

Introduction to Theology & Religious Studies

"Refugees La Sagrada Familia"
by Kelly Latimore



TRS 1020

This course introduces students to the fundamental questions, sources, and content of the Christian theological tradition, with special attention to Catholic Christianity, and its significance for Christian faith and life in the world today. It also introduces students to theories and methods in the academic study of religion, including critical approaches to religion at the intersection of politics, race, gender, class, sexuality, and dis/ability.

Prof: axel marc oaks takacs (dr takacs)

1020 04
MW 1:50-3:15 PM
Bishop Kellenberg Hall, K001

about this land

Molloy University is located on the ancestral lands of the Munsee Lenape, indigenous peoples of Turtle Island/North America)

about this instructor

dr takacs is a scholar of classical & post-classical islamic intellectual & poetic traditions, interreligious studies, and a catholic comparative theologian



by Owisokon Lahache,
a practicing Iroquois artist (Mohawk, Turtle Clan)

How do I contact dr takacs?

email
atakacs@molloy.edu

office
Siena 101 C

office hours
by appointment

via zoom
or
in-person

THEOLOGY
faith seeking understanding
critical reflection on praxis in the light of faith
the human response to God

IMAGINATION
exercising the imagination to engage central questions about life's meaning and purpose

REASON
using our intellect and reason to uncover the intelligibility of the universe

AFFECT
learning from our embodied experiences, emotional responses, and psychological states

CONTEXT
recognizing that while we are all human, our experiences of the world are different



The oldest icon (6th c. CE) of *Christ Pantocrator (Christ All-Powerful)* - St. Catherine's Monastery, Sinai Peninsula, Egypt

Literacy, Intelligence, and Proficiency

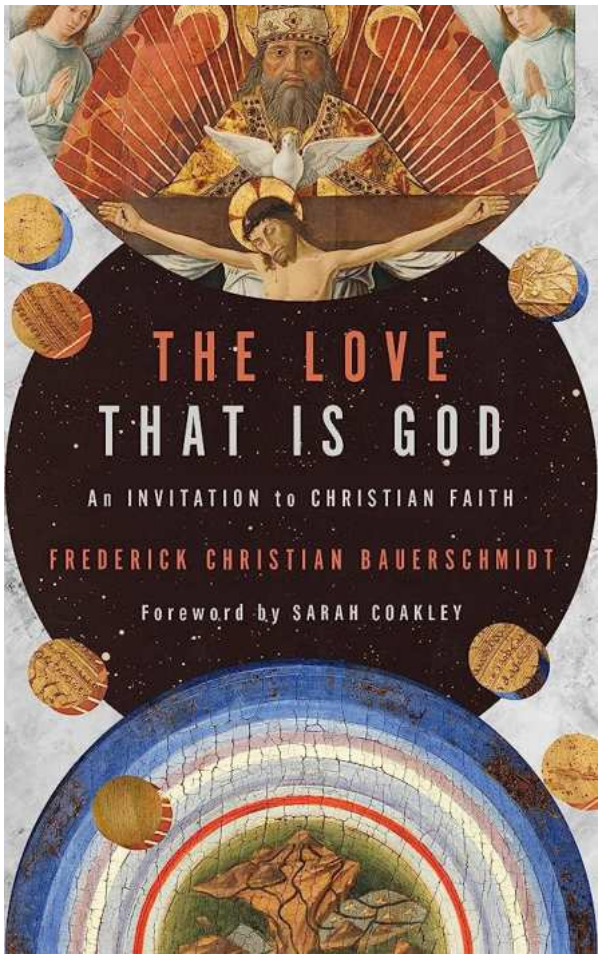
This class is primarily about Christian theology. However, we will engage in interreligious and comparative theology to broaden our horizon of knowledge.

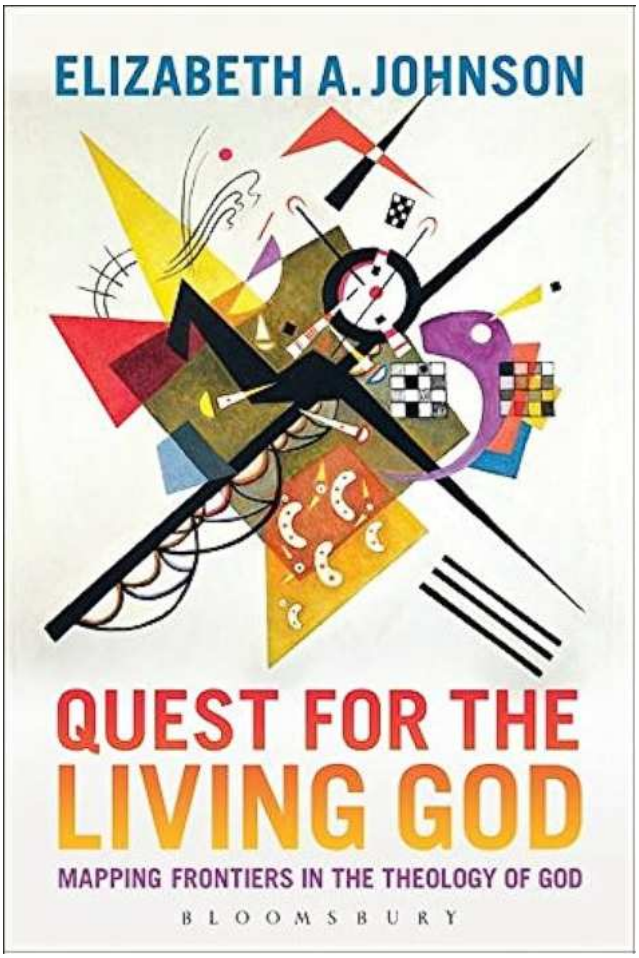
Interreligious Literacy provides students with the basic building blocks for understanding inter- and intra-religious **diversity**. It enables us to identify and explain various religious and interreligious histories, contexts, traditions, theologies, practices, ethics, and values. It **comprehends the present in light of the past**.

Interreligious intelligence is the intellectual, social, and imaginative capacity to apply interreligious literacy to various contexts in one's future. It enables us to employ interreligious knowledge in making judgments about the best course of action in any given diverse context. It is not neutral but grounded in **justice-oriented critical thinking** that seeks to construct a world in which religious pluralism and diversity is affirmed. It **imagines a future yet unknown**.

