

**ST. PETER'S SEMINARY / KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE at Western  
University**

**Fundamental Moral Theology**  
**(Moral Theology 5132A / Religious Studies 2238F)**

**Course Outline – Fall 2020**

Wednesdays 9:30 AM – 12:20 PM

St. Peter's Seminary, Room 231

Instructor: Fr. Jason Kuntz

Office Hours by appointment: 519-432-1824, ext. 226 e-mail: jkuntz4@uwo.ca

**A. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An exploration of the fundamental concepts of the Catholic moral tradition in light of the Second Vatican Council: scriptural foundations, happiness, freedom, the moral act, virtue, sin and conversion, law, the formation of conscience. A particular emphasis will be given to the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

**B. GOALS**

By the end of the course the student should know and understand:

1. The most important biblical texts related to Moral Theology.
2. The fundamental concepts of the Catholic moral tradition along with the “inherent values” that underly them (see John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, 33).
3. The relationship between Catholic moral theology and dogmatic, spiritual and pastoral theology.
4. How the teaching of the Catholic Church on moral issues contributes to the flourishing of individuals and society.

By the end of the course the student should be able to:

1. Read, analyze, and explain texts of moral theology.
2. Discuss moral issues persuasively and make effective theological arguments.
3. Identify and understand contrary positions, responding to them with intelligence and charity.
4. Make prudent decisions in their own lives and assist others in prudent decision making: “we have been called to form consciences not to replace them.” (Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 37).

5. Accompany with “understanding, comfort and acceptance” those who struggle to accept the Church’s moral teaching (Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 49).

This course aims to foster the following attitudes:

1. An appreciation of Holy Scripture as the “soul of theology” and the most important source for moral theology (Second Vatican Council, *Optatam Totius*, 16).
2. An awareness of the “loftiness of the calling of the faithful in Christ and the obligation that is theirs of bearing fruit in charity for the life of the world.” (Second Vatican Council, *Optatam Totius*, 16)
3. A sense of moral theology as an “ecclesial science” which “grows in the Church and works on the Church.” A feeling of belonging to the Church and contributing to her prophetic mission (See John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, 109).
4. Religious docility towards the Magisterium of the Church as a teacher of moral norms and the authentic interpreter of the Word of God (See Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 25).
5. The desire to become “joyful messengers of challenging proposals, guardians of the goodness and beauty which shine forth in a life of fidelity to the Gospel” (Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 168).

## C. REQUIRED TEXTS

*The Holy Bible.*

Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae*. Edited by John Mortensen and Enrique Alarcón. Translated by Lawrence Shapcote O.P. 8 vols. Lander, Wyoming: The Aquinas Institute for the Study of Sacred Doctrine, 2012.

[Students are not required to purchase this text. We will only be reading short selections. This edition is available online at <https://aquinas.cc/> A very similar translation is available at [New Advent](#) and [Aquinas 101](#)]

John Paul II. Encyclical Letter *Veritatis Splendor*. August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1993. Print edition, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, available at UWO bookstore; or online: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_06081993\\_veritatis-splendor.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html)

Other readings will be distributed to students via OWL.

## D. CLASS SCHEDULE

- 1) September 9 – What is Moral Theology?

- 2) September 16 –The New Testament
- 3) September 23 – Happiness and Holiness
- 4) September 30 – Freedom and Obstacles to Freedom.
- 5) October 7 – The Moral Act. Absolute Moral Norms.

**First Paper Due**

- 6) October 14 – The Moral Act: Double Effect and Co-operation
- 7) October 21 – Passions and Virtue
- 8) October 28 – The Cardinal Virtues

November 4 - **Reading Week**

- 9) November 11 – The Theological Virtues, Infused Moral Virtue, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
  - 10) November 18 – Vice and Sin
- Second Paper Due**

- 11) November 25 – Law
- 12) December 2 – Conscience
- 13) December 9 – The New Law; Moral Theology and Evangelization.

**Take Home Exam Due before Noon on December 16.**

This class will be offered synchronously from 9:30-12:20 on Wednesdays as indicated above. If circumstances permit, students who wish will be invited to participate in person with social distancing. Students will also be able to participate remotely via Zoom.

If a large number of students and/or the instructor are unable to assist in person, the class will be offered remotely via Zoom. In this case, some elements of the course may be offered asynchronously. All students should ensure they have a computer with camera and microphone as well as a stable internet connection.

