DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces the students to the following letters of St. Paul: I and II Thessalonians, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, I and II Corinthians and Romans. Besides theological and spiritual reflections on selective passages in each of these letters, the situation in which each letter was written and Paul’s attempts to address particular problems will also be addressed. Paul’s Corinthians correspondence will receive a more thorough and detailed consideration.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will become familiar with the life of Paul.

2. Students will acquire knowledge of the unique circumstances of each of Paul’s letters and the development of Paul’s theological and spiritual insights into the Christian life.

3. Students will acquire constructive pastoral attitudes and skills from reflecting on how Paul related to the churches he founded.

COURSE FORMAT AND EVALUATION:

1. The course will consist of lectures on particular letters and themes, followed by class discussion.

2. There will be four written exams on which the final course grade will be determined:
   a. Four exams (25% each)
   b. Exam dates: 10/29, 11/12, 12/3, and 12/10
   c. Only the Bible may be used during examinations.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. La Biblia Latinoamericana

2. 134 pages of notes by Fr. Jerry Frank, titled Un Estudio de las Cartas de San Pablo
RECOMMENDED READING:


COURSE OUTLINE:

Classes will meet on Thursday’s, Oct. 15 to Dec. 10, 2015, from 7 to 10 pm.

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<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>10/15 Opening Class.</td>
<td>Explanation of Syllabus</td>
<td>Frank, pp. 1-9, 16-26, and 72-74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overview of Paul’s letters</td>
<td>Life of Paul up to Letters to Thess.</td>
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<td>Paul’s early life and issues</td>
<td>Historical background of Letter to Thessalonians</td>
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<tr>
<td>First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians</td>
<td>Selected passages from Letters to Thessalonians: (1) I Thess 2:13-4:2; (2) 1 Thess 1:1- 2:12 and 4:3-5:28; and (3) II Thessalonians</td>
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<td>Reflection 1 Discussion regarding theological virtues, imminent parousia expectations, apocalyptic literature (Great Rebel and Restraint) and historical vs. typical interpretations of such literature.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/22 Letter to Galatians</td>
<td>Life of Paul from Letters to Thessalonians until Letters to Galatians and Philippians inclusive</td>
<td>Letter to Gal. Frank, pp 34-42</td>
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<td>Historical background of Letter to Galatians</td>
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<td>Problem with the Judaizers</td>
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<td>What is an apostle?</td>
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<td>Paul’s special vocation</td>
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<td>Effects of Damascus experience</td>
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<td>Paul’s Gospel</td>
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<td>A LAW mentality</td>
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<td>Pauline spirituality (grace, faith, freedom, fruits of Spirit, the cross)</td>
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<td>Letter to Philippians</td>
<td>Pauline anthropology</td>
<td>Letter to Philippians. Frank, pp. 43-49</td>
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<td>Selected passages</td>
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<td>Historical background of Letter to Philippians</td>
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<td>Letter A 4:10-20</td>
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<td>Letter B 1:1-13 and 4:2-9 (imprisonment)</td>
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<td>Letter C 3:2-4:1 (against Judaizers)</td>
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<td>Life in Christ, Imitation of Christ (and Paul)</td>
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### Letters to Colossians and Philemon
- Joy in Suffering
- A “race” to possess Christ
- Hymn (2:6-11) emptying and glorification
- Selected passages
- Historic background
- Primitive gnosticism
- Liturgical hymn (1:15-20) “image” of invisible God
- Church as his body
- Selected passages

### 10/29, 11/5
**First Letter to the Corinthians**

A great part of the course will focus on Paul’s letters to the Corinthians.

These letters will be treated in considerable detail.

- God’s Wisdom
- Faith in the cross
- Humility (“vessels of clay”)
- Spirit
  - Source of faith, hope and love
  - Discernment
- Pauline anthropology cont.
- Process of salvation
  - Justification
  - Sanctification
  - Glorification
- Sacraments
  - Baptism
  - Eucharist

Problems in Corinth

Christian community as an alternative value system

- Marriage and Celibacy

- The Church
  - Mediates Christ
  - Purpose of gifts
  - Members of one body
  - Greatest gift is love
  - The collection

- The Resurrection
  - New life, not restoration
  - Jesus is the life-giving Spirit of the new creation
  - Beyond physical and moral corruptibility

- Jesus, the risen Lord
  - His dominion (progressive conquest)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Source(s)</th>
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| 11/12      | Second Letter to the Corinthians                                      | - Historic background relating II Corinthians to I Corinthians, and chapters 10-13 to chapters 1-9 of II Corinthians  
- The “tribulation of Asia” or “sentence of death” in 1:8-11; 4:10-12.  
- “Earthen vessels” (4:7). Boasting in the Lord  
- Human weakness and divine power (suffering and failures)  
- True test of an apostle  
- Paul’s labors in comparison to the “arch apostles”  
- Paul’s “thorn in the flesh”  
- Problems again with Judaizers  
- Paul’s mystical experience  
- Collection for Jewish-Christians of Jerusalem (principles of almsgiving)                                                                 | II Corinthians  
Frank, pp. 66-71, 76, 79, 88 and 89. |
| 11/19      | Letter to the Romans                                                  | - Retrace Paul’s life from II Corinthians to his martyrdom in Rome, following Jerome Murphy O’ Connor’s position regarding Paul as the actual author of II Timothy  
- Historic background of Romans  
- Selective passages re themes not yet treated in previous letters  
- Role of Jesus in salvation (his solidarity with us)  
- Pre-destination in Paul  
- Grace  
- Love and freedom  
- Gnostic abuse of freedom  
- Law of reason  
- Relation of Christ to the Law  
- Structure of living church                                                                 | Romans  
Frank, pp. 76, 77, 79, 109-130 |
| 12/3       | Paul’s Prayer Life                                                    | Damascus experience (conversion and call)  
Changed Paul’s concept of God  
His prayer is trinitarian  
Role of Holy Spirit enables prayer                                                                 | Frank, pp. 90-98 |
effects (fruits of Holy Spirit) prayer must be constant
Paul’s prayer moods
Relation of prayer to his ministry
Letters as expressions of prayer
The “Confession” in 2 Cor 1:3-11
“Boasts” of his trials theologian of hope
Paul’s prayer is Christ-centered (sharing in his suffering and experiencing the power of his resurrection)

<table>
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<th>12/10 Letter to the Ephesians</th>
<th>Background</th>
<th>Ephesians Frank, pp. 101-108</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jesus</td>
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<td>New creation Divinization of humanity Image of God and human kind God’s plan (wisdom)</td>
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<td>Church as Body of Christ Her role and mission Our ‘true selves’ in Christ Eucharist Growth in Christ</td>
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<td>Cosmic dominion of Christ Future and present eschatology Church as Christ’s spouse (marriage)</td>
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BIBLIOGRAPHY:

and *According To Paul* (New York: Pauline Press, 1993)
and *Paul, His Story*, 2004 (Oxford University Press).
N.T. Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*, 2009 (Fortress Press).
and *Paul And The Faithfulness Of God*, 2013 (Fortress Press).