

<b>Module Title:</b>	<b>Christology and Trinity</b>
<b>Module Code:</b>	<b>601 TCHT</b>
<b>Level:</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Credit Rating:</b>	<b>20 Credits</b>
<b>Duration:</b>	<b>Student Learning Time: 200 hours</b>
<b>Teaching Hours:</b>	<b>40 Hours</b>
<b>Academic Responsibility:</b>	<b>Thomas Herbst OFM, D Phil David Blowey OFM Conv, STD</b>

### **Module Aims:**

This module is divided into two parts:

#### Part One- Christology

The module begins by offering students a concise history of the development of systematic Christological doctrine and reflection within the Christian tradition presented thematically in terms of the development of Christology from New Testament roots through the major patristic councils, which includes a systematic reflection on Christ's ontological constitution, person and natures. Shifting from an emphasis on developed doctrine of Christ's person, the module then continues with a focus on the soteriological aspect of Christ's work, offering students a concise history of the development of systematic Christological doctrine and reflection within the Christian tradition presented thematically in terms of-

- An introduction to the notion of salvation within the Judeo-Christian context.
- The redemptive Incarnation; a systematic reflection on the soteriological mission of Christ in the New Testament (cognizant of differing New Testament soteriologies) and
- Patristic development, of Christ as 'sacrament' or 'instrument' of salvation.
- Emphasis on the Death and Passion of Christ in light of the above.
- Medieval insights pertaining to the above, inclusive of Peter Lombard's Sentences, Anselm's explanation, emerging emphasis on the humanity of Christ, the impact of Aristotelianism from Abelard to Aquinas etc. Special emphasis is given to the Franciscan tradition, particularly Bonaventure's and John Duns Scotus' soteriology,
- The redemptive Resurrection; a reflection on the Resurrection as a saving event.

#### Part Two- Trinity

The second part of the module begins with an analysis of the philosophical-theological vocabulary used when discussing Trinitarian matters and proceeds to a deeper knowledge of the rich patristic/conciliar traditions which led to the explication of this, the basis of the Christian faith, with close attention paid to patristic speculation culminating in the dogmatic assertions of Church Councils of the same era. Included in this analysis is an investigation into problematic definitions, in the world of late Antiquity, as to what a 'person' might be with concurrent questions regarding individuality etc. Recourse to the rich philosophical traditions, particularly those animating ancient Christianity, is taken into close account. A critical analysis of the development of the Trinitarian dogmas will enable the students to increase their own theological investigations as they continue their theological-academic pursuits in the future.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the module students should be able to:

1. Form a critical understanding of the foundational importance of scriptural exegesis in the formation of Christological as well as Trinitarian doctrine demonstrating familiarity with the problems involved.
2. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the theological and doctrinal Christological and Trinitarian suppositions articulated by the patristic ecumenical councils.
3. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the subsidiary reflection on the ontological constitution of Christ in light of the above, also with reference to the Trinity.
4. Display an ability to relate the logic of patristic Christological and Trinitarian speculation to its ultimate dogmatic exposition as articulated by the councils.
5. Display a critical understanding of the foundational importance of scriptural exegesis in the formation of Christological soteriology as well as familiarity with the problems involved.
6. Display a thorough understanding of the theological and doctrinal suppositions articulated by relevant patristic authors pertaining to Christology and Trinity within their philosophical and exegetical contexts.
7. Display a thorough understanding of the theological and doctrinal suppositions pertaining to Christology and the related area of Trinity articulated by relevant medieval authors within a broader context involving the modification of patristic concepts, a new philosophical synthesis, and developing exegetical methodology.

### **Indicative Module Content:**

The module begins with an outline/overview of the nascent, sometimes problematic, Christology found in the New Testament. This continues with a close examination of early exegetical methodology and conceptions of scripture as formative and authoritative in emerging Christological speculation.

The context thus set, the following chronology will be examined:

- Christology from the New Testament to Nicea.
- Christology from Nicea to Constantinople I.
- Christology from Constantinople I to Ephesus.
- Christology from Ephesus to Chalcedon.

The module continues with an outline/overview of the nascent, sometimes problematic, soteriology found in the Old Testament, and continues by applying 'types' to interpretation of the same in the New Testament; examples: developing Messianic theology in both Old and New Testament contexts, Christ as 'New Adam' etc.

