



COURSE DESCRIPTION:

St. John Henry Newman said of the Church Fathers: “They are witnesses to the fact of . . . doctrines having been received, not here or there, but everywhere . . . down to our times, without interruption, ever since the apostles.” What are the teachings of these early Christian writers whom Newman so deeply appreciated? What were their beliefs, hopes, and concerns? Do these mirror our own?

In this first (of two) semesters on the Fathers of the Church, we shall delve deeply into the writings of the first Christian centuries and become acquainted with such figures as St. Clement of Rome, St. Ignatius, St. Justin Martyr, St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and Origen, and we will come to an appreciation of their specific genius and legacy for our own generation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Each class session has an assigned reading. Student is expected to read the text before each class.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- ✓ Pope Benedict XVI, *Church Fathers from Clement of Rome to Augustine* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008).
- ✓ All other readings will be provided on the course page.

COURSE SCHEDULE: Thursdays, 8:00 – 9:15 PM ET

Lesson	Date	Topic	Reading
0	Jan. 18	Orientation	
1	Jan. 25	Intro to Patristics: what is it?	
2	Feb. 1	Patristics: Methods and tools	Claire Russell, <i>Glimpses</i> , xiii-xx.
3	Feb. 8	The Apostolic Fathers: St. Clement of Rome	Pope Benedict XVI, <i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 1; <i>Epistle of St. Clement</i>



Lesson	Date	Topic	Reading
N/A	Feb. 15	No class (First week of Lent)	
4	Feb. 22	The Apostolic Fathers: St. Ignatius	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 2; St. Ignatius, <i>Epistles</i>
5	Feb. 29	<i>The Didache</i>	<i>The Didache</i>
6	Mar. 7	The Apologists: Athenagoras	Athenagoras, <i>Plea for Christians</i>
7	Mar. 14	<i>Letter to Diognetus</i>	<i>Letter to Diognetus</i>
8	Mar. 21	The Apologists: St. Justin Martyr	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 3; St. Justin Martyr, <i>First Apology</i>
N/A	Mar. 28	No class (Holy Thursday)	
N/A	Apr. 4	No class (Easter Thursday)	
9	Apr. 11	St. Justin Martyr	St. Justin Martyr, <i>Dialogue with Trypho</i>
10	Apr. 18	St. Theophilus of Antioch	St. Theophilus, <i>To Autolicus</i>
11	Apr. 25	St. Irenaeus	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 4; Irenaeus, <i>Against the Heresies</i> , selections
12	May 2	St. Clement of Alexandria	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 5; St. Clement, selections
N/A	May 9	No Class (Ascension)	
13	May 16	Origen, pt. 1	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 6, pp. 35-40; Origen, <i>On First Principles</i> 4
14	May 23	Origen, pt. 2	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 6, pp. 41-45; Origen, <i>Homily on Leviticus 9</i>
15	May 30	Tertullian, pt. 1	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 7; Tertullian, <i>The Prescription Against Heretics</i>
16	Jun. 6	Tertullian, pt. 2	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 7; Tertullian, <i>On Baptism</i>
17	Jun. 13	St. Cyprian of Carthage	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 8; St. Cyprian, <i>On the Unity of the Catholic Church</i>
18	Jun. 20	Eusebius of Caesarea; Conclusion	<i>Fathers</i> , Ch. 9; Eusebius, <i>Church History</i> , selections