

WINTER COURSE 2024
ST. AUGUSTINE'S "DE CIUITATE DEI"
AND THE REFORMATION



St. Augustine's "De ciuitate dei" (The City of God) is one of the most important patristic texts for the Reformation. The North African church father's apology, formulated in the wake of the decline of Roman rule in the western Mediterranean, was of great importance for the political thinking of the Reformation and remains influential to this day.

From January 2 to 14, 2024, the Wittenberg Center for Reformation Studies (WCRS) will offer a ten-day intensive course in reading Augustine in the original Latin, interpreting him against his patristic background, and examining his significance for the Reformation. The program will begin with an overview of all twenty-two books of Augustine's *City of God* and translate important chapters from the original Latin text, such as *De ciu.* XIV, 28–XV, 1 and other passages, mainly from books XI–XXII.

Then texts from the Reformation will show how Augustine's political thought was received in the sixteenth century. Martin Luther's letter to Melanchthon "De gladii iure" (1521) is one of the earliest evidence of a new approach to political ethics, and his theses for the disputation "De tribus hierarchiis, Ecclesiastica, Politica, Oeconomica" (1539) show how Luther developed his doctrine of the two kingdoms. In parallel with Luther, Ulrich Zwingli formulated an alternative interpretation of the Augustinian distinction between the two cities, summarized in his "De vera et falsa religione commentarius" (1525). And John Calvin summed up his influential teaching on the two kingdoms and temporal authority in his 1559 "Institutio", especially in Inst. III, 15–16 and IV, 20.

Special attention will be given to working in the original Latin, including a review of Latin grammar and training in translation skills. The course is particularly suitable for students of the Reformation who wish to consolidate and gain confidence in their Latin. A working knowledge of Latin is required, as well as a willingness to review Latin vocabulary and grammar in advance.

The course will take place in Tunis, Tunisia, which was built on the site of ancient Carthage. We will be hosted by St. Cyprian's College, an academic institution of the Anglican Church. Since the WCRS is committed to the study of church history in its cultural context, the program will also include excursions on the traces of late antique church history in Carthage and an optional one-day tour of important ancient and medieval sites in Tunisia. For those selected to participate, all expenses will be covered (course, airfare, single room in a good hotel in the city center, all meals, excursions).

We invite anyone who wants to learn more about the Reformation message and its roots in the early church by strengthening their Latin skills, especially, but not exclusively, Ph.D. students, theological educators, and early career scholars.

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