Development of various 'tropes' or 'types' from their scriptural roots to patristic speculation with emphasis on Neo-Platonic philosophical influences on notions of salvation, martyrdom as a soteriological trope, Irenaeus' theory of recapitulation, Augustine on original sin and redemption, emerging sacramental theology as it impacted on soteriology. Also, the close association of ecclesiology and soteriology as well as the emerging conciliar Christological definitions associated with soteriological concerns. An analysis of shifting soteriological emphases in the medieval period.

Part Two of the module dealing with the Trinity begins with a study the biblical bases (Old Testament foreshadowings [דבר,  $\sigma\sigma\phi\iota\alpha$ , רוח] and New Testament explications) and early baptismal/creedal formulae which lead to the development of the Trinitarian dogmas. This is followed by examination and interpretation of extracts from the pertinent literature (the main eastern and western Church Fathers) and conciliar developments, through medieval theology (Thomas Aquinas, Franciscan school) to contemporary essays that reformulate this mystery of faith. The systematic reflection will also deal with Trinitarian hermeneutics, the unity between immanent and

revealed Trinitarian theology (ο ἰ'κ ο ν ο μ ι α), the Trinity's self-communication, the meaning of the notion of person, the essential unity of the three divine persons, based on the *relatio subsistens*, the concepts of Trinitarian procession and missions, and the particularities of the persons (especially concerning pneumatology). In the course of the term, the ecumenical aspects of the *filioque* controversy and the spiritual dimension of Trinitarian indwelling will also be presented.

### Learning and Teaching Strategies:

The basic format of presentation will be four weekly lectures systematically treating the subject matter as described in the Indicative Module Content. Students are given specific weekly reading assignments as well as directed toward extra-curricular reading proposed by the instructor. Research interests are quickly identified and tutorial sessions, depending on individual needs of the students, arranged for clarification and direction, inclusive of suggested extra-curricular reading. Within the classroom context of lectures, active participation of students in terms of questions and, especially, discussion is strongly encouraged as a primary way of developing analytical skills, critical thinking, and clarity of expression.

### Assessment:

The module will be assessed in the form of two written essays of not less than 2,500 words.

### Indicative Essay Titles:

1. Discuss the underlying soteriological concern animating the Nicean/Chalcedonian definitions of the divinity and humanity of Christ.
2. New Testament Christology was both necessary and problematic for the subsequent dogmatic pronouncements of ecumenical councils, discuss.
3. In his *Catechetical Lectures* Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 315-386) presents his vision of the Christian life to the Elect and Neophytes of the Church. Analyze in depth Cyril's pneumatology as found in these mystagogical treatises in relationship to Trinitarian theology.
4. The *filioque* clause has been a consistent 'thorn in the flesh' of the process of reunification of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. Critically assess the theological arguments underlying the Unification Councils of Lyons (1274) and of Ferrara/Florence (1438-1445) in view of the present ecumenical discussions of the "Joint International Commission for Theological Discussion between the Catholic Churches and the Orthodox Churches."

### Illustrative Bibliography

Boff, Leonardo (1986)	<i>Trinity and Society.</i>	Orbis.
Coffey, David (1999)	<i>Deus Trinitas: The Doctrine of the Triune God.</i>	OUP
Fatula, Mary Ann (1990)	<i>The Triune God of Christian Faith.</i> Zacchaeus Studies: Theology. A Michael Glazer Book.	Liturgical Press.
Farrelly, M. John, O.S.B. (2005)	<i>The Trinity.</i>	Sheed & Ward Rowman & Littlefield
Kelley, JND, (1978)	<i>Early Christian Doctrines</i> , rvsd. ed.	Harper Press.

- Torrance, T.F. (1995) *Divine Meaning: Studies in Patristic Hermeneutics*. Edinburgh.
- Marshall, I.H.(1992) *The Origins of New Testament Christology*. Leicester.
- Evans, G.R. (2001) ed., *The Medieval Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Medieval Period* Massachusetts.
- Tanner, N.P.  
(1990) *english ed* *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1: Nicaea-Lateran IV.* London.