

Department of Theology

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: **Fall 2008**
Instructor: Dan Maguire
Course #: THEO 179
Section: 1003
Course Title: Special Topics in Moral Theology
Course Sub-Title: A Method for Moral Choice

Description:

To be a person is to be an ethicist. So, if you are already doing ethics, what do I have to teach you? A course in philosophical or theological ethics tries to make you better at doing what you are already doing...i.e. it tries to teach you to be more sensitive and less easily seduced by the dominant myths of the society.

This course will give you a moral method that will help you address and *try to solve* all moral questions. We will also look at the “theopolitical dynamite” contained in Judaism and Christianity and apply all this to questions such as: “How come the United States has military installations and bases in 800 places around the planet whereas Indonesia could not open a naval station in Florida nor could Russia open an air base in Michigan?” “How did the Catholic Church get so obsessed with sexual and reproductive issues even though there is a strong Catholic social justice tradition and early Christianity stressed justice, peace making, and concern for the poor?” “Why are environmental issues not considered ‘Family Values?’” “Who rigged the deal whereby 82% of all world income goes to the top 20 %, leaving 18% for the rest of the struggling and often starving world?” “What secrets explain the white male monopolies in the U.S. society?” “Is marriage only for heterosexuals?” “Is uncritical flag-waving patriotism a form of idolatry?”

Required texts:

- 1) On Moral Grounds: The Art/Science of Ethics, by Daniel C. Maguire and A. Nicholas Fargnoli, McGraw Hill, paperback.
- 2) A Moral Creed for All Christians, by D. Maguire, Fortress Press, 2005.
- 3) Whose Church? A Concise Guide for Progressive Catholics, The New Press, 2008.

TESTS:

There will be three tests, including the final, and there are no exemptions from the final. The final will be in accord with the university final exam schedule.

To help in your study, I will give you in advance a list of all the possible exam questions. Then in the exam you will be asked several of the questions from that list. Thus you will not be blindsided in the exam by questions you never imagined.