

"Catholicism has adapted to thousands of different cultures in its history. As an incarnational faith, it has viewed every one of them as a potential carrier of the Gospel-- in varying degrees, to be sure. Indeed, Catholicism was multicultural long before the term became part of the vocabulary of the 1990s." Richard P. McBrien

Religious Studies TESP 50

Catholic Theology: Foundations

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Course Description: The course is an introduction to theology, method and style of Catholicism. We shall explore the central truth-claims of Christianity (the experience of God, revelation and faith, the historical foundations of the tradition, the mystery of Jesus, grace, sin, and redemption, the church, sacraments, and religious pluralism) through the lens of this rich tradition.

Course Objectives

2a. Students will be able to analyze complex and diverse religious phenomena (such as architecture and art, music, ritual, scriptures, theological systems, and other cultural expressions of religious belief).

2b. Students will be able to integrate and compare several disciplinary approaches to a coherent set of religious phenomena.

2c. Students will be able to clarify and express beliefs in light of their critical inquiry into the religious dimensions of human existence.

Course Goals:

1. Students will learn to recognize the distinctive character of Catholic theology and practice.
2. Students will be able to analyze and make judgments about the effectiveness of Catholic forms of teaching, worship, spiritual practice and institutional processes.
3. Students will be able to define and describe central Catholic teachings regarding the human person's relationship with God.
4. Students will be able to formulate central challenges and questions regarding the Catholic tradition going-forward.
5. Students will be able to classify Christian praise for its theological coherence.
6. Students will be able to evaluate the intellectual coherence of religious claims made in popular discourse.

Required Texts:

Richard P. McBrien, *Catholicism: Completely Revised and Updated*, New York: HarperCollins, 1994.

Ehn, Erik. *Saints Plays*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.

Requirements and Grading:

1. Daily **quizzes** on reading assignments. 15%
2. Class **participation** and **attention**. 5%
3. **4 short exercises** that engage scholars about Catholicism with particular attention to history, art and aesthetics, literature and politics. See Library Assignment Instructions pages 6-7. 20%
4. A **final research paper** that about a Catholic teaching, liturgical practice, devotional tradition, educational tradition or social justice tradition. See Research Paper Instructions pages 7-8 below. 30% OR Critical Report on The Saints Plays production or "The Legacy of the Martyrs Conference" event(s). See <http://www.scu.edu/ignatiancenter/events/conferences/elsal20.cfm>
5. **Final Exam** See page 8 for some sample questions. 30%

Attendance and Participation:

Class is important, so a student who is absent more than three classes (unexcused) cannot expect to receive higher than a B; more than four a C; more than five a D; more than six an F.

The daily reading outside class will act as the frame for the material presented in class each day. The readings provide you material that we shall be placing in conversation with the material presented in class. In this way, each class day models the form of analysis that I will be asking you to use when you write your paper. Attendance in class is very important. The class is incomplete without the material presented each day. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get the notes and to learn the material for the day you missed. The professor will not re-teach the material.

If you are sick or unable to attend, please notify the professor. Notifying the professor of illness or necessary absence is both courteous and professional. I do not have a "policy" regarding "free absences." I do not expect you to miss class any more than your employer "expects" you to miss work. I do however, understand that things happen and illnesses strike us all. Attendance is assumed in this class, and the exams will be based not only on the readings, but also on the lectures. If you do not plan to attend class every class meeting, I suggest you drop the course. Attendance at all class meetings is expected. **If you miss 3 sessions, your grade will be reduced by one level. It will be reduced another grade level for every absence after 3. Attendance in class is your professional activity; part of your performance is careful, prepared attendance.**

Theological Assumptions:

Theology is critical reflection upon faith. Because this class is a university class, the critical reflection will be even farther away from catechesis than any adult education or

more advanced high school classes you may have attended. At the same time, this critical reflection has as its object the most personal and meaningful aspects of human life. It reflects upon our experience of the Living God and that God's personal presence in each person's inner life and in the corporate life of the community. Therefore, a constitutive part of the critical reflection is the respect for, and attention to, the various experiences of God that all of us will bring to this study. I shall work to achieve this standard and ask that you do so as well. While this course may indeed enhance and develop your own faith life, it is not materially about your faith life; it is materially concerned with critical reflection upon the meaning of human existence and God's existence. Wherever you as an individual person find yourself with regard to these questions of meaning, will in no way effect the grade you earn in this course. What will affect the grade you earn is how well you engage these questions at the university level.

