UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: Spring 2012
Instructor: W. Kurz, S. J.
Course #: 2110
Section: 102
Course Title: New Testament Selected Books:
Course Sub-Title: Synoptic Gospels and Acts

Description:

The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles are the only two-volume work in the New Testament that continues the story of Jesus into the early church. Only Acts provides a framework for the isolated pieces of information about the origins of Christianity in NT letters. We shall review the major steps from oral tradition to the first Gospel, Mark. We shall explain what Gospels are (using especially Mark and Luke) and how Luke-Acts continues the OT history of God’s creating and saving his people. Besides using historical critical approaches to the Gospels and Acts and studying them as narratives with contemporary literary criticism, we will join the current revival of more explicitly theological biblical criticism with some reference to Church Fathers. We will also see how stories in Mark, Luke and Acts provide biblical models for, and how they can be applied to contemporary Christian living, since for Christians, Mark, Luke and Acts are also part of God’s inspired Word to us today.

Most of our work will be EXEGESIS, involving extremely close reading and re-reading of Bible texts at home in preparation and together in class. Class preparation, faithful attendance and class contributions are of major importance since class-session format involves heavy use of teacher-student analysis of texts and discussion groups more than lecture. No previous Scripture courses are presupposed.

Grades will probably be based on:

- [10%] contributions to class interpretation (quality vs. quantity)
- [10% = 5% + 5%] ten brief quizzes for class preparation
- [10%] Exegetical outlined argument for thesis (preparation for final paper) 1-2 pages
- [20%] Midterm Test
- [25%] Final Exam
- [25%] Paper, 8-10 pages (minimum 4 pp. exegesis & 4 pp. personal synthesis & application to contemporary experience).