STP 400/MPS 100 – Introduction to Pastoral Theology

Course Outline

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Course Description
This course will explore the biblical and historical roots of pastoral theology, explore the theological foundations and current understanding of pastoral theology, facilitate an initial exploration of a theology of ministry, and provide an introduction to theological reflection and other formational practices for ministry.

Course Objectives
a) To develop a personal theology of ministry which will guide practice.
b) To reflect on the moral responsibilities of pastoral ministers.
c) To examine the nature of pastoral theology as a discipline; its history, methods, and relevance for the Church and for society.
d) To examine a model of theological reflection; and explore how practical theologians integrate the social science methods into their research in service of the Church.
e) To reflect on the role of cultural diversity in ministry through the framework of theological reflection.
f) To demonstrate the ability to integrate theory and practice which will be applied in future congregational leadership and ministry.

Course Assignments and Evaluation
1. Develop the contours of a personal theology of ministry based on the following resources and honest personal reflection. Include:
   a. A reflection on your call to ministry.
   b. Identification of at least three virtues you possess. Explain how you intend to use them in pastoral ministry.
   c. Identification of areas for personal and professional growth as a pastoral minister, including a reflection on the need for boundaries.
      (4 pages maximum and use of at least two sources for undergraduate students, 6 pages maximum and use of at least three sources for graduate students). Sources may include CCB Statement, Responsibility in Ministry, 1996 (particularly Appendix A and D), Just Ministry Chapter 1-4, Co-Workers in the Vineyard, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Pastores Dabo Vobis and Principled Ministry: A Guidebook for Catholic Church Leaders (20% of final grade).
      Richard Gula, Just Ministry: Professional Ethics for Pastoral Ministers Chapter 1-4
      CCCB Statement, Responsibility in Ministry, 1996,
USCCB, Co-Workers in the Vineyard,
Loughlan Sofield and Carroll Juliano, Principled Ministry: A Guidebook for Catholic Church Leaders

2. Presentation on Theological Reflection Methods: 20% of final grade. See Rubric for grading. Note: Graduate students are responsible for knowing all seven methods, undergraduates are responsible for understanding four methods.

3. Theological reflection is a process, which uses religious experience and ministry as a “text” for study and discernment using various methods and perspectives. This process helps us to understand and shape theological education and faith development in families, parishes, hospitals, and other social institutions. After reading The Art of Theological Reflection, write up a case study (3-4 pages for undergraduate students, 5-6 pages for graduate students, given the template provided. (30% of final grade) Patricia O’Connell Killen and John de Beer, The Art of Theological Reflection (New York: Crossroads, 1995).

4. Take Home Exam 4-5 pages for Undergraduate students, 6-8 pages for graduate students (30% of final grade).

Required Reading
5. CCCB Statement, Responsibility in Ministry, 1996.

Recommended Reading
2. Don Browning. A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1991)
5. Vatican Council II, Dignitatis humanae (Declaration on Religious Freedom)
6. Vatican Council II, Gaudium et spes Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World
7. Vatican Council II, Lumen gentium Dogmatic Constitution on the Church
10. USCCB, Co-Workers in the Vineyard, 2005
11. US National Association for Lay Ministry, Standards: Code of Ethics

Additional material:

Course Requirements
This course in pastoral theology takes as its basic task, the promotion of faithful discipleship in order to facilitate the formation of those called to serve as ministers in the church. This class provides an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of ministry through reflection upon discipleship rooted in the Christian tradition. Since pastoral theology focuses on responding to concrete situations, this course emphasizes intentional reflection on events and concrete settings that must be encountered faithfully in order to understand the existing situation and to propose eventual direction for action. Ministers serve as key communicators and interpreters of the lived reality of the faith within their local settings. They draw insights from biblical, historical, ethical, spiritual, and theological resources to help people make sense of their lives. Therefore in addition to becoming familiar with the literature related to pastoral theology, developing the ability to reflect theologically is an important component of this course. Such reflection should become a lifelong practice of ministers as they interpret their pastoral experience in light of Scripture, Church teaching, personal faith, and pastoral practices.

These goals will be evaluated through class participation, the development of a personal theology of ministry, a class presentation, and a final paper/project.

General Academic Information
Extensions: Assignments must be handed in on time as designated in the syllabus. In situations of grave concern, please see the professor. More information on the late submission policy can be found in the Student Handbook.
Plagiarism: Acts of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism are subject to penalty including a grade of “F.” Further details are available in the Student Handbook.
Academic grievances: Information related to academic grievances can be found in the Student Handbook.
Grade calculation: NTC reports letter grades based on a 4.0 system. For more information on the grading system see the NTC Academic Calendar.
Writing Style: Chicago, Turabian, MLA, or APA
Special Learning Needs: If you have special learning needs, please see the professor to discuss how these needs can best be met.
Course Schedule

1. Introduction to Pastoral Theology

   September 13

Introduction to Course/Review of Syllabus
- Student Background and Interests
- Writing Guidelines for Practical Theology Papers
- The Nature of Pastoral Theology:
  - Historically, and in the contemporary situation.

Reading:
- Gula, Just Ministry, Ministry as Vocation, Ministry as Profession 1-80,
- CCCB Statement “Responsibility in Ministry.”
- Watch an introduction to boundaries. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWVA7J2sm6s

- Introduction of Assignment #1: The development of the contours of a personal theology of ministry (3-4 pages double spaced for Bachelor’s students and 5-6 pages for Masters students) to be submitted by email or hard copy no later than Monday September 19th. (20% of final grade)

2. Method and Perspectives in Pastoral Theology

   September 20

Examine human experience as a source for theology: Karl Rahner and the theology of grace
- Explore pastoral theology as a discipline, skill or “art form” that provides a means for reflection upon pastoral ministry.
- Pastoral Minister and Instrument
- Parallel Process
- Introduce methods in pastoral theology

Introduce “Theological Reflection” as a tool for ministerial formation. Theological reflection is a process, which uses religious experience and ministry as a text for study and discernment using various methods and perspectives. This process helps us to understand and shape theology and faith in families, parishes, hospitals, and other social institutions.

Reading:
- Graham, Walton and Ward, Theological Reflection: Methods, 1-17


Introduction of Assignment #2: Presentations on Methods: October 4 & October 11 in groups of two: Presentation on the chapter(s) and the facilitation of a short class discussion for a total of 30 minutes (20% of mark). This should include an explanation of the method/chapter, identifying and the benefits and limitations of the method and one or two questions to engage the class in discussion.
3) Practicing Pastoral Theology
The Art of Theological Reflection: Attitudes and Disposition
Writing Theological Reflections
Models of the Church
Professional Ethics for Pastoral Ministers: Boundaries
Organize for Ministry Visit

Reading:

Additional:
Kinast, *Making Faith-sense*

4) Theological Reflection: Methods
The Contours of Theological Reflection

Particular Methods of Theological Reflection
- Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Theological Reflection: Methods*
  - Theology by Heart Presenters: ____________
  - Speaking in Parables Presenters: ____________
  - Telling God’s