

## STP 461 — Introduction to Moral Theology

Fall Semester 2019

### Course Outline

#### Class Start Date & End Date

September 5, 2019 — December 5, 2019

#### Class Meeting Time, Location, and Room

Thursday 1:15pm - 4:05pm, Newman Theological College, St. Francis Room

**Instructors Name:** Fr. Michael Schumacher  
**Office:** St. Joseph Seminary, 9828 84 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, T6A 0B2  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 1:30pm - 2:30pm  
**Telephone:** 780-392-2445 ext. 2317  
**Email:** [Michael.Schumacher@stjoseph-seminary.com](mailto:Michael.Schumacher@stjoseph-seminary.com)  
**Skype:** father.michael.schuamcher

#### Course Description

The basic elements of moral theology since Vatican II. Biblical and theological themes that define the person in Christ. The Christian meaning of sin, virtue, conscience, law and moral discernment. The Christian experience of conversion and reconciliation in the way of discipleship.

#### Course Objectives

Formulated to address one or more of the four goals of theological education at NTC as articulated in the context and scope section of the catalogue.

- a) **Intellectual Formation (IF)** - The course aims to offer students an introduction to the major areas of Catholic moral theology since the call for renewal at the Second Vatican Council while situating them within a broader theological framework thus enabling students to understand the major areas in their relation to each other. The course will expose students to virtue ethics and the importance of the perspective of the acting person in moral theology.
- b) **Cultural Context (CC)** - The course aims to give the students a grasp of the historical development of Catholic moral theology as well as an understanding of the major developments and trends since the Second Vatican Council and the renewal in moral theology that the council fathers called for.
- c) **Personal and Spiritual Formation (PSF)** - The course seeks to foster not only a greater theoretical knowledge of Catholic moral theology but also a greater practical knowledge of the basic contours of assessing, judging and acting well in order to enable students to both better inform and utilize the judgment of their conscience and to nurture their growth in virtuous action.

- d) **Capacity for Ministerial Leadership (CML)**- The course aims provide students the skills for prudential judgment on moral issues using the Biblical and theological tradition of the Church's Magisterium and by cultivating both a theoretical and practical ability to grasp and respond to individual circumstances and occurrences of moral discernment and action in light of contemporary moral problems.

### Course Assignments and Evaluation

Course assignments and evaluation will consist of the following four components:

1. **Bi-Weekly Online Forum Discussions:** Students will be expected to contribute to an online discussion forum by posting 5 posts every two weeks. The posts are to be relevant to the weekly readings being discussed and as indicated below in **red font** within the course schedule. Readings that are not in the course textbook will be **available at <http://moodle.newman.edu>**. \*Five discussion posts are considered by the professor to be equivalent to 1 written page. [IF/PSF/CML]
2. **Small reflection paper:** 5 pages in length, to be submitted September 12, 2019. The content of this paper will be to write a reflection paper upon the content of either of these two readings giving due attention to the important point(s) that they are making respectively: Melina, Livio. "Between Crisis and Renewal: The Cultural and Theological Context of Morality Today," in *Sharing in Christ's Virtues: For a Renewal of Moral Theology in Light of Veritatis Splendor*. Washington: CUA Press, 2001, pp. 13-33; Mattison III, William C. *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2008, pp. 19-56. [IF/CC]
3. **Research Paper:** 12-15 pages in length, to be submitted by October 24, 2019. Students can choose to write on a topic chosen from a list given by the professor or from a topic approved by the professor after formal consultation. \*Please see below for acceptable writing styles and formats (pages 6-7). [IF/CC]
4. **Final take-home examination:** 10 pages in length, to be submitted before December 18, 2019. Students will be able to choose from a list of topics that will be given to them during that last class of the semester (December 14, 2019). \*For online students the list of exam topics will be given during the last week of classes prior to the study break. [IF/PSF]

### Course Requirements and Grade calculation

**Breakdown of grade calculation is as follows:**

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|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Bi-Weekly Online Forum Discussions | <b>25%</b> of final grade |
| 2. Small reflection paper             | <b>10%</b> of final grade |
| 3. Research Paper                     | <b>35%</b> of final grade |
| 4. Final take-home examination        | <b>30%</b> of final grade |

**Grades will be calculated based on the following criteria:**

1. Relevance to the topic under consideration **(25%)**
2. Comprehension and organization of the content being discussed **(30%)**
3. Understanding of the implications and the quality of personal reflections **(30%)**
4. Formatting and Grammar (when relevant to the assignment) **(15%)**

## Textbooks

Mattison III, William C. *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2008.

Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Veritatis Splendor*, On Certain Fundamental Questions of the Church's Teaching. August 6, 1993. [Accessed online]

## Secondary/Recommended Reading Texts

Melina, Livio. *Sharing in Christ's Virtues: For a Renewal of Moral Theology in Light of Veritatis Splendor*. Trans. William E. May. Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001.

