



SCR503 Pauline Literature Course Syllabus

AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE

3 units / Spring 2026
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I. Reading Schedule¹

(“Recommended Readings” are for extra credit and are not “Required.”)

- Session 1:**
Tues., 1.20.26
Intro to Paul: His Life in Judaism and Encounter with Christ on the Damascus Road
For this class read: Prothro, *Apostle Paul and His Letters*, Chapters 1–2 (pp. 1–25); Pitre et al, *Paul, A New Covenant Jew*, Foreword (pp., ix–xi), Chapter 1 (pp. 1–63)
- Session 2:**
Fri., 1.23.26
(2pm–5pm)
Paul as Missionary and His Letters
For this class read: Acts 6:8–15; 7:54–60; 8:1–4; 13:1–14:28; Prothro, *Apostle Paul and His Letters*, Chapters 3–5 (pp. 27–70); Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Galatians*, Chapter 2, Lectures 3–4 (link on Canvas)*
Recommended: Prothro, *A Pauline Theology of Justification*, pp. 1–107; Mark Nanos, “What Was at Stake in Peter’s ‘Eating with Gentiles’ at Antioch?,” pp. 282–318 in *The Galatians Debate* * (2002)
- Session 3:**
Tues., 1.27.26
The Epistle to the Galatians and the Jerusalem Council
For this class read: Acts 15:1–35; Galatians; Prothro, *Apostle Paul and His Letters*, Chapter 9 (pp. 143–164); Pitre et al, *Paul, A New Covenant Jew*, Chapter 5 (pp. 162–210)
Recommended: Levering, *Christ’s Fulfillment of Torah and Temple: Salvation according to Thomas Aquinas* (2002), pp. 15–30*; Paula Fredriksen, “God Is Jewish, but Gentiles Don’t Have to Be: Ethnicity and Eschatology in Paul’s Gospel,” in *The Message of Paul the Apostle within Second Temple Judaism*, ed. F. Ábel (2020)
- Session 4:**
Fri., 2.6.26
(2pm–5pm)
1–2 Thessalonians
For this class read: Acts 15:36–17:33; 1–2 Thessalonians; Prothro, *Apostle Paul and His Letters*, Chapter 13 (pp. 219–234); Pitre et al, *Paul, A New Covenant Jew*, Chapter 2 (pp. 64–94)
Recommended: Eubank, *1–2 Thessalonians*

¹ Assignments designated with an asterisk (*) are to be found on Canvas. It is expected that students will read all New Testament texts from a study Bible, consulting the accompanying notes when questions arise.

Session 5: Tues., 2.10.26	<i>1 Corinthians 1–7</i> For this class read:	Acts 18; 1 Corinthians 1–7; Prothro, <i>Apostle Paul and His Letters</i> , part of Chapter 7 (pp. 97–110); Pitre et al, <i>Paul, A New Covenant Jew</i> , Chapter 3 (pp. pp. 95–128)
	Recommended:	Prothro, <i>A Pauline Theology of Justification</i> , pp. 108–192; Gorman, <i>Apostle of the Crucified Lord</i> , pp. 1–51*
Session 6: Tues., 2.17.26	<i>1 Corinthians 8–16</i> For this class read:	1 Corinthians 8–16; Prothro, <i>Apostle Paul and His Letters</i> , finish Chapter 7 (pp. 110–117); Pitre et al, Chapter 6 (pp. 211–250); Augustine, <i>Faith and Works</i> (excerpts)
	Recommended:	Richard Bauckham, <i>Jesus and the God of Israel</i> (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008)(excerpts*); Morales, “Baptism and Union with Christ,” pp. 157–179*
Session 7: Tues., 2.24.26	<i>Colossians</i> For this class read:	Acts 18:23–21:15; Colossians; Prothro, <i>Apostle Paul and His Letters</i> , Chapter 12 (pp. 201–216); Benedict XVI, <i>Saint Paul</i> , Chapters 8 and 10*
	Recommended:	Benedict XVI, <i>Saint Paul</i> (read entire book); Barclay, “Why the Roman Empire was Insignificant to Paul”*
Session 8: Fri., 2.27.26 (2pm–5pm)	<i>2 Corinthians 1–7</i> For this class read:	2 Corinthians 1–7; Prothro, <i>Apostle Paul and His Letters</i> , Chapter 8 (pp. 119–140); Pitre et al, <i>Paul, A New Covenant Jew</i> , Chapter 4 (pp. 129–161) and Conclusion (pp. 251–253)
	Recommended:	Stegman, <i>2 Corinthians</i> , Intro and Chapter 1–7
Session 9: Tues., 3.3.26	<i>2 Corinthians 8–13, the Jerusalem Collection, and Trial in Caesarea</i> For this class read:	Acts 21:16–26:32; 2 Corinthians 8–13; McKnight and Oropeza, eds., Pitre, “The Roman Catholic Perspective on Paul,” in McKnight and Oropeza, eds., <i>Perspectives on Paul</i> , pp. 25–82*
	Recommended:	Stegman, <i>2 Corinthians</i> , Chapter 8–13
Session 10: Tues., 3.10.26	<i>Ephesians</i> For this class read:	Ephesians; <i>Apostle Paul and His Letters</i> , Chapter 10 (pp. 165–180); Aquinas, <i>Commentary on St. Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians</i> , Chapter 2, Lectures 4–5 and Chapter 6, Lecture 5*
	Recommended:	Gupta, <i>A Beginner’s Guide to New Testament Studies</i> , pp. 103–118*
Session 11: Tues., 3.17.26	<i>Romans 1–6</i> For this class read:	Romans 1–6; Prothro, <i>Apostle Paul and His Letters</i> , Chapter 6 (pp. 71–96); Excerpts from McKnight and Oropeza, eds., <i>Perspectives on Paul</i> , pp. 83–113*
	Recommended:	Stegman, “Romans,” in <i>The Paulist Biblical Commentary</i> , pp. 1234–1255*; Thorsteinsson, et al, “Paul’s Interlocutor in

