FUNDAMENTAL MORAL THEOLOGY

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley
James T. Bretzke, S.J.

CE 2056; Spring 1998 Class: Tuesdays 8:10-11:00AM
Office Hours: Mon/Tues 3:00-4:30 (Other times by appointment)
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Course Description

This one-semester course is designed as an introduction to fundamental moral theology in the Roman Catholic tradition. The principal themes to be treated include: The Nature of, and a Methodological Model for Approaching Fundamental Moral Theology; An Historical Overview of Casuistry and Pre-Vatican II Moral Theology; The Moral Person and Moral Community; The Christian Vocation: Call and Response; Conscience and the Fundamental Option; Moral Norms and the Natural Law; Virtue and Teleology; Evaluations of Moral Acts; Sin, Conversion and Reconciliation; Roles of the Magisterium; Current Tensions in Moral Theology, and Prospects for the Future. Selected issues in special ethics, especially from areas of sexual and medical ethics will be discussed in terms of applying the fundamental themes of moral theology to practical life situations. The course format will be lecture and questions based on both lecture input and the course readings. Small discussion groups, focusing on sexual and biomedical ethics, will be held a few times in place of the regular class during the second half of the semester.

Course written assignments and exams

The mid-term exam will be a 20 minute oral exam based on the course lectures, readings, and one (1) case study prepared and submitted in advance by the student. The final exam will be a closed book three-hour comprehensive written exam held during the final class session. In addition, at the time of the final exam two (2) additional case studies are to be handed in. Each case study will be a maximum of four (4) typed pages, double-spaced, and will detail the principal moral issues involved as well as an outline of a proposed pastoral response to the case treated. Examples of the case studies will be provided in class well before each exam.

Course Grading

Three principal factors will be taken into consideration for the final grade for the course: 1) careful preparation of the assigned readings and active participation in each of the class meetings (40%); 2) the case study and oral mid-term (25%); and 3) the case studies and written final exam (35%).

COURSE READINGS

REQUIRED Books

- Bretzke, James T., S.J. A Morally Complex World. CE 2056 Course Notes for Fundamental Moral Theology (for use of students only).
REQUIRED Articles

NB: See Reserve Box at JSTB for CE 2056 for copies of these articles

  http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paulyi/encyclicals/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.s
  http://www.knight.org/advent/summa1209400.htm
- Vatican II. Selections: Lumen gentium #25, #39-42 Available on the Internet at:
  http://www.vatican.va/archive/ii_vatican_council/constitutions/vatican-ii_constitution2 1-nov-196
- Gaudium et spes #16, #47-52. Available on the Internet at:
  http://www.vatican.va/archive/ii_vatican_council/constitutions/vatican-ii_constitution 7-dec- 1965
- Dignitatis humanae #2. Available on the Internet at:
  http://www.vatican.va/archive/ii_vaticancouncil/declarations/vatican-ii_declaration_7-dec-l 965_d

RECOMMENDED Books
Basic Reference Works


RECOMMENDED Articles

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** NB Other Recommended books and articles will be noted throughout the course, and are also indicated in the xeroxed Course Notes.

SYLLABUS OF COURSE THEMES & READINGS

- NB There is obviously a certain progression as well as overlap and interrelation among these various themes. In general, we will move from a grounding in theory, concepts, and tradition, to a consideration of contemporary church teachings, theological opinions and application to concrete moral issues.
- Refer to the Course Readings for complete page numbers and bibliographical information on these assigned readings.
- Readings listed for each week should be completed by class-time of each week.

Week 1 Introduction, Methodology, and Overview of Contemporary Moral Theology [Feb. 3]

Week 2 History of Moral Theology and Introduction to Basic Concepts [Feb. 10]
  Jolmstone, “From Physicalism to Personalism.”

Week 3 The Moral Person, Freedom, Conscience, and Community [Feb. 17]
  Vatican II: Gaudium et spes #16; Dignitatis humanae #2

Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Part Three: Life in Christ” Section One, Ch. 1, Articles 1-3, Article 6, Ch. 2, Articles 1-3,

Janssens, “Personalism in Moral Theology.”

**Week 4 Moral Good and Evil; Rightness and Wrongness of Actions** [Feb. 24]
Keenan, “The Distinction Between Goodness and Rightness.”
Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Part Three: Life in Christ” Section One, Ch. 1, Articles 4-5


**Week 5 Moral Norms and Natural Law** [Mar. 3]
Thomas Aquinas. Summa Theologiae I-II, Question 94.
Mahoney, The Making of Moral Theology, Ch. 6.
Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Part Three: Life in Christ” Section One, Ch. 3, Article 1

*Recommended*: Fuchs, “The Absoluteness of Moral Terms.”

**Week 6 Sin, Grace, Conversion, and Reconciliation** [Mar. 11]
Mahoney, The Making of Moral Theology, Ch. 3.
Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Part Three: Life in Christ” Section One, Ch. 1, Article 8, Ch. 3, Article 2


**Week 7 Roles of Church Teaching and Tradition** [Mar. 17]

*NB* Mid-Term Case Study Due on March 17th

Vatican II: Lumen gentium #25.
Mahoney, The Making of Moral Theology, Ch. 4.
Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Part Three: Life in Christ” Section One, Ch. 3, Article 3
Sklba, “Theological Diversity and Dissent within the Church.”

**SPRING BREAK**: March 23-28 (NO CLASS)

**Week 8 Roles of Church Teaching and Tradition, cont.; Virtue, Moral Discernment, and Use of Scripture in Ethics** [Mar. 31]
Mahoney, The Making of Moral Theology, Ch. 5.
Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Part Three: Life in Christ” Section One, Ch. 1, Article 7

*Recommended*: Bretzke, “Scripture: the ‘Soul’ of Moral Theology?

* *NB ORAL MID-TERMS HELD THIS WEEK* (Based on Material from Weeks 1-7, and Scheduled Outside of Regular Class-time)
Week 9 Sexual Ethics I [April 7]
Farley, “Sexual Ethics.”
Vatican II, Gaudium et spes, Ch. 1, #47-52.

Paul VI, Humanae vitae (1968)
Mahoney, The Making of Moral Theology, Ch. 7.


Week 10 Sexual Ethics II [April 14]
Cahill, “Catholic Sexual Ethics and the Dignity of the Person: A Double Message.”
Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Part Three: Life in Christ” Section Two, Ch. 2, Articles 6, 9
Haring, Bernard, C.Ss.R. “Sins against Chastity within Marriage.

Week 11 Bioethics I [April 21]
Callahan, “The Sanctity of Life Seduced: A Symposium on Medical Ethics.”
John Paul II, Ch. 3 of Evangelium vitae
Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Part Three: Life in Christ” Section Two, Ch. 2, Article 5


Week 12 Bioethics II [April 28]
Kopfensteiner, “Protecting a Dignified Death: A Contemporary Challenge for Moral Reasoning.”

Week 13 Inculturation and Discernment in Moral Theology [May 5]
Vatican II, Lumen gentium #39-42
Bretzke, “Cultural Particularity and the Globalization of Ethics in the Light of Inculturation.”
Mahoney, The Making of Moral Theology, Ch. 8.

Week 14 Pastoral Catechesis of Fundamental Moral Theology [May 12]
Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Part Three: Life in Christ” Section Two, Ch. 2, Articles 1-4; 7-8, 10

* *NB FINAL REGULAR CLASS DAY (with Course Evaluation)*

Week 15 Final Examination [May 19]

**NB Final Exam Case Studies also due on May 19th **NB Final Exam Will be Comprehensive, Closed Book, In-Class