Pinckaers, Servais, O.P. *The Sources of Christian Ethics*. Sr. Mary Thomas Noble, O.P., trans. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995.

St. Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica*.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 (September 5, 2019)

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Moral Theology vs. Ethics—Christian vs. Secular—Situating Moral Theology in the Cultural Context

**On-line Discussion Forum Readings:**

Pope Saint John Paul II. Encyclical Letter, *Veritatis Splendor*, On Certain Fundamental Questions of the Church's Moral Teaching. August 6, 1993. Nos. 1-27 (Introduction and Chapter 1).

### Week 2 (September 12, 2019) \* Reflection Paper Due

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God, Christ and Creation (Christ as the Good Master)/Man, Made in God's Image

**On-line Discussion Forum Readings:**

Mattison III, William C. *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2008, pp. 19-56.

Melina, Livio. "Between Crisis and Renewal: The Cultural and Theological Context of Morality Today," in *Sharing in Christ's Virtues: For a Renewal of Moral Theology in Light of Veritatis Splendor*. Washington: CUA Press, 2001, pp. 13-33.

### Week 3 (September 19, 2019)

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The Happiness of Man (Man's Good)/Holiness and Perfection/Following Christ (Divine Filiation)

**On-line Discussion Forum Reading:**

Rhonheimer, Martin. "Is Christian Morality Reasonable? On the Difference between Secular and Christian Humanism," in *The Perspective of the Acting Person: Essays in the Renewal of Thomistic Moral Philosophy*.

### Week 4 (September 26, 2019)

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An Introduction to the Human Faculties (Philosophical Anthropology) and their relation to the true/good/beautiful (Will, Intellect, Passions)/Human Freedom and the Good/ Conscience and Truth

**On-line Discussion Forum Readings:**

Mattison III, William C. *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2008, pp. 57-94.

### Week 5 (October 3, 2019)

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Continued from above...

**On-line Discussion Forum Reading:**

Mattison III, William C. *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2008, pp. 95-9112, 180-194.

### Week 6 (October 10, 2019)

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The Moral Act (Action Theory)/Sources of Morality- moral object, intention, circumstance/Sin and intrinsically evil acts/Mortal and Venial Sin/Grace and Conversion

**On-line Discussion Forum Reading:**

Pope Saint John Paul II. Encyclical Letter, *Veritatis Splendor*, On Certain Fundamental Questions of the Church's Moral Teaching. August 6, 1993. Nos. 28-83 (Chapter 2).

### Week 7 (October 17, 2019)

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Law and Freedom/Virtue and Character (Beatitudes?)

**On-line Discussion Forum Reading:**

Luño, Angel Rodriguez. "*Veritatis Splendor*" and Action Theory.

### Week 8 (October 24, 2019) \* Research Paper Due

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The Virtue of Prudence (differentiating from conscience)/Theological Virtues

**On-line Discussion Forum Reading:**

Pinckaers O.P., Servais. "Freedom of Indifference: The Origin of Obligational Moral Theory," in *The Sources of Christian Ethics*. Sr. Mary Thomas Noble, O.P., Trans. Washington: CUA Press, 1995, pp. 327-354.

### Week 9 (October 31, 2019)

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Historical Survey I: Pre-Christian, Biblical (Christ and St. Paul), Patristic (St. Augustine), Medieval (St. Thomas), Nominalism. Manualist Tradition, Modern/Contemporary/*Veritatis Splendor*

**On-line Discussion Forum Reading:**

Pope Saint John Paul II. Encyclical Letter, *Veritatis Splendor*, On Certain Fundamental Questions of the Church's Moral Teaching. August 6, 1993. Nos. 84-120 (Chapter 3).

### Week 10 (November 7, 2019)

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Historical Survey II

**On-line Discussion Forum Readings:**

Ratzinger, Joseph. *The Renewal of Moral Theology: Perspectives of Vatican II and Veritatis Splendor*.

Wansbrough O.S.B., Henry. *The Bible and Morality: Biblical Roots of Christian Conduct*.

### Reading Break (November 14, 2019)

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No classes

### Week 11 (November 21, 2019)

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Christ and the Cross/The Road to Happiness/Grace of the Holy Spirit/New Law/New Life/Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount (interp. and place in the Moral Life)

**On-line Discussion Forum Reading:**

Mattison III, William C. *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2008, pp. 195-272.

## Week 12 (November 28, 2019)

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Intrinsic Evil/Double Effect/Moral Cooperation

**On-line Discussion Forum Reading:**

Luño, Angel Rodriguez. *The Novelty of the Faith as an Interpretive and Operative Criterion for Moral Life Existence.*

## Week 13 (December 5, 2019)

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*Veritatis Splendor* on Pastoral Concerns...morality and the good for every human life/Moral Formation and Maturation (theoretical vs. practical)

## Final Exam Due December 14, 2019

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### General Academic Information

#### Late Submission Policy.

All grading will be in accordance with NTC guidelines. Please see NTC Academic Regulation in the *Academic Calendar* (14-19) and below for more information. **Any request for an extension must be discussed with the professor at least one week prior to the due date and will be considered on a case by case basis.** Without a formal request for an extension, there will be a 5% grade reduction for each day past the due date (including weekends).

