

## Major Courses for Fall 2020

### ***LITERATURE***

#### **The Russian Novel** [Dr. Mumbach]

In this course students take up the fiction of Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy. A special emphasis is accorded the theme of the abrupt and relatively belated confrontation of Christian society with European modernity.

### ***PHILOSOPHY***

#### **God and Being (Metaphysics)** [Dr. van Versendaal]

This course is an exercise in that most characteristically philosophical act: the contemplation of what it means to exist at all. According to the great witnesses of the tradition, this act begins in wonder and, if followed through faithfully, ends in rejoicing. Together with classical and medieval authors, we will ask basic questions about the things we experience: what does it mean to be one complete thing? To have a nature and to change? To be related to other finite substances and to God? To be caused and to cause others in turn? In view of such questions, we'll also consider how metaphysics sheds light on the phenomenon of bodily life and on the integrity of the organism.

Thinking philosophically about reality in light of a Christian confession of God as Creator will lead us to ponder the structure of interpersonal gift-giving as an expression of how the finite world comes into being in the first place. We'll find that in our present age the meaning of gift is both most directly challenged and most lucidly articulated. We will accordingly turn our attention to rejections, revisions, and recoveries of metaphysics among modern authors, and will explore how a Thomistic account of being can respond to and account for legitimate concerns voiced in our day.

The course will end by placing the many principles discussed over the semester at the service of understanding the constitution of the human person, man and woman, in whom the full meaning of being as gift is unfolded.

### ***THEOLOGY***

#### **Leo XIII and the Social Teaching of the Church** [Mr. Cooper]

This exploration and close reading of the encyclicals of Leo XIII will enable students to master the sources that have informed the contemporary social doctrine of the Church. Projects will include an original application of the thought of Pope Leo XIII, e.g., the ethical participation in civil government and the practice of truth as a virtue.