**“Know The Faith”**

**Fall Semester 2022**

**Wednesdays 1:00pm (PST)**

**Father Michael Shanbour**

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**Office Hours: 2:00-4:00pm**

**Rationale:**

This course will help students to absorb and appreciate the fundamental teachings of the Holy Orthodox Christian Church, with a special emphasis on learning how to communicate these Orthodox teachings in comparison and contrast with Roman Catholic and Protestant views.

**Course Aims and Outcomes:**

The aim of this course is to provide knowledge that will help students comprehend and live their Orthodox Faith more fully and to raise their level of confidence in communicating their faith to others. Each class will seek to explore the uniqueness of Orthodox theology and practice compared with later views developed after the Great Schism. The student will have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge of specific teachings in Holy Scripture and Holy Fathers that uphold the Orthodox perspective on each of eleven topics.

By end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Distinguish between Orthodox and non-Orthodox views on fundamental theological points;
2. Point to specific scriptural verses that affirm the Orthodox position;
3. Articulate the position of the early Church Fathers affirming the Orthodox position;
4. Understand how the Orthodox position affects one’s world-view and way of life; and
5. Communicate or defend the Orthodox position to non-Orthodox and, to some extent, respond to common objections to these positions.

**Format and Procedures:**

The students may (but are not required to) read the assigned material prior to each class. We will read the text together and stop frequently for explanation and discussion. The more questions and discussion, the more will be absorbed and retained. Students may be asked to read out loud during the class. (If a student is unable to or does not wish to do so, please contact the instructor privately.) It is expected and preferred that all students participate at various points in discussions. It is expected that students participate whenever possible by both video and audio. The instructor will call on students who raise their hands to respond to questions. Students may be called upon directly to provide input or answers to help even out participation. Both the instructor and students will refrain from embarrassing or adversarial comments and will display an Orthodox Christian ethic of empathy and kindness. Discussion will be good natured and friendly, but will also include some fun and humor.

**My Assumptions:**

The instructor assumes that the students are Orthodox Christians (or willing inquirers) and are open to traditional Orthodox teachings. The course will be presented with the assumption that the Orthodox Church is the authentic one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of history and will promote this position in a clear but respectful way. Any Orthodox position presented will be founded on the teaching of scripture and the Saints of the Orthodox Church and not personal opinion (except when noted).

**Course Requirements:**

Students should be active participants in the life of the Orthodox Church, providing them with a practical and personal basis for and general experience of the topics covered.

The exclusive required text is “Know the Faith: A Handbook for Orthodox Christians and Inquirers,” Fr. Michael Shanbour, Ancient Faith Publishing. However, the student is *encouraged* to read the New Testament as well as other texts which, from time to time, may also be brought to the attention of the students. The book is available in hardcopy or e-book format. Reading assignments take both formats into account.

**Expectations for Parents**

* Set aside a calm, quiet, distraction-free space for your child(ren) to work every day.
* Ensure virtual learning equipment is available and charged.
* Establish routines and expectations and a basic schedule for completing classwork.
* Help students ‘own’ their learning.
* Check Edmodo for communications from teachers and help students print off resources that are provided.
* Stay abreast of teacher feedback in the form of grades or other messages.
* Proctor tests, quizzes, or other assessments as scheduled by the teacher. Parents ensure academic integrity because they are on the “live” side of the screen.
* Communicate with teachers regularly via email or Edmodo regarding any questions or issues that arise.
* If your child is having trouble completing work, email teachers to schedule a time for an online meeting.

**Grading Procedures**

Students will be graded as Pass or Fail based on their meaningful participation in class and their comprehension of the material as conveyed by the following:

Each CLASS: A 100-200 word summary of each chapter, written in the form of a letter (“Dear \_\_\_\_\_) to a fictitious RC or Protestant friend explaining the Orthodox position – **to be completed *after* each class.**

+ Memorize three verses from Holy Scripture for each chapter/topic. Be able to articulate the general position of the early Church Fathers the topic in question.

**Extra Credit Options**

1. Make an appointment and have a conversation with your priest on one of the topics covered.
2. Memorize 10 or more scripture verses in “Know the Faith.”
3. Write a report on a conversation you have on some topic of faith with a non-Orthodox Christian.
4. Find Scripture verses not included in “Know the Faith” that are relevant to a particular topic.

Thank you for the honor of offering these teachings for your edification and education. Please pray for me that God will bless me for this ministry, though I am unworthy. If you have questions, concerns, or special consideration don’t hesitate to contact me.

**Academic Integrity**

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work.

You are encouraged to study together and to discuss information and concepts covered in lecture and the sections with other students. One great way to assess what you know is to teach the idea to a peer! You may also work together on problem sets and give "consulting" help to or receive "consulting" help from your peers. However, this permissible cooperation should never involve one student having possession of a copy of all or part of work done by someone else, in any form (e.g. email, Word doc, Box file, Google sheet, or a hard copy). Assignments that have been previously submitted in another course may not be submitted for this course.

