

Course information

St. Peter's Seminary / King's University College at The University of Western Ontario

Fall 2023

BIBLSTUD 5101

Introduction to Sacred Scripture

Friday 9:30 am -12:30 pm

Professor: Hervé Tremblay O.P.

Office hours: Thursday 3-4 pm, or by appointment.

Course description

Faith and intelligence have a long history of a difficult relationship. For some, faith doesn't require intelligence but just obedience. This is not the catholic perspective. There is a way, even a call, to be a believer who fully uses his / her intelligence.

First, a short history of modern exegesis and its main methods will be presented, followed by the main instruments and tools of biblical exegesis.

Then, this course will present the Bible in all its richness and complexity: the different canons and texts, the main collections and traditions (Pentateuch, historical books, wisdom literature, prophets and New Testament).

In the end it will be easier to understand the catholic point of view that is reflected in some major documents about biblical interpretation in the Church.

(3 hours per week; antirequisite: the former Biblical Studies 136b)

Course learning outcomes

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

Knowledge:

- 1- To introduce the students to the content of the whole Bible in its different parts, the main themes and literary genres.
- 2- To teach and foster critical thinking among the students.
- 3- To introduce students to the main critical methods, tools, and resources for the study of the Bible.
- 4- To introduce students to the Church's teaching on Scripture as revealed and inspired.

Skills:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- 1- Identify and use the main tools and resources for the study of the Bible.

- 2- To present written work in a coherent and thoughtful manner, and to employ standard citation formats for referencing material.
- 3- Research a biblical passage using the abovementioned tools and resources in order to come to an understanding of the historical context of the passage, and then to integrate this information into contemporary applications.
- 4- Articulate and employ the twin principles of Catholic biblical scholarship: exegesis and actualization.
- 5- To communicate exegetical material into a format accessible to the average lay parishioner in a ministry setting.

Disposition:

- 1- An open-minded willingness to explore the meanings within the Old and New Testaments by approaching scripture exegetically.
- 2- A respect for, and understanding of, the work of exegetes and other biblical scholars.
- 3- A desire to make appropriate use of Scripture and contemporary scholarship in the service of evangelization.
- 4- A love for the Sacred Scripture as interpreted in the life and mission of the Church.

Mode of Instruction

This course will be given entirely in-person (perhaps with one exception of an online course on October 11th).

Course textbooks / materials

Students are required to have the following resources. Electronic editions are perfectly acceptable for the textbooks, but the Bible (#1), should be in hardcopy. All resources are also available in the library.

- 1- A good study Bible with introductions, footnotes, tables and maps. Ideally, this should be a Catholic edition, like the *Bible of Jerusalem*, or a good edition that can easily be used by Catholics, like the *New Revised Version* or *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*. Fully Revised Fifth Edition, Michael D. Coogan, editor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
Please bring your bible to every class meeting.
- 2- Lawrence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament*, 2nd edition. New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2012.
Available here: <https://a.co/d/4SSq42g>
- 3- Raymond Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament: The Abridged Edition*. New York: Doubleday, 2016.
Available here: <https://a.co/d/7f0UyRm>

- 4- Richard R. Gaillardetz, *By What Authority? Foundations for Understanding Authority in the Church*. Second Edition. Liturgical Press, 2018.
Available here: <https://a.co/d/eNyWeMG>
- 5- Throughout the semester the instructor will distribute or assign additional resources via OWL. Please ensure you have access to OWL, and that your UWO email address is active and able to receive messages (i.e. not full!), since OWL sends notices to UWO addresses only.

Method of evaluation

Attendance and Participation (10%): The following comprise the student's participation and attendance grade:

- Attendance: Weekly attendance is mandatory. Seminarians must provide a valid excuse for all absences (e.g., significant illness). See the New Policy for Academic consideration.
- Participation: Preparation for, and active and informed participation in class discussion is a major aspect of this component of your grade. Since students interact with material in different ways, various kinds of participation will be noted towards your grade. For example, listening attentively, asking questions (even by email), and making comments are all good ways to demonstrate that you are thinking critically about the material. Participation marks are lost when it is clear that a student has not done the readings, and, though perhaps physically present, is not engaged with the material or class discussion. Participation marks are also lost when a student engages in disruptive or distracting behaviours (e.g. multiple interruptions, derailing the flow of discussion, 'hijacking' other students' comments, etc.)

Please note: Texting and all other forms of social networking are not permitted during class time. Cell phones must not be on one's desk. Students are welcome to check phones and social media during breaks.

1- Old Testament Exegesis, 25% (2000 words): Due on October 25th 2024, 11:59 pm, uploaded to OWL:

The goal of this assignment is to begin working with the resources available to biblical studies through the library system. Guidance for using the library system and employing exegetical methodology will be provided in class.

Students will select a passage from the Old Testament to research in depth.

Complete instructions and guidelines will be provided in class and on the assignment page in OWL.

2- New Testament Exegesis, 20% (2000 words): Due on November 22nd 2024, 11:59 pm, uploaded to OWL:

Students will select a passage from the New Testament to research in depth.

More guidance for this assignment will be provided in class.

3- Catholic Biblical Studies: Summary and Implications, 20% (2000 words): Due on December 10th 2024, 11:59 pm, uploaded to OWL:

In this assignment, students will produce a report in the style of a journal article in a publication such as *The Bible Today*. The subject of the report is to provide a comparison between Pius XII's *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943), Vatican II's *Dei Verbum* (1965) and *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (1993). Your report should address issues such as revelation, inspiration, authorship, and inerrancy / truth in Sacred Scripture. What are the important areas of overlap or contrast between these documents? What are the implications for Catholic biblical engagement?

