

Curriculum Vitae

Deborah Ross

Teaching Professor and Director of Ministerial Formation
Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University (JST-SCU)
Phone: (510) 549-5025
Email: dross@scu.edu

EDUCATION

S.T.L., Pastoral and Liturgical Theology, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University

Ph.D., Theology, Heythrop College, University of London, United Kingdom (U.K.), thesis “The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and Liminal Experience: A Theological Anthropological Interpretation”

M.Th., Pastoral Theology, Heythrop College, University of London, dissertation on RCIA and catechesis

B.A. (Hons), Theology and Religious Studies with English, St. Mary’s College, Twickenham, London, University of Surrey (now St. Mary’s University), U.K., dissertation on moral theology

ECCLESIASTICAL CREDENTIAL

Nihil Obstat, Vatican Dicastery of Culture and Education, granted January 2025

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Teaching Professor and Director of Ministerial Formation, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, 2025-present

Senior Lecturer and Director of Ministerial Formation, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, 2024-2025

Lecturer and Director of Ministerial Formation, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, 2013-2024

Quarterly Adjunct Lecturer, Religious Studies Department and Graduate Program in Pastoral Ministries (GPPM), Santa Clara University (SCU), 2012-2013

Adjunct Professor, St. Ignatius Institute, University of San Francisco, 2012-2013

Research Assistant, progressing to Project Coordinator/Consultant, Action Research Church and Society (ARCS) project, Heythrop College, University of London, 2006-2010

Research Assistant/Consultant, Evangelisation Research in the Catholic Church, Von Hügel Institute, St. Edmund’s College, University of Cambridge, U.K., 2005-2006

Various ministry roles including parish, university, and sixth form college ministry, 1994-2006

RESEARCH AREAS

Practical theology; catechesis; contextual theology; ecclesiology; sacramental and liturgical theology; theological anthropology; pilgrimage; and science and religion (bioethics)

PUBLICATIONS (Selected)

Book on practical theology in preparation

Book, co-editor and contributing author, Deborah Ross, Eduardo Fernández, S.J., with Stephen Bevans, S.V.D. (editors), *Doing Theology as If People Mattered: Encounters in Contextual Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 2019)

Book, co-author, with Helen Cameron, James Sweeney, C.P., et al, *Talking About God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2010)

Introduction, with Eduardo Fernández, S.J., *Doing Theology as If People Mattered: Encounters in Contextual Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 2019)

Introduction, Edith and Victor Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011)

Book chapter, “‘Let Him Easter in Us’: Paschal Spirituality, Sacramentality, and Lay Ecclesial Ministry,” in *Harvesting and Sowing: Ministry, Protagonism, and the Laity in a Time of Epochal Change*, eds. Maureen O’Brien and Michael Canaris (Paulist Press, forthcoming 2026)

Book chapter, “Field Education at a Shared Parish: Navigating Contextual and Pastoral Opportunities,” in *Doing Theology as If People Mattered: Encounters in Contextual Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 2019)

Journal article, “Ignatian Spirituality and Action Research: Exploring Lay Ecclesial Ministerial Formation,” *The Way*, 61/2, April 2022, 98-110

Book review, Emma O’Donnell, *Remembering the Future: The Experience of Time in Jewish and Christian Liturgy* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2015), *Theological Studies*, Vol. 78 no. 1 (March 2017)

Book review, Claire Wolfteich, ed., *Invitation to Practical Theology: Visions and Voices* (Mahwah, NY: Paulist Press, 2014), *Theological Studies*, 77 no. 1 (March 2016)

Book review, Timothy Larsen, *The Slain God: Anthropologists and the Christian Faith* (Oxford: OUP, 2014), *Theological Studies*, 76 no. 4 (December 2015)

Book review, Edward P. Hahnenberg, *Theology for Ministry: An Introduction for Lay Ministers* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014), *Theological Studies*, 76, no. 2 (June 2015)

Book review, Myroslav Tataryn and Maria Truchan-Tataryn, *Discovering Trinity in Disability: A Theology for Embracing Difference* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2013), *Theological Studies* 75, no. 3 (September 2014)

Report, *Ministerial Formation Report and Plan* (JST-SCU, 2020)

Report, *Research Report on Lay Ecclesial Formation at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University* (JST-SCU, 2018)

Report, co-author, *Living Church in the Global City: Theology in Practice* (Heythrop College, University of London, 2008)

Report, co-author, *Going Forth: An Enquiry into Evangelisation and Renewal in the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales* (Von Hügel Institute, St. Edmund's College, University of Cambridge and Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, 2006)

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS (Selected)

“Theological Education for Ministry: Synodal Approaches,” panel presentation, Association of Graduate Programs in Pastoral Ministry (AGPIM) Annual Meeting, Los Altos, CA, February 2024

“Lay Ecclesial Ministerial Formation and Chauvet’s Sacramental Theology,” conference paper, AGPIM Annual Meeting, March 2022

“The Work of Contextual Theology: ‘Doing Theology as If People Mattered,’” conference presentation with Eduardo Fernández, S.J., Catholic Theological Society of America (CTSA), June 2021

“Ignatian Action Research,” conference paper, Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education Conference, Seattle University, August 2017

“Pastoral/Practical Theology at the Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley, California” conference paper given at “The Belo Horizonte Meeting” Catholic practical theology conference, *Faculdade Jesuíta de Filosofia e Teologia*, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, April 2014

Action Research Church and Society (ARCS) project, presentation and book launch of *Talking About God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2010), Heythrop College, University of London, January 2011

