

Canterbury House of Studies
Upper School
Moral Theology and the Sanctification of Time
Syllabus 2020-2021

THE PRAYER:

ALMIGHTY Father, grant that our classroom may be a home of faith and fruitful study; and that we may so learn truth as to bear its light along our ways, and so learn Christ as to be found in him; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

THE INSTRUCTOR:

Rhea Bright
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405-831-6631

Office hours: Wednesday 9:30-10:30 a.m. and 2:45-3:45 p.m. ET

I am always happy to answer questions or address and concerns that students or parents may have. Please email me anytime, or text or call between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern time to set up a time to talk. I will get back to you as soon as possible. When you contact me, please give me some idea of what times are good for you and what time zone you are in. I am in Atlantic time, which is 1 hour ahead of Eastern Time.

THE STUDENT:

This course is for any high school student (10th-12th grade) with the following qualifications:

- is interested in coming to a better understanding of herself or himself as a human being and as a child of God.
- is willing to read a variety of texts with attention.
- is willing to enter into the argument of each text and to discuss each one.
- respects and listens to others, and is able to politely discuss divergent points of view.
- can take notes.
- can write (type) paragraphs and essays without difficulty.

THE CURRICULUM:

This course is part of a programme in rediscovering and renewing a lively Anglican heritage of theology, scripture reading and prayer. We will read from philosophers, theologians, poets, hymnodists and apologists from ancient times to the 20th century. We will be looking at the authors for a consistent and reliable understanding of orthodox Christian theology and the

Anglican tradition of sanctifying time through daily prayer and study. Many of the reading selections will be from online sources or provided by the teacher. Students will need to print these so that they have texts they can mark on. Josef Pieper's book on the Cardinal Virtues and the 1662 Book of Common Prayer will provide the lenses through which we read these authors.

This is not a course in moralism or legalism. It is not about laws and actions that will make us successful in life. It begins with the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount turning the whole notion of "success" on its head. It is about understanding who and what God created us to be, and the gifts that He has given us to draw us ever closer to Him and to one another. It is about knowing ourselves and, in knowing ourselves, knowing God. It is about loving one another and, in loving one another, loving God. It is about the pilgrimage of life and the sanctification of time.

THE GOAL:

This class is intended to be part of a life-long journey of discovery and sanctification, with these specific aims:

- To know the western doctrine of the soul, grounded in Plato and Aristotle, consistent with the Holy Scriptures and developed by Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas.
- To understand what is meant by the "cardinal virtues" (prudence, courage, temperance and justice), and the relation of these virtues to the doctrine of the soul as proper to it by nature.
- To understand the intent of the English reformers in producing the Book of Common Prayer.
- To appreciate and make use of the Anglican system of daily scripture reading, praying daily using the words of scripture.
- To see in the services of the Church the formation and strengthening of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.
- To think seriously and care deeply about the most important things in life: what it means to be fully human; how we are to love God and one another.

THE METHOD:

Students are assigned reading for each class. The most important part of being a student is learning how to be a student; so we read with a goal to understanding the author's purpose and argument before commenting on it. Thus, students can expect to spend about as much time preparing for class as they spend in class. Students will be asked to mark key terms in the text, attempt to identify the main point or argument of the reading and write a summary sentence or two in their commonplace journals.

In the classroom setting, the reading will be discussed by all present. The teacher will provide any necessary background, clarification and assistance to the understanding of the argument or

key points. Students will be given the last 10 minutes of class to write a paragraph in their commonplace book summarizing the main points of the reading as enlightened by the discussion. Scanned copies of these commonplace entries should be sent to Mrs Bright by noon (eastern time) the following day. The readings are selected to build upon one another, so by the end of each semester, students should be able to trace a development of ideas in their journals.

THE READINGS: Texts will be finalized by April 2020.

1. Selections from the Bible (KJV) such as: The Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7)
2. Josef Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*.
3. Online selections from works such as the following:
 - a. Plato, *Republic*
 - b. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
 - c. Augustine, *De Trinitate*
 - d. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*
 - e. Dante, *Purgatorio*
 - f. Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*
4. The Book of Common Prayer 1662.
5. Reading selections from a variety of authors from theologians to poets and hymnodists, including William Tyndale, Thomas Cranmer, Richard Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, John Keble, John Mason Neale, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, Dorothy Sayers, Edmund Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, John Donne, George Herbert, T.S. Eliot, Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley.

THE SCHEDULE:

- Class days:
Monday and Wednesday 3:45-5:00 Eastern Time for 32 weeks
- Orientation:
Monday August 31.
- Semester 1 Class dates Sept. 9 to Jan. 20:
September 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30
October 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28
November 2, 4, 9, 11, 16, 18, 30 [Thanksgiving Break: Nov. 23-27]
December 2, 7, 9, 14, 16 [Christmas Break: Dec. 21-Jan. 8]
January 11, 13, 18, 20
- Semester 2 Class dates Jan 27 to May 26:
January 25, 27
February 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17 [Winter Break: Feb. 22-26]
March 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24 [Holy Week/Easter Break: March 29-April 2]
April 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28

May 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26

- In case of cancellation due to illness, family emergency, internet problems, etc, I will get a substitute, record a makeup session, or provide an alternative assignment in lieu of class that day.

EVALUATION:

We desire for students to cultivate scholarly virtues and habits of diligence, constancy, patience, and persistence. Cultivating habits and acquiring virtues takes time and encouragement. I will provide the following grades in order to help students and their parents assess if the student is moving adequately toward those goals. Students will receive marks on a scale from *non satis* to *magna cum laude* (see below). Note that *magna cum laude* is, by definition, an uncommon accolade. I will also post letter or numerical grades accessible to parents.

- Contributions to class discussion will receive an assessment every two weeks which will reflect the student's participation and engagement with the texts and ideas over that two-week period. Absences (exceptions are made for religious observances), tardiness, and being unprepared or disrespectful all contribute to being *non satis*.
- The twice weekly commonplace journal entries will receive a completion grade of *satis* or *non satis*, along with comments as necessary. These are not given numerical grades.
- Occasional longer writing assignments will receive qualitative grades of *non satis* to *magna cum laude*.
- End-of-semester essays will receive a letter or numerical grade. This grade will be an assessment of the quality of the student's argument, the understanding conveyed, and the clarity and quality of the expression of the argument. The grade level of the student will be taken into consideration.

<i>Magna cum laude</i>	with great praise	Especially and unusually fine work. This is not common.
<i>Cum laude</i>	with praise	Very good work done by the average student. This should be common.
<i>Satis</i>	satisfactory	Adequate work that is completed as assigned and on time.
<i>Non satis</i>	unsatisfactory	Work that is incomplete, poorly executed, or late.

We all have different gifts and abilities. I will attempt to guide students toward being better students, and I am always willing to have those conversations. I cannot, however, guide a student toward a particular grade, and I do not think such conversations are ever fruitful.