Interreligious proficiency is the practice of executing those judgments in the real world. Students develop **habits of mind**, **inquiry**, and **action** that shape how they relate to self and others in the context of a religiously diverse world. It is the **embodied practice** of interreligious intelligence and **constructs a future to be known.**

required books







There are two required books. Not only will you have assigned readings from these books, but you will need them for in-class discussion, online responses, and written assessments. So it they are very **much required.**

The Love That is God: An Invitation to Christian Faith, by Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt (Eerdmans Publishing, 2020)

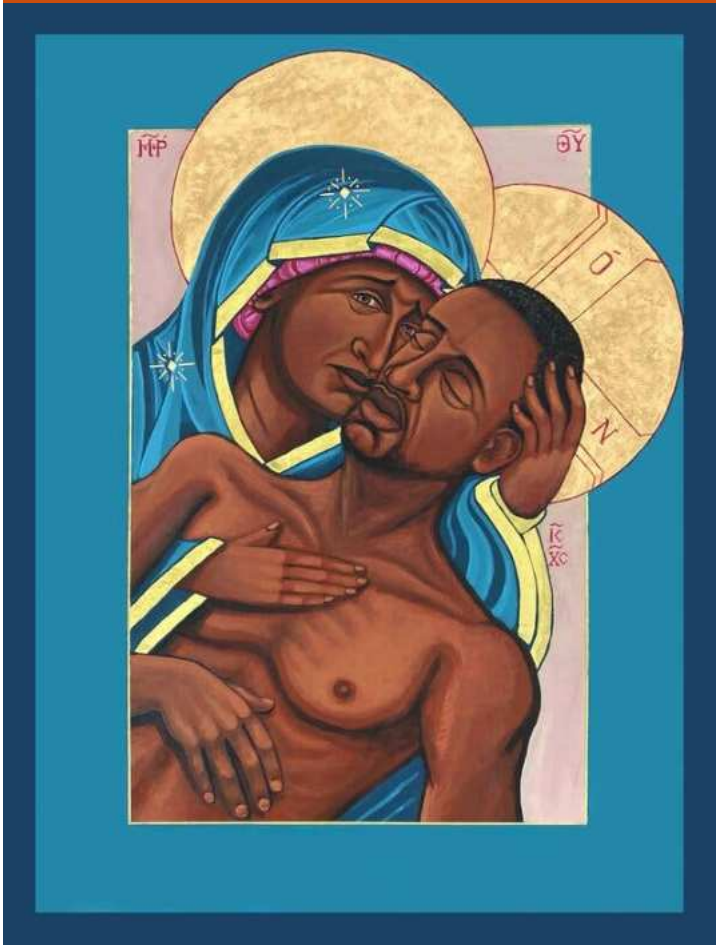
Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God, by Elizabeth Johnson (Bloomsbury, 2011)

The rest of the readings will be available as PDFs on Canvas. If you are on a budget and absolutely cannot purchase these, email me asap.

What are we doing?

- Class Attendance and Participation (15%)
- Pre-Class Discussion Posts (10%)
- Post-Class Mini Quizzes (15%)
- Interview and Storytelling Project (15%)
- Module Tests (15%)
- Creative Art Assignment (15%)
- Final Exam Questions (15%)

"Mama" (2020),
a painting by iconographer Kelly Latimore,
based on one of George Floyd's last words.



What are the goals?

The student will be able to:

- Identify the major concepts and themes of Christian theology;
  - God: Who or What is God?
  - Christ: Why did God become human?
  - Humanity: What does it mean to be human?
- Recognize the differences between the fields of theology and religious studies;
- Investigate religious and theological concepts within cultural and historical contexts, especially as they relate to embodiment (race, gender, sexuality, etc.) and materiality;
- Analyze the relationship between religious traditions and issues of social justice.
- Compare theological questions across religious traditions

Program Learning Outcomes - Students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Engage the search for meaning as encountered in human religious experience, and as examined in the disciplines of theology and religious studies;
- Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources from a variety of religious traditions, in their socio-historical contexts;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the central tenets of Christian theology, the history of the development of doctrine, and the interaction of theology and culture.



General Education Learning Outcomes - Students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Respect and critically consider diverse viewpoints;
- Integrate knowledge across disciplines;
- Use diverse sources of evidence to support an idea or argument.

Humanities courses are not merely about names, places, and dates, they are about **critical thinking and the conceptualization of ideas**. Most importantly, humanities courses train an individual to **entertain an idea other than one's own**. They exercise the **imagination** in an attempt to enter into the ways in which **various human cultures** from different times and places have understood **what it means to be human**. Additionally, humanities classes explore questions of **power, inequality, inequity, justice, truth, beauty, goodness, and human flourishing**.

late policy

if you want feedback, then assignments need to be submitted w/in 24 hours of due date. no penalty up to 10 days late, after which highest possible grade is 70%

be a luddite

cell phones prohibited
laptops prohibited
take notes by hand
hold a physical book
gaze into the eyes of your neighbor
technology will always be with us, let's take a break from it in this classroom (aside from digital images, video, podcasts, Online Modules, etc.)

DSS

Molloy University has a commitment to providing reasonable accommodations for any student with a documented disability or chronic illness. Students who may need accommodations in order to fully participate in this class are urged to contact The Center for Access and Disability at access@molloy.edu. You may also go to Casey 017 or call 516-323-3316.

just don't cheat

Cheating of any kind, but plagiarism in particular, destroys trust, disrespects the learning process, and mocks genuine intellectual engagement. The Theology and Religious Studies Department considers all cheating and plagiarism serious breaches of academic integrity, including use of ChatGPT and other AI text-generation systems.

If you cheat, you will be required to resubmit the work for 70% credit. In addition, you will write a 4-page reflective essay explaining why you cheated, what you could have done instead, and what strategies you will employ in the future to choose not to cheat.

Do you feel the need to cheat?



email me instead and let's work together to figure out why!

How many of you can't even? I am stressed, you are stressed. *The world doesn't have to be this way!* Think of this classroom as imagining a future free of anxiety while preparing you for the reality that the world remains colonized by a hyper-competitive work-work-work mentality.