Romans,” 1–37*; Jipp, “The Implications of the Ethnic Identity of Paul’s Interlocutor? Continuing the Conversation, 183–203*"

Session 12:

Romans 7–16

Tues., 4.7.26

For this class read:

Romans 7–16; *Perspectives on Paul*, 171–200, 219–43*

Recommended:

Stegman, “Romans,” pp. 1255–1288*; Staples, “What Do the Gentiles Have to Do with ‘All Israel’? A Fresh Look at Rom 11:25–27”*

Session 13:

The Pastorals

Tues., 4.14.26

For this class read:

1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus; Prothro, *Apostle Paul and His Letters*, 237–259

Recommended:

Thomas Michelet, O.P., “Deaconesses and the Diaconate,” *Nova et Vetera* 23/2 (2025): 381–93

*****Paper Due by 11:59pm (Central Time) on Friday, 4.10.26*****

Session 14:

Philippians, the Roman Captivity, and Philemon

Tues., 4.21.26

For this class read:

Acts 27–28; Philippians; Philemon; Prothro, *Apostle Paul and His Letters*, Chapter 11 (pp. 183–199) and Chapter 15 (pp. 261–270)

Recommended:

Gorman, *Inhabiting the Cruciform God* (excerpts)*; Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* (excerpt on Philemon)*

Final Exam:

Those walking at commencement, finish by 11:59pm CT on Mon., 4.27.26

Those not walking at commencement, finish by 11:59pm CT Wed., 4.29.26

II. Course Description

This course analyzes the major literary, historical, and theological issues involved with the study of St. Paul’s letters. Special attention is given to the Apostle’s identity as a first-century Jew, his faith in Christ the Lord, and to the way the scriptures inform his theology. Students will learn how to explain and synthesize key aspects of his theology (e.g., his christology, ecclesiology, soteriology, eschatology). In addition, students will learn how to evaluate and critique different views of his teachings. Finally, this course will emphasize the way Paul’s pastoral concerns are driven by in-depth theological reflection. In this, students will learn how Paul provides us with a model for dealing with the challenges involved with the spiritual life, evangelization, and ministry today.

III. Course Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze St. Paul’s teaching against the backdrop of his historical context, particularly his ancient Jewish and Greco-Roman settings.²
2. Interpret the Pauline letters and their teaching—for example, their witness to the person and work of Christ—in light of the content and unity of the whole of Scripture.³

² See MA Theology, MA Pastoral Theology, MA Catholic Education programmatic goal #1, element of understanding #1; MA Theology programmatic goal #3, element of understanding #5.

³ See MA Theology and MA Catholic Education programmatic goal #2, element of understanding #1; MA Pastoral Theology programmatic goal #2, element of understanding #4.

