

Christian Anthropology
St. John's School of Theology and Seminary

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

“The glory of God is the human person fully alive.” These words of St. Irenaeus will guide our exploration of the important field of Christian anthropology. This course will explore classic and contemporary Christian understandings of human life in light of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Among the topics to be addressed are creation, sin, grace, freedom, gender, race, suffering, death, praxis and the dialogue between science and theology about what it means to be a human person. These topics will be approached not only discretely, but also in terms of their systematic connection to one another. Finally, our study of Christian anthropology will not only seek to gain an understanding of this discipline but also to see its many applications for thinking about contemporary issues, pastoral applications and methodological strategies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a deeper sense of the theological tradition's teaching regarding the nature of human personhood by examining how major historical and theological developments have influenced the church's understanding of human existence.
2. To see theological anthropology within the nexus of systematic theology and recognize its deep connections to revelation, Christology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, etc.
3. To demonstrate the importance of method in theology & recognize its impact in theological arguments.
4. To articulate how visions of human personhood are at the center of many contemporary theological arguments.
5. To advance students' own objectives in terms of understanding questions related to Christian Anthropology as well as overall theological knowledge and pastoral practice.

COURSE TEXTS

*Burns, J. Patout, ed. *Theological Anthropology* (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1981). ISBN 0-8006-1412-7. [TA]

*Haight, Roger. *The Experience and Language of Grace*. (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1979). ISBN 0-8091-2200-6. [H]

*Rahner, Karl. *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity* (New Crossroads, 1993). ISBN 0-8245-0523-9. [R]

Note: [C] on syllabus indicates that the reading is found on the course's Canvas page.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation– 10% of course grade

Student performance in this category will be evaluated based on the following elements:

- Regular and punctual attendance
- Demonstrated careful preparation of reading assignments
- Contributions to large and small group discussions and respectful attention to others
- Efforts to create an atmosphere which promotes dialogue including:
willingness to start a discussion, respond to the comments of others, raise questions, highlight passages from the readings and make connections between various ideas from this course.
- Contributions to discussions described in Appendix B

Synthetic Exercise– 20% of course grade

This *low stress* exercise will provide students a chance to synthesize some of the major themes of the initial part of the course. Pausing the forward progression of the class to review past material is an opportunity for students to step back and reflect on everything that we have done up until this point in the semester in order to enhance their learning. This exercise will consist of essay questions and students will have a choice regarding which topics they address.

Review Exercises – 10% of course grade (5% for chart and 5% for concept map – see appendix)

Writing Assignments – 60% of course grade

Option Blue = 7 Response papers + 1 Brief reflective essay due on the last day (7.5% each)

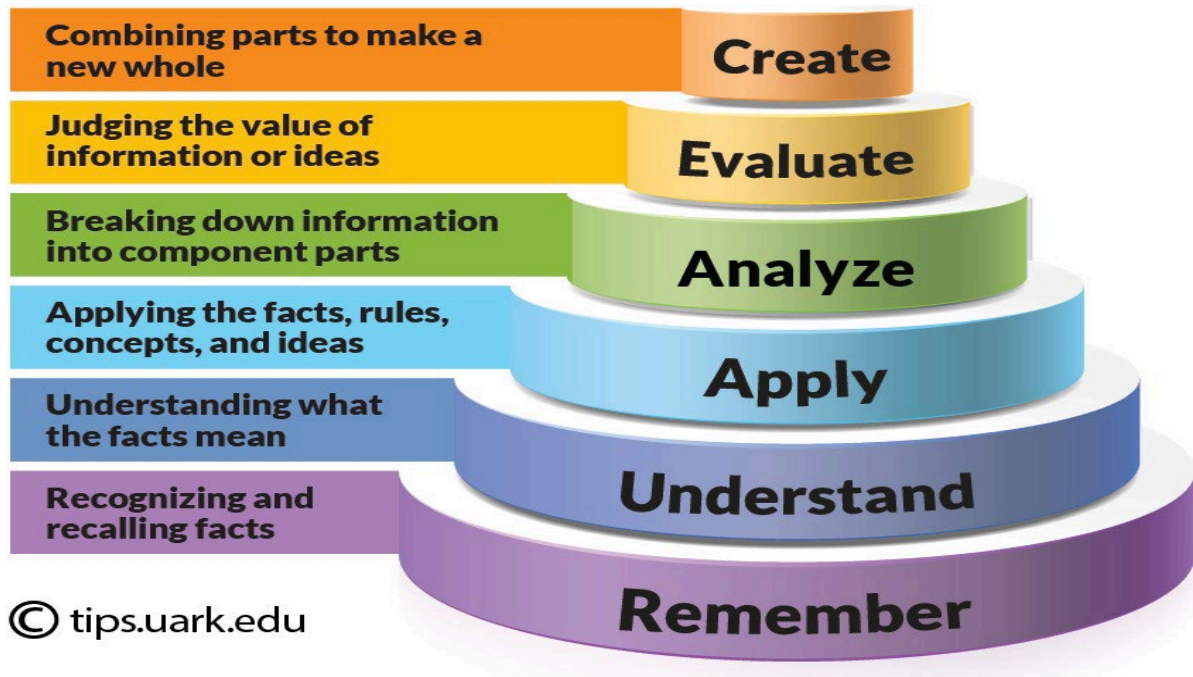
For 7 of 10 weeks students will be required to hand in a 2-3 page response to the week's readings. Response papers are to be uploaded to Canvas before class begins as they are intended to help convey what you saw as most interesting/important about the readings before we discussed them as a group. All assignments are to be typed, written in prose (not bullet points, outline form, etc.). These assignments are not intended to be as polished and substantive as a research paper or formal essay, but they should demonstrate reflection and general editing. Response papers should show an ability to summarize *some* of the main ideas of the readings (*what* the readings said) and significance of the assigned readings (*why* the readings are important). Usually, the best assignments synthesize main points from the author(s) and employ effective quotes from the readings to support particular positions. On the last day of class, students who chose this option will be asked to write a 2-page reflective essay on their learning.