Organizational Assumptions:

There are three background values that will be operative in this class, especially in the time we spend together. These values take the form of goals.

1. The first goal is to develop **university level discourse**. By this I mean that your questions and the formulations of your arguments should consist of critical reflection that is informed by the insights made by scholars with competence, and often, with expertise.

2. The second goal is consistent and dependent upon the first; it is that this is a **professional environment**. All aspects of the class, from my performance to the student's performance, will reflect this standard.

--I expect students to be in class on time and ready to work when class starts.

--Tardiness is disruptive to the class. I expect students to have an email account that is checked daily.

--Please make sure your SCU email account is activated. This will be the major way that I communicate with students.

-- Exchange contact information with someone in class, so that you have someone with whom to clarify your notes and questions.

--Please do not leave the room once we have started unless you have a personal emergency.

3. The third goal is that this class, and especially the time in the classroom, becomes a **learning community**. Both the vision and mission of Catholicism as a corporate community and the university embrace and affirm this value.

Disability Accommodation Policy:

The Office of Disabilities Resources has been designated by the University to ensure access for all students with disabilities to all academic programs and University resources. Types of disabilities include medical, physical, psychological, attention-deficit, and learning disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are provided to minimize the effects of a student's disability and to maximize the potential for success. Santa Clara University follows the law that states: "Professors cannot change essential course requirements." Any accommodation must be arranged through the Office of Disabilities Resources. From Undergraduate Bulletin: "To request academic accommodations for a

disability, students must contact Disability Resources (408) 554-4111; TTY (408) 554-5445. Students must register with Disabilities Resources and provide appropriate documentation to that office prior to receiving accommodations.”

Please visit the Office's Website for more information.

<http://www.scu.edu/advising/learning/disabilities/>

Academic Integrity:

Students need to be aware of and follow the university's academic integrity policy. See <http://www.scu.edu/academics/bulletins/undergraduate/Academic-Integrity.cfm>.

Plagiarism will lower your grade and may result in an F for the course. Plagiarism is lying to your professor and stealing from another member of the academy.

Assignment and Quiz Instructions:

Quizzes

Here is an example of the kind of quiz you will be given for each reading assignment:

1. An appropriate description of faith is to say it is a _____.

- a. rational principle
- b. gift of God
- c. certainty
- d. doctrine

2. Theology is _____ the experience of faith or faith seeking _____. (Anselm)

(pick one from each set)

- a1. critical reflection a2 affirmation
- b1. rational analysis of b2 understanding
- c1. doctrinal theory about c2 correction
- d1. magisterial pronouncement d2 certainty

3. Mainstream Catholic theology uses what is called _____

_____ as the method best suited to the articulation and interpretation of faith. (David Tracy)

- a. Biblical study
- b. critical correlation
- c. catechetical instruction
- d. pastoral counseling

4. A (n) _____ is a definitive teaching that is protected from fundamental error by the Holy Spirit.

- a. doctrine
- b. encyclical
- c. official teaching of the American Bishops
- d. dogma

5. The word Catholic derives from the Greek adjective *katholikos* that means _____.

- a. universal
- b. first
- c. papal
- d. oldest

6. Since the Reformation the word "Catholic" is inappropriately used in opposition to the word "Protestant"; the true opposite of "Catholic" is _____.

