

**COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS**  
**Department of Religious Studies**

**RELS 117: History of Christianity I**  
**Fall 2010**

Joanne M. Pierce, Ph.D.

Section 01: MWF 11:00 – 11:50 (Smith 201)

Section 02: MWF 1:00 – 1:50 (Stein 307)

Office: Smith 423

Office Hours: M: 2:15-3:30; T: 2:00-3:00; F: 12:00-12:50; and by appointment

Office Phone: 508-793-3452

Web Page: <http://college.holycross.edu/faculty/jpierce/>

E-Mail: [jpierce@holycross.edu](mailto:jpierce@holycross.edu)

**Course Description:**

This course provides a survey of the origins and development of Christianity, both its theology and its structure, from the apostolic period to the eve of the Reformation. Special attention will be paid to the evolution of Christian doctrine and worship during the early and medieval periods of Christian history. The interplay between orthodoxy and heterodoxy will be stressed in a close examination of the heretical movements and their impact on the formation of the tradition. The interaction between Church and society will also be addressed.

Upon completion of this course, students should have: mastered a basic knowledge of the structure of Christian history (important figures, periods, dates, events, and geographical areas); gained an understanding of how Christian institutions and theology developed, and how both influenced the development of European/Western civilization; and developed an overall impression of the differing characteristics of each period of Christian history, especially in terms of culture, art, liturgy, and architecture.

**Course Requirements:**

- A. **Analytical Essay.** Each student will write one analytical essay (5-6 pages) on certain of the selections from the collections of primary sources covered in the small discussion groups. Students may choose which one of the topics to analyze further. Essays are usually due in class one week following the discussion groups, except for those at the end of the semester (see the “Quick List of Due Dates” at the end of the syllabus). Each essay assignment will have its own guide sheet, made available to students in advance of the essay due date. Additional details will be given in class.
  
- B. **Worship Service Visit/Paper.** Each student will be expected to write one description/reflection paper (5-6 pages) on a worship service celebrated by one of the traditions under study during the course, e.g. a Jewish service, a Muslim service, an Orthodox or Eastern Catholic service, a monastic service (non-eucharistic), or a

“medieval” (Extraordinary Form/”Tridentine”) Roman Catholic service. Additional details will be given in class.

- C. **Quizzes.** Each student will take five (5) quizzes on the course material during the semester. Quizzes include **ALL** material (lectures, readings, discussion groups, and videos) **covered since the last quiz.** Quizzes will be given, on average, every sixth class meeting. The best four (4) out of five (5) quizzes will be counted for the final grade: therefore, students may drop the lowest quiz grade, or choose to skip one of the five quizzes. **An optional sixth quiz will be given on the last day of class; students may choose to take this quiz to make up for a previous poor grade or missed quiz. Since this is the case, under ordinary circumstances no make-up quizzes will be given.**
- D. **Final Exam.** Each student will take a final (essay) exam, which will be comprehensive (i.e. will cover the entire course). A list of possible essay questions will be distributed at the end of the semester; the final exam essays will be selected from among those essay questions on the list. Additional details will be given in class.
- E. **Small Group Discussions/Videos.** Some class meetings, often but not always on Fridays, will be scheduled for small group discussions, or video presentations.

**Discussions.** Each student will be expected to post a short “response” on the small group discussion readings on the designated Moodle forum. These responses should be in the form of a brief paragraph with thoughts on one key point from the selections (e.g. a surprising idea, a new idea, a concept that the student found challenging, one that the student agreed/disagreed with), and must conclude with a proposed question for further discussion in the small group. ***Responses must be posted by 8:00 pm the evening before a small group discussion so that all other students in the class can read them ahead of time.***

Students will be divided into small groups for the discussion in class. The Placher and/or Harrington books **MUST** be brought to class for discussion assignments.

Each discussion will cover the discussion questions raised by its members the night before. In addition, each discussion topic will have an accompanying guide sheet with additional suggestions of points to consider. One student will be chosen to be recorder in each discussion group: this student will take notes on the day’s discussion and write up a summary of the group’s thoughts. The recorder should post this summary on the appropriate Discussion Board Forum on Moodle by the next day, so that all students may read it. Different students will act as recorder for each discussion.

