

EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION
Saint Katherine College, Encinitas, CA
Course Title: Fundamentals of Orthodox Theology - TH1a
Spring 2011
Eve Tibbs, Ph.D.

DESCRIPTION:

This course is the first semester of a year-long survey introduction to Orthodox Theology. This course will provide a foundational understanding of the Orthodox Christian view of God and truth as pursued through contemplation, philosophy, history, and the arts and the sciences. Focus will be placed on the early Church and the apostolic and patristic witness to God and truth, especially considering the sources and method of Orthodox theology. Key topics will include Orthodox Christian views of the knowability of God, scripture and revelation, the created universe, the Fall, salvation, the Church, liturgy and worship, the testimony of the Saints, the theology of the Holy Images, or Icons, and the witness of Orthodoxy in the world at large. This course will also touch upon comparative views of these and other issues in order to help the student situate Orthodox Christianity in its contemporary religious context.

RELEVANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL FORMATION:

This course will widen students' perspectives on theology, church history, and sacramentality. It will explain some of the differences between Orthodox Christianity and the Catholic and Protestant traditions. The course provides a critical context in which to discuss special problems relevant to history, theology, culture, science, the arts, and contemporary life.

COURSE FORMAT:

This course will meet weekly for 3-hour sessions of lecture, film and other visual presentations, and class discussion.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1) Ware, Timothy (Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia). *The Orthodox Church*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1997).

The Orthodox Church, by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware is the most frequently recommended book on Eastern Orthodoxy in the English language to date. It is considered to be the standard introduction to the Orthodox Church throughout the English Speaking world. Part I describes the history of the Church, and Part II explains the beliefs and worship.

2) His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, *Encountering the Mystery: Understanding Orthodox Christianity Today* (New York: Doubleday, 2008).

Written by the spiritual leader and spokesperson of the Orthodox Church throughout the world, His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I presents a broad glimpse of the Orthodox Christian Faith and theology through his personal life and ministry. Often referred to as the "Green Patriarch" because of his emphasis on our need to care for creation, an important underlying theme of this book is that care and respect for all of that which has been created by God.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, BUT NOT REQUIRED:

3) Payton, James R. *Light from the Christian East: An Introduction to the Orthodox Tradition* (Downer's Grove, IL: IVP, 2007).

Light from the Christian East is a balanced, clear and concise view of the Orthodox Christian tradition from the vantage point of a Protestant Christian scholar. Especially suitable for this course is Payton's highlighting of the differences between Orthodoxy and Western Christian views (both Protestant and Roman Catholic.)

4) Grenz, S. et al. *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, Intervarsity Press, 1999.

Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms is a compact and concise collection of over 300 definitions of the most common theological terms found in contemporary writings. This small book is helpful resource for theological readings, lectures & writing assignments.

Other Required Readings will be provided by photocopy in class or online (pdf format).

Theology Majors are to select one additional special topic text. Suggested titles include (but are not limited to):

Archbishop Anastasios (Yannoulatos), *Facing the World: Orthodox Christian Essays on Global Concerns*. Crestwood: SVS Press, 2003. (Ecumenism and Theology of Religions)

Bobrinsky, Boris, *The Mystery of the Trinity: Trinitarian Experience and Vision in the Biblical and Patristic Tradition*, Crestwood NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999.

Bondi, Roberta. *To Love as God Loves*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987 (Desert Spirituality)

Chryssavgis, John. *Light Through Darkness: The Orthodox Tradition* Orbis Books, 2004. (The mystical spiritual tradition)

Clendenin, Daniel B. ed. *Eastern Orthodox Theology: A Contemporary Reader*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2nd Ed. 2003.)

Hopko, Thomas. *All the Fullness of God: Essays on Orthodoxy, Ecumenism and Modern Society*. Crestwood: SVS Press, 1997.

Lossky, Vladimir. *Orthodox Theology: an Introduction*, Ian and Ihita Kesarkodi-Watson, trans. New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989.

McPartlan, Paul. *The Eucharist Makes the Church: Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999. (Trinity and Communion Ecclesiology)

Schememann, Alexander. *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy*. Crestwood: SVS Press, 1997. (liturgical worship and sacramentality)

Ugolnik, Anton. *The Illuminating Icon*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989). ("iconic" Orthodox hermeneutics)

Zizioulas, John. *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*. Continuum, 2007. (Trinity and Personhood)

Ware, Timothy (Metropolitan Kallistos). *The Orthodox Way. The Orthodox Way*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996. (Orthodox Spirituality)

ASSIGNMENTS: (1) Required reading (800 pages); (2) Six 2-page reading responses plus active class participation; (3) Two short-answer terminology quizzes; (4) Theology majors only: One 3-4 page book review expounding on key points, plus your assessment, of one of the required special topic texts; (5) Theology majors only: One 8-10 page research paper.

PREREQUISITES: None.

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM: TH101a

FINAL EXAMINATION: No