

St Vladimir's Seminary

Elective Course Descriptions – Fall 2026

LITURGICAL THEOLOGY 390 (490)

Credits: 3 (3) credits

THE REV. DR MARK ROOSIEN

Mystagogy. This course examines the church's practice of mystagogy, or, initiation into the mysteries. The main questions of the course are these: what is mystagogy? What are the mysteries we are initiated into, and how do preaching, reading, and writing help initiate us into them? How has the church practiced mystagogy through its history? How do we do mystagogy well today? First, we will examine the mystagogical preaching of the fourth century, focusing on the works of Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, and Ambrose of Milan. Next, we will examine the major early Byzantine liturgical commentaries of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor, and Germanos of Constantinople. Later Byzantine commentaries (Ps-Gregory of Nazianzus, Nicholas Cabasilas, Symeon of Thessaloniki) will also be read. At each juncture, we will consult the latest historical and theological research on these authors. The course will conclude with the two most effective modern mystagogues of our time: Archimandrite Vasileios (Gondikakis) and Alexander Schmemmann. *Prerequisite: Second-year standing in the M.Div. or M.A. program.*

Mondays, 2:00-4:45pm

NEW TESTAMENT 330

Credits: 3 credits

THE RIGHT REV. DR VAHAN HOVHANESSIAN

Formation of the Biblical Canon: Patristic Witness and Contemporary Debates. This course explores the historical emergence and ecclesial recognition of the biblical canon, emphasizing the role of apostolic Tradition, patristic testimony, conciliar discernment, and liturgical usage. The canon is presented as the Church's inspired recognition of Scripture through her life in the Holy Spirit, rather than as a purely historical or administrative construct. While grounded in a patristic understanding of the "rule of faith," the course also engages contemporary scholarly debates regarding canon formation, clarifying how the Church's lived experience of the Word safeguards the boundaries and unity of the Holy Scriptures. *Prerequisite: Second-year standing in the M.Div. or M.A. program.*

Thursdays, 9:15am-12:00pm

OLD TESTAMENT 325 (425)

Credits: 3 (3) credits

DR MICHAEL LEGASPI

Wisdom. In this course, we will study books of the Old Testament commonly referred to as the "wisdom literature" of the Old Testament: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Job, Sirach, and Wisdom of Solomon. In each case, we will seek to understand not only what is distinctive about each book but also how each contributes to a broader, Scriptural conceptualization of what wisdom is. In addition to close study of the books themselves, we will also consider their characteristic vocabulary, literary structure, and historical backgrounds—as well as patristic homilies and commentaries and the use of wisdom texts in the liturgical life of the Church. *Prerequisite: Second-year standing in the M.Div. or M.A. program.*

Thursdays, 9:15am-12:00pm

PATRISTICS 315 (415)

Credits: 3 (3) credits

THE REV. DR BOGDAN BUCUR

Exegesis of Theophanies and Doctrinal Articulation in Early Christianity. This course will consider whether the articulation of doctrine during the first four centuries of the Christian era may be viewed as largely coextensive with the early Christian exegesis of biblical theophanies. Students will investigate the literature emerging from the major polemical contexts in which early Christian doctrine was

forged—anti-Jewish, anti-dualistic, anti-modalistic, anti-subordinationist—along with a number of catechetical and doxological materials, seeking to understand why and in what ways recourse to Old Testament theophanies was deemed relevant to the various arguments set forth. *Prerequisite: Second-year standing in the M.Div. or M.A. program.*

Thursdays, 2:00-4:45pm

SACRED ARTS 360

Credits: 3 credits

DR PETER BOUTENEFF

The Music and Faith of Arvo Pärt. Arvo Pärt draws on his Orthodox Christian roots to compose music that seizes people of all faiths and of none. Through an in-depth study of his music and the sources that directly influence it, this course seeks to deepen appreciation of Pärt's oeuvre as well as give insight into missional questions about Orthodox tradition and contemporary culture. *Prerequisite: None.*

Mondays, 2:00-4:45pm