I. SOURCE WORKS

Patristic Writings: *Didache*, John Chrysostom, excerpted homilies in *On Marriage and Family Life*, Origen, *On First Principles*


St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, QQ 1-13; I-II, QQ 1-21, 49-54, 90-97

Church documents: *Gaudium et Spes*, *Dei Verbum*, *Humanae Vitae*, *Laborem Exercens*, *Familiaris Consortio*, *The Challenge of Peace*, *Centesimus Annus*, *Veritatis Splendor*, *Evangelium Vitae*

II. WORKS IN OTHER FIELDS

Clifford Geertz *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, 1973; rpt New York, Basic, 2000


Aidan Nichols *The Shape of Catholic Theology* Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991


III. MORAL THEOLOGY/ETHICS


Martha Nussbaum: *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* New York: Cambridge University, 1986


Lisa Sowle Cahill: *Sex, Gender and Christian Ethics* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996


Gustavo Gutierrez: *A Theology of Liberation* Maryknoll: Orbis, 1990

MORAL THEOLOGY/ETHICS
M. A. COMPREHENSIVE READING LIST

I. SOURCE WORKS

Patristic Writings: Didache, John Chrysostom, excerpted homilies in On Marriage and Family Life, Origen, On First Principles.


St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, I, Q. 1-13; I-II, Q. 1-21, 49-54, 90-97

Church documents: Gaudium et Spes, Dei Verbum, Humanae Vitae, Laborem Exercens, Familiaris Consortio, The Challenge of Peace, Centesimus Annus, Veritatis Splendor, Evangelium Vitae

II. WORKS IN OTHER FIELDS


III. MORAL THEOLOGY/ETHICS


MORAL THEOLOGY/ETHICS
M.A. Comprehensive Exams
Day 1

Select four out of the eight questions below and answer in essay form in a four hour period.

1. Contrast the understanding of faith and its role in theology in the thought of Augustine, Aquinas, and Del Verbum.

2. Discuss Kant’s argument in the Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals. In what way are the various formulations of the categorical imperative central or peripheral to this analysis?

3. Lonergan claims that theology needs to begin with reflection on conversion. Explain how this sets his approach off from those who would start with the “deposit of faith.” How does Lonergan’s approach differ from that of Aidan Nichols or Paul Ricoeur?

4. One of the important tasks for theology today is to come to terms with “modernity” and the descriptive rather than normative account of culture. Compare and contrast two of the following thinkers in their approach to “modernity”: Clifford Geertz, John Milbank, John Rawls, Charles Taylor.

5. Sketch how John Milbank might be expected to interpret Clifford Geertz’s theory of religion in light of his Theology and Social Theory. Then consider how Geertz might assess Milbank’s work as an illustration of his (Geertz’s) own theory. Which perspective do you find more compelling? And what is at stake for the study of morality?

6. In what ways might the theory of justice espoused by John Rawls in Political Liberalism be considered to be in a Kantian tradition rooted in the Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals? In what ways does Rawls depart from this tradition?

7. Compare and contrast the philosophical discussions of selfhood in Ricoeur’s Oneself as Another and Taylor’s Sources of the Self. What implications do the issues they discuss have for theological ethics?

8. Compare and contrast the notion of family as it appears in the thought of John Chrysostom, Augustine, and one modern Church document (e.g., Gaudium et Spes, Humanae Vitae, Familiaris Consortio)
Select four out of the eight questions below and answer in essay form in a four hour period.

1. In “Natural and Divine Law,” Jean Porter argues that the natural law was, for the Scholastics, based in Scripture and thus thoroughly embedded in theology. Discuss her argument for this view, paying attention to (a) whom or what positions she is arguing against, (b) what is at stake in the argument, and (c) whether her argument is persuasive.

2. In what ways do contemporary discussions of Christian sexual morality (as evinced in the writings of Cahill and Grabowski) employ what Richard Hays terms *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*? What methodological issues arise here concerning the use of scripture in moral theology?

3. In *Intention* (#s 23-27), Anscombe provides an extended discussion of a man pumping water into a cistern which supplies the drinking water of a house. She describes numerous possible descriptions of what he is doing and asks: Which is the description of his action? Is there one true or dominant description of an action? If so, how do we determine it? If not, how are we to properly describe (and evaluate) an action?

4. Discuss McCormick’s understanding of the central ambiguities in moral choice, and compare and contrast McCormick’s view of moral absolutes with that of *Veritatis splendor*.

5. What are some of the main concerns of feminists as they critique and retrieve ethics in the Christian tradition? Explain (1) the ethical issues that feminists see as of particular concern for women and (2) the distinctive approach/method that feminists bring to Christian ethics. How are the two (issues and methods) related if at all?

6. Both St. Augustine and St. Aquinas begin discussions of moral theology by claiming that all people desire happiness. Pick either Augustine or Aquinas and explain what role reflection on happiness plays in his moral theology. Pick one other author from the rest of the reading list and explain how his or her work in ethics is similar or different in attending to the moral importance of happiness.

7. The Vatican II document *Optatam totius* famously called for a renewal in moral theology. One of the ways that post-conciliar moralists have undertaken such a renewal in Catholic moral theology has been through an emphasis on virtue. Pick three of the authors from the readings list (they can be Catholic or non-Catholic) and explain how each one uses virtue to correct certain deficiencies in ethical approaches that do not attend to virtue.
8 Discuss the notions of justice and work within the Catholic social tradition, citing particular documents where relevant. How have these concepts been challenged and refined by liberation theology?