

**St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary
Boynton Beach, Florida**

I. COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE:

MSBIB 668E CHRIST THE SAVIOR IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK (2011)

II. INSTRUCTOR:

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III. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar will explore the gospel of Mark's presentation of Jesus as Son of God and eschatological savior, in the context of late Second temple period biblical interpretation and of this gospel as a coherent theological and literary composition. An important foil is the critique of the temple and of the Jewish cult. **Prerequisites: BIB501 and BIB611. (Class limited to 8 students.)**

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Understand the Christology and soteriology behind the Gospel of Mark, including the meaning of the various titles of Jesus.
2. Be able to see Mark's presentation of Jesus as the radical fulfillment of Old Testament passages and expectations regarding the messiah and eschatological salvation.
3. Have an understanding of Markan symbolism, especially in regards to Jesus' action in the Temple, his trial and crucifixion.

V. TEXT AND REQUIRED MATERIALS

You should always bring a good Bible to class, such as *The New Oxford Annotated Bible. New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*; *The New Jerusalem Bible*; *The Jewish Study Bible*; (has just the "Old Testament" without deuterocanonicals);

The HarperCollins Study Bible Fully Revised and Updated, including Apocryphal Deuterocanonical Books. Student Edition; or The Catholic Study Bible, but a variety of Bibles are welcome in order to allow comparison of translations. The above list of bibles is approximately in the order of their suitability.

Required: Emilio G. Chávez, “Theological Interpretation of Jesus’ Temple-Action in the Gospel According to Mark,” abbrev. “Chávez,” to be handed out; other writings of Chávez and others to be handed out as required.

Recommended: Donald H. Juel, *The Gospel of Mark* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999).

VI. SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS:

This seminar will consist of lectures, class discussion, student presentations, brief written assignments, quizzes (pop, preannounced or take-home) and other activities as deemed opportune and as time permits. **The assignments (typically indicated by “Study” or “Read”) indicated below, and any written assignments, are to be completed and/or handed in before the corresponding class, unless otherwise indicated.** You might want to take advantage of weeks with lighter assignments (or when you have more time) to better keep up with your work. An optional term paper (up to 7 pages), as extra credit for up to 20% of the final grade, in order to be accepted, is required to be handed in by Dec. 15, 2011; THE TOPIC MUST BE DECIDED UPON AND APPROVED BY Nov. 15, 2011. See section IX below on the requirements for the term paper.

The first numbers below refer to weeks in the course.

1. **Aug. 30:** Introduction to the seminar. Discussion of topic and thesis, and general observations of biblical methodology and in particular for this seminar. Overview of syllabus, of course requirements and of reading materials. Begin carefully reading the gospel of Mark, and re-read it often during this semester, in order to become as familiar with it as you can.

2. **Sept. 6:** Isaiah’s New Exodus as the background to Mark’s gospel; discussion of the importance of this topic to an understanding of the whole Bible and of Mark’s gospel; analysis of Mark 1:1-3.

Assignment: Chávez, Intro; Short Note on the real goal of the Exodus; Rikki Watt’s book (see bibliography).

3. **Sept. 13:** Jesus’ baptism as the eschatological anointing of the Spirit; discussion of Isa 61 and of the Jubilee (Lev 16) which takes place on Yom Kippur (Lev 25); analysis of Mark 1:4-20.

Assignment: Chávez, Chapter Three.

4. **Sept. 20:** Jesus' programmatic first exorcism—"Teaching;" analysis of Mark 1:21-28.

Assignment: Chávez, Chapter Two.

There is no session for this course during the fifth week of this school year.

6. **Oct. 4:** Jesus the Son of man with *exousía*; analysis of Mark 2:1-12; explanation of topic and its great importance.

Assignment: Re-read Chávez, Chapter Two.

There is no session for this course during the seventh week of this school year.

8. **Oct. 18:** Jesus the Strong One who binds Satan/Belias. Analysis of Mark 1:7 and its "Old Testament" context; Mark 3:22; 5:1-20.

Assignment: Testament of Levi 18; 11 Q Melchizedek and Short Notes on this topic (On the Final Jubilee, Qumran; Let us again etc.).

9. **Oct. 25:** Jesus as eschatological high priest: discussion of passages in Mark pointing in this direction (with their Old Testament background), e.g., Mark 7.

Assignment: Chávez Chapter Five; re-read Week 6 assignments.

10. **Nov. 1:** The Son of man must suffer: the *musar* of the Servant/Israel/New Adam. Explanation and discussion of topic and its importance; the Passion predictions in Mark

Assignment: Re-read Chávez, Chapter Three and Short Notes, "The Biblical Concept of Divine Discipline."

11. **Nov. 8:** The messianic entry and the New Temple. Analysis and discussion of the central role of Mark 11:1-12:12.

Assignment: Chávez, Chapter One; "stone" handouts, Interrelationships Chart. Can also consult Prof. Chávez's *book*, Chapters Four and Five.

TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE IN PROFESSOR'S MAILBOX NOV. 8 (COVERS THE MATERIAL SEEN THROUGH THE NOV. 1 SESSION).

12. **Nov. 15:** The Temple Act and the "Fig Newton." Continued discussion of Week 10 topics.

Assignment: Re-read Chávez, Chapter One and other materials which may be provided.

NOV. 15 IS THE LAST DAY TO GET APPROVAL FOR OPTIONAL PAPER

13. **Nov. 22:** The Son sent in the End. Analysis and discussion of Mark 12:1-11 and the Christian belief in the “finality” of Jesus.

