(may serve either as substitute for BIB -D502 Biblical Interpretation or as an Old Testament elective) 3 credits Kevin Stephens, O.P., S.S.D. student, *École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem* hybrid, online May 21 to August 10, with three day intensive seminar,

Thursday–Saturday-, June 21–23, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., end noon Saturday

# **Description**:

A study of the history of Israel and the Ancient Near East with a focus on how the history of Israel interacts with the history of the surrounding cultures, the importance of this history to studying the Old Testament, and the impact of this history on the New Testament and the tradition of Christian interpretation. Some of the questions to be asked might include, who were Assyria and Babylonia? What do we really know about David? How does the answer to these questions affect how we read, for example, the prophets? How did the writers of the Old Testament regard and represent their own history? How does this affect how we read the New Testament? What relevance does history have for historical and contemporary biblical interpretation?

## **Course Objectives:**

- Students will come out of the course with a conceptual framework of the political history of the Ancient Near East and specifically the kingdoms of Israel and Judah during the period covered by Old Testament texts.
- Students will be able to read the Old Testament with an eye toward the historical situation behind a text.
- Students will begin to develop a sense of the role that the history of Israel plays in interpreting the New Testament and Patristic writings.
- Students will be able to read articles on biblical archaeology in relation to biblical history with a critical eye.
- Students will be introduced to the basic categories of historical-critical biblical scholarship as well as some newer approaches.

#### **Grading/Evaluation:**

Students will be evaluated based on their participation in the online seminar, their input during the intensive session, and a final paper on a suitable topic which explores the historical record, the historical narrative, and the intersection between the two.

## **Required Texts:**

Miller, J. Maxwell, and John H. Hayes. *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*. 2nd ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006. ISBN 0-664-22358-3

### **Recommended Texts:**

Béchard, Dean P. *The Scripture Documents: An Anthology of Official Catholic Teachings*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2002. ISBN 0-8146-2591-6

Soulen, Richard N., and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 3rd ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. ISBN 0-664-22314-1