

OLD CATHOLIC THEOLOGY: FAITH, HISTORY AND PRAXIS

PROGRAMME

5 July 2026– 10 July 2026

••• OUD-KATHOLIEK SEMINARIE
*summer*school
UTRECHT



WELCOME



Prof. Dr. Peter-Ben Smit
Course director



Marian Brand, BA
Course coordinator

Dear visitor! I'm very glad that you're interested in our summer school in Old Catholic theology. Since 2013 we have been welcoming students to Utrecht to explore Old Catholic theology together. More than just taking a course, the experience has been an experience of intercultural, ecumenical, even interreligious and intergenerational fellowship for all participants, students and professors alike.

Because of the success of what is now our "classic", the introductory course Old Catholic Theology: Faith, History and Praxis we will continue to offer it. It is a unique opportunity to acquaint yourself with the basic tenets and key voices in Old Catholic theology.

If you want to go beyond the basics, then the advanced course is the right choice for you. In 2026, this course is titled Ecumenical Catholicity: The Old Catholic Witness. As the title indicates, we will be studying the ecumenical life of the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht. Ecumenism belongs to the Old Catholic charism and is both an exiting calling and a true theological and spiritual challenge.

Of course, you can also choose to combine both courses in one 'track' – two weeks of full immersion in Old Catholic theology! This even comes with a discount on your course fee. For this, see the track 'Old Catholic Theology: Contexts and Calling.'

We're delighted that the faculty of the Old Catholic Seminary at Utrecht University is again offering its time and talent for the summer schools. They include some of the best and brightest minds in Old Catholic theology, such as The Rev. Dr. Mattijs Ploeger, dean of the Seminary, who will be lecturing on liturgy and systematic theology and The Rt. Rev. Dr. Dick Schoon, Bishop of Haarlem, who will lecture on church history. Also, we're honoured that Prof. Dr. Andreas Krebs, a theologian with a strong interest in queer and

ecological approaches, will visit us again from the Old Catholic Institute of Bonn University.

Last but certainly not least, excursions are also included into both courses, for instance to St. Gertrud's Cathedral, seat of the Archbishop of Utrecht; to the leading museum of religious art and history in the Netherlands, the Catharijneconvent; to the hidden history of (Old) Catholicism in Amsterdam during its suppression, and to the medieval cathedral of Utrecht, the Dom Church.

As course director, I'd be very happy to be able to welcome you to join us in Utrecht in 2026. This is your chance to be part of a unique community of learners in Old Catholic theology. While you connect with participants from all over the globe, you will engage intensively with Old Catholic systematic theology, liturgy, history, spirituality, ecumenical relations, canon law, and praxis.

If you ask yourself: is this for me? the answer is probably: yes, it is! Courses are suitable for theologians, clergy and interested lay persons alike. Please feel free to contact me through p.b.a.smit@uu.nl should you have any questions.

Oh, and before I forget, there's one final piece of good news: despite the rise in prices all over the world, we've decided to keep our course fee the same!

With every good wish,

Prof. Dr. Peter-Ben Smit, course director

P.S. Given the positive feedback on the 'in person' experience of the past years, we will continue to teach our classes physically in 2026.

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

This course offers an introduction to Old Catholic theology in an ecumenical context. Old Catholic theology is understood as the main theological currents as reflected in the Union of Utrecht of Old Catholic Churches. The topics covered by the course include the following aspects of Old Catholic theology and tradition: The History of Old Catholicism, Spirituality, Ecumenism, Canon Law and Ecclesiology, Liturgy, and Systematic Theology.

Students will be taught by experts in Old Catholic theology from the faculty at the Old Catholic Seminary, Utrecht. The course also includes an exploration of religious art in cooperation with the main Dutch museum on this topic, Museum Catharijneconvent. Participants will also engage with Old Catholic liturgy and church music by attending Mass in St. Gertrud's Cathedral. The excursion to Amsterdam, where the participants will tour sites of (Old) Catholic history will be offered again this year. Besides lectures and excursions, it will also be possible to participate in social activities, in which you can learn from the knowledge and backgrounds of your fellow students and have a good time together as well.

At the end of the course, students will have a broad overview of major topics and themes in Old Catholic theology and spirituality and will be able to pursue further independent study of the subject. The course is at the introductory level of an M.Div. curriculum; good BA students may also apply. Students may be expected to do advance reading for the course.

This course can be combined with a second week of advanced studies: Ecumenical Catholicity: The Old Catholic Witness. That course is offered in immediate connection with the introductory course.

Target audience

- Students of theology interested in Old Catholicism and ecumenism;
- Clergy and theologians interested in Old Catholicism and ecumenism;
- Laypersons with formal or informal theological training interested in Old Catholicism and ecumenism.

The course is of specific interest for students from Anglican, Orthodox, Lutheran, Old Catholic, and ecumenical backgrounds.

Aim of the course

The goals of the course are, the following;

Upon completing the course:

1. the student will be familiar with central aspects of Old Catholic identity and theology;
2. the student will be able to contextualize Old Catholic theology within the broader spectrum of theology and religious studies;
3. the student will be able to undertake further independent exploratory studies of specific aspects of Old Catholic theology.

Study load

4 contact hours/day, about 40 hours of preparatory self-study will be required.

Costs

Course fee: € 425

Registration

Application deadline: 1st May 2026

LECTURERS a.o.



