

# PMIN 201-1: Theological Foundations for Ministry



**Class Time:** Mondays, 6-9 PM  
**Instructor:** Paul J. Schutz  
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**Office Hours:** Kenna 323D;  
Zoom, by appt.  
**Fall Quarter 2026 | In-Person**



## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The discipline of practical theology reflects critically on the Christian faith as it takes shape in the diverse sociocultural contexts Christians inhabit. In keeping with these disciplinary aims, this course explores diverse ways in which the Catholic, Christian faith is articulated and lived in the global Church and in the practice of ministry. Our work is **theological** insofar as it seeks to understand more fully the tenets of our faith through the practice of theological reflection on God, Christ, Spirit, Church, Creation, Eschatology, and so on. It is **practical** insofar as it focuses on the **lived experience** of that faith: not simply what it means to say that “Jesus is Lord,” but what it means to say “Jesus is Lord” in a specific time and place, taking stock of the cares and concerns of local Christian communities.

In keeping with the GPPM’s twofold emphasis on cultivating **theological reflection and pastoral-ministerial skills**, this course aims to equip students with the conceptual tools necessary to engage in critical reflection on the Christian faith—to engage in theology as “faith seeking understanding”—and to apply the fruits of that reflection to the life of faith and the task of ministry in a diverse global church. To achieve this end, we engage in reading, writing, and thinking in an atmosphere of mutual, constructive engagement to discuss the challenges and opportunities practical theology offers the contemporary church and those who minister in its name.

### **Goal 1: Theological Foundation**

Knowledge of the broad intellectual foundation for ministry in the areas of scripture, systematic and contextual theology, and spirituality; and incorporate theological reflection to enrich their ministerial practices across varying contexts.

### **Goal 2: Pastoral Proficiency**

Familiarity with ministerial practices in various manifestations of church life, expressed in concrete pastoral applications which include discernment, compassion, and ministries of accompaniment.

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## COURSE OBJECTIVES

### **What do we aim to achieve? By the end of this course, students will be able to:**

- Think, speak, and write critically about the Christian faith by engaging in theological reflection from the standpoint of ministry;
- Articulate and engage challenges and opportunities that emerge at the intersection of theological reflection on the Christian tradition and the lived experience of the faith;
- Discuss and reflect upon how theological claims are enculturated in and challenged by the diverse sociocultural contexts the church inhabits (i.e. Latin America, Asian contexts, economically-oppressed communities, etc.);
- Apply the fruits of theological reflection to the work of ministry in and beyond the communities GPPM students serve.



## **EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS (FOR YOU AND FOR ME)**

1. **Be Respectful:** We will discuss numerous viewpoints, some or many of which may conflict with your own. While you can and should disagree with one another (and with me!), please do so with a spirit of generosity and understanding.
  2. **Be Responsible:** There are no excuses for late work, frequent absences, or anything else. Readings must be read; papers and projects must be submitted on the date indicated. In the age of laptops and THE CLOUD, and on a campus with numerous computer labs, computer failure is typically not a valid excuse for an incomplete assignment. That said, **I'm here to help** if any technical issues arise, and accommodations will be made when extenuating circumstances apply.
  3. **There are three BP's in my class:**
    - a. **Be Prompt:** Arrive on time. Lateness will be noted and may result in a reduction in a student's participation grade.
    - b. **Be Present:** Come to class. Be present mentally **and** physically. Let's make the most of the time we have together.
    - c. **Be Prepared:** Complete all readings and assignments on time. Come with what you need to get to work.In general, my policy is simple: **If something comes up, we can work it out. But please speak to me in advance.**
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### **Course TEXTS (free through the library, in the bookstore, or on Amazon)**

If buying course texts causes you any financial hardship, please speak with me.