AI

There has been a significant increase in the popularity and availability of a variety of generative artificial intelligence (AI). These tools are shaping the future of work, research, and technology. Used in the wrong way, they stand in conflict with academic integrity guidelines at Molloy University. To maintain a culture of integrity and respect, these generative AI tools should not be used in the completion of course assignments unless a faculty member for a given course specifically authorizes their use. Faculty use Turnitin.com to monitor unauthorized use of AI tools (Please refer to the Student Handbook for additional information.).

grading scale

A	93-100	C	< 78
A-	< 93	C-	< 73
B+	< 90	D+	< 70
B	< 88	D	< 67
B-	< 83	F	< 60
C+	< 80		

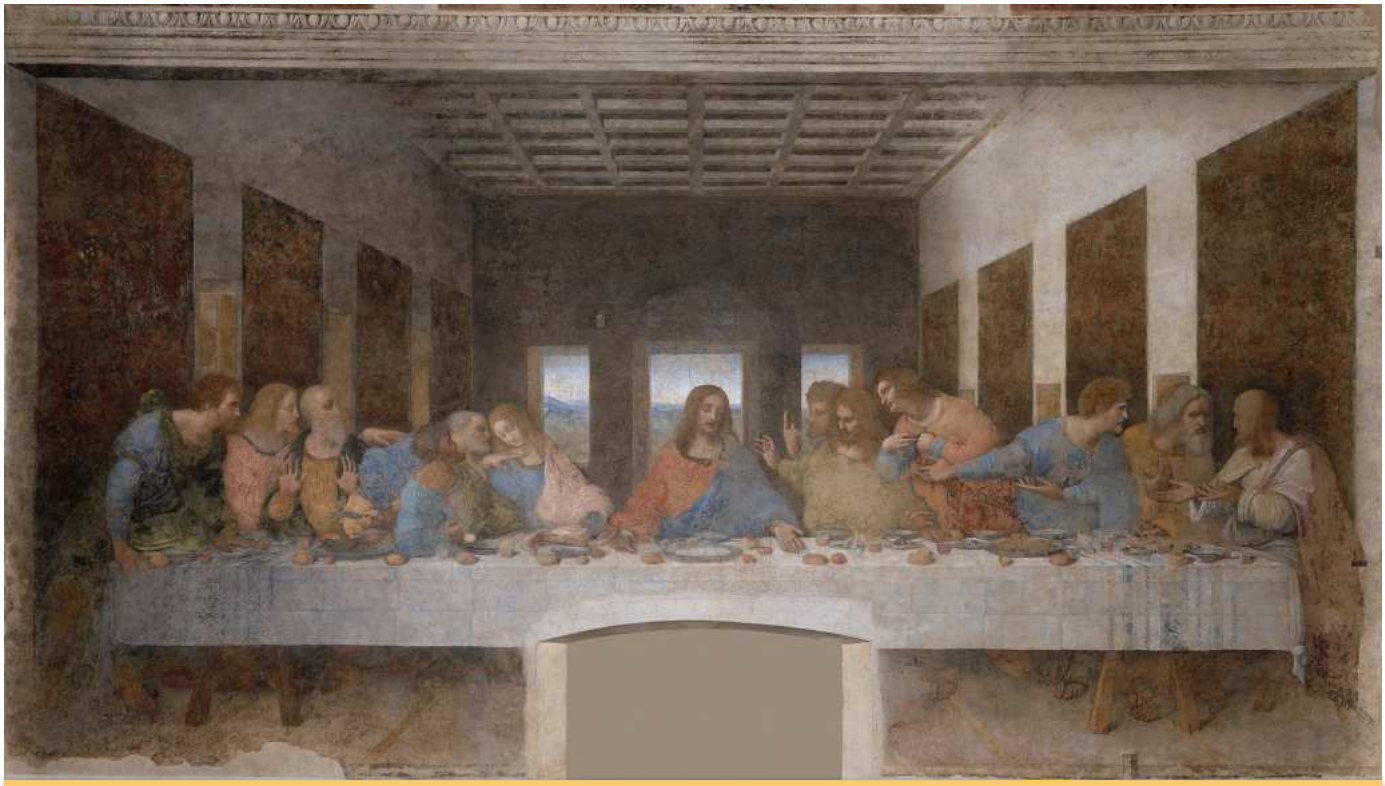
health & wellness

Molloy University is committed to maintaining a healthy environment. Therefore, students are urged to monitor the website and all health and safety updates for any health-related changes in campus procedures. If you suspect contracting a contagious disease you are encouraged to use good judgment, monitor your symptoms, consult a medical professional, and remain home if needed. At the present time, masks are not required while on campus. However, we respect individual preferences and encourage members of the community to support the individual right to determine their need to wear a face covering. If you have health questions or concerns the Student Health Services can be reached by email at healthservices@molloy.edu or by phone at 516-323-3467. The Student Personal Counseling Center (SPCC) is a confidential and free service available to all currently enrolled Molloy University students. If you are interested in scheduling an appointment, please call 516-323-3484 Monday-Friday, scan the adjacent QR code using the camera on your phone, or walk in to request a time and day to meet.

To schedule an appointment with the Student Personal Counseling Center (SPCC) scan QR Code

