Redemptor Hominis JP2 5300
Dr. John Corrigan
Term: Fall 2025

Course Description:

A study of the life and thought of Pope St. John Paul II through a consideration of his autobiographical writings and various brief selections from his main works. The convergence of his artistic, philosophical, theological, spiritual and pastoral gifts will lead to a focus upon *Redemptor Hominis*, the first encyclical and a pivotal work in his life. This course serves as an introduction to John Paul II studies.

Chief outcomes – at the end of the course the student should be able:

- To master the timeline of key events and people in the life of John Paul II.
- To identify and explain the importance of Poland in John Paul II's life and times
- To appreciate the role of poetry and drama in the life and work of Karol Wojtyla/John Paul II and to explicate some examples of his work
- To explain the role and influence of classical, Thomistic and modern themes and methods in the philosophy of Karol Wojtyla/John Paul II
- To outline and define various aspects of the theological work of John Paul II such as faith, Trinity and *communio*, the three-fold offices of Christ, Mary and the Church, and the universal call to holiness
- To define Christian humanism and articulate the features of the human person
- To identify and explain the importance of priesthood in John Paul II's life
- To be able to delineate the structure and identify the themes of *Redemptor Hominis*
- To list and explain key aspects of the legacy of St. John Paul II

Course Requirements / Grading

Assignment	Value
Journal	20%
Discussion board	30%
Presentations	20%
Final Paper	30%

*Course and Syllabus developed by Dr. John Hittinger, adapted by Dr. John Corrigan

Course Journal (20%)

The student must write a Journal entry 8 times during the semester – except where stated, as in weeks 5 and 6, the Journal will be based on the "Discovering the human Person" by Stanisław Grygiel. Each week you will find some useful questions to help you make your way through Grygiel's book or through other texts you are reading. At the end of the semester, you may find these helpful for your paper.

Discussion board (30%)

After completing the week's readings, podcasts and videos, please respond to a prompt provided for discussion. Provide a 350-500 word response expressing your informed judgment and opinion about the matter. In addition, please comment on the post of at least two other students. Aim for your response to be constructive and engaging. You may disagree with each other, and challenge each other; but civility must be observed at all times. A post on the discussion board should be done, if possible, by Friday of the module week.

Paper (30%)

Drawing on the books you have studied this semester, focus on a topic or theme in the encyclical *Redeemer of Man.* You should focus on one section of the encyclical – by explaining his key ideas and propositions elaborate on the teaching of John Paul II and its importance for the Church and the world. The paper should be 10-15 pages double-spaced, 12 point, 1 inch margins. Use the *University of Chicago Style* or the *Turabian style book*.

Presentations (20%)

The student will be asked to make a brief presentation of 5-10 minutes two times during the semester. One presentation will be on an assigned poem by Karol Wojtyla; the other presentation will be on some passages from Crossing the Threshold of Hope. Each presentation should be written out and posted in Blackboard and shared during the weekly zoom session.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected and required to conform to the highest standards of academic honesty, truthfulness, and integrity in taking exams. They are expected to hand in their own work and this alone. Plagiarism in the case of a paper will result in a grade of zero. Plagiarism will be understood as presenting the words of another as one's own and without attributing them to their author. Close paraphrasing of another's ideas and formulations without attribution can approach plagiarism. When in doubt, students should always explicitly cite the source of the idea or formulation.

Accommodations

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the University of St. Thomas will provide academic accommodations to ensure access for students with disabilities.

Students with disabilities who require accommodations for this class, must register with the Office of Access & Disability Services (ADS) and provide documentation of a disability to determine what accommodations are most appropriate. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and disability accommodations are not provided until a Course Accessibility Letter has been provided to the instructor. For questions regarding

academic accommodations and accessibility, please contact the Office of Access and Disability Services by email at ACCESS@STTHOM.EDU, or visit the ADS website at STTHOM.EDU/ACCESS.

Texts for course:

George Weigel, Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II. Update edition. New York: Harper Perennial, 2020.

Stanisław Grygiel, Discovering the Human Person: In Conversation with John Paul II, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014). [ISBN: 978-0-8028-7154-1] [Grygiel and his wife were personal friends of Pope St. John Paul II.]

Karol Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction. New York: Seabury Press, 1979.

John Paul II, Gift and Mystery: On the Fiftieth Anniversary of My Priestly Ordination Memories New York: Doubleday Image, 1996.

John Paul II and Vittorio Messori, Crossing the Threshold of Hope. New York: Knopf, 1994.

Karol Wojtyla, The Place Within: The Poetry of Pope John Paul II. Translated by Jerzy Peterkiewicz. New York: Random House, 1994.

Kenneth Schmitz, At the Center of the Human Drama: The Philosophical Anthropology of Karol Wojtyla/Pope John Paul II, Michael J. McGivney Lectures. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1993)

Pope Paul VI, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: Gaudium et spes. Boston: St Paul Books and Media, 1965

On-line sources:

John Paul II, Redemptor hominis, "Redeemer of Man." Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1979. VATICAN WEBSITE Grzegorz Hołub (Ed.)

Karol Wojtyła (Kraków: Ignatianum, 2019). This is the introduction to Wojtyła and his philosophy. Only available in Poland but it is found blackboard & on line.

Selections from Joseph Ratzinger, (Benedict XVI), John Paul II: My Beloved Predecessor. Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2007. [Out of Print]