

The Catholic Church, Social Justice, and Human Rights
REL 4491/5497
Tuesday, Thursday 5:00 –6:15 p.m.
Williams 225
Fall 2003

Contact Information:

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Office hours: Wednesday 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., and by appointment

Course Description:

There is a rich tradition of attention to social justice issues in Catholicism, especially since the late 19th century. In this course we will explore this tradition and pay particular attention to the complex and often controversial ways that justice and rights have been construed in various magisterial and theological documents. We will engage in close, careful readings of the official documents that make up Catholic Social Teaching. To gain a full understanding of this tradition we will explore themes such as natural law, the common good, and the dignity of the human person. A central focus of our inquiry will concern the way the tradition reconciles individual rights with promotion of the common good. We will also explore the relationship of natural law to natural rights and to human rights. Towards the end of the semester, we will focus on the particular problems raised by human rights in these documents, and explore liberation theology's view of justice.

Course Objectives: By the end of the semester you will:

1. Be familiar with the body of documents that make up Catholic Social Teaching, especially in the 20th century.
2. Be able to describe concepts such as natural law, the common good, and dignity of the person as they pertain to Catholic teaching.
3. Use and understand the specific vocabulary of the official Catholic social documents.
4. Be able to describe and apply the language of human rights to Catholicism's specific concerns about society and the person.
5. Understand Jacques Maritain's role in the development of Catholic social thought, especially as it pertains to human rights.
6. Appreciate Catholicism's position vis-à-vis important 20th century political movements such as liberalism and socialism.
7. Be able to relate official Catholic teaching on issues of politics and the economy to the development of Latin American Liberation Theology.

Course Requirements:

⌘ **Class Attendance**

Attendance is required for this seminar. Each unexcused absence will result in a deduction of 5 points from your final grade.

⌘ **Class Participation**

This course is a seminar. There will be occasional lectures on background issues that you need to supplement the readings. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings. Class participation is important to your success in this course. Twenty five percent of your final grade will be based on your participation.

⌘ **Papers**

You will be responsible for three papers (8 pages each for undergraduates; 12 pages each for graduate students). Specific paper assignments will be distributed throughout the semester. Papers will be graded on content, style, organization, and originality. Papers must be turned in on the due date indicated on the syllabus. E-mailed papers will not be accepted.

⌘ **Seminar Presentation and Response**

Each **graduate student** will sign up for one Tuesday class session where they will kick the seminar off with a 4-6 page reflection paper on the assigned reading. Each **undergraduate student** will sign up for a Thursday session and present a 2-3 page response to the previous Tuesday's presenter.

Grading:

Participation	25%
3 papers (20% each)	60%
Seminar Presentation/Response	15%
Total	100%

FSU Honor Code:

Cheating, plagiarism or any dishonesty in your work is not tolerated at this university. Please refer to your student handbook or to this website (<http://www.fsu.edu/~union/honor.htm>) for more information about FSU's academic honor system, or come to see me if any part of the code is unclear.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC). For more information, check their website at <http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/index.html>. Please bring a letter to class from the SDRC indicating you need academic accommodations. This should be done within the first week of class. Please talk to me if you have questions.

Required Texts:

There are three required texts that ought to be available at the FSU and Bill's bookstores. Below is the information for these books in case you want to order them elsewhere:

1. *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage*, David J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon, eds. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992).
ISBN: 0-88344-787-8 (paperback)
2. *Catholic Social Teaching, 1891-Present*, Charles E. Curran (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2002).
ISBN: 0-87840-881-9 (paperback)
3. *Man and the State*, Jacques Maritain (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1998).
ISBN:0-8132-09050-6 (paperback)

Additional readings will be available in the Religion Department library in Dodd Hall. You can xerox the material or read it in the library.

Schedule of Readings: (indicates that the reading is required for graduate students only)****I. Background**

Aug. 26: Orientation to the Course

Aug. 28: Introduction to Catholicism

v *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, (part three, section one, chapter one, para. 1699-1876)

http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s1.htm

Sept. 2: Themes in Catholic Social Thought (Dignity of the Person)

- √ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, (part three, section one, chapters 2 and 3, para. 1877-2051)
- √ *Catholic Social Teaching*, Charles Curran, pp. 127-171

- Sept. 4:** Themes, continued (Natural Law and the Common Good)
- √ *"The Common Good Revisited,"* David Hollenbach, S.J. **
 - √ *"The Common Good and the Open Society,"* Louis Dupré
 - √ *"Natural Law in Moral Theology,"* Charles Curran
 - √ *"The Natural Law and Objective Morality: A Thomistic Perspective,"* William E. May
 - √ Thomas Aquinas on natural law (Summa Theologica, I-II Q. 90, 91, 94)
- <http://www.ccel.org/a/aquinas/summa/home.html>

- Sept. 9-11:** Overview of Catholic Social Teaching
- √ *Catholic Social Teaching*, Charles Curran pp. 21-124
 - √ *"Neither Liberal nor Socialist: The Originality of Catholic Social Teaching,"* John Coleman, S.J.
 - √ Thomas Aquinas on justice (Summa II-II Q. 57, 58, 61)

II. Development of Catholic Social Teaching (1891-Present)

- Sept. 16-18:** "Laying the groundwork.." Leo XIII
- √ *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Leo XIII (1891)
 - √ *"Leo XIII: Separation of Church and State,"* John Courtney Murray
 - √ *"The Rights and Duties of Labor and Capital,"* Richard L. Camp.

Paper #1 Due: Sept. 16: Select one of the themes we have been discussing (e.g. natural law, justice, common good, and dignity of the person). Explain what you understand to be the official Catholic teaching on this theme, and then discuss what you perceive as potential tensions in the application of this theme to problems of social justice.

- Sept. 23-25:** Pius XI and Pius XII
- √ *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pius XI (1931)
 - √ Excerpts *Divini Redemptoris*, Pius XI
 - √ *Dec. 24, 1944 Christmas Message on Democracy and Lasting Peace*, Pius XII
 - √ *"Forty Years Later: Reflections and Reminiscences,"* John F. Cronin, S.J.

- Sept. 30-Oct. 2:** Pope John XXIII
- √ *Mater et Magistra*, John XXIII (1961)

- √ *Pacem in Terris*, John XXIII (1963)
 - √ "Pope John XXIII – A New Direction?" Donald Dorr
- Oct. 7-9:** Vatican II
 - √ *Gaudium et Spes* (1965)
 - √ *Dignitates Humanae Personnae*
 - √ "Towards a Fundamental Interpretation of Vatican II," Karl Rahner
 - √ Chapter 3 *Claims in Conflict*, Hollenbach
- Oct. 14-16:** Paul VI
 - √ *Populorum Progressio* (1967)
 - √ *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971)
- Oct. 21-23:** Pope John Paul II
 - √ *Laborem Exercens* (1981)
 - √ *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987)
 - √ *Centessimus Annus* (1991)

III. Human Rights and Catholicism

- Oct. 28-30:** Jacques Maritain's Neo-Thomist interpretation of the person and human rights.
 - √ *Man and the State*, Jacques Maritain
 - √ UNESCO speech
 - √ "Maritain, St. Thomas Aquinas, and the First Principles of Natural Law," Gregory Doolan **
 - √ "Maritain's "Integral Humanism" and Catholic Social Teaching," Joseph M. de Torre

Paper #2 Due: October 28: Select one issue from the major documents associated with Catholic Social Teaching and trace its development through this tradition. Issues could include, family, poverty, property, work, wages, conscience, war, disarmament, church authority, population, science, technology, and many others.

- Nov. 4-6:** What are Human Rights? Definitions and Distinctions
 - √ *Claims in Conflict: Retrieving and Renewing the Catholic Human Rights Tradition*, David Hollenbach, chapters 1-3.
 - √ Chapter 1 from *The Idea of Human Rights: Four Inquiries*, Michael J. Perry
 - √ "Human Rights", Burns H. Weston

Nov. 11: Veteran's Day Holiday: No Class

Nov. 13: Catholic Tradition and Human Rights

- √ *"Contrasting and Uniting Theology and Human Rights,"* John Langan, S.J.
- √ *"Defining Human Rights: A Revision of the Liberal Tradition,"* John Langan, S.J.
- √ *"Toward a Christian Theory of Human Rights,"* Lisa Sowle Cahill
- √ *"Catholic Human Rights Theory: Four Challenges to an Intellectual Tradition,"* John A. Coleman, S.J.

IV. Catholic Bishops, Economic Rights, and Liberation Theology

Nov. 18-20: US Bishops on the Economy; economic rights

- √ *Economic Justice for All* (1986)
- √ *"Economic Justice and the World of Work,"* David Hollenbach
- √ *"Free Persons and the Common Good,"* Michael Novak
- √ *Catholic Social Teaching,* Curran, pp. 173-213.

Nov. 25: **AAR Conference: No Class**

Nov. 27: **Thanksgiving Holiday: No Class**

Dec. 2-4: Liberation Theology; social sin, preferential option for the poor and Community

- √ *"Human Rights and Latin American Theology,"* Alfred Hennelly, S.J.
- √ Excerpts from Gustavo Gutierrez
- √ *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation",* Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith (1984)
- √ *"The Reconstruction of Natural Law Reasoning: Liberation Theology as a Case Study,"* Thomas L. Schubeck, S.J. **

Paper #3 Due: Dec. 8: Select either human rights or liberation theology and reflect on some aspect of one of these as it relates to contemporary Catholic social thought.

READINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE – I MAY ADD AND DELETE SOME READINGS AS THE SEMESTER PROGRESSES.