“Victor and Edith Turner, Liminality and the RCIA,” paper given at the Theology Research Seminar, Heythrop College, University of London, February 2009

Action Research Church and Society (ARCS) project, presentation and launch of “Living Church in the Global City: Theology in Practice,” Heythrop College, University of London, December 2008

“The RCIA as a Liminal Journey,” seminar presentation for the North American Forum on the Catechumenate Conference, Ohio, November 2008

“Liminality and the RCIA,” seminar presentation by invitation of Dr. Edith Turner, University of Virginia, November 2008

“Action Research Church and Society (ARCS) Project Methodology,” ARCS project seminar presentation, Heythrop College, University of London, June 2008

“Researching Theological Contexts - A Grounded Theory Approach,” conference paper presented at “Theology for Church and Society: Developing Resources for Pastoral and Practical Theology,” Heythrop College, University of London, November 2007

“Evangelization and Renewal Research Project – Reading the Practice: A Grounded Theory Approach,” presentation at colloquium led by Heythrop College, University of London and the Von Hügel Institute, St. Edmund’s College, University of Cambridge, May 2006

TEACHING

Lecturer and Director of Ministerial Formation, Jesuit School of Theology, 2013-present. Graduate courses currently teaching, or previously taught or co-taught:

- FE-2621 Theology of Ministry and Practice, Fall 2024-to present
- FE-2155 M. Div. Capstone Seminar, Fall 2023
- FE-4402 Th.M. Research Practicum, Fall 2022; Spring 2023
- FE-1152 M. Div. I Orientation Seminar, Fall 2021; Fall 2022; Fall 2023
- FE-2151 Field Education Practicum, Spring 2022-present
- FE-1152 M. Div. Integration Seminar I, 2013-2021
- FE-2152 M. Div. Integration Seminar II, 2013-2023
- FE-4400 S.T.L. Research Practicum, co-taught, 2015-2018
- FE-4401 S.T.D. Research Practicum, co-taught, 2015-2018

Adjunct Professor, St. Ignatius Institute, University of San Francisco, 2012-2013. Undergraduate courses taught:

- Sacramentality in Film and Literature I, Fall 2012
- Faith, Hope, and Love in Charles Dickens, Fall 2012
- Sacramentality in Film and Literature II, Spring 2013
- Pilgrimage in Contemporary Society, Spring 2013

Quarterly Adjunct Lecturer, Religious Studies Department, Graduate Program in Pastoral Ministries (GPPM), Santa Clara University, 2012-2013. Courses taught:

- Practical Theology, GPPM course, Fall 2012
- Catholic Theology: Foundations, undergraduate course, Winter 2013
- Encounters of Religion and Globalization, undergraduate course, Spring 2013
- Process of Catechesis, GPPM course, Summer 2013

JST-SCU SERVICE (Selected)

Committees

M.Div. Degree Review Committee, January 2024-April 2024

Statutes and Curricula Committee, December 2023-present; chair, Fall 2025-present

Academic Affairs Committee, JST-SCU Board of Directors, September 2023-present

Program Director Assessment Committee, September 2022-May 2023

Student Life Committee, JST-SCU Board of Directors, January 2019-May 2023

SCU Provost’s Adjunct Faculty and Lecturers Council (PAFLC), February 2020-June 2022

Master of Divinity Comprehensive Examination Board, May 2015-2021

Admissions Committee, September 2013-present

Search Committee, Director of Spiritual Formation, June -August 2021; December 2021-April 2022

Search Committee, tenure track Assistant Professor in Christian Spirituality, October 2018-March 2019

Search Committee for tenure track Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, December 2015-March 2016

Department Projects and Activities (Selected)

Program Director, Master of Theology (Th.M.) Degree Program, 2022-2023

Principal Investigator for Santa Clara University Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education (IJCE) grant-funded project developing a model of action research integrating Ignatian spirituality, 2014-2017

Director, STL theses on diocesan synodal formation and collaborative ministry, 2024-present

Reader, various M.T.S. degree synthesis projects on pastoral theology and catechesis, 2020-2023

Reader, Graduate Theological Union (GTU) M.A. degree thesis on Japanese pilgrimage, 2019

Reader, GTU Ph.D. degree dissertation on practical and Latinx theology and Mariology, 2016-2018

Presentations (Selected)

Co-organizer and emcee, Thomas Massaro, S.J., “The Renewal of Catholic Labor Justice Advocacy Under Pope Francis,” SCU Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education (ICJE) Bannan Forum and JST-SCU webinar, February 2022

Presenter, “Contextual Theology,” GTU doctoral students’ “Theology and Ethics Seminar,” with Eduardo Fernández, S.J., November 2020

Co-presenter, JST-SCU panel presentation, *Doing Theology as If People Mattered: Encounters in Contextual Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 2019), with Eduardo Fernández, S.J., Joe Daoust, S.J., and GTU Ph.D. student, September 2019

Facilitator, RCIA/OCIA workshops for JST-SCU students, April 2014 and April 2024

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Association of Graduate Programs in Ministry (AGPIM), president, February 2023-February 2024; vice president, July 2022-February 2023; past president, February 2024-February 2025

Member, American Academy of Religion

Member, Association of Practical Theology

Member, Catholic Theological Society of America

GRANTS (Selected)

SCU Lecturer Professional Activity Grant for “Ignatian Action Research,” paper presentation, Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education Conference, Seattle University, 2017

SCU Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education Bannan Institute Working Group Grant to support a project developing an action research model integrating Ignatian spirituality and practice, 2014-2017

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Ecclesiastical Latin; French (intermediate); Spanish (elementary)