

**COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**RELS 118: SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY
Spring 2006**

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Office: Smith 423

Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:30-4:30 pm; Thursday, 5:30-6:30 pm;

Friday, 11:00-11:50 am; and by appointment

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Course Description:

This course provides a general study of the historical development and theological significance of Christian sacraments. The study will begin with discussion of key underlying concepts in sacramental theology: the experience of the sacred; sign, symbol, ritual; and Christ/Church as sacrament. Special attention will be paid to the Roman Catholic experience, but other Christian traditions will be discussed.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, the student should understand the core concepts of symbol and sacrament, and be able to relate them to the other key theological topics of christology and ecclesiology. Students should be able to discuss their own experiences of the sacraments in terms of the various historical and theological issues which have shaped present practice and controversy. Finally, the student should be able to relate aspects of sacramental theology to wider theological and cultural issues under consideration at present.

Assignments:

Course Requirements:

A. Discussions:

- i. Students will be divided into small groups for the discussion class. Copies of the readings assigned for discussion **MUST** be brought to class for discussion assignments. 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 Blackboard by the following Monday, so that all students can read it, and any comments I may make. Different students will act as recorder for each discussion. **Important: Students are responsible for the material generated in discussion groups, as well as that presented in lecture classes.**

- ii. Students will write two (2) reflection essay (4-5 pages) following up on any ONE of the discussion topics. One must be turned in before the spring break, and one after. More details will be given on this in class.

- B. Each student will write an observation/analysis/reflection paper on an experience of a sacramental celebration (minimum: 5 pages each). Additional details will be given in class.

- C. Each student will take a final (essay) exam, which will be comprehensive (i.e. cover the entire course). More details will be given in class.

Grade Evaluation:

50% = Reflection essays (1 before break, 1 after)
 25% = Sacramental service paper
 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.

Policies:

Class attendance is expected. More than one unexcused absence may seriously affect the student's mastery of the material and participation in class discussion. Essays and papers are due on the day assigned; unexcused late work will receive grading penalties.

Required texts:

Bouley, Allan, ed. *Catholic Rites Today*.
 Cooke, Bernard, and Gary Macy. *Christian Symbol and Ritual*.
 Martos, Joseph. *Doors to the Sacred*.

Additional material will be assigned and will be made available on ERes. Occasionally, students will be given a choice of readings, and some **optional** readings will also be suggested.

Course Outline

Week of:

- 1) Jan. 18 Introduction: Ritual and Symbol
 (Martos I; Cooke/Macy, Introduction)
 For next week: Ritual and Theology
 Readings: C/M, chs. 1 and 2.
- 2) Jan. 25 Background: Ritual and Theology
 For next week: Initiation/Baptism: Historical and Ritual Background
 Readings: Martos, VI; C/M, ch. 4; Bouley, Part 2, 33-163 (**skim**)
- [Note: Martos, II-V offer a summary of key developments in Christian history. Please refer to these chapters as needed for additional background information as we discuss the history of each individual sacrament.]
- 3) Feb. 1 Initiation/Baptism
 For next Wednesday: Initiation/Baptism: Problems and Issues
 Readings: Paul Covino, "The Postconciliar Infant Baptism Debate in the American Catholic Church"; *Boston Globe*, "Paulist Baptisms...."
- 4) Feb. 8 Wednesday: Discussion: Initiation/Baptism: Problems and Issues
 For Friday: Initiation/Confirmation: Historical and Ritual Background
 Readings: Martos, VII; Bouley, Part 2, 164-186 (**skim**)
 G. Austin, *The Rite of Confirmation* (Liturgical Press/Pueblo, 1985) 134-146
- 5) Feb. 15 Wednesday: Initiation/Confirmation: Background
 For Friday: Initiation/Confirmation: Problems and Issues
 Readings: G. Austin, "Observations and Guidelines," pp. 134-146 P. Turner, "Adolescent Confirmation," pp. 111-121
- For next class: Limbo
 Readings: NPR, "Catholic Doctrine on Limbo Reconsidered"
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5033332>
<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0506867.htm>
- G. Fagin, "Whatever Happened to Limbo?"
<http://www.americamagazine.org/gettext.cfm?articleTypeID=1&textID=1647&issueID=365#>

AND

J. Murphy-O'Connor, "Eucharist and Community in First Corinthians," in K. Seasoltz, ed. *Living Bread, Saving Cup* (Liturgical Press, 1982, 1987), 1-30.