The Rev. Prof. Dr.
Peter-Ben Smit

Prof. Dr. Peter-Ben Smit holds the Chair of Ancient Catholic Church Structures at Utrecht University, on behalf of the Old Catholic Seminary. Lecturer in Biblical and Ecumenical Theology at the Old Catholic Seminary in Utrecht.

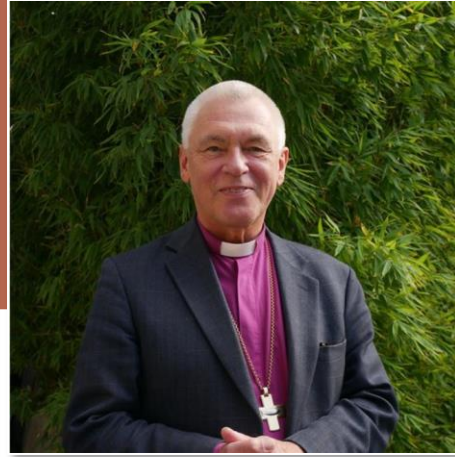
Ecumenism



The Rev. Dr. Mattijs
Ploeger

Dean at the Old Catholic Seminary in Utrecht. Lecturer in Systematic Theology and Liturgy.

Systematic Theology
and Liturgy



The Rt. Rev. Dr. Dirk
Jan (Dick) Schoon

Lecturer in Church History at the Old Catholic Seminary in Utrecht. Also Bishop of Haarlem.

Church History



Adriaan Snijders
LL.M., MA

Lecturer in Canon Law at the Old Catholic Seminary in Utrecht

Canon Law



The Rev. Canon Louis
Runhaar

Priest of the parish of St. Gertrude's Cathedral in Utrecht.

Praxis and Spirituality

PROGRAMME PART I

Time	Location	Description	Lecturer
Saturday, 4 July			
12.00-18.00	Key pick-up	You will find the exact key pick-up location in the pre-departure information, available after you have paid the course fee	
Sunday, 5 July			
10.00	Mass at St. Gertrude's Cathedral, Willemsplantsoen 2, Utrecht	Attendance of Mass and subsequent coffee hour with the local priest and parishioners	The Rev. Prof. Dr. Peter-Ben Smit and The Rev. Can. Henk Schoon
12.00	Informal lunch and guided tour through St. Gertrude's Cathedral	The coffee hour will be followed by an informal lunch and tour through the cathedral and its immediate forerunner, the St. Gertrud's Chapel. Lunch will be provided	
Monday, 6 July			
10.00-12.00	Course Introduction - Drift 25, room 1.01	Orientation on the course, introduction to sources and resources for Old Catholic theology in an ecumenical context; sharing of the preparatory reflection papers on the motivation for the course.	The Rev. Prof. Dr. Peter-Ben Smit
12.00-14.00	Lunch Break		
14.00-16.00	Lecture - Drift 25, room 1.01	Old Catholic Approaches to Theology	The Rev. Dr. Mattijs Ploeger
19.30-21.00	Garten at Gertrude's Cathedral (Willemsplantsoen 3)	Drinks, reception and an informal conversation about the diaconal vocation of the church with speakers from different traditions represented in the Summer School group.	
Tuesday, 7 July			
10.00-12.00	Lecture - Drift 25, room 1.01	Introduction to the history of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands.	Rt. Rev. Dr. Dick Schoon
12.00-14.30	Lunch Break, going to Amsterdam		
14.30-16.30	Excursion – Start Amsterdam Central Station	Hidden churches - publicly known. A tour of (Old) Catholicism in Amsterdam.	Rt. Rev. Dr. Dick Schoon

PROGRAMME

PART II

Time	Location	Description	Lecturer
Wednesday, 8 July			
10.00-12.00	Lecture - Drift 25, room 1.01	Old Catholic liturgy: history and current situation	The Rev. Dr. Mattijs Ploeger
12.00-14.00	Lunch Break		
14.00-16.00	Excursion - Museum Catharijneconvent Utrecht	Excursion to National Museum Catharijneconvent (Utrecht)	Dr. Richard de Beer, curator of the Old Catholic collection
Thursday, 9 July			
10.00-12.00	Lecture - Drift 25, room 1.01	Old Catholic parish life and spirituality in day-to-day practice	The Rev. Canon Runhaar, MA
12.00-14.00	Lunch Break		
14.00-16.00	Lecture - Drift 25, room 1.01	Introduction to Old Catholic Canon Law in its Ecclesiological Context	Adriaan Snijders, LL.M., MA
Friday, 10 July			
10.00-12.00	Lecture – Kappittelroom Gertrude’s Cathedral	Concluding seminar	The Most. Rev. Bernd Wallet, MA (Archbishop of Utrecht)
12.00-14.00	Informal lunch. Garden Gertrude’s Cathedral	Lunch will be provided.	



FURTHER INFORMATION

For more INFORMATION or to apply for this course check:

[Old Catholic Theology: Faith, History and Praxis](#)

Going BEYOND the basics?

[Ecumenical Catholicity: The Old Catholic Witness](#)

Being very AMBITIOUS? Check the TRACK (with discount):

[Old Catholic Theology: Contexts and Calling](#)

Scholarships:

For information regarding financial assistance, please contact the course director at p.b.a.smit@uu.nl.

Disclaimer:

This programme is provisional and may be subject to minor changes due to unforeseen circumstances.