

# Final Assignment T/RS 122 (Olsen) Spring 2020 – COVID-19 Lockdown Conditions

**\*Due before Friday, May 22 at 2:00pm\***

## **Explanation of the Final Assignment**

We now have just over two weeks before our semester is complete. One final assignment awaits. It will involve continuation of your work with Adobe Spark as well as the theme “Love and the City,” set within the context of the resources and ideas provided by Christian theology introduced in this course. You will write an essay as your final assignment. It is due May 22 by 2:00pm. Each of you will write 2,000+ words. The essay will demonstrate your mastery of course content, and also provide an opportunity to marshal your education at the University of Scranton as a whole in the evidence you provide for your thesis, as well as any other connections you can make that illuminate the topic. Your essay will serve as a direct commentary on section five, chapter six of *Laudato Si*: “Civic and Political Love.” (The Pope’s words amount to about 630 words, so you are left to provide a minimum of your own 1,370 words, preferably more, especially if you use other sources, which is highly encouraged.) The essay thus continues our COVID-19 lockdown theme, namely Love and the City. The focus this time is upon the Pope’s Vision for Civic and Political Love in the Context of Care for Our Common Home.

In this essay you will explain *to a non-specialist audience* what Pope Francis means by civic and political love as it pertains to “Care for our Common Home.” Explanation requires elaboration, example, illustration, and complementary ideas. To achieve the end of explaining to a non-specialist audience, your essay must provide a clear thesis statement pertaining to love and the city in the context of care for our common home. Furthermore, you should utilize the content from the course to achieve elaborations, to reach for examples, to provide illustrations. Complementary ideas, and other such explanatory devices, can also be brought in from personal experience relevant to the matters explained, as well as your own academic expertise. If you are a budding economist, you might want to elaborate upon material relevant to economic thought or policy that remain relevant to the insights of the letter.

The letter situates love in the context of “Care for Our Common Home”. So must your essay. How does his vision for love and the city connect with Augustine, Dante, and other sources? What is his vision? How do love and care fit together in his Christian vision for attending sufficiently to our contemporary social, cultural, economic, bio-medical, spiritual, and ecological challenges? Do you find the proposals and insights compelling? If so, how? If not, why not? Already you have used material from your sources to think about how love and the city are connected from a Christian theological point of view. Remember that idea from Charles Williams in his work on Dante, the one where he wrote that Dante is concerned with the InGodding of the human person? From his viewpoint, Christians seek to become more and more like God—whoever that is—and in so doing grow into their image of God. If God is love, a love that becomes one of us, and teaches us how to love, then Christians see a direct connection between imitating Jesus, God incarnate, and transforming human communities on the basis of that imitation. When combined with Augustine’s concept of love and the city, and other sources

from the course, we can now see how the Pope speaks from a tradition valuing certain kinds of connections between humans and the earth.

Due attention must be paid to the Christian concepts he utilizes, and that we have situated in the larger content of the course. You have Augustine's analyses of the sources of evil, his definition of a city, Dante's so-called romantic theology, *The Secret of Kells*, and *The Mission* at your fingertips. Just look at the combination of the clip I provided from *The Mission* and its use of 1 Corinthians in my Spark Page "Encounter and Dialogue":



"If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. If there are prophecies, they will be brought to nothing; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will be brought to nothing. For we know partially and we prophesy partially, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I put aside childish things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known. So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:1-13)

And doesn't the film *Secret of Kells* also contain visions of humans in their environment that echo the Franciscan confraternity with all creatures?



Brendan learns from Aisling to attend to the natural world, a relationship immortalized in the Chi Rho page in the Book of Kells:



Chi Rho = First two letter of Greek name for Christ (= messiah/anointed one)

Love of nature and love's faith are combined in the vision for the Book of Kells compellingly illustrated by the film we viewed. Indeed, according to Pope Francis, "along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a "culture of care" which permeates all of society" (*Laudato Si*, 231). The devotion and care displayed simply in the creation of the materials to illuminate the manuscript, as displayed in the film, helps us attend more readily to the deep

connections between art, spirituality, and the environment. Loss of plant species impoverishes the colors artists can use to create artifacts that inspire us to live differently. So many of us have the privilege of accessing art, music, and film during our COVID-19 lockdown, without which our lives would be greatly impoverished. We would also be less hopeful and inspired to face our challenges with the resilience, humor, and joy provided us in the arts.

