

THEO-251-M01
✘ JESUS AND SALVATION ✘

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
(Luke 4:18-19)

As mere theory and empty rhetoric come under fire because of their impotence in the face of the urgent crises of our time (...) theology must understand itself not as abstract speculation but as concrete reflection that arises out of and is directed to the praxis of Christian faith, hope and love.
(Daniel L. Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, xiii)

Professor:	Rev. Melanie Grace Mitchell, M.Div., Lic. T^a	MWF 12:00-12:50, SIH C
E-mail:	mmitche8@slu.edu	Semester: Fall 2014
Office:	SIH 315 Humanities	Core requirement: 3 Credits
Office Hours:	WF 10:00-10:50 and by appointment	Prerequisite: THEO-100

Course description:

Who is Jesus and how does he help us? These are questions both for theologians and for the common person drawn to his figure and to the salvation promised in his name. Who was Jesus and what did he do and teach? These are questions for historians. How do theology and history speak to each other? Does one modify the other? Who has the authority to speak about Jesus? How open is he to interpretation?

Jesus was born into a particular cultural, social, political and religious context, far removed from our own. How can studies of that ancient context shed light on Jesus’ identity, words and actions? How have changing power relationships over the centuries between Christians and the larger society affected witness to Jesus and his message? Jesus Christ incarnated God’s Word 2,000 years ago, and yet he has been incarnated anew in each time and place, leading to a diversity of Christologies and Soteriologies around the world. What is it about Jesus’ message that it is seen to be both universal and particular? How can we be sure that interpretations are faithful to his essence as the living image of God and faithful to the diversity of humanity, also created in God’s image?

In this course, we will seek to bring classical Christian beliefs, as expressed in the Scriptures and the Creeds, about the person and work of Jesus Christ into conversation with the fruits of historical Jesus research and contemporary global interpretations of Jesus, salvation and the Christian life. Is Jesus primarily a moral example, a teacher, a prophet who denounces injustice, or a divine savior? Is his main message eternal salvation or worldly liberation? Does he call people primarily to faith or to action? What does it mean to pray: “Thy kingdom come...”?

Appropriate to a multi-cultural, religiously diverse campus like SLU Madrid, our study will be ecumenical and will include both Western perspectives and emerging global theologies, as well as Christian and non-Christian voices.

My objectives for this course:

Required on-line (or print) readings:

The Holy Bible

In English: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/> (NASV with commentary)

<http://www.devotions.net/bible/00bible.htm> (NRSV)

In Spanish: <http://www.buscad.com/biblias/reina-valera-1995.html> (RV 1995)

In Arabic: <http://www.copticchurch.net/cgibin/bible/> (SDV)

Film: *From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians*, PBS Frontline, 1998.

Required readings from books on reserve in the library and/or available for purchase:

Borg, Marcus J. and Wright, N.T., *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, (New York: HarperOne, 2007).

Jesus and the Cross: Reflections of Christians from Islamic Contexts. David Emmanuel Singh, ed.

Migliore, Daniel L., *Faith Seeking Understanding: An introduction to Christian Theology*, 2nd ed.

(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004). (See also his Glossary of Theological Terms)

Placher, William, *Narratives of a Vulnerable God: Christ, Theology and Scripture*, (Louisville:

Westminster/John Knox, 1994). (Available in the bookstore)

Pope-Levison, Patricia and Levison, John R., *Jesus in Global Contexts* (Louisville, KY:

Westminster John Knox Press, 1994). (Available in the bookstore)

Vermes, Geza, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981).

