



DIOCESE OF SAN JOSÉ • INSTITUTE FOR LEADERSHIP IN MINISTRY

## NEW TESTAMENT MODULE

WINTER 2025

**Dr. Catherine M. Murphy**  
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January 8, 15, 22, 29  
Discussion of paper February 5  
7:00–9:00 p.m.

### Required Books

Donald Senior and John J. Collins, eds. *The Catholic Study Bible*, NABRE, 3d ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. ISBN 978-0190267230

Catherine M Murphy, *The Gospels: A Pastoral Handbook*. Privately published, 2025 (relevant chapters will be distributed a week in advance of class in Google Classroom)

### Course Description

This course introduces the central stories of our Christian faith, the gospel accounts of Jesus, the Word made flesh. These stories tell the origins of our faith, but they are more than merely historical accounts. They are also “gospels” or “good news,” calling us to life in an ever-deepening relationship with God. The stories and teachings mean to form us into the Word of God ourselves, in fellowship with the Christian community. In this course, you will be invited into a deeper relationship with Christ through the critical study of the four gospels and Acts of the Apostles. We will explore and compare each gospel account, imagine the pastoral circumstances of their composition, and consider the problems and promises posed by a story that comes to us in four such different forms.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify at least three principles of Catholic biblical interpretation.
2. Distinguish key characteristics and themes of each gospel.
3. Differentiate the Christologies of each evangelist and tie these to their contexts.
5. Articulate the gospel message for your pastoral situation today.

### Learning Covenant





The Institute for Leadership in Ministry has prepared a learning covenant that lays out expectations for class attendance and preparation, homework, academic integrity, and classroom relationships.

### Web Resources

Everything you need for this course is available during our term at the ILM website through Google Classroom. During and after the term, a parallel resource is available from the Professor’s own website at Santa Clara University. This site includes video lectures on the gospels, and additional resources on the Bible, church teaching, theological reflection and biblical exegesis.

<https://webpages.scu.edu/ftp/cmurphy/courses/ilm-nt>

## SCHEDULE

Wk	Gospel	Murphy Book	Lecture Topics
<b>1</b> 1/8 	<b>Mark</b>  Read all of Mark  	Chapters 1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principles of Catholic biblical interpretation</li> <li>The gospel genre</li> <li>The Gospel of Mark <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outline</li> <li>literary characteristics</li> <li>pastoral context and resulting themes</li> <li>Christology: a suffering messiah</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>2</b> 1/15 	<b>Matthew</b>  Read all of Matthew  Focus on 1–3; 5–7; 23–28	Chapter 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Gospel of Matthew <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outline</li> <li>literary characteristics</li> <li>pastoral context and resulting themes</li> <li>Christology: the fulfillment of Jewish hopes</li> </ul> </li> <li>Practicing redaction criticism</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> 1/22 	<b>Luke-Acts</b>  Read all of Luke and Acts 1–4  In the gospel, focus on 1–4; 9:51–19:27; 22:1–24:53	Chapter 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A developing tradition: redaction, part 2</li> <li>The Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outline</li> <li>literary characteristics</li> <li>pastoral context and resulting themes</li> <li>Christology: savior of the world</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>4</b> 1/29 	<b>John</b>  Read all of John  Focus on 1–6; 9–15; 18–21	Chapter 6  <i>Optional: Ch 7</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparing the Synoptics and John</li> <li>The Gospel of John <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outline</li> <li>literary characteristics</li> <li>pastoral context and resulting themes</li> <li>Christology: the divine revealer</li> </ul> </li> <li>How John is like and unlike Gnostic thought</li> <li>Concluding issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The value of four voices rather than one</li> <li>Translating the gospels today</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>5</b> 2/5	<b>Discussion of Paper</b>	Chapter 8	The paper will be due on Tuesday, February 11; send to ILMstudents @dsj.org

## FINAL ASSIGNMENT



Your final paper is a three-page, double-spaced pastoral reflection on ONE gospel.

A pastoral reflection is a **thoughtful response** to a **real-life issue** in the church community. You think non-judgmentally about that issue and what can be done to address it, **using a resource from the Christian tradition**. Your resource will be ONE of the gospels.