**Videos:** Videos will be shown on the class day assigned, and will also be left on reserve in the Multimedia Resource Center (Stein 3) for students to view outside of class time. Each video will have its own guide sheet; it is strongly

recommended that students bring this sheet to class to assist note-taking during the video. **Important:** Students are responsible for the material generated both in discussion groups, and presented in these videos.

### Policies:

- A. **Class attendance is expected.** If at all possible, students are asked to please notify me ahead of time by email or by calling my office and leaving a message if they expect to be absent from a class. Students are responsible for making up work (class notes, hand-outs, etc.) if a class is missed. More than two unexcused absences may cause serious problems in the mastery of course material, and in class participation.
- B. Essays and papers are due on the day assigned; late work will receive grading penalties. All assignments are to be typed using standard margins and 11 point font. **Essays and papers must be handed in both in hard copy and by email as an attached electronic file.**
- C. Class material, a course calendar, discussion fora, and announcements will all be available on Moodle. Further details will be given in class.
- D. **Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.** Students are expected to act with academic integrity in every course at Holy Cross. Here are some guidelines on what constitutes academic honesty :

The College academic honesty policy states:

"As an institution devoted to teaching, learning, and intellectual inquiry, Holy Cross expects all members of the College community to abide by the highest standards of academic integrity. Any violation of academic honesty undermines the student-teacher relationship, thereby wounding the whole community. The principal violations of academic honesty are plagiarism, cheating, and collusion.

**Plagiarism** is the act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrative material, or statements of someone else, without full and proper acknowledgment, and presenting them as one's own.

**Cheating** is the use of improper means or subterfuge to gain credit or advantage. Forms of cheating include the use, attempted use, or improper possession of unauthorized aids in any examination or other academic exercise submitted for evaluation; the fabrication or falsification of data; misrepresentation of academic or extracurricular credentials; and deceitful performance on placement examinations. It is also cheating to submit the same work for credit in more than one course, except as authorized in advance by the course instructors.

**Collusion** is assisting or attempting to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty."

The full statement from the College catalogue can be found here: Academic Honesty link:  
<http://www.holycross.edu/catalog/academic-honesty-policy.pdf>

The temptation to engage in an act of academic dishonesty will almost certainly arise, but the risk of enhancing a single grade is not worth the loss of your personal integrity. If you do not know how to cite reference materials correctly, consult with the campus Writer's Workshop (see below) or visit one of these links:

Department of History:

<http://www.holycross.edu/departments/history/website/academichonesty.htm>

Department of English (link to Houghton Mifflin booklet, "Understanding Plagiarism: A Student Guide to Writing Your Own Work"):

[http://college.cengage.com/english/plagiarism\\_prevention.html](http://college.cengage.com/english/plagiarism_prevention.html)

Houghton Mifflin, "The Plagiarism Zone"

[http://college.hmco.com/english/plagiarism\\_prevention.html](http://college.hmco.com/english/plagiarism_prevention.html)

NOTE: If in doubt about what you plan to do or write violates academic honesty, PLEASE ASK!

### Grading/Evaluation:

- 25% = Essay (on one discussion/analysis of primary sources)
- 25% = Paper (on worship service)
- 25% = Quiz average (4 out of 5)
- 25% = Final Exam
- 100% = Final Grade

Class participation will also have an influence on the final grade, especially in the case of border-line grades.

### Required Texts:

- ▶ Catherine Cory, David Landry, eds. *The Christian Theological Tradition* (2d ed.).
- ▶ Justo González. *Essential Theological Terms*.
- ▶ Joel Harrington, ed. *A Cloud of Witnesses: Readings in the History of Western Christianity*.
- ▶ William Placher, ed. *Readings in the History of Christian Theology*, Volume 1.
- ▶ Timothy Fry, ed. *The Rule of St. Benedict in English*.

