

**University of Saint Mary of the Lake
Mundelein Seminary**

Fundamental Theology

Course Number:	DT511A
Credit Hours:	2
Instructor:	Fr. Emery de Gaál, Ph.D. Chair and Professor of Dogmatic Theology 847-970-4862
Email:	EdeGaal@usml.edu
Office Hours:	by appointment only
Class times:	MTh 1:10-2:05 PM
Room:	201
Prerequisites:	some knowledge of Latin and Greek is welcome, admission to the theology program

Specific Information for Students of Fundamental Theology DT511A

1. **Catalogue Description:** The course examines the foundations of faith and theology. It considers the religious nature of humankind, theories of revelation and faith, the development of the Christian tradition and its role in Christian life, the inspiration of scripture, and the relationship of Christianity to other religions.
2. **Rationale:** Fundamental Theology is a theological discipline but incorporates philosophical and theological methods
3. **Objectives:** the student should gain the ability
 - to have some appreciation for the basis upon which faith in the Catholic self-understanding is founded.
 - to perceive outlines of the complex matrix in which revelation occurs.
 - to appreciate the bridging function of fundamental theology between concrete life and faith, between philosophy and dogmatic theology.
 - to acquire practice in the analytical reading of conciliar and theological texts.
4. **Strategies:** This is a lecture course. There are several components to the learning process. First, we will review essential elements of Fundamental Theology. Secondly we will acquaint ourselves with relevant texts. The required readings will intimate basic notions. Usually a class session will begin with discussion of the previous lecture's contents. This will be followed by the lecture.

5. **Strategies:** At the beginning of each hour questions will be raised concerning the preceding hour. Following the lectures with this in mind will help answer the questions. The answers to these along with general participation in discussions will form the basis for assessing a part of the grade. Please check www.usml.edu for a list of the topics for the STB Comprehensive Examination. It is helpful to study this course with these questions in mind.
6. **Assessment:** Students will be assessed by two examinations (2 x 30%), 2 or 3 book summaries (3 x 10% - including chapter presentation in class), and class participation (10%). One will occur at mid-term and the other as final. These will be objective exams with perhaps one or two essay questions. An alternative assessment by oral examination may be discussed with the professor. Book summaries are extra credit – or better: pour l’amour de Dieu.

Grading System: There 100 points allotted to the various components of the assessment. The letter grade scale published in the current Mundelein Seminary catalogue (pages 31-34) will be used.

7. Reading Assignments:

Texts:

The following are books and readings for the course from which required readings are drawn -insofar as they relate to presentations:

1. *Dei Verbum*, Vatican II, Constitution on Divine Revelation.
2. *Nostra Aetate*, Vatican II, Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian religions.
3. Justin L. Barrett, *Cognitive Science, Religion, and Theology: From Human Minds to Divine Minds*, in: *Templeton Science and Religion Series*, Templeton Press, 2011.
4. Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism, Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, Ignatius Press, 1988.
5. Aidan Nichols, *The Shape of Theology*, Liturgical Press, 1991.
6. Joseph Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology, Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology*, Ignatius Press, 1987.
7. Herbert Vorgrimler, *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, Vol. III on the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, St. Louis, MO: Herder and Herder, 1967.

Optional Text Summaries for extra Credit and required to earn an A+

On de Lubac's and Ratzinger's books 3 pages of summary plus 2 pages of quotations the student considers particularly insightful will be written.

For due dates consult the Lesson Plan. All summaries will have on the first line the student's name, the book's author and title, and date. They will have 1.5 line spacing and letter grade 12. The emphasis, however, is to be placed on presenting the book's content.

Student Presentations

On the dates assigned in the Lesson Plan two or three students will present together a summary of a chapter from Nichols' book *The Shape of Catholic Theology*. These ten presentations should follow the same format as a book summary (cf. above). The emphasis is, however, on bringing together in compact form information for the course's final examination and for the S.T.B. Comprehensive Examination (cf. attachment). These summaries are presented at the beginning of the class on the due date (5-10 minutes in length – 2 pages).

Copies of the presentations will be distributed at the beginning of each class to all students and to the instructor.