1. Kathleen Cahalan, *Introducing the Practice of Ministry*. Liturgical Press, 2010. 9780814631690  
(ebook available through the SCU library: <https://libcat.scu.edu/Record/b4051360>)
  2. Edward Hahnenberg *Theology for Ministry*. Liturgical Press, 2014. 9780814635216 (<https://libcat.scu.edu/Record/b4051348>)
  3. Francis Schussler Fiorenza and John Galvin, *Systematic Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Augsburg Fortress, 2011. 9780800662912  
(ebook available through the SCU library: <https://libcat.scu.edu/Record/b3202064>)
  4. Aidan Kavanagh, O.S.B., *On Liturgical Theology*. Liturgical Press, 1984. 9780814660676  
(ebook available through the SCU library: <https://libcat.scu.edu/Record/b4051355> )
  5. Robert L. Kinast, *Making Faith-Sense*. Liturgical Press, 1999. 9780814625132
  6. William Reiser, S.J., *Seeking God in All Things*. Liturgical Press, 2004. 9780814651667  
(ebook available through the SCU library: <https://libcat.scu.edu/Record/b4051341>)
  7. **All other texts will be available on Camino (<https://camino.scu.edu>).**
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### **ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Burning Questions:** This course intends to hone the skills necessary to be excellent critical thinkers and critical readers of texts. But texts aren't just sources of information; they're carefully constructed arguments, with which you might agree or disagree. To get the most out of such texts, you must "think with the text" as you read.

**To practice this skill, when Burning Questions are assigned, please submit 2-3 detailed questions, comments of reflections on specific quotations from the assigned texts.** Write out the quotation (with page number) and then offer your question or comment. Responses might ask for clarity or depth on a particular idea or reflect on ideas that struck you as you read. They should demonstrate **critical textual engagement**. Fulfills LGs 1 & 2

2. **Three 2-3 Page Theological Reflection Papers (your choice, after Wk 5).** TRPs provide opportunities to practice theological reflection. Essays should begin with a clear thesis formulated in response to the question given in class. A rigorous analysis that puts critical theological reflection into dialogue with your understanding of ministry should follow. Papers should incorporate **close, critical textual analysis** and be supported by **examples and quotations** from course texts.
  - Headings should include your name and the assignment number. There's no need for a title.
  - The body may be double- or 1.5-line spaced. There isn't room for introduction, **so jump in with your thesis**.
  - Make sure your paper is clear, well-structured, and supported by specific examples **from the text**. Cite sources using parenthetical citations, i.e. (Rahner 85). P

Papers **must be proofread for grammatical and spelling errors** prior to submission. Please use one-inch margins, standards fonts, 12-pt. type. Fulfills LGs 1 & 2

3. **"For our good and the good of all God's holy church!" Final Research Paper & Ministry Presentation**  
Reflecting on all we've done this quarter and on your own pastoral experience/expertise, this essay invites you to 1) engage in deeper research and reflection on any aspect of the church's faith to 2) construct a parish program or resource that applies your reflection to the community you serve. You'll present your research and resource at a symposium during Finals Week.

**For the Final Paper, please follow the [GPPM style guide](#).**

1. Material taken **verbatim** from another source **must be enclosed in quotation marks** (i.e. “Generally speaking, the Roman Empire had little time to worry over the particularities of the Jewish faith.”) and should be followed by a **footnote reference** to the source of the material.
2. Material **paraphrased** from another source **should be introduced as belonging to the author** (i.e. Ehrman explains that the Roman Empire was quite tolerant of the Jewish religion, as long as it did not pose a threat to their rule).

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### Grading Scheme

20%	<b>Constructive Participation</b> in discussions, activities, completion of readings
10%	<b>Burning Questions</b>
35%	<b>Theological Reflection Papers</b>
35%	<b>Final Paper &amp; Symposium Presentation</b>

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### Grading Scale

94-100	A	Honors level work.
90-93	A-	Excellent work.
89-87	B+	Very good work; near excellence, but has minor problems.
83-86	B	Good work; solid performance; above average.
80-82	B-	Good work, but lacking some completeness, or accuracy.
77-79	C+	Acceptable work.
73-76	C	Acceptable work, but lacking in completeness, critical thinking or accuracy.
69-72	C-	Perfunctory work; may be simply rehashing sources.
60-68	D	Unsatisfactory work; shows minimal grasp of concepts or sloppy analysis.
0-59	F	Failure.