Other helpful texts in the library for reading and research:

The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Vol.s 1-6

Armstrong, Karen, *A History of God* (Christianity within developing monotheistic tradition)

Bautista, Esperanza, *La mujer en la iglesia primitiva*

Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, USCCB, *The Bible, the Jews and the Death of Jesus: A Collection of Catholic Documents*

Borg, Marcus, *Jesús y Buda: Palabras paralelas*

Griffiths, Paul J., *Christianity through Non-Christian Eyes*

Harrelson, Walter and Falk, Randall, *Jews and Christians: A Troubled Family*

Hebblethwaite, Margaret, *Six New Gospels: New Testament Women Tell Their Stories*

Jenkins, Philip, *God's Continent* (Islam and Christianity in Europe)

Jenkins, Philip, *The Next Christendom* (The Global Shift of Christianity)

Jesus and His World: An Archaeological and Cultural Dictionary, John J. Rousseau and Rami Arav, ed.s

Kavanaugh, John F., *Following Christ in a Consumer Society* (Jesus challenges western culture)

Pagola, José Antonio, *Jesús: Aproximación histórica*

Ratzinger, Joseph (Benedict XVI), *Jesus of Nazareth* (Papal historical and theological reflections)

Routledge Reader in Christian-Muslim Relations, Mona Siddiqui, ed.

Theissen, Gerd and Merz, Annette, *The Historical Jesus* (Comprehensive guide)

Theissen, *The Shadow of the Galilean* (Novel based on historical Jesus research)

Thurston, Bonnie, *Women in the New Testament*

Wink, Walter, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium* (influential author on the spiritual and demonic dimensions of the social and political systems of today)

Grading policy:

The final grade will be determined in accordance with the following Learning Goals established by the SLU Theology Department for 200 level courses:

Thinking theologically: Students will demonstrate critical thinking by analyzing the themes, concepts and presuppositions of Christology and Soteriology.
Reading theologically: Students will analyze and critique the coherence and argumentation of the course contents within their historical and/or contemporary contexts.
Researching theologically: Students will be able to find, cite and use appropriate essays and articles, including print journals, essays in books, online journals, etc.
Speaking theologically: Students will analyze theological topics and the relationship between them.
Writing theologically: Students will formulate a thesis and develop a written argument on a discipline-specific topic in relationship to the course content.
Indicators of goals being met: “This course challenged me to analyze the theological themes of the course content.” “As a result of this course, I am better able to formulate an informed critique of the theological themes treated in this course.”

The final grade will be calculated in the following manner:

15%: Attendance and Participation	20%: Global Christology Presentation
20%: Jesus in the Gospels Essay	25%: Final Examination
20%: Midterm Examination	

Grade scale:

A	94-100	B+	87-89	B-	80-82	C	73-76	D	60-69
A-	90-93	B	83-86	C+	77-79	C-	70-72	F	0-59

Assignment Descriptions:**1. Jesus and the Gospels Essay:**

- Read one of the Gospels in the *Holy Bible*: Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.
- Write an 8-10 page essay—properly referenced—about what you learn from the Gospel itself about Jesus’ life, teachings, ministry, death and resurrection.
- Sample questions: How does the author present Jesus? How does Jesus present himself? Who are his friends and adversaries? How does the story begin and end? In what ways is Jesus depicted as human? In what ways does he appear divine? What titles are applied to him? What titles does he use for himself? What is said and what meanings are applied to his death and resurrection? What is meant by the “kingdom of God” or the “kingdom of heaven?”
- Critically engage Borg, Wright, Vermes and the film, based on your reading.
- Optional: You may also choose to discuss how your readings interact with your own beliefs about/in Jesus.
- All quotations and paraphrased ideas should be cited, and quotations of three lines or more should be single-spaced and indented. Plagiarism will be punished and reported!
- Citations from the Scriptures will follow this format: (Mt. 22:37, NRSV). “NRSV” stands for the translation of the Bible being used, if you use various translations. If you use just one (or

mostly just one), include a footnote at the site of the first quotation saying the equivalent of: “All biblical citations are taken from the Revised Standard Version (unless otherwise noted).” From then on, all you have to do is cite book, chapter and verse.

- h. Please make use of the Writing Center on campus if you need any assistance—especially if you are a non-native English speaker.
- i. Turn in your paper electronically by midnight on the day it is due.