Assignment: Chávez, Chapter Four.

14. **Nov. 29:** The Passion of Jesus. Discussion of Mark 14.

Assignment: Prof. Chávez’s articles on fire/purification in the Bible, “refinement” of the just, etc.

15. **Dec. 6:** The Death of Jesus and the new worship of God. Discussion of Mark 15 and the Letter to the Hebrews and other biblical passages.

Assignment: Short Notes on the cultic aspects of Jesus’ death (sprinkle, lift up, translation of Isa 53, servant/*pais* of God, Son of man/Suffering Servant).

16. **Dec. 13:** Continuation of last week’s discussion.

Assignment: Chávez, Conclusion.

DEC. 15 IS THE LAST DAY TO SUBMIT ALL PAPERS

VII. GRADING CRITERIA:

1. Classroom activities, such as the brief written assignments and other possible exercises, as well as class and group discussions and student presentations, count for 50% of the final grade.

2. The midterm exam will count for 20% of the final grade. It will consist of three questions on important aspects of the material covered up to that point, to be answered in essay form. The Bible may be consulted. Prior reading of the class notes and required readings is essential. Supplemental readings help. The student will be graded on clarity of thought, extent of knowledge of the material being examined, insights, and effectiveness of expression. Please write neatly and legibly.

3. The final exam will count for 30% of the final grade and consist of five questions on the whole course. Otherwise, the same observations made for the midterm exam apply to the final exam, although obviously evident progress will be expected.

4. We will not contribute to grade inflation. An “A” will be given for *excellent* work, “B” for good work, “C” for normal or average work. A “D” is given if one has hardly passed. An “F” is given when the minimal course requirements have not been satisfied.

VIII. DESCRIPTION OF OPTIONAL TERM PAPER:

1. As the semester progresses, the student may consider writing a term paper as extra credit, to the extent merited by the quality of the term paper (up to 20% of the final grade). For this purpose, the student should be giving thought during the early part of the semester to a topic which is of special interest or concern to him or her. When a particular topic has been decided on, the student should consult with the professor for approval of the topic and pointers on how to go about preparing the work. **If you are thinking of doing a term paper, please plan ahead, meet with the professor early on, and note that the last day to hand in all papers is Dec. 15, 2011.**

2. The paper must be on an approved topic regarding this seminar, and must employ the exegetical methods which have been learned in Biblical studies. IT IS NOT IN THE FIRST PLACE A REFLECTION PAPER DEALING WITH SPIRITUALITY OR PASTORAL APPROACHES. This can be included in the term paper *after* the student has demonstrated an understanding of the Pauline topic or text in question in accordance with contemporary biblical methodology. IN CASE OF DOUBT, PLEASE HAVE ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION WITH THE PROFESSOR.

2. The paper should be in the *Chicago Manual* style and follow the gender-inclusive language directives set forth in the seminary's "Policies About Written Work" (see pertinent pages in the catalog). Footnotes or endnotes may be used; be careful to give the citations accurately and in the required style format. Carefully review the attached Grading Rubric in order to prepare and write your paper in the required way, so as not to have your grade suffer. Proof reading should be careful; spelling mistakes indicate neglect and lack of care. **INCLUDE THE GRADING RUBRIC WITH YOUR PAPER** (to be marked as appropriate by the professor).

3. Pursuant to the above-stated seminary policies, the grade may be affected by spelling, grammar, style and other factors as set forth in the Grading Rubric. Papers *must not* be handed in past the last deadline (they may be rejected). Students are strongly encouraged to plan ahead and prepare and write the paper in a timely fashion (avoiding last minute rushes), and to turn them in early. Be quite mindful of the plagiarism prohibition.

IX. EXPECTATIONS:

1. Students are expected to always come to class on time, Bible and other needed materials on hand, and to have carefully read the assignment. Class attentiveness and diligent note-taking are very important for meeting the course objectives and getting a good grade. Students are expected and strongly encouraged to consult with each other and with the professor on the content of the class lectures and discussion. Preparation in groups is not only a good teamwork exercise, but a great aid in pooling together intellectual, spiritual and labor resources for maximum performance in this course.

2. Students are expected and encouraged to develop an interest in the course materials, and to confer with the professor as often as desired in order to fully appropriate what the course has to offer.

3. The professor encourages the students' comments and suggestions on how he is conducting the course, in order to improve same. Sincerity and thoughtfulness are appreciated. Needless to say, plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty are reproachable and may be severely punished.

X. SUPPLEMENTAL READING LIST:

Emilio G. Chávez, *The Theological Significance of Jesus' Temple Action in Mark's Gospel* (Edwin Mellen Press: New York, 2002); the library also has the prior version (where the original languages used are not translated) submitted for my thesis defense entitled "Exorcism, *Exousía*, the Widow and the Temple. The Meaning of Jesus' Temple Action and Teaching (Mark 11:15-17)."

_____, "¿Quiso Jesús purificar el templo según el evangelista Marcos?," *AnáMnesis* 22 (julio-diciembre 2001) 63-77;

_____, "Interpretación teológica de la acción de Jesús en el templo según el evangelio de Marcos," *AnáMnesis* 34 (2007) 1-65.

John Paul Heil, *The Gospel of Mark as a Model for Action. A Reader-Response Commentary* (Paulist Press: New York, 1992).

Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord. Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993).

W.R. Telford, *Mark* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, 1997; 2003 reprint T & T Clark Study Guides).

Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark* (J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1997; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000).