You can come at this paper from **one** of two directions:

<p style="text-align: center;">Direction #1 From a current issue Murphy, <i>GAPH</i> ch. 8</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Direction #2 From the gospel Murphy, <i>GAPH</i> end of chs. 3–6, + <a href="#">video lectures</a> and your notes from class sessions</p>
<p>Pick an issue that people in your church community are struggling with.</p> <p>Find a similar issue that one of our gospel authors was facing.</p> <p>Identify how that gospel author responded to the issue in his teaching about Jesus’ ministry.</p> <p>Figure out how that response might speak to your church community today.</p>	<p>Pick an issue that one of our gospel authors was facing.</p> <p>Identify how that gospel author responded to the issue in his teaching about Jesus’ ministry.</p> <p>Find a similar issue that people in your church community are struggling with.</p> <p>Figure out how the evangelist’s response might speak to your church community today.</p>

When you sit down to write your paper, break it down into the following parts:

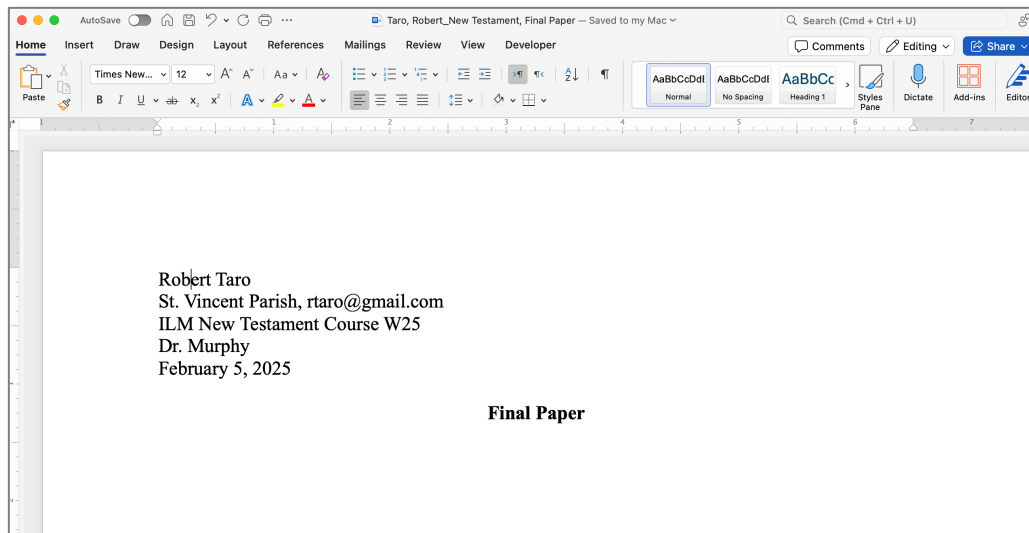
- **Identify** the pastoral issue that your gospel author is facing, and **describe** what his message or response is to that issue. The response should be a key theological or Christological theme that the author stresses in at least a couple of places in the text. Be sure to anchor your description of the message or theme with a couple of those examples from the text (don’t quote the text at any length, but do include chapter:verse references in parentheses after the description as proof of what you’re saying, like this — Matt 25:31-46). Write in complete sentences, and spend about a page on this.
- **Identify** and **describe** a contemporary pastoral issue that is similar to one of the issues you discussed in your gospel. When you describe the current issue, try to narrate it as neutrally (without judgment) as possible. Spend about ¾ of a page on this issue.
- Finally, **apply** the evangelist’s message then to your situation now. What is similar between the situations? What is different? How do you *apply* the evangelist’s response to our situation—that is, what would he say if he were here today? Write about a page on this.

## Format

This is a 3-page paper, typed and double-spaced. Use one-inch margins, add page numbers, and write in complete sentences (no lists, outlines or subtitles). Your references to gospel passages can take this simple form in parentheses at the end of a phrase or sentence (Matt 5:32-35). On the first page (only), in the top left corner, please type the following identifying information:

Your Name  
Your Parish, Your Email address  
ILM New Testament Course, W25  
Dr. Murphy  
[Date you finish the paper]

Your paper should look like this:



We will meet on Wednesday, February 5, one week after our last class on John's gospel, to discuss your paper. Please prepare a sketch of your questions, an outline, or even a draft of your paper for that night, so you can ask specific questions that will help you. The paper is due the following Tuesday.

**Discussion of Paper:** Wednesday, February 5

**Paper due:** Tuesday, February 11 (send to [ILMstudents@dsj.org](mailto:ILMstudents@dsj.org), not to the professor)

**Email Subject Line:** Taro, Robert\_New Testament, Final Paper

The ILM staff will give your paper back electronically, with the professor's comments, in March or April.