3. Explain and synthesize key aspects of Pauline theology (e.g., Christology, Justification, Ecclesiology) in light of Paul's use of the scriptures of Israel and the Church's living tradition.⁴
4. Evaluate and critique contemporary scholarly approaches to Paul's teaching by looking carefully at the data in the Pauline letters, other relevant ancient and modern sources, and Catholic teaching.⁵
5. To analyze St. Paul's theology as the solution to *pastoral* problems and to formulate strategies for pastoral theology, evangelization, and Catholic education based on his letters.⁶

IV. Course Texts

A. REQUIRED BOOKS

- Pitre, Brant, Michael P. Barber, and John A. Kincaid, *Paul, A New Covenant Jew: Rethinking Pauline Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019). ISBN-10: 0802873766; ISBN-13: 978-0802873767
- Prothro, James. *The Apostle Paul and His Letters: An Introduction*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2021. ISBN-10: 081323512X; ISBN-13: 978-0813235127
- Study Bible
- Other readings excerpted by the professor and made available as pdfs on Canvas.

B. RECOMMENDED (NOT REQUIRED!)

- Benedict XVI, *St. Paul*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009. ISBN-10: 1586173677; ISBN-13: 978-1586173678
- Eubank, Nathan. *1–2 Thessalonians*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019. ISBN-10: 080104944X; ISBN-13: 978-0801049446
- McKnight, Scot and B. J. Oropeza, eds. with John M. G. Barclay, A. Andrew Das, James D G. Dunn, Brant Pitre, and Magnus Zetterholm. *Perspectives on Paul*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020. ISBN-13: 978-1540960757
- Prothro, James B. *A Pauline Theology of Justification: Forgiveness, Friendship, and Life in Christ*. Lectio Sacra. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2023. ISBN-10: 1725282917; ISBN-13: 978-1725282919
- Stegman, Thomas D. *2 Corinthians*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009. ISBN-10: 9780801035838; ISBN-13: 978-0801035838

C. RECOMMENDED REFERENCE WORK (NOT REQUIRED!)

- McKnight, Scot, ed. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*. Second Edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2023. ISBN-10: 0830817859; ISBN-13: 978-0830817856

V. The Course's "Home Page" on Canvas

All students will be given access to Canvas, the online learning platform used by the Augustine Institute Graduate School. This site is the "home" of the course. There students will find videos of each class lecture, course documents, readings, exams, message boards, etc. All announcements regarding the course will be found there. All assignments must be uploaded to the website. To ensure that assignments are properly received, please be sure to upload assignments to Canvas.

VI. Explanation of Assignments and Course Requirements

⁴ See MA Theology and MA Catholic Education programmatic goal #2, elements of understanding #2 and #3; MA in Theology and MA in Catholic Education programmatic goal #1, element of understanding #2.

⁵ See MA Theology and MA Catholic Education programmatic goal #2, element of understanding #3.

⁶ See MA Theology and MA Catholic Education programmatic goal #2, element of understanding #4; MA Pastoral Theology programmatic goal #3, elements of understanding #1 and #2; MA Catholic Education programmatic goal #3, element of understanding #3; MA Catholic Education programmatic goal #4, element of understanding #3.

A. SESSION EXAMS (30%): All Due by 11:59pm Central on Monday., 4.27.26

All students will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of the lecture material and reading assignments by taking session exams containing basic objective questions (e.g., true/false, multiple choice, matching). Students can complete these exams at any time before the end of the term, however, it would be unwise to wait too long to take them. It is best to complete them immediately after finishing the video for each session (assuming the reading has been completed prior to that). These exams will cover the reading and lecture material and must be taken *without notes* or any tools (e.g., artificial intelligence tools). The lowest score will be dropped from the final tally.

B. FINAL EXAM (30%):

Those walking at commencement, finish by 11:59pm CT on Mon., 4.27.26

Those not walking at commencement, finish by 11:59pm CT Wed., 4.29.26

All students will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of the lecture material and reading assignments by completing a Final Exam. Like the Session Exams, the Final Exam must be taken *without notes* and without any assistance from artificial intelligence whatsoever (in *no way* may artificial intelligence used in connection with the paper). Failure to comply with these requirements will result in serious penalties, including failing the course and expulsion.

C. TERM PAPER (30%): Complete by 11:59pm on Friday., 4.10.26

NOTE: Students must make every effort to avoid *any* assistance from artificial intelligence in connection with this paper. See below for the paper instructions, which varies depending on the degree program in which you are enrolled.

Assignment for M.A. Theology Students:

Students will apply what they have learned and demonstrate their understanding of the course's contents by writing a paper (10–12 pages) explaining Paul's statement that believers are "fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him" (Rom 8:17). Students should look in detail at each aspect of this verse, explaining its parts in light of various dimensions of Paul's teaching, with particular focus on other specific passages in the Pauline letters (give *specific* citations as frequently as possible; do not veer into other New Testament books). Aside from focusing on the language of Romans 8:17 itself, no particular list of ideas or passages are required, with three exceptions: (1) all students must talk about the significance of the cross in Paul's theology, (2) all students must discuss how Galatians 2:20 ("I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me") helps explain Paul's teaching regarding suffering, and (3) all students must devote some space for substantial treatment of the "heirs" or "inheritance" language in Paul. The paper should be submitted via the proper folder on the Canvas website. It must follow the more specific guidelines for formatting posted on the Canvas site.