Option Red = 3 Response papers + 1 Project w/ short sharing on last day (Response papers and presentation are worth 7.5% each, project is worth 30%).

Students who chose this option will be asked to write 3 as described in the paragraph above. These students will culminate the course by crafting a project on a topic related to theological anthropology. The projects may take the form of a research paper (10 pages) or a presentation which is rooted in theological anthropology. Students who choose the presentation will be asked to envision a particular audience (a retreat, a high school classroom, a reflection for fellow community members) and develop a full set of slides, handouts, planned activities, reading lists, etc. Both the presentation and the research paper are chances to explore a topic not covered in class or go deeper into something that is of interest. Note: the content of your three responses papers can be incorporated into a final project, so you may want to chose topics with an eyes towards that. All students in Option Red will meet with Kristin around Easter to discuss projects. These students will share aspects of their project on the last day of class.

Summary of homework hints:

- 1) Summarize in your own words one or two important ideas (*why* this article matters). In 2-3 pages you cannot talk about everything in the article, so be sure to talk about something important, synthetic/central.
- 2) Support your points with evidence from the text (highlight *what* the author says). Use good quotes which indicate that you know what is most significant about the article.
- 3) Use proper citations. If the reading appears on the syllabus, please cite it parenthetically. For example: “The mysterious character of the Church has important applications for methodology” (Dulles, 16). If it does not come from the syllabus, please provide a full citation in a footnote.
- 4) Proofread your work!!
- 5) Use all assigned texts if possible.



Proposed Schedule of Readings (subject to change)

NOTE 1: These readings are not meant to be read all in one sitting. I recommend that you break the reading up into multiple sessions – I have tried to group readings that are meant to be read together and provide a space to indicate where a new idea or theme might be being explored. I encourage you to think about how the readings all fit together and what the “big picture” idea is that links each week’s readings.

NOTE 2: I have worked hard to find readings that are both substantive and accessible/engaging. Each week make your best effort to complete the entirety of the reading. If you stumble on something – go back and re-read it a second time. If after the second reading you still do not understand it – just keep moving. Sometimes difficult passages or readings make sense when you have read the whole thing, but you that you cannot have “lightbulb moments” of understanding while reading or in class if you have not engaged the material. All this being said, I encourage you not to spend hours and hours with a difficult reading – make your best effort to try to see the “big picture” and come to class with questions.

NOTE 3: I do know that some of the topics and figures included on our syllabus also appear in our classes in the SOT. While I have excluded some topics to avoid overlap, there are some cases where a certain degree of overlap stands because the material is vital to our exploration or we will be approaching it from a different perspective. Please note that talking about something like Augustine’s debate with Pelagians in more than one class can be an important chance to consider or reconsider important ideas as there is great richness there to be explored.

NOTE 4: Students should remember that readings have strengths and weaknesses. Just because a reading is assigned does not mean that every part of it is perfect, that the instructor thinks that every argument is convincing. As graduate students, you need to try to understand what the author is presenting – be sure to read actively to assess strengths and weaknesses of various arguments.

NOTE 5: Not all week’s have the same amount of reading. I know from the past that students like it when there is lots of consistency in the amount of reading. I have tried to keep this in mind, but I also want to avoid adding or subtracting a reading to provide an even amount of reading.

Class 1: Introduction to the Course & the Doctrine of Creation

Introduction to the ideas and readings: We are beginning our course with a fundamental topic, the doctrine of creation. Professor Robert Sokolowski of the Catholic University of America has said that the doctrine of creation is not one doctrine among many, but the central doctrine of the Christian faith which serves as the foundation of all other doctrines. We want to pay attention today to what the doctrine of creation seeks to convey. What we will see is that this doctrine is not about a “zap” at the beginning of our lives or the beginning of time, it is about our dynamic relationship with God which holds us in existence at every moment. The doctrine of creation is a topic where theology often comes into conflict with science. However, Haught shows us that a proper understanding of the theological notion of creation illumines that such a conflict is not necessary.