2. Global Christology Presentation:

- a. Each student will do research, individually or in small groups, on a particular global Christology (Latin American, Asian, Black, Feminist...).
- b. Levison and Levison’s *Jesus in Global Contexts* and “Confessing Jesus Christ in Context” in Migliore’s *Faith Seeking Understanding* will serve as general references, as well as library books, articles from the databases, and other research from scholarly sources.
- c. Each student will explain and critically engage his or her particular Christology and its relationship to classical Christology and Soteriology and to historical Jesus investigations.
- d. Presentations shall be educational, creative and engaging and include slides, a print-out of which is to be sent to the professor one day in advance.
- e. The presentations shall be limited to the allotted time frame—to be determined—and will include questions to generate class discussion.
- f. At least five sources will be used and listed in a bibliography at the end.

Policy on late-work:

- 1. For every day a paper is late, five points will be subtracted from the grade.
- 2. If you are to present in class and are unable to do so, you must inform the professor well in advance, as your group will be depending on your participation, and the entire class will be affected by any schedule changes.

Assessment policy:

Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus is committed to excellent and innovative educational practices. In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to relevant accreditation requirements, we regularly assess our teaching, services, and programs for evidence of student learning outcomes achievement. For this purpose we keep on file anonymized representative examples of student work from all courses and programs such as: assignments, papers, exams, portfolios, and results from student surveys, focus groups, and reflective exercises. Thus, copies of your work for this course, including exams, oral presentations, assignments, and papers may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes. If you prefer that Saint Louis University-Madrid Campus does not keep your work on file, you will need to communicate your decision in writing to your professor.

Attendance policy:

Regular, punctual, participatory attendance is expected and essential to everyone’s learning process in this course. We all learn from one another and each voice is valued! Also, more than three absences will affect your grade. Nevertheless, it is always advisable to inform your professor when you will be absent and it is essential to recover any material missed. To this end, all PowerPoint presentations will be posted on Blackboard.

Academic integrity:

“Please note that, as a student in this course, you are required to adhere to the university's Academic Honesty Policy. Cheating, falsification, and plagiarism are strictly forbidden. Plagiarism is the intentional representation of someone else’s thoughts or words as if they were one’s own.” The general rule is that three words in order from a source must be placed in quotes and cited. Ideas that come from sources should also be referenced. “Any violation of this policy will result in an ‘F’ for the pertinent academic exercise. A detailed statement of the policy may be found at: http://spain.slu.edu/academics/policies & procedures/docs/Academic_integrity.pdf.”

Special resources for special learning needs:

“In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your instructor.

University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to:

http://spain.slu.edu/academics/learning_resources.html.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at +34 915 54 58 58, ext. 204, send an e-mail to counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu, or to visit the Counseling Office (San Ignacio Hall). Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.”

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SYLLABUS

Wednesday, September 3: Introduction to course, instructor and participants.

Read: Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, pp163-169

Friday, September 5: Introduction to Christology and Soteriology.

(Application deadline for fall semester degree candidates)

(This weekend: Optional Trips to Toledo and to the Monasterio de Piedra¹)

Monday, September 8: Introduction to the Study of the “Historical Jesus.”

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part II: “What Did Jesus Do and Teach?”

¹ Sign up for trips at the Finance Office.

Wednesday, September 10: *From Jesus to Christ*, Part I: Jesus of Nazareth: The Life and Passion
Assignment: Essay on Jesus and the Gospels. Due on Friday, October 10.

Friday, September 12: Discussion of film and articles: Portraits of Jesus
Read: Vermes, Geza, *Jesus the Jew*, Introduction and Postscript.

(This weekend: Optional Trips to Segovia and Salamanca)

Monday, September 15: Portraits of Jesus
(Last day to drop a class without a grade of W, to add a class, and to choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No Pass (P/NP) Options)

Wednesday, September 17: Portraits of Jesus
Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part III: "The Death of Jesus"

Friday, September 19: Discussion of film and articles: The Passion of Jesus

Monday, September 22: The Passion of Jesus

Wednesday, September 24: *From Jesus to Christ*, Part II: The Jesus Movement
Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part IV: "God Raised Jesus from the Dead"

(Optional trip to Morocco: Sept. 24-28)

Friday, September 26: NO CLASSES

Monday, September 29: Discussion of film and articles: The Resurrection

Wednesday, October 1: The Resurrection
Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part I: "How Do We Know About Jesus?"

