

## SC200: Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics

Professor: Archbishop Kristina Rake, M.A.

Course Schedule: 12 Weeks of 1-2 hour online lectures; 12 weeks of labs/guided exercises

Course Objectives: Students will learn: how the Catholic Church properly interprets scripture in light of her Dogmatic Constitutions and Liturgy; the history of biblical interpretation of both the Old and New Testaments; ancient techniques of bible study, such as typology, senses of scripture, PARDES, and word pictures; controversies in biblical interpretation; various methods of examining verses, including the cultural, historical, canonical, contextual, and lexicographical. Students will also employ the various biblical interpretative methods they have learned on a variety of bible verses.

### COURSE TEXTS

#### Primary (**please purchase**):

Virkler, Henry A., and Karelynn Gerber Ayayo. *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*. Baker Academic, 2009.

#### Secondary (**not a required purchase but invaluable now and for the future**)

Gorman, Michael J., *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers*. Baker Academic, 2009.

#### Other Prominent Texts (**selections will be provided**):

*Dei Verbum*. Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on the Bible.

Harrington, Wilfrid. *Key to the Bible: Volume I*. Alba House, 1975.

Jeanrond, Werner. *Theological Hermeneutics: Development and Significance*. Werner Jeanrond, 1995.

*Lumen Gentium*. Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on the Church in the World.

Shea, Mark. *Making Senses Out of Scripture: Reading the Bible as the First Christians Did*. Basilica Press, 2016.

#### Important Websites:

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)

*\*will be used extensively*

[www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com)

*\*will be used extensively*

[www.jewishencyclopedia.com](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com)

[www.lexilogos.com](http://www.lexilogos.com)

<https://libguides.marquette.edu/c.php?g=36796&p=2974240>

[www.newadvent.org](http://www.newadvent.org)

[www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

### **Class Assignments/Labs:**

A series of short assignments will be assigned throughout the course, with scheduled live labs. During live labs, the instructor will teach students the critical thinking process behind the various assignments. Participation in labs is not required, but it can enhance one's grade to attend. Assignments are given at the end of each lecture. If students need further clarification on the assignment, they should contact the instructor.

Assignments are to be turned in through google classroom before each deadline. Late assignments will automatically be graded down by 20 points. If you are struggling with life circumstances, please let the instructor know.

### **Class Discussion:**

The Professor will post various questions in the Google Classroom throughout the course. If the answer is required for a grade, students should answer the question and then comment on another student's answer. The goal of this course is to think critically about the way in which we interpret scripture, to examine our biases, and to think critically about how we think.

### **Grade:**

Grades will be based upon the weighted average of the cumulative assignments as listed below.

Classroom exercises: **30%**

Discussion: **30%**

2 Longer interpretive projects: **40%**

### **Longer Interpretive Projects:**

1 of 2 interpretive projects will be due halfway through the course with the other due on the day of the last lecture. For those taking the class on their own time, the paper will be due once you have completed lecture 6 and lecture 12, respectively.

Project 1: You will do a word study for your choice of a selection of scripture verses.

Project 2: You will do a thorough exegetical paper on the scripture selection of your choice.

Your choice of verses must be cleared with the instructor ahead of time.

## **Lecture Topics**

**Lecture 1:** Inspiration, Infallibility, Interpretation, and the Liturgy in the Catholic Church. An explanation of how scripture is viewed and used in the Western Catholic Tradition and whether we can accept its inerrancy.

**Lecture 2:** What is Hermeneutics in General and Theological Hermeneutics in particular? Defining terms, understanding the major questions and controversies, and learning metacognition.

### **LAB I: Surveying the text.**

**Lecture 3:** A History of Biblical Exegetical Techniques from Ancient Judaism to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. How bible interpretation has changed with time and the advantages and disadvantages with those changes.

**Lecture 4:** Bible Translations & Contextual Analysis—Historical, cultural, and contextual analysis of a text.

### **LAB II: The First Exegetical Steps.**

**Lecture 5:** Formal Analysis—The Form, Structure, and Movement of the Text.

**Lecture 6:** Lexical-Syntactical Analysis of the Text

1<sup>st</sup> Paper Due

**LAB III: Close Reading of a Text**

**Lecture 7:** Special Literary Forms/Genres & Special Hebraic Considerations

**Lecture 8:** Theological Analysis & Synthesis—The Final Interpretation

**LAB IV:** A full, detailed, theological analysis of a verse

**Lecture 9:** Application—Homiletics, teaching, counseling, mission

**Lecture 10:** Pitfalls, Polyvalence, Ambiguity, Translations, and other Controversies

**LAB V:** Real Life Exegetical Moments for Priests

**Lecture 11:** A New Niavite and the Movement of Faith

**Lecture 12:** Resources for Analysis

2<sup>nd</sup> Paper Due