McDonnell, John. “Christian Anthropology: The Divine-Human Relationship” in *Chicago Studies* (36) 1997: 140-158. [C]

Genesis 1- 4.

Haught, John, *Making Sense of Evolution: Darwin, God and the Drama of Life* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010), 1-27. [C]

Create: Before you begin reading create a word cloud as described in introductory email.

Class 2 (M 1/30): Irenaeus & the Christian Notions of Freedom & Faith

Introduction to the ideas and the readings: Today our reading is divided into four parts: 1) Finishing up ideas about creation from the first week; 2) Primary reading by St. Irenaeus (130-202), a key contributor to early doctrines of sin, Christology, and soteriology, 3) Theological reflections on the nature of freedom and 4) Scientific reflections on whether or not there is such a thing as free will. The introductory reading by Burns sets a context for your understanding of Irenaeus. As you read Irenaeus, think about the problem he is trying to solve and what answer he provides. As you will see, FREEDOM is a key issue for Irenaeus. During the second half of our class we will be talking about freedom is viewed as a key element of human personhood in the theological tradition. We will hold this in tension with some recent scientific writing which calls into question the idea of free will and suggests that all choices are rooted in environmental factors and can be explained in terms of neuroscience. If freedom is such a fundamental concept, what happens if science argues that we are not really “free.” Wilson is one of the world’s preeminent biologists and naturalists. His book was a finalist for the National Book Award. So, read the introductory material from Burns and Irenaeus together and then take a break before shifting gears for Sachs, Harrison and Wilson.

Read: *Burns, J Patout. “Introduction,” 1-6 (“Stop at “CHRISTIAN PLATONISM”). [TA]
*Ireneaus, “Against Heresies, Book IV 38 & 39,” 23-28. [TA]
*Ireneaus, “Against Heresies, Book IV, ch 37 and 40 (supplements above). [C]

*Sachs, John R. “The Gift of Human Freedom” in *The Christian Vision of Humanity* (Collegeville: Lit Press, 1991) 27-34. [C]

*Harrison, Nonna Vera. “Freedom” in *God’s Many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation,*” 13-27. [C]

Scientific Perspective= Wilson, Edward. “Free Will” in *The Meaning of Human Existence* (NY: Liveright Publishing Co, 2014), 159-171. [C]

Write:

- What do you see as Irenaeus’ primary struggle or question? What solution/answer does he provide?
- How is freedom in the Christian tradition different than the popular understanding of freedom as “choosing”? What is freedom?
- Summarize Wilson’s description of free will. Do you see it as compatible with, or a challenge to, the theological notion of freedom?

Class 3 (M 2/6): Augustine & Pelagius: The Reality of Sin

Introduction to the reading: As we have noted, a fundamental question of human existence is “why don’t human beings act as God intended?” A subsequent question is “who is to blame for this behavior; is God to blame for creating imperfect creatures or are human beings to blame for choosing sin?” These questions are at the heart of the debate between Augustine and the Pelagians. Both sides develop sophisticated responses with several layers of reasoning about why human beings act as they do. Try to grasp some of the nuances of each of their respective positions, but don’t feel you need to understand everything at first. The Brown reading is an introduction to the debate that I want you to pay attention to. Even if you know the debate between Augustine and the Pelagians, this is a critical source. I have included excerpts from the exchange between Augustine and Pelagius as assigned readings – if you have read this recently in another class, you can look over it but don’t have to re-read everything. We then shift into some reflections on the nature of sin. Pope Benedict’s reflection on sin is extremely important – pay special attention to pages 70 and 71 which, in my mind, get to the very heart of what sin is. The Michael Himes piece is a favorite among students, he builds in a relatable way on the ideas that Benedict raises. Finally, Brian Flanagan gives us a great picture of what it means to be holy and what it means to be sinful.

Read:

- *Brown, Peter. "Pelagius and Pelagianism" in *Augustine: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967) 340-52. [C]
- *Pelagius, "Letter to Demetrias," 39-51 [end at (13)]. [TA]
- *Augustine, "On the Grace of Jesus Christ" and "On Rebuke and Grace," 61-75 (up to xx.21). [TA]
- *Pope Benedict, "Homily on Sin and Salvation," 59-74 (Stop at The Response of the New Testament). [C]
- *Himes, Michael J. "Experiencing the Mystery of Not Being God" in *Doing the Truth in Love* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995) 23-32. [C]
- *Flanagan, Brian. "Sin" in *Stumbling in Holiness: Sin and Sanctity in the Church* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2018), 55-71.

