

*General Objectives:*

To introduce the Church Fathers and early Christian Writers in the period between the Council of Nicaea and the Seventh Century, presenting them with a broad overview within their specific contexts.

To indicate the main features of their teachings and their significance for the history of theology and the development of dogma (Trinity, Christology, Ecclesiology, etc.).

To consider also the Fathers' contribution to the development of the Church's spiritual life (mystical theology, monasticism and liturgical mystagogy).

To foster a love for the Fathers as spiritual guides and models of theological activity and to encourage students to acquire their "mind", so that theology may be a contemplative encounter with the Lord in his mysteries.

*Course Outlines:*

1. General introduction to patristic literature in the period. 2. The Fourth Century transformations in the Church, the first two Ecumenical Councils, and Trinitarian theology definitions. 3. The four Great Latin Fathers (St Gregory the Great, St Ambrose of Milan, St Augustine of Cartage, St Jerome). 4. The four Great Greek Fathers (St John Chrysostom, St Basil the Great, St Gregory of Nazianzus, St Athanasius the Great). 5. The monastic movement in Egypt, Syria, Palestine and the west. 6. Patristic liturgical theology. 7. Patristic mystical theology and teaching on prayer.

*Learning Outcomes:*

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to engage in detailed discussion of controversial topics; to read excerpts from patristic literature in class and discuss them together; to show how the teaching of the Fathers entered the mainstream of Christian theology and assisted the definition of orthodoxy; to reference Fathers' inclusions in the Church's Liturgy of the Hours, so as to encourage a more fruitful praying of the Breviary.

*Textbook:*

Drobner, Hubertus. *The Fathers of the Church: A Comprehensive Introduction*. Translated by Siegfried Schatzmann. Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing House, 2007.

*Bibliography:*

Aquilina, Mike. *The Fathers of the Church: An Introduction to the First Christian Teachers*. Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 2013; Benedict XVI. *Church Fathers and Teachers: From Leo the Great to Peter Lombard*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010; Di Berardino, Angelo, ed. *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*. 2 vols. Translated by Adrian Walford. Cambridge: James Clarke, 1992; Fortescue, Adrian. *The Greek Fathers: Their Lives and Writings*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007; Quasten, Johannes. *Patrology*. Vol. 3, *The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature from the Council of Nicaea to the Council of Chalcedon*. Notre Dame: Christian Classics, 1995; Quasten, Johannes. *Patrology*. Vol. 4, *The Golden Age of Latin Patristic Literature from the Council of Nicaea to the Council of Chalcedon*. Notre Dame: Christian Classics, 1995; Schaff, Philip, and Henry Wallace, eds. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Second Series, 14 vols. New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007; Schaff, Philip, ed. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. First Series, 14 vols. New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007; Simonetti, Manlio. *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*. Translated by John Hughes. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001; Willis, John, ed. *The Teachings of the Church Fathers*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002.