

Department of Theology

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: **Spring 2008**
Instructor: Dr. John D. Zemler
Course #: Theo 168
Section: 1001
Course Title: Theology of Violence and Non-Violence

Description:

We will examine Violence and Non-Violence in order to arrive at a Theology of Violence and Non-Violence. Our aims will include the following: Identify "Peace" as more than the absence of war; Understand the Cycle of Violence and its de-humanizing aspects; Identify the trajectory away from violence in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and the New Testament. Additionally, we shall look at ancient teachings and then Aquinas on just war, Christian teaching on slavery, and the theological consequences of violence. Prayer and meditation in different traditions as a resource for peace will be also addressed. A major emphasis will be upon ways to understand and to heal Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, a syndrome resulting from terror and trauma. Lastly, we shall also inquire about individual suffering and how to make it endurable.

Learning Objectives: As a third-level theology course within the core curriculum, this class aims to help students meet certain basic objectives. These are as follows:

1. Describe theologically the basic content of Peace & Peacemaking in terms of the historical communities and present-day communities.
2. Interpret theological texts and frameworks in historical and literary contexts.
3. Articulate implications of Christian faith for growth in holiness and promotion of justice in the contemporary world.
4. The ability to convey the above through the act of academic writing (Students will be shown how this is done).

Required texts:

1. Henrik Syse and Gregory M. Reichberg *ETHICS, NATIONALISM, AND JUST WAR: Medieval and Contemporary Perspectives*
2. Michael K. Duffey, *Sowing Justice, Reaping Peace: Case Studies of Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Healing Around the World.*
3. Edward Tick, *War and the Soul: Healing Our Nation's Veterans From Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*
4. Walter Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*
5. Henri Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*

Other required reading/study material will be placed on library reserve.

Always bring your syllabus to class.

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Optional texts:

A Bible, preferably a modern translation. The Revised Standard Version is always nice. You do not need to go out and purchase a Bible for this class. That said, you are expected to have easy access to one throughout the semester.