

COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS
FIRST-YEAR PROGRAM
SPRING 2005
FYPR 110: Christian Perspectives on Suffering 2: Attempting to Heal

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Section 01: TR 11:00-12:15 a.m. (Smith 426)
Section 02: TR 2:00 - 3:15 p.m. (Smith 426)

Office Hours: M: 3:15-4:15 p.m.; T: 7:00-8:00 p.m.; R: 1:00-1:50 p.m.; and by appointment

FYP Theme: “Confronted by suffering and loss, how then shall we live?”

Course Description: For almost 2000 years, Christians have tried to come to terms with the human experience of suffering and loss. The Christian response to suffering and loss has also included attempts to “set things right,” in terms of offering hope of forgiveness to sinners, healing to the sick, and comfort to those in grief. In this semester, we will examine the topics of healing, death and afterlife, and spiritual growth, with special attention to the ways contemporary American culture deals with these issues. We will continue to read selections from Christian writers (for example, St. Benedict and Julian of Norwich) as well as short stories; in addition, we will include films and documentaries in the course material.

Course Assignments:

Quizzes. Each student will be expected to take five short quizzes in class. The lowest quiz grade will drop. More details will be given in class.

Exam. Each student will be expected to take a take-home final exam. More details will be given in class.

Essays. 1) Each student will be expected to hand in reflection essays (2-3 pages) on each of the three assigned common readings/clusters. More details will be given in class.

2) Each student will be expected to do a worship service visit or other “outside” experiential reflection essay (minimum: 5 pages). More details will be given in class.

Journals. Each student will be expected to keep a journal of reflections on the common readings, the course material, and other FYP events. These journals will be collected periodically and read by the instructor. More details will be given in class.

Class Discussions. In order for a seminar to be fruitful, each student should expect to attend every class meeting, and to participate in general class discussions. In addition, students will be assigned (in groups of two) to lead one in-class discussion of a particular topic, usually focusing on assigned readings from primary sources. More details will be given in class.

Course Grades:

Reflection essays (3):	20%
“Experiential” essay:	20%
Quiz average:	20%
Final Exam:	20%
*Participation:	20%
Total:	100%

*Participation includes: leading one class discussion (with another student); activity in general class discussion; evaluation of the journal. Some students participate with more ease orally in class; others participate more effectively in written form in the journal. The important element is *engagement*: engagement with the readings and with the flow of the class “process” as the course progresses.

Course Books:

Required (From last semester)

Catherine Cory and David Landry, eds. *The Christian Theological Tradition*. 2d. ed.

Augustine. *Confessions*. Henry Chadwick, transl.

Alister McGrath, ed. *The Christian Theology Reader*. 2d. ed.

Jean Améry. *At the Mind's Limits*.

Required (Bookstore: This semester)

Timothy Fry, ed. *The Rule of St. Benedict in English*.

Julian (of Norwich). *Revelations of Divine Love*.

Harlan Ellison. *Paingod and Other Delusions*.

Rutherford, Richard. *Honoring the Dead: Catholics and Cremation Today*.

(Bookstore: common readings, in order of use)

Eliza Steelwater. *The Hangman's Knot: Lynching, Legal Executions and America's Struggle with the Death Penalty*

Geraldine Brooks. *Year of Wonders*.

Jean Vanier. *Becoming Human*.

Leo Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*.

Other Readings (ERes)

Short common readings. Voltaire's Poem on the Lisbon Earthquake; Rousseau's Response.

Short stories: All short stories from the science fiction collections and anthologies listed.

Primary readings: Selections from primary source material taken from three collections, edited by Joel Harrington, Karen Jolly, and William Placher (volumes 1 and 2).

Secondary readings: Selections from other textbooks, e.g. Justo González and Alister McGrath.

Many of these books will also be available on reserve in the Reserve Room, Dinand Library (2d floor).