Think of the countless artists, poets, philosophers, economists, theologians, and politicians inspired by *The Divine Comedy*. Dante composed that over many years, but it began and ended in the pain and isolation of exile. In a way, we are all presently exiles; certainly we are isolated. Perhaps now we are more aware of how re-thinking civic and political life can help us live together with greater care. How do the resources of this course help us explain the Christian vision of Pope Francis? If you are a business major, perhaps you can focus on what the text says about businesses, corporations, finance, and international law? If you are a nursing major, think of how applicable the notion of “care” is to your profession overall. If you are a science major, think of the way he is in conversation with climate science, how he uses concepts like biodiversity, and how an ongoing dialogue among experts is required for an informed global citizenry. You have a chance to marshal your academic expertise in this essay (see the rubric at the end).

The essay and the Adobe Spark page serve as a collection point, not only for this course content as a whole, but also for your education as a whole. Provide insights only you can make from your resources, whether that is music, film, entomology, microbiology, actuarial science, elementary education, or criminology. How can “love” help us recover from a “throwaway culture”? In technology and production we take for granted the reality of what is called planned obsolescence. Companies create iterations of their materials that are designed to have a short life, so you’ll buy the next model. Some of that dynamic is driven by our own limitations, which we can keep pushing only in intervals. Yet others are fueled simply by the desire for increased profit and a dependency of a populous hooked and willing to pay more and more. How expensive is an iPhone now? We are urged to consider that “a sober look at our world shows that the degree of human intervention, often in the service of business interests and consumerism, is actually making our earth less rich and beautiful, ever more limited and grey, even as technological advances and consumer goods continue to abound limitlessly. We seem to think that we can substitute an irreplaceable and irretrievable beauty with something which we have created ourselves” (*Laudato Si*, 31). Spring is upon us, and simple exposure to a blooming flower can remind us of the factors at play in such commentary by the Pope.

Furthermore, and with respect to our course, the letter reminds us that the throwaway culture, and our appetites for more, have spiritual roots, especially in the absence of peace. What did Augustine say in his *Confessions*? The human heart “is restless until it rests in thee” (*Conf.* 1.1.1). Echoing that ancient insight, the letter says that

no one can cultivate a sober and satisfying life without being at peace with him or herself. An adequate understanding of spirituality consists in filling out what we mean by peace, which is much more than the absence of war. Inner peace is closely related to care for ecology and for the common good because, lived out authentically, it is reflected in a balanced lifestyle together with a capacity for wonder which takes us to a deeper understanding of life. (*Laudato Si*, 225)

Wonder is a delight to behold in a person. We see it especially on display in children. It is a spontaneous reaction from us when we marvel at the beauty and complexity of the world. Indeed, Aristotle said that wonder is foundational to all learning and knowledge. Wonder drove you to examine the world, before you even knew what “schooling” was. To cultivate that wonder requires balance and the kind of sobriety about living alluded to in the text.

What if that wonder, borne by a spirituality of care for the earth, were to infuse our civic and political lives? What if technology companies collaborated with water scientists to ensure run-off from production is not only mindfully cleaned as it leaves the factory, but life-giving and energizing for the earth that receives it back? What if...these are contained in Dante’s vision of the Empyrean, the Mystic Rose; the “city” is idealized in the image of the hive that is unified in its blissful activity. When we write an essay bearing the title “Vision,” we are more free to envision alongside the insights provided. The letter offers comments and insights, built from science and data, but it largely shies away from providing any kind of panacea. Readers are left to examine the letter freely, and to engage it in dialogue, for the sake of our “cities.”

