295-01 Senior Seminar: The Public Role and Significance of Theology

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The Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which human beings ask about this present life and the life to come, and about the relationship of the one to the other. We must therefore recognize and understand the world in which we live, its explanations, its longings, and its often dramatic characteristics.

~ Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes no. 4

Overview and Goals

This seminar involves reflection on theology and spirituality as it plays out in the public realm, with special attention to the *prophetic* (or political) and *mystical* (or contemplative) dimensions of Christian faith. A key first principle here is that the church, as a pilgrim community of faith in the living God of history, is called to respond in solidarity to the “signs of the times,” and to help leaven a climate of understanding, hospitality, and peace in a pluralist society. The course has five goals:

1. To identify the challenges of thinking, doing, and speaking theology in the public realm today, with special attention to the social and political context of all theology.

2. To chart the Roman Catholic Church’s remarkable turn toward the world and public call for a culture of peace in the wake of World War II, Vatican II (1962-65), Medellin (1968), and other major theological movements of the mid to late 20th century.

3. To explore the thought of four major theological figures of this period—Johann Baptist Metz, Thomas Merton, Dorothee Soelle, and Monika Hellwig—and to reflect on the implications of their thought for Christian life and spirituality today.

4. To develop tools for assessing *new works* in theology, and to provide each student the opportunity to research a contemporary theologian of their choice and share their insights with one another.

5. To give senior theology majors the opportunity to articulate their own vision of a theology and spirituality responsive to the signs of the times at the turn of a new century.

Primary Texts

1. *Amazing Church: A Catholic Theologian Remembers a Half-Century of Change*, by Gregory Baum
2. *Faith in History and Society: Toward a Practical Fundamental Theology*, Johann Baptist Metz
5. *Dorothee Soelle: Essential Writings*, Dorothee Soelle, ed. Dianne Oliver
Secondary Articles will be provided or posted to Blackboard in PDF format under the “Course Documents” tab.


Requirements: Each seminar participant is expected to:

1. Prepare assigned readings, take notes, actively engage in seminar environment.

2. Complete the “Theological Imagination Exercise” (due Sep. 23)

3. Submit nearly every week a 1 page (single space) précis statement (10 total) comprised of:
   a. one paragraph summarizing 6-8 pages of the assigned primary text
   b. one paragraph relating one of the secondary readings to the primary material
   c. one paragraph of assessment (what strikes you most in the readings and why)

4. Give two presentations (one brief, one major) on the work of a contemporary theologian of your choice and write a Book Review Essay (10-12 pages) on the selected work. Schedule an interview with Dr. Pramuk before the major presentation to discuss focus points, etc. See suggested bibliography and guidelines below.

5. Write a take-home final “Public Theology and Spirituality” Paper (8-10 pages), in which you articulate your constructive vision of a theology and spirituality responsive to the “signs of the times.” Due during the final exam period. Guidelines will be provided in November.

Evaluation

The final grade is determined on the basis of:

1. [10%] Attendance/active participation
2. [10%] “Theological Imagination” exercise (Sep )
3. [40%] Weekly 1 ½ page précis statements (10 total, dates below)
4. [25%] Two presentations and Review Essay on book of your choice (0% + 10% + 15%)
5. [15%] Final “Public Theology and Spirituality” paper (due Finals week)

The Theology Dept. mandates the following scale:

- A = 100-94
- B+ = 91-90
- B = 89-87
- B- = 86-84
- C+ = 83-82
- C = 81-79
- C- = 78-76
- D+ = 75-74
- D = 73-71
- D- = 70-68
- F = 67-0

Please bear in mind that according to Theology Department standards, the grade of “A” denotes not “average” work or “good” effort but consistently exceptional academic performance.
Attendance and Active Participation

Active Participation: Senior Seminar is built on a rigorous graduate-style model in which participants are expected to take full ownership of their learning, both in and outside the classroom. At minimum, this requires careful preparation of all required readings, taking notes thoroughly, raising pertinent questions, engaging in the conversation at hand, and so on. This does not mean that everyone must be an extrovert. It does mean all are expected to come prepared for the kind of discussion one would find (and enjoy!) in a graduate-style seminar.