The Bible: Best Versions On-Line

www.usccb.org/nab/bible/ (New American Bible)

<http://etext.virginia.edu/rsv/browse.html> (Revised Standard Version)

<http://www.devotions.net/bible/00bible.htm> (New Revised Standard Version)

<http://bible.gospelcom.net/bible?version=NIV> (New International Version)

The Bible: Also Available in Reference, Dinand Library (Main Reading Room, First Floor)

The Holy Bible (New Revised Standard Version, 1989): Ref. BS 191.5 .A1 1989 N48

The Holy Bible (New International Version, 1984): Ref. BS 195 .N37 1984

Course Readings:

The theological readings for the course are divided into two groups: primary readings and secondary readings. Each class meeting has a specific topic. The readings for that topic have been assigned at the end on the preceding class, under the instruction "Prepare for next class."

Primary readings are taken from primary sources, that is, from scriptural texts, or from theological documents written by original theologians themselves. **Secondary readings** are

taken from textbooks, and provide background information, as well as explanations and clarification of theological ideas. Secondary readings can help you understand primary readings, but remember: it is important for you to try to read and analyze the texts yourself, and not necessarily be swayed by another person's opinion of what the text says. You are responsible for both primary and secondary readings (unless you are asked to "skim").

A third group of readings is also an important part of this course: **short stories** taken from the genre of science fiction (or speculative fiction, as some call it). These stories allow us to examine some key ideas in a very different context (like "thought experiments") and, in doing so, can prompt the reader to consider issues in a different light, or to examine other, unforeseen repercussions.

NOTE: Materials on the Net are helpful, but these **MUST** be used with caution. **ALWAYS** check the source of a document (usually noted at the end of the document with a copyright). **REMEMBER** that search engines will list all materials that refer to the search term(s), and some of these may be the sheer opinion of private individuals or groups (as opposed to newspaper articles, for example). **NEVER** reply or send comments to an unknown person, and be very wary of entering into chat room conversations.

Class Schedule

Class week:

1) 1/20

R: Introduction to course.

Topic: Religious reactions to the 12/26 tsunami:

NPR transcript (1/10/05): "Analysis: People of different faiths interpret the tsunami and its devastation in different ways"; NPR transcript (1/05/05):

"Analysis: Reconciling religion and disaster." (ERes)

Prepare for next class: read *The Hangman's Knot*.

Note: Monday, 1/24: Talk by author Alice McDermott: "Suffering, Loss, and the Work of a Writer." 4:00 PM, Rehm Library

2) 1/25

T: Discussion of common reading: *The Hangman's Knot*

Prepare for next class: finish *The Hangman's Knot*; reread Amery's essay "Resentments"

R: Discussion of common reading: finish *Hangman's Knot* and discuss "Resentments"

Prepare for next class: Primary reading: From *The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks*, pp. 12-32.

Secondary reading:

Gonzalez, I, pp. 136-140; Cory, pp. 183-185

Note: Thursday, 1/27: Panel on Tsunami Disaster, 3:30-5:00, Mary Chapel (tentative); Interfaith Prayer Service 5:00-5:45, Mary Chapel

3) 2/1

T: Topic: Monasticism I: Early

Prepare for next class: Primary reading: *The Rule of St. Benedict in English* (= RB); Poul Anderson, "Kyrie," (1968) in *The Road to Science Fiction*, vol. 3, pp. 431-440.

Secondary reading: MET:

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mona/hd_mona.htm

Gonzalez, I, pp. 238-242;

And:

<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/monastery.htm>

Note: Presentation by Sr. Nancy Audette, RSM, and Fr. George Williams, SJ, on prison ministry. Tentative date: Wednesday, February 2, 7:00 pm. (Mandatory FYP Event)

R: Topic: Monasticism II: Benedictine

Prepare for next class: Primary reading: Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition*, Pt. II, 16-23: <http://www29.homepage.villanova.edu/christopher.haas/Hippolytus.html>

And McGrath, *Readings*, nos. 8.1 -8.4, 8.6 – 8.8;

Secondary Reading: Cory, pp. 119-120, 206-208; Gonzalez 1, pp. 92-97

Reflection essay on *Hangman's Knot* due

11:00 section: Submit Journals

4) 2/8

T: **Quiz 1**, then:

Topic: Sacraments: Baptism I

Prepare for next class: Primary readings: McGrath, *Readings*, nos. 8.14, 8.15, 8.17, 8.20, (8.21), 8.24, 8.25.; Placher, vol. 2, pp. 26-27 (George Blaurock), 30-32 (Schleitheim Confession), 32-34 (Menno Simons); Bouley, *Catholic Rites Today*, pp. 116-133.