attendance

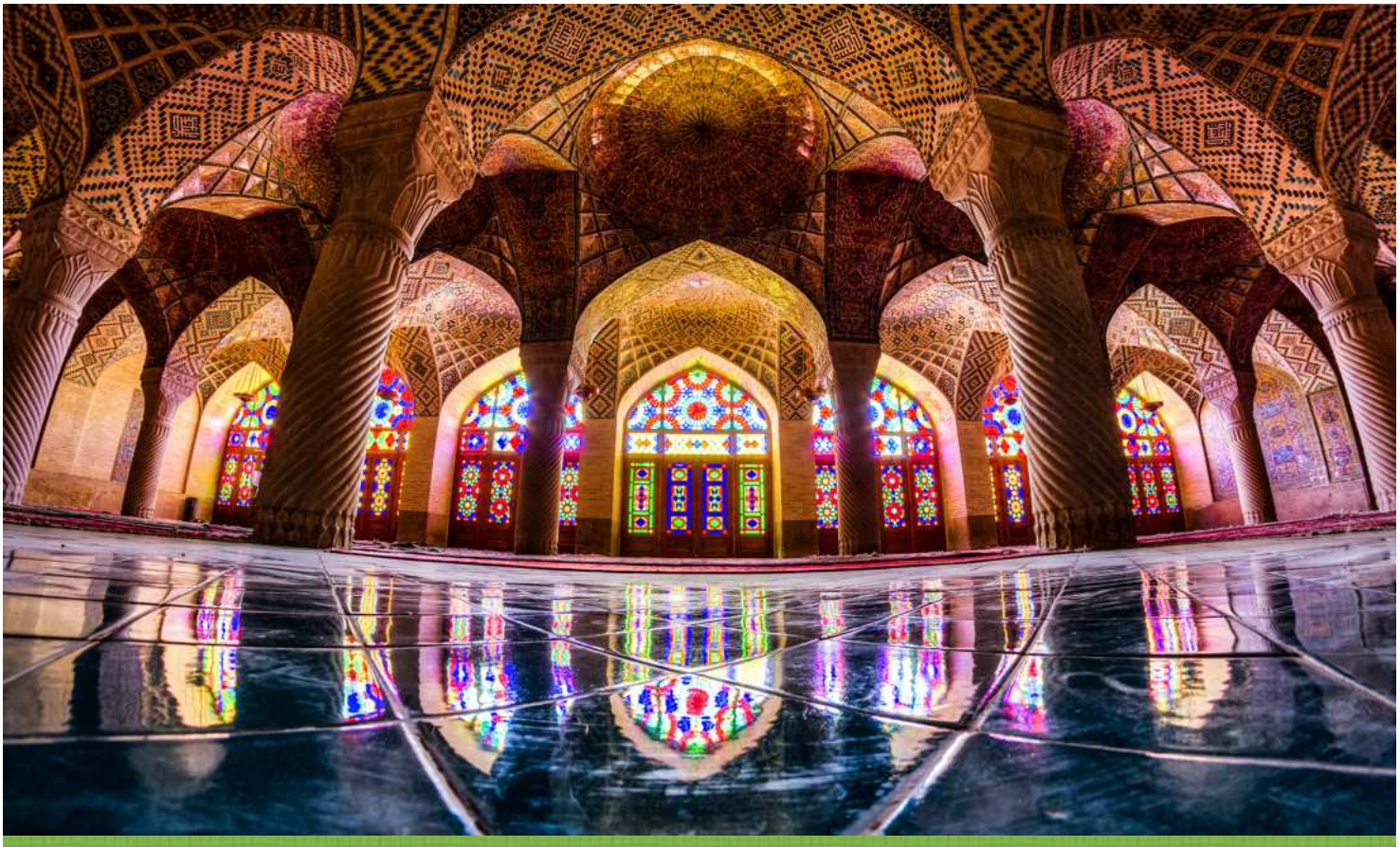
It is the accepted practice at Molloy University that faculty take attendance in all courses. Students should notify faculty if an absence is necessary as the result of a serious situation. **Failure to attend class for two (2) consecutive weeks at any point in the semester, without notification of extenuating circumstances, will result in an administrative withdrawal from the course.** In the case of an online or hybrid course, attendance is considered similarly important. Therefore, failure to participate in academic activities in any given week is considered an absence. Examples of participation in academic activities representing attendance would be participation in a class chat or discussion board on an academic topic, submissions of a required assignment, digital interaction with the professor on an academic topic, and completion of a quiz or exam. Administrative withdrawal results in removal from the course with a grade of "WA" or WF" determined by the point in the term and the academic performance. Students should consult the University catalog for complete details regarding withdrawals and the potential financial implications of a withdrawal.



"The Last Supper," by Leonardo da Vinci, late 1490s mural

recording

As a student enrolled in courses offered by Molloy University, Rockville Centre, New York, I understand that classes may sometimes be audio or digitally captured for instructional purposes. THESE RECORDINGS ARE INTENDED ONLY FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES AND WILL BE USED ONLY BY THE FACULTY AND STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE COURSE. PLEASE NOTIFY YOUR INSTRUCTOR BY EMAIL IF YOU DO NOT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATION IN A DIGITAL RECORDING OF YOUR COURSE. If no student elects to withhold his/her consent prior to **9/11/23**, digital recording of the class may begin on **9/11/23**. Any student who has not contacted the professor prior to that date will be deemed to have consented to the recording. You may notify your professor by email at any time if you choose to revoke your consent.



Nasir-i Milk Mosque, Shiraz, Iran

inclusive learning environment

“Don’t talk about money, religion, or politics.”

In humanities classes we often talk about all these things, in addition to race, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality, in various ways. That being the case, in this course all viewpoints are welcomed from all students, no matter your race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, country of origin, native language, immigration status, political party, or socioeconomic status.

However, as we’ll learn, our reception, perception, and conception of the world are all shaped by our experiences, histories, and identities. How a Muslim, heterosexual woman of color experiences and interprets the world is different from how a Christian, queer Asian man experiences and interprets the world, both of which are different from how an atheist, heterosexual white man experiences and interprets the world.

An inclusive learning environment does not only mean being open to challenges from other viewpoints, being receptive to critique, and being civil in our discussion; it also means recognizing that some positions may more negatively impact one community over another in a disproportionate way.

A good first step is always to challenge ideas and positions rather than persons. However, it also means recognizing that some ideas and positions are inextricably bound to the embodied experiences of persons.

Discussion, debate, and conversation are messy; but we’ll all deal with its messiness together, humbly and with compassionate understanding.

We must recognize that no one is perfect and we all make mistakes that may offend someone when discussing religion, politics, and culture—even your professor!

But as a learning community, this is a space for growing and not for shaming or shutting people down.

inclusive learning environment

Adapted from Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning

- Allow everyone a chance to speak
- Listen respectfully and actively
- Criticize ideas, not individuals
- Commit to learning, not debating
- Avoid blame, speculation, inflammatory language
- Avoid assumptions about others, especially based on their perceived social group
- Be careful about putting other participants on the spot. *Do not demand that others speak for a group that you perceive them to represent*.

- Some sample statements:
    - It seems like what you're saying is…
    - "I wonder if…
    - "I think that…"
    - "How did you come to that position…"
    - "Given your position, it follows that…Is that what you intended?"
    - "I don't get it. Can you help me understand what you're saying…"

- Be comfortable with silence, quiet reflection
- Do not interrupt or engage in private conversations while others are speaking
- Raise your hand
- What is shared in the classroom or small-group discussion is confidential. Trust is key. Keep confidential any personal information that comes up in the conversation.

Listening

- Listen carefully and respectfully, without interrupting.
- Be aware that tone and body language are powerful communicators. Show respectful listening by facing and looking at the speaker, making eye contact, staying quiet, nodding, etc.

inclusive learning environment

Speaking

- Share briefly from your own experiences.
- Use "I" statements to state your views.
- Build on others' comments. Acknowledge them, even if you disagree.
- Be careful not to generalize about people and/or experiences.

Be Courageous

- If you think something is missing from the conversation, do not wait for someone else to say it; say it yourself.
- If you find another's statement to be problematic, do speak up.
- Try not to silence yourself out of concern for what others will think about what you say.



