

SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY

TESP 31 *The Christ: Mystery and Meaning*

Winter 2009 Prof. Parrella

SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the mystery and the meaning of Jesus of Nazareth who was proclaimed by his followers as the Christ and Son of God. Topics include:

- (1) examining the meaning of salvation in literature
- (2) the images of Jesus in Western culture and the models of Jesus in contemporary theology
- (3) Jesus as he appears in the four Gospels: history and theology
- (4) the cross, death, and Resurrection of Jesus: the Paschal Mystery's central place in the life of the Christian community
- (5) the development of community's doctrine about Jesus; from the New Testament to the 5th century and the Council of Chalcedon
- (6) reinterpreting the mystery of the Christ and the doctrine about the Christ for the 21st century in light of a secular, pluralist, and multi-cultural world.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to integrate and compare several different disciplinary approaches to religious phenomena by critical thinking on the complexity of content as well as on theological and historical methodologies.
- Students will be able to analyze and reflect on a coherent cluster of complex and diverse religious phenomena and write intelligent and coherent essays on these phenomena.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Salinger, Jerome David (J. D.). "For Esmé With Love and Squalor." In *Nine Stories*, 87-114. Boston: Little Brown paper, 1991 [1953].
- Murphy, Catherine. *The Historical Jesus for Dummies*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2007.
- The Gospels Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*. The New American Bible translation.
- Dwyer, John. *Son of Man, Son of God. A New Language for Faith*, 155-197. New York: Paulist, 1983. (In packet)
- Lane, Dermot. *Christ the Centre. Selected Issues in Christology*, chapters 1-5. Dublin: Veritas, 1991. (In packet).
- _____. "Reshaping the Christological Dogma," in *The Reality of Jesus. An Essay in Christology*, 109-129. New York: Paulist, 1975. (In packet)
- Richardson, Alan. "The Doctrine of the Person of Christ," in *Creeds in the Making*, 69-95. London: SCM, 1935. (In packet)
- Baillie, Donald M. "The Paradox of the Incarnation," in *God Was in Christ*, 106-132. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948. (In packet)
- Tillich, Paul. *The New Being*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955. Volume two of Tillich's sermons; reprinted, with an Introduction by Mary Ann Stenger. Lincoln, Nebraska and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2005.

Parrella, Frederick J. *The Mystery of Jesus the Christ*. Unpublished manuscript. Santa Clara University, 2000. (In packet)

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT

During the fourth week of the term, each student must choose a text from one of the Gospels that poses a difficult problem of interpretation or introduces the student to an insight into Jesus hitherto unknown. Be prepared to read the text and state the question or present the insight in class.

PAPERS

In place of exams, five (5) papers are required for the course. Each paper is to be in proper form, at least **4 (four) pages** in length. Please follow the instructions about writing your paper in the *Writing Guides* that you will find in the course packet. *Remember each paper must have a title page and please number every page.* You must use and cite some, but not all, of the sources listed with the description of each paper. The questions under each paper topic are not to be answered literally; they merely serve as prompts for the student's reflection.

- When citing Scripture in your papers, no footnotes are necessary; simply place the reference in parenthesis in your text—for example: (Mt. 25: 31-46). The period goes after the close of the parentheses.

(1) PAPER ONE

A brief essay, four (4) pages minimum, on the short story of J. D. Salinger, "For Esmé With Love and Squalor." The essay should discuss the fundamental theological issues raised in the story. Put differently, how do Esmé, Charles, and Sergeant X embody of the mystery of the Christian saving event? What connections do you see between the story and the meaning of the salvation, especially but not exclusively, found in the Christian tradition? Put differently, what does salvation/ liberation mean? What are we saved *from*? You may use any other readings assigned in the course if they are helpful.

Source: "For Esmé with Love and Squalor" and any other assigned readings, especially the Gospels, that a student may find helpful.

Due: Wednesday of the 3rd week, 21 January 2009.

(2) PAPER TWO

A creative essay on the person of Jesus *as he appears* in the Gospels. If you are a believing Christian, try to leave all your pre-knowledge and presuppositions about Jesus aside and look at Jesus for the first time. What sort of God does Jesus reveal to the people of his time as well as the world today? If you are reading the Gospels for the first time, what sort of person is Jesus? Why have Christians proclaimed through the centuries they have seen the face of God in the life of this man Jesus? In your essay, take into account the literary and historical interpretations of the Gospels as presented in Catherine Murphy's *The Historical Jesus for Dummies*. Be sure to cite the Gospels and Murphy in your essay.

