

COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RELS 118: SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY
Spring 2011

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Office: Smith 423

Office Hours: W 3:15-4:30 pm; Th 11:30-12:30 pm; F 11:00-11:50 am; and by appointment

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Class Times: MWF 12:00-12:50 [Stein 314]

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.

Course Requirements:

- A. **Reflection Essays.** Each student will write two short analytical/reflection essays (3-4 pages) on certain of the "Issues and Problems" readings covered in the small discussion groups. Students may choose which topics to write on, but at least one **MUST** be turned in **BEFORE** Spring Break. Essays are usually due in class one week following the discussion groups, except for those at the end of the semester. Additional details will be given in class.

- B. **Sacramental Experience Paper.** Each student will be expected to write one description/reflection paper (6-7 pages) on a sacramental celebration, e.g. a communion/Eucharistic service in a tradition **OTHER** than the student's own tradition, a Roman Catholic service of Penance and Reconciliation (during Lent), the celebration of

the Rites of Initiation during the (RC) Easter Vigil, or a pre-20th century (Extraordinary Form/"Tridentine") Roman Catholic Mass. Additional details will be given in class.

- C. **Take-Home Final Exam.** Additional details will be given in class.
- D. **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. Copies of the readings assigned for discussion **MUST** be brought to class for discussion assignments, Each discussion will cover the discussion questions raised by its members the night before. 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.

Important: Students are responsible for the material generated in discussion groups, as well as that presented in lecture classes.

Grade Evaluation:

20% = Reflection essay 1 (before spring break)
20% = Reflection essay 2 (after spring break)
30% = Sacramental service paper
30% = 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:

- 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 forums, 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

Houghton Mifflin, "The Plagiarism Zone" 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!

Required texts:

Bouley, Allan, ed. *Catholic Rites Today*.

Cooke, Bernard, and Gary Macy. *Christian Symbol and Ritual*.

Martos, Joseph. *Doors to the Sacred*.

McKenna, K. E. *A Concise Guide to Canon Law*.

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.

The Bible: Best Versions On-Line

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)

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 Outline

Week:

1) 1/26 W: Introduction: Ritual and Symbol

For Friday: Martos I; Cooke/Macy, Introduction

F: Continue Introduction

For next Topic: Ritual and Theology

Readings: C/M, chs. 1 and 2; on ERes, Mitchell, selections from *Liturgy and the Social Sciences*; Huizenga, Ch. 1

2) 1/31

M: Topic: Ritual and Theology

W: Continue Topic

F: Continue Topic

For Monday: Read G. Goethals, “Ritual: Ceremony and Super Sunday” (ERes); also, try to watch at least some of the Super Bowl and/or the programming surrounding the game, and/or review some TV clips from the funeral of a political/public figure (e.g. Ronald Reagan, Pope John Paul II) and/or from the conventions or election of 2008. The article discusses televised religious rituals and “secular” rituals (including sports events and politics).

For the rest of 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) 2/07

M: Discussion: Goethals article: What IS ritual in the 21st century?

W: Topic: Initiation/Baptism: Historical and Ritual Background

F: Continue Topic

For next week’s Topic: Initiation/Baptism: Issues and Problems

Readings: McKenna, “Baptism”; on ERes: Paul Covino, “The Postconciliar Infant Baptism Debate in the American Catholic Church”; *Boston Globe*, “Paulist Baptisms....” (and an official response from Rome:

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20080201_validity-baptism_en.html); David Batchelder, “Baptismal Renunciations: Making Promises We do not Intend to Keep,” *Worship* 81 (5/2007) 409-425; if you have

ever attended a baptism (in any Christian denomination), make a few notes on what you remember about the service.

4) 2/14

M: Continue Topic

W: Topic: Initiation/Baptism: Problems and Issues

F: Continue Topic

For next class: Infant Baptism and Limbo

Readings: on Eres: McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 528-531;

NCR: "A Little Flexibility Concerning Limbo" (2006); links:

NPR, "Catholic Doctrine on Limbo Reconsidered" (2005):

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5033332>

CNS: "Closing the Doors of Limbo"

<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0506867.htm>

G. Fagin, "Whatever Happened to Limbo?" (2002)

<http://www.americamagazine.org/gettext.cfm?articleTypeID=1&textID=1647&issueID=365#>

5) 2/21

M: Discussion: Infant Baptism and Limbo

For the next Topic: Initiation/Confirmation: Historical and Ritual Background

Readings: Martos, VII; Bouley, Part 2, 164-186 (**skim**)

W: Topic: Initiation/Confirmation: Historical and Ritual Background

F: Continue Topic

For next Topic: Initiation/Confirmation: Problems and Issues

Topic Readings: McKenna, "Confirmation"; on ERes: G. Austin, "Observations and Guidelines," *Anointing with the Spirit*, (1986) pp. 134-146; P. Turner, "Adolescent Confirmation," (pages TBA)

6) 2/28

M: Topic: Initiation/Confirmation: Issues and Problems

W: Continue Topic

For next class: Read: G. Robinson, “Confirmation: A Bishop’s Dilemma” *Worship* 78 (2004) 50-59; jot down notes on what you remember from your own Confirmation, both the preparation and the service (if you have been confirmed as a Roman Catholic or in another Christian church)

F: Discussion: What IS Confirmation, and what should it be?

For next Topic (after Spring Break): Eucharist: Historical and Ritual Background
Topic Readings: Martos, VIII; C/M, ch. 5; Bouley, Part 3, 189-392 (**skim** over the next few weeks); on ERes: Jan Michael Joncas, “Tasting the Kingdom of God...” *Worship*; 76 (5/2002); if possible, sometime during the next two weeks after the break, attend a celebration of Mass on campus and make notes on the experience, including the physical setting (arrangement of the church/chapel), music, and homily.

