



## BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY UNIT OUTLINE

### GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN THEOLOGY

UNIT TITLE	<b>HUMANITY, SIN &amp; GRACE</b>
UNIT CODE	C74131
UNIT STATUS	Elective
HOST FIELD	C
PREREQUISITE	C51013; C73113 Introducing Theology
INCOMPATIBLES	C52131 Humanity Sin & Grace
CREDIT POINTS	10cp
REQUIREMENTS	Equivalent to 3 hours per week contact and 7 hours per week study over a 13 week semester
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Even Years
PREPARED BY	Revd Dr David Pascoe
UNIT COORDINATOR	Revd Dr David Pascoe
TEACHING STAFF	Revd Dr David Pascoe, Revd Dr Don Saines
DATE PREPARED	16 February 2004

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#### **Rationale**

This elective unit teaches specialist knowledge and skills in systematic theology by focusing on the doctrines of grace and sin, in the context of theological anthropology. The unit is an appropriate focus for the Graduate Diploma of Theology as the theological notion of grace is fundamental for the Christian understanding of humanity's relation to God and all creation. The nature of God's grace and how this grace is offered to all creation in and through Christ and the Holy Spirit is at the heart of Christian self-understanding and meaning. The unit is relevant to specific and focused subject material of the college's Graduate Diploma in Theology. A further degree of expectation in regard to critical and analytical approaches to the subject matter is expected.

#### **Relation to Course**

A general study of how Christian theology understands the nature of the human person in relationship with God, as both en-graced and as sinner is both one with other elective units in systematic theology and is integral to them. How God relates to human persons through God's self-communication understood in the theological notion of grace in the divine persons of Christ and the Holy Spirit in and through the church provides frameworks for Christian human self-understanding and as such determines and is determined by other fields of theological endeavor. This is in accord with the goals of the BCT's postgraduate courses where particular doctrines and themes are studied with a view to presenting those doctrines and themes in a systematic and coherent way.

#### **Aims**

The unit aims to develop student learning in and through an understanding of how theology articulates the relationship between God and human persons through the theological notion of grace: that is—

- in continuity with the church's understanding of its being founded and continually guided through God's grace expressed in Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God

- in accord with the church's reflection on the nature of God's grace as integral to Christian human self-understanding
- relevant to the contemporary world.

Further, the unit aims to enable students to study the church in a systematic way so as to provide them with an introduction to a comprehensive Roman Catholic ecclesiology.

### **Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit students will be able to:

1. interpret various contemporary theological understandings of the human person that have their origins in the Judaic-Christian tradition
2. critically analyse the theological issues that impact on a contemporary theological anthropology for example, the theological notions of human freedom, justification, grace and sin
3. examine critically and explain the theological foundations of the notion of grace in relation to creation and salvation
4. articulate the relationship between the theological notions of sin and grace
5. examine and explain the significance of the ecumenical convergences on the Doctrine of Justification.

### **Content**

- Week One:** The Human Person in the Contemporary Teaching of the Church  
Opens the area of investigation with regard to how the human person is understood in the church's recent teaching on theological anthropology.
- Week Two:** Grace and Sin in the Old Testament  
Looks to examine the Christian notions of grace and sin as these have been interpreted by the church in the Old Testament scriptures.
- Week Three:** Grace and Sin in the New Testament  
Reflects on the notions of grace and sin as these have been interpreted by the church in the New Testament scriptures: weeks two and three present foundational theological material for understanding the God's self-revelation for Christian theological anthropology
- Week Four:** Original Sin  
Responds to the question, what is the meaning of the doctrine of original sin with regard to the church's teaching in the light of the scriptures?
- Week Five:** The Terms of Human Freedom  
Responds to the question, how does the church understand the theological notion of freedom today?
- Week Six:** Grace and Freedom - Augustine and Pelagius  
This lecture addresses the debates between Augustine and Pelagius on grace and freedom as critical for understanding the development of these notions in Western theological thought.
- Week Seven:** Nature and Grace – Aquinas  
This lecture addresses the import of Aquinas' theological reflection on the notions of nature and grace as formative for the church's understanding of the relation between God and humanity.
- Week Eight:** Justification, Faith and Merit: Luther and the Council of Trent  
This lecture addresses the issues of theological division in the church surrounding the core notion of justification.
- Week Nine:** Nature and Grace: John Calvin  
Further to week eight, how the notions of nature and grace are developed by John Calvin in relation to the notion of justification and in difference to the Catholic understanding are addressed.
- Week Ten:** Ecumenical Convergences on the Doctrine of Justification  
This lecture responds to the question, how and in what way have the churches in contemporary times been able to positively re-address the issues of nature and grace through ecumenical dialogue?
- Week Eleven:** The Church as Holy and Sinful  
This lecture examines the question, how is the church able to make a creedal statement of its integral holiness and yet admit sinfulness of humanity?
- Week Twelve:** Death, Immortality of the Soul, Resurrection from the Dead

The doctrines of the church named in the title of this lecture are examined with regard to their contemporary relevance and theological import.