Sources: The Four Gospels: Mt, Mk, Lk, Jn
Murphy, Catherine. *The Historical Jesus for Dummies*.
Lane, *Christ the Center*, chapters 1–2.

Due: Monday of the 6th week, 9 Feb. 2009.

(3) PAPER THREE

A theological essay that attempts to answer this question: *What is the theological meaning of the cross and resurrection of Jesus the Christ?* What sense does the Cross make to modern life? Is it only to satisfy God for human sinfulness? How is the cross not only a window into Jesus but also the God that Jesus reveals?

Sources: Dwyer, *Son of Man, Son of God*, 155-197
Lane, *Christ at the Center*, chapters 3 and 4

The Four Gospels

Due: Monday of the 8th week, 23 Feb. 2009.

(4) PAPER FOUR

A theological essay on the nature and the development of the Christological doctrine as the center of Christian faith throughout the centuries. How did the Jesus of the Gospels become translated into the Christ of Greek philosophy, culminating in the Council of Chalcedon's statement that Jesus is truly God and truly a human being? What does it mean to call both Jesus divine and human today?

Sources: Lane, *Christ at the Centre*, chapter 5.
 Lane, "Reshaping the Christological Dogma," 109-129.
 Richardson, "The Doctrine of the Person of Christ."
 Baillie, "The Paradox of the Incarnation."

Due: Monday of the 10th week, 16 March 2009

(5) PAPER FIVE

A capstone essay on this question: why and how is Jesus the Christ the New Being? How does this approach to Jesus move our understanding of Christ's significance from abstract doctrine to living reality? Does this approach to Christology make the Christian faith more relevant to modern and postmodern people today? You may also find it helpful to consider this question in writing your essay: *If Jesus Christ is the answer, what is the question?* You may want to select several chapters from the book that appeals to you, or a common theme that is present throughout the book and focus on these chapters or theme.

- You may also do an interdisciplinary paper: combine this paper with ideas from your major, e.g., art history, history, psychology, history, literature, et al. Consult with me on an interdisciplinary paper.

Sources: Tillich, *The New Being*.
 Any other course reading or item on the bibliography you find helpful, or other sources.

Due: No later than Wednesday of the 11th week, 18 March 2009 at noon.

NOTE WELL ABOUT PAPERS

On form:

- (1) Be sure to number the pages of your paper.
- (2) No bibliography or "works cited" page is required. All the information is contained in the footnotes. Learn to do footnotes in the proper manner—see the Writing Guides in the Reading Packet.

On deadlines:

- (1) Keep in mind: *there are deadlines and there are consequences if the student does not submit his/her paper on time. Late papers may be returned with a grade but without comment.*
- (2) The final paper is due no later than Wednesday, March 18, 2009, at Noon.

ATTENDANCE

A student is expected to attend *all* classes and attendance is the student's responsibility. There are often reasons why a student *cannot* or *does* not attend class. Failure to attend class means that the student will be unfamiliar with the assigned reading material as well as ideas presented and discussed in class for the required papers. This cannot but help have a negative impact upon the student's final grade. Classes are given only once: if you miss class, it is *your* responsibility to keep up to date with the course. Keep up with the readings as well as you can if you are sick or miss class.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OF STUDENTS

Please observe the following rules of professional conduct in a class:

- Students should make every effort to arrive at the classroom on time and suitably and properly dressed for an academic forum.

- No one is permitted to leave the class without permission of the professor until the class has been dismissed except for a serious medical emergency. Restroom facilities are available before and after the class, not during the class.
- *Please be sure your cell phone is turned off before each class begins.* You would NEVER want your phone to ring in my class. Thank you.

GRADING POLICY

(1) Grades will be based on the papers required for the course. The papers will be evaluated on the basis of the student's ability: (1) to reveal to the reader his/her command of the assigned readings in both depth and breadth; (2) to develop a clear and coherent argument of the student's choosing based upon the required readings. References to the texts—either citations or direct quotations—are essential. Each paper will count for one fifth of the final grade. Attendance and participation will also be a *qualitative* factor in consideration of the final grade.

(2) The grade of Incomplete will be given only under special and unusual circumstances. For students who receive a grade of Incomplete: all work required for the course must be submitted no later than the beginning of the fourth week of the following term. Failure to do so means that the grade will automatically be turned over to an "F" by the Office of Student Records at the beginning of the fifth week. This is the grade you will receive for the course.

