STMM 500 – Christian Anthropology
Summer 2005
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Explores the mystery of human existence from a Christian perspective. An examination of contemporary pressures on our self-understanding and a theological response in the light of that. Biblical and Christian perspectives on our origins, meaning, and destiny with special focus on our relationship to each other, nature, and Christ.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Lewis, C.S. The Great Divorce. Simon and Schuster.
Rolheiser, Ronald. Against an Inifinite Horizon. Crossroads.
Rolheiser, Ronald. The Holy Longing. Doubleday.
Rolheiser, Ronald. The Restless Heart. Revised edition, Doubleday, 2003; Hodder & Stoughton, 2003.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

Bailie, Gil. Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads. N.Y., Crossroads, 1997.
Barron, Robert. And Now I See: A Theology of Transformation. N.Y., Crossroads, 1998.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

I. Requirements

A. Do the required readings:

1) C.S. Lewis, The Great Divorce
2) Ronald Rolheiser, The Restless Heart
3) Ronald Rolheiser, Against an Infinite Horizon
4) Ronald Rolheiser, The Holy Longing

B. Consider the suggested readings:

1) Robert Barron, And Now I See: A Theology of Transformation.
   This text is supplemental, especially on the issue of original sin and the biblical understanding of the human person as IMAGO DEI.
2) Gil Bailie, Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads.
   This is a book based on the anthropological insights of Rene Girard and is the best analysis of the structure of culture (and the inherent violence within that structure) and how the gospel of Christ (particularly the cross) unearth the structure of violence. One of the most significant "anthropological" books published in the last fifty years.
3) There is a lot of good synthetic material available in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Vatican, 1994 sections: The Mystery of Creation, nos. 295-421; I Believe in the Resurrection of the Body, nos. 988-1065; Life in Christ, nos. 1691-1942.

II. Assignments

Write a reflection paper of circa 850-1300 words on **one** of the following:

A. Do a critical review of one of the following books, on the basis of a holistic Christian Anthropology:

1) Germaine Greer, The Change; Gloria Steinem, Revolution from Within.
2) Michael Meade, Men and the Water of Life, Initiation and the Tempering of Men.
3) Alice Miller, The Drama of the Gifted Child.
4) Thomas Moore, Care of the Soul.
5) Daniel Levinson, The Seasons of Man's Life.
6) Robert Bly, The Sibling Society.
7) James Hillman, The Soul's Code.
8) James Hillman, The Force of Character.
9) Susan Howatch, High Flyer.

B. Write an article, for publication for a popular magazine, on one of the following topics:

1) Today there is a double alienation from religion, women are alienated from its structure, men from its soul.
2) An assessment of feminism from the perspective of Christian Anthropology.
3) The Post-Modernism of "Seinfeld" – Comfortable Despair.
4) The divorce within our culture between "life" and "energy."
5) Our culture's naiveté about the imperialism of energy.

C. Prepare, for publication, a religious ritual of passage, closure, or blessing; e.g. one of your children is leaving home, a divorce, celebrating a significant birthday, you have suffered a miscarriage, etc.