7) 3/07 **Spring Break: No Classes**

8) 3/14 M: Topic: Eucharist: Historical and Ritual Background

W: Continue Topic

For next class: The Order of Mass (*Ordo Missae*) of the 1962 Roman Missal:
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/latinmass2.html>

F: Finish Topic: Focus: The “Extraordinary Form” of the Roman Catholic Mass (1962)

For next Topic: Eucharist: Issues and Problems
Topic Readings: McKenna, “Eucharist”; on Eres: Thomas O’Loughlin, “The Eucharist as ‘The Meal That Should Be’,” *Worship* 80 (2006) 30-45

9) 3/21 M: Topic: Eucharist: Issues and Problems

For next class: How is Christ Present in the Eucharist?
Readings: on ERes: D. Gray, “The Real Absence”; McGrath, *Christian Theology*, pp. 522-528 (on the Eucharist)

W: Continue Topic

For next class: Culture, Justice and the Eucharist

Readings: Paul Gibson, "Forum: Eucharistic Food--May we Substitute?" *Worship*; 76 (5/2002) 445-455; Daniel Groody "Fruit of the Vine and Work of Human Hands: Immigration and the Eucharist" *Worship* 80 (2006); Aloysius Pieris, "An Asian Way to Celebrate the Eucharist" *Worship* 81 (2007)

F: Discussion: How does the Eucharist connect to different cultures?

For next Topic: Penance and Reconciliation

Readings: Martos, IX; C/M, ch. 6; Bouley, Part 4, 395-428 (**skim**);
On ERes, McGrath, *Christian Theology*, Ch. 18, pp. 569-571 (on Purgatory)

10) 3/28

M: Topic: Penance and Reconciliation

For next class: McKenna, "Penance"; on ERes: K. Hughes, RSCJ, "Reconciliation: Cultural and Christian Perspectives" (1988) 57-77

W: Continue Topic

For next class: On ERes: J. Nilson, "'Opportunities Incalculable': Reconciliation and the U.S. Economy," and K. Hughes, RSCJ, "Reconciliation: Disquieting Pastoral Reflections" (1987); if applicable, make a few notes on your own experience of a penance service or confession [excluding the actual list of sins, of course!]

F: Discussion: What about Sin and Confession today?

For next Topic: Anointing of the Sick

Readings: Martos, X; C/M, ch. 8; Bouley, Part 7, 489-546 (**skim**);
McKenna, "Anointing of the Sick"

11) 4/04

M: Topic: Anointing of the Sick

W: Continue Topic

For next class: On ERes: M. Jennifer Glen, "Sickness and Symbol: The Promise of the Future," *Worship* 54 (1980) 397-411; J. Empeur, *Anointing: A Sacrament of Vocation* (1982), pp. 141- 159 (especially 151-159); B. Morrill, *Divine Worship and Human Healing*, pp. 154-165. Have you personally ever witnessed anyone being anointed because of illness?

F: Discussion: What is the real meaning of the Anointing of the Sick?

For next class: Anointing of the Sick: Case Study: An Indian Catholic Healer
Reading: On ERes: M. Schmalz, "Charismatic Transgressions: The Life and Work of an Indian Catholic Healer"

12) 4/11 M: Case Study: An Indian Catholic Healer

For next Topic: Marriage: Historical and Ritual Background
Readings: Martos, XI; C/M, ch. 3; Bouley, Part 5, 431-449 (**skim**)

W: Topic: Marriage: Historical and Ritual Background

F: Continue Topic [Guest Lecture on Preparing for a Catholic Wedding TBA]

For next Topic: Marriage: Issues and Problems
Readings: McKenna, "Marriage" and "Declaration of Invalidity (Annulment)"; on ERes, R. Gaillardet, *A Daring Promise*, Ch. 3; M. Lawler, "The Sacrament of Marriage: Disputed Perspectives"; NCCB, "Marriage Preparation and Cohabiting Couples"; if you have ever attended a wedding (in any Christian denomination), make a short list of the key elements of the service that you remember

13) 4/18 M: Topic: Marriage: Issues and Problems

W: Discussion: Marriage (TBA)

F: **Easter Break --No Class**

14) 4/25 **For next Topic:** Ordination: Historical and Ritual Background
Readings: Martos, XII; C/M, ch. 7; Bouley, Part 6, 456-485 (**skim**)
Monday: **Easter Break --No Class**

W: Topic: Ordination: Historical and Ritual Background

F: Continue Topic

For next Topic: Ordination: Issues and Problems

McKenna, "Sacred Orders"

On ERes: S. Butler and M. Schaefer, "Forum: Ordaining Women," *Worship* 63 (1989) 157-165, 467-473; E. Cullinan, "Forum: Women and the Diaconate," *Worship* 70 (1996) 260-266; *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* (1994)

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_22051994_ordinatio-sacerdotalis_en.html ;

Inter Insigniores (1976)

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19761015_inter-insigniores_en.html

15) 5/02 M: Topic: Ordination: Issues and Problems

W: Discussion: What does Ordination mean today?

For next class: Conclusion

Readings: Martos, Conclusion; C/M, Conclusion

F: Conclusion

16) 5/09 M: Last Class: Comments on the Take-Home Final

Note: 5/10: Study Period begins

5/12: Final Exams begin-- 5/18: Final Exams end; [no exams S/S, 5/14-15]

*** Take-Home Final Exam Due Date TBA ***

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