(3) Students who do not attend class on a consistent basis so that they are known by the professor and other students to be a member of the course in good standing, and who fail to contact the professor with the reason for missing classes, will receive a serious reduction in their final grades based on the level of attendance and quality of participation, *regardless of the work submitted.*

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Cheating can take many forms. Please be aware that if you are caught in a situation of academic dishonesty, you will receive an F in the assignment. The most common form of cheating is plagiarism. Note carefully: *whenever you use the precise words or even the ideas of another, you must* give a complete reference to the book (author, title, city, publisher, date, page number) to your source text either in a footnote or endnote.

On the other hand, it is perfectly legitimate, even desirous, for students to talk over their topics, exchange ideas, and edit each other's papers. This is an important part of the process of learning: sharing your creative ideas with your peers. This presumes that all students collaborating with others both give and receive from such fruitful collaboration.

THE PLACE OF AN INTERMEDIATE RELIGIOUS STUDIES COURSE IN THE CURRICULUM

- The second course in Religious Studies invites students to deeper engagement with the study of religion through the application of multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary approaches to complex religious phenomena, past and present. By providing multiple and integrated perspectives, this course seeks to enrich students' appreciation for the diversity of human religious expression. This course, which may be either lower or upper division, is to be taken only after completion of Religious Studies 1–19.
- The second Religious Studies course attempts to provide mastery of a coherent body of material in order to broaden and deepen the "database" that students use to think about religions, religious issues, and all the possible interdisciplinary connections.
- Cognitively, the second course challenges students to master a discrete body of material in its own terms, to draw on this new knowledge in addressing issues framed by other disciplines, and to be alert to the way knowledge is organized and appropriated.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION POLICY

To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disability Resources located in the Drahmann Center in Benson, room 214, (408) 554-4111; TTY (408) 554-5445. Students must provide documentation of a disability to Disability Resources before receiving accommodations.

SCHEDULE

The quarter is ten weeks long. The following is a tentative reading schedule so you will know how to plan your reading intelligently.

For the week of (Monday):

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| 5 Jan. 2009 | Salinger, "For Esmé..." |
| 12 Jan. | Murphy, 273-299; Lane, chapter 1. |
| 19 Jan. | The four Gospels; Murphy, 1-272. |
| 26 Jan. | The four Gospels; Lane, <i>Christ at the Centre</i> , chapters 1 and 2; Murphy, 1-272. |
| 2 Feb. | The four Gospels; Lane, chapters 1 and 2; Murphy, 1-272; Dwyer, 155-197; Lane, <i>Christ at the Centre</i> , chapter 3. |
| 9 Feb. | Dwyer, 155-197; Lane, chapter 3, 4, and 5. |
| 16 Feb. | Lane, "Reshaping the Christological Dogma," 109-129; Richardson, "The Doctrine of the Person..." |
| 23 Feb. | Lane, "Reshaping the Christological Dogma," 109-129; Dwyer, 35-154; Richardson, "The Doctrine of the Person..." Baillie, "The Paradox of the Incarnation" |
| 2 Mar. | Tillich, <i>The New Being</i> |
| 9 Mar. | Tillich, <i>The New Being</i> |
| 16 Mar. | Final papers due |

NO Exams. Papers are due in the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 10th and 11th weeks of the quarter.

Note well: The Synopsis of the course (called Frederick J. Parrella, *An Introduction to Christology* [Unpublished manuscript. Santa Clara University, 2000-09]) is to be read throughout the quarter in accompaniment with the class readings, lectures, and discussions. It may be cited in papers as it appears above and in the required readings.

CONSULTATION

My office is in Kenna Hall, Suite 300, Room H. If you wish to consult with me at any time about your papers or any other issue related to the course, please make an appointment after class or by phone for a mutually convenient time.

Office telephone: 554.4714
Home telephone: 408.259.8225
Email: fparrella@scu.edu

Feel free to call me at home *any* day of the week at reasonable hours. Often brief questions can be discussed over the phone in order to save time for both of us. If you call or email me, be certain to leave a telephone number where you can be reached. Telephone is often preferred over email because questions and ideas can be exchanged immediately. Use email for very short, factual questions. Thank you.

"When I shall be dead, tell the kingdom of the earth that I have loved it much more than I have ever dared to say."