A painting by Hassan Massoudy of a phrase by Khalil Gibran which says:
"Will my heart become a tree laden heavily with fruit that I can pick and give

contacting the professor

My preferred communication method is via Canvas's messaging/email system. I will respond to students' messages sent M-F within 24 hours. I will respond to students' messages sent on the weekends within 48 hours. I will send regular email updates via Canvas Announcement system.

UNDOCUALLY

DIVERSE
INCLUSIVE
ACCEPTING
WELCOMING
SAFE SPACE
FOR EVERYONE



"Another World IS Possible," by Ricardo Levins Morales

Whatever your race, (ir)religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, trauma-informed knowledge and experience, neurology, country of origin, native language, immigration status, English-speaking capacities, socioeconomic status, dis/abilities—you, your views, your knowledge, and your experiences are valued and affirmed.

-alternative assignments and assessments are always possible-



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Assignment and Assessment Details

Class Attendance, Participation, and Engagement

This is pretty straightforward. This class meets 25 times. If you show up to all the classes, you get 25/31 points; that's an **80.6% or low B-** (weighted at 20% of your total grade).

Every class you miss, you lose a point. Excused absences require documentation.

Excused absences:

- sickness or surgery
- mental health issues
- disability accommodation
- religious observances
- pregnancy-related events
- childcare responsibilities
- family emergencies (caregiving, funerals, etc.)
- volunteering to register voters or volunteering for a political campaign or ballot issue initiative (you are allowed one absence on this account)
- voting in local, state, or national elections, or volunteering to assist others to vote

This class also requires active engagement and participation. The more you participate, the closer to that 31/31 you will get.

How to do this?

1. **Come to class with three questions or comments from the readings.** Just write down THREE points about the reading that intrigued you, puzzled you, illuminated you, confused you, etc. **DO THIS! I will ask you to share often.**
2. When we break into **small-group discussion**, **participate**.
3. Work on your **active listening skills** (eye contact and/or nodding and/or writing to take notes and/or doodling on a paper—NOT emailing, NOT social media-ing, etc.)
4. **IMPORTANT:** Students attending class **without the book** from which the assigned reading was taken will be considered **ABSENT**.
5. Raise your hand and ask a question whenever you want about anything. This is open season on "what the hell does this mean" and "I've always wondered why" type of questions.
6. At the end of class, leave a few comments in the open-discussion forum connected to the class. These are titled "Lingering Comments and Questions".

Module Tests

There is no midterm in this class. Instead, you will have a "module test" via Canvas that will require you to demonstrate proficiency with the material we covered in the previous classes.

It will be due on Fridays. There are 7 of these. They are open-notes, open-books. **Your lowest grade will be dropped.**

Fridays: 2/2, 2/16, 2/23, 3/8, 3/29, 4/12, 4/19



The Last Judgment: a fresco by the Italian Renaissance painter Michelangelo covering the whole altar wall of the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City.

Interview and Storytelling Project

This is a group project in which you will partner with one student and record an interview/conversation about your religious, spiritual, ethical, and/or values-based (RSEV) worldview. We will practice some of these conversational exercises in class throughout the semester.

Goals

- to engage in self-reflection about your own values—religious, spiritual, ethical, or otherwise
- to reflect narratively about experiences in the past that have shaped who you are today, and who you want to become in the future
- to imagine a future world and a future you
- to exercise your contemplative listening, speaking, and conversation skills

Details

A. Alone: you will reflect and jot down responses to the following questions. These responses can be bullet-pointed notes, journaling, or detailed paragraphs—whatever works for you. I suggest you set aside distraction-free time to do this. Do your best to disconnect from social media, the internet, and other distractions. Music might help some students, however. Reflect and write in a comfortable position—sitting, laying down, whatever.

1. List as many words as you can to describe who you are. Where did you learn these words about yourself?
2. Growing up, were you raised within a certain religious tradition? If so, what was your experience with that tradition? If not, any reflections as to why? Explain.
3. What other sources of knowledge have you encountered about religion, spirituality, ethics, and values? Do you consider them trustworthy? Explain.
4. What is an experience in your past that brought/brings you joy? Explain.
5. What is an experience in your past that brought/brings you grief? Explain.
6. What text (book, story, etc.) was significantly meaningful to you? Song? Explain.
7. Reflect on a major experience you had that shaped your RSEV worldview today? What is so memorable about that experience and why do you think it impacted you? What lessons do you take from it?
8. What makes you happy?
9. What makes you sad?
10. What are your hopes and dreams for the future?
11. What are your fears? What scares or concerns you about the future?

12. What is an experience in your life that helps us see what concerns you about the world and how we live in it or what you wish could be different? (If this is difficult, you may also just share what you consider to be the most pressing concern in the world)
13. What is an experience in your life that helps us see what has inspired you to believe that the world can be different or exemplified for you how the world should be? (If this is difficult, you may also just share what you consider to be attitudes, spiritual dispositions, or ethical values that are necessary to address the problems of the world)
14. How do you want *to be* in the world? Well into your future, after college and working for two or three decades, maybe you have a family, maybe you don't, etc. How do you want to be described by others? List as many words as you can.
15. How do you want the world *to be*? This is open-ended.

Submit these notes/journaling/responses to Canvas
Due Date: Monday 2/19

B. With your partner: You will meet with your partner to have a conversation about some of these questions. Once again, strive for a distraction-free environment, free of social media, ringing phones, etc. **Bring the notes from Part A above with you**. You are *each* to spend at least 15 minutes talking.

One partner begins to share a response to a question. The partner listens, without interrupting; they are encouraged to take notes about their partner's response. When their partner is done speaking, they may *non-judgmentally* react to their partner's response: affirm, ask followup questions, or briefly share an experience that might overlap with theirs, or is similar to it.

However, this is meant to be "**meaningful conversation**." In conversation, we are often so focused on projecting our opinions and defending our agenda that we fail to hear the voices of others. This tendency is why contemplative conversation and deep listening practices challenge the way we normally engage in conversation. These practices rely on a commitment to self-control and self-awareness, as well as a group-centered rather than self-centered approach. There is no right or wrong, better or worse response or experience. **We will practice this in class, too**.

Proceed to go back and forth until you have each talked for at least 15 minutes. Hopefully, the conversation becomes organic as you smoothly transition to other questions. Again, be sure to take notes. As you converse, you may notice aspects of your RSEV worldview emerging, giving form and structure to something you may have thought was confused, fuzzy, foggy, irrelevant, formless, or even "silly" and "dumb". Take notice of these!

