THEO 60403 - RITES OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION

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Course Description:

This course will trace the historical development of the liturgies and theological interpretations of Christian Initiation in East and West from the New Testament period to the modern period of ecumenical convergence. In light of this historical investigation some modern forms of these rites (e.g., RCIA, LBW, BCP, etc.) will be considered theologically and ecumenically with an eye toward pastoral appropriations and implications.

Goals and Objectives:

This course is about the acquisition of knowledge with a view toward the critical evaluation of the shape of Christian Initiation especially within the Roman Catholic Church and in a variety of contemporary churches today. While pastoral issues may certainly be considered, the course is neither a "how-to-do-the rites" course nor is it concerned with offering blueprints for pastoral practice in the variety of settings from which students come or to which they are going. Rather, this course takes as its premise that the only way to know what the Rites of Christian Initiation are is to study their manifestation as they actually appear within the various strata of the Christian tradition. Only then can one adequately evaluate their current shape(s). This means, concretely, both history of the Rites and history of their theological interpretation.

More specifically, this course intends to assist M.A. students in Liturgical Studies and others in acquiring:

1. A thorough knowledge of the history and theology of the Rites of Christian Initiation in preparation for either further research and study or serving in various pastoral ministries in an informed and intelligent manner;
2. An ability to articulate, express, and evaluate the distinct theologies of those rites in the life of the Church; and
3. An ability to celebrate "fully, actively, and consciously" those Rites of Christian Initiation as they take place in the Sundays, feasts, and seasons of the liturgical year.

Course Requirements:
With the exception of Goal # 3 above, which is unmeasurable in the context of the course, the above goals and objectives will be met by:

1. Attendance at and participation (discussion, dialogue, etc.) in all class sessions;
2. Keeping up with the assigned reading (Note: the readings indicated for each class session are probably impossible to complete and so must be prioritized according to the sources and studies required/recommended for the course).
3. **Written Work: Two** take-home essay examinations due as indicated on the syllabus.

**REQUIRED:**


**RECOMMENDED TEXTS:**


**AdditionalSupplemental Readings On Library Reserve:**


GRADING:

Grades will be determined on the basis of "full, active, and conscious participation," the two short papers, take-home exams, and final oral presentation. **NOTE:** The grade A is reserved for what is considered to be exceptional work on the graduate level; an A-/B+ means that work is at a level of solid and high quality, a level above what is necessary to complete successfully the requirements for the course; a B is good solid work, the average and minimum required (and expected of graduate students) for the successful completion of a graduate-level course; a B-, C+ is a passing grade for graduate-level study meaning that an assignment was completed but in need of improvement and/or further development or clarification; and a C, although a passing grade, indicates some serious problems.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF CLASSES, TOPICS, AND SUGGESTED READING**


**Abbreviations**

- AIRI = Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation
- IMAGES = Images of Baptism
- LWSS = Living Water, Sealing Spirit
- RCI = Rites of Christian Initiation: Evolution and Interpretation
- SL = Studia Liturgica

**M, JUNE 13:**
1. Introduction to the Course

2. Two Models of Initiation and Church

   **Req. Reading:** Kavanagh, "Christian Initiation in Post-Conciliar Catholicism," LWSS, 1-10.

**T, JUNE 14:**
1. The Origins of Christian Initiation
**Req. Reading:** RCI, 1-32; A. Collins, "The Origin of Christian Baptism," LWSS, 35-57; Kavanagh, *Shape*, Chapter 1


2. The Pre-Nicene Period I - Eastern


**Sup. Reading:** Dujarier, *History*, 29-76; L. Mitchell, *Baptismal Anointing*, Ch. III, 30-36

W, JUNE 15:

1. The Pre-Nicene Period II - Western

**Req. Reading:** RCI, 60-88; Kavanagh, "Confirmation: A Suggestion from Structure," LWSS, 148-158; Paul Turner, "The Origins of Confirmation," LWSS, 238-258; Kavanagh, *Shape*, 35-54; Austin, *Anointing*, 3-12;

**Sup. Reading:** Kavanagh, *Confirmation*, Chapters 1 and 2 (especially pages 39-53).

2. Summary and Comparison of Pre-Nicene Period in East and West

Th, JUNE 16:

1. Initiation in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries I: East

**Req. Reading:** RCI, 89-124; Review G. Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Pre-baptismal Anointing and its Implications," LWSS, 58-81; P. Bradshaw, "Baptismal Practice in the Alexandrian Tradition," LWSS, 82-100

