

Christian Social Teaching East and West (7,5 ECTS credits)

Level: 1st cycle

Discipline: THEOLOGY (Theological Studies in Culture and Society)

Course ID: 0356

Admission requirements

General admission requirements for university studies. Students taking part in the course as a part of their Bachelor's degree program must have completed Course A, Introduction in Philosophy and Theology (30 ECTS credits). Students taking part in the course as a freestanding course are expected to have corresponding prior knowledge.

Educational goals

After having completed the course, the students are expected to:

- give a comprehensive account of some of Christian social teaching's central issues;
- analyze similarities and differences of main principles and their application of Christian social teaching in the Catholic Church and in the Orthodox Churches;
- understand the relationship between the Christian social thought and contemporary social challenges, and be able to analyze the relationship;
- be able to critically reflect on the social doctrine of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches in relation to contemporary social issues such as poverty, war and peace, and the environment.

Course content

This course provides a historical, theoretical and practical overview of the principles and themes of Christian social teaching and social justice. On the one hand, it explores approaches of Catholic social responsibility through the official texts from 100 years of Catholic social teaching, and on the other hand, it compares it to the evolution of the Christian social thought within the Orthodox theological milieux, their teaching and practice. A special attention will be paid to the contemporary topics such as wealth and poverty, war and peace, and the question of the environmental responsibility.

Teaching and examination

Teaching has the form of material on a digital teaching platform as well as education in a classroom as one week of intensive education, with lectures, presentations and seminars. The examination is in the form of a written assignment (of 4-6 pp.). The grade is based on active participation in the course (40 %) and on the final written assignment (60 %).

Bibliography

Additional resources and studies:

Dorr, Donal. *Option for the Poor and for the Earth: From Leo XIII to Pope Francis* / Donal Dorr. ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016. 496 p.

Guroian, Vigen, *Incarnate Love: Essays in Orthodox Ethics*. Notre Dame, Indiana, Notre Dame University Press, 1987. 260 p.

Harakas, Stanley S., *The Wholeness of Faith and Life: Orthodox Christian Ethics: Part One: Patristic Ethics*. Brookline, Mass: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1999. 449 p.

Massaro, Thomas. *Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2023. 197 p.

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. USCCB Publishing, 2004. ca. 300 p. Online version available at www.vatican.va

Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, “Rescue the victims from the hand of their oppressors” (Jer. 22:3) *The Letter of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC in Ukraine on War and Just Peace in the Context of New Ideologies*. 2024. Available online at <https://ugcc.ua/en/data/rescue-the-victims-from-the-hand-of-their-oppressors-jer-223-the-letter-of-the-synod-of-bishops-of-the-ugcc-in-ukraine-on-war-and-just-peace-in-the-context-of-new-ideologies-944/>

Additional articles, around 20 pages in total, accessed through the digital platform.

Roman Catholic Encyclicals:

Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum* (On Capital and Labor), Encyclical Letter, May 15, 1891. 22 p.

John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris* (On Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity, and Liberty), Encyclical Letter, April 11, 1963. 20 p.

John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus* (On Hundredth Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*), Encyclical Letter, May 1, 1991. 54 p.

Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development), Encyclical Letter, June 29, 2009. 59 p.

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si* (On Care for our Common Home), Encyclical Letter, May 24, 2015. 82 p.

Encyclicals available at www.vatican.va

Eastern Orthodox Documents:

The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church

<http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>

For the Life of the World. Toward a Social Ethos of the Orthodox Church

https://www.goarch.org/social-ethos?p_p_id=56_INSTANCE_km0Xa4sy69OV&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-1&p_p_col_count=1&_56_INSTANCE_km0Xa4sy69OV_languageId=en_US

See also "Kursplaner: allmänna bestämmelser" (Course plans: General rules)

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