## **E. ASSESSMENT**

**1) 20% Participation**– Students are expected to participate in class discussion and may be called upon to share their thoughts on the readings. Reading questions will be given in advance of each class to assist students to prepare for the discussion. Students may also participate through the online forum.

**2) 40% Two papers** [1250 words each] - Students will be given a problem to resolve in the format of a disputed question. Students will be graded upon their ability to argue for their position, make necessary distinctions, identify objections and respond to these objections. More details will be given in class.

**3) 40% Final Exam** – The questions for the final exam will be given to students on the final day of class to be returned one week after. It will consist of two or three short essays that require the student to synthesize, explain and apply material from the course.

### **CHICAGO STYLE**

According to the policy adopted by the faculty of St. Peter's Seminary, all citations, references and bibliographies in written assignments must follow the formatting prescribed in the Chicago Manual of Style (Footnotes and Bibliography). Footnotes are to be used, rather than author-date references in the body of the text. For further information, please review and consult the summary provided by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary at the following web address:

<https://www.kenrick.edu/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Academic-Papers-and-Citations.pdf>

### **GRADING SCALE**

A+ 90 - 100% – *for profound and creative work*: exceptional performance with clear evidence of original thinking; a superior grasp of the subject matter with sound critical evaluations; strong evidence of an extensive knowledge base;

A 80 - 89% – *for excellent work*: outstanding performance with indication the student is approaching some original thinking; good organization and a well developed capacity to critique, analyse and synthesize; an excellent grasp of the subject matter; thorough knowledge of the relevant literature;

B 70 - 79% – *for good work*: good performance with evidence of a grasp of the subject matter; some evidence of a critical capacity and analytic ability; a reasonable understanding of the relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature;

C 60 - 69% – *for adequate work*: intellectually adequate performance of a student who is profiting from his or her academic experience; an understanding of the subject matter and the ability to understand the basic concepts found in the material;

D 50 - 59% – *for marginal work*: minimally acceptable performance; some evidence of familiarity with the subject matter and some ability to synthesize it;

F below 50% – *for wholly inadequate work*: a failing performance in which there is little evidence of even a superficial understanding of the subject matter; an overall weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.

## F. UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

**Students are responsible** for knowing the University's academic policies and regulations and any particularities of their own course of study. Ignorance of these policies is not an excuse for any violation thereof. The following policies are particularly important to note:

**Accommodations for Tests/Examinations:** Students are responsible for seeking accommodation with appropriate documentation, prior to writing tests/examinations, if they are of the view that their performance may be affected by extenuating circumstances.

### **How to Request Academic Accommodation – King's Students:**

(<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/courses-enrolment/exams-and-tests/medical-accommodation/>)

### **UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:**

([http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf)) Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://www.eng.uwo.ca/files/undergraduate/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

**All students requiring academic accommodations for tests and examinations must use the services offered through King's University College.**

**Scholastic Offences:** Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. <http://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/terms/plagiarism.html>

**Copyright re: Course Material:** Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty Members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a Faculty Member. Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member is interested in posting a student's answers or papers on the course web site he/she should ask for the student's written permission. (Commercial use of Course material - <http://umd.edu/legal/commercial.html>)

**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.

Students who are unable to hand in assignments or take examinations for legitimate reasons must consult with the instructor. If the reason is medical, students may be required to provide a note from a doctor. Ordinarily, all assignments and exams will be made up at a later date. In certain circumstances, the final grading scheme may be re-weighted if the missed assignment is of a low weight.

**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.

**Classroom Conduct:** Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for everyone and with professionalism in all classroom activities. Laptops and other electronic devices may be used for classroom academic activities only (i.e. Taking notes, consulting texts that are being discussed). The use of such devices must always be in accord with the common good of the whole learning community as specified by the instructor. The instructor may choose at any time to limit their use for instructional purposes or because of the disruptive use of such devices.

### **Support Services:**

Information about Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development (formerly Services for Students with Disabilities) at King's is available at <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

For emotional/mental health assistance see: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

The website for Academic Services at King's University College is

<http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-support/>

Students who are in emotional/mental health distress should refer to Mental Health@Western: <https://uwo.ca/health/services/students/index.html> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. University Students Council provides many valuable support services for students (including the health insurance plan) <http://westernusc.ca/services/>.

These services are not meant to replace those offered at the Seminary but may be beneficial to our students after consultation with the appropriate instructors, administrators, and formators.