

## **Ss. Cyril & Methodius Seminary**

*“This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand.” (Mark 1:15)*

*SS 523 The Synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles*

Winter, 2012

Three credits

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### **I. Course Description**

“An introduction to the Synoptic Tradition throughout the Church’s history will be presented with attention to various theories regarding the so-called Synoptic Problem. Use of various historical and literary critical methodologies will be discussed and evaluated for their value to Gospel study and for understanding the theologies of Mark, Matthew, and Luke. The use of patristic exegesis and the spiritual senses of Gospel passages examined. Attention to Synoptic Christology, Eschatology, Ethics, Miracles stories, Parables, Infancy Narratives, Passion Narratives, and Resurrection Narratives.” (*Catalog*)

### **II. Course Objectives - Rationale**

It is the objective of the Sacred Scripture department to give the student an overview and introduction to each book of the Bible over the course of the program. Of course not every book can be examined in depth, nor even can each book be treated equally. However, at the end of each course the student should have a familiarity with the books covered. He/She should also be able to see how the books considered in a particular course relate to the Bible as a whole.

### **III. Required Texts**

The only required text is the Bible itself. Any modern English language translation may be used. Different translations are encouraged and will sometimes be referred to in class to show how certain passages may be interpreted due to how they are translated. Recommended books will be mentioned in class.

### **IV. Church Documents**

It is presumed that the student is familiar with the following Church documents:

1. Catechism of the Catholic Church
2. *Providentissimus Deus*
3. *Divino Afflante Spiritu*
4. *Dei Verbum*
5. *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*

## V. Assignments

An exegesis project related to the course material will be assigned. Details will be given in class. The project may be in outline form. Passage approval is due by 12 March (by class time). The finished project is due by 16 April (by class time). Assignments are to be submitted electronically (see above for email address). No extensions will be given.

## VI. Attendance

In accord with the formation and academic norms of the seminary program and because the material will be presented by way of lectures along with discussion, attendance at all classes is expected of seminarians. Exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Lay students have the option of attending lectures or hearing them online, at their own choice.

## VII. Examinations

Four written essay style exams will be given throughout the course.

Dates for these exams are:

30 January

27 February

26 March

30 April

Examinations take place in the first half of the regular class time; lectures resume in the second half.

The examinations are not cumulative. Once an exam is taken on a section of the course, that material is finished. Hence, the final exam of the course, taken during exam week, will cover only the subject matter treated since the last exam. Options for online student examinations will be presented in class.

## VIII. Evaluation

The final grade will be calculated by the average of the four exams and the exegesis project totaled and averaged evenly.

## IX. Academic Integrity

“Students are expected to maintain personal honesty and professional integrity in examinations, assigned papers, and research projects. Source materials and citations used in preparation of papers are to be indicated by proper documentation. Copyright laws should be honored when duplicating materials. Plagiarism and cheating are a breach of academic integrity. Violations in this area are considered a serious offense and may result in failing grade and/or dismissal from the program.” (*Catalog*)

## X. Availability

Office hours by appointment. I am available every day of the week and throughout most of the day. Please email, call or simply see me in class to arrange a

mutually convenient time. My office is on the first floor, north side of the east wing of the SAC.

## XI. Course of Study

### A. The Origin and Formation of the Gospels

1. the needs which gave rise to the Gospels
2. the "SIL"s
  - a. Jesus
  - b. Church
  - c. Gospel

### B. The Synoptic Problem

1. the interrelationships of the Synoptics

### C. Special Questions

1. "post-resurrectional" ramifications
2. miracles and parables

### D. The Gospel of Mark

1. Composition, general themes and theology
2. A particular examination – the 12 Apostles
  - a. an example of tracing a theme
3. A particular examination – the daughter of Jairus
  - a. an example of the exegetical endeavor

### E. The Gospel of Matthew

1. Composition, general themes and theology
2. A particular examination – the Sermon on the Mount
  - a. precepts, principles, paradigms
  - b. structure and controlling verses

### F. The Gospel of Luke

1. Composition, general themes and theology
2. A particular examination – the Prologue
3. A particular examination – the Sermon on the Plain
  - a. comparison to the Sermon on the Mount

### G. The Infancy Narratives

### H. The Acts of the Apostles

1. Composition, general themes and theology
2. A particular examination --select speeches
3. A particular examination --Council of Jerusalem
4. An emerging Christology and Trinitarian theology

I. The Passion Narratives will be taken in the classes before Holy Week.

XII. Select Bibliography

Students are encouraged to use the many on-line resources available through the campus library or any other modern library.

The following works are especially recommended:

*Anchor Bible*

*Anchor Bible Dictionary.*

Brown, R. E. *An Introduction to the New Testament.* New York: Doubleday, 1997.

*Elenchus of Biblica.* Rome: Pontifical Biblical Press.

*Hermaneia*

*Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*

*New Testament Message Series*

*Sacra Pagina*

*The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*

