

# Moral Theology 5132B (also Religious Studies 2238G) Introduction to Moral Theology

WINTER 2012

MONDAY and TUESDAY 11:30 AM - 12:50 PM  
Room 108, St. Peter's Seminary

**Instructor:** Fr. Peter Amszej (pamszej@hotmail.com)

Office Hours By Appointment

## A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

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An exploration of the fundamental concepts of the Catholic moral tradition: scriptural, historical and conciliar foundations, conversion and discipleship, the role of the Magisterium, natural law and the law of Christ, conscience, the moral act, sin and virtue. (3 hours)

## B. GOALS

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This course will assist students to grow in the following knowledge, skills and attitudes:

### KNOWLEDGE:

To gain a deeper knowledge of the basic concepts encountered in Catholic moral theology.

To gain a better grasp of the philosophical and historical background of the natural law tradition.

### SKILLS:

To recognize how Catholic moral theology is relevant to various contemporary issues.

To learn to discuss and examine ethical issues from a Catholic moral perspective.

### ATTITUDES:

To gain an appreciation of the influences of faith and reason on current Catholic moral thinking.

To appreciate various ways of "doing moral theology" from a Catholic perspective.

## C. ASSESSMENT

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DVD Question Sheets (10%)

Leading "Ethics in the News" Classroom Discussions (10%)

Mid-Term Exam (15%)

Paper (8 to 10 pages – due on **April 3<sup>rd</sup>**) and Presentation (35%)

Final Exam (30%)

## **D. READINGS OR TEXTBOOKS**

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*Required:*

David Bohr: *Catholic Moral Tradition, Revised Edition*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006. (Available at the UWO bookstore; the 1999 version from Our Sunday Visitor is also acceptable; other readings will be on reserve in the library).

John Paul II: *Veritatis Splendor*. (Available online at [http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0222/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0222/_INDEX.HTM))

Catechism of the Catholic Church. (Available online at [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM))

## **E. STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE**

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### **Week 1 (Jan. 9/10):**

- \* Introduction (Bohr, pp. 19-40)
- \* God / Jesus at the Centre (Bohr, pp. 33-36, 145-149; *Veritatis Splendor*, Chapter 1)

### **Week 2 (Jan. 16/17):**

- \* Old Testament Morality (Bohr, pp. 45-48; George Lobo: *Guide to Christian Living*. Westminster, Md.: Christian Classics, Inc., 1991, pp. 23-43; Pontifical Biblical Commission: *The Bible and Morality*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2008)
- \* New Testament Morality (Bohr, pp. 48-55; Lobo, pp. 44-65)

### **Week 3 (Jan. 23/24):**

- \* History of Moral Theology: Part I (Bohr, pp. 57-76)
- \* History of Moral Theology: Part II (Bernard Häring, *The Law of Christ*. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1961, pp. 3-33)

### **Week 4 (Jan. 30/31):**

- \* Christian Anthropology (Bohr, pp. 80-100; *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)*, #s 1700-1748, 1762-1775)
- \* Sin (Bohr, pp. 208-224; CCC, #s 1846-1876)

### **Week 5 (Feb. 6/7):**

- \* Conversion (Bohr, pp. 104-119; CCC, #s 1987-2029)
- \* Law (Bohr, pp. 149-166; CCC, #s 1949-1986)

**Week 6 (Feb. 13/14):**

- \* Conscience (Bohr, pp. 169-194; CCC, #s 1776-1802)
- \* Mid-Term Exam (first half of class on **Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>**)

**Break Week**

**Week 7 (Feb. 27/28):**

- \* Virtue: Part I (Bohr, pp. 199-208; CCC, #s 1803-1811)
- \* Virtue: Part II (Bohr, pp. 121-143; CCC, #s 1812-1845)

**Week 8 (Mar. 5/6):**

- \* Community (CCC, #s 1877-1948, 2030-2051; Connors and McCormick: *Character, Choices and Community*. New York: Paulist Press, 1998, pp. 54-72)
- \* No class on **March 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Week 9 (Mar. 12/13):**

- \* The Moral Act (Bohr, pp. 224-226; CCC, #s 1749-1761; St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, qq. 6-21)
- \* Traditional Principles of Catholic Morality (Bohr, pp. 226-230; Lobo, pp. 348-356)

**Week 10 (Mar. 19/20):**

- \* Issues in *Veritatis Splendor* (VS, Chapters Two and Three)

**Week 11 (Mar. 26/27):**

- \* Moral Issues in *Deus Caritas Est*. (Benedict XVI: *Deus Caritas Est* – available online at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20051225\\_deus-caritas-est\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html))
- \* Approaches to Moral Theology: Part I (Glen Stassen and David Gushee: *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2003, pp. 99-124.

**Week 12 (Apr. 2/3):**

- \* Presentations of Topics (15 to 20 minute presentation on the topic chosen for one's paper – the completed papers will be due at the end the day, **April 3<sup>rd</sup>**)

**Week 13 (Apr. 9/10):**

- \* Approaches to Moral Theology: Part II (Samuel Wells and Ben Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, pp. 113-206)
- \* Conclusion

## F. UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

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**Students are responsible** for knowing the University's academic policies and regulations and any particularities of their own course of study. These can all be found at the University's website (<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>). Ignorance of these policies is not an excuse for any violation thereof. The following policies are particularly important to note:

**Submission of Assignments:** It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments are completed on time. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission.

It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments are completed on time. For a serious reason, a student may approach the professor before the due-date, and may be granted an extension at the discretion of the professor. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean's Office. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission.

No electronic devices will be allowed during tests or the examination, unless approved in advance by Student Services at the University or King's.

Students who miss tests will negotiate a "make-up" date with the professor. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean's Office.

**Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt by quotation marks and/or footnotes. Plagiarism is a major academic offense. Students may be required to submit their work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

**Selection and Registration of Courses:** Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all prerequisite course(s) have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any anti-requisite course(s) that they have taken.