



HIVER/WINTER 2022

DIPLÔME EN THÉOLOGIE ORTHODOXE (2e CYCLE)

**SELECTED THEMES IN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY:
THE CHALLENGE OF SECULARISM AND SECULARIZATION (THL-6222)**

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Thursday Evenings (6-9 p.m.) through Video Conferencing
From January 13 to April 21, 2022

In a general way within Western society, and especially with regards to the public sphere, theological concerns have been gradually displaced in favour of references and concepts which are purposely disconnected from God or the Church. These far-reaching phenomena, often referred to as secularization and secularism, have largely succeeded in displacing the relevance of metaphysical concerns. As a result, significant challenges to the mission of the Church have evolved. Many parishioners struggle with discerning the purpose of the Church and their faith within their own lives. The correlating rise of the individualistic impulse and the primacy placed on material wealth often conflict with the communal aspect and salvific purpose of the sacramental life in Christ. The unfortunate temptation to view our relationship to the Church simply as an extension of one's cultural or family identity has also become very prevalent.

The course aims to expose students to the unique challenges posed by secularization and secularism for the life of the Church. To do so, the history and theory of secularism and secularization will be presented and thoroughly discussed. In addition, we will consider the ways in which the Orthodox Church has been specifically impacted by these phenomena. Of course, our main interest is to highlight a suitable theological response to these challenges. The intention is to elaborate strategies aimed at effectively carrying out the mission of the Church and facilitating a direct and personal participation in the ecclesial encounter with God, notwithstanding the evolving nature of the prevailing conditions in the contemporary world.