**Additional readings will be assigned: these may be internet materials, handouts, or texts available on ERes or on Moodle.** Most course materials will also be available on Moodle, and reminders or other announcements will be posted there as well.

Video series used will include:

- *Saints and Sinners: The History of the Popes*
- *Testament: The Bible and History*
- *Art of the Western World*

### **The Bible: Best Versions On-Line**

[www.usccb.org/nab/bible/](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/) (New American Bible; sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops)

<http://www.biblegateway.com/> (Bible Gateway; allows a search of several different translations of the Bible [but NOT the New Revised Standard Version]; sponsored by Gospelcom.net, an alliance of several more evangelical ministerial organizations)

**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

**Note:** Materials on the internet are helpful, but these MUST be used with caution. ALWAYS check the source (and the age; some articles from the online *Catholic Encyclopedia* on NewAdvent.com, for example, were originally written almost 100 years ago) of a document. Both are usually noted at the end of a document with a copyright; usually a link to some “Home” page is provided. 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 (Wikipedia, for example), and are therefore very unreliable as sources of fact or dependable scholarly research. Entries from peer-reviewed encyclopedias or journal articles (from, say, the *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, available through the Dinand Library homepage) must be approved, in a “blind review” by a panel or board of editors, and are therefore much more reliable. And general Internet “rules” apply: NEVER reply or send comments to a person unknown to you, and be very wary of entering into chat room conversations.

### **Important Notes on the Course Outline:**

- 1) *Text Readings* are assigned from the textbook for each topic covered in the syllabus. Students may read these readings before, during, or after the material is covered in class, depending on how they best integrate lecture material with readings.
- 2) *Source Readings* are usually assigned from the two books of primary source readings (Placher and Harrington) and are designed to provide specific examples or writings from the

periods and authors covered within the general topic. The source readings for the six small group discussions MUST be read in advance of the class meeting (see above).

2) Dates for quizzes are set and cannot be extended.

3) Due dates for essays MAY be extended for individuals for serious reasons (I will decide on a case-by-case basis).

4) In order to assist students in planning their worship service visits, and to offer a sense of the “rhythm” of the religious calendars of various traditions, important seasons and feast days have been noted in the syllabus for this semester. For more information, please click on the links provided.

## Course Outline:

Week of:

1) 9/01 (W)      Wednesday: Topic: Introduction to course  
Text Readings: *The Christian Theological Tradition* (= CTT), Chapter 1 and pp. 135-139

Friday: Finish Introduction to course; Begin Topic: Roots of Christianity

Text Readings: CTT, pp. 91-96 and Chapters 5-7

Source Readings: Placher, pp. 15-18; Harrington, Ch. 1, C. 1 and 2, E. 1

(◇ General religious calendar: <http://www.williams.edu/chaplain/religiouscalendar10-11.php> )

(◇ Eastern Orthodox calendars:

Russian Orthodox: <http://www.holytrinityorthodox.com/calendar/>

Greek Orthodox: <http://www.goarch.org/en/chapel/calendar.asp> )

(◇ Tuesday, 8/28: Dormition of the *Theotokos* (Mary, the Mother of God), for Russian Orthodox Christians)

2) 9/06            Monday: Finish Roots of Christianity  
Source Readings: Placher, pp. 15-18; Harrington, Ch. 1, C. 1 and 2, E. 1

Wednesday: Begin Topic: Early Church

Text Reading: CTT, Chapter 8

Source Readings: Placher, pp. 22-24 (the *Didache*), 31-40; Harrington, Ch. 1, A. 4 (also from the *Didache*, and it will overlap a little with the selection in Placher) and 5; B.4,

Friday: **Video: Testament: Gospel Truth**

(◇ Wednesday 9/08: Nativity of the *Theotokos* (Mary, the Mother of God), for Greek Orthodox Christians)

(◇ Thursday 9/09: Rosh Hashanah, for Jews: <http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday2.htm> and <http://judaism.about.com/od/highholidays/> )

