Mystery of the Eucharist as center of a modern theology

    How to speak about God with J. Ratzinger’s theology in today’s world

    The significance of the “Regensburg” speech for the interreligious dialogue

    Salvation for the World: an analysis of its theological significance

    Church Reform: what can Theology do to support it?

    Grace: a pervasive theme in Ratzinger’s theology and its relation to the current culture