- a. Marxist
- b. non-Christian
- c. atheist
- d. sectarian

7. Catholic theology recognizes and affirms that the Bible has an authority that is not equaled by any other written

source. When the Enlightenment prompted a formal articulation of this authority, the debate centered not upon the fact of God's activity in the Bible but over the _____ of this activity.

- a. control
- b. manner
- c. dangers
- d. heresies

8. In its widest sense, tradition refers to a _____ by which the Church hands on to each new generation the faith of the Church.

- a. history
- b. process
- c. doctrinal collection
- d. magisterial collection

9. While Catholicism seeks to affirm the importance of both Scripture and

Tradition, Vatican II emphasized the principle that Scripture itself is a product of _____.

- a. debate
- b. tradition
- c. the supernatural
- d. the apostles

10. A helpful way to distinguish between the Protestant view of human existence and a more Catholic view is to say that Protestants see the divine relationship to humankind and the world as a dialectical one and Catholics see it primarily as _____.

- a. negative
- b. analogical
- c. political
- d. liturgical

Library Assignment Instructions

These short assignments are designed so that you will engage a theological conversation with well-trained scholars. At its best, Catholic theology is engaged with all aspects of human life and culture. The journals below focus on the four selected areas of engagement that shape our text as well as our course together. You will read one journal article from each of the lists below. Then you will prepare a **critical reflection essay of 3-4 pages** that includes the following steps:

First, summarize the argument in the article. **Second**, engage an idea of your choice taken from our course into conversation with the argument in the article. For example, you might apply the principle of sacramentality to the author's argument to assess whether or not the author takes proper account of that principle. In making this choice, draw upon your own experience and thinking. As you take notes in class each day, there will be questions or ideas that occur to you. When you prepare these exercises, you may find it helpful to "mine" your notes to generate critical thinking. **Conclude** by raising the questions that emerge as a result of the dialogue you have created. You do not have to "answer" these questions; that is not the purpose of questioning in this context. The purpose here to demonstrate the direction that theological reflection is moving as a result of the conversation you generated.

You will write one essay using each of the lists below.

Assignment #1

History

Catholic Historical Review
Church History
Medieval Philosophy and Theology
Journal of Early Christian Studies
Reformation & Renaissance Review

Assignment #2

Practice/Aesthetics/Art

Worship
Liturgy
Journal of Religion
Gregorianum
American Benedictine Review
Chicago Studies
St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly
Modern Liturgy

Assignment #3

Literature and Theology in Dialogue

Journal of Religion and Literature
*Contagion: Journal of Violence Mimesis
and Culture*
Tolkien Studies
*Spiritus: A Journal of Christian
Spirituality*

Assignment #4

Social Location/Political Context

Black Theology
Feminist Theology
Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology
EcoTheology
Mennonite Quarterly Review

Research Paper Instructions

The purpose of this essay is to "think theologically" from a Catholic perspective. You will be analyzing a teaching, tradition or practice in order to make a claim about its coherence with the over-arching claims Christianity about the relationship between human persons and God. There are two sets of criteria that you will use in your analysis:

1. the Catholic principles of sacramentality, mediation, and communion
2. the process of development and reception that is central to Catholic theology and practice.

There are three parts to the paper.

A. a description of the teaching, tradition or practice that includes the 3 phases of development presupposed in our course's framework

1. a description of the human experience that is the source of your chosen teaching, tradition or practice.
2. a short summary of the history of the teaching, tradition or practice
3. a description of phases of development through which the teaching, tradition or practice gone

B. theological reflection upon the teaching, tradition or practice taken using the list of selected journals and/or the bibliographies at the end of the chapters in your text, *Catholicism*.

C. Your own assessment of the coherence (that is, Does this teaching contribute to human meaning with direct reference to the notion of the *imago Dei*, the mission, suffering and resurrection of Jesus and the in-dwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.) of this teaching, tradition or practice.

This paper should be 8-12 pages. Follow the Chicago Manual of Style for footnoting. The paper should have standard margins and use a 12 point font. Be sure to number the pages, create a footer that includes your name, TESP 50 and Fall 2009, and a title page with your name, the title and date.

Sample Final Exam Questions:

In paragraph form, address the following questions. Be sure to include information from both class notes and our text in your answers.

1. Explain the axiom *lex orandi; lex credendi* making use of a specific example from Catholic teaching and/or practice.
2. Explain the difference between an "international church" and a "global church." Be sure to include how the Catholic teaching on salvation is central to this discussion.
3. Describe how St. Augustine used a psychological model to formulate his theology of the Trinity.

4. Define "reception" and explain this process using a specific teaching that has been received and one that has not been received.

Calendar:

Please come to class having read and reviewed the readings listed for that day.

Tuesday 9- 22

Introduction to the class in general

Review of syllabus and requirements

Description of theological method of the class and to the method of Richard McBrien's *Catholicism*

Thursday 9-24

Readings: *Catholicism* (all reading assignments that follow are chapters in *Catholicism*.)

Chapter XXXII, "Catholicism: A Synthesis," pp. 1187- 1202 and Chapter I, "What is Catholicism?" pp. 3- 18.

Tuesday 9- 28

Readings: Chapter II, "Faith and Its Outcomes," pp. 19- 72.

Thursday 10- 1

Readings: Chapter V, "A Theology of Human Existence: Nature and Grace, Original Sin," pp. 157- 200 and a section from Chapter IV, "Theology," pp. 136- 156.

Tuesday 10- 6

Readings: Chapter VI, "Belief and Unbelief: The Search for God," pp. 205- 226.

Thursday 10- 8

Readings: Chapter VII, "Revelation: God's Self-disclosure to Us," pp. 227- 274.

Tuesday 10- 13

Readings: Chapter VIII, "The Triune God," pp. 275- 332 and Chapter IX, "God: Special Questions," pp. 333- 357.

Thursday 10- 15

Readings: Chapter XVI, "The Church of the New Testament," pp. 569- 606

Tuesday 10- 20

Readings: Chapter XVII, "The Church in History," pp. 607- 654

Library Exercise #1 Due

Thursday 10- 22

Readings: Chapter XVIII, "The Church of the Second Vatican Council," pp. 655- 690 and Chapter XX "Special Questions in Ecclesiology," pp. 739- 782.

Tuesday 10- 27

Readings: Chapter XII, "The Christ of the New Testament," pp. 415- 460.

Thursday 10- 29

Readings: Chapter XIII, "The Christ of Postbiblical Theology and Doctrine," pp. 461- 490.

Tuesday 11- 3

Readings: Chapter XIV, "The Christ of Contemporary Theology," pp. 491- 538.

Thursday 11- 5

Readings: Chapter XV, "Special Questions in Christology," pp. 491- 567.

Library Exercise #2 Due

Tuesday 11- 10

Readings: Chapter XXIX, "Worship: Liturgy, Prayer, Devotions," pp. 1063- 1076

Thursday 11- 12

Readings: Chapter XXVIII, "Christian Spirituality," pp. 1015- 1062.

Tuesday 11- 17

Readings: Chapter XXI, "The Sacraments in General (with introduction)," pp. 783- 804 and Chapter XXIV, "The Sacraments of Vocation and Commitment: Matrimony and Holy Order," pp. 851- 880 and Chapter XXX, "Mary and the Saints," pp. 1077- 1122.

Library Exercise #3 Due

Thursday 11- 19

Readings: and Chapter XXII, "The Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist," pp. 805- 833 and Chapter XXIII, "The Sacraments of Healing: Penance and Anointing of the Sick," pp. 835- 850.

Thanksgiving Break 11- 23- 27

Tuesday 12- 1

Readings: Chapter XXV, "Christian Morality; A Historical Perspective (with introduction)," pp. 881- 920 and Chapter XXVII, "Christian Morality: Special Questions," pp. 981- 1014.

Library Exercise #4 Due

Thursday 12- 3 Summary