COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This honors course is an introductory course in theology and religious studies that provides a glimpse into the science of the study of God through the exploration of the thought of selected theologians and scripture. Students will learn how to read and interpret various genres of theological texts from different historical eras—including the Old Testament, the New Testament, the early Church, the Middle Ages, the Reformation era, the period of the Second Vatican Council, and the present time. By engaging these texts through discussion, research, and writing, students will gain an introductory grasp of the academic discipline of theology and religious studies.

This honors course is one part of a larger First-Year Experience. These classes all require you to think about how we know ourselves, the world, and God and how we act in light of that knowledge. We think and act better in the company of friends, Aristotle said, and so we will grapple with these questions together as a learning community. Together we will read, discuss and write about fundamental questions and ideas in the well-founded hope that the search for truth will make us better, more complete human beings. What we’re doing is risky because answers to these questions have real implications for how we live our lives.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will read primary and secondary source material within the Catholic intellectual tradition critically, closely, and with attention to genre, and they will demonstrate understanding of the questions and issues addressed by the materials.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the Christian Scriptures and the basic structure of Christian belief. They will also note the importance of locating the texts in context and engage in hermeneutical tasks.
3. The student will gain an understanding of distinctions between theology and religious studies and use tools gained in the latter to approach questions and texts from the former.
4. Students will locate sources, assimilate information, and evaluate ideas relevant to questions raised in the primary and secondary source material.
5. Students will communicate clearly and effectively in discussion and in writing concerning researchable questions and correlate these questions with course themes and material.
REQUIRED TEXTS – AVAILABLE FROM THE CUA BOOKSTORE:

New American Bible, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. (The bible can be under any name as long as it is the New American Bible (NAB) translation. For example, the College Study Bible works well for this course.)

In addition to the bible noted above – which can be purchased through the CUA Bookstore or through any online site – the student will be responsible for articles and excerpts according to the schedule below. These additional readings are available through the Blackboard system. The Blackboard electronic readings can be found online at http://blackboard.cua.edu/. You can login with your own CUA username and password or as a guest.

EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Attendance/Punctuality/Preparation:

Attendance is required for this class, and attendance will be taken and recorded for every class. It is necessary, therefore, for you to be in attendance and be on time. Situations may come up during the semester that may prevent you from attending. With this said, more than 3 absences during the semester will result in a grade deduction. One point will be deducted from the final total (out of 100) for every absence over the limit (3).

Punctuality is connected to attendance. Students arriving late for class may miss essential announcements and disrupt their fellow students and the flow of the class. Three counts of being tardy will be counted as one absence.

Preparation is also intricately related to attendance. In addition to being physically present in class, students need to be mentally present as well. This means that the student must be prepared to verbally participate in class discussions. Class participation is 10 percent of your final grade. In order to participate fully in the class, the student will have read critically the assigned reading(s) for that day. Only those who familiarize themselves with the reading(s) can intelligently participate in the class for that day.

There may be times during the semester that students will be asked to write reflections (and turn in) on a particular text prior to the class meeting. This process helps the student get thoughts “down on paper” in a more coherent, organized way. The process also assists those who may not be comfortable presenting ideas verbally in a free-form manner. If need be, the student can read from their cogent reflection.

Important Note: with the above policies, your grade can significantly increase just by attending and participating (with preparation) in the class.

You can meet with me any time during the semester to discuss your attendance, punctuality, and participation grades. Be proactive and set up a time to talk to me. I am available on a daily basis.

In addition, I ask you to be aware of the following:

- Cell phones should be turned to silent mode during class time. Text messaging is not permitted during class time. Three instances of correcting for use of cell phones will be treated as one absence.
- Assignments may be turned in either electronically (preferred) or in hard-copy format. If you are submitting through BlackBoard, I will expect the assignment before the time of the class meeting.
  - Please use a naming convention for uploads that includes your name, section number, and assignment (i.e., CBorn_201-42_GenesisReflect).
Late assignments will be accepted, but only if notification is given to me at least 24 hours prior to the day on which the assignment is due. **Failure to do so will result in the assignment receiving a deduction of 4 points per class late off the final grade assigned.**

- Missed homework and quizzes will be given a grade of 0%.
- No make-up exams will be given without documentation of an emergency situation provided within a week of the missed exam date.
- All assignments must be completed to pass the course.

