

POLS 30654 - Catholicism and Politics (Fall 2017)

Professor Daniel Philpott
Office Hours: 2077 Nanovic Hall
Tuesday 1-2:30; Wednesday 3-4:30; or by appointment
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Course Description

It is not obvious that the Catholic Church and its teachings have much to do with politics. Realists say that politics has its own laws and logic to which a Christian must conform. Radicals agree that politics is incompatible with Catholic faith but insist that Catholics should have nothing to do with it. Should a Catholic be involved in politics, then? If so, what does his or her faith have to do with the conduct of politics? How the Church views the political order is the first order of business in Catholicism and Politics. But if the Church does offer guidance for the political order, then of what does it consist? How ought Catholics to view the state's policy towards war, religious freedom, human rights, the death penalty, abortion, economics, global poverty, immigration, health care, and the environment? How ought Catholics to vote? Face issues of conscience? Deal with the Church's own past sins?

The goal of Catholicism and Politics is to train students to approach these questions from a Catholic perspective. The course begins with an investigation of classic Catholic ideas about politics as found in Scripture and in tradition up through the Second Vatican Council. It then examines how the Church thinks about a range of contemporary issues and how it draws from its classical thinking in doing so. A highlight of the course is a series of dramatic debates in which students bring alive Catholic political issues in the context of a fictional Church gathering: a canonization hearing on the policy of Pope Pius XII towards the Holocaust, and a session of the "Council of South Bend."

Course Objectives

- 1) Students will learn to think about politics analytically from a distinctively Catholic perspective.
- 2) Students will gain a strong familiarity with enduring concepts in Catholic political thought through reading key sources from the Catholic tradition, including the Bible, classical thinkers such as Augustine and Aquinas, and landmark papal encyclicals.
- 3) Students will acquire a familiarity with the Catholic Church's teachings on contemporary political questions and develop the ability to evaluate them critically.

- 4) Students will learn to articulate and defend normative views about disputed political questions based on the Catholic tradition and to express these views through speaking and writing. This will take place through several modes of learning, most important among these being the dramatic debates, where students will debate issues such as the role of Pope Pius XII in the Holocaust, health care, Islam and politics, political forgiveness, and immigration.

Readings

- All readings and movies are available EITHER on Sakai OR on the internet via the given URL
- For Bible passages , please use the New American Bible, Revised Edition found online at the site of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/>

Course Requirements

- Mid-term take-home examination (25%)
- Dramatic debate: Canonization Hearing on Pius XII and the Holocaust *or* a session of The Council of South Bend (total of 30%):
- Final examination (25%)
- Class participation (reading quizzes, contribution to discussion, etc.) (15%)
- Contribution to class online forum. Each student is expected to post at least one thoughtful comment to the forum every week. Thoughtful means informed by readings for the class and involving a point of view and reasons for it. (5%)

Policies

- *Attendance.* You are expected to attend every class session. Excused absences consist of 1) preventive illness; 2) death in the family; 3) a university-sponsored event for which a note of excuse is provided. You're granted one "grace" unexcused absence, beyond which each unexcused absence results in the drop of the final grade by one point (on a 100-point scale). In addition, class begins on time. Being more than 15 minutes late without excuse counts as an unexcused absence for that session.

- Use of laptops, smart phones, and other electronic devices during class is not permitted.
- Eating during class is not permitted.
- *Honesty.* Cheating of any kind carries significant penalties. I adhere to the University's Honor Code: see <http://www.nd.edu/~hnrcode/index.htm>. I consider you, a student taking this course, to be bound by the pledge: "As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty."

Introduction

(Tuesday, August 22nd)

Readings

- Daniel Philpott, “One Professor’s Guide.” (You might be interested in the accompanying article in the summer 2009 issue of *Notre Dame Magazine*, “To Redeem the Time,” which can be found at <http://magazine.nd.edu/news/11885/#>)

Old Testament

(Thursday, August 24th)

Readings:

- Deuteronomy 17:8-20
- 1 Samuel: Chapter 8, Chapter 10:1, Chapter 10:17-27, Chapter 11:15, and Chapter 12

New Testament

(Tuesday, August 29th)

Readings:

- Matthew 5:38-44; Matthew 22:15-22; John 18:28-19:27; Romans 13:1-7; and Colossians 1:15-19