(◇ Friday, 9/10: Eid Al-Fitr, End of Ramadan, for Muslims;  
[http://islam.about.com/cs/calendar/a/hijrah\\_calendar\\_3.htm](http://islam.about.com/cs/calendar/a/hijrah_calendar_3.htm)  
and <http://islam.about.com/od/holidays/f/holidays.htm> )

(◇ Saturday, 9/11: Beheading of St. John the Baptist; for Russian Orthodox Christians)

3) 9/13

Monday: Topic: Continue: The Early Church  
Source Readings: Placher, pp.15-18; 46-47; Harrington, Ch. 1,  
C.1 and 2; E.1

Wednesday: Finish: The Early Church

Friday: **Discussion 1: Gnosticism**  
Source Readings: Placher, pp. 11-15, 24-29; Harrington, Ch. 1, D.3, 4 and 5

(◇ Tuesday 9/14: Exaltation of the Holy Cross, for Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Christians; patronal feast of the College of the Holy Cross)

(◇ Saturday, 9/18: Yom Kippur, for Jews:  
<http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday3.htm>; <http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday4.htm>; and  
<http://judaism.about.com/od/highholidays/>)

4) 9/20

Monday: **Quiz 1**, then Topic: The Imperial Church  
Text Reading: CTT, Chapter 9  
Source Readings: Placher, pp. 48-62

Wednesday: Continue Imperial Church  
Placher, pp. 63-75; Harrington Ch.2, A.1, 2; B (all)

Friday: **Video: Saints and Sinners I: Upon This Rock**

(◇ Tuesday, 9/21: Nativity of Mary, Mother of God, for Russian Orthodox Christians)

(◇ Thursday, 9/23: Beginning of Sukkot, for Jews;  
<http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday5.htm>)

- 5) 9/27            Monday: Finish Imperial Church; Begin Topic: Augustine  
 Text Readings: CYY, Chapter 10
- Wednesday: Finish Augustine
- Friday: **Discussion 2: Augustine's Theology**  
 Source Readings: Harrington, Ch. 2, C.1 and 2; Placher, Chapter 5 (all)
- (◇ Monday, 9/27: Elevation of the Cross, for Russian Orthodox Christians)
- (◇ Thursday, 9/30: Simhat Torah, for Jews; <http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday6.htm> )
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- 6) 10/04            Monday: **Quiz 2**, then Topic: Eastern Christianity  
 Text Readings: CTT, Chapter 11
- Wednesday: Finish: Eastern Christianity  
 Source Readings: Placher, pp. 76-81, 84-93, 95-99
- Friday: **Video: Saints and Sinners I: Upon This Rock**
- (◇ Monday, 10/1: Holy Protection of the *Theotokos* (Mary), for Greek Orthodox Christians)
- (◇ Thursday, 10/7: Our Lady of the Rosary, for Roman Catholics)  
 (◇ The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary, for Roman Catholics)
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- 7) 10/11            **Fall Break: No Classes**
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- 8) 10/18            Monday: Topic: Islam  
 Text Readings: CTT, Chapter 12 (to p. 228)  
 Source Readings: Harrington, Ch. 3, B.1 (other readings TBA)
- Wednesday: Topic: The Medieval Church I  
 Text Readings: CTT, Chapter 13  
 Source Readings: Placher, pp. 82-84, 93-95, 122-131; Harrington, Ch. 2, D.1 and 2, E.1a and 2
- Friday: **Discussion 3: Rule of St. Benedict in English**

Source Reading: Fry, *The Rule of St. Benedict in English*  
(On-Line: [www.osb.org](http://www.osb.org) ; [www.spencerabbey.org](http://www.spencerabbey.org) )

(◇ Thursday, 10/14: Protection of Mary, Mother of God, for Russian Orthodox Christians)

9) 10/25 Monday: **Quiz 3**, then continue The Medieval Church I  
Source Readings: Placher, pp. 131-132, 139-141, 144-151

Wednesday: **Video: *Saints and Sinners II: Between Two Empires***

Friday: Finish Medieval Church I

(◇ Sunday, 10/31, is Reformation Sunday for some Protestant Christian denominations)