Submit a written or oral reflection on this experience
Due Date: Friday 3/22

Interview and Storytelling Project (continued)

C. Preparing and Recording the 7-to-8-minute (max 10 min!) **Conversation/ Storytelling with your partner**: You are now ready to meet with your partner a second time and record a conversation about your RSEV worldview based on the questions above but in narrative form.

Beforehand, however, **you and your partner need to plan some basic outline (or even script) for the conversation**. From your experiences in Part A and Part B, each of you needs to craft a narrative about your RSEV worldview, a sort of "spiritual autobiography."

Remember, an autobiography is not merely a recollection of memories that are then transposed into words on a page, or responses to all of the above questions. Rather, an autobiography is the *present self writing the past self*. Do your best to give a narrative to your script, tracing the encounters that you think shaped your RSEV worldview based on the responses you gave. You can "authentically fabricate" beyond your memories.

Look back at your relevant past experiences, and make meaning, find value, and discover T/truth in them, even if in the past moment you surely did not reflect on them in this way.

Script: General Outline

I. Introduce Yourselves ("Hi, my name is…I'm a sophomore…etc.")

II. One student gives their RSEV worldview in a loosely narrative form and based on any aspect of the questions above (no matter how you do this, be sure it is obvious who is speaking)

III. The other student can make one or two follow-up inquiries.

IV. The next student gives their RSEV worldview in a loosely narrative form…

V. The other student can make one or two follow-up inquries.

VI. Conclude with any closing thoughts

Submit the recording to Canvas,
along with script or notes you prepared

Due by Friday 4/26

Each of these Parts (A, B, C) will be assignments on Canvas. I will provide any additional details for each part in the assignment and in class.

Pre-Class Discussion Posts

Before every class, each student must submit a discussion post on Canvas that responds to three prompts. You must engage, with citation, the required reading at least once. 4 points = 1 point / question + 1 point for citing

1. What are **two** questions or comments you have from the readings or other assigned material (video, for instance)?
2. What do you consider **two** of the most important points from the readings or other assigned material **and why?**
3. Personally, what piece of information do you find the most challenging or insightful? Or, what piece of information made you rethink a previous assumption about Islam and Muslims? Or, if you consider yourself Christian, what piece of information shaped how you relate to your own faith?

Post-Class Mini-Quizzes

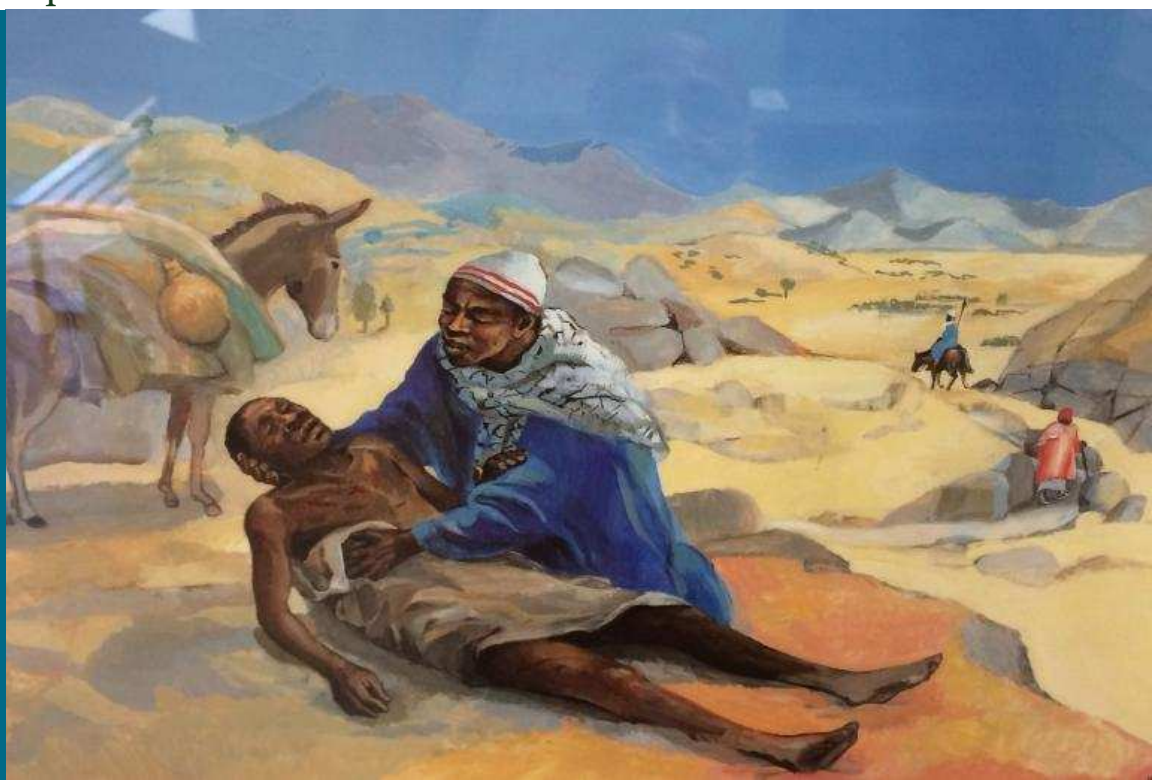
This class meets Mondays and Wednesdays.

After each class, you will be required to complete a post-class quiz. This quiz expects you to demonstrate basic literacy with the readings, lectures, in-class discussions, and other material that was assigned.

It is not meant to trick you. It is open-book, open-notes.

If you do the reading, attend class—you will perform well.

Each post-class quiz will be due at the end of the day after the class meets (i.e., end-of-day Tuesdays and Thursdays). This gives you between 30 and 33 hours to complete the mini quiz.



The Good Samaritan, by Tim Kubacki

Creative Art Assignment: Thematic Reflection

You are to select a reading from the list below and respond, reflect, and/or express it in a creative way and using any media.

- Any of the Chapters from *The Love That Is God*
- Skywoman Falling
- Genesis 1-3
- Augustine's *Confessions* (Selections from Class)
- Ibn ʿArabī's Famous poem from *Tarjumān al-ashwāq*
- Julian of Norwich's *Revelations of Divine Love* (Selections from Class)
- Jon Sobrino's *Jesus the Liberator* (Selections from Class)
- *Fratelli Tutti* (Selections from Class)
- Selections from Catherine of Siena (from Class)
- Selection from "Conclusion" of *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Cone)
- Selection from "Chapter 5: Eucharist, Racism, and Black Bodies," *Enfleshing Freedom* (M. Shawn Copeland)
- Your own Interview and Storytelling Project



"Dorothy Day with Homeless Christ," by Kelly Latimore

Any media?