**Campus Resources for Student Support:**

- The Writing Center is located in room 111 O’Boyle Hall; phone 319-4286.
- The Counseling Center is in room 127 O’Boyle Hall; phone 319-5765.
- The Center for Academic Success is located in Suite 201, Pryzbyla Center.
- The TRS reference room is 300 Mullen Library, and the Theology Library is on the fourth floor of Mullen Library.

Take advantage of these resources.

In particular, the Writing Center is an excellent resource for any student here at CUA. The Writing Center is committed to supporting the writing needs of students at all stages of the writing process. The Writing Center offers:

- Advice from trained consultants;
- Techniques for invention, arrangement, and style;
- Assistance for student writers of all levels; and
- Reference material such as dictionaries, thesauri, and citation formats for APA, MLA, and Chicago style guides.

If, at any point in the semester, you feel like you are struggling to draft, revise or properly reference sources in a writing assignment, make an appointment at [http://english.cua.edu/wc](http://english.cua.edu/wc). The Writing Center is located in 111 O’Boyle Hall. Instructors may also refer you to the Writing Center for further assistance with any assignment or writing skill. It always helps to have an extra pair of eyes, so don’t be surprised if I ask you to visit the Center at some point.

Our Learning Community team includes an Embedded Librarian and two Undergraduate Fellows. The Embedded Librarian will be part of course planning and our go-to resource for information literacy. The Undergraduate Fellows help me and your other FYE teachers organize Learning Community dinners, D.C. excursions, and service-learning projects. All of them are a valuable resource for you as you navigate your first year. Your undergraduate fellows thrived in their first year at CUA and can help you learn how to study better and show you how to get the most out of your education. Your embedded librarian can help you navigate the many avenues of knowledge open to you at the university. Get to know all of these folks look to them for help. Their contact information and office hours are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dustin Booher</th>
<th>Alex Bichler</th>
<th>Jackie Ecle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:Booher@cua.edu">Booher@cua.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:63Bichler@cardinalmail.cua.edu">63Bichler@cardinalmail.cua.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:56Ecle@cardinalmail.cua.edu">56Ecle@cardinalmail.cua.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mullen Library, Rel. Studies</td>
<td>Center for Academic Success</td>
<td>Center for Academic Success</td>
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</tbody>
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**MyCUA (my.cua.edu) is a web portal just for you.** It includes academic announcements, events calendars, an FYE blog, and links to all the university websites you’re likely to need. You’ll also get information from your advisor, the FYE Speaker Series, registration and more.
Academic Honesty:
Academic honesty is expected of all CUA students. Faculty are required to initiate the imposition of sanctions when they find violations of academic honesty, such as plagiarism, improper use of a student’s own work, cheating, and fabrication. University policy is that the presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. Please review the complete texts of the University policy and procedures regarding Student Academic Dishonesty at http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrity.cfm.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact Disability Support Services (202 319-5211, room 207, Pryzbyla Center) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. To read about the services and policies, please visit the website: http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu

**FOUR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

**Paper #1: Genesis, Ecology, and Environmentalism (Due Tuesday, October 9)**
More information will follow concerning this paper; however, it will link the course and readings to the LC Excursion to the National Zoo on **Saturday, September 22**.

**Paper #2: Faithful Citizenship (Due Monday, October 29)**
The student will construct a 4-5 page paper incorporating the theme of “Signs of the Times.” First, the student will read the USCCB’s document, *Faithful Citizenship*. Second, students will take the “Are You a Faithful Citizen?” quiz: http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/all-catholics/faithful-citizenship-quiz-questions.cfm. Third, the student will find a civic organization implementing the document’s themes among the country’s youth and write about (1) how the student discovered the organization, (2) the founding of the organization, (3) the group’s main objectives, and (4) current projects. Be sure to include a reflection on what drew the student to this particular organization as opposed to others. Fourth, a very brief in-class presentation of the organization and the work they have done will accompany the paper.