Assignment for M.A. Pastoral Theology Students

Students will write a paper (10–12 pages) that argues Paul understands theology, anchored in the scriptures of Israel, to be the solution for addressing pastoral concerns. Specifically, students will analyze the issues involved with gentile inclusion and circumcision in Galatians, explaining Paul's approach, and showing how Paul deals with the situation in light of Christ's work and the Old Testament. Special emphasis should be given to the priority of charity in Paul's approach, with stress given to the way Paul views Christ himself as the exemplar of love. In the course of the paper, students are to explain how the principles guiding Paul undergird Pastoral Theology's need to read the signs of the times in light of doctrine for the promotion of holiness today. Students should reference how Paul models what is taught about pastoral ministry in Church documents such as the Second Vatican Council's works, Pope Paul VI's *Evangelii nuntiandi* (1975), and Pope Francis's *Evangelii gaudium* (2013)—though the emphasis of this paper must remain on Paul as a model, not on magisterial documents. The paper must follow the more specific guidelines for formatting posted on the Canvas site.

Assignment for Catholic Education Students (students in the M.A. in Christian Education program)

Students will write a paper (10–12 pages) analyzing the relationship of charity to wisdom in Paul's letters, focusing on 1 Corinthians 13 and the way its teaching is exemplified in Paul's solutions to the challenges posed by the "weak" and the "strong" groups in Romans 14. In particular, students will consider how Paul subordinates wisdom to charity. In their analysis of Paul's teaching about the virtues, students should draw especially from Thomas Aquinas's commentaries on 1 Corinthians and Romans, while also using the description of the virtues in the *Summa Theologiae* to explain the nature of the virtues and how they are to be distinguished from one another. Special note: in discussing the situation in view in Romans 14, students should show evidence of consulting contemporary scholarship on the identity of the "weak" and "strong." Students will be expected to be nuanced in speaking of the specifics of the circumstances Paul addresses, which are not necessarily the same in Rome and Corinth. Discussions about the precise scenarios Paul is dealing with in his letters, however, should be a minor aspect of the paper as the focus of the assignment is to unpack the relationship of charity and wisdom in a way that is informed by St. Thomas's teaching. At the same time, students must emphasize that the point of the paper is to explain *Paul's* teaching, *not* St. Thomas's. St. Thomas is to be understood as a guide to understanding St. Paul (and the divine author who inspired him), not the other way around. The paper should be submitted via the proper folder on the Canvas website and follow the general guidelines laid out there.

D. PARTICIPATION (10%): ALL DUE BY 11:59PM ON 4.27.26

Participation requirements for on campus students is fulfilled by attending classes in person. The goal for online credit-seeking students is participation at least three (3) Zoom sessions over the course of the term. *Zoom sessions are not open to auditing students.* It is important to this professor to engage in real-time, face-to-face interaction with credit-seeking students; if you are taking this course for credit, please make attending three Zoom sessions a priority. Credit-seeking students are more than free to attend additional sessions if they wish but no extra-credit is earned by such attendance. In cases where a student is not capable of satisfying Zoom requirements, student participation grades will be fulfilled either in part or in whole by commenting on course message boards. All students are required to post in the introductory message board, following the directions there.

E. FINAL GRADE CALCULATION

30%: Session Exams / 30%: Final Exam / 30%: Term Paper / 10%: Participation

VII. Academic Integrity Statement

Students are expected to abide by expectations regarding academic honesty stipulated in the Student Bulletin. *The use of artificial intelligence as an aid for any assignments or materials for this course is strictly prohibited.*

VIII. Learning Disabilities and Other Concerns

If you are a student with a learning disability or if you have other difficulties during the quarter (e.g., an unexpected trauma, e.g., the loss of a loved one), please contact the professor.

IX. Select Bibliography on Paul

** signifies resources especially recommended as helpful for the term paper*

LETTER TO THE ROMANS

From the Tradition

Abelard, Peter. *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Fathers of the Church Medieval Continuation 12.

Translated by Steven R. Cartwright. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011.

Ambrosiaster. *Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians*. Ancient Christian Texts. Translated and edited by Gerald L. Bray. Downers Grove.: IVP Academic, 2009.

*Aquinas, Thomas. *Commentary on the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans*. Translated by Fabian R. Larcher, OP. Lander: Aquinas Institute, 2012.