Essays graded with **letter grades will be translated into a numerical grade** at the instructor’s discretion. Letter grades will typically receive the numerical average of the range of any grade. However, **the instructor reserves the right to raise or lower numerical averages** where circumstances dictate.

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### Attendance Policies and Procedures

**Attending class is indispensable to 1) learning the subject matter and 2) mastering the critical skills this course intends to cultivate.** Students will be allowed **one** unquestioned, excused absence. Unexcused absences of **two or more** may result in one whole letter-grade deduction each (i.e. B to C). **For unavoidable absences, please speak to me in advance.** Accommodations will rarely be made if you speak to me **after** a class meeting.

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### Mixed-Mode (Live/Zoom) Attendance Policy

**Attending class is indispensable to 1) learning the subject matter and 2) mastering the critical skills this course intends to cultivate.** This course runs like a traditional classroom but with some students present in person and others present from remote locations; all students meet at the same time, “coming to class” promptly at 6:00 PM. **Students located in the Dioceses of San Jose, San Francisco, and Oakland are required to attend in person.** Students in other areas may attend via Zoom.

Students will be allowed **one** unquestioned, excused absence. Unexcused absences of **two or more** may result in one whole letter-grade deduction each. **For unavoidable absences, please speak to me in advance.** Accommodations will rarely be made if you speak to me **after** a class meeting. Zoom-based students must attend from a **quiet environment, free from distractions.** Students should follow best practices for Zoom, including: 1) operating in a **well-lit area with one’s laptop connected to power and on level surface** (setting your laptop on top of a pile of books to raise it is a big help); 2) **muting laptops when not speaking** and raising one’s hand (via Zoom or physically) to enter the conversation; 3) **avoiding cell phone use.**

## Technology & Class Recordings Policy

1. Laptops and other electronic devices may be used **only when indicated by the instructor**.
2. **Audiovisual recording of class is prohibited unless approved by the instructor.** As stated in the Student Conduct Code: "...Dissemination or sharing of any classroom recording without the permission of the instructor would be considered "misuse" and, therefore, prohibited. Violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action by the University. At the instructor's discretion, violations may also have an adverse effect on the student's grade." **All online classes will be recorded and made available on Camino.**
3. All materials in this course are protected by United States copyright laws. I am the copyright holder of the materials I create, including notes, handouts, slides, and videos. You may make copies of course materials for your own use and you may share the materials with other students enrolled in this course. You may not publicly distribute the course materials without my written permission.

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## Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of—and commitment to—a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

*I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.*

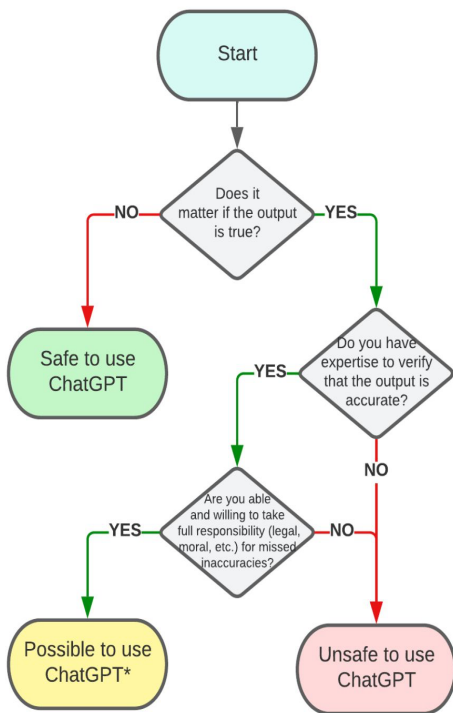
Academic integrity is part of your intellectual, ethical, and professional development. I expect you to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. I will clarify expectations on academic integrity -- including the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT and course sharing sites for all assignments and exams in this course. If you have questions about what is appropriate on any assignment, please let me know before you hand in work. For resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see [LibGuide on Academic Integrity](#).

