DT 502 - God: One and Triune

I. Course Description

This course utilizes primary sources to trace the theological development of the Church’s understanding of the greatest mystery of our faith, the Trinity. Besides the various conciliar and creedal developments, the course will examine the works of theologians such as Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, Boethius, Anselm, and Thomas Aquinas. Various modern Trinitarian models will be examined in light of the Tradition.

II. Course Rationale

The Trinity is the greatest mystery of the Catholic faith. The study of this mystery as understood by the Church and articulated by theologians in the Catholic tradition is integral to the study of other theological loci and to the development of a sound spirituality.

III. Envisioned Outcomes

- Students will be familiar with the Trinitarian faith of the Church as found in Sacred Scripture, Councils, and the Fathers and Doctors of the Church.
- Students will understand the issues that led to the Trinitarian controversies of the fourth century.
- Students will become familiar with various theologians and their contributions to Trinitarian theology.
- Students will be able to analyze a given Trinitarian model with regard to its authenticity and soundness in light of the Catholic theological Tradition.
• Students will be able to communicate an authentic Trinitarian Theology with cogency and clarity.

IV. Instructional Methods

• Lecture
• Question and Answer (Socratic Method)
• Discussion

V. Requirements and Important Dates

A. Read all assignments and be prepared to discuss them in class.
B. Two exams (on 3/26 and during exam week).
C. Research bibliography (due last class) - A research bibliography with at least 15 scholarly citations on an approved topic.

VI. Bibliography


________. The Three-Personed God : The Trinity as a Mystery of Salvation. Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1982.

________. The Three-Personed God: The Trinity as a Mystery of Salvation. CUA Press, 1982.


VII. **Glossary of Philosophical and Theological Terms**

*ad extra* – refers to the relations and actions of the Trinity to the outside or with regard to the economy.

*ad intra* – refers to the actions and relations within the Godhead itself without reference to the missions *ad extra.*

analogy – a type of predication that acknowledges both the similarity and the difference between a thing and its referent.

appropriations – attributing a given *ad extra* action to a specific divine person without denying the involvement of the other two persons.

begotten – translates the Greek *gennetos* (born). A son is begotten of his father.

consubstantial – translates the Latin *consubstantialis* and the Greek *homoousios.* Means “one and the same substance.”

Economic Trinity – The divine persons as they are revealed in salvation history. The Trinity as manifested in history *pro nobis* (for us) and our salvation.

economy (of salvation) – from the Greek *oikos* (house) and *nomos.* The term pertains to God’s work in the world *ad extra,* especially with regard to His plan of salvation for mankind.

*Filioque* – “And the Son” which was added to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed to affirm that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

generation – the origin of one living being from another, both having a common nature.

immanence – refers to the fact that God is everywhere and in everything.

*homoousios* (Gr. ὁμοούσιος- same substance) – Although the term predates its usage at the Council of Nicaea, the council used the term to affirm the equality of the Father and the Son.

*hypostasis* (Gr. ὑπόστασις) – although etymologically related more to the Latin term *substantia,* in the developments of the Fourth Century Trinitarian debates, the term comes to be understood more as an individual subsistence, akin to the term person (Lt. *persona*).

Immanent Trinity – the divine persons and their life together in eternity. The Trinity as it is *in se* (in itself).
Modalism – a position that stresses the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit so as to deny any real distinctions in the persons. For the modalist, the personal names refer only to the modes or ways that the monopersonal God acts in history.

notion – a defining characteristic of a divine person. For Aquinas there are five notions in God: innascibility, paternity, filiation, common spiration, and procession.

notional acts – those acts in the immanent Trinity whereby the order of origin is signified. For Aquinas, every origin is designated by an act. In the Trinity a person proceeds from a person by a notional act.

opposition of relation (relationis oppositio) – relations within the immanent Trinity that define the persons as distinct from another person such as paternity and filiation.

Patritpassians – modalists in the 3rd century who said it was the Father who suffered.

Perichoresis – the reciprocal presence and interpenetration of the divine persons.

Pneumatomachians – 4th century heretics who denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The name means “spirit fighters.”

procession – a coming forth of one thing/person from another. The dynamics of the Trinity ad intra is understood in the processions of the Son and Spirit. The proceeds from the Father, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Psychological Analogy – an analogy of the Trinity based on the operations of the human mind. For Augustine, the triad of memoria, intellectus, et voluntas points to the Trinitarian pattern as found in the human mind.

relation – One of Aristotle’s nine accidents whose formal definition is the order of one thing to another (Gr. πρός τι, Lt. ad aliquid). An accident involves a subject (subiectum, suppositum) a term (terminus), and a reason (ratio) by which the subject is related to the term. Differing from the other accidents, a relation is more than a perfection in the subject but is a reference to the term. The essential idea of a relation is more with regard to the reference to (esse ad) than in the inherence in (esse in).

simplicity, divine – a divine attribute that excludes any type of composition in God, whether that be physical, metaphysical, or substantial.

subordinationism – A heretical teaching that asserts that the Son is not fully God. The Word, therefore, is subordinate to the Father in terms of divinity, power, majesty, and the like.

substance (Lt. substantia) – Arguably one of the most important philosophical terms used in theology. The term is correlative to the Greek terms ousia (οὐσία) and hypostasis (ὑπόστασις). One of the ten categories of Aristotle, substance is that which stands on its own as opposed to the nine accidents whose being is described as adhering in something (namely, in a substance).

ubiquity, divine – a divine attribute that, as corollary to the divine infinity, excludes the possibility of God not being in a given place. More positively, it is synonymous with the divine omnipresence.

Vestigia Trinitatis – the traces of the Trinity found in the creation.
### VIII. Lecture and Reading Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Trinity - Mystery - Revelation -Theology (Lecture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Apologists and the Road to Nicaea (Lecture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Nicene Creed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gregory Nazianzus <em>Theological Orations</em> 3 and 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gregory of Nyssa <em>On Not Three Gods</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ambrose’s <em>De Fide</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Augustine’s <em>De Trinitate</em> (Bk 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>De Trinitate</em> (Bk 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>De Trinitate</em> (Bk 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>De Trinitate</em> (Bk 15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Boethius – Selected Works (pdf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>John Damascene’s <em>De Fide</em> Bk. 1, chs. 1-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Anselm’s <em>Monologion</em> Chs. 1-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Anselm’s <em>Monologion</em> Chs. 25-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Anselm’s <em>De Processione Spiritu Sancti</em> (pdf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td><em>Summa theologiae</em> Divine Processions (<em>ST</em> 1.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Divine Relations (<em>ST</em> 1.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Divine Simplicity and the Psychological Analogy in Thomas (Lecture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>On the Knowledge of the Divine Persons (<em>ST</em> 1.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>On the Persons in Relation to the Essence (<em>ST</em> 1.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Aquinas on the Missions (<em>ST</em> 1.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Moltmann’s Pathetic Trinitarian Theology (pdf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>von Balthasar’s Theology of Super-Kenosis (pdf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Weinandy’s <em>Father’s Spirit of Sonship</em> (pdf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Swinburne’s <em>Christian God</em>? (Lecture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Trinity - Preaching the Mystery (pdf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Q and A Session</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IX. Evaluation

The student’s average will be based upon the exams (35% - mid-term and 50% - final), and the research bibliography (15%).

X. Attendance Policy

Notre Dame Seminary observes the following policy regarding class attendance: Regular class attendance is expected and required of all students who intend to receive credit for course work in the graduate school. Inevitably, extraordinary circumstances will arise that make class attendance impossible on occasion; therefore, a formula for determining regular attendance has been established as policy for the convenience of both seminarians and instructors. A student is permitted to be absent from class no more than twice the number of times the class meets per week. (You are considered absent if you are not present when attendance is taken). Thus, if a student is absent for seven classes from a course that meets three times a week, the student is in violation of school policy in this regard. The normal penalty for such a violation is the grade FA (failure due to absence).

