

**Mystics, Masters, and Martyrs:
Theology and Theologians in Medieval Europe
January 2017
9-11:30am, Gardencourt 206
Instructor: Christopher Elwood**

Course Description:

This course will explore the lives, thought, and context of significant Christian figures of the Middle Ages in Europe: Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109), Marguerite Porete (d. 1310), and Gregory Palamas (1296-1359). We will focus on themes of revelation and knowledge of God, attending to how these theologians and spiritual authors integrated practice and belief, spirituality, and theology. In addition, students will have the opportunity to research another medieval theologian of their choice.

Goals and Objectives:

The goal of the course is to help students develop their capacity for faithful and coherent theological expression in pastoral practice.

Students will

- gain a basic understanding of the different forms of theology and spirituality developed and practiced in Europe in the Middle Ages,
- sharpen their skills of theological interpretation through the close reading and discussion of primary sources, orally and in writing,
- develop their ability to make responsible and relevant use of historic theological writing,
- reflect on various models for integrating the analytical, devotional and practical components of theology and spiritual writing,
- and clarify their own theological and ethical positions.

Required Books:

Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works. Eds. Brian Davis and G.R. Evans. *Oxford World's Classics*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. (Referred to in the syllabus as AoC)
Marguerite Porete: The Mirror of Simple Souls. Ed. Ellen L. Babinsky. *The Classics of Western Spirituality*. New York: Paulist Press, 1993.
Gregory Palamas: The Triads. Eds. John Meyendorff and Nicholas Gendle. *The Classics of Western Spirituality*. New York: Paulist Press, 1983.

On Library Reserve:

Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works. Eds. Brian Davis and G.R. Evans. *Oxford World's Classics*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. (Referred to in the syllabus as AoC)
Marguerite Porete: The Mirror of Simple Souls. Ed. Ellen L. Babinsky. *The Classics of Western Spirituality*. New York: Paulist Press, 1993.
Gregory Palamas: The Triads. Eds. John Meyendorff and Nicholas Gendle. *The Classics of Western Spirituality*. New York: Paulist Press, 1983.
The Prayers and Meditations of St. Anselm. Ed. Sister Benedicta Ward. *Penguin Classics*. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1973.
David N. Bell. *Many Mansions: An Introduction to the Development and Diversity of Medieval Theology*. *Cistercian Studies Series* 146. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1996.
Norman F. Cantor, *Inventing the Middle Ages: The Lives, Works, and Ideas of the Great Medievalists of the Twentieth Century*. New York: William Morrow, 1991.

- Gillian R. Evans. *The Medieval Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Medieval Period*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001.
- Gillian R. Evans. *Anselm*. Wilton, Conn.: Morehouse-Barlow, 1989.
- Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1982, new ed.
- Bernard McGinn. *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism-1200-1350*. New York: Crossroad, 1998.
- Bernard McGinn, ed. *Meister Eckhart and the Beguine Mystics: Hadewijch of Brabant, Mechthild of Magdeburg, and Marguerite Porete*. New York: Continuum, 1994.
- John Meyendorff. *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality*. Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974.
- Jill Raitt, ed. *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*. New York: Crossroad, 1987.
- Joanne Maguire Robinson. *Nobility and Annihilation in Marguerite Porete's Mirror of Simple Souls*. Albany, N.Y.: SUNY, 2001.
- R. W. Southern. *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

In the Reference Room:

- Joseph Strayer, ed. *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*. New York: Scribner, 1983.
- Rosamond Kitterick, gen. ed. *New Cambridge Medieval History*. 7 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- For additional resources see also: <http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.asp>.