(◇ 11/01 is All Saints' Day, and 11/02 is All Souls' Day, for Catholics and some other Christian denominations)

10) 11/01 Monday: **Video: Art of the Western World: A White Garment of Churches**  
[Romanesque and Gothic architecture]

Wednesday: Topic: The Medieval Church II  
Text Readings: CTT, Chapter 14  
Source Readings: Placher, p. 153; Harrington, Ch. 3, E.1; Ch. 4, C.1

Friday: Continue Medieval Church II  
Source Readings: Harrington, Ch. 3, D.1 and 2; Ch. 4, A.1 (reread Ch. 3, B.1)

11) 11/08 Monday: **Quiz 4**, then finish Medieval Church II

Wednesday: Topic: Thomas Aquinas  
Text Readings: CTT, Chapter 15

Friday: **Discussion 4: Scholasticism: Anselm and Aquinas**  
Source Readings: (Anselm) Placher, pp. 145-149; (Aquinas) Placher, pp. 157 (start at Question 2, Article 3)-164; Harrington, Ch. 3, C.2

12) 11/15      Monday: Topic: The Medieval Church III  
Text Readings: C, Chapter 16; G, pp. 324-361  
Source Readings: Placher, pp. 171-175; Harrington, Ch. 4, B.1

Wednesday: Continue Topic: The Medieval Church III  
Placher, pp. 171-175; Harrington, Ch. 4, B.1

Friday: Friday: **Video: *Saints and Sinners III: Set Over Nations***

13) 11/22      Monday: **Quiz 4**; then continue Topic: The Medieval Church III  
Placher, 185-193

**Thanksgiving Vacation: no classes 11/24, 11/26**

(◇ Sunday, 11/28, is the first Sunday of Advent, for most Western Christians)

14) 11/29      Monday: Topic: The Renaissance Church  
Text Readings: CTT, pp. 303-306, and Chapter 17

Wednesday: **Discussion 5: Late Medieval Mysticism**  
Placher, pp. 175-180, Harrington, Ch. 4, D (all)

Friday: Continue Renaissance Church

(◇ Sunday, 12/05, is the Second Sunday of Advent for most Western Christians, and is the feast of the Conception of the Virgin, for Greek Orthodox Christians)

15) 12/06      Monday: Finish: The Renaissance Church  
Harrington, Ch. 4, B. 2, E.2

Wednesday: **Discussion 6: Erasmus**  
Source Readings: Placher, pp. 193-196; Harrington, Ch. 4, A.2; Ch. 5, A.1

Friday: **Quiz 6 [optional]**, then course summary and discussion of final exam

(◇ Monday, 12/06: Feast of St. Nicholas for Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Christians)

(◇ Wednesday, 12/08: Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, for Roman Catholics)

**Saturday, 12/11: Study Period Begins**

**Tuesday, 12/14: Exam Period Begins**

**Saturday, 12/18: Exam Period Ends**

## **Final Exams for History of Christianity 1: TBA**

(◇ Sunday, 12/12, is the Third Sunday of Advent, called by Roman Catholics *Gaudete* "Rejoice" Sunday; liturgical color ROSE is worn)

(◇ Tuesday, 12/14: The Entry into the Temple of Mary, the Mother of God, for Russian Orthodox Christians)

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

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### **Quick List of Due Dates:**

(includes quiz dates, worship service paper due date, and dates for final exams; remember, students are to choose only ONE of the SIX possible essay assignments to write up and turn in)

9/20: Quiz 1

9/24: Essay 1 due

10/04: Quiz 2

10/08: Essay 2 due

10/25: Quiz 3

11/01: Essay 3 due

11/08: Quiz 4

11/19: Essay 4 due

11/08: Quiz 4

■ 11/19: Last date to turn in Worship Service Paper (if done in Worcester area)

11/22: Quiz 5

■ 12/06: Last date to turn in Worship Service Paper (if done at “home” over Thanksgiving Break)

12/08: Essay 5 due

12/10: Quiz 6 [optional]

12/14: Essay 6 due

NOTES: