NOTRE DAME SEMINARY
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Professor: Dr. David Liberto  
e-mail: dliberto@nds.edu

Class: Christology and Mariology  
Time: TTh 8:00-9:25  
Classroom: 3

DT 506 - Christology and Mariology

I. Course Description

This course treats the theology of the person and mission of Jesus Christ. While providing the biblical foundation for an understanding of Christ, the course is primarily directed to studying Christology from a historico-dogmatic perspective. The course will examine the writings of important theologians on the topic such as St. Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzus, Boethius, St. Anselm, and St. Thomas Aquinas. An essential Mariology will also be covered, examining the various Marian dogmas, and the relations of Mariology to other dogmatic areas such as Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Spiritual Theology.

II. Envisioned Outcomes

• Students will understand the problems and solutions in the Patristic development of Christology up to the Council of Chalcedon.
• Students will be able to identify the subsequent Christological problems after Chalcedon and the Church’s theological response.
• Students will understand the various contributions to Christology in the Scholastic period.
• Students will be able to evaluate modern christologies in light of the Catholic tradition.
• Students will be able to articulate an essential Mariology based on the dogmatic teaching of the Church.
• Students will be able to communicate authentic Catholic doctrine in the areas of Christology and Mariology in a cogent and clear manner.

III. Instructional Methods

• Lecture
• Question and Answer (Socratic Method)
• Discussion
IV. Requirements

- Read all assignments and be prepared to discuss them in class.
- Two exams (3/26 and during exam week)
- Research Bibliography - A research bibliography on an approved topic of at least 15 scholarly sources (Due 4/14).

V. Bibliography


VI.

Glossary of Philosophical and Theological Terms

adoptionism – the general name applied to any Christological heresy which denies the natural and eternal sonship of Christ, but forwards a view of Christ as an adopted son.

anhypostatic – a term applied to the humanity of Christ, which although an integral human nature, does not terminate in a human hypostasis or person.

Apollinarianism – a Christological heresy named for Apollinaris of Laodiciea which understood that the Logos assumed an incomplete human nature, the Logos taking the place of the intellective soul.

Arianism – a Christological/Trinitarian heresy named for the presbyter, Arius of Alexandria, which denied the deity of Christ. Arius’s phrase, “There was a time when he (the Logos) was not,” was condemned at the Council of Nicaea in 325.

communicatio idiomata (communication of idioms or properties) – based on the hypostatic union, this refers to the ability to predicate of Christ (the person) properties of both the human and divine natures. The expression, “God died on the cross,” is true based on the communication of idioms.

Co-Redemptrix – a title applied to Our Lady based on the role she plays in the redemption of mankind. This role, however, is qualitatively different from, and dependent upon, the role played by Christ as the Redeemer of the world.

Docetism (Gr. δοκέω- to seem or appear) – Christological heresy of the first centuries of the Church which understood the Incarnation (and therefore the Passion and Resurrection) as mere appearances by the Son of God in the economy.

Ebionites – a Jewish-Christian sect of the Apostolic Period that denied the natural generation of Christ, thereby denying the full divinity of the Second Person of the Trinity.
Eutychianism – Christological heresy named after the monk Eutyches which posited that over-emphasized the unity of the two natures in Christ so as to fuse the two into one *theandric* nature.

*fomes peccati* – a term used to describe the disordered inclination to sin as a result of original sin.

*hypostasis* (Gr. ὑπόστασις) – a philosophical term that developed within the Trinitarian controversies of the 4th century and again in the Christological controversies of the 5th century. Originally having the same or similar sense as *ousia* (Gr. ὄσια), the term came to be distinguished from *ousia* by the Cappadocians. At Chalcedon (451), Christ is described as one *hypostasis* in two natures.

*hypostatic union* – a term referring to the union of the two natures of Christ in the person (*hypostasis*) of the Word.

Immaculate Conception – a title and teaching applied to Mary based on the fact that she was conceived without the stain of original sin in view of the future merits of Christ.

Kenotic Christology – descriptive of various christologies of the 19th century that applied the emptying (Gr. κένωσις) of Christ, as described in Phil 2:6-11, to the divinity of Christ.

*logos anthropos* Christology – a type of Christology, usually identified with Antioch, that stressed the full and integral human nature.

*logos sarx* Christology – a type of Christology, usually identified with Alexandria, that stressed the union of the *Logos* with the humanity of Christ.

Mediatrix – a title used by various popes (Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI) to describe the real but derivative role of Mary in the mediation of graces.

Messiah (Hb. מֶשֶׁחַ; Gk. χριστός) – a Hebrew word meaning anointed. A term/title used of kings and priests in the OT.

mixed relation – a philosophical concept developed in the Scholastic Period to describe the unequal relations between two things, whereby the relation from one thing to the other is real, but the relation of the second thing to the first is merely logical. A prime example is mixed relation between the knower and the thing known.

Monoenergism (Gr. µόνος- one, alone and ἐνέργεια- activity) – a Christological error that asserted only one theandric activity of the Word Incarnate.

Monophysitism (Gr. µόνος- one, alone and φύσις- nature) – a Christological heresy that would reduce the natures of Christ into one nature.

Monotheletism – (Gr. µονου- one, alone and θέλω - I want, will) – a Christological heresy that taught that Christ had only one will based on the one hypostasis, instead of two wills based on the integrity of each nature.

Mother of God (Gr. θεοτόκος and Lt. genetrix) – title given to Mary, of more Christological import than Mariological, especially in the Patristic Period. Mary is truly Mother of God based on the correct understanding of the Hypostatic Union and the resultant *communicatio idiomata*. Her son is truly the Son of God (even if Mary is not merely the material source of the humanity of Christ), so she is truly the Mother of God.

Nestorianism – a Christological heresy, bearing the name of its proponent, Patriarch Nestorius of Constantinople. Nestorius’s position was tantamount to denying that Christ is only one subject or person. Nestorius held this based on his adequation of nature and subject.
ousia (Gr. οὐσία) – Greek philosophical term that is, by the Council of Chalcedon, similar to the meaning of the Latin substantia.

theandric (Gr. θεός - God and ἀνήρ - man) – a term applied to the activity of Christ which are, due to the Hypostatic Union, the work of the God-Man. The term can also be used incorrectly based on or tending to a Monophysite position.

Theopaschism (Gr. θεός - God, and πάσχειν - to suffer) – a term applicable to any of several heretical Christologies that attribute suffering to the Divine Nature in and through the passion of Christ.

VII. Lecture and Reading Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class #</th>
<th>Lecture Title and Reading Selection</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Syllabus, Expectations, Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Biblical Christology (Lecture)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Christology in the Apologists (Lecture)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Origen of Alexandria, Peri Archon Bk. III</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Athanasius - De Incarnatione</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Gregory Nazianzus - 3rd and 4th Theological Orations</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Augustine - De Fide et Symbolo (PDF) and De Trinitate</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Cyril of Alexandria - Letter to Nestorius</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>12 Anathemas and Letter to John of Antioch</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Boethius - Contra Eutychen et Nestorium</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Maximos the Confessor’s Disputation with Pyrrhus (PDF)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>John Damascene’s De Fide Bk. 3, Chs. 1-12</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>John Damascene’s De Fide Bk. 3, Chs. 13-27</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Anselm -De Incarnatione Verbi (PDF)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>The Fitness of the Incarnation – STh 3.1</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>The Mode of Union – STh 3.2</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>The Grace of Christ – STh 3.7</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>The Knowledge of Christ – STh 3.9 et al.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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</tbody>
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VIII. **Evaluation**

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

IX. **Attendance Policies**

Students are expected to be present for every class. Excused absences (max. 4) will not adversely affect one’s grade. Unexcused absences will affect the final grade (1 point for each unexcused absence).

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.

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<tr>
<th>Letter Grade Number</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
<th>Grade Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>93 – 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>89 – 88</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>87 – 84</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>83 – 80</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>59 – 0</td>
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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.