And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. (John 17:3)

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter 1:3–4)

Catalogue description
This course will explore the relation of the philosophical notions of God to the God of revelation with particular consideration of the predicament of theology in the face of atheism. The course will explore God’s self-revelation in the Old and New Testament as well as the economic and immanent Trinity. The course will trace the development of Trinitarian theology and provide an evaluation of contemporary questions about the Trinity. Prerequisite: Revelation and Faith.

This section of Doctrine of God
This section will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30 am to 9:45 am in Room 204 of the Nold Building.

In this iteration of Doctrine of God we will directly follow St. Thomas Aquinas’s presentation of this same material in the Summa theologiae. Supplemental lectures will highlight key doctrinal developments, especially from the early Councils, and will address the challenges of Islam and contemporary atheism.

Required materials
All students will need the Bible, the pars prima of the Summa theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas, and Remi Brague’s On the God of the Christians (and one or two others), (published by St. Augustine’s Press, 2013). Only real books, not electronic editions, are acceptable in class. Students will also need materials for taking notes by hand, in a notebook or binder. (Either or both of these requirements will be waived if necessary for the accommodation of a certified disability.)
Course requirements and grading

Each student taking the course for credit will take three objective (short answer) exams, as indicated on the calendar below. Note that the third exam will include questions about Remi Brague’s *The God of the Christians*, a book students will be expected to have read for Exam 3 (taken during Finals week).

All students will submit their written course notes for grading. These must include detailed notes on all the required readings from the *Summa theologiae* and on the lectures and classroom discussions. Please note that the notes should all be legible and bound together.

Students in the MA/STB program will, in addition, read one of the following books and write an elegant and literate letter to the professor discussing the author’s most important point about God. Letters must be 400 to 500 words in length, must immediately focus on the most theologically important point in the book — no small talk! — and must conclude with a 1-sentence recommendation saying for whom, if anyone, the book would be appropriate. It must be apparent from the letter that the student has actually read and spent time thinking about the book, so as to discern what, of all that the author says about God, is most important. The letter is due no later than October 31. At the professor’s discretion, an oral exam on the book may also be required during November — in case it is unclear whether a student really read and pondered the book!

Book choices:

1. Caryll Houselander, *The Reed of God*
2. Frederick Faber, Book 2 (“Difficulties of Created Love”) in *The Creator and the Creature*
3. Anselm Moynihan, *The Presence of God*

Grades for the course will be calculated differently for students in different degree programs.

Students in the MAPS and MDiv programs will be graded on their three exams (20% each) and on their written notes (40%).

Students in the MA and STB programs will be graded on their three exams (20% each), on their written notes (20%), and on their letter to the professor (20%).
Prohibitions

No electronic or recording devices may be used in class at any time, except as accommodations to disabilities.

Class Preparation

For each class, students are required to prepare detailed notes on the *Summa theologiae* readings indicated in the course calendar, below.

A separate handout of brief meditative readings will be distributed with this syllabus. These brief readings are meant to assist and enrich the study of the course material. These “meditations” may be covered on the course exams.

Course calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 8/22</td>
<td>Introduction and review of syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 8/24</td>
<td>ST Ia, q. 1 (Sacred doctrine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 8/29</td>
<td>ST Ia, q. 2 (God’s existence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 8/31</td>
<td>ST Ia, q. 3 (God’s simplicity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 9/5</td>
<td><em>(Labor Day — no class)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 9/7</td>
<td>ST Ia, q. 4 (God’s perfection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 9/12</td>
<td>ST Ia, qq. 5–6 (Good in general; God’s goodness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 9/14</td>
<td>ST Ia, qq. 7–8 (God’s infinity; God’s omnipresence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 9/19</td>
<td>ST Ia, qq. 9–11 (God’s immutability; God’s eternity; God’s unity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 9/21</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 9/26</td>
<td>ST Ia, q. 12–13 (How God is known by us, and God’s names)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 9/28</td>
<td>ST Ia, q. 14 and q. 18 (God’s knowledge; God’s life)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Monday, 10/3</em></td>
<td><em>(Shepherd’s Cup — no class)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 10/5</td>
<td>ST Ia, qq. 19–21 (God’s will, love, justice, and mercy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Monday, 10/10**  
*(Columbus Day / Fall Break — no class)*

**Wednesday, 10/12**  
ST Ia, q. q. 103 – 105 (God’s government)

**Monday, 10/17**  
ST Ia, q. 22 (Providence)

**Wednesday, 10/19**  
ST Ia, q. 23–24 (Predestination and the Book of Life)

**Monday, 10/24**  
ST Ia, q. 25 (God’s power)

**Wednesday, 10/26**  
ST Ia, q. 26 (God’s beatitude)

**Monday, 10/31**  
**Exam 2**

**Wednesday, 11/2**  
ST Ia, q. q. 27–28 (Processions and Relations)

**Monday, 11/7**  
ST Ia, q. q. 29–31 (Divine Persons)

**Wednesday, 11/9**  
ST Ia, q. q. 32–33 (Knowledge of the Divine Persons, God the Father)

**Monday, 11/14**  
ST Ia, q. q. 34–35 (God the Son)

**Wednesday, 11/16**  
ST Ia, q. q. 36–38 (God the Holy Spirit)

**Monday, 11/21**  
ST Ia, q. q. 39–41 (Trinitarian Persons, Relations, and Notions)

**Wednesday, 11/23**  
(Thanksgiving Break – no class)

**Monday, 11/28**  
Islam: The Most Successful Heresy (no prep reading)

**Wednesday, 11/30**  
ST Ia, q. q. 42–43 (Divine Likeness, Divine Missions)

**Monday, 12/5**  
Exam Week begins — final exam (**Exam 3**) date TBA

**Bibliography**


Brague, Rémi. *On the God of the Christians (and on One or Two Others)*. Trans. Paul Seaton. South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s, 2013.