5- Final Exam, 25%: A final, in-class, written examination in mixed formats (multiple choice, definitions, passage identification, short answer, essay). The examination will be held during the examination period after the end of classes and will be on the date set by the Dean of Theology.

Schedule of Classes

Date	Course	Topic
Friday September 6 th	1	Presentation – Canons and texts
September 13 th	2	Overview of history and civilization
September 20 th	3	Short history of modern exegesis
September 27 th	4	Main exegetical methods
October 4 th	5	Exegetical instruments and tools
October 11 th	6	OT - Pentateuch
October 25 th	7	OT - Historical Books
November 1 st	8	OT - Wisdom Literature
November 8 th	9	OT - Prophets
November 15 th	10	NT - Gospels
November 22 nd	11	NT - The letters of Paul
November 29 th	12	NT - The rest of the New Testament
December 6 th	13	The documents of the Church
December 9 th -22 nd	Final Exams	

Select Bibliography and Reference Information

According to the policy adopted by the faculty of St. Peter's Seminary, all citations, references and bibliographies in written assignments are to follow the formatting prescribed in the Chicago

Manual of Style. Footnotes are to be used, rather than author-date references in the body of the text. Please review and consult the summary provided by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary at <https://www.kenrick.edu/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Academic-Papers-and-Citations.pdf> for further information. Students may also consult the *SBL Handbook of Style* (on OWL) for assistance formatting many biblical resources.

Old Testament Resources

Boadt, Lawrence. Edited by Richard Clifford and Daniel Harrington. *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction*. Second Edition. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2012.

Duggan, Michael W. *The Consuming Fire: A Christian Guide to the Old Testament*. Updated and Revised. Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2010.

New Testament Resources

Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: Doubleday, 1997.

Harrington, Daniel J. and Christopher R. Matthews, eds. *Encountering Jesus in the Scriptures*. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2012

McMahon, Christopher. *Reading the Gospels: Biblical Interpretation in the Catholic Tradition*. Winona: Anselm Academic, 2012.

Perkins, Pheme. *Reading the New Testament*. Third Edition. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2012.

Scholtz, Daniel J. *Jesus in the Gospels and Acts: Introducing the New Testament*. Winona: Anselm Academic, 2012.

Catholic Approaches to Biblical Studies

Bergant, Dianne. *Scripture: History and Interpretation*. Engaging Theology: Catholic Perspectives. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008.

Brettler, Marc Zvi, Peter Enns and Daniel J. Harrington. *The Bible and the Believer: How to Read the Bible Critically and Religiously*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. (NB.

This text presents Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant perspectives on the bible and is a valuable resource for examining the bible with interreligious concerns in mind.)

Brown, Raymond E. *101 Questions and Answers on The Bible*. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1990.

Gaillardetz, Richard R. *By What Authority? A Primer on Scripture, the Magisterium, and the Sense of the Faithful*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003.

Hahn, Scott, ed. "Biblical Criticism", in *The Catholic Bible Dictionary*. New York: Doubleday, 2009. 111-119.

Harrington, Daniel J. *How Do Catholics Read the Bible?* Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, Oxford: Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, 2005.

Nutting Ralph, Margaret and Catherine Cory, editors. *Understanding the Bible: A Guide to Reading the Scriptures*. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2008.

Schneiders, Sandra M. *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture*. Second Edition. Collegeville, MN. Liturgical Press, 1999.

Papal and Magisterial Documents on Biblical Studies

Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, 1993. Found in the web, for example at catholic-resources.org.

Béchar, Dean P., ed. *The Scripture Documents: An Anthology of Official Catholic Teachings*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2002.

Benedict XVI, Pope. *Verbum Domini: The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation. Ottawa: CCCB Publications Service, 2010.

Lysik, David A. ed. *The Bible Documents: A Parish Resource with Commentary and Index*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2001.

Academic Considerations

Academic Integrity / Remote Proctoring:

- *Link to Western Scholastic Discipline policy:*
https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf
- *Course policy on use of generative AI, including translation/grammar aids*
- *Notice on Turnitin (if using)*
- *Notice on remote proctoring (if using)*

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-andtests/medical-accommodation/>

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

Scholarly Citations: According to the policy adopted by the faculty of St. Peter’s Seminary, all citations, references and bibliographies in written assignments are to follow the formatting prescribed in the Chicago Manual of Style. Footnotes are to be used, rather than author-date references in the body of the text. Please review and consult the summary provided by Kenrick-Glenon Seminary at <https://www.kenrick.edu/wpcontent/uploads/Guide-to-Academic-Papers-and-Citations.pdf> for further information. In addition to citing written and electronic sources (i.e a video documentary or podcast), it is expected that students will also acknowledge any assistance they have received with proofreading or editing. For example, in a footnote, you may include something like, “I wish to acknowledge the advice and proofreading assistance from [first name] [last name].”

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. To receive an extension, students are advised to dialogue with their instructor well in advance of the due date. An extension form will be signed by both the instructor and student and submitted to the Dean of Theology.

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.

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.

Course Policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

St. Peter’s Seminary is committed to fostering a culture of professionalism, honesty, and academic integrity, and all members of our community—faculty, staff, and students— have a role

to play in promoting an ethical learning environment. Furthermore, through the work they submit for academic evaluation, students develop important habits of critical thinking, independent inquiry, and creativity. Thus, it is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Within this course, use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools [such as Chat GPT] is not permitted for written work submitted for evaluation.

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>)

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. 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. You are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations.

Support Services:

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help: https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/ 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.