

University of Notre Dame
Catholicism in the United States:
History and Pastoral Practice
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Summer 2016
THEO 60234

MTWRF 3:15 – 5:45
Office Hours:
W 1:00 – 3:00 or by appt.

Course Description: The story of Catholicism in the United States is a tale of triumph and tragedy, unity and diversity, struggle and endurance, sinners and saints. This course is designed to enable pastoral leaders and teachers to appreciate the history of Catholicism in the United States, as well as to hone their capacity to discern pastoral practices that effectively address U.S. Catholic faith communities within that context. The course encompasses three primary components: (a) a survey history of the Catholic Church in the United States with particular focus on its multicultural origins and development; (b) a case study of history and pastoral practice among Latino Catholics; and (c) an examination of select topics of history and pastoral practice within U.S. Catholicism.

Required Texts:

Fisher, James T. *Communion of Immigrants: A History of Catholics in America*. New York: Oxford, 2002.

Matovina, Timothy. *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012.

Assignments:

Part I: Survey History of Catholicism in the United States

June 13 Leslie Woodcock Tentler, "On the Margins: The State of American Catholic History," *American Quarterly* 45 (March 1993): 104-27; Tentler, "Beyond the Margins," *American Catholic Studies Newsletter* 38 (Spring 2011): 1, 8-11; Matovina, pp. 1-6, 35-41. NOTE: the two Tentler reading assignments are available on Sakai.

14 Fisher, chapters 1-2; Matovina, pp. 6-15

15 Fisher, chapters 3-4; Matovina, pp. 15-25

16 Fisher, chapters 5-6

17 Fisher, chapter 7; Matovina, pp. 25-35

20 First Writing Assignment due

Part II: History and Pastoral Practice: A Case Study of Latino Catholics

21 Matovina, chapters 2-3

22 Matovina, chapters 4-5

23 Matovina, chapter 6; student presentation proposal due (include: topic, names of group members, list of 4-5 most important readings on this topic – see further instructions below)

24 Matovina, chapters 7-8

27 Second Writing Assignment due

Part III: History and Pastoral Practice: Select Topics

28 student presentations

29 student presentations

30 student presentations

July 1 Conclusion

Means of Assessment: Class participation (25% of grade) will assess the student's comprehension and evaluation of lectures, discussions, and assigned readings. Two written assignments (25% each) will assess students' capacity to synthesize and critically analyze assigned readings on U.S. Catholicism and Latino Catholicism, respectively. A group presentation on a select topic pertinent to history and pastoral practice in U.S. Catholicism (25%) will evaluate the student's ability to apply course content to pastoral ministries and/or teaching.

Class Participation: Careful preparation and critical engagement of assigned readings is absolutely essential. Please come prepared to discuss the assigned readings for each class session. Attendance is required.

Written Assignments: The purpose of these two assignments is to enable you to articulate the most crucial insights of the two assigned books and apply those insights to the teaching and pastoral life of the church. You do not need to summarize the book contents in your paper, as we will do that in our class discussions. Focus instead on synthesizing the most significant material from the respective books and the implications of that material for teaching and pastoral work. The presumed audience for your essay is fellow teachers or workers in ministry, and indeed you will have the opportunity to discuss your findings in small groups with other class participants. Both papers should be 3-4 double-spaced pages in length.

First Written Assignment: What three insights about the history of Catholicism in the United States do you think are most crucial for understanding the implications of that history for pastoral ministry and teaching in the church today? Due Monday, June 20.

Second Written Assignment: What three insights about the past, present, and future of Latino Catholics in the United States do you think are most crucial for understanding their faith and struggles and engaging in pastoral ministry and faith formation with them today? Due Monday, June 27.

Group Presentation: This assignment will give you the opportunity to apply what you have learned from the assigned class texts to a select topic pertinent to history and pastoral practice in U.S. Catholicism. The recommended group size is four so that group members can divide up the responsibility of the research and reading. You can choose any topic pertinent to history and pastoral practice in U.S. Catholicism, such as ministry with Asian Americans, the mission of Catholic schools, pastoral care of migrants, shared (multicultural) parishes, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), Catholics and the wider society, pro-life ministries, evangelization and popular piety, catechesis for persons with special needs, etc., etc. Another option that might be particularly appealing to Echo or other participants is a study of the history of the diocese, parish and/or school in which you will serve and any of the particular pastoral challenges and opportunities the local bishop or other leaders have recently articulated for that place or

institution. The Notre Dame library and archives have a wealth of parish histories and primary source materials on the history of Catholicism in the United States that could be of use in researching such a topic. (NOTE: if you choose this option, it will be important to make your presentation instructive for members of the class who minister in other locales. You can do this by raising up pastoral concerns from your ministry site that have application to other sites).

This list of possible topics is very partial. Be creative: find a topic you are passionate about and that will enable you to teach the rest of the class about an important pastoral concern in the church in the United States today.

Each group will compile the 4-5 most important readings on your selected topic. Please consult with me on this matter before you begin reading so you can be sure you have significant sources. All groups are expected to submit a proposal on June 23, but you are welcome to work with me on this proposal in advance if you want to begin work on the assignment earlier.

Once you have an approved proposal, group members can start working on the reading list. You may divide up the responsibility of reading the selected works. Please prepare a 1-2 page handout for all members of the class. The handout should contain a statement of your topic, an annotated bibliography of your selected readings (i.e. bibliographic citations and a short precis for each reading), a brief outline of the class presentation you will make, and questions for group discussion about your topic.

For the group presentation itself, provide a summary overview of what you learned about your assigned topic. Judging from the readings your group undertook, what are the significant historical developments and lessons to be learned? And what are the significant pastoral insights and guidelines about your topic? Once you have completed your presentation, lead the class in a discussion of the topic on which you presented. Each group will have half a class period, roughly about an hour, so I recommend about a 30 minute presentation and another 30 minutes for discussion. You may divide the class into small groups for a short period if that would be a helpful means to get us all engaged.

I encourage you to use visual and/or audio aids for your presentation where appropriate. You may also use a power point or write notes on the blackboard, but please do not merely read notes or quotations from a power point display. As a group you may divide up the different sections of your presentation in any way you wish, but of course each student must take an equal part in instructing the class and guiding the discussion.

The primary criterion for grading this assignment will be how well you enabled your classmates (and professor) to learn about a select topic pertinent to history and pastoral practice in U.S. Catholicism. Generally all members of the group will receive the same grade, though I may make exceptions to this pattern in instances where one or two group members make clearly superior presentations as compared to their counterparts.

Welcome to the course!

Professor Timothy Matovina
June 13, 2016