Yes, any media: photography, drawing, AI-generated images, poem, comic strip, abstract art, Instagram Reel/TikTok video, short story, collage, and so forth.

Assessment ("but, I'm not artistic")

You will not be graded on your artistic ability (aside from an assessment as to whether you actually spent some time *trying*—that is, don't submit a circle, or a square, or a scribble).

Rather, you will be graded on the 250-to-500-word reflection/analysis of your creative work of art. You must include what reading you are responding to, and then draw from it to explain your work of art. You must cite, with quotation marks, from the reading and from one other reading and the content of the class—lectures, discussion, other readings, etc.

You need to demonstrate proficiency and intelligence with the material.

Submit image of art and reflection/analysis via Canvas

Due Date:
Thursday 4/18

Final Exam

The final exam will be a series of short answer questions that require you to engage the course material and cite from the readings. The exam will be on Canvas, and therefore an “at-home” exam that is open notes and open books.



"The Crowning,” by Sara Star
(Mary birthing Jesus)

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Wednesday 1/17 **Course Introduction**	**Before Class:** • **Review the Syllabus** **In Class:** • **Review of Syllabus** • **"This Is Water," David Foster Wallace Commencement Speech (2005, Kenyon College): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCbGM4mqEVw**
Monday 1/22 **What is Theology? I**	**Before Class:** • **Read "What Theology Is and Is Not," by Richard P. McBrien, in *America* (https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/100/what-theology-and-not)** • **Read Chapter 1, "The Task of Theology," up to and including the section entitled 'The Questionable Nature of Theology' (from *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, by Daniel Migliore)** **In Class:** • **Reading and discussing together sections from Hans Urs von Balthasar's "The Place of Theology"**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Wednesday 1/24 **What is Theology? II**	**Before Class:** • **"Study Theology, Even If You Don't Believe in God," in *The Atlantic*** • **Read the rest of Chapter 1, "The Task of Theology": sections 'The Questions of Theology' and 'Methods of Asking Theological Questions' (from *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, by Daniel Migliore)** **In Class:** • **Reading and discussing together sections from Balthasar's "The Place of Theology"**
Monday 1/29 **What is the Study of Religion (SR)? I**	**Before Class:** • **Read Chapter 1, "Religion: Language, Law, and Legacies," *Understanding Religion*, pp. 19-35** • **Listen to E101 of *keeping it 101*: "What the Heck Is Religion, and What the Heck Is This Podcast?"** **In Class:** • **Watch "What is the Difference Between Theology and Religious Studies?" ReligionForBreakfast** • **What are we doing when we point and say "that is religion"?**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Wednesday 1/31 **What is the SR? II**	**Before Class:** • **Read Chapter 7, "Colonialism: Postcolonialism, Orientalism, and Decolonization" in *Understanding Religion*, pp. 163-179** • **Listen to E103 of *keeping it 101*: "Major religions? Minor religions? Must we?" In Class:** **In Class:** • **Case Study: "Before and After the Legalization of Christianity in the Roman Empire"**
Friday 2/2 **Module 1 Test Covering Previous Four Classes**	**Due on Canvas**
Monday 2/5 **Theology: Who or what is God? I**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Chapter 1: Ancient Story, New Chapter," *Quest for the Living God*, by Elizabeth Johnson** **In Class:** • **Background: The Jewishness of Christianity (Creation, Liberation, Prophetic Tradition)** • **Selections from Genesis 1-3; Exodus 6:1-9; Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Amos and Isaiah (Hebrew Bible/ "Old Testament")** • **Comparative: Skywoman Falling (Native American creation story—Great Lakes and Northeastern Woodlands peoples)**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Wednesday 2/7 **Theology: Who or what is God? II**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Chapter 2: Gracious Mystery, Ever Greater, Ever Nearer," *Quest for the Living God*, Johnson** **In Class:** • **Selections from Books I, VII, and X of Augustine's *Confessions*** • **Selections from Pseudo-Dionysius, *Mystical Theology*** • **Comparative: Ibn al-ʿArabī on Divine Majesty and Beauty (Islam)**
Monday 2/12 **Theology: Who or what is God? III**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Chapter 1: God is Love," in *The Love That Is God*, by Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt** **In Class:** • **Selections from the First Letter of John (New Testament) and *Deus Caritas Est* (Pope Benedict XVI)** • **Comparative: Fakhr al-Dīn ʿIrāqī on Love (Islam) and Ibn ʿArabī's Famous poem from *Tarjumān al-ashwāq***
Friday 2/16 **Module 2 Test Covering Previous Three Classes**	**Due on Canvas**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Wednesday 2/14 **SR: Religion is political and politics is religious**	**Before Class:** • **Listen to E104 of *keeping it 101*: "World religions, shall we not?"** • **Read Chapter 18, "Politics: Governance, the Colonial Wound, and the Sacred" in *Understanding Religion*, pp. 163-179** **In Class:** • **What is Civil Religion? Is all religion political and all politics religious?** • **Extra: Contemplative Listening Exercises**
Monday 2/19 NO CLASS, Presidents' Day	
Monday 2/19 **Interview and Storytelling Project: PART A**	**Submit your journaling responses via Canvas**
Wednesday 2/21 **SR: Not everyone reads religious texts. Most *live* religiously.** **"How Christian *are* you?" vs. "*How* are you Christian?"**	**Before Class:** • **Read Chapter 3 "Life: Lived Religion, Syncretism, and Hybridity," in *Understanding Religion*** **In Class:** • **Extra: Contemplative Listening Exercises**
Friday 2/23 **Module 3 Test Covering Previous Two Classes**	**Due on Canvas**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 2/26 **Theology: Why did God Become Human? I** **Christology**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Chapter 2: The love that is God is crucified love," in *The Love that is God* (Bauerschmidt)** **In Class:** • **Selections from New Testament (Romans, John, Philippians)** • **Selections from Augustine's *Enchiridion* VIII** • **Exsultet** • **Selections from Athanasius's *On The Incarnation of God*** • **Selections from Anselm's *Cur deus homo* (Why God Became Human)**
Wednesday 2/28 **Theology: Why did God Become Human? II** **Christology**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Chapter 3: The Crucified God of Compassion," in *Quest for the Living God* (Johnson)** **In Class:** • **Selections from Julian of Norwich's *Revelations of Divine Love*** • **Comparative: Selections from the Metta Sutta (Buddhist)**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 3/4 **Theology: Why did God Become Human? III** **Christology**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Chapter 4: Liberating God of Life," in *Quest for the Living God* (Johnson)** **In Class:** • **Selections from Jon Sobrino's *Jesus the Liberator*** • **Watch Farid Esack's "An Overview of Theology of Liberation in Islam"**
Wednesday 3/6 **SR: Everything is a social construction? Well, *many* things are, at least.**	**Before Class:** • **Listen to E201 of *keeping it 101*: "Race, Gender, & Sexuality: What's Religion Got to Do with 'Em?"** • **Read Chapter 5 "Power: Social Constructionism, Habitus, and Authority," in *Understanding Religion*** **In Class:** • **We are all subjugated by something! How being intentional can disrupt our subjugation ("Religious Account")**
Friday 3/8 **Module 4 Test Covering Previous Four Classes**	**Due Via Canvas**