Attendance: Due to the concentrated nature of the Senior Seminar, no absences are allowable except for extraordinary circumstances. Whenever possible advance permission of the professor is appreciated and make-up work expected. You may miss up to two classes without penalty. After this, I reserve the right to lower the final grade by half a letter per absence. The idea here is to allow some room for illness or other inevitable circumstances. Please arrive on time. If you have an unavoidable reason for being tardy, better to come late rather than not attend.

No pagers, cell phones, laptops, or other technological intrusions, please, unless you have a documented learning disability that necessitates use of a laptop. If you find it impossible not to text during class, please leave your cell phone at home. Always have your notebook open and ready. A great deal of insight can emerge spontaneously in the give and take of discussion. Be a creative, active note-taker – an art and discipline that will serve you well in many educational and work contexts.

Questions I will ask myself in evaluating your participation in seminar discussions

1. Does your participation consistently reflect careful reading of all readings assigned for the session?
2. Do you show an ability to listen, to weigh differing perspectives accurately, fairly, respectfully? Are you willing and able to integrate multiple perspectives into a (more or less) coherent whole?
3. Are you having any fun?

Seminar Atmosphere: Intellectual Curiosity, Openness, Generosity

As you know theology engages questions of a personal, political, and sometimes controversial nature. This kind of personal engagement calls for an atmosphere of openness, trust, and mutual respect, especially where we may disagree with another person's point of view. The best learning and growth takes place when we allow ourselves to engage diverse and conflicting points of view, including tensions and opposing viewpoints within ourselves.

If you find yourself feeling challenged or uncomfortable with another person’s stated position, a good Jesuit or Ignatian rule of thumb is to listen carefully and strive to consider the idea—but above all the person advancing it—through the best possible lens, or what we might call a “hermeneutic of generosity.” When understanding fails, ask follow-up questions to give the person an opportunity to clarify or nuance their position.

I would finally ask that we maintain a rule of confidentiality if experiences of a personal or sensitive nature are shared during class discussions. Please trust your best judgment and instincts.
Note on writing for this class

Theology is a reading and writing-intensive discipline, especially as you advance in the field. Please see me if you ever have questions or concerns about your writing for this course or guidelines provided for a particular assignment. The main thing is to communicate with me openly.

Careful presentation and excellence in form is crucial at this level. As you know, last minute writing at deadline almost never yields best results. Sloppy papers or work with errors in grammar, spelling, or careless content will be significantly downgraded. I am always happy to work with students who show a sincere and concerted effort to improve their critical writing skills. Use of the Writing Center (Alter Hall) is strongly encouraged when writing and editing the longer 2 papers.

For all writing, including the précis papers, please do not hit the “print” button until you are confident you have attained, through careful proof-reading and editing, your best work.

Late policy: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the designated date. For each calendar day a paper or précis is late, a half letter grade or more will be subtracted, unless an extension has been requested and granted. After one week overdue papers will not be accepted for credit without explicit permission from the professor. No work will be accepted after finals week. Please remember that direct communication with me is essential if you run into difficulties with any assignment.

In keeping with Xavier policy, “Incomplete” grades are discouraged and granted only in extraordinary circumstances. Verbal requests must be confirmed in writing to the instructor without delay, who will then consult the department chair for approval and determining specific requirements for granting the request.

Academic Honesty: This course will be conducted in keeping with Xavier University’s policy on academic honesty, which includes the use of Turnitin.com and other resources in cases where plagiarism is suspected. Please don’t put yourself, or me, in the very uncomfortable position of having to make such an inquiry. In all material submitted for this course, the ideas and wording must be your own, or must be clearly attributed to their proper sources. Re-submission of any work used for a previous course, whether yours or that of another student, is a serious violation.

Disabilities. If you have a documented physical or learning disability requiring academic adjustments for this course, please contact the Learning Assistance Program (Kuhlman Hall/745-3280), and see me in the first week of class to discuss any necessary arrangements or ways I can be of assistance.

Athletic or academic team commitments. It is your responsibility to ensure that I am aware ahead of time of any scheduling conflicts or absences you may incur due to university sponsored athletic events. Please provide a letter from your coach or adviser with the team schedule and dates highlighted that will necessitate absence from this class. If the number of projected absences is excessive, it may be recommended that another course be taken.

