

PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY ON THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN PERSON

At the School of Mary: Course for Adults (*mature high school students also welcome*)

Instructor: Sister Bernadette-Marie of Jesus Christ Crucified, F.L.M.

Time: Thursdays, 7:00-8:00 P.M. (Central Time)

Suggested Donation: \$280 for the full, twelve week course

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Course Description: This course studies what it means to be a human person, that is, a being made in the image and likeness of God, that is, a being endowed with freedom and the capacities to know and to love. Topics include: basic philosophical principles; man as a body-soul composite; the rational soul and its immortality; the faculties of man (the senses, the passions, the intellect, the will); the inviolability of the human person. Through a greater understanding of human nature, students will be better able to fulfill the end for which they were made: to know, love, and serve God in this life so as to be happy with Him forever in the next.

Course Objectives:

- To grow in a greater understanding of our God-given nature so as to better understand how grace builds upon it
- To learn some basic philosophical principles which will facilitate further study the Catholic Faith and of philosophy
- To be able to give a **reason**-based defense of the inviolability of all human life from the moment of conception

Spring Semester 2025^{AD} Syllabus (Subject to Change)

Class	Topic	Homework/Reading [To be completed in preparation for class]
<i>Class 1:</i> February 27	What is philosophy? Why study philosophy? What is objective truth?	N/A
<i>Class 2:</i> March 6	Order and hierarchy in creation; begin basic philosophical principles: form and matter; four causes; the <i>telos</i> of things	1. Selection from <i>Socrates' Children</i> , Vol. 1, by Peter Kreeft, pg. 122-129
<i>Class 3:</i> March 13	Continuation of basic philosophical principles: intrinsic and extrinsic principles; potency and act; first and second act	1. Selection from <i>An Introduction to Philosophy</i> by Daniel Sullivan
<i>Class 4:</i> March 20	Categories: substance and accidents; change; prime matter; secondary matter	1. <i>A Companion to the Summa</i> , Vol. I, pg. 277-296, by Walter Farrell
<i>Class 5:</i> March 27	The Soul: kinds, powers, activities of the soul; vegetative powers of the soul	1. Selection from <i>God and His Creation</i> , by Murphy, Donlan, Reidy, & Cunningham, pg. 428-433
<i>Class 6:</i> April 3	Sensitive powers of the soul: sensation, appetite, locomotion; external senses	1. Selection from <i>God and His Creation</i> , by Murphy, Donlan, Reidy, & Cunningham, pg. 434-447

Class 7: April 10	Internal senses; sense appetite	1. Selection from <i>The Nature of the Human Soul and its Faculties</i> , by Sister Mary Angelica Neenan, O.P., Chapter Two
Class 8: April 24	Rational Powers: intellect and will. Begin the faculty of the intellect	1. Selection from <i>Philosophy of Man</i> , by Father Sebastian Walshe, O. Praem, pg. 107-113
Class 9: May 1	Continue the faculty of the intellect	1. <i>A Companion to the Summa</i> , Vol. I, pg. 321-341, by Walter Farrell
Class 10: May 15	Spiritual Soul: subsistent, immortal, immaterial; what it means to be a <i>person</i>	1. Selection from <i>Socrates' Children</i> , Vol. 1, by Peter Kreeft, pg. 133-135
Class 11: May 22	The faculty of the human will; begin human freedom	1. Selection from <i>God and His Creation</i> , by Murphy, Donlan, Reidy, and Cunningham, pg. 447-457
Class 12: June 5	Continuation of human freedom; the <i>summum bonum</i> and happiness (if time, human nature as elevated by grace)	1. Selection from <i>The Greatest Marvel of Nature</i> , by Pierre-Marie Emonet, O.P.

N.B. There are no classes on April 17, May 8, or May 29.

N.B. Course Readings: The course readings will be provided on the course page on our website: schoolofmaryflm.org. I would recommend printing out the readings in order to be able to “mark up” the text (underline, highlight, take notes in the margins, etc.). While the readings are not strictly necessary, a careful reading of them will increase the depth of your understanding of the topics presented in this course.

N.B. Class Participation: It is requested that all students have their cameras **on** for the duration of the class. While the class is mostly lecture-based, questions are welcome and class participation may be requested at times.

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CLASS PRAYER

“Grant me grace, O Merciful God, to desire ardently all that is pleasing to Thee, to acknowledge it truthfully, to examine it prudently, and to accomplish it perfectly, all for the praise and the glory of Thy Name. Amen.” (St. Thomas Aquinas)

Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom, pray for us. *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, pray for us.

Recommended Reading for Further Study

Brennan, Robert Edward, O.P. *Thomistic Psychology: A Philosophic Analysis of the Nature of Man*. (Providence, RI: Cluny Media) 2016.

Farrell, Walter, O.P. *A Companion to the Summa* (4 Vol.). (New York: Sheed and Ward) 1941.

Muphy, Donlan, Reidy, and Cunningham. *God and His Creation*. (Dubuque, IA: Priory Press) 1958.

Neenan, Sister Mary Angelica, O.P. *The Nature of the Human Soul and its Faculties: Philosophical and Anthropological Background for Moral Theology*. (Providence, RI: Cluny Media).

Walshe, Sebastian, O. Praem. *Foundations of Wisdom: Volume II: Philosophy of Nature*. (Gastonia, NC: TAN) 2023.

Ibid., *Volume III: Philosophy of Man*, 2023.