Another resource for the future= Patout, Burns. "Introduction," 12-18. [TA]

Write:

- *What does Pelagians teach and why? How does Augustine critique him? What does Augustine think that he gets wrong about Christ and about the nature of human existence?*
- Using Cone, Flanagan and Himes – what is sin? Give as rich a description as you possibly can.*

Class 4 (M 2/13): Thomas Aquinas and Grace

Introduction to the readings and ideas: As long as I have been at the SOT, Shawn has joined my Christian Anthropology class for the session on Aquinas. Shawn is a leading expert on this topic (with a recent book on Aquinas and Bonaventure on nature and grace) so it is always nice to take advantage of his expertise. As an additional bonus this year, Shawn will lead us through his recent chapter on how the theology of grace developed – this piece was recently published in a prestigious volume, *T&T Clark's Handbook of Theological Anthropology* (New York: T&T Clark, 2021). Shawn has written a letter of introduction to the students which will orient you to material; this is posted on canvas.

- Read:** *Wawrykow, Joseph. "Nature and Grace," "Sin," & "Creation" in *The Westminster Handbook to Thomas Aquinas* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005). [C]
- *Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, sections below. [C]

1. I:93, articles 1 and 4-6
2. I-II:5, whole question
3. I-II:85, articles 1-3
4. I-II:109, whole question
5. I-II:111, article 2

- *Colberg, Shawn. "The Gift of Grace and the Perfection of Human Nature" in *T&T Clark Handbook of Theological Anthropology* (New York: T&T Clark, 2021), 111-22. [C]
- Another source: "Aquinas," 54-75 in [H].

Write: Shawn supplied the five (!) questions below on the Aquinas reading, you may select two to write on for your homework. Students choosing to do this homework should also write on the last (+) reading.

- What aspect of human nature makes the human person an image of God and why is this important?*
- In what does happiness consist and how is God the highest form of human happiness?*
- What does sin do to human nature?*
- What is the difference between helping and habitual grace, and how does it affect pre-fallen vs post-fallen nature?*

--What are operative and cooperative graces? How do they effect human nature and the advance of the person on a journey to God?

+ --What is one interesting thing that you noticed about the development of grace in Shawn's article?

Class 5 (M 2/20): The Duplex Ordo and Nature-Grace Disputes and Revelation

Introduction to the ideas and the readings: Students have always said that this week of the course is critical to gaining a deep understanding of what comes afterwards. One of the key areas of focus in theological anthropology is the relationship between nature and grace. It asks the question: What is the relation between the created order and the supernatural order? There have been a wide spectrum of answers to this question throughout the Christian tradition. These disputes over the nature-grace relationship flared up in the 19th and 20th centuries. During this time, much of theology adopted a "neo-scholastic" approach where great priority was given to having arguments with maximal clarity, precision and strong philosophical grounding. During this period, we see the rise of a "duplex ordo" or two-tiered view of the world where grace and nature are totally separate from each other. From a neo-scholastic perspective, this worldview seemed necessary because it preserves God's ability to act freely. However, this worldview raises grave problems -- not least of which stem from the fact that it does not correspond to our experience of God's presence in the world. In your reading focus on WHY some would want to support the duplex ordo model (what is the problem that it is seeking to solve?). WHY does de Lubac reject this solution? -- what does he propose instead? How does Rahner advance the conversation further? The Duplex Ordo debate prepares us to talk about the turn to experience in Rahner which is a defining moment of 20th century theology, so we are reading Elizabeth Johnson's description of Rahner's project to give us a start. If you have time this week and want to start reading the Carr and Dych pieces assigned for next week, you could do that to create more space for next week's Rahner reading.

*Colberg, K. "The Overcoming of the Duplex Ordo" (9 page excerpt of an article I am writing). [C]

*Johnson, Elizabeth. "Gracious Mystery, Ever Greater, Ever Nearer," 25-47. [C]

Additional Resource: "Rahner: Grace and History" in [H]

--What is the duplex ordo debate about? First consider: WHAT do the neo-scholastics say and WHY do they say it? (give the best possible reasoning for their argument? Then consider: WHAT does de Lubac say and WHY does he say it? Give the best possible reasoning for his argument?

--Based on Johnson's chapter -- what does Rahner see as the problem for Christianity in the modern world and how does he try to address it?

Class 6 (M 2/27): Karl Rahner -- The Turn to Experience

Introduction to the ideas and the readings: Understanding Karl Rahner's work is critical to understanding twentieth and twenty-first century theology. After the Enlightenment many people felt that theology and the modern world were incompatible. Theology appeared to be a relic of an un-Enlightened age -- further, some felt that theology and religion needed to be overcome so that the new way of thinking could fully take hold. Rahner tries to show how theology is compatible with modern thought and can address its most serious questions. *KEY POINT: Rahner tries to make an argument for the reasonableness of Christianity to a modern audience. To do this he starts with the experience of the human person and then goes on to show how this gives witness to the truth of Christianity.* As I said above, reading Rahner is difficult, here are two recommendations: #1) do not give up -- push through even if things are confusing. You cannot have a "lightbulb moment" about the why this book is so important if you have not taken the time to get an idea of what it contains. Often, students find themselves lost at one moment -- but a few sentences later they recognize a key insight. #2) all that being said, don't spend an inordinate amount of time trying to understand everything. Just keep moving and try to see some aspects of the "big picture."