Introduce, cite, and comment upon section five of chapter six using all the tools at your fingertips, available to your memory and imagination. The essay will be 2,000+ words, recalling that usage of over 600 words (at least) of Pope Francis’s reduces the burden. For some of you, it may help to look at a resource like “[An Ecomodernist Manifesto](#)” to see how another group seeks to articulate principles for development and conservation. Let us remember, however, that the context for this essay is the culminating assignment from an introductory course in Christian theology at a Catholic and Jesuit institution of higher education. Tell us, your audience, how you are reading and reacting to such content within the context of your education. Clearly this will vary depending upon your stage of education, but take the opportunity to think holistically, to unify, to complicate, to continue to keep the big questions open as you seek a life full of learning. Despite the circumstances, I’d like you to be proud of what you can do, at this stage. Since the link from Adobe will be shareable, the project could be something you’d be proud to send around as exemplifying the kind of creative work you can now produce as a consequence of your education.

I am available to assist and collaborate up until the final deadline, so please use me as you need to help you complete this work. Have fun with it, and even use it as an opportunity to open up conversations with your loved ones; they too will have input that may help you greatly and end up in the assignment.

\*\*At the end of your Spark Page, please include a tag-line indicating that the essay served as your Final Assignment for T/RS 122: Introduction to Christian Theology at The University of Scranton, under the direction of Dr. Cyrus P. Olsen III.\*\*

## **Specific Guidelines for the Final Assignment**

Here is the title everyone's Final Assignment must present:

### **Pope Francis's Vision for Civic and Political Love in the Context of Care for our Common Home**

The essay bearing this title will be followed by your name:

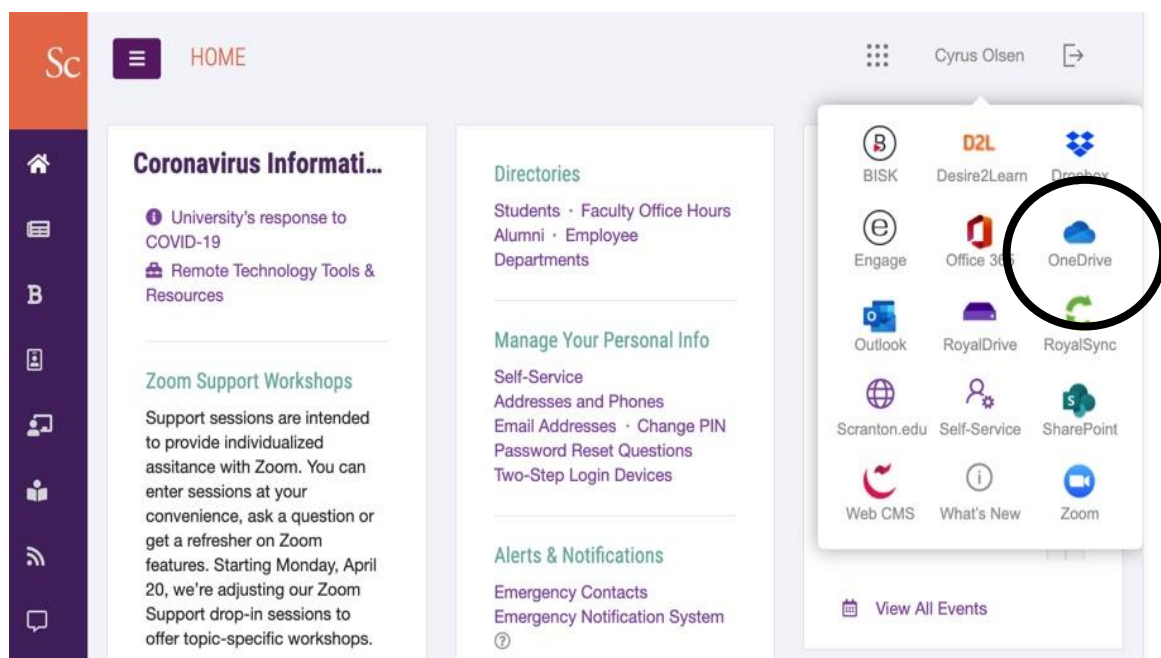
### **Pope Francis's Vision for Civic and Political Love in the Context of Care for our Common Home**

**Jennifer Donnelly**

The essay will be submitted in two formats. Firstly, the essay will be saved in a Word file. The essay will be saved in this manner:

LastName\_FirstName\_TRS122\_Final\_Spring2020.docx  
Donnelly\_Jennifer\_TRS122\_Final\_Spring2020.docx