3/11 – 3/17: SPRING RECESS - NO CLASSES

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 3/18 **Theology: What does it mean to be human? I** **Theological Anthropology**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Chapter 3: We are called to friendship with the risen Jesus," *The Love that is God* (Bauerschmidt)** **In Class:** • **Selections from *Fratelli Tutti*** • **Selections from "Drawing Near to God, Drawing Near to Others," (Islam)**
Wednesday 3/20 **Theology: What does it mean to be human? II** **Theological Anthropology**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Chapter 4: We cannot love God if we do not love each other," *The Love that is God* (Bauerschmidt)** **In Class:** • **Selections from Catherine of Siena (*Catherine of Siena: Passion for the Truth, Compassion for Humanity*, ed. Mary O'Driscoll)**
Friday 3/22 **Interview and Storytelling Project: PART B**	**Submit your written or oral reflection on the experience conversing with your partner - via Canvas**
Monday 3/25 **Theology: What does it mean to be human? III** **Theological Anthropology**	**Before Class:** • **Read "We live our love out from the community created by the Spirit," *The Love that is God* (Bauerschmidt)** **In Class:** • **Selections from "Chapter 4: Turning the Subject," in *Enfleshing Freedom*, by M. Shawn Copeland**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Friday 3/29 **Module 5 Test Covering Previous Three Classes**	**Due on Canvas**
Wednesday 3/27 **SR: Misbegotten Men = Women? Yikes!**	**Before Class:** • **Read Chapter 10 "Gender: Feminism, Sexuality, and Religion," in *Understanding Religion*** • **Listen to E202 of *keeping it 101*: "Intersectionality"** **In Class:** • **Misogyny+Patriarchy from Paul to Aquinas and *everywhere* via Aristotle**
3/28 – 4/1: EASTER RECESS - NO CLASSES	
Wednesday 4/3 **Theology: Gender and Theology**	**Before Class:** • **Listen to E205 of *keeping it 101*: "Gender, Sexuality, & Religion in what's now the U.S."** • **Read "Chapter 5: God Acting Womanish," *Quest for the Living God* (Johnson)** **In Class:** • **Selection from "Cry Beloved Image: Rethinking the Image of God," by Mary Catherine Hilkert, in *In the Embrace of God*** • **Comparative: Selection from *Women's Khutba Book* (Islam)**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 4/8 **Theology: Race and Theology**	**Before Class:** • **Listen to E 203 of *keepingit101*: "Race & Religion in what's now the US"** • **Read "Chapter 6: God Who Breaks Chains," *Quest for the Living God*** **In Class:** • **Selection from "Conclusion" of *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Cone); Selection from "Chapter 5: Eucharist, Racism, and Black Bodies," *Enfleshing Freedom* (M. Shawn Copeland)**
Friday 4/12 **Module 6 Test Covering Previous Three Classes**	**Due on Canvas**
Wednesday 4/10 **Theology: Sex and Theology I (Hookups, Dating, Relationships, Marriage)**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Hookups, Happiness, and Human Flourishing," by Jennifer Beste, in *Sex Love and Families: Catholic Perspectives*** • **Read "Relationships Instead of Hookup Up? Justice in Dating," by Megan K. McCabe in *Sex Love and Families: Catholic Perspectives*** **In Class:** • **"I went on a date with Aziz Ansari. It turned into the worst night of my life," by Katie Way** • **"The Neoliberal Sexuality of the Left," by Nathan Schneider (*America Magazine*)**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 4/15 **Theology: Sex (& Gender) and Theology II (LGBTQ+ Theology)**	**Before Class:** • **Read, "The Challenge of Idolatry for LGBTI Ministry," by Fr. Bryan N. Massingale** • **Read, "Born That Way? The Challenge of Trans/Gender Identity for Catholic Theology," by Craig A. Ford Jr., in *Sex Love and Families: Catholic Perspectives*** **In Class:** • **Selection from *That We Might Become God: The Queerness of Creedal Christianity*, by Andy Buechel**
Thursday 4/18 **Creative Art Assignment**	**Submit your Creative Art Assignment as well as analysis via Canvas**
Friday 4/19 **Module 7 Test Covering Previous Two Classes**	**Due on Canvas**
Wednesday 4/17 **Theology: Disability and Theology**	**Before Class:** • **Listen to E507 of *keeping it 101*: "So Glad You Asked! About Religion and Disability"** • **Read, "Chapter 4 Carnal Sins" and "Chapter 5 The Disabled God," in *The Disabled God*, by Nancy L. Eiesland** **In Class:** • **Selection from *Loving Our Own Bones*, by Julia Watts Besler**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 4/22 **Theology: Theology of Religions**	**Before Class:** • **Read "Chapter 8: Generous God of the Religions," *Quest for the Living God* (Johnson)** **In Class:** • **"The pluralism and the diversity of religions, colour, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings." (*A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*, 2019)** • **From *Edict of Thessalonica* (380CE) to *Unam Sanctam* (1302CE), *Nostra Aetate* (1965), *A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together* (2019), and *Fratelli Tutti* (2020)**
Friday 4/26 **Interview and Storytelling Project: PART C**	**Submit your recording to Canvas, along with script or notes you prepared**

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Wednesday 4/24 **Lingering Questions, Open Topics and Discussion**	**Before Class:** • **Nothing** **In Class:** • **Lingering Questions, Open Topics and Discussion**

Monday 4/29 - NO CLASS

enjoy your day off before finals begins :)