Read:

*Carr, Anne. "Starting with the Human," in *A World of Grace: An Introduction to the Themes and Foundations of Karl Rahner's Theology*, 17-30. [C]

*Dych, William. "Theology in a New Key," in *A World of Grace*, 1-15.

*Rahner, Karl. *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity* – all in [R]

Preface

1-14 (skip "The Justification of Faith on a "First Level of Reference" pages 8-10)

24-49 (stop at "The Survival of the word God")

93-101

116-33. [R]

Additional Resource: "Rahner: Grace and History" in [H]

Write:

-- *Rahner argues that Christianity is reasonable/intelligible by starting with the human person. He builds his argument step by step by describing what it means to be human. Describe 3 things that Rahner thinks are characteristic of human existence.*

--*Discuss one idea or discussion in Carr or Dych that helped you understand something about Rahner. (be prepared to share this helpful thing in class).*

!!!SPRING BREAK – ENJOY!!!!

Class 7 (M 3/13): Theological Anthropology at Vatican II and Theological Anthropology in the Writings of Recent Popes

Introduction to the ideas and the readings: Theological anthropology is critical at Vatican II, as we will see it is central to the council's theology and its method. Today we are reading excerpts from Vatican II's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World and its Declaration on Religious Freedom. As you read these texts, note how the council uses human experience as a starting point for making arguments about the nature of human personhood and the church's relationship to the world. This common ground was seen as central to helping the church speak meaningfully to modern men and women. Kasper's piece highlights key aspects of the importance of theological anthropology to the council's goals and he talks about the relationship between anthropology and Christology in *Gaudium et spes*. This is an important connection that we want to pay attention to. The second half of our class, I will lead us through an exploration of how recent popes have treated the themes of theological anthropology and freedom. Cardinal Blaise Cupich of Chicago was recently quoted as saying: "John Paul II told us what to do, Pope Benedict told us why to do it and Pope Francis says 'Do it!'" A goal for today's session is to determine how notions of freedom and human personhood are imbedded in their messages. For this examination, I will lead us through some excerpts from Paul VI, John Paul II and Benedict. I am trying to keep the reading manageable since it is the week after spring break.

Read:

*The Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes* –sections 1-14 and 33-38. [VC II]

*The Second Vatican Council, *Dignitatus Humanae*, 1-8.

*Kasper, Walter. "The Theological Anthropology of *Gaudium et spes*," 129-40. [C]

*Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*. Sections 1-36 and 87-111.

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html

Write:

--*What role does anthropology play in Gaudium et spes? How does it connect anthropology & Christology?*

--*Dignitatus Humanae is about religious freedom, but it is also about the nature of truth. What does it's understanding of the nature of truth say about what it means to be human?*

--*What does Fratelli Tutti tell us about what it means to be human?*

Class 8 (M 3/20): Small Group Zoom Review for Synthetic Exercise

Students will meet in small groups for one hour via Zoom to review for the synthetic exercise. During this time they will review broadly. Each student will complete review exercises to help promote good synthesis and conversation. See Appendix A for instructions regarding the review exercises.

Create: Review Exercises

Test: Students are asked to complete the synthetic exercise on Canvas prior to Friday at midnight.

Class 9 (M 3/27): The Rise of Contextual Theologies & Liberation Theology: Prioritizing Praxis

Introduction to the ideas and the readings: Advances in theological anthropology are fundamental to the rise of contextual theologies. In fact, some argue that advances in theological anthropology have illuminated the reality that all theology is contextual theology. Today we will be looking at the connection between theological anthropology and Latin American Liberation theology. The Diaz reading provides a good overview of the theological and philosophical bases for the rise of contextual theology and how Rahner's work is important in this development. (Note: Miguel Diaz taught at St. John's for many years before being named the U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican during Obama's presidency). Our second reading is from Gustavo Gutierrez, O.P., who is universally recognized as the father of liberation theology. In this excerpt from Gutierrez note that liberation theology is important not just for its content but also for its method. In other words, it is significant for how it does theology and how it calls for theology to adopt renewed methods. Our final source for this week is an interview with James Cone who was a famous professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York City; sadly he died a few years ago. He is known as the father of Black Liberation Theology. He draws on many of the same themes as Gutierrez. One note for consideration: while Rahner can seem very abstract and "distant" from the concrete realities discussed by Gutierrez and Boff – both Boff and Gutierrez would cite Rahner's advances as fundamental to their projects. As you read, think about how Rahner's anthropology sets a foundation for contextual theology.

