

Faculty of Theology



THEO1292 Fundamental and Practical Ecclesiology

[90h] 6 credits

This two-yearly course is taught in 2006-2007, 2008-2009,...

This course is taught in the 1st and 2nd semester

Language: French

Level: First cycle

Aims

By the end of this course, the student should be able:

- to deal, on the basis of the texts of Vatican II, particularly Lumen Gentium, with the main current questions in ecclesiology;
- to give objective information on the current questions in ecumenism;
- to identify the nature, the goals and the players of pastoral practices; to use the instruments necessary to describe, analyse and evaluate pastoral practices;
- to understand the place and role of canon law in the life and practice of the Church; to appreciate how ecclesiological data are implemented concretely in canon law;
- to use the documents and work instruments in ecclesiology, including the texts of Vatican II and the "Code of Canon Law";
- to hold together ecclesiology, pastoral theology and canon law.

Main themes

To meet these objectives, the course covers the following:

(unit A - ecclesiology - 3 credits [45 h])

(1) (on the basis of the texts of Vatican II): the Church as mystery and historical institution; the holding together of the common mission of the baptised and of the various ministries; the uniqueness of the Church and the multiplicity of the Churches; the Church as sacrament of salvation for the world;

(2) (ecumenism): history and current situation of the main Christian denominations; history of the ecumenical movement and of the World Council of Churches; the Conciliar decree Unitatis redintegratio; the bilateral dialogues of the Roman Catholic Church and ecumenism in Belgium;

(unit B - pastoral theology - 2 credits [30 h])

(3) meanings of the word "pastoral" in Biblical revelations; source, genesis and development of pastoral/practical theology; current methods in pastoral /practical theology; application to topical questions;

(unit C - canon law - 1 credit [15 h])

(4) reflection on the justification, nature, goals and limits of canon law in its relationship with theology, on one hand, and with the concrete life of the Church on the other hand. In addition, the course includes a practical initiation to the use of reference texts in ecclesiology.

Content and teaching methods

Unit A Ecclesiology

On the basis of the texts of Vatican II, particularly *Lumen gentium* and *Unitatis redintegratio*, the course will deal with some fundamental questions in ecclesiology today: the relationship between theological mystery and historical institution within Church's reality; the holding together of the common mission of the baptized, and of the ministries, the ordained ones especially; the ecumenical question of the multiplicity of Christian Churches, and the efforts to get over the divisions amongst them; the Church as sacrament of salvation for the world, and her relationship with non Christian religions in particular. One will also take care of holding together ecclesiology, pastoral theology and canon law.

Unit B Introduction in practical theology

This introduction in practical theology consists of three parts. The first part will set out before the students the challenges of the practical theology and its methods (1), its history (2) and the main texts of the Churches about it (3). Then we will study the contemporary situation in western countries through the main components that affect the Christian life : new connection between Churches and Society, "ultra-modernity", post-Christendom, faith and culture, pluralism, individualism, crisis of the education# (4). Some selected questions of practical theology will be afterwards shortly presented (5).

Unit C Canon law

After a short historical introduction, the canonical approach will be focused on the main issues addressed by the different schools of theology of canon law, in three perspectives : (a) normative validity (b) normative legitimacy (c) normative effectivity of canon law within the Catholic Church. The conclusive part will discuss the specificity of canon law for the Church, the faithful and the society today. The main methodological principles for a research in canon law will be introduced.

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)

without object