- 6) Feb. 22 Wednesday: Special Discussion Topic: Limbo
 For Friday: Eucharist: Background
 Readings: Martos, VIII; C/M, ch. 5; Bouley, Part 3, 189-392 (**skim** over the next few weeks)
 For next week:
 Wednesday: Continue Eucharist: Background
 Friday: Eucharist: Problems and Issues
 Readings: Continue Bouley, as above;
 D. Gray, "The Real Absence: A Note on the Eucharist," in Seasoltz, *Living Bread, Saving Cup*, 190-196;
 R.W. Franklin, "ARC-USA: Five Affirmations on the Eucharist as Sacrifice," with J. Pierce, "The Eucharist as Sacrifice: Some Contemporary Roman Catholic Reflections," in *Worship* 69 (1995) 386-390, 394-403;
 K. Seasoltz, "Justice and the Eucharist," in Seasoltz, *Living Bread, Saving Cup* (on reserve as a photocopy), 305-323.
- 7) Mar. 1 Wednesday: Continue Eucharist: Background
 Friday: Discussion: Eucharist: Problems and Issues
- For Mar. 18: discussion sheet #7 on Penance and Reconciliation.
 Readings: Martos, IX; Bouley, Part 4, 395-428 (**skim**);
 K. Hughes, RSCJ, "Reconciliation: Disquieting Pastoral Reflections," in *Repentance and Reconciliation in the Church* (Liturgical Press, 1987) 57-77 (on reserve as a photocopy);
 (J. Nilson, "'Opportunities Incalculable': Reconciliation and the U.S. Economy," in R. J. Kennedy, ed. *Reconciliation: The Continuing Agenda* (Liturgical Press, 1987) 181-189; **optional**; on reserve as a photocopy)
- 8) Mar. 8 **No class [Spring Break]**
- 9) Mar. 15 Penance and Reconciliation
 For next week: Anointing of the Sick.
 Readings: Martos, X; Bouley, Part 7, 489-546 (**skim**);

C. Gusmer, "Penance and the Anointing of the Sick," in Kennedy, *Reconciliation*, 205-218 (on reserve as a photocopy with the Nilson article) OR
 M. Jennifer Glen, "Sickness and Symbol: The Promise of the Future," *Worship* 54 (1980) 397-411 (on reserve as a photocopy).

- 10) Mar. 22 Friday: Topic: Anointing of the Sick
 For next week: Marriage.
 Readings: Martos, XI; Bouley, Part 5, 431-449 (**skim**);
 B. Cook, *Sacraments and Sacramentality*, Ch. 7 (Twenty-Third Press, 1983, 1989) 79-94
OR
 M. Lawler, *Marriage and Sacrament*, Ch. 6 (Liturgical Press/Glazier, 1993) 98-118.
- 11) Mar. 29 Wednesday: Topic: Marriage
 Friday: Discussion: Marriage: Problems and Issues

 For Friday next week: Ordination.
 Readings: Martos, XII; Bouley, Part 6, 456-485 (**skim**);
 S. Butler and M. Schaefer, "Forum: Ordaining Women," *Worship* 63 (1989) 157-165,
 467-473 (on reserve as a photocopy);
AND E. Cullinan, "Forum: Women and the Diaconate," *Worship* 70 (1996) 260-266 (on
 reserve as a photocopy).
- 12) Apr. 5 Wednesday: Discussion: Anointing of the Sick
 Ordination
 For Apr. 19: discussion sheet #11 on course summary. Prepare a brief statement on what
 you think was the one (or two) key point(s) or element(s) discussed in the course, and
 why. Readings: Martos, Conclusion; Osborne, "Introduction," Ch. 8 and Epilogue.
 Note: You have more than a full month from today to work on your final paper
- 13) Apr. 12 **No classes -- Easter Break** (Wed?)
- 14) Apr. 19 Ordination
 discussion sheet #11 on course summary. Prepare a brief statement on what you think
 was the one (or two) key point(s) or element(s) discussed in the course, and why.
 Readings: Martos, Conclusion; Osborne, "Introduction," Ch. 8 and Epilogue.
- 15) Apr. 26

[16) May 3 Study Period begins]

***TENTATIVE DUE DATE FOR FINAL PAPERS WILL BE DAY, MAY ***

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