Read:

*Bevans, Stephen. "Doing Theology as Critical Reflection on Praxis," 156-62. [C]

*Diaz, Miguel. *On Being Human: U.S. Hispanic and Rahnerian Perspectives*, 1-4, 23-34 & 39-47. [C]

*Nickoloff, James, ed. *Gustavo Gutierrez: Essential Writings* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979), 23-34. [C]

*James Cone, interview about Black Liberation Theology. 13 minute audio clip.[C]

<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89236116>

Write:

--How does the "turn to experience" in theology that Rahner pioneers in Catholic theology serve as a foundation for contextual/liberation theology? (here you can use some Diaz but you can/should also bring in your own thoughts).

--Describe some of the goals of liberation theology with attention to what it says about the task of theology/the church and the nature of human personhood.

--Why do some people say that "all theology is contextual theology"? Why is context important?

Class 10 (M 4/3): Original Sin, Structural Sin and Questions of Racial Justice

Introduction to the ideas and readings: In recent decades, significant theological reflection has been focused on the fact that sin exists not only on the individual level (as discrete acts), but also exists as a structural reality. In fact, many theologians have worked to connect the concept of original sin to the concept of structural sin. Much of the work on structural sin has come out of the Latin American context and we see it reflected in Boff's piece. Our class for today will begin with this topic. One place where the reality of structural sin has been carefully explored is in conversations about racism. CSBSJU is *extremely* fortunate to have Bryan Massingale of Fordham University coming to campus on Tuesday, April 4. He is a professor of Christian ethics who is also a leading voice in the American Church on racial justice and inclusivity. I encourage every student to attend some of the events connected to his visit. So, it is a perfect time to read some of his outstanding work on this topic, work that is directly related to our course. The other author that we are examining is Shawn Copeland. She recently retired from Boston College. Her book, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race and Being* is internationally recognized as a major advance in the field of theological anthropology. It is so important, in fact, that it is on the comprehensive book list in Systematics. Copeland has been working on a revised and updated version of this text, but it has been delayed and will not be ready until this summer. So, our work this week is critical to our course and also extremely timely for our world and our campuses.

Read:

- *Boff, Leonardo. *Liberating Grace* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979), 81-87. [C]
- *Teel, Karen. "Salving the Wound of Race: Racialized Bodies as Sacrament in the Theology of M. Shawn Copeland," in *T&T Clark: Handbook of Theological Anthropology*, 293-304
- *Copeland, M. Shawn. *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race and Being* (New York: Fortress, 2010), 85-105.[C]
- *Massingale, Bryan. "What is Racism?" in *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*, 1-30. [C]
- *Massingale, Bryan. "White Privilege and What we Can do About it." [C]

Write:

- Historically, sin has been seen as individual or referring to a set of discrete acts. How is sin social or structural?
- What starting point does Copeland use? Why does she start there & why is it theologically significant?
- Sit back and reflect on the readings from Bryan Massingale. Put your pen, book, laptop etc down and think about what he wrote. Describe something that you learned from his writings, a significant takeaway.

Resource on Original Sin for future reference = Rahner, Karl. *Sacramentum Mundi*, v 4., 328-34.

Monday, April 10 – No class on Easter Monday

Class 11 (M 4/17): *Imago Dei*: Expanding our View of How and Where we See God's Image.

Introduction to the ideas and the readings: Today's readings engage a variety of topics – they are all linked by the concept of the *imago dei*. One thing that we are going to see is that to bear God's image is to be in relationship. The first piece by Gonzalez lays out a basic understanding of the concept of the *imago dei*. The second piece by Cuddeback-Green considers how disability in the bible and today tell us something about being created in God's image. Elizabeth Johnson brings in ecological lens to the question of *imago dei*. Using ecology, biology and botany she argues that our view of creation and God's image should not be anthropocentric but creation-centered or earth-centered. She asks, what would happen to our theology if we put ecological care at the center of views of what it means to be a creature? What if humans viewed themselves as creatures alongside other creatures?

Read:

*Gonzalez, Michelle. "Created for God and for Each Other: Our *Imago Dei*," in *T&T Clark Handbook of Theological Anthropology*, 61-71. [C]

*Cuddeback-Gedeon, Lorraine. "Disability: Raising Challenged to Rationality and Embodiment in Theological Anthropology," in *T&T Clark Handbook of Theological Anthropology*, 333-444. [C]

*Johnson, Elizabeth. "Ecological Theology in Women's Voices" in *Faith and Feminism: Ecumenical Essays*, eds. B. Diane Lipsett & Phyllis Tribble (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 189-201.

Ebook through our library: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csbsju/reader.action?docID=3416825&ppg=210>

Resource: Johnson, Elizabeth. *Go Asks the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 122-53 and 260-86.

Available as an ebook through our library: [Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love \(ebSCOhost.com\)](#)

Write:

--How do these authors challenge us to stretch our sense of what it means to be created *imago dei*?

In your response, find a way of making a connection between two of the authors.

--What do you think of Johnson's turn from androcentrism?

