Course Description

This course will hold selected texts of Catholic social teaching in conversation with interlocutors across various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. The primary goal will be to develop an account of economic justice rooted in the broader Catholic social tradition, engaging Scripture and the official teaching of the church through the centuries on issues such as private property, usury, and the demands of distributive, social, commutative, and contributive justice in the context of the common good. Students will become conversant with the concepts and language of Catholic social teaching related to economic justice and will be able to engage in contextual theology to address the ethical aspects of particular cases.

Readings

All readings will be available on the library e-reserve space for our course or on Sakai. In the case of episcopal or papal texts, unless otherwise noted, you may access them on the websites for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops or the Vatican.

The following text is recommended:

Requirements

Attendance

Two or more absences will result in a lower final grade. Three or more absences will put one in danger of failing the course. If unforeseen circumstances interfere with class attendance, please contact the instructor immediately. A student facing a sudden medical or family emergency will need to follow appropriate procedures established by the Graduate School.

Participation (20%)

Please come to class prepared to enter into discussion of the assigned material.

3 Analytical Papers (45%)

You are asked to write three analytical papers (4 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font) based on our assigned course material. In each paper, please present your own analysis of two or three main points emerging from the assigned readings for that class session. (In cases in which a particular class session is divided into two parts, please focus on the material for just one part of the session.) Each paper will be due on the date for which that particular material has been assigned, and you may choose the three class sessions for which you will write a paper.

Case Study (35%)

The main objective of the case study is to afford you the opportunity to consider a particular case and apply what you have learned about the Catholic social tradition and economic justice in a synthetic fashion. In choosing a case, please consider these questions:

- Is this particular case of significance to the church and to the local community in which it occurs?
- Will analysis of this particular case contribute to your own development academically, vocationally, and/or ministerially?
- Does this case lend itself to a synthetic application of broad themes and concepts found in the Catholic social tradition?

Structure of the Assignment:

Please describe the relevant circumstances of the case and analyze it through the lens of our course material. You are not expected to draw heavily upon other material but may do so if necessary to develop your argument. The case study should be 5 pages, double-spaced, using a 12-point font. Due Date: June 27.
Honor Code

Students are expected to abide by the standards of the University of Notre Dame’s Honor Code.

Calendar of Assignments

June 13

a. Introduction and Overview
b. Background: Catholic Social Teaching Principles and Concepts

June 14 Creation, Jubilee, and Sabbath

a. Genesis and the Universal Destination of Created Goods

Book of Genesis, Ch. 1:1 – 2:25


b. Jubilee, Debt Relief, and Sabbath

Norman Wirzba, Living the Sabbath (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), 30-41, 142-153.

Richard Lowery, Sabbath and Jubilee (Chalice Press 2000), (excerpt)


June 15 Jesus, Economic Justice, and the Early Church

a. The Parable of the Talents and the Acts of the Apostles

Mt. 25:14-30
Acts 2:1-47


b. Basil of Caesaria


June 16   Monastic Community

a.   The Benedictine Rule, Hospitality, and the Sacramentality of Creation


b.   Clare, Poverty, and Contemplation


June 17 Aquinas, Private Property, and the Common Good

Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, II-II 32, a. 5 ad 2; 66.1, 2. New York: Benziger Bros., 1947.


June 20 Interest-taking and Usury

Ex. 22:25
Lev. 25: 35-37
Dt. 23: 20-21
Ez. 18:5-9
Psalm (14)15
Lk. 6:27-36


June 21 Industrial Revolution, Human Dignity, and Work

a. Leo XIII, Rerum novarum (1891)


June 22 Quadragesimo anno and Distributive Justice

a. John Ryan, the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and Quadragesimo anno (1931)

Pius XI, Quadragesimo anno (1931)


b. The Catholic Worker and the Distributists


June 23 Economic Justice and Violence

a. Possessions and Violence


b. Human Rights, Duties, and Armaments

John XXIII, *Pacem in terris* (1963)

Vatican II, *Gaudium et spes* (1965)

June 24 Integral Human Development, Solidarity, Subsidiarity, and Globalization

a. *Populorum progressio* and *Sollicitudo rei socialis*

Paul VI, *Populorum progressio* (1967)


b. *Caritas in veritate* and Gratuitousness

Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate* (2009)

Stefano Zamagni, “Fraternity, Gift, and Reciprocity in *Caritas in veritate*” *Cultura Económica* 75/76 (August/December 2009), 11-29.


June 27 Liberalism, Communitarianism, Justice as participation and the “Market Economy”


b.  

_Centesimus Annus_

John Paul II, _Centesimus annus_ (1991)


June 28

a.  

Family as the Basic Unit of Civil Society and the Feminization of Poverty


b.  

Immigrants, Refugees, Sovereignty, and the Global Economy


**June 29**  
**The Intersection of Racial and Economic Justice**

a. **Racial Justice**


b. **Cooperatives and Food Justice - my chapter in Allman; Wendell Berry**


Wendell Berry, *Bringing It to the Table. On Farming and Food* (Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2009), 105-118, 227-234.


International Cooperative Alliance: Please take some time to look at their website: http://ica.coop
June 30 Preferential Option for the Poor and Socioeconomic Inequality

Suzanne McGee, “Holidays offer chance to flaunt wealth -- and alarming reminder of inequality; While the country's richest are mulling over gifts like safaris and submarines, they are missing the threat that the wealth gap poses for the US as a whole,” TheGuardian.com, Dec. 11, 2015.


July 1 Oikos: Ecology, Economy, and Ecological Debt

Pope Francis, Laudato si (2015)