#### On-Campus Course Attendance

No credit will be given for a course if the student has been absent, for any reason whatever, from one-third or more of the lectures and/or seminars scheduled for the term. Likewise, no credit will be given if term assignments or other assignments are or remain incomplete.

#### Leave of Absence and Policy for Incompletes

Extensions to an incomplete grade may be granted in extenuating circumstances, but may not exceed 16 weeks following the end of the course. Students who fail to complete course work by the agreed deadline will have a grade assigned which is based on work completed.

#### Academic Integrity

Acts of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) are subject to an appropriate penalty. The grade "F" may be assigned to a student guilty of such acts by the professor of the course in which the infraction occurred. A second offense against academic integrity renders the student liable to automatic dismissal from NTC. Further details are available in the Student Handbook in the Academic Misconduct Policy.

#### Academic Grievances

Students may appeal grades received; the procedure is outlined in the Student Handbook in the Grade Appeal Policy. For other grievances, students will refer to the Student Grievances Policy also outlined in the Student Handbook.

*NOTE: The GPA is computed on the basis of cumulative grade point (letter) values, not percentage values. All courses are included in this calculation except those exceeding degree requirements and/or received as transfer credits from other recognized institutions.*

### Grading System

Undergraduate Studies C.Th., Dip.Th., B.Th.			Graduate Studies M.T.S., M.Div., M.Th., G.C.C.S.A., M.R.E.		
Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point	Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent	A+	4.0	Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0		A	4.0
	A-	3.7		A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3	Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0		B	3.0
	B-	2.7		B-	2.7
Adequate	C+	2.3	Adequate	C+	2.3
	C	2.0		C	2.0
	C-	1.7		C-	1.7
Marginal	D+	1.3			
	D	1.0			
Fail	F	0.0	Fail	D+	1.3
				D	1.0
				F	0.0

### Written Assignments - Style and Format

Newman Theological College requires that all written work be submitted in acceptable academic format and style. Please note the following regulations:

#### *Regulations*

Research papers, book reports, article summaries, reflection papers, and essays should be double-spaced, printed on one side only, and submitted on white, 8.5" x 11" paper.

A standard type style, such as Times New Roman, with a 12-point font size, must be used. The instructor will specify the most recent edition of the style manual to be used:

1. Kate Turabian, "A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
2. Joseph Gibaldi & William Ahters, eds., "MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers" (New York: Modern Language Association of America).
3. American Psychological Association "Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association" (Washington: APA Publications).

Copies of these standard references may be purchased in the NTC bookstore.

Ignorance of standard form is not considered an acceptable excuse for deviation from required standards of format and style.

### Academic Regulations

The following Academic Regulations are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Changes in Registration: Add/Drop/Withdraw Notice
- Course Work
- Final Examination Schedule
- Incomplete Grade Policy
- Inclusive Language

### Related Academic Matters

The following Related Academic Matters are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Grade Reports & Posting
- Glossary of Academic Terms

### Other Related Policies

The following policies are located in the Student Handbook for your reference:

- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Grade Appeal Policy

### Recording of Lectures

Audio or video recording of lectures, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior consent of the instructor. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

### Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Student Services, contact Doreen Bloos at 780-392-2450 ext. 2212; Email [doreen.bloos@newman.edu](mailto:doreen.bloos@newman.edu).

## **Bibliography**

Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*. Translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province. London: Burns Oates & Washbourne LTD., 1911.

Bohr, David. *Catholic Moral Tradition: "In Christ, a new creation"*. Revised Edition. Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Inc., 1999.

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*. 2nd ed. English Translation. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997.

Cessario, Romanus, O.P. *Introduction to Moral Theology*. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001.

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- McInerney, Ralph. *Aquinas on Human Action: A Theory of Practice*. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012.
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- Pinckaers, Servais, O. P. *Morality: The Catholic View*. Edited by Michael Sherwin, O.P.. South Bend: St. Augustines Press Inc., 2005.
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- Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Veritatis Splendor*, On Certain Fundamental Questions of the Church's Teaching. August 6, 1993.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. *On Conscience: Two Essays. Bioethics and Culture Series*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007.
- Rhonheimer, Martin. *Natural Law and Practical Reason: A Thomist View of Moral Autonomy*. Moral Philosophy and Theology Series, No.1. Moral Philosophy and Theology, 2000.
- Rhonheimer, Martin. *The Perspective of the Acting Person: Essays in the Renewal of Thomistic Moral Philosophy*. Edited by William F. Murphy Jr. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2008.



Sgreccia, Elio. *Personalist Bioethics: Foundations and Applications*. Translated by John A. Di Camillo and Michael J. Miller. Philadelphia: National Catholic Bioethics Centre, 2012.

St. Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica*. I-II.