Class 12 (M 4/24): Human Suffering, Death and Resurrection/Initial Student Presentations

Introduction to the ideas and readings: Suffering and death are critical elements of human experience and raise urgent questions for men and women. Why does God allow suffering and why is human existence finite? What happens once we die? For Christianity to speak meaningfully to men and women – it must provide satisfying answers to these questions. The answers to these questions are important for theological coherence and pastoral success. As you do these readings, think about what the authors' views on death, suffering and resurrection say about human freedom, human sin, and who Christ is. Teachings about suffering and death are often viewed in isolation, but they work as part of the whole system of Christian belief. Also important today are scientific views of what death and suffering are. Again, we want to think about how theological and scientific views are seeking to illumine different aspects of the same reality. This is especially important for those of you who will be ministering in a healthcare setting. Medical journals commonly define death as "the end or cessation of life" or the "permanent cessation of all vital bodily functions." Gawande is a surgeon who reflects on how death is approached by the medical community and how it could be re-considered. His best-selling book will give you insight into death from a medical or scientific perspective. Sulmasy is a medical doctor who approaches death from a clinical perspective. Dr. Gawande's and Dr. Sulmasy's discussions of the end of life can seem to stand in tension with the views offered by Rahner and Schillebeeckx which give death a deep meaning. As you read, keep thinking about how the theological view of death and the medical/clinical view of death might be in conversation with each other.

Read:

*Rahner, Karl. "Why Does God allow us to Suffer?" *Theological Investigations*, Vol. 19 (New York: Crossroad, 1983) 194-208. [C]

*Schillebeeckx, Edward. "God Does Not Want Mankind to Suffer," in *Christ: The Experience of Jesus as Lord* (New York: Crossroad, 1980) 724-730. [C]

*Rahner, Karl. "Ideas for a Theology of Death," in *Theological Investigations* 13, 169-86. [C]

*Dr. Atul Gawande, M.D., *Being Mortal* (NY: Metropolitan, 2017), 149-230. (Looks like a lot, but an easy read). [C]

*Dr. Daniel Sulmasy, M.D., "Holding Life and Death in Dynamic Tension" in *Health Progress* (December 2017). [C]

Listen: Podcast - "Rethinking Death." [Rethinking Death : TED Radio Hour : NPR](#)

Write:

- *Why does suffering exist according to Rahner and Schillebeeckx and what does it tell us about human personhood and about God?*
- What do death and resurrection tell us about the character of human personhood?*
- Dr. Gamande and Sulmacy offer some clinical perspectives on death, what are your thoughts about the light they shed on the end of life and how you would talk about death in a hospital/hospice setting?*

Class 13 (M 5/1): Student Presentations

This session is always a great end to our term as it allows us to learn about a wide variety of research & applications related to theological anthropology.

Appendix A: Instructions for Review Exercises

Prior to the review session students are asked to complete two review exercises. These exercises are to be submitted to the instructor prior to your group's review session. Please have these exercises ready to share during the review ("share screen"). Because we will be sharing them you will want to make them easy to read/follow.

#1) CHART -- The first exercise is to create a chart which compares three figures or groups from our class on a particular thematic point. Some possible themes for comparison are: 1) the nature and capacity of human freedom, 2) the impact and nature of sin, 3) a tension they seek to wrestle with, 4) how they would answer the question: why don't human beings act as they ought?, and 5) What is their starting point for dealing with anthropological questions? You choose the figures/groups and you choose the themes. Note: You do not have to choose the same three figures for both comparisons, but it is helpful/useful to push yourself to see how what one person says about one area (ex: freedom) impacts what she/he says about another (ex: sin). Finally, in the version that you will share with your group, please try to condense your boxes to 4-5 bullet points that express what is MOST important for that figure on that question as it will facilitate your ability to review with others. You may want to prepare a chart with lots of content, but please produce a condensed version for the group discussion (the act of condensing has the benefit of helping you reflect on what's most important).

Example:

	Why don't human beings act as they ought?	A central tension that they are wrestling with
Augustine		
Pelagius		
Rahner		

#2) Concept Map –

A concept map is a visual way of organizing information and showing how various concepts are related within a larger whole. Concept maps help us to activate our knowledge of a topic and then connect those ideas in a meaningful way. This can help solidify one's thinking and understanding as well as to reveal that thinking to others. Typically concepts maps are developed to answer a particular question. The question for this assignment is "What does the Christian theological tradition say about what it means to be a human person?" I have included an example below.

