

An Invitation from Lutheran Church of the Cross

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH IN THE 21st CENTURY

Lutheran Church of the Cross, Port Charlotte, Florida, will again this year be the site of a very interesting and timely continuing education opportunity sponsored by Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS), Fort Wayne, Indiana. On August 2-4, 2010, Dr. Adam Francisco, Assistant Professor of Historical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary, will present a discussion entitled, "Contending for the Faith in the 21st Century."

Dr. Francisco's presentation is a crash course in apologetics that examines the major adversaries of Christianity and explores avenues for articulating and defending the faith in view of the challenges posed by postmodernism, atheism, Islam, and others.

Funds have been made available from the Sarasota Circuit to help offset the costs of registration, travel or lodging for pastors and lay persons attending this program. By expressing your desire for financial assistance, Lutheran Church of the Cross will distribute up to \$50 for laity or retired pastors and up to \$75 for active pastors or professional church workers on a first come, first served basis.

Additionally, members of Lutheran Church of the Cross are offering overnight accommodations in their homes for as many attendees as possible to assist them in being good stewards of scarce congregational and district funds.

Registration costs are as follows:

Pastors and Prof. Church workers -\$150

Retired Pastors and Lay Persons - \$100

Vicars/Students/Fieldwork & Vicarage Supervisors - No Charge

Please register by July 2, 2010, on the Concordia Theological Seminary website at www.ctsfw.edu or by calling the seminary at 260-452-2279. Site information including directions and lodging availability can be obtained by emailing Lutheran Church of the Cross at secretary@lccross.org or calling 941-627-6060.

Lutheran Church of the Cross and Concordia Theological Seminary invite you to take this opportunity to: grow in your knowledge and understanding of biblical and theological matters; refresh your mind and find new enthusiasm; and connect with others in a relaxed, informal atmosphere.



Dr. Francisco is Assistant Professor of Historical Theology. Prior to joining the faculty in 2007 where he teaches Islamic studies in the PhD program as well as several graduate electives in Christian apologetics, he served as Assistant Professor of History at Concordia College–New York (2005–2007). He is the author of *Martin Luther and Islam: A Study in Sixteenth-Century Polemics and Apologetics*, co-editor of *Theologia et Apologia: Essays in Reformation Theology and Its Defense* (2007), and a contributing scholar for *Modern Reformation* magazine.

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SYLLABUS

August 2-4, 2010

Adam S. Francisco

Christianity in the 21st century faces a multitude of challenges. Postmodernism has eviscerated its distinctive character, rendering it merely one among many equally true religions. A resurgent atheistic secularism accuses it of being antiquated and intellectually untenable. And popular academics continue to discredit its divine and historical origin while, in the meantime, the world's religions—now firmly embedded in America's religious landscape—offer a host of alternative theologies and worldviews to fill the void. What is a Christian to do? This crash course in apologetics examines the major adversaries of Christianity, and explores avenues for articulating and defending the veracity of the faith in light of these and other contemporary challenges.

Outline of Topics:

1. Introduction: Christian Apologetics Defined, Defended, and Detailed
2. The Challenge of the New Atheism
3. Dealing with Islam
4. Postmodernism: Friend or Foe?
5. Conclusion

Suggested readings:

J.W. Montgomery, "Christian Apologetics in Light of the Lutheran Confessions," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 42 (1978): 258-275. (Available here:

<http://www.ctsfw.net/media/pdfs/montgomerychristianapologetics.pdf>.)

J.W. Montgomery, "The Incarnate Christ: The Apologetic Thrust of Lutheran Theology," *Modern Reformation* (Jan/Feb.1998): 8-12 (Available here:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20030818190112/www.modernreformation.org/mr98/JanFeb/mr9801lutheran.html>.)

J.W. Montgomery, "The Jury Returns: A Juridical Defense of Christianity," in *Evidence for Faith: Deciding the God Question*, ed. Montgomery (Dallas: Probe Books, 1991), 319-341. (Also available here: <http://www.mtio.com/articles/bissart1.htm>)

Helpful (but by no means required) resources:

A. Flew, *There Is A God* (Harper One, 2007).

P. Griffiths, *An Apology for Apologetics* (Wipf and Stock, 1991).

D. Groothuis, *Truth Decay* (IVP, 2000).

M. Licona, *Paul Meets Muhammad* (Baker, 2006).

J.W. Montgomery, *Tractatus Logico-Theologicus* (VKW, 2002).

J. Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 5th ed. (IVP, 2009).

J. Komoszewski et al. (eds), *Reinventing Jesus* (Kregel, 2006).