2. Initiation in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries II: West

Req. Reading: RCI, 125-158; M. Johnson, "The Postchrismational Structure of Apostolic Tradition" 21, the Witness of Ambrose of Milan, and a Tentative Hypothesis Regarding the Current Reform of Confirmation in the Roman Rite," Worship 70, 1 (1996): 16-34

Sup. Reading: Kavanagh, Confirmation, 52-64; Yarnold, AIRI (Ambrose of Milan); Dujarier, History, 77-119; H.M. Riley, Christian Initiation; L. Mitchell, Baptismal Anointing, Ch. V, 80-102

Take Home Exam #1 Distributed

F, JUNE 17:

1. Initiation in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries III - Sacramental Theology (Donatism, Pelagianism, and Augustine)

Req. Reading: Review RCI, 66-72; 147-157

2. Excursus I: The Evolution of the Baptismal Font

M, JUNE 20:

1. Excursus II: Baptismal Preparation and the Origins/Evolution of "Lent"


2. Summary and Comparison of Fourth and Fifth Centuries in East and West

No Additional Reading Assigned

T, JUNE 21: Take-Home Exam I due!

Initiation in the Middle Ages

Req. Reading: RCI, 177-226; G. Winkler, "Confirmation or Chrismation? A Study in Comparative Liturgy," LWSS, 202-218; J Levesque, "The Theology of the Postbaptismal Rites in the Seventh and Eighth Century Gallican Church," LWSS, 159-201; F. Quinn,
"Confirmation Reconsidered: Rite and Meaning," LWSS, 219-237; Austin, Anointing, 12-37; Kavanagh, Shape, 54-78

Sup. Reading: Kavanagh, Confirmation, 65-78; J.D.C. Fisher, Baptism in the Medieval West 1-101; L. Mitchell, Baptismal Anointing, Ch.V; N. Mitchell, "Dissolution of the Rite of Christian Initiation," in Made, Not Born, 50-82

CHRISTIAN INITIATION – ADJUSTED SYLLABUS, SUMMER, 2012

W, JUNE 22: THE CHRISTIAN EAST

1. Introduction to Initiation Rites in Eastern Christianity

Req. Reading: RCI, Chapter 7

2. Christian Initiation in the Byzantine Rite (Video)

Th, JUNE 23:

1. The Reformation I - Baptism

Req. Reading: RCI, 227-270


2. The Reformation II - Confirmation and Christian Initiation at Trent

Req. Reading: RCI, 270-290

Sup. Reading: Same as above, and Schroeder (trans.), Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Seventh Session; J.D.C. Fisher, Baptism in the Medieval West, Appendix V, 182-185; B. Neunheuser, Baptism and Confirmation, 221-231

F, JUNE 24:

1. From the Tridentine Books to the Present
Req. Reading: RCI, 291-307; Kavanagh, Shape, 81-101


2. Christian Initiation Today I - The Rites (Roman Catholic RCIA)

Req. Reading: RCI, 307-325; Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults; Kavanagh, "Unfinished and Unbegun Revisited: The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults," LWSS, 259-273; Kavanagh, Shape, 102-149

Sup. Reading: Kavanagh, "Christian Initiation of Adults: The Rites," in Made, Not Born, 118-137;

M, JUNE 27:

1. Christian Initiation Today II - The Rites (Roman Catholic RBC and Confirmation)


Sup. Reading: Kavanagh, Confirmation, 81-122; R. Keifer, "Christian Initiation: The State of the Question," in Made, Not Born, 138-151

2. Christian Initiation Today III - The Rites (Select Protestant Rites)

Req. Reading: RCI, 347-363; WCC, Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry; Austin, Anointing, 41-156; B. Spinks, "Vivid Signs of the Gift of the Spirit?" LWSS, 310-326;

Take-Home Exam 2 Distributed!!

T, JUNE 28:

1. Christian Initiation Today IV - Theological and Pastoral Issues


2. Celebrating Initiation at the Paschal Vigil

W, JUNE 29:

1. Ecumenical Convergence – Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry

2. Images of Baptism I and II – Death, Burial, and Resurrection in Christ

Req. Reading: IMAGES

Th, JUNE 30: Take-Home Exam II due!

Images of Baptism III and IV – Baptism as Incorporation into the Body of Christ

Req. Reading: IMAGES

F, JULY 6:

Toward a Baptismal Spirituality

Req. Reading: RCI, 365-391