UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: Fall 2011
Instructor: David G. Schultenover, S.J.
Course #: THEO 4320/5320
Section: 101
Course Title: Jesus the Christ

Description:

This course explores the twofold question: What difference does belief (a) in God and (b) in Jesus Christ as God incarnate make to the development of the human person and consequently to one’s life choices? This twofold question is therefore about belief and its consequences, with a focus on specifically Christian belief and therefore on Christian identity, i.e., on what being a Christian means both theoretically and practically.

We will explore both the identity of the historical Jesus of Nazareth and his meaning for Christian believers, so that one can make an informed choice about the apostle Paul’s injunction to “be conformed to the image of his [God’s] Son” or to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 8:29; 13:14). In other words, we will illuminate the question, “Who is Jesus who became the Christ?” and what does it mean to be conformed to him?

For the Christian believer, this question is also profoundly a question of self-identity, for the Christian holds that Jesus is the paradigm of the human person (according to the definition of the Council of Chalcedon, that Jesus Christ is fully human as well as fully divine). In other words, for the Christian, Jesus defines the human person: he says and shows what it means to be fully human.

This course fits into the academic genre of theological and Christological anthropology, but its practical focus also places it in the genre of foundational spiritual theology. The course’s method is interdisciplinary, including psychological and anthropological, as well as theological reflection.