Requirements:

1. *Course engagement*: Thorough preparation for class and active, thoughtful participation in discussion is a basic requirement of the course. Attendance is mandatory. Students will submit a one-paragraph self-assessment of their course engagement, including a grade, as an appendix to their *Synthetic Project* (see 3, below). The following is a rough guide to letter grade assignment: A = completed 95-100% of the reading prior to class discussion, with critical reflection, and engaged thoughtfully and with respect for others in class exchanges; B = completed 85% ...; C = completed 75% ... Grades should be lowered appropriately for unexcused absences, tardiness, leaving class early, in-class texting or other forms of non-participation. The instructor reserves the right to adjust the reported grade when necessary. (about 20%)
2. *Short research paper*: Students will research and write a paper (1700-2000 words, double spaced, Times New Roman 12-pt font) on another medieval theologian or spiritual author of the student's choice (due and to be presented in class on January 18). See reference list below. Save your essay as a Word document and name it in this way: "**Yourlastname MMM research**." (about 30%)
3. *A Synthetic Project*: Students will produce a culminating project that represents the synthesizing and integrating reflective and analytic work of the semester. It is an opportunity for you to demonstrate how you have engaged the work of each of the figures covered and made sense of their contributions in a way that contributes to your emerging and growing sense of your theological identity and vocational purpose. This may take any of several forms. It may be a traditional, academic essay (10 pages) that traces a theme common to all the authors studied in the course. It may focus on an element of pastoral practice (preaching and worship, pastoral care, teaching). It may involve elements of art, performance, or creative writing. Work on the project should be roughly equivalent to the time expended on writing a 10-page academic paper. Students will present their projects on January 25 (due in final form January 27). (about 50%)

All required written work should be submitted, electronically, to the instructor's email inbox.

Medieval Theologians – a beginning list:

Aelred of Rivaulx	Hadewijch of Brabant	Moses Maimonides
Albert the Great (Albertus Magnus)	Hildegard of Bingen	Nicholas of Cusa
Anselm of Laon	Hugh of St. Victor	Nicholas of Lyra
Berengar of Tours	Ivo of Chartres	Paschasius Radbertus
Bernard of Clairvaux	Jean Gerson	Peter Abelard
Bonaventure	John of Damascus	Peter Damian
Bridget of Sweden	John Duns Scotus	Peter Lombard
Clare of Assisi	John Scotus Eriugena	Pierre d’Ailly
Catherine of Genoa	Julian of Norwich	Ratramnus of Corbie
Catherine of Sienna	Lanfranc of Canterbury	Richard of St. Victor
Francis of Assisi	Margery Kempe	Symeon the New Theologian
Gratian	Marsilius of Padua	Thomas Aquinas
Gregory of Rimini	Mechtild of Magdeburg	William of Ockham
	Meister Eckhart	

N.B. *In order to pass the course, students must complete and submit all assigned work.*

Citation Policy:

Citations in your papers should follow the Seminary standard, which is based on these guides:

- Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center. Please contact

Academic Honesty:

All work turned in to the instructor is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another’s language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For the Seminary policy, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Accessibility and Accommodation:

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Inclusive Language:

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible’s images for God. For more information, see

<http://www.lpts.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-support-center/online-writing-lab/avoiding-gender-bias>.

Policy on late work:

All written assignments are due, unless indicated otherwise, by 11:59 pm on the date given in the syllabus. Students who encounter unusual obstacles to getting an assignment in may ask for an extension of the due date. They should contact the instructor to request an extension before the work comes due. They may speak to the instructor directly, but they are required to communicate by email so as to provide a record of the request. Extensions are granted solely at the discretion of the instructor. Assignments submitted late, when no extension has been granted, will be penalized in the grading by one letter grade increment for every day (a B+ paper becomes a B if one day late, a B- if two days, a C+ if three days, etc.). Assignments submitted more than ten days after the due date will not be accepted.

Use of electronic devices in class:

Do not send or read text messages during class. Cell phones should be turned off. In the event that you have a legitimate need to be accessible during class, you may ask the instructor for an exception to this rule. Laptops should not be used if you cannot trust yourself to restrict your use to note-taking and referring to the assigned primary source readings for the day. You may not access the Internet during class time unless specifically for purposes directly relevant to the course. Any misuse of electronic devices during class time, including checking of email or social networking sites will negatively affect the course grade.

