



AMERICAN
NATIONAL
CATHOLIC
THEOLOGICAL
INSTITUTE

PRACTICING THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION Summer Term II 2025

Course Syllabus

COURSE TITLE

TH-162: Practicing Theological Reflection

Credit Hours: 1.5

Class Meeting Time: Saturdays, 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM EDT via ZOOM

Semester: Summer 2025: August 23, September 6, 13, 20, and 27

CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Most Rev. George R. Lucey

Email address: glucey@anccmail.org

Phone: (973) 800-2357

Office hours: The course instructor prefers to be contacted first by email unless the matter is urgent. The instructor will respond to email communications as soon as possible. If you would like the instructor to contact you by phone, please include your number in your email. Also, please indicate if the matter is urgent.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This is a required course for those pursuing ordination in the ANCC. This five-week course invites students to develop a methodological understanding of the praxis of theological reflection. The course will help participants acquire a normative theological framework within which to consider foundational theological concepts, such as the relationship of the Catholic theological narrative to other faith narratives, reason and faith, conversion, revelation, tradition, the development of doctrine, authority, ecclesiology, and ecumenism. Particular attention will be given to the significant influence of Vatican Council II in the American National Catholic Church.

This seminar is designed to help integrate the lived experience of the participants with the major sources of the Christian Tradition, and the implications of this integration for Christian living and ministry.

Participants will:

- Acquire a theological methodological approach to theological and spiritual reflection.
- Develop a theological frame for interrelations of culture, religion, spirituality Tradition.
- Identify and elaborate on the major forms of interpretation of scripture and doctrine.

- Demonstrate an increasing ability to integrate ministerial experiences with theological foundations.
- Develop a ministerial identity consistent with the norms of the American National Catholic Church.
- Develop a capacity for giving and receiving constructive critique of minstrel practice to add to an integrative understanding of participant's knowing, being, acting, feeling, and intuiting.

TEXTS

In addition to the required texts listed below, additional readings may be assigned from supplemental texts. These additional readings will be provided by the instructor as handouts at no cost to the participants. Assigned readings will make use of the abbreviated references in bold print.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Lonergan, Bernard. *Methods in Theology*. University of Toronto Press, 1993

Kinast, Robert L. *What Are They Saying about Theological Reflection?* New York: Paulist Press, 2000

Kinast, Robert L. *Let Ministry Teach: A Guide to Theological Reflection*. Liturgical Press: Collegeville, 1996.

ASSIGNMENTS AND HOMEWORK

All participants, including auditors, are expected to participate in class discussions and to complete the assigned readings in advance of each class. Throughout the course the instructor will ask participants, including auditors, to take a role in presenting a particular subtopic, which will require additional preparation.

Students who are auditing the course are exempt from the course requirements, although asked to be diligent in attendance and reading and to participate fully in the class discussions. They are perfectly welcome (and encouraged!) to take on any or all of the non-formation credit requirements.

Participants in formation and all those taking this course for credit are required to complete the following for a passing grade:

1. After reading "What are they saying about Theological Reflection," please write a three-page reflection paper on a style of theological reflection you prefer and state why.
2. Two-page reflection on a pastoral encounter, discussing the nature of the encounter and the theological principles that helped influence your role in the encounter. For example, scripture, Tradition, cultural, or theological.
3. Two-page statement of:
 - a) Thoughts on pastoral applications from the course;
 - b) Significant learnings from the course

Formatting and Submission of Papers: Papers must be prepared using Microsoft Word or a Microsoft Word compatible/equivalent word processor. All papers must conform to the following format:

Type font: Times New Roman 12 point. Text should be typed in regular face except for emphasis, which may be done using boldface, underlining, italics or a combination of the three. Headings and subheadings should be no larger than 16 point.

Margins, Paragraphs and line spacing: Papers should use a one-inch margin on all four sides. Using the “Paragraph” dropdown menu, select “0” space before each paragraph and 6 pt. space after each paragraph. Doing this eliminates hard breaks that take up unnecessary space (in other words, there should be no paragraph space holders between each paragraph). Set the line spacing to 1.5.

Page numbering: Insert and center page numbers in the footer of each page (using the page number dropdown menu from the “Insert” menu tab allows you to insert and center page numbers automatically).

Citations and Notes: Documentation of your sources and ideas is essential in academic writing. Please use a standard style for uniform citations; you may wish to consult one of several style books for this purpose. You may use either footnotes or endnotes.

Submission of your papers: All papers should be converted to PDF files and emailed to the instructor before 5 PM eastern time on the date they are due. Papers that do not meet the formatting requirements outlined above will not be accepted and will be returned for proper formatting.

PLAGIARISM AND USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Refer to the ANCTI Policies and Procedures for the ANCTI policy on plagiarism and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in courses.

ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, AND CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Participants are expected to attend each of the five classes of the course. Perfect attendance, while desired, is not always possible to achieve for reasons beyond a participant’s control. Accordingly, a participant may have no more than one unexcused class absence. Additional unexcused absences will result in a reduction in the participant’s grade and absence from more than three classes will result in the participant being automatically withdrawn from the course, and the final evaluation will so reflect.

All participants are expected to actively engage the course material and class discussions. Class participation forms an element of the grade for participants taking the course for credit, but even those not taking the course for credit are encouraged to participate fully as discussion is a vital part of the learning experience.

Presence in Class on Cams. All course participants should be aware of the requirements regarding presence in live online instruction: Unless specifically excused by the instructor, each participant is required to participate via a live camera, and the participant’s presence must be seen as actively present on the camera view in the class. A static screenshot or similar static symbol is not permitted except for very brief periods of less than five minutes, should a participant need to step away from the class for personal care. Should a somewhat longer period be required, the participant must secure the instructor’s permission, preferably in advance, and may be taken only with the instructor’s approval. Use of this exception should not be abused during any class session.

Because all classes are conducted via Zoom, participants must mute their microphone once the class has begun and unmute when they wish to ask a question, make a comment or respond to something raised during the class. Care must be taken not to “speak over” one another.

Participants are expected to always show the utmost courtesy and respect for others participating in the course.

Other policies and procedures: Participants should consult the ANCTI website (<https://ancti.org>) for additional policies and procedures pertaining to Institute courses.

Participants should also refer to the Institute's Policy and Procedures (available on the Institute's website at <https://ancti.org>) regarding withdrawal from courses.

GRADING

Grades for this course will be determined through evaluation of class participation, assignments and presentations, both written and oral. Where applicable, grades for this course will be determined through evaluation of class participation, assignments and presentations, both written and oral.

Participants taking this course for academic credit in the American National Catholic Theological Institute will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Assignments and participation will be evaluated using the following indicators of performance:

E = Excellent (Approximate equivalent to: A+, A, A-)

S = Satisfactory (Approximate equivalent to B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-)

U = Unsatisfactory (Equivalent to F)

W = Withdrawal (Student withdrawal from course for any reason)

WP = Withdrawal Passing (withdrawal with course at least half completed successfully)

WT = withdrawal based on exceeding the withdrawal time limit.

Accordingly, work rated "E" or "S" will be recorded as a Pass; work that is unsatisfactory will be recorded as a Fail. Participants should also refer to the Institute's Policy and Procedures (available on the Institute's website at <https://ancti.org>) regarding withdrawal from courses.

Late Work: If a participant is aware of a situation that will cause work to be submitted late or a presentation not to be made on time, the participant should inform the instructor as soon as possible to request to be excused from the deadline for the work or the presentation date. If excused, the instructor will assign a new due date in consultation with the participant. Unexcused work/presentations will result in no credit for that work or presentation. Unexcused work/presentations submitted late because of an unforeseen emergency will be accepted when a reasonable explanation, as determined in the instructor's sole discretion, is provided.

GRADING SCALE

Percent	Letter Grade	4.0 Scale
93-100	A	4.0
90-92	A-	3.7
87-89	B+	3.3
83-86	B	3.0
80-82	B-	2.7
77-79	C+	2.3
73-76	C	2.0
70-72	C-	1.7
67-69	D+	1.3
63-66	D	1.0
62 or less	F	0

Weighted elements of your grade:

Papers will be evaluated on a Likert scale on the following dimensions:

Integrated	Attempted	Not Attempted
5	4	3
2	1	0

Clear thesis statement.

The thesis statement addresses the content of the reflection.

Reasoned arguments support the thesis statement.

Evidence of engaging the readings and seminar discussions.

Evidence of critical thinking.

Able, when appropriate, to adopt an evaluative stance toward the text, concept or theological statement.

Organization of ideas.

Clarity of writing style.

Mechanics (spelling, footnote, bibliography).

Final grades for this course will be reported to the Registrar. Participants taking the course for credit should receive their grade no later than three days after they are reported to the Registrar.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topics/Assigned Readings/Homework
Class 1 August 23	Introduction: Departure Points: 1.) Why is Theology? 2.) What is theological reflection? (Easter as a point of discussion for this reflection) 3.) Discussion of what your operative theology is 4.) Operations in theological reflection. 5.) Hermeneutics: What is your operative theology, and what is your operative spirituality?
Class 2 September 6	Communications" Chapter 14 of Methods in Theology. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theological foundations and understanding of the human person • ANCC believing communities. • Persons in communion.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Participant-led Theological Reflection.</u>
Class 3 September 13	Moral Imperatives of Theological Foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Foundations as synthesis point for Theological Reflection. • Discussion of theological styles.
Class 4 September 20	Integrative discussion of course material, theology, spirituality, scripture. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Participant-led Theological Reflection</u>
Class 5 September 27	Integrative discussion of course material, theology, spirituality, scripture. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfinished Business)