

COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS
Department of Religious Studies

RELS 192: Medieval Christianity
Fall 2001

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Office: Smith 421

Office Hours: M 11:00-11:55; T 2:00-3:00; W 2:00-2:55; and by appointment

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Course Description:

This course provides an in-depth study, in seminar format, of the origins and development of medieval Christianity in Western Europe. Both its theology and structural evolution will be covered, from the fall of the Roman Empire to the eve of the Reformation. Special attention will be paid to the evolution of Christian doctrine, spirituality, and worship during the “high” and “late” Middle Ages. The interplay between orthodoxy and heterodoxy will be stressed in a close examination of heretical movements and their impact on the formation of the tradition. The interaction between Church and society will also be addressed.

By the end of this course, students should be able to discuss the structure and development of the medieval Christian experience in the West: important figures, periods, dates, events, and geographical areas. They should be able to articulate clearly the main points that influenced the succeeding periods of Renaissance and Reformation, as well as several historical and theological issues that have shaped present Christian belief and practice. Finally, students should be able to demonstrate their ability to analyze critically primary sources in medieval Christian history or theology.

Course Requirements:

- A. Readings: Several groups of readings will be assigned for each class meeting: some are background (secondary sources, like Lynch), and others are primary (from primary sources written during the period under discussion, like the material in Jolly or *The Rule of St. Benedict*). The background readings are assigned to clarify the primary source selections; you may find some parts more helpful or relevant than others. Try to skim or “sample” the primary source readings until you come to one or two key ideas that interest you in some way (e.g. something you didn’t know before, something you agree/disagree with, something that seems especially striking or unusual). If you find one selection or section uninteresting, move on to another. *Readings assigned for a class must be read before the class meeting.*

- B. Discussion sheets: Students will be asked to hand in short discussion sheets (2 pages) for each class in preparation for class discussion. These discussion sheets will present what you see to be the one or two key issues or ideas covered in the reading assigned for that class. Focus on the primary source readings (remember that the introductions to these primary sources may be helpful). They should also include some of your own reflections on why these issues seems to be important. Each discussion sheet should conclude with a general question for further group discussion in class. These discussion sheets will serve as starting points for class discussion on the seminar topic for that day. There are eleven (11) discussion sheets assigned; the lowest grade will be dropped.
- C. Other Activities: Students will be asked to write one longer reflection paper (5 pages) on one of two outside “field trips” arranged during the course. One would be to the Trappist monastery in Spencer (St. Joseph’s Abbey); the other, to Holy Trinity (German) Church in Boston, to attend a Latin (Tridentine rite) Mass (the closest we can get to a medieval mass). Further details will be discussed in class.
- D. Final Papers: Each student will be asked to write a substantial analysis of a medieval primary text not already assigned for group discussion (minimum length: 10 pages). A list of suggested selections will be distributed in class. Students MUST consult with the professor on their choice of text. Brief students presentations on these papers will take place during the last two classes. Further details will be given in class.

Grade Evaluation:

50% = Discussion sheets (10)
 10% = Reflection paper
40% = Final Paper
 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 two unexcused absences may cause serious problems in understanding course material. If at all possible, please call my office and leave a message if you expect to be absent from class (due to illness or other serious reason). In some cases a note from the class dean may be necessary. Essays and papers are due on the day assigned; unexcused late work will receive grading penalties. All assignments are to be typed.

Required (for purchase)Texts:

Fry, ed. *The Rule of St. Benedict in English.*
 Jolly, ed. *Tradition and Diversity.*
 Lynch. *The Medieval Church: A Brief History.*

Recommended (for purchase) Texts (in chronological order):

Augustine, *Confessions*.
Dhorda, *Handbook for William*.
Anselm, *The Major Works*.
Aquinas, *Selected Writings*.
Julian, *Revelations of Divine Love*.
More, *Utopia*.

Required Readings (on reserve):

Foley, *From Age to Age*.
Macy, *The Banquet's Wisdom*.
Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*.

Optional Secondary Material (on reserve):

González, *A History of Christian Thought*. Volume II.

Optional Secondary Material (on the Web):

www.labyrinth.georgetown.edu
www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth

Course Outline:

Class Meeting:

- 1) 8/29 (W) Topic: Introduction to the course
Background reading: Skim Lynch, Preface and ch. 1 (on your own)
Library Project
For next class: Discussion sheet (1) on Augustine.

