

THEO 223-21: SACRAMENTS TODAY

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FALL SEMESTER 2003
MWF 9:30-10:20 a.m. (ALT 321)

Office Hours: Mon 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m./by appointment

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course presents students with a comprehensive understanding of the nature, history and development of sacraments. It examines sacraments within the context of the sacramental/incarnational view of the relationship between humanity and God which is characteristic of the Catholic vision. The theological, historical, and pastoral dimensions of the sacraments will be included to contextualize contemporary issues in sacramental practice. Our investigation will center around three key areas, viz.:

λ **Anthropology:** As human beings, why do we express ourselves and our relationship to God through ritual activity?

λ **Theology:** What are the theological foundations for the sacraments?

λ **History:** What is the historical development of each of the seven sacraments? What has remained constant in spite of the historical changes?

Although the primary format of this course will be lecture, students are encouraged to ask questions and engage freely in discussion.

II. REQUIRED TEXTS

The following required textbooks are available for purchase at the university bookstore:

Leonardo Boff, *Sacraments of Life, Life of the Sacraments* (1987)

Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred* (Revised and Updated Edition, 2001).

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Completion of all reading assignments before class, attendance and participation at all class sessions. A 1% point will be deducted for each class you miss without excuse. Excuses will be accepted only for grave emergency situations (e.g., major illness with proper written documentation, death in family) or university-approved activities off-campus (e.g., varsity sports) and *only* at the instructor's discretion. Every two late arrivals will count as an unexcused absence and a 1% point will be deducted accordingly.
2. Four examinations, covering materials in the textbooks, lectures and discussions.

3. All examinations must be taken on the assigned days. As a rule, substitute examinations will not be given. Exceptions *may* be made for grave emergency reasons (e.g., major illness with proper written documentation, death in family) or university-approved activities off-campus (e.g., varsity sports), but only at the professor's sole discretion.

IV. THEOLOGY DEPARTMENT'S GRADING GUIDELINES

(approved by department: March 20, 2002)

The full version of the Theology Department's Grading Policy is available on-line at:
[http:// www.xu.edu/theology/grading_policy.html](http://www.xu.edu/theology/grading_policy.html)

Grades indicate *a professor's assessment of a student's academic performance* and not a student's effort. Grades are *not an entitlement* – you have to *earn* your grade for this course.

In accordance with University policy and the Theology Department grading guidelines, letter grades in undergraduate theology courses mean the following:

- A (92-100)** = Exceptional academic performance (that is, uncommonly high academic achievement, which demonstrates mastery of the subject matter, uncommon skills in critical analysis and effective communication, and imagination).
- B (84-91)** = Good academic performance (that is, high quality academic achievement; demonstrated competency in the discipline above the average or standard).
- C (76-83)** = Satisfactory academic performance (that is, academic achievement that meets an average or standard level of competency in the discipline).
- D (68-75)** = Minimal academic performance, sufficient to pass.
- F (67 and below)** = Failure.

The Grading of Objective and Essay Tests

Grades reflect the accuracy, coherence, clarity, and completeness of answers and essays. In grading your answers, the following elements will be evaluated:

1. comprehension of the materials under consideration,
2. ability to articulate one's understanding with clarity,
3. correct usage of standard English grammar, spelling and punctuation,
4. organization of material,
5. ability to establish relationships and synthesize ideas, and
6. ability to reflect on the material with an eye to raising serious, critical questions.

V. COMPUTATION OF MIDTERM & FINAL GRADES

Midterm: Exam #1 (25%) – unexcused absences

Final: Midterm + Exam #2 (25%) + Exam #3 (25%) + Exam #4 (25%) – unexcused absences

VI. ACADEMIC HONESTY

The professor expects all work that appears under the student's name to be that student's own, and will follow up on evidence that a student has copied from another's work or used notes in examinations. **If an incident of cheating is established, the professor will give a grade of zero (0%) for the entire course.**

VII. COURSE OUTLINE, SCHEDULE & READINGS

25 Aug: NO CLASS – First Day of Semester

27 Aug: Introduction

29 Aug: S.A.C.R.A.M.E.N.T.S.

1 Sep: NO CLASS – Labor Day

3 Sep: Film: *Babette's Feast*, Pt. I

5 Sep: Film: *Babette's Feast*, Pt. II

8 Sep: Class Discussion on *Babette's Feast*

10 & 12 Sep: Sacrament, Sacramental, Sacramentality
READINGS: Boff, *Sacraments of Life*; Martos, ch. 1

15, 17 & 19 Sep: Sacraments in Early Christianity
READINGS: Martos, ch. 2

22, 24 & 26 Sep: Sacraments in Medieval Christianity
READINGS: Martos, ch. 3

29 Sep: Examination #1

1, 6 & 8 Oct: Catholic and Protestant Understandings of Sacraments
READINGS: Martos, ch. 4

NB: 3 Oct: NO CLASS – Fall Holiday

10 & 13 Oct: Contemporary Understandings of Sacraments
READINGS: Martos, ch. 5

15, 17 & 20 Oct: Baptism
READINGS: Martos, ch. 6

22 & 24 Oct: Confirmation
READINGS: Martos, ch. 7

27 Oct: Examination #2

29 & 31 Oct, 3, 5 & 7 Nov: Eucharist
READINGS: Martos, ch. 8

10, 12 & 14 Nov: Reconciliation
READINGS: Martos, ch. 9

17 Nov: Examination #3

19-24 Nov: NO CLASS – Professor attending Conference

26-28 Nov: NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Holiday

1 & 3 Dec: Anointing
READINGS: Martos, ch. 10

5 & 8 Dec: Marriage
READINGS: Martos, ch. 11

10 & 12 Dec: Holy Orders
READINGS: Martos, ch. 12

Wed, 17 Dec: Examination #4 (8:30-10:20 a.m.)