R: Topic: Baptism II

Prepare for next class: Primary reading: Augustine, *Confessions*, VIII 17-20, 25-30, IX, 14; and Richard Bowker, "Contamination," (1982) in *Perpetual Light*, pp. 71-86; Allan Lowson, "The Thousand Words," (1998) in *Divine Realms*, pp.

201-215; Ted Chiang, "Hell is the Absence of God," (2001) in *The Locus Awards*, pp. 465-489.

2:00 section: Submit Journals

Note: Lecture by Bishop Barbara Harris at 7:15 pm, Rehm Library, on **MONDAY, 2/14**. One of the "Lectures on Ministry" series, part of the Lilly Vocation Discernment initiative. See: http://college.holycross.edu/grants/lilly/lectures_ministry.html#bishop

5) 2/15

T: Topic: Conversion

Prepare for next class: Primary Reading: Bouley, *Catholic Rites Today*, pp. 395-423;

Secondary Reading: Catherine Dooley, O.P., "The History of Penance in the Early Church: Implications for the Future," in *Reconciliation: The Continuing Agenda*, pp. 83-95; Kathleen Hughes, R.S.C.J., "Reconciliation: Cultural and Christian Perspectives," in *Ibid.*, pp. 114-130.

R: Topic: Penance

Prepare for next class: Primary Reading: Bouley, *Catholic Rites Today*, pp. 510-521;

Secondary reading: James Empereur, S.J., "Anointing: A Sacrament of Vocation," in *Prophetic Anointing*, pp. 141-159; Peter Fink, S.J., "Anointing of the Sick and the Forgiveness of Sins," in *Recovering the Riches of Anointing*, pp. 21-36; Bouley, *Catholic Rites Today*, pp. 510-521

6) 2/22

T: Topic: Anointing of the Sick

Prepare for next class:

John L'Hereux, "The Expert on God" (1994), in *A Celestial Omnibus*, pp. 57-60; Reynolds Price, "Watching Her Die" (1993), in *A Celestial Omnibus*, pp. 96-109; Donna Farley, "Thanksgiving Day at the Temple" (1998), in *Divine Realms*, pp. 85-95;

Jeff Duntemann, "Our Lady of the Endless Sky," in *Sacred Visions*, pp. 149-168.

R: **Quiz 2**, then:

Topic: Discuss stories on penance, anointing, and death.

Prepare for next class:

Primary Reading: McGrath, Reader, 10.13 (Catherine of Genoa); Jolly, pp. 532-538; the “Corporal Works of Mercy”

(<http://www.catholicdoors.com/faq/qu39.htm>)

the “Spiritual Works of Mercy”

(<http://www.catholicdoors.com/faq/qu38.htm>)

Boccaccio, *Decameron*: <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/plague.htm>

“Ordinances” on the plague: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/med/pistoia.html>

Secondary Reading: Cory, pp. 234-236

11:00 section: Submit Journals

7) 3/1

T: Topic: Guest Lecture: Fr. Tom Worcester, S.J., on “The Plague: Quarantine, Mercy and Purgatory.”

Prepare for next class: Ellison, “The Discarded,” in *Paingod*, pp. 96-106; Isaac Asimov, “The Ugly Little Boy” (1958), in *Isaac Asimov: The Complete Stories*, Vol. 1, pp. 301-333; Damon Knight, “The Country of the Kind” (1955), in *The Science Fiction Hall of Fame*, pp. 490-501.

R: Topic: Discussion of short stories.

Prepare for next class: Henri Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer*, ch. III.

2:00 section: Submit Journals

8) 3/8

Spring Break: No Classes

9) 3/15

T: Guest Presentation: Therese Shroeder-Sheker (tentative)

Prepare for next class: begin common readings.

R: Discussion of common readings: *Year of Wonders*; Voltaire and Rousseau

Prepare for next class: finish common readings.