Should copying occur, both the student who copied work from another student and the student who gave material to be copied will both automatically receive a zero for the assignment. Penalty for violation of this Code can also be extended to include failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

For your writing assignments, you must work by yourself.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Reading Assignment Schedule From “Know the Faith”**

**Fall Semester 2022:**

8/17 – Introductions & Discussion on St. Cornelius the Centurion (Read Acts 10 – entire chapter) as it relates to sharing and knowing the Orthodox Faith.

CLASS 1: 8/24 – *KTF*: Chapter 1, The Church, pp 15-26.

CLASS 2: 8/31 – *KTF*: Chapter 1, The Church, pp 26-38.

CLASS 3: 9/07 – *KTF*: Chapter 1, The Church, pp 38-45.

*BREAK: 9/14 – No Class (Great Feast of the Cross)*

CLASS 4: 9/21*– KTF*: Chapter 2, Grace, pp 47-56.

CLASS 5: 9/28 – *KTF*: Chapter 2, Grace, pp 57-67.

CLASS 6: 10/5 – *KTF*: Chapter 2, Grace, pp 67-68 (Discussion on the “nous” + teachings of St. Seraphim of Sarov).

CLASS 7: 10/12 – *KTF*: Chapter 2, Grace, pp 72-84.

CLASS 8: 10/19 – *KTF*: Chapter 4, Salvation, pp 85-92.

CLASS 9: 10/26 – *KTF*: Chapter 3, Salvation, pp 92-97.

CLASS 10: 11/09 – *KTF*: Chapter 3, Salvation, pp 98-119.

*BREAK: 11/23 – No Class (Thanksgiving Break)*

CLASS 12: 11/30 – *KTF*: Chapter 5, Justification by Faith, pp 121-133.

CLASS 13: 12/07 – *KTF*: Chapter 5, Justification by Faith, pp 133-147.

CLASS 14: 12/14 – *KTF*: Chapter 5, Justification by Faith (The real meaning of justification)

**Spring Semester 2023:**

CLASS 1: 1/11 – *KTF*: Chapter 5, Tradition & Scripture, pp 149-160

Kindle: Beginning of Ch. 5 up to “The Relationship of Tradition and Scripture.”

CLASS 2: 1/18 – *KTF*: Chapter 5, Tradition & Scripture, pp 160-169.

Kindle: From “The Relationship of Tradition & Scripture” to “Scripture is to be Interpreted in the Light of Tradition.”

CLASS 3: 1/25 – *KTF*: Chapter 5, Tradition & Scripture, pp 169-179.

Kindle: From “Scripture is to be Interpreted in the Light of Tradition” to end of chapter.

CLASS 4: 2/1 *– KTF*: Chapter 6, The Eucharist & Liturgical Worship, pp 181-190.

Kindle: Beginning of Ch. 6 up to “Divine Liturgy.”

CLASS 5: 2/8 – *KTF*: Chapter 6, The Eucharist & Liturgical Worship, pp 203-216.

Kindle: From “Divine Liturgy” to “The Eucharist and the Reformation.”

CLASS 6: 2/22 – *KTF*: Chapter 7, Ordination & the Priesthood, pp 217-227.

Kindle: Beginning of Ch. 7 up to “The Origin of the Grace of the Priesthood.”

*BREAK: 3/01 – No Class (1st week of Great Lent)*

CLASS 7: 3/8 – *KTF*: Chapter 7, Ordination & the Priesthood, pp 227-242.

Kindle: From “The Origin of the Grace of the Priesthood” to end of chapter.

CLASS 8: 3/15 – *KTF*: Chapter 8, Confession & Repentance, pp 243-254.

Kindle: From Beginning of Ch. 8 up to “Crime and Punishment.”

CLASS 9: 3/22 – *KTF*: Chapter 8, Confession & Repentance, pp 255-269.

Kindle: From “Crime and Punishment” to end of chapter.

CLASS 10: 3/29 – *KTF*: Chapter 9, Icons, Veneration & Worship, pp 217-284.

Kindle: From “Word and Image” to end of chapter.

CLASS 11: 4/5 – *KTF*: Chapter 9, Icons, Veneration & Worship, pp 284-293.

Kindle: From “Word and Image” to end of chapter.

*BREAK: 4/12 – No Class.*

*BREAK: 4/19 – No Class. Great & Holy Week. Blessed Pascha!!*

CLASS 12: KTF: Chapter 10, The Intercessions of the Saints, pp. 295-313.

CLASS 13: KTF: Chapter 10, More on the Saints.

CLASS 14: 4/26 – *KTF*: Chapter 11, Veneration of the Virgin Mary, pp 315-325.

Kindle: Beginning of Ch. 11 up to “The Protestant Problem with Mary.”

CLASS 15: 5/4 – *KTF*: Chapter 11, Veneration of the Virgin Mary, pp 325-345.

Kindle: “The Protestant Problem with Mary” to the end of chapter.