Week Thirteen: Heaven, Hell and Purgatory

This lecture examines the doctrines in the above title by asking, how can the church explain the meaning of heaven, hell and purgatory in a credible way today?

### Organisation and Teaching Strategies

#### *Basic Unit Procedure*

This unit of study consists principally in readings, discussions, and lectures. Two hours per week is allotted for lectures on specific topics of study in the unit. Every three weeks, i.e., four times during the semester, postgraduate students will gather with the lecturer in dedicated discussion groups on the particular readings allotted to them that are sequential with the topics of study in the unit, but different from the undergraduate readings. The readings and discussions are related to the assessment topics of the unit.

#### *Lecture Periods of the Unit*

The first week of the unit is set aside as a basic orientation to the entire unit of study. The focus of this orientation is to come to a common understanding of the content and procedure of the unit. It also opens up the group to an understanding of the cotemporary issues that impact on what it is to be the church. Each subsequent week of the semester has two of the three periods set aside as lecture time.

### Assessment

Type of assessment	No of words	Weighting %	Due date	Learning Outcomes covered
Postgraduate assessment is divided into three pieces of work undertaken in the form of essays. Assignment topics by individual students are to be formed with the guidance of the lecturer, and are not specifically set. The two essays due during the unit are if 1500-1800 words in length. This is in accord with the direction of independence for research as important dimension of this unit.				
Essay 1 The essay engages with the relationship of contemporary Christian understandings of the human person in relation to the Judaic Christian tradition as this is founded in the Scriptures	1500-1800	25%	Week 4	1, 3.
Essay 2 This second essay engages with theological notions of human freedom, justification, grace and sin in the theological tradition of the church.	1500-1800	25%	Week 9	2, 3.
Essay 3 This essay engages with the nature of sin and grace as this is articulated in contemporary ecumenical convergences.	3000	50%	End of semester	4, 5.

### Generic Attributes

- The ability to define and analyse problems.
- The ability to apply critical reasoning to issues through independent thought and informed judgement.
- The ability to collect, analyse and organise information and ideas and to convey those ideas clearly and fluently, in both written and spoken forms.

### Textbooks

#### *Required*

Nil.

#### *Recommended*

There are no specific books set as required texts for this unit. However, the following bibliography presents material that covers topics of the unit content. They are recommended here as basic texts for this subject area.

## Academic and General Resource Requirements

### References – Books

- Carr, Anne. *Transforming Grace: Christian Tradition and Women's Experience*. San Francisco: Harper, 1990.
- Comblin, Jose. *Being Human*. London: Burns and Oates, 1990.
- Dreyer, Elizabeth. *Manifestations of Grace*. Wilmington: Glazier, 1990.
- Duffy, Stephan. *The Graced Horizon: Nature and Grace in Modern Catholic Thought*. Collegeville: Glazier, 1992.
- Gaden, John. *A Vision of Wholeness*. Ed. Duncan Reid. Dwyer, 1994.
- Haight, Roger. *The Experience and Language of Grace*. London: Gill and MacMillan, 1979.
- Laporte, J.-M. *Patience and Power: Grace for the First World*. New York: Paulist, 1988.
- Polkinghorne, John. *Science and Christian Belief: Theological Reflections of a Bottom-Up Thinker*. London: SPCK, 1994.
- Rodgers, Margaret & Thomas, Max (eds.) *A Theology of the Human Person*. Collins Dove. 1992.
- Schillebeeckx, Edward. *Christ: The Christian Experience in the Modern World*. London: SCM, 1980.
- Zizioulas, John. D. *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*. New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1993.

### References – Journal Articles

- Brodie, Alexander. "Duns Scotus on Sinful Thought," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996) 291-310.
- Highfield, Ron. "The Freedom to Say "No"?: Karl Rahner's Doctrine of Sin," *Theological Studies* 56 (1995) 485-505.
- O'Neill, Mary Aquin. "Toward a Renewed Anthropology," *Theological Studies* 36 (1975) 725-737.
- Teselle, Eugene. "Nature and Grace in the Forum of Ecumenical Discussion," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 8 (1971) 539-559.

### References – Online and Other IT Resources

- Other Church Documents. <http://www.catholicgoldmine.com/documents/index.htm>
- A list of issues, A-Z addressed from a Catholic point of view. <http://www.silk.net/RelEd/a.htm>
- Church Documents. <http://www.shc.edu/theolibrary/docs.htm>
- Documents of Vatican II. <http://www.ecatholicism.org/category.cfm?Category=6>
- Other Church Documents. <http://www.catholicgoldmine.com/documents/index.htm>