Friday, October 3: *From Jesus to Christ*, Part III: The Gospels

Monday, October 6: Discussion of film and articles: The Gospels.
Read: Placher, *Narratives of a Vulnerable God*, pp87-108.

Wednesday, October 8: Discussion of film and articles: The Gospels.

Friday, October 10: *From Jesus to Christ*, Part IV: Persecution and the Rise of the Church
Read: Migliore, pp169-173; 212-216.
Due: Jesus and the Gospels Essay

Monday, October 13: Christological Controversies and Formulations.

Wednesday, October 15: Christological Controversies and Formulations.

Read: Migliore, pp174-182.

(Last Day to Submit Transfer Application for Spring Semester)

Friday, October 17: Rethinking Classical Affirmations of the Person of Christ: Fully Human

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part V: "Was Jesus God?"

(This weekend: Optional Campus Ministry Trip to Loyola and Islam Class Trip to Córdoba)

Monday, October 20: Rethinking Classical Affirmations of the Person of Christ: Fully Divine

Read: Placher, *Narratives of a Vulnerable God*, pp53-83.

Wednesday, October 22: The Incarnation, the Trinity and Monotheism

Friday, October 24: The Incarnation, the Trinity and Monotheism

Read: Cragg, Kenneth, The Cross and Power: Parting of Ways, in *Jesus and the Cross: Reflections of Christians from Islamic Contexts*. David Emmanuel Singh, ed., pp33-46.

Monday, October 27: The Incarnation, the Trinity and Monotheism

Read: Migliore, pp 182-196.

Wednesday, October 29: Rethinking the Classical interpretations of the Work of Christ

(Thursday, October 30: Last day to drop a class and receive a grade of "W")

Friday, October 31: Rethinking the Classical interpretations of the Work of Christ

Read: Migliore, pp197-222; Levison and Levison, pp11-25.

(Saturday, November 1: Application Deadline for Fall Semester Degree Candidates)

Monday, November 3: Jesus Christ in Western Art: Changing Depictions for Changing Times. Guest lecturer: Curra Vericat, Profesor of Art History.

Wednesday, November 5: Introduction to Contemporary Contextual Christologies and Soteriologies.

Midterm review sheet to be distributed.

Read: Placher, *Narratives of a Vulnerable God*, pp109-133.

(Thursday, November 6: Registration for Spring Semester Begins.)

Friday, November 7: Introduction to Contemporary Contextual Christologies and Soteriologies.

Assignment of topics for presentations. Midterm review.

Monday, November 10: *Nuestra Señora de la Almodena* Holiday (University Closed)

Wednesday, November 12: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part VII: "He Will Come Again"

Friday, November 14: The Future of Jesus and Christian Hope

Read: Migliore, pp330-353.

Monday, November 17: The Future of Jesus and Christian Hope

Read: Migliore, pp301-329.

Wednesday, November 19: The Finality of Jesus Christ and Religious Pluralism.

Friday, November 21: The Finality of Jesus Christ and Religious Pluralism.

Monday, November 24: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Wednesday, November 26: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Friday, November 28: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Monday, December 1: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Wednesday, December 3: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Read: Levison and Levison, pp165-197.

Friday, December 5: Bringing the Christologies and Soteriologies into Conversation

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part VIII: "Jesus and the Christian Life," and Migliore, pp139-162.

Monday, December 8: *Inmaculada Concepción* Holiday (University Closed)

Wednesday, December 10: Who Was Jesus? Who Is Jesus? Why Does It Matter? Final review to be distributed.

Friday, December 12: Who Was Jesus? Who Is Jesus? Why Does It Matter? Final review.

Monday, December 15, 12:00-15:00: FINAL EXAMINATION

The Apostles Creed (1st-2nd century CE)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He arose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The Nicene Creed (325; expanded at Constantinople in 381 CE)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Chalcedonian Creed (451)

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; consubstantial [co-essential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.

A Brief Statement of Faith (PCUSA 1991)

In life and death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God's condemnation. Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the church. The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, Come, Lord Jesus! With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.