Unavoidable absences: The rule here is communicate with me early and often. Please remind me the previous class about an absence approaching. In cases involving a paper due, it is especially important to follow-up. Please don’t expect accommodations after the fact.
What you can expect from me

I consider teaching Senior Seminar a joy and privilege, especially the opportunity to get to know each of you at this stage in your Xavier career. Please know that I hold myself to the highest standards, including:

1. Respect for the faith traditions of Catholic, non-Catholic, and non-Christian students, and no less for those who describe themselves as agnostic, atheist, or otherwise
2. A posture of openness to your questions, your input, and the particularities of your own spiritual or religious journey
3. Careful preparation of each session of this course
4. Availability outside of class when needed
5. Every effort to make this class thought-provoking, challenging, and enjoyable.

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Course Overview

Unit I. Introduction: Civil Religion vs. Prophetic Theology

Unit II. The Emergence of the New Political Theology: Johann Baptist Metz

Unit III. Mysticism and Prophecy in Post-war America: Thomas Merton

Unit IV. Resistance, Discernment, and Hope: Dorothee Soelle & Monika Hellwig
Guidelines for the weekly “précis” papers [10 total, 1-1 ½ pp. single space each]

“précis” = a concise summary of essential points, statements, or facts

The précis is your opportunity to analyze and reflect on each week’s readings, and my primary measure of how you are engaging the texts. The goal of the paper is not to attempt a detailed analysis of the entire reading, but to focus on the “essential points” in 6-8 pages of the texts in play. In those cases where I provide questions to accompany the readings, you may (or may not) use these to help you focus your précis around certain key ideas or themes. In the case of Metz, use Ashley’s study guide to focus your attention on key points. If you structure your paper (more or less) around the following “guidelines” you should be in good shape.

a. [1+ pgph] In your own words, state what you perceive to be the author’s main ideas or “thesis” advanced in the selected pages of the text (or in particular passages the advance questions direct you to focus on). What central argument or theological insight is being forwarded? On what basis or “authority” is the author advancing the argument? Reason? Personal/communal experience? Church teaching? The Bible? Historical data?

b. [1+ pgph] Relate insights from the secondary reading(s) to the primary text. The goal here is to draw larger connections between diverse authors and perspectives, bringing them into conversation. Are there insights from secondary readings which support, complement, or refute, this author’s perspective?

c. [1+ pgph] Step back and offer your personal evaluation of these readings on the whole. What strikes you most in this week’s readings, and why? What questions or insights do they raise for you?

Note: It is OK to include brief citations in these papers, but do not include extensive quotes – I’m interested in your take on the author’s perspective. You should, however, give frequent page references (parenthetical) so that I can find the places in the primary or secondary text you have in mind.

Questions I will ask myself in grading the précis:

a. Does the writing show a careful reading of the author’s perspective in the selected passages?
b. Does the paper reflect both critical and personal engagement with the material?
c. Is the writing done with care for appearance, spelling, and grammar? (Did the student proof-read carefully before turning it in?)
d. Is the paper clear, thoughtfully structured, easy to follow?

A range: exceptional, uncommonly insightful, well-crafted, creative
B range: very good critical and personal engagement with the material, well-crafted with no conceptual or mechanical writing problems (spelling, grammar, etc)
C range: good or acceptable critical and personal engagement; or basic completion of the assignment, but with mechanical or conceptual problems
D and below: minimal effort, poor mechanics, or weak engagement with ideas
Theological Imagination Exercise (Sep 23)

One of the most important “lenses” or cognitive faculties we have for grasping the mystery of God and God’s relationship to the world is the imagination, and the complex set of images that root and shape our theology. Whether consciously or not, our imaginations tend to privilege certain images and themes from the Christian tradition or from the Bible that most resonate in us, giving coherence to how we understand and relate to reality in a religious (or non-religious) way. The set of images we draw from are a combination of those handed down through the tradition and through our social location, i.e., the cultural context in which we live and work, and our personal histories.

The purpose of this exercise is to discover who and what influences have most shaped your theological imagination up to this point in your life. Recall that David Tracy has distinguished three “publics” in which theology “comes to life,” as it were, and makes living contact with people everyday:

1. the church (as sociological and spiritual community)
2. the academy (theology as an academic discipline)
3. the society at large (including the economic, political, and cultural realms)

Instructions: The following questions are structured along the lines of these three “publics,” and are aimed to elicit how and to what degree each realm may (or may not) have shaped your theological imagination. Answer the questions as best you can. Please answer them in the order given. The entire exercise should amount to no more than four or five pages.

The exercise is not a psychological projection test or profile, but is aimed simply at helping you to reflect on the influences that have most shaped your manner of imagining, thinking, doing, and living theology. Your responses will be evaluated for coherence and completeness.

Part One: Inventory

1. List three experiences of, or in some way related to, “the church” that have had a significant impact (whether positive or negative) on your theological imagination (i.e., who God is, who you are, who we are as a human community, in relation to God).
2. List three persons in some way related to or associated with “the church” who have had a significant impact (whether positive or negative) on your theological imagination.
3. List three experiences connected to your academic study of theology that have most significantly impacted or shaped your theological imagination.
4. List three persons associated with your academic study of theology, whether living or dead, whether or not you know them personally, who have most significantly impacted or shaped your theological imagination.
5. List three experiences of (or historical events in) the “society or culture at large” that have significantly impacted, shaped, or come to bear on your theological imagination.
6. List any other cultural, racial, ethnic, or particular communities of identity (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, political party, etc) with which you may identify strongly that have shaped or come to bear on your theological imagination.
7. List any artistic images, architectural spaces, musical pieces, songs, or films that have shaped your theological imagination. How about geographical (or natural) spaces?
8. List one person in the broad sweep of history, whether dead or living, with whom you would most like to meet and have a theological conversation.

Part Two: Analysis

9. Briefly: Do you see any connections between your listings for questions 1-2, questions 3-4, and questions 5-6? How would you describe the interrelationship in your life between these three public spaces? Do the influences noted in questions 5-6 enhance those in questions 1-4? Counter, dominate, or change them? Have nothing to do with them?

10. On the basis of your analysis, write a 1-2 pp. essay on the major roots and influences in your composite theological imagination to this point in your life. Who or what has had the greatest impact on your sense of who God is, who you are, who we are as a human community, in relation to God? On the whole, are there formative theological experiences still missing or lacking in your life, that you desire to fill?

Personal Evaluation

Did you find this exercise useful? Helpful? Of no consequence? Explain in a few sentences.
Theo 295: Research Options: Presentation and Book Review

Consuming Religion: Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture, Vincent Miller
Following Christ in a Consumer Society: The Spirituality of Cultural Resistance, John Kavanaugh, SJ
Virtual Faith: The Irreverent Spiritual Quest of Generation X, Tom Beaudoin
Politics in the Parish: The Political Influence of Parish Priests, Gregory Allen Smith
A Moral Vision for America by Joseph Cardinal Bernardin (ed. John Langan)
God in Action: How Faith in God Can Address the Challenges of the World, Francis Cardinal George
Awakening Vocation: A Theology of Christian Call, Edward Hahnenberg
Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology, Kwok Pui-ian
Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being, M. Shawn Copeland
The Female Face of God at Auschwitz: A Feminist Theology of the Holocaust, Melissa Raphael
Radical Wisdom: A Feminist Mystical Theology, Beverly Lanzetta
Redeemed Bodies: Women Martyrs in Early Christianity, Gail Streete

Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ, William Cavanaugh
No Rising Tide: Theology, Economics and the Future, Joerg Rieger
The Scapgoat, Rene Girard
The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World, Miroslav Volf
God Interrupts History: Theology in a Time of Upheaval, Liiven Boeve
Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony, Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon
On God's Side: What Religion Forgets and What Politics Hasn't Learned about Serving the Common Good, Jim Wallis
Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination, by Walter Wink
Put Down Your Sword: Answering the Gospel Call to Creative Nonviolence, John Dear, SJ
The Politics of Jesus, John Howard Yoder

A New Climate for Theology: God, the World, and Global Warming, Sally McFague
Breath of Life: A Theology of the Creator Spirit, Denis Edwards
The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth, Thomas Berry
What are People For?, Wendell Berry

God's many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation, Sr. Nonna Verna Harrison
Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise, Virgilio Elizondo
Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare?, James Cone
In the End, the Beginning: The Life of Hope, Jurgen Moltmann
The Principle of Mercy: Taking the Crucified Peoples from the Cross, Jon Sobrino
The Mystery of Christ: Life in Death, John Behr
Mother Maria Skobtsova: Essential Writings, ed. Jim Forrest

Biblical Foundations of Spirituality: Touching a Finger to the Flame, Barbara Bowe
The Heart of Christianity, Marcus Borg.
Jesus as Precursor, Robert Funk
Reading the Hebrew Bible after the Shoah: Engaging Holocaust Theology, Marvin Sweeney

Book Review Essay [due Dec. 9] – 10-12 pages, and should include:

a) The significance of the theologian's biography and/or social location (What primary question or historical context is their work a response to?)

b) Careful analysis of one aspect of his or her theology as developed in the selected text, including input from at least three solid secondary sources (e.g., journal article, book review)

c) Your assessment of the work (contributions, strengths, weaknesses) based on criteria developed in the seminar and constructive conclusions

d) Modest bibliography of primary and secondary literature.
Secondary Resources

PASTORAL / weekly or bi-weekly (all with websites and available via XU online Journals)

America (national Jesuit Catholic weekly)
Commonweal: Weekly Review of Religion, Arts, Culture (outstanding lay-run, excellent writing)
Christian Century (Chicago-based, superb commentary)
Christianity Today (evangelical, youth-oriented, socially progressive)
First Things (conservative answer to America & Commonweal)
Sojourners (strong faith and justice orientation, evangelical, politically attuned)
The Tablet (London-based review of religion, politics, culture)
National Catholic Register (more conservative national and global Catholic news)
National Catholic Reporter: (more progressive national and global Catholic news)
U.S. Catholic (faith and everyday life for ordinary Catholics)

JOURNALS (Most available in the periodicals section at XU library- all are available through on-line search engines to which you have access)

1/ Theological Studies
2/ Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality
3/ Horizons: The Journal of the College Theology Society
4/ Anglican Theological Review
5/ Heythrop Journal
6/ Irish Theological Quarterly
7/ Buddhist-Christian Studies
8/ New Theology Review
9/ Chicago Studies
10/ Downside Review
11/ Theology Digest
12/ Theology Today
13/ Christianity and Literature
14/ Journal of Religion
15/ Louvain Studies
16/ IMAGE: A Journal of the Arts and Religion
17/ ARTS: The Arts in Religious and Theological Studies

Select websites:

www.datinggod.org – excellent blog by Dan Horan, a young Franciscan scholar and theologian
www.americamagazine.org – national Jesuit weekly with excellent blog and online resources
www.commonwealmagazine.org – progressive Catholic commentary on faith, politics, culture
www.firstthings.com – conservative Catholic commentary on faith, politics, culture
www.bustedhalo.com – ecumenical resources on faith, politics, spirituality, culture, sexuality
www.sojo.net – Sojourners (progressive evangelical) and Jim Wallis blog and resources
www.zenit.org (“The World Seen from Rome” – up to minute news from Vatican/Catholic global scene)
www.catholicbooksreview.org – online book reviews of many recent works in theology
www.rockandthetheology.com – eclectic and wonderful theological reflection on music and pop culture
www.hopesingssobeautiful.org – Dr. Pramuk’s blog with resources related especially to race relations
Calendar

*Note: may change or be adjusted. Required readings will be confirmed at each session.

Unit I  Civil Religion vs. Public/Prophetic Theology

Tu Aug 26  Introduction
P:  Monika Hellwig, Intro, Chs. 1, 2

Q. Of theology’s three “publics”—church, society, academy—which do you think is most important? To whom is the theologian most responsible? To what extent should “reason” be the dominant mode of “public” theology?

Th Aug 28  Two Case Studies: Dr. King and Rev. Wright
P:  Monika Hellwig, Ch 7
S:  Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham City Jail”
Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Wright, “God-d*#! America” [YouTube]

Q. According to Hellwig, what are the dangers of “civil religion,” by contrast to the prophetic tradition? What strikes you most in her analysis of the tensions ordinary citizens and believers face in navigating their responsibilities for public life?

Case Studies: Which “public” (or publics) is Dr. King addressing? To what authority (or authorities) does he appeal? (Reason? Biblical images? U.S. history and democratic values?) How does the form (or style) of his language relate to its content? What is the significance of his social location? Now apply these same questions to Rev. Wright’s sermon. How does Rev. Wright negotiate the boundaries between conformity and critical dissent, between “civil religion” and a “prophetic” theology?

Tu Sep 2  Does religious speech still have public currency?
P:  Thomas Merton, “War and the Crisis of Language”; “Devout Meditation”
S:  Dorothy Soelle, “Speaking of God”
Due: Précis #1

Q. What observations lead Merton to conclude that we suffer both a “crisis of language” and a “crisis of reason” in public (and religious) discourse? What kind of God-language does Dorothee Soelle resist or reject? Why? Do you share her dilemma?

Th Sep 4  Theology in a global horizon
P:  Gregory Baum, Amazing Church, 7-52
S:  Robert Schreiter, “The Impact of Vatican II”

Q. What does Baum find “amazing,” or worthy of celebration, about the Roman Catholic Church’s “public voice” in the mid to late 20th century? Do you agree? What does Baum mean by the “dark side of modernity”? What are some characteristics or symptoms of “postmodernity” and its “more sober view” of the world, as described by Schreiter? What are some implications for theology in this “changed context” since Vatican II?

Tu Sep 9  Pluralism and “postmodernity”
P:  Baum II (pp. 83-134)
S:  David Tracy, “On Naming the Present”

Q. What does Baum find most praiseworthy in the Church’s response to pluralism? According to Tracy, what is the necessary “price” of doing theology in a pluralistic world? Why is the rise of fundamentalisms in our time not surprising? What is the difference between “fundamentalism” and “neoconservative” movements? Tracy suggests that it is the theology rising from “the suffering and the oppressed” peoples of the world that merits our greatest attention. Do you agree? Why/why not?
Th Sep 11  
**Fundamentalism vs. Secularism: Two Responses to Change**  
P: Baum III (pp. 135-151)  
S: Harvey Cox, “The Myth of the Twentieth Century”  
**Due: Précis #2**

**Q.** If the magisterium “changes its mind,” as Baum demonstrates, to what extent can (or must) theologians be permitted to publicly question official teachings of the church? What strikes you most in Cox’s assessment of the global religious scene today? What signs do you see here in the U.S. or in Europe of his observations about the challenges of integrating Islam into liberal democratic societies? (p. 137-38)

**Unit II: Toward a New Political Theology: Johann Baptist Metz**

**Tue Sep 16**  
**Three Challenges for Theology after World War II**  
P: Johann Baptist Metz, *A Passion for God*, excerpts  
S: James Bacik, “Johann Metz”  
William Placher, “Political Theology”

**Q.** What key life experiences gave rise to Metz’s “political theology”? What does Metz mean by a “reason endowed with memory,” and why is this crucial for theology (p. 25)? How is theology affected by the Marxist insight that “all knowledge is conditioned by interest”? Why insist on the primacy of the memoria passionis (“memory of suffering”) in theology? Are there risks in making such memory the starting point and/or decisive hermeneutic for theology?

**Th Sep 18**  
**Metz’s Relationship with Karl Rahner**  
P: Metz, “On the Way to a Post-Idealist Theology”  
S: J. Matthew Ashley, “Reading Metz”

**Q.** Given Metz’s devotion to his teacher Karl Rahner, what led him to “strike out on his own”? What clues does he himself provide in the essays above? Where does Ashley locate the differences between Rahner and Metz?

**Tu Sep 23**  
**The Frankfurt School: Taking the Marxist Critique Seriously**  
P: Ashley, “The Path to Faith in History and Society,” FHS, intro, 1-20  
S: Gregory Baum, “The Impact of Marxist Ideas on Christian Theology”  
**Due: “Theological Imagination” Exercise**

**Th Sep 25**  
**Basic Concepts of Political Theology I**  
P: Metz, FHS, Chapters 1-2, p. 23-45 / study guide, 215-21  
S: Mathew Minix & John Kavanaugh, “The Culture Industry”

**Tu Sep 30**  
**Basic Concepts of Political Theology II**  
P: Metz, FHS, Ch. 3-4, pp. 46-84 / study guide, 221-25  
S: James Downey, “Risking Memory: Political Theology as Interruption”  
**Due: Précis #3**

**Brief introduction** of your chosen theologian and text

**Th Oct 2**  
**Themes I: Dangerous Memory**  
P: Metz, FHS, Chapters 5, 6, 11: pp. 87-113; 169-85 / study guide, 226-30; 239-41  
S: C. Pramuk, “Strange Fruit: Contemplating the Black Cross in America”
Tue Oct 7  
**Themes II: Narrative**

**P:**  
Metz, FHS, Chapters 9, 12: pp. 144-55; 186-207 / *study guide*, 235-37; 242-44

**S:**  
Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History”

Pink Floyd: A (Postmodern) Case Study

**Due:** Précis #4

Th Oct 9  
No Class: Fall Break

Tu Oct 14  
**Themes III: Solidarity and (Apocalyptic) Hope**

**P:**  
Metz, FHS, Chapters 8, 10: pp. 128-43; 156-65 / *study guide*, 23-35; 238-39

**S:**  
David Tracy, “The Christian Option for the Poor”

Th Oct 16  
**Solidarity and Hope (continued)**

**P:**  
Metz, FHS, Ch. 13 / *study guide*, 244-46; Metz, “The Second Coming”

**S:**  
Ashley, “Critical Appreciation and Questions,” pp. 191-204

JSTB, “Johann Baptist Metz Addresses Graduates”

**Due:** Précis #5

Unit III.  
**Prophecy and Mysticism in post-WWII America: Thomas Merton**

Tu Oct 21  
**P:**  

**S:**  
Christine Bochen, “Awakening the Heart”

Th Oct 23  
**P:**  
“Day of a Stranger”; “Thoughts in Solitude”: TMSM, 214-22, 241-50

**S:**  
Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, preface and ch. 1 [ix-xxiv, 1-20]

Sat Oct 25  
Pursuing the Spiritual Roots of Protest, Bellarmine University, Louisville

Tu Oct 28  
**P:**  

**S:**  
Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, chs. 2-3, pp. 21-57

**Due:** Précis #6

Th Oct 30  
**P:**  
“Fire Watch, July 4, 1952”; “Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander,” TMSM, 107-64

**S:**  
Joseph Nangle, “The Incarnation” / Eucharistic Prayer (Overberg)

**Due:** Presentations (#1) overview of book, focus of interest, provisional bibliography (at least 2 secondary sources)

Tu Nov 4  
**P:**  
“The Mystery of Christ”; “The General Dance”; “Hagia Sophia”; TMSM, 251-64

**S:**  
C. Pramuk, “Theological Significance of Hagia Sophia”

D. Soelle, “Living Language”

Th Nov 6  
**P:**  
“Message to Poets”; “The Time of the End is the Time of No Room”

**S:**  
Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, ch. 4, pp. 59-79

**Précis #7**

Tu Nov 11  
**P:**  
“Blessed are the Meek”; “Contemplative Life as Prophetic Vocation”; “The Asian Journal,” TMSM, 223-37

**S:**  
Interview with Maxine Hong Kingston (PBS online video)

S: Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, ch. 5

Due: Précis #8

Sat Nov 15-16 Pilgrimage to the Abbey of Gethsemani, Trappist, KY

Unit IV: Resistance, Discernment, and Hope: Dorothee Soelle and Monika Hellwig

Tu Nov 18 Reconciling Divine Power

P: Dorothee Soelle, EW, 33-92
S: Diane Oliver, “Introduction,” EW, 13-32

*Jesuit Martyrs / SOA and Ignatian Teach-In*

Th Nov 20 Solidarity, Suffering, and Resistance

P: Soelle, EW, 93-168
S: “The New Monasticism”
Video: John Dear, SJ, “The Narrow Path”

Tu Nov 25 Poetics in Theology

P: Soelle, EW, 169-232
S: Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, ch. 6, 135-51

Due: Précis #9

Th Nov 27 No Class: Thanksgiving Holiday

Tu Dec 2 Public Life and Spirituality

P: Hellwig, chs. 3-6, p. 25-67
S: Adolfo Nicolas, SJ, “Challenges to Jesuit Higher Education Today”

Presentations #2: including thesis, outline, and excerpt of text

Th Dec 4 Public Life and Spirituality

P: Hellwig, chs. 8-11, p. 81-125
S: Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, ch. 7, postscript, 115-25

Due: Precis #10

Presentations (continued)

Tu Dec 9 Public Life and Spirituality

P: Hellwig, Ch. 12, Conclusion, p. 127-48
S: Czeslaw Milosz, “If Only This Could Be Said”

Presentations / Book Review Essays Due

Th Dec 11 Public Life and Spirituality

P: Hellwig, “Finding God in All Things”
S: Pedro Arrupe, SJ, “Men and Women for Others”

Dec 10-14: Final “Public Theology and Spirituality” Paper due