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## AI/ChatGPT Policies

### Is it safe to use ChatGPT for your task?

Aleksandr Tiulkanov | January 19, 2023



\* but be sure to verify each output word and sentence for accuracy and common sense

AI technologies (e.g. ChatGPT) raise practical and ethical questions about what it means to learn. We're working our way through this transition together, and we need strategies for navigating this situation. As a learning community, we have formulated these guidelines for the proper use of AI. First, a few background points to consider:

- **The purpose of this course is not to teach you answers.** The course aims to foster in-depth critical thinking and analysis skills and invite you to reflect deeply on the world, religion, and what it means to be human.
- **ChatGPT and other Large Language Models (LLMs) aren't programmed to "know" what is true or accurate.** LLMs "read" the internet and construct answers based on the most probable response, not what is true or accurate.
- **AI "consumes" around 2 liters of water for every 20-50 queries made.** The exact amount depends on the complexity of the query. This water is used for cooling the mainframes that power the AI "brain." People in our world lack access to clean water.
- **Not all students have equal access to AI technologies.** Not everyone can afford higher-end GPT models. Equitable access to learning is a major concern of mine. I can't guarantee that when AI is doing thinking for some but not others.
- **AI isn't going anywhere, and it can do amazing things. But we need to think about ethical and practical limits of AI.** In the end, we humans made AI to help us. That could either empower humanity or destroy it. In a technological crisis, we humans are still going to need to outthink AI. **That means that we need advanced capacities for pattern recognition, analysis, creativity, innovation, and so on.** If we let AI determine how we think, I'm pretty sure we're bringing about our own doom.
- **Ultimately, I care about you as people.** I'm invested in cultivating authentic human intelligence, relationship, and community. Forming authentic community—talking to each other in and outside of class—will always be better than talking to AI.

## **AI Acceptable Use Policy**

- AI use must be disclosed in the assignment's byline. If you use AI, put "[Name] with [AI tool name]" (e.g., Paul Schutz with Gemini). Further, in the comments on Camino, you must state how the AI tool was used. Failure to cite AI as a co-author will result in automatic failure of the assignment (a "0").
  - The use of AI **is never permitted on daily assignments** (burning questions, study guides, debate notes, etc.).
  - **You may only use AI for the following purposes (considered "acceptable use"):**
    - Brainstorming essay topics; organizing your ideas into a logical and coherent structure (outlining);
    - Proofreading and answering technical writing questions, checking grammar and spelling, defining words, etc.
      - However, please keep in mind that we'll be learning definitions proper to our course in class; definitions supplied by AI may not correspond with what we've learned, especially when we're talking about arcane topics.
    - Summarizing or creating study guides for readings **you have already read**. Here's an acceptable process for using AI to increase reading comprehension (read carefully, because AI may not help you with the associated assignments):
      - Complete the reading, taking notes and making annotations as you read. As a reminder, you'll be able to use handwritten notes—but only handwritten notes—on the final exam.
      - Complete any assignments associated with the reading **without** consulting AI.
      - Ask AI to summarize key ideas from the reading. **Tell it to provide key quotes with page numbers.**
      - Compare your responses / assignment to what AI produced. If it seems like something is wrong or you want to do some more work on the assignment, you can. Then, when you're finished, upload it to Camino as usual, noting in the comments that you used AI for **reading comprehension support**.
  - **Anything else, especially having AI draft an essay for you, constitutes "improper use"** and will result in the following:
    - If I suspect that ChatGPT/AI has been used improperly, I will consult with colleagues and several AI detectors. If my concerns remain, I will email you and contact you via Camino and email about the situation. **You must respond within 24 hours, and you have two options for response:**
    - If you engaged in improper AI use, **you may admit to improper use** and explain why you used AI improperly.
    - If you did not use AI improperly, **explain**. I reserve the right to **request a 3-question oral exam** about the assignment.
    - The first improper use of AI will result in **automatic failure of the assignment (a "0")**. The second offense results in **automatic failure of the course**.
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## **Office of Accessible Education (OAE)**

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact the Office of Accessible Education (OAE), Benson 216, <http://www.scu.edu/oae> as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through the OAE, please be sure to request accommodations through myOAE and discuss them with me within the first two weeks of the quarter.