The number of absences includes those due to illness, late registration, or any other cause. Absence from class immediately before or after holidays and free weekends is considered a double cut. Only the Academic Dean may waive penalties for absence. In absences due to illness, you must inform the instructor and your formation advisor prior to the class.

XI. Academic Integrity

Seminarians of Notre Dame Seminary are required to commit themselves to responsible scholarship in every aspect of priestly formation, including academics. It is expected that every seminarian works and studies to the best of his ability for every course.

Seminarians also accept responsibilities and obligations as students, which include commitments to honesty, disciplined study, and integrity in their academic work. They will be expected to respect academic scholarship by giving proper credit to other people’s work, while at the same time preparing well for assigned materials and examinations in such a way that their academic integrity will never be questioned.

Those needing assistance with writing papers, or who would like tutoring, should contact the Academic Resource Center (ARC) for assistance. All students are encouraged to seek the direct assistance of their instructor whenever any questions arise regarding assignments, grading, course expectations, etc.
XII. **Disability Accommodation Policy**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Notre Dame Seminary provides disability accommodations for students with identified and/or diagnosed disabilities. Students with disabilities need not inform their instructors about the nature of their disabilities, but they are responsible for contacting and providing appropriate documentation to the Academic Resources Center. Requests for accommodations must be made each semester for which the student wishes to receive service; the Academic Resources Center will then distribute a letter of accommodation to the faculty. It is the student’s responsibility to meet with each faculty member to discuss how his/her accommodation(s) may be met within each course. Notre Dame Seminary will attempt to meet reasonable accommodations requested. A reasonable accommodation is a modification to a non-essential aspect of a course, program, or facility which does not pose an undue burden and which enables a qualified student with a disability to have adequate opportunity to participate and to demonstrate his or her ability. Such accommodations are determined on an individual basis depending upon the nature and extent of the disability. For more information, contact the Academic Dean’s Office.

XIII. **Extension Policy**

Instructors are never obligated to grant a student’s request for a due-date extension on a paper/project if they judge the request to be without sufficient merit or not in keeping with the fair requirements articulated in the course syllabus.

XIV. **Audit Policy**

For academic course audits at Notre Dame Seminary, the amount of work required of seminarians will be decided on a case by case basis by the instructor, the Academic Dean and the seminarian’s Formation Advisor.

XV. **Probation and Grading Policy**

Passing grades for seminarians are A, B and C. A seminarian is put on academic probation for the following:

A seminarian who obtains a D+ or lower in any course is automatically placed on probationary status and must repeat the course in order to get credit for the course. Seminarians will be allowed to repeat a course only once and the course must be repeated at NDS. Seminarian status is then subject to review by the Dean.

A seminarian whose semester grade point average (GPA) in coursework is below a 2.30 at any time is placed on academic probation. Two or more consecutive semesters may subject the
seminarian to be dismissed from academic formation at Notre Dame Seminary. To be removed from probationary status, the seminarian must complete a semester with a GPA of 2.30 or higher.

After each semester, the seminarian’s Bishop will receive a copy of his transcript and a review of the seminarians’ status.

If a seminarian fails to meet the passing grade point average requirement then he forfeits his eligibility for financial aid under Title IV Federal Regulations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade Number</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
<th>Grade Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>100 – 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>93 – 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>89 – 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>87 – 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>83 – 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>79 – 78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>77 – 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>73 – 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>69 – 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>67 – 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>63 – 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59 – 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Academic Catalog for Grading Guidelines Policy Narrative.

XVIII. **Syllabus Contract**

This syllabus *obliges* the student to adhere to all policy requirements and to fulfill all academic expectations herein stated; it also *entitles* the student to a reasonable opportunity to learn the material specified in the course description in order to accomplish for himself the educational goals of the course. In order to optimize the learning process the course instructor reserves the right to make reasonable adjustments to the syllabus requirements during the semester in response to unforeseen developments or circumstances. All adjustments made must be communicated clearly to students.