- 2) 9/5 Topic: The End of Antiquity
Background Reading: González, Ch. I (optional)
Primary reading: Augustine's *Confessions*, Bk I, v-vii; Bk II, i-vi; Bk V, xii-xiv; Bk VI, I-v; *Bk VIII, vi-xii; Bk X, xxvii-xxix, xlii-xliii; Bk XI, ix-xiii; Bk XIII, xi (*MUST read); Jolly, pp. 113-115.
For next class: Discussion sheet (2) on Benedict's *Rule*.

- 3) 9/12 Topic: Monasticism
Background reading: Lynch, chs. 2-4; González, Ch. 11 (optional)
Primary reading: Fry, *Rule of St. Benedict in English*; Jolly, 6.1, 6.2, to p. 141; 11.4
For next class: Discussion sheet (3) on Christianity and Barbarians.

- 4) 9/19 Topic: Barbarians
 Background reading: (same as for 9/12)
 Primary reading: Jolly, 8 (all)
 [Trip to St. Joseph's Abbey TBA]
 For next class: Discussion sheet (4) on Dhuoda's *Handbook for William*.
- 5) 9/26 Topic: The Carolingian Era
 Background reading: Lynch, chs. 5-7; González, Ch. IV (optional)
 Primary reading: Dhuoda's *Handbook for William*, all (omit Books 4-6); Jolly, 9.3, 10.1
 For next class: Discussion sheet (5) on 11th Century: Reform and Crusade.
- 6) 10/3 Topic: 11th Century: Reform and Crusade
 Background reading: Lynch, chs. 8-11; González, Ch. V (optional)
 Primary reading: Jolly, 13.1, 13.2, 14.1, 14.2, 14.3; for more on medieval Christian anti-Semitism, see Jolly, 9.2, 12.3, 24.1
 For next class: Discussion sheet (6) on 12th and 13th Century: Mendicants and Heretics.
- 7) 10/10 Topic: 12th and 13th Century: Mendicant and Heretic
 Background reading: Lynch, chs. 12-15; González, Ch. IV, end, and VIII (optional)
 Primary reading: Jolly, 13.4, 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 18.1, 18.2
 For next class: Discussion sheet (7) on Early Scholasticism: Anselm.
- 8) 10/17 Topic: Early Scholasticism
 Background reading: Lynch, ch. 16; González, Ch. VI, to p. 181 (VIII) (optional)
 Primary Reading: Anselm, *The Major Works: Proslogion and Why God Became Man* (Book I, Book II, 1-9); Jolly, 15.2
 For next class: Discussion sheet (8) on Medieval Liturgy.
- 9) 10/24 Topic: Medieval Liturgy
 Background reading: Lynch, 17-18; E. Foley, *From Age to Age*, Chs. 4 and 5
OR G. Macy, *The Banquet's Wisdom*, chs. 4-5.
 Primary reading: B. Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, pp. 27-52 (optional introduction), 54-91 (English translation of a medieval low mass); Jolly, 11.2, 23.1; see also 19.1 (popular views) and 21.3 (a early reformer's view)

For next class: Discussion sheet (9) on 13th Century Scholasticism: Aquinas.
[Trip to Holy Trinity Church Sunday 10/28: TBA]

- 10) 10/31 Topic: 13th Century Scholasticism: Aquinas
Background reading: Gonzaléz, (VIII), X (optional).
Primary reading: Aquinas, *Selected Works*, 11, 14, 26, 29, 30; Jolly, 17.4.
For next class: Discussion sheet (10) on Julian, *Revelations of Divine Love*.
- 11) 11/7 Topic: 14th Century: Mysticism, Nominalism, Conciliarism
Background reading: Lynch, chs. 19 and 20; Gonzaléz, Ch. XII, to p. 326
(optional)
Primary reading: Julian, *Revelations of Divine Love*, chs. 1-6, 9, 27-34, 39-44,
52, 58-61, 64-65, 81; Jolly, 21.2.
For next class: Discussion sheet (11) on More, *Utopia*.
- 12) 11/14 Topic: Renaissance and Reformation
Background reading: Lynch, Epilogue; Gonzaléz, Ch. XIII, pp. 327-334, and
XIV (optional)
Primary reading: More, *Utopia*; Jolly, 24.4.
Student Presentations begin
- 13) 11/21 **[Thanksgiving Vacation: no class]**
- 14) 11/28 Student presentations conclude
- [15) Study Week begins 12/4]**

Final Papers Due: Monday, 12/11

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