



Religious Studies 1027e (570)
Introduction to Catholic Christianity
Fall/ Winter 2026-2027

Instructor: M. Ross

Email: mross67@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

This course introduces students to fundamental questions about human existence, the world, and God, and the ways in which the Catholic tradition in all its diversity has addressed these questions. Themes include: the nature of God, the destiny of creation and the meaning of Jesus Christ for salvation.

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 1.00

Breadth: Category B

Subject Code: RELSTUD

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Religious Studies 1027E (570) – Introduction to Catholic Christianity

Course Outline – 2025-26

Michael Ross
Department of Religious Studies, King's University College
mross67@uwo.ca

This is an In-Person Class.

ZOOM Office Hours:

Wednesdays: 10:00 am – 11:00 am or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to fundamental questions about human existence, the world, and God, and the ways in which the Catholic tradition in all its diversity has addressed these questions. Themes include: the nature of God, the destiny of creation, and the meaning of Jesus Christ for salvation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Foster a sympathetic and critical understanding of the Catholic tradition in its historical development;
2. Introduce students to the major topics of theology and to show their interrelation;
3. Introduce students to the diversity of contemporary theological concerns and approaches.

COURSE GOALS:

By the end of this course, as a successful student, you will be able to:

1. Describe the historical development of the Catholic tradition and relate historical developments to the shape and issues of contemporary Catholic Christianity
2. Define and interrelate concepts and themes Catholic theology
3. Describe accurately and assess issues and arguments in contemporary Catholic thought and practice
4. Express ideas about the Catholic tradition and contemporary culture in your own voice

This course serves as the “gateway” course for *Catholic Studies* and *Catholic Studies for Teachers*. It is meant to lay the groundwork and prepare you for subsequent Religious Studies courses.

ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION

Attendance & Participation – 10%

- Students are expected to attend class and to be able to make meaningful contributions to class discussions.

Weekly Readings & Perusall – 25%

- Each week, readings will be posted on Brightspace with an accompanying set of questions embedded in the web application called *Perusall*. This grade will be based on evidence of reading and the quality and accuracy of your responses and comments. (We will discuss this in further detail at the first class and throughout the year as I offer feedback).

First Semester In-Class Paper – 10%

- On **Monday, November 16th**, students will write a short paper in class. We will discuss further details and prepare for this paper in the weeks leading up to the assignment.

Midterm Exam (December Exam Period) – 15%

- This will be a two-hour exam written during the December exam period. Administration publishes the date and time of all December exams in October. This exam includes everything that's been covered in first semester. A thorough review will be offered at the last class in December.

Second Semester In-Class Paper – 10%

- On **Monday, March 22nd**, students will write a short paper in class. We will discuss further details and prepare for this paper in the weeks leading up to the assignment.

Final Exam – 30%

- This will be a two-hour exam written during the April exam period. Administration publishes the date and time of all April exams in February. This exam will focus on second semester content (although many of the second semester themes build on first semester themes so the final exam is cumulative in that sense). A thorough review will be offered at the last class in April.

COPYRIGHT OF COURSE MATERIAL

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, video lectures, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Instructors are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and copies for their own use but may not distribute course materials publicly and/or online.

READINGS & TEXTBOOKS

There is no single textbook that you'll need to buy for this course. Readings will be provided on BRIGHTSPACE by me and/or the library as we move through the year.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES & TOPICS

Week 1 – Monday, September 14th
Introduction & the Catholic Intellectual Tradition

Week 2 – Monday, September 21st
History of Israel: Jesus of Nazareth and Christian Origins

Week 3 – Monday, September 28th
Early Christianity: Becoming the Imperial Church

Week 4 – Monday, October 5th
Augustine & Missionaries

*****Monday, October 12th – THANKSGIVING/NO CLASS/READING WEEK*****

Week 5 – Monday, October 19th
Early Middle Ages: East & West

Week 6 – Monday, October 26th
The High Middle Ages: Thomas Aquinas

Week 7 – Monday, November 2nd
Reformation & Exploration

Week 8 – Monday, November 9th
Vatican I and Vatican II: Church & the Modern World

Week 9 – Monday, November 16th – IN-CLASS PAPER

Week 10 – Monday, November 23rd
God & Revelation

Week 11 – Monday, November 30th
Scripture & Tradition

Week 12 – Monday, December 7th
A Teaching & Learning Church + REVIEW

*****CHRISTMAS BREAK*****

Week 13 – Monday, January 4th
God & Creation

Week 14 – Monday, January 11th
Jesus I: Life & Ministry

Week 15 – Monday, January 18th
Jesus II: Death & Resurrection

Week 16 – Monday, January 25th
Holy Spirit & Trinity

Week 17 – Monday, February 1st
Original Sin & Grace

Week 18 – Monday, February 8th
Sacraments & Liturgy

Monday, February 15th - READING WEEK/NO CLASS

Week 19 – Monday, February 22nd
Eschatology

Week 20 – Monday, March 1st
Religious Diversity

Week 21 – Monday, March 8th
Ethics & Catholic Social Teaching

Week 22 – Monday, March 15th
Women & the Church

Week 23 – Monday, March 22nd – IN-CLASS PAPER

Week 24 – Monday, March 29th
Issues of the Moment - TBD (EASTER MONDAY/REGULAR CLASS)

Week 25 – Monday, April 5th – REVIEW

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality_Reports_-_TurnItIn.html.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.