



Foundational Questions

Comprehensive Examinations evaluate a student's synthesis of a particular topic, not a particular class taught by a specific professor.

You will be given a choice of six questions from which you must answer three.

1. Discuss the unfolding of God's self-gift in history. Be specific in your answer and consider the relationship between creation and redemption.
2. Discuss the relationship between the notion of God's self-gift and the theology of the Nicene Creed.
3. What is the relationship of conscience and authority in Catholic moral theology? Refer to the documents of Vatican II and subsequent discussions of the obligations Catholics have to the moral teachings of the ordinary magisterium. What are the different functions of conscience and what freedom does conscience have in the Catholic community?
4. Describe the change in focus of Catholic social teaching after Vatican II. How and why did it become more global, more biblical, and more centered on justice? Using the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' 1983 *Challenge of Peace* and 1986 *Economic Justice for All*, show how biblical material has altered traditional natural law approaches on questions of human dignity, war and peace, and the right to private property.
5. According to Mark 1:15, Jesus announced that the "*Reign of God*" was at hand. Discuss how Jesus spoke about the Reign of God, how he embodied his message in his actions, and how he understood his death as a moment in the coming of the Reign.
6. The Council of Chalcedon (451 CE) said there was no "confusion" of Jesus' divine and human natures. A few centuries later, Maximus the Confessor took another step: *if Jesus is divine he would be the most authentic human being who ever lived*. Why would that be so?
7. Jesus preached the imminent reign of God and the endtimes of history and from his preaching has come the Christian Church. In light of this: (a) describe the reign of God in Jesus' life and work; and (b) explain its relationship to the Christian community which emerged after Jesus' death and resurrection — how Jesus the *preacher* became Jesus the *preached*.
8. Discuss the nature and function of models in theology and select at least one of Avery Dulles's models of the Church that, in your opinion, serve as the best starting point for understanding the mystery of the Church. Explain the model you have chosen and present a careful evaluation in a biblical, historical, theological, pastoral, and liberationist perspective.
9. Describe the dominant themes and theological points of view of the Hebrew Bible, giving examples of their occurrence and analyzing their relevance for today.
10. A variety of methods are used in the study of the Hebrew Bible. Describe the major methodological approaches and discuss their theological significance. How do these approaches clarify or modify more traditional views of the Bible?
11. Choose one gospel and discuss its overall structure, its particular purpose, its literary and theological

characteristics, and its probable audience. Indicate how this critical process informs your own use of scripture as the source for your ministry.

12. Choose one of Paul's major, undisputed letters and discuss its overall structure, its peculiar purpose, its literary and theological characteristics, and its probable audience. Then show how this critical reflection on Paul's message and work informs your own ministry.
13. Compare the meaning of Jesus' death as presented by each of the Synoptic Gospels. How do the differences affect catechetical presentation of Jesus' death?
14. Choose three generically different books in the New Testament. What are their genre, and how are these genres related to the book's kerygmatic message? Discuss the catechetical problems and possibilities that these three books present.