While I am here to assist you in any way I can, I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from OAE. The OAE will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assistive technology. Students with approved accommodations of time-and-a-half should talk with me as soon as possible. OAE must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations. The OAE would be grateful for advance notice of at least two weeks. **For more information, you may contact OAE at 408-554-4109.**

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## **Accommodations for Pregnancy and Parenting**

In alignment with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and with the California Education Code, Section 66281.7, Santa Clara University provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medically related needs. Absences due to medical conditions relating to pregnancy and childbirth will be excused for as long as deemed medically necessary by a student's doctor, and students will be given the opportunity to make up missed work. Alternatively, a pregnant or parenting student experiencing related medical conditions may seek assistance with accommodations through OAE or Title IX.

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## **Safety Measures**

In order to meet our learning objectives, we must uphold the highest standards for safety and mutual respect. Students are required to adhere to current university mask mandates at all times; to make their best attempt to make themselves heard when asking questions or contributing to discussions; and refrain from eating or drinking in class. It is expected that everyone will follow university guidelines about health and public safety measures outlined on the [Prepared SCU website](#).

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## **Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)**

Santa Clara University is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment free of all forms of discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. California law SB 493 **requires faculty members to report** any information brought to their attention about incidents of sexual harassment or misconduct to the SCU [Equal Opportunity and Title IX Office](#) (408) 551-3043. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures in writing assignments, class discussions, and one-on-one conversations.

Should you need support, SCU has dedicated staff trained to assist you in navigating campus resources, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and filing a formal complaint with the University or with law enforcement. Please see the [Student Resources](#) page for more information about reporting options and resources.

### **I am also here as your ally and advocate.**

If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, please tell someone immediately. If you wish to speak to a confidential resource who is not required to report, please utilize one of the following SCU resources:

- [SCU Wellness Center](#)
- [CAPS](#)
- Any individual (clergy, counselors) acting in a professional capacity for which confidentiality is mandated by law.

I am happy to help connect you with any of these resources. For more information, please consult the University's Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Jenna Elliott, at [408-551-3521](tel:408-551-3521), [jrelliott@scu.edu](mailto:jrelliott@scu.edu). Reports may be submitted online through <https://www.scu.edu/osl/report/> or anonymously through [Ethicspoint](#).



## SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

DATE & TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENT (S)
Week 1: 9/21 Introducing Ministry: Call & Practice	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Read</b> Syllabus</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kathleen Cahalan, <i>Introducing the Practice of Ministry</i>, Ch. 1-3 Edward Hahnenberg, <i>Theology for Ministry</i>, Ch. 1 Elizabeth Johnson, <i>Abounding in Kindness</i>, Ch. 1 (Camino)</p>	A little light summer reading!
Week 2: 9/28 From Ministry to Theology: Introducing Theological Reflection	<p style="text-align: center;">Cahalan, <i>Introducing the Practice of Ministry</i>, Ch. 4-7 Clifford and Gaillardetz, "Re-Imagining the Ecclesial/Prophetic Vocation of the Theologian" (Camino) Pope Francis, "Theology After <i>Veritatis Gaudium</i>" (Camino) Eunjoo Mary Kim, <i>Christian Preaching and Worship in Multicultural Contexts</i> (Camino) <b>Recommended:</b> Fiorenza and Galvin, Ch. 1 (Systematic Theology)</p>	Burning Questions (BQs)
Week 3: 10/5 Faith, Revelation, and History: The Bible as Story of Faith	<p style="text-align: center;">Raymond Brown, "The Human Word of Almighty God" (Camino) Vatican II, <i>Dei Verbum</i> (Camino) Rahner, <i>Foundations</i>, 39-43; 81-89; 138-161 (Camino   <b>skip</b> 133-137) Reiser, <i>Seeking God in All Things</i>, 1-68 <b>Recommended:</b> Fiorenza and Galvin, Ch. 2 (Faith &amp; Revelation)</p>	BQs
WEEK 4: 10/12	INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY	WORK FOR JUSTICE!
Week 5: 10/19 The Mystery of God and the Challenge of Women's Experience	<p style="text-align: center;">Hahnenberg, <i>Theology for Ministry</i>, Ch. 2 Fiorenza and Galvin, Ch. 3.1 ("Approaching the Christian Understanding of God") Karl Rahner, <i>Foundations of Christian Faith</i>, 133-137 (Camino) Elizabeth Johnson, <i>Abounding in Kindness</i>, Ch. 8-9 (Camino) Karen Baker Fletcher, <i>Dancing With God</i>, 52-62 (Camino)</p>	TRP & BQs
Week 6: 10/26 Christ, Race, and Gender: Challenges on the Way	<p style="text-align: center;">Hahnenberg, <i>Theology for Ministry</i>, Ch. 3 "Ignacio Ellacuría" (Camino) James Cone, <i>The Cross and the Lynching Tree</i> (xiii-xvii, 1-12, 25-29) Baker Fletcher, <i>Dancing with God</i>, 146-163 (Camino) Reiser, <i>Seeking God</i>, 117-130; 147-end <b>Recommended:</b> Fiorenza and Galvin, Ch. 5 (Jesus Christ)</p>	TRP & BQs
Week 7: 11/2 Creation, Ecological Theology, and Social Sin	<p style="text-align: center;">Hahnenberg, <i>Theology for Ministry</i>, Ch. 4 Fiorenza and Galvin, Ch. 4 (Creation) Pope Francis, <i>Laudato Si'</i>, Ch. 3-4 (Camino) Baker Fletcher, <i>Dancing With God</i>, 63-74 (Camino) Elizabeth Johnson, "Turn to the Heavens and the Earth" (Camino) Schutz, "Fire of Justice, Breath of Life" (Camino)</p>	TRP & BQs