**Paper #3: Wiki “Religion in the News” Project and Reflection (Due Monday, November 19)**
Students will be broken out into teams of five students each. Each team will decide on a topic of “Religion in the News.” The topic can concern religion in politics, religion in film, religion in social policy, etc. The idea is that religion is all around us and we need to understand the role religion plays in people’s lives through their actions and preferences. The teams will build a wiki page highlighting news stories, articles, and cultural events pertaining to their chosen topic. The team will present the page and highlight the best stories. In addition to the team project, each student will write their own short reflection of the “most interesting” story they encountered and relate it to themes discussed in the course. More information will be distributed concerning this assignment.

**Library Assignment/Article Abstract (Due Friday, November 9)**
Students will choose one particular course topic/theme and locate 4 scholarly journal articles related to it **published in the past 20 years**. The relevance of these will be presented in a brief outline of the topic and a brief annotated bibliography (with a 1-2 paragraph description of each source). Use the Turabian Manual of Style for guidance on how to cite the references. In the written piece, note the database used to find the particular articles and the “permanent link web address” for each article. I highly recommend using articles that

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1 A note concerning the written assignments: Separate handouts with more detailed instructions will be distributed for each of the above assignments. Also, a portion of class-time will be dedicated to discussing each assignment. Finally, I am always available to discuss any problems/questions and/or read a draft of your paper. Please allow enough time before the due date to address issues or seek comments on a draft.
do not have abstracts already prefacing the article. Or, in cases where there is an abstract, delete it to avoid any temptations of plagiarism.

The outline portion of this assignment will be presented in class on day selected toward the end of the semester. Selection of topics and presentation dates will take place by Wednesday, September 26 (so students can engage in research during the library research training).

ASSessment:
The final grade for this course will be based upon a variety of rubrics designed to access both subjective and objective dimensions for assessing your comprehension of course material. I have attempted to devise as wide a spectrum for assessment as possible to allow you as full an understanding of the course goals as possible. Additional details and particulars for assignments and exams will be provided as time nears for their submission and performance.

1. Participation/Preparedness/Reflections 10%
2. Midterm (in-class essay) 15%
3. Paper #1: Excursion reflection (details forthcoming) 15%
4. Paper #2: 4-5 “Signs of the Times” paper and presentation on the USCCB’s Faithful Citizenship and an organization promoting these ideals among the nation’s youth (details forthcoming). 15%
5. Paper #3: Reflection on Wiki Project 10%
6. Wiki Team Project 10%
7. Library Assignment/Article Abstract 10%
8. Final Exam (not cumulative) 15%

University grades:
The University grading system is at http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad//gradesfull.cfm#II Reports of grades are available at the end of each term on http://cardinalstation.cua.edu.

My point scale is roughly equivalent to the University grade system:

- A = 95-100
- B = 84-88
- C = 74-77
- A- = 92-94
- B- = 81-83
- C- = 71-73
- B+ = 89-91
- C+ = 78-80
- D = 65-70
- F = 64 and below