Note: Friday, 3/18: Leave for Washington DC trip at 12:30 sharp!
(Mandatory FYP event)

10) 3/22

T: **Quiz 3**, then: Continue with common readings

Prepare for next class: Primary reading: Augustine, *Confessions*, IX 17 – 37; Bouley, *Catholic Rites Today*, pp. 561-583; Secondary reading: Rutherford, *Honoring the Dead: Catholics and Cremation Today*; other reading TBA.

R: No Class: Easter Break

11) 3/29

T: Topic: Death and Funerals

Prepare for next class: Primary reading: Start reading Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love* (begin with the editor's Introduction, other sections TBA); Jolly, pp. 501-505 (Catherine of Siena). Secondary reading: Cory, pp. 239-242

Reflection essay on *Year of Wonders*, Voltaire and Rousseau, due

Note: Concert, "Baroque Music for Hope and Healing," in the Brooks Concert Hall, Wednesday, March 30 (8:00 pm).

R: Topic: Mysticism and Healing I: Catherine of Siena; Julian of Norwich

Prepare for next class: Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, pages TBA; Henri Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer*, ch. III (review); Ellison, "Wanted in Surgery," in *Pain God*, pp. 108-134. Secondary reading: Gonzalez, II, pp. 258-261

11:00 section: Submit Journals

12) 4/5

T: Topic: Mysticism and Healing II: Mary Baker Eddy; Henri Nouwen

Prepare for next class: TBA

Note: FYP trips to the Worcester Art Museum to see the exhibit on plague art TBA. (Mandatory FYP event)

Also: Fr. Thomas Worcester, S.J., will give an orientation presentation on the exhibit for the FYP. (Mandatory FYP event)

R: Topic: Exorcism

Prepare for next class:

Hippolytus, ch. 16: (review)

<http://www29.homepage.villanova.edu/christopher.haas/Hippolytus.html>

Aquinas: <http://ethics.acusd.edu/Books/Texts/aquinas/justwar.html>

Luther, "Temporal Authority," pp. 290-294;

Münzer: Placher, pp. 28-30;

Calvin: *Institutes*, Book 4, in Placher, pp. 64-65;

Contemporary: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pol116/justwar.htm>

2:00 section: Submit Journals

Note: Lecture by Fr. Greg Boyle, S.J., on gang ministry, Thursday, April 7. One of the "Lectures on Ministry" series, part of the Lilly Vocation Discernment initiative. See:

http://college.holycross.edu/grants/lilly/lectures_ministry.html#bishop

13) 4/12

T: **Quiz 4**, then

Topic: Pacifism

Prepare for next class: Review Schleithem and Menno Simons readings from 2/8; other Mennonite sources: <http://www.bluffton.edu/~mastg/pacifism.htm>

Final due date for "experiential" essays

R: Guest Lecturer: Dean Stephen Ainlay: Mennonites, Part 2 (Attempting to Heal)

Prepare for next class: Primary readings:

Gutierrez and Song, in Placher, vol. 2, pp. 193-195 and 198-200; Ruether, in Harrington, pp. 507-511; other readings TBA.

Secondary readings: Cory, pp. 366-371, 377-380, 389-395

Final due date for "experiential" essays

Note: 4/14: Performance of *The Seagull* (tentative)

14) 4/19 T: Topic: Social Justice and Healing I

Prepare for next class: C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, pp. 110-118, 132-147; Isaac Asimov, "The Strikebreaker" (1956), in *Isaac Asimov: The Complete Stories*, pp. 549-560; Richard Chwedyk, "The Measure of All Things" (2001), in *Year's Best SF 7*, pp. 77-99; Jim Grimsley, "Into Greenwood," (2001), in *The Year's Best Science Fiction, Nineteenth Annual Collection*, pp. 470-496.

R: Topic: Social Justice and Healing II

Prepare for next class: Read *Becoming Human*.

15) 4/26 T: Discuss common readings: *Becoming Human*
Prepare for next class: *The Death of Ivan Illych*

R: Discuss common readings: *The Death of Ivan Illych*
Prepare for next class: TBA

Both sections: Submit Journals

16) 5/3 T: Last Class Meeting: **Quiz 5**, then
Questions about the final exam.

W: Study Period Begins

[5/7 Final Examinations begin]

Take-Home Final Exam due: Wednesday, 5/11, by 2:00 p.m. (Tentative)

NOTE: The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.