Attendance Policy:

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Six or more absences (1/4 of the course) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

Contacting the instructor:

While students are always welcome to speak to the instructor at any time about questions or issues that arise, the most reliable and efficient means of setting up an opportunity to meet and talk over important matters is through email. Students are strongly encouraged to contact the professor when they feel they need clarification on topics and questions that arise in the class, or when they are confronting significant challenges in their learning.

Calendar of Topics and Assignments:

- January 3** Introduction to the Course
T Required reading:
Norman F. Cantor, *Inventing the Middle Ages*, pp. 410-417.
Bernard McGinn, "Introduction" in *Meister Eckhart and the Beguine Mystics*, pp. 1-14.
Recommended background:
Jean Leclercq, "Monastic Theology," in *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*
- January 4** Anselm of Canterbury: Prayer and the Practice of Theology
W Required reading:
Prayers and Meditations, pp. 90-126; 212-219
AoC, Letter to Archbishop Lanfranc, pp. 3-4

AoC, Monologion, pp. 5-20; 65-81
Recommended background:
G.R. Evans, *Anselm* ch. 2-3

- January 5** Anselm: Praying to and Thinking About God
TH
Required reading:
AoC, Proslogion
Recommended background:
G.R. Evans, *Anselm* ch. 4
- January 6** Arguing Anselm's Theology
F
Required reading:
Prayers and Meditations, pp. 201-211; 221-237
AoC, Gaunilo, On Behalf of the Fool, pp. 105-110
AoC, Reply to Gaunilo, pp. 111-122
- January 9** More Anselmian Arguments: Incarnation and Trinity
M
Required reading:
Prayers and Meditations, pp. 141-156
AoC, Incarnation of the Word, pp. 233-38; 247-259
AoC, Procession of the Holy Spirit, pp. 390-98; 413-15; 425-434
Recommended background:
G.R. Evans, *Anselm* ch. 5
- January 10** Marguerite Porete and a Women's Movement
T
Required reading:
Ellen Babinsky, Introduction to *Marguerite Porete: Mirror of Simple Souls*
Amy Hollywood, "'Who Does She Think She Is?' Christian Women's
Mysticism," *Theology Today* 60 (2003): 5-15 (available on the ATLA
database)
"The Trial of Marguerite Porete"
<http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/margporete.htm>
Recommended background:
Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism*, pp. 199-200, 244-265
Joanne Maguire Robinson, *Nobility and Annihilation*, ch. 2
- January 11** Marguerite Porete: Love and Reason
W
Required reading:
Mirror of Simple Souls, pp. 79-136
- January 12** Marguerite Porete: the Peace of the Divine Life
TH
Required reading:
Mirror of Simple Souls, pp. 137-222
- January 13** **Research Day—No Class**
F
- January 16** **Martin Luther King Day—No Class**
M
- January 17** **Research Day—No Class**
T

- January 18** Student Presentations
W **Research paper due**
- January 19** Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Tradition
TH Visitor: Father Atty, St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church
Required reading:
John Meyendorff, Introduction to *Gregory Palamas: The Triads*
Andrew Louth, "Postpatristic Byzantine Theologians," in G.R. Evans, *The Medieval Theologians*
David Bell, *Many Mansions*, ch. 9
Recommended background:
Stanley Samuel Harakas, "Faith Formation in Byzantium," in John Van Engen, ed., *Educating People of Faith*
John Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality*
- January 20** Gregory Palamas, Apophatic Theology, and Hesychasm
F Required reading:
The Triads, pp. 25-56
- January 23** Theosis and the Divine Essence and Energies
M Required reading:
The Triads, pp. 57-111
- January 24** **Writing/Working Day—No Class**
T
- January 25** Conclusions and Synthetic Project Reports (final day of class)
W
- January 27** **Synthetic Projects due (final form)**
F