IMPORTANT DATES
Wednesday, 9/12 ➔ First Year Convocation (No FYE Classes)
Saturday, 9/22 ➔ Learning Community Excursion
Wednesday, 9/26 ➔ Class meeting at in the MERIC lab at Mullen Library
Monday, 10/8 ➔ Columbus Day (No Class)
Tuesday, 10/9 ➔ “Administrative Monday” - Monday classes meet this day
Wednesday, 11/21 ➔ Thanksgiving (No Class)
Friday, 11/23 ➔ Thanksgiving (No Class)
Friday, 12/7 ➔ Last day of classes
Monday, 12/10 – Saturday, 12/15 ➔ Exams
## CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Leading questions</th>
<th>Assigned reading for the day</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **MON 8/27** | * Class introduction and syllabus overview  
* Religious Literacy Quiz                     | None                                                                                     |
| **WED 8/29** | * Why am I here? Why study religion in the first place?  
* Quiz results discussed              | * U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Summary of Key Findings, Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life  
* Excerpt from Prothero’s Religious Literacy                                             |
| **FRI 8/31** | * How are faith and reason related according to Aquinas?                               | * Aquinas, Summa Theologica, Question 1: That Nature and Extent of Sacred Doctrine (Articles 1-8) |
| **MON 9/3** | * No class: Labor Day                                                                    |                                                                                             |
| **WED 9/5** | * Is there a difference in tone between the first reading (The First Vatican Council Session 3) and the other two? What is the difference?  
* What is the relationship between faith and science in the first document compared to the other two? Which do you support? If either. See especially chapter 4, para. 9 in the 1st document. | * First Vatican Council Session 3 (1870)  
* John Paul II, Fides et Ratio  
* Newman, Sermon One                                                                 |
| **FRI 9/7** | * According to contemporary thinkers, what is the relationship between religion and science?  
* What arguments have been made concerning these two subjects? Can they co-exist or do they answer different questions? | * Selections from John Haught, Making Sense of Evolution and Richard Dawkins, The Greatest Show on Earth |
| **MON 9/10** | * What about the spiritual, but not religious designation? Are we at a point where we are beyond belief?  
* How would you make an argument “for religion”? | * Selections from Bellah, Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Modern World |
| **WED 9/12** | * No class: Convocation  
All first year students are expected to be attendance at Convocation the morning of 9/12. |                                                                                             |
| **FRI 9/14** | * How is sacred scripture to be understood?  
* How should we approach scripture? | * Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation) (1965). Chapters 1-6 |
| **MON 9/17** | * In addition to scripture, what other ways does God reveal Himself to humankind?  
* What is the difference between religions rooted in revelation versus the “natural religions”? What does it mean for individuals to assert that God reveals Himself to humanity? | * Selections from Avery Dulles, Models of Revelation |
| **WED 9/19** | * Scriptures often note how the world came into being? How should these creations myths be understood? As literally true? Or true in a different sense? | * Excerpt from Livingston, Anatomy of the Sacred |
| **FRI 9/21** | * What does the creation account in Genesis tell Christians about God, themselves, their relation to each other, and to nature? | * New American Bible, Genesis, Chapters 1-2  
* Reading on religion and ecology (TBD) |
| **SAT 9/22** | LC Excursion ➔ Time/Location is TBD (It will be a “daytime” event.) |                                                                                             |
| **MON 9/24** | * Is the Genesis account irretrievably sexist?  
* A Feminist critique of Genesis… | * Trible, “Adam and Eve Reread” |
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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 9/26</td>
<td>Library Tour and Research Training – MERIC Classroom (first floor of Mullen Library)</td>
<td>* Library Research topic needs to have been selected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 9/28</td>
<td>* What is the importance of “The Fall” in Genesis?</td>
<td>* New American Bible, Genesis Chapters 3-4</td>
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<td>Mon 10/1</td>
<td>* What is the role of Christ for Christians in their redemption?</td>
<td>* Selection from Athanasius, De Incarnatione Verbi Dei (On the Incarnation)</td>
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<td><strong>Covenant: God Establishes the Covenant with His People - The Role of Christ in That Fulfillment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 10/3</td>
<td>* What is the covenant made by God to His people?</td>
<td>* New American Bible, Genesis 12, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21</td>
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<td>Fri 10/5</td>
<td>* The Covenant continues…</td>
<td>* New American Bible: Exodus 1-15, 19-20, 32</td>
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<td>Mon 10/8</td>
<td>No Class → Columbus Day</td>
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<td>Tues 10/9</td>
<td>Administrative Monday:</td>
<td>* New American Bible: Job 1-10, 38-42</td>
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<td>* Challenges to the covenant…what happens when good people suffer?</td>
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<td>* Paper #1 Due (LC Excursion Paper)</td>
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<td>Wed 10/10</td>
<td>* Prophesizing the fulfillment of the covenant…</td>
<td>* New American Bible, 2 Samuel 7; Psalm 89, 132; and Zechariah 1-14.</td>
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<td>* What kind of Messiah is being projected? Why does this matter?</td>
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<td>* What is the role of the Judeo-Christian Messiah?</td>
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<td>Mon 10/15</td>
<td>* How does Revelation complete the circle? How is Revelation to be understood?</td>
<td>* New American Bible, Book of Revelation 1, 4-5, 7, 13, 17-22.</td>
