

CH 517 *The Patristic Church* Midterm Examination,
March 11, 2026

To be returned **via e-mail** on or before Friday, **March 27, 2026**

Please answer all parts of all three questions

**To be returned electronically via e-mail [NOT on CANVAS!]
(ldvsinger@stjohnsem.edu) by Friday, March 27, 2026 in pdf or .doc format**

In your answers, when you cite primary texts (as I hope you will) DO NOT simply cut and paste the text into your answer. SUMMARIZE ACCURATELY what the relevant text says, just as you would in any real pastoral situation, and give the relevant citation in a footnote. Please answer all parts of all three questions. There is no minimum or maximum number of pages.

Please remember that whenever your answers include anything other than your own words or ideas, you must place the cited text in quotation marks and include appropriate references. When citing text from the Internet always include in your reference the original author and source of the material you cited, together with the Webpage HTTP reference. For example:

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Ia, 103.4.
<http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1103.htm>

And **not** merely: <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1103.htm>

1. Describe the different “clerical orders” (levels of church leadership and ministry) mentioned in Clement’s Letter to the Corinthians.

- a) How are these orders similar to or different from those described in the *Didache*, the *Letters* of Ignatius of Antioch, and the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus?
 - b) Is there a doctrine of apostolic succession or any suggestion of papal primacy in these or any of these texts we have studied? If so, describe it.
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2. What do the descriptions of the martyrdoms of Polycarp, Perpetua, and Felicity tell us about the new role as intercessors and intermediaries these saints were believed to have acquired as a result of their sacrifice? What difficulties did this role raise for bishops with regard to excommunication and reconciliation?

3. How do the attitudes of Clement of Alexandria and Origen towards classical philosophy differ from that of Tertullian? What are the implications of this for Christian systematic theology and spiritual theology?