The Early Church

(Thursday, August 31st)

Readings:

- “From the Letter to Diognetus,” in Oliver O’Donovan and Joan Lockwood O’Donovan, eds., *From Irenaeus to Grotius*, pp. 12-14

The Augustinian Turn

(Tuesday, September 5th)

Readings:

- Selections from Augustine, in O’Donovan and O’Donovan, pp. 113-119, 131-136, 140 (beginning with “From *City of God*, Book 5”) -163

The Politics of the Middle Ages

(Thursday, September 7th)

Readings:

- Selections from Paul E. Sigmund, ed., *St. Thomas Aquinas on Politics and Ethics*, pp. 14-17 (stop at “Chapter 2”), 26-29, 44-56 (including Qu. 97), 61-73 (including Qu. 69)

The Church and The New World
(Tuesday, September 12th)

Movie

- *The Mission*, find on Sakai

The Church vs. the Modern State
(Thursday, September 14th)

Readings:

- *Syllabus of Errors* (1864), sections V, VI, IX, X, and postscript required (rest recommended). (Find at: <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm>)

Canonization Hearing: Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust
(Tuesday, September 19th)

Political Themes in the Second Vatican Council
(Thursday, September 21st)

Readings:

- *Gaudium et Spes*, sections 1-12, 23-28, 40, 42, 73-93.
(Find at: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html)

America and Americanism
(Tuesday, September 26th)

Readings:

- Weigel, George, “Catholicism and the American Proposition,” pp. 38-44
- Steinfels, Peter, “Reinventing Liberal Catholicism,” pp. 30-39

Mid-Term Examination
(Thursday, September 28th)

Liberation Theology and Social Justice For the Poor
(Tuesday, October 3rd)

Readings:

- Gutierrez, Gustavo, *Essential Writings*, pp. 23-33, 143-148, 194-197
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation,"* entire
(Find at:
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19840806_theology-liberation_en.html)

Radical Catholicism
(Thursday, October 5th)

Readings:

- Baxter, Michael, "Blowing the Dynamite of the Church': Catholic Radicalism from a Catholic Radicalist Perspective," pp. 195-212

War and Peace
(Tuesday, October 10th)

Readings:

- *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, pp. 213-226

Transforming the International System
(Thursday, October 12th)

Film:

- *Liberating a Continent: John Paul II and the Fall of Communism*

** FALL BREAK **

Religious Freedom
(Tuesday, October 24th)

Readings:

- *Dignitatis Humanae*, entire, find at

John Paul II's Gospel of Life
(Thursday, October 26th)

Readings:

- Pope John Paul II, *The Gospel of Life*, section 1-28, 52-77, 89-90
(Find at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae_en.html)

The Death Penalty
(Tuesday, October 31st)

Readings:

- *Dead Man Walking*, find on Sakai

Catholic Economics
(Thursday, November 2nd)

Readings:

- Clifford Longley, *Just Money: How Catholic Social Teaching Can Redeem Capitalism*, 7-92.

Immigration
(Tuesday, November 7th)

Readings:

- *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope: A Pastoral Letter Concerning Migration from the Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States*, find at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm>

The Church and the Sins of Its Own Past
(Thursday, November 9th)

Readings:

- International Theological Commission, *Memory and Reconciliation*, introduction and sections 1, 3, 4, and 5 (Find at: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_000307_memory-reconc-itc_en.html)

On Being a Catholic Politician
(Tuesday, November 14th)

Guest:

Michael Hamann, County Auditor, St. Joseph County

The Environment
(Thursday, November 16th)

Guest:

Fr. Terry Ehrman

Readings:

Laudato Si, entire (Find at:

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html)

How Should I Vote?
(Tuesday, November 21st)

Reading:

- *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, entire (Find at: <http://uscgb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship-document.cfm> upload the pdf version)

**** Thanksgiving Break ****

The Council of South Bend: Health Care
(Tuesday, November 28th)

The Council of South Bend: Islam
(Thursday, November 30th)

The Council of South Bend: Forgiveness
(Tuesday, December 5th)

A Litany of Catholics in Politics
(Thursday, December 7th)

Movie:

- *A Man For All Seasons*, find on Sakai.

Final Examination: Thursday, December 14th, 10:30-12:30