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<td>Wed 10/17</td>
<td>Revelation in Popular culture</td>
<td>* Excerpt from LeHaye, Left Behind series or Lindsey’s The Late Great Planet Earth</td>
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<td>* Why is the Apocalypse so enticing for literature and cultural works?</td>
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<td>* What are the different millenarian movements?</td>
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<td>Fri 10/19</td>
<td>No Class → Work on Library research project and study for Midterm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 10/22</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>Wed 10/24</td>
<td>* How do religion and politics interact? The importance of religion in the 2012 presidential election.</td>
<td>* Reading TBD * Selections from John Paul II, Novo Millennio Inuente</td>
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<td>* How important is it for an American citizen to consider their faith in their political decisions? Are faith and politics separate?</td>
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<td>* How important is a candidate’s religion to you? What about a candidate for president versus a candidate for city council or seats in between? Is there a difference? Why?</td>
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<td><strong>Revelation II: Sacred Tradition - Living Out the Covenant</strong></td>
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<td>Mon 10/29</td>
<td>* Look at conversion through a religious studies lens?</td>
<td>* Excerpt from Gordon Allport or William James on conversion</td>
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<td>* The importance of Saul/Paul and his conversion.</td>
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<td>* Paper #2 Due: Faithful Citizenship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 10/31</td>
<td>* Bringing uniformity to the Christian Message – the role of the early churches</td>
<td>* New American Bible, Saint Paul’s Letter to the Philippians; First Letter of St. John (all)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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| FRI 11/2 | * What are other interpretations of Jesus’ life?  
* Implications on Christianity down the line?                                                                                                         | * Excerpts from Robert Miller, *The Jesus Seminar and Its Critics*  
* Excerpts from Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* |
| MON 11/5 | * Passing on the tradition – establishing the barriers of belief  
* “Routinization of charisma”  
* The call for a Creed                                                                                             | * Selection from Max Weber, *Theory of Social and Economic Organization*  
* The Nicene Creed |
| WED 11/7 | * Fulfilling the Covenant through prayer…                                                                                                          | * The Rule of St. Augustine |
| FRI 11/9 | * No Class ➔ Watch PBS Special on Religion in America  
* Library Assignment Due (in BlackBoard)                                                                                                   |                                                                  |
| MON 11/12 | * Fulfilling the covenant through prayer…part II                                                                                                  | * St. Theresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle* |
| WED 11/14 | * Finding “happiness” in God…what is happiness?  
* Can we attain happiness in this life?                                                                                     | * Aquinas, excerpts from the *Summa Theologica* |
| FRI 11/16 | * How important is “tradition”? Martin Luther and the debate over tradition in the Church  
* In order to be a believer in a particular faith, do you have to accept all the tenets of the faith or can you be in disagreement on some teachings?  
* How did the Church respond?                                                         | * Luther, *Address to the German Nobility* and *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*  
* Excerpts from the Council of Trent |
| MON 11/19 | * Wiki Projects are due – 10 minute presentation on findings  
* Present the wiki and the most interesting stories  
* Paper #3 Due: Wiki individual reflection – most intriguing story/finding – why?                                          |                                                                  |
| WED 11/21 | * No Class – Thanksgiving                                                                                                                          |                                                                  |
| FRI 11/23 | * No Class – Thanksgiving                                                                                                                          |                                                                  |
| MON 11/26 | * Laying the groundwork…religion in the contemporary world.  
* Selection from Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* or other reading. |
| FRI 11/30 | * What is the relationship between Catholics and other Christians and people of different faiths?  
* Does the Buddha go to heaven?                                                                                         | * Selections from *Unitatis Redintegratio*, Decree on Ecumenism and *Nostra Aetate*, Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions, Second Vatican Council |
| MON 12/3 | * What is the future of Christianity in the World?                                                                                               | * Philip Jenkins, “The Next Christianity” and “After the Next Christendom” |
| WED 12/5 | * For Benedict, what happens when reason and faith become separated? Do you agree with him?  
* What is the role of suffering in our lives? In your opinion, is the elimination of suffering possible?          | * Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*: Saved by Hope, paragraphs 1-2, 10-31, 35-48 |
| FRI 12/7 | * What does it mean to be Catholic or religious in the contemporary world?                                                                          |                                                                  |

**Final Day of Classes – Class Review and Further Discussion**

**Final Exam Week: Monday 12/10 – Saturday, 12/15**