<p>Week 8: 11/9 The Church of God Throughout the World</p>	<p>Hahnenberg, <i>Theology for Ministry</i>, Ch. 5 Fiorenza and Galvin, Ch. 6 (Church) Vatican II, <i>Lumen Gentium</i>, #1-42 <a href="https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html">https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html</a> Peter Phan, <i>In Our Own Tongues</i>, Ch. 2-4 (Camino) Johnson, <i>Abounding in Kindness</i>, Ch. 18 (Camino) <b>Recommended:</b> Baker Fletcher, <i>Dancing With God</i>, 163-169 (Camino)</p>	<p>TRP &amp; BQs</p>
<p>Week 9: 11/16 The Church at Prayer: Tensions of Vision and Reality in the Sacraments</p>	<p>Fiorenza and Galvin, Ch. 9.1 (Sacraments in General) Vatican II, <i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i> (excerpts on Camino) Aidan Kavanagh, <i>On Liturgical Theology</i>, Intro-Ch. 6 Elizabeth Johnson, "Your one wild and precious life" (Camino)</p>	<p>TRP &amp; BQs 3 Short Proposals for Final Project Final Project Proposal</p>
<p><b>11/23</b></p>	<p><b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b></p>	<p><b>EAT &amp; REST!</b></p>
<p>Week 10: 11/30 The Saints, Devotional Prayer, and The End</p>	<p>Fiorenza and Galvin, Ch. 8 (Saints &amp; Mary) Elizabeth Johnson, <i>Abounding in Kindness</i>, Ch. 21-22 (Camino) <b>Group A:</b> Peter Phan, "Mary in Vietnamese Piety and Theology" (Camino) <b>Group B:</b> Virgilio Elizondo, <i>Guadalupe: Mother of the New Creation</i> (1-33, 34-59 optional, 60-80, 100-136, on Camino) ..... Rahner, "On the Theology of Hope" (Camino) Johnson, <i>Abounding in Kindness</i>, Ch. 10 (Camino) <b>Group A:</b> Johnson, <i>Friends of God and Prophets</i>, Ch. 10-11 (Camino) <b>Group B:</b> Barbara Rossing, "River of Life in God's New Jerusalem" (Camino)</p>	<p>TRP &amp; BQs Annotated Bibliography</p>
<p><b>TBD</b></p>	<p><b>FINAL EXAM/PROJECT</b></p>	<p></p>