

## Creation, Man/Woman, Sin (RGT2321HS L0101) 2010

### Course Description/Syllabus

The Christian doctrine of creation; its scriptural foundation in the Old and New Testaments; its difference from Greek philosophical theories; its history to the present; its relation to evolution; process theories with a focus on Teilhard and Whitehead. Man/Woman: their nature and relationship to God and the world as understood in the history of Christian thought. Monogenism vs. polygenism; the sin of the world; traditional and contemporary theologies of original sin compared. Lectures, discussion, paper.

### Outline

- Creation in the Old Testament
- Creation in the New Testament
- Greek Theories of Creation
- Hebraic and Greek Theories of Creation Compared
- History of Creation to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century
- The Challenge of Darwin and Evolutionary Thinking to the Traditional Understanding of Creation
- The Christian Evolutionary Theology of Teilhard de Chardin
- Teilhard and the Theology of Work
- Quantum Mechanics and its Implications for a Theology of Creation
- Process Thought and Creation: Alfred North Whitehead
- Chaos Theory and Intelligent Design
- The New Cosmology: Man/Woman and the Creation of the World
- Monogenism, Polygenism and Original Sin: Traditional and Contemporary Understandings
- Fall-Redemption and Creation-Centred Views of Evil, Original Sin and Suffering

### Objectives

- to highlight the difference between faith and theology
- to show how one's understanding of God, humanity and the world is related to one's cosmology
- to familiarize the student with the influence of Greek philosophy on the development of traditional theologies of creation
- to highlight the challenge to the theologian to relate the understanding of God, humanity and the world when our understanding of any of the three (God, humanity, world) change
- to show how Creation-Centred theologies, based on an evolutionary view of the world, differ from Fall-Redemption theologies, based on a static view of the world, differ, and show the implications of these differences for our understanding of God, humanity and the world and for spirituality

- to familiarize the student with contemporary developments in science and help the student to articulate a theology of creation in light of these developments
- to show how one's theology of creation relates to one's theology of redemption
- to compare traditional understandings of humanity, original sin and evil, based on a static view of the world, with contemporary perspectives, based on an evolutionary view of the world

### Requirements

- weekly written accounting of reading
- lectures and discussion
- paper is worth 70% of the grade
- paper = 15 pages double-spaced
- last class = 5 April 2010
- **paper due not later than 9 April 2010**
- *Beginning the week after Reading Week, all students should arrange to see me in my office to discuss the readings they claim to have read, to discuss the choice of an essay topic, and to get guidance in the writing of it.*
- *The criteria for rating students for their overall reading during the semester are:*
  - The number of "studies" they have read*
  - The rating of each "study" given in the bibliography (bold, italics, etc.)*
  - The total number of pages covered by these "studies"*
  - The reading must include "studies" from each sub-heading in the bibliography*

### Possible Essay Topics

(A student may write on any other topic with the approval of the professor)

1. The Biblical Doctrine of Creation: the Contemporary Discussion
2. Stewardship and Creation
3. Creation Theology and the Ecological Crisis
4. Creationism and the Catholic/Christian Doctrine of Creation
5. Science and Theology in the Twenty-first Century
6. Creation Theology and Evolutionary Theory
7. Creation-Centred and Fall-Redemption Theologies of Creation Compared

8. The Spirituality of Teilhard de Chardin
9. Teilhard de Chardin and the Theology of Creation
10. Feeding the Zest for Life: Spiritual Energy Resources for the Future of Humanity
11. Zest for Life: Teilhard's Cosmological Vision
12. Teilhard, Globalization and the Future of Humanity
13. A Process View of Creation
14. The Creation Theology of Teilhard and Whitehead Compared
15. Toward a Spirituality of Work
16. The Ignatian Dimension of Teilhard's Spirituality of Work
17. Human Beings as Co-Creator
18. Human Suffering and Pastoral Care
19. Christian and Native Indian Theologies of the Earth
20. Process Theology and Feminist Thought
21. Human Suffering and the God of Love
22. Evolution and Hope
23. Creation and Liberation Theology
24. Motherhood (Parenting) as Co-Creation
25. The Humility of God and Process Thought

## **Bibliography**