

## JDI SUMMER PRO-SEMINAR

# *‘Giving their lives in love’: Pastoral approaches in a post-Christendom culture*

Pontifical College Josephinum † Josephinum Diaconate Institute † July 2022

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Course code: MP730ME

Credit hours: 2

Time: 7–9:40 PM:

Days: Monday July 18, Thursday July 21, Monday July 25, and Thursday July 28

Zoom meeting ID:

Office hours: 8-9pm, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, or by appointment

Instructor: Dr. Eric Graff

Telephone: (614) 252-0781, ext. 2272; (614) 725-8613 (cell)

E-Mail: [egraff@pcj.edu](mailto:egraff@pcj.edu)

### **Course description**

The Summer Pro-seminar for 2022 explores the framework and implications of Msgr. James Shea’s influential book *From Christendom to Apostolic Mission* (2020). Central to this book and to the variety of ideas surrounding it is the proposition that we live in a Post-Christendom age, that is, an age without the institutions, culture, and imagination that supported Christians throughout much of the history of the Church. During this seminar, students will read contemporary and historical approaches to this problem and discuss the pastoral possibilities that emerge from the current relationship between the Church and society. Finally, each student will contribute reflections on the assigned materials and an analysis of a specific pastoral problem.

Completion of the work of this seminar has three goals:

1. The student will be thoroughly familiar with the literature surrounding this timely question, and able to articulate the central themes and issues of ‘Christendom’ and ‘Apostolicity’;
2. The student will develop an approach to these issues grounded in the heart of the Church, and will draw on the authority of magisterial teaching in appropriate ways;
3. The student will demonstrate that he or she can craft an authentic critique of the evangelical challenges of the ‘Post-Christendom’ culture.

## Assigned readings

**NB. Each item has been given a number for future reference in assignments**

1. Shea, James P. *From Christendom to Apostolic Mission*. University of Mary Press, 2020.

Materials relating to Msgr. Shea's book:

2. Armstrong, Patti Maguire. "Back to the Future: From Christendom to Apostolic Mission" (review). National Catholic Register, May 17, 2021. Available here: <https://www.ncregister.com/blog/from-christendom-to-apostolic-mission>.

3. McKeller, Scott. "Book Review: *From Christendom to Apostolic Mission*." Hither Thither and Yon, July 9, 2021. Available here: <https://newhitherhitherandyon.wordpress.com/2021/07/09/book-review-from-christendom-to-apostolic-mission/>

4. Mirus, Jeffrey. "Bishop Conley's bid to foster Apostolic Catholicism" (review). Catholicculture.org, March 25, 2022. Available here: <https://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/from-christendom-mode-to-apostolic-catholicism/>.

5. Thematic and explanatory videos on this topic are available here: <https://www.primematters.com/foundations/christendom-apostolic>.

6. Study resources, including videos, from the Diocese of Sioux Falls, here: <https://www.sfcatholic.org/discipleship/apostolic-mission/>.

7. Carron, Julian. *Disarming Beauty: Essays on Faith, Truth, and Freedom*. University of Notre Dame Press, 2017. Available digitally at: [https://web.s.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?sid=fb12f04e-99c6-42b3-b322-090909003b7f%40redis&vid=0&format=EB&lpid=lp\\_i&rid=0#](https://web.s.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?sid=fb12f04e-99c6-42b3-b322-090909003b7f%40redis&vid=0&format=EB&lpid=lp_i&rid=0#).

Review of Julian Carron's *Disarming Beauty*.

8. Blakely, Jason. "The book Christians should read instead of 'The Benedict Option'." America: The Jesuit Review, June 14, 2017. Available here: [https://www.americamagazine.org/arts-culture/2017/06/14/book-christians-should-read-instead-benedict-option?gclid=EA1aIQobChMIqLRyL-e-AIVBJbCh2VMgw\\_EAMYASAAEgJvMfD\\_BwE](https://www.americamagazine.org/arts-culture/2017/06/14/book-christians-should-read-instead-benedict-option?gclid=EA1aIQobChMIqLRyL-e-AIVBJbCh2VMgw_EAMYASAAEgJvMfD_BwE).

Three papal encyclicals on closely related topics:

9. Pope Francis. *Evangelii gaudium* (November 2013). Available here: [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html).

10. Pope Benedict XVI. *Caritas in veritate* (June 2009). Available here:  
[https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20090629\\_caritas-in-veritate.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html).
11. Pope John Paul II. *Redemptoris mission* (December 1990). Available here:  
[https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_07121990\\_redemptoris-missio.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html).
12. Walsh, David. *The Third Millenium: Reflections on Faith and Reason*. Georgetown University Press, 1999. **Selections only**, pp. 67-110, pp. 193-232. To be provided by PDF.
13. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate. *Faith and Spiritual Life of Catholics in the United States*. November 2021. Available here:  
<https://cara.georgetown.edu/youngadults2020.pdf>.

### **Grading policies and student responsibilities**

The instructor will evaluate students on their overall participation in the seminar, their reflection on and engagement with the materials, and their responsiveness to the contributions of fellow students.

A rubric sheet for each type of assignment will be provided. In short, the student will choose four items on which to write short reflections (300-500 words). Each student will also provide an extended position paper responding to one or more of the pastoral challenges identified by Msgr. Shea. Students will be expected to contribute actively to the real-time discussions and to post replies or responses to commentary provided by other students. The proportion of points assigned to each type of activity appears below:

<i>Evaluation type</i>	<i>Percent of total grade</i>
Writing reflections (4)	40%
Participation	20%
Position paper	30%
Response postings	10%
	100%

Attendance is expected at every seminar session for this compressed format. All absences or expected absences must be discussed with and approved by the instructor.

The Summer Pro-seminar course page will offer additional details about the schedule of each session, including additional speakers and resources.

For each session, there will be required reading and a reflection prompt. Dr. Graff will conduct the group discussion and invite special presenters on smaller topics during each meeting. At the end of the seminar, participants will be asked to record a brief evaluation. Below is the general schedule of topics for each session.

*Session One:*

“Forlorn cathedrals remain”: The legacy of Christendom in the Western world  
How self-evident is the ‘imaginative vision’ of Christianity in America?

*Session Two*

The continuity of the New Evangelization  
The deacon in a new apostolic age

*Session Three:*

When are we? An exploration of historical precedents and future prospects

*Session Four:*

Pastoral tactics in context: three examples

As always, students are expected to conduct themselves in the spirit of the Gospel and according to the codes of conduct as specified in the Seminarian’s Handbook. All students are encouraged to ask for help from each other and from the instructor whenever the need arises.