Lesson Plan 2018

- Aug. 27 **Introduction to the Course**
- Introduction to the Scope and Purpose of the Study of Fundamental Theology
 - Fundamental Theology as Theology's "Department of State" and "Department of Defense"
 - Review of General Information Sheet
 - Review of Specific Information Sheet
 - Review of Syllabus
 - Review of Assignments
- Aug. 30 **Chapter One – Understanding "Revelation"**
- 1.1 Definition of Revelation
 - 1.2 Changes in Definition of the Term
- Read for next lecture: "Dei Verbum".
- Sept. 6
- 1.3 Revelation as Communication – the II. Vatican Council's Definition of Revelation
 - as encounter of God and Humanity
 - as God's historic turn to Creation
 - as Divine Self- Communication in Jesus Christ
- Sept. 10 **Chapter Two – The History of Fundamental Theology**
- 2.1 A brief History of Fundamental Theology
 - 2.2 The Form of classical Fundamental Theology as "Apologetics"
- Sept. 13
- 2.3 Attempts towards a Renewal of Fundamental Theology
- Chapter Three – Critique of Religion as a Critique of Revelation**
- 3.1 Modern-Day Rationalism and Deism
- Sept. 17
- 3.2 Immanuel Kant's Critique of Insight
 - 3.3 "Two Levels" Thinking as Humanity's Theological Alienation from God
- Presentation: Wood, Henri de Lubac, Theologian of the Church, Name:**
- Suggested summary of de Lubac's Catholicism is due*
- Sept. 24 **Chapter Four Humanity as Addressee of Divine Revelation**
- 4.1 Human Openness for God
 - 4.2 The Paradox of the Human Condition
- Presentation: Becker, An Examination of 'subsistit in', Name:**
- Sept. 27 **Presentation: Nichols pages 13-26 Names:**

- 4.3 Humanity as Listener of God's Word

Chapter Five Jesus Christ – Mediator and Fullness of Divine Revelation

- 5.1 “The Kingdom of God in Person”

Oct. 1 **Presentation: Nichols pages 27-38 Names:**

- 5.2 “In Deeds and Words”
- 5.3 The not-to-be-excelled Word

Oct. 4 **Presentation: Nichols pages 41-54 Names:**

Chapter Six Faith as Received Revelation

- 6.1 Faith as a foundational Phenomenon
- 6.2 The Creed – Subjective and Objective Faith

Oct. 18 **Presentation: Nichols pages 55-95 Names:**

- 6.3 Faith and Reason (Fides et Ratio)

Read for next Lecture “The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church”

Oct. 11 **Presentation: Nichols pages 99-140 Names:**

- Chapter Seven The Church – The presentic Form of Revelation
- 7.1 The Church as God's “Sacrament” of Union with Humanity

Oct. 18 **Mid-Term Examination**

Oct. 22 **Presentation: Nichols pages 141-162 Names:**

- 7.2 Tradition and Scripture as transmitting Media of Revelation through the Church
- 7.2.1 Tradition
- 7.2.2 “Holy Writ”
- 7.2.3 Scripture and Tradition

Oct. 25 **Presentation: Nichols pages 165-199 Names:**

- 7.3 The Church's Sacramentality as the “Specificum” of Catholic Ecclesiology

Chapter Eight Does Revelation also occur in other Religions?

- 8.1 Defining the Term “Religion”
- Read for next Lecture: “Nostra Aetate”

Oct. 29 **Presentation: Nichols pages 200-231 Names:**

- 8.2 The Necessity for Dialogue

- 8.3 Does Christianity hold claim on Absolute Truth?
- Nov. 1 **Presentation: Nichols pages 235-260 Names:**
- Nov. 5 **Presentation: Nichols pages 263-282 Names:**
- Nov. 8 **Presentation: Nichols pages 282-310 Names:**
- Nov. 12 **Presentation: Nichols pages 310-343 Names:**
- Nov. 15 **Presentation: Nichols pages 343-348 Name (one presenter):**
- Nov. 26 **Presentation: Nichols pages 349-355 Name (one presenter):**
- Nov. 29 **Neuroscience and God: is the *Desiderium Naturale ad Videndum Dei*
engrained in the Human Brain?**
Justin L. Barrett, Ian M. Church, “Should CSR Give Atheists Epistemic
Assurance? On Beer-Goggles, BFFs, and Skepticism Regarding Religious Beliefs” 96/3
The Monist (2013), pp. 311-324; **TWO** presenters:
- Dec. 3 **Recapitulation and Discussion: Neuroscience and God**

Presentation Commentary on “Dei Verbum”
Chapter I, Name:
Chapter II, Name:
- Dec. 6 **Presentation Commentary on “Dei Verbum”**
Chapter III, Name:
Chapter IV, Name:
- Dec. 10 **Presentation Commentary on “Dei Verbum”**
Chapter V, Name:
Chapter VI, Name:
Extra credit summary of Joseph Ratzinger’s book Principles of Catholic Theology,
Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology is due
- Dec. 13 **Final Examination**

Disclaimer: The above schedule is intended as a guideline only and may not reflect the actual dates of course events. Procedures in the class are subject to change due to *force majeure*.

Academic Policies: All academic regulations listed in the University of St. Mary of the Lake catalogue apply to this course.