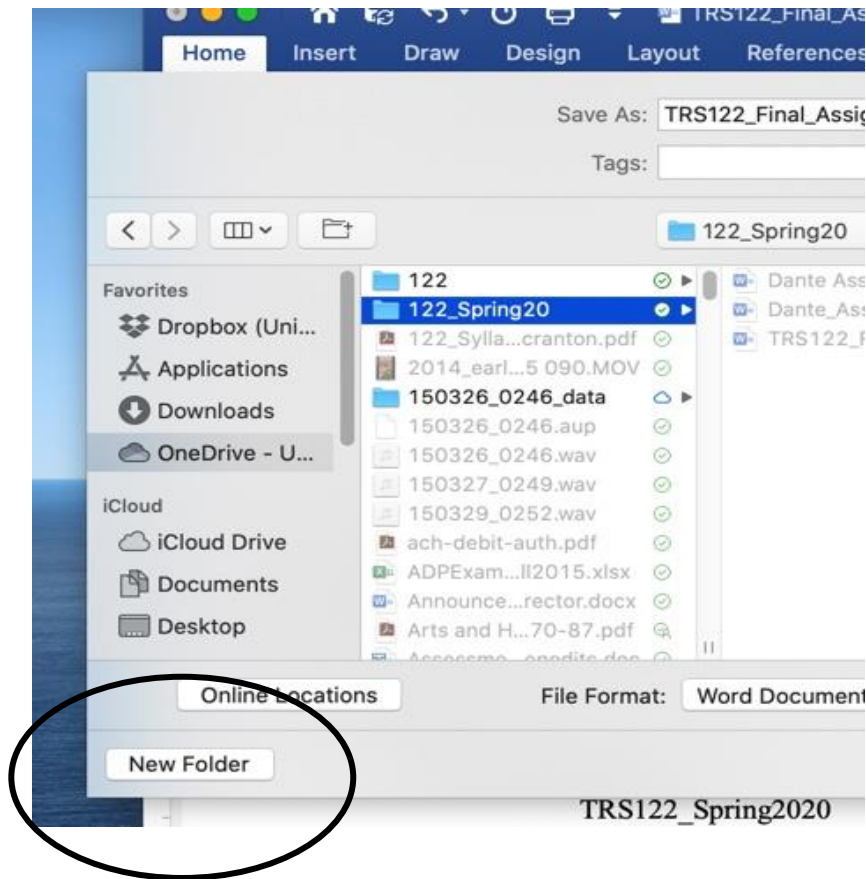
Simply create that file *immediately*, with that file name. Save it to your own OneDrive file structure within your Outlook email provided through the University system.



By saving the file in this way, you will have access to it through your University system and it can also be saved to your own hard drive, especially for those of you graduating who may need to access their portfolio of work in the future. I thus suggest that both in OneDrive and on your own computer you have some kind of file folder structure like the following:

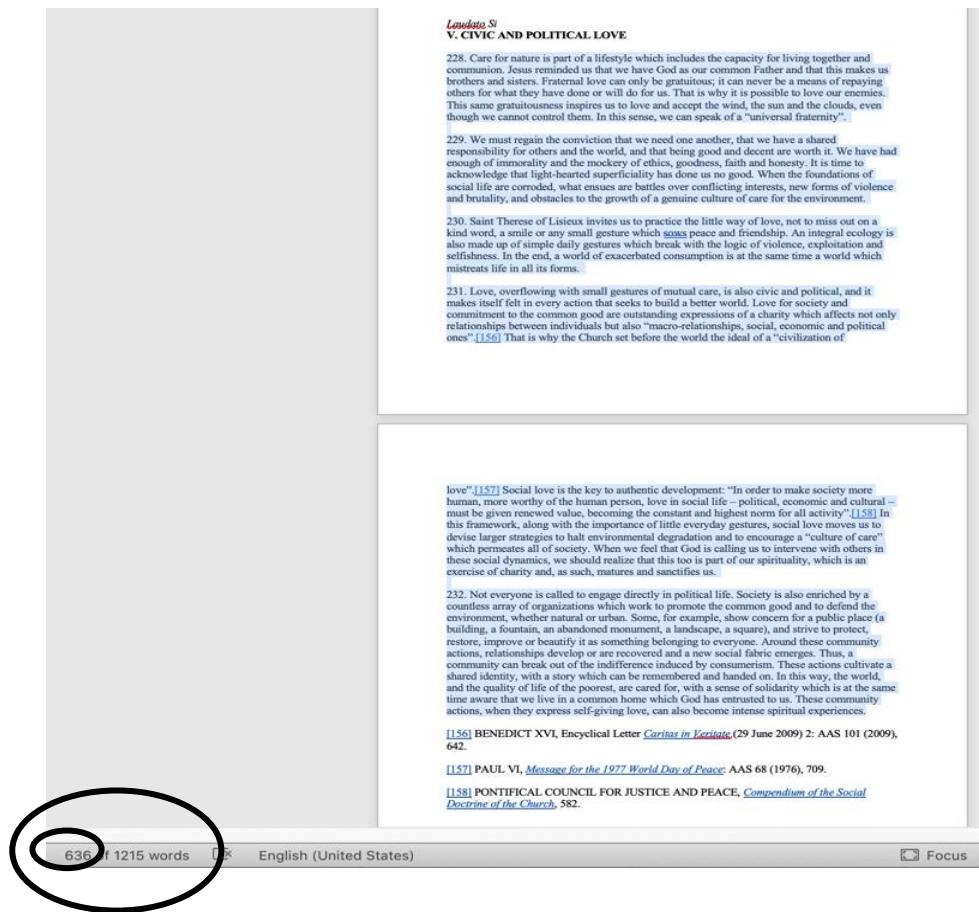
Scranton\_2014\_2020  
    Scranton\_2020  
        Scranton\_Spring2020  
            Spring2020\_Courses  
                TRS122\_Spring2020  
                    Donnelly\_Jennifer\_TRS122\_Final\_Spring2020.docx

For any future purposes, you will be able to locate your work in its proper folder, thereby ensuring you do not simply have a file saved as “essay3.docx” without any identifiers. (Students most frequently send essays with such naming conventions, and it can even make grading very difficult for instructors.). It is easy enough to create new folders every time you save a file.



The submitted file will demonstrate mastery of conventional writing standards by providing all citations according to either [MLA](#) or [APA](#) formatting, depending upon your preferred style and citation manual. Observe the standards throughout the paper, whichever you choose. By “observe” I mean follow the specifications provided by these style guides. Given our previous problems with plagiarism, I expect all citations, no matter how loosely used, to be provided. Be sure to cover all possible bases. Even when you are utilizing something that is left unquoted, you can nevertheless provide a footnote, or in-text citation, indicating the source for your ideas.

The essay saved with this file name will have at least a total of 2,000 words in the body paragraphs of the essay. 636 of those words will be those of Pope Francis from *Laudato Si*, which I will explain shortly. In reality, then, you will need to provide at least approximately 1,350 words of your own. If and when you use other sources, as you will, that overall count will increase. Within Word you can view word count by highlighting text and assessing the overall count at the bottom of the page:



As you can see, the smaller circle indicates the highlighted text, whereas the word-count to the right and within the larger circle tells us how many total words are in the document at the time of the highlighting. Your work can always be examined for word-counts in this way. The text I have highlighted here is what you all will include in your essays, and it is from the final chapter of *Laudato Si*, section Five, titled “Civic and Political Love.”



That text is provided here, and can be the first thing you copy and paste in its entirety directly into the file you have just created, thereby avoiding that fearsome “blank page.” So, after you copy and paste the title above and include your name, copy and paste this material:

#### **[V. CIVIC AND POLITICAL LOVE**

228. Care for nature is part of a lifestyle which includes the capacity for living together and communion. Jesus reminded us that we have God as our common Father and that this makes us brothers and sisters. Fraternal love can only be gratuitous; it can never be a means of repaying others for what they have done or will do for us. That is why it is possible to love our enemies. This same gratuitousness inspires us to love and accept the wind, the sun and the clouds, even though we cannot control them. In this sense, we can speak of a “universal fraternity”.