Steps:

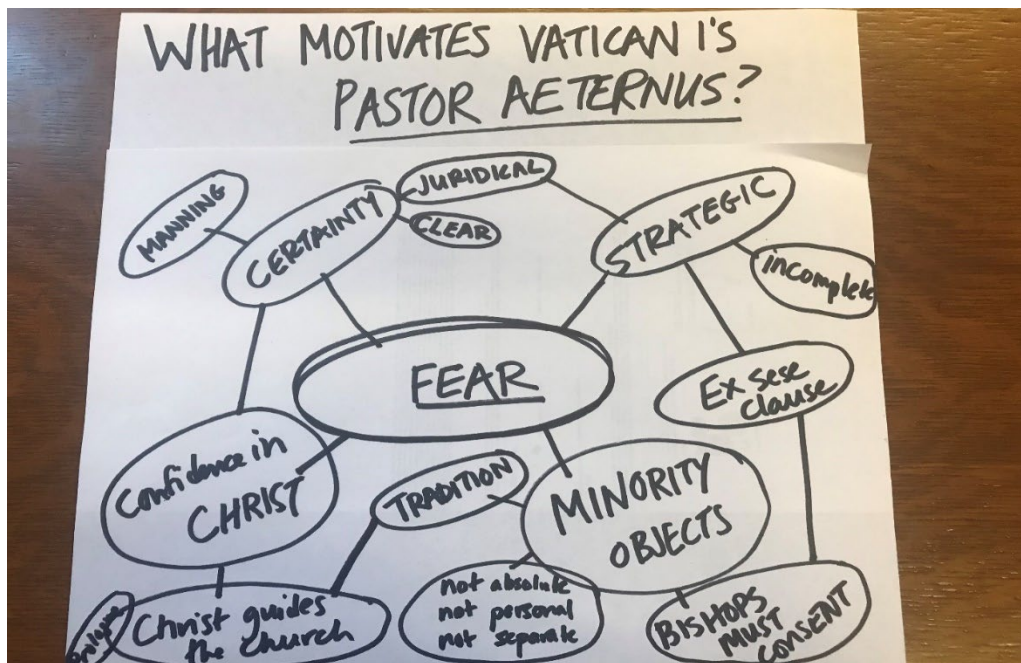
Generate – Give yourself an hour to review your notes carefully and *think* about big ideas. After a careful review, generate a list of words, ideas or aspects that have been important during this unit and are associated with the question/topic. You should not begin creating your map until you have generated this list, but you can go back and add to the list as you go.

Sort – Sort your ideas according to how central or tangential they are, placing central ideas near the center and more peripheral ideas towards the outside. I recommend starting by sketching with a pencil as your thinking will likely shift.

Connect – Connect your ideas by drawing lines between ideas that share a connection and try to briefly explain this connection by writing it out on the line.

Elaborate – Pick a few central ideas and trajectories and elaborate on them. Can you create subcategories that break the ideas into smaller parts?

Each student is asked to send their map and a paragraph that elaborates on a few central ideas or trajectories to Kristin by the time that their small group review session is scheduled to start. Please be prepared to discuss your map with your group – especially why you chose what you chose for the center and some connections or trajectories that you found interesting.



Appendix B: Small Group Work for Weeks 2-6

During weeks 2-6 of the course (up until spring break) we will be meeting in the same small groups for discussion. These groups will typically meet halfway through the class period and will reflect on the lecture/discussion during the first part of the course as well as ideas from the readings on this topic which were not able to be incorporated during that time. The instructor will provide discussion questions based on the day's work. Each week, one group will be asked to take the lead in sharing some of the fruits of their discussion. This "leading group" will lead about 20 minutes of large group discussion.

Here is what your 20 minutes with the large group might look like:

Begin by reflecting on the learning/sharing in your small group (no more than five minutes):

Here is what our group talked about or got excited about.....

Here is a question that our group had about this material.....

Here is a practical application that our group recognized in these ideas.....

The "leading group" should then invite feedback from the larger group (no more than 15 minutes total).

Ask other groups to report back- "Could each group share one takeaway from their conversation?"

Raise a new question for the whole group to consider, give the room silent time to reflect, then ask for ideas.

Ask people to draw something

Ask people to talk in pairs on a question

Creativity is welcomed!

Note: The timing is critical here, please try to stick to the guideline of 5 minutes + 15 minutes.

Note: Participation in this activity each week – as part of the "leading group" and as someone willing to respond to the prompts of the "leading group" will impact your participation grade. Not everyone from the small group needs to speak during the large group time, but all group members should be equally involved in the planning. As in all small groups (and many areas of life), the enthusiastic participation of all members is critical to the success of the group. On the last week of this exercise, students will be asked to fill out an evaluation form for the instructor reflecting on the success of their group.

GROUPS (I have taken your name as it appears on Banner)

Week 2

David Paul Lange
Logan Edwards
Rachel Henry
Lanh Kim Nguyen
Duc Nguyen
Frantzy Mahotiere

Week 3

Bernie Donolon
Marcos Rodrigues Leles
Jean D'Amour Dusengumuremyi
Thong Tran
Rianna Doyle

Week 4

Denys Janiga
Maria Elena Lindsay
Paulinus Daeli
Coleman Kimbrough
Noah Nordengren
Hang Nguyen

Week 5

Andrea Frey
Emily Klaus
Matthew Nadalin
Mary Parks
Peter Tran
Charlotte Wells
Kelly Olson

Week 6

Henry Widdicombe
Elizabeth Hamak
Abigail Henning
Xuyen Nguyen
Eric Kalimbiriro

