

Thomas Aquinas on Truth
Studies in the classical tradition
Syllabus for 2009

Prof. J. Hilary Martin, O.P.

PH 4211 Spring 2009

Mon 7:00pm – 9:40pm DSPT rm 3

3 units

Office Hours Thurs. 1:30-2:30

Course Description

Truth, like the words *religion*, *culture* or *morality* is in constant use and seems to be part of the eternal furniture of our minds, but upon examination its meaning is not so clear nor easily arrived at. This course will look into the meaning of truth in Thomas Aquinas, a thinker whose thought still shapes much of what is said today. The course is designed for students who are interested in doing a careful and a critical analysis of his text in order to serve as a springboard for their own thought and future research. Important locations for Thomas's view of truth can be found in the *Summa Theologica*, in his QD, *De Veritate*. Opposing authors will also be taken up, including possibly Pierre Jean Olivi and Wiliiam of Occam.

Method and Expectations:

The seminar method will be employed. A section of the text will be assigned each week for study and will be read and commented on in class. Students will have read the text beforehand and will be prepared to discuss its meaning and place in Thomas's philosophic system. Since *De Veritate* is a seminal work, and covers a wide range of topics, we will take only selected *Quaestiones* since the total number is far too large to be covered in a single course, Experience has shown that discussions can be far ranging and involve contemporary understandings of truth. As the course progresses the class may wish to focus on a *Quaestio* which takes up particular topic, such truth in prophecy, in the Divine ideas, etc. Copies of the Latin Leonine text are available and will serve as the basis of study, particularly for those who are fluent in Latin. Good translations are available, however, and will be used. Students should feel free to make use of English translations since the *meaning* is the most important consideration here. There will be a library assignment (GTU and UCB)

Expectations and assessment:

Class participation is essential and will help form the basis for the assessment. At the end of each class students will turn in an informal, short (2-3 page) summary of the reading of the text being discussed (25%). There will be a final paper (75%)

Class Meetings

Class will meet Mondays 7:10pm -9:30pm

DSPT rm 3

Thomas Aquinas on Truth -J.H. Martin, O.P.

Bibliography

1. Primary Source: (we will use)

Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate*, download, or a Xeroxed text of the Leonine will be provided.

Thomas Aquinas, *The Disputed Questions on Truth*, Trans., R.W. Mulligan, Chicago: Henry Regneri, , 1952) 3 vols. (We will use vol. 1)

2. Secondary Sources (for this course)

Boland, Vivian, *Ideas in God According to Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Leiden, 1996

The Cambridge Translations of Medieval Philosophical Texts. Vol. 3 ed. R. Pasnau, Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002

Dewan, Lawrence, "St. Thomas, Ideas and Immediate Knowledge," *Dialogue* 18 (1979) 392-404.

Farthing, John L., "The Problem of Divine Exemplarity in St. Thomas," *Thomist* 49 (1985) 183-222

Pasnau, Robert, "Theories of Cognition in the later Middle Ages," Cambridge Uni. Press: Cambridge 1997.

Ramos, Alice, "The Divine Ideas and the Intelligibility of Creation: A Way Towards Universal Signification in Aquinas," *Doctor Communis* 44 (1991) 250-265.

Torrell, Jean-Pierre, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*: vol. 1, *The Person and His Work*, trans. Robert Royal, (Catholic University of America, 1996) [from *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin* by Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P. (Edition du cerf) 1993]; *Thomas Aquinas Spiritual Master*, vol. 2, 2003

Weisheipl, Athenatius, O.P., *Friar Thomas d'Aquino, His Life, Thought and Work*, (Doubleday, 1974).