229. We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it. We have had enough of immorality and the mockery of ethics, goodness, faith and honesty. It is time to acknowledge that light-hearted superficiality has done us no good. When the foundations of social life are corroded, what ensues are battles over conflicting interests, new forms of violence and brutality, and obstacles to the growth of a genuine culture of care for the environment.

230. Saint Therese of Lisieux invites us to practice the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness. In the end, a world of exacerbated consumption is at the same time a world which mistreats life in all its forms.

231. Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world. Love for society and commitment to the common good are outstanding expressions of a charity which affects not only relationships between individuals but also “macro-relationships, social, economic and political ones”.<sup>[156]</sup> That is why the Church set before the world the ideal of a “civilization of love”.<sup>[157]</sup> Social love is the key to authentic development: “In order to make society more human, more worthy of the human person, love in social life – political, economic and cultural – must be given renewed value, becoming the constant and highest norm for all activity”.<sup>[158]</sup> In this framework, along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a “culture of care” which permeates all of society. When we feel that God is calling us to intervene with others in these social dynamics, we should realize that this too is part of our spirituality, which is an exercise of charity and, as such, matures and sanctifies us.

232. Not everyone is called to engage directly in political life. Society is also enriched by a countless array of organizations which work to promote the common good and to defend the environment, whether natural or urban. Some, for example, show concern for a public place (a building, a fountain, an abandoned monument, a landscape, a square), and strive to protect, restore, improve or beautify it as something belonging to everyone. Around these community actions, relationships develop or are recovered and a new social fabric emerges. Thus, a

community can break out of the indifference induced by consumerism. These actions cultivate a shared identity, with a story which can be remembered and handed on. In this way, the world, and the quality of life of the poorest, are cared for, with a sense of solidarity which is at the same time aware that we live in a common home which God has entrusted to us. These community actions, when they express self-giving love, can also become intense spiritual experiences.

[156] BENEDICT XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* (29 June 2009) 2: AAS 101 (2009), 642.

[157] PAUL VI, *Message for the 1977 World Day of Peace*: AAS 68 (1976), 709.

[158] PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 582.]

I left the citations in there so that you could observe how the papal documents also follow citation conventions. The links are live so that you too can utilize them, if you so choose. Usage of hyperlinks will prove helpful for the second component of the submission guidelines, namely the inclusion of your Adobe Spark link, both in the form of a hyperlink, and as simply copied and pasted from your “link” provided upon completion of the Adobe Spark page.

## **Submission Guidelines for the Final Assignment**

In your submission, then, your title will be hyperlinked. It will thus look like the links immediately above, so that when the cursor hovers over the link, the URL appears.

[Pope Francis’s Vision for Civic and Political Love in the Context of Care for our Common Home](#)

[Jessica Donnelly](#)

[For the multi-media version of this paper, either click the hyperlink provided above, or use the following: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/M0h6iVGhCQyn0/>]

Just as you did above, create the Spark Page *immediately* with that title and your name. Pick a random picture to begin, and save it just to ensure the work is started and has all the correct components. Clearly you will wait to insert the hyperlink for the final text until the very end, when you have finalized your translation of the written essay into the Spark format. You can also immediately copy and paste the content from *Laudato Si* above, if that also helps you get started.

Since your file will contain the hyperlinks for your Adobe Spark Page, you will need only to upload that file to the D2L Dropbox titled “Civic and Political Love.”

Grading Rubric for Final Assignment – T/RS 122 – Dr. Olsen, Spring 2020:

<b>Demonstrate familiarity and understanding of a classic Christian text: <i>Confessions</i> <i>Divine Comedy</i></b>	Cites properly, comments thoroughly, and puts to use for the final topic essay with insight <b>20 points</b>	Cites properly, comments partially, and puts to use with some insight for the final topic essay <b>18 points</b>	Cites properly, barely comments, and puts to use for the final topic with little insight <b>16 points</b>	Cites improperly, fails to comment, and shows little to no insight when applied to final essay <b>14 points</b>	Failure to observe citation conventions, commentary, and no connection to final essay <b>10 points</b>	
<b>Demonstrate understanding of the fundamentals of the Christian faith, especially God, Christ, sin, and salvation</b>	Articulates at least two of the fundamentals listed in light of Civic and Political Love, in the context of Love and the City <b>20 points</b>	Articulates at least one of the fundamentals listed in light of Civic and Political Love, in the context of Love and the City <b>18 points</b>	Tries to articulate at least one of fundamentals listed in light of Civic and Political Love, in the context of Love and the City <b>16 points</b>	Attempts to articulate fundamentals listed in light of Civic and Political Love, but refers to the context of Love and the City <b>14 points</b>	Fails to articulate fundamentals listed in light of Civic and Political Love, and fails to refer to context: Love and the City <b>10 points</b>	
<b>Demonstrate understanding of significance of Christian worldview for engaging contemporary society</b>	Ably demonstrates how <i>Laudato Si</i> engages contemporary society from within a Christian worldview <b>20 points</b>	Partially demonstrates how <i>Laudato Si</i> engages contemporary society from within a Christian worldview <b>18 points</b>	Somewhat demonstrates how <i>Laudato Si</i> engages contemporary society from within a Christian worldview <b>16 points</b>	Minimally demonstrates how <i>Laudato Si</i> engages contemporary society from within a Christian worldview <b>14 points</b>	Fails to demonstrate how <i>Laudato Si</i> engages contemporary society from within a Christian worldview <b>10 points</b>	
<b>Demonstrate ability to reflect on intersections of theology and personal and/or academic interests</b>	Highly articulate application of course content to personal/and or academic interests <b>20 points</b>	Articulate application of course content to personal/and or academic interests <b>18 points</b>	Adequate application of course content to personal/and or academic interests <b>16 points</b>	Poor application of course content to personal/and or academic interests <b>14 points</b>	No application of course content to personal/and or academic interests <b>10 points</b>	
<b>Acquire a theological vocabulary to be used as a basis for subsequent study</b>	Sophisticated use of theological vocabulary <b>20 points</b>	Articulate use of theological vocabulary <b>18 points</b>	Adequate use of theological vocabulary <b>16 points</b>	Minor use of theological vocabulary <b>14 points</b>	Little to no use of theological vocabulary <b>10 points</b>	
<b>Grammar</b>	Proficiently demonstrates grammatical conventions common to English usage <b>5 points</b>	Accurately demonstrates grammatical conventions common to English usage <b>4 points</b>	Adequately demonstrates grammatical conventions common to English usage <b>3 points</b>	Minimally demonstrates grammatical conventions common to English usage <b>2 points</b>	Fails to demonstrate grammatical conventions common to English usage <b>0 points</b>	

<b>Thesis Statement</b>	Complex, integrative of course content, and easily identifiable <b>5 points</b>	Complex, integrative of course content, and identifiable <b>4 points</b>	Complex and identifiable <b>3 points</b>	Identifiable <b>2 points</b>	None <b>0 points</b>	
<b>Adobe Spark Style</b>	Visually compelling with relevant imagery and easeful flow <b>5 points</b>	Visually compelling with relevant imagery <b>4 points</b>	Visually competent with some relevant imagery <b>3 points</b>	Visually jumbled with irrelevant imagery <b>2 points</b>	Total absence of attention to presentation style <b>0 points</b>	
<b>Adobe Spark Content, e.g. hyperlinks, videos, citations</b>	Excellent attention paid to multimedia potential of Spark <b>5 points</b>	Above-average attention paid to multimedia potential of Spark <b>4 points</b>	Average attention paid to multimedia potential of Spark <b>3 points</b>	Below-average attention paid to multimedia potential of Spark <b>2 points</b>	No attention paid to multimedia potential of Spark <b>0 points</b>	
<b>Demonstration of how one's academic expertise intersects with course content in light of the theme Love and the City</b>	Imaginative and applicable intersections to course content from one's academic expertise <b>20 points</b>	Applicable intersections to course content from one's academic expertise <b>18 points</b>	Somewhat applicable intersections to course content from one's academic expertise <b>16 points</b>	Applicable but minimal intersections to course content from one's academic expertise <b>14 points</b>	Few intersections to course content from one's academic expertise <b>0 points</b>	
					<b>Total (140)</b>	