YSD/YMD 5303 Revelation and Faith  
Fr. C.J.T. Talar  
O: 713 686 4345 X244  
talarc@stthom.edu

Course Description: This course is a theological exploration of God’s divine self-communication to humankind by the power of the Holy Spirit and humankind’s graced response to that revelation in the life of faith. The course will begin with a reflection on the nature of human experience as the locus of this encounter between God and humankind. We shall explore the way in which one divine revelation is mediated through Scripture and Tradition and given normative expression in dogma and doctrine. The respective roles of the magisterium, theologians and sensus fidelium in the faithful transmission and reception of the Catholic faith will be explored at length.

Course Outline:

1. The Nature of Theology  
   READ Aidan Nichols, The Shape of Catholic Theology, chaps. 1 & 2

2. The Role of Philosophy in Theology  
   READ Nichols chaps. 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7  
   READ Fides et Ratio chaps. 4, 5 & 6

3. Scripture as a Source in Theology  
   (a) Canonicity, Inspiration and Inerrancy  
   READ Nichols, chaps. 8, 9 & 10

4. Revelation:  
   (a) General Revelation  
   READ Gula chapt. 1  
   (b) Special Revelation

Exam #1

   (c) Vatican II  
   READ Dei Verbum  
   READ Witherup parts I through IV

5. Tradition as a Source in Theology  
   (a) The Nature of Tradition  
   Video: “Tradition”  
   READ Nichols chapt. 13
(b) *Lex orandi, lex credendi*. Liturgy
READ Nichols, chapt. 14
(c) The Conciliar Contribution
READ Nichols, chapt. 15
(d) The Sense of the Faithful
READ Nichols, chapt. 16
(e) Tradition and Pastoral Practice
READ Gula chapt. 6

6. Aids to Discernment in Theology
   (a) Experience
   READ Nichols, chapt. 17
   (b) The Magisterium
   READ Nichols, chapt. 18 and Francis A. Sullivan, *Creative Fidelity*, chapt. 1 & 8 (library reserve)

7. Theologies of Christian Faith
   READ *Lumen Fidei*

Exam #3

**Course Evaluation:** Two exams, each 1/3 of final grade
   Course paper (2 options)
Option A (MDiv) Choose one of the books from the list of “Project Books” and write a 7-9 page essay (summarizing the basic point or overall thrust of the book; (b) relating its material to material we’ve covered in the course. While you may want to do additional research (book reviews, secondary articles discussing the author’s work, other writers on the same topic, etc.), the point of the exercise is for you to think about what the book’s author is presenting in light of the overall themes of revelation/faith. Obviously, you’ll need to be selective about what you choose to relate to it. What I am looking for is evidence that you have understood what the author is up to in the book, and can make connections between that and selected themes from what we’ve studied. This is less an exercise in researching what other people have to say about an author/topic and more one of exhibiting your appropriation of course material and ability to think theologically.

Option B: STB: Research paper of 15 pages on a topic relevant to the course. Topic to be approved by the instructor.

**Course texts:**
   *Fides et Ratio*
   *Dei Verbum*. The Documents of Vatican II
   *Lumen Fidei*
Project Books: (copies on closed library reserve for 4 weeks; circulate after that)


Some Additional Bibliography

John Ballie, *The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought* (1956)
Owen Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman* (1957)
Aidan Nichols, *From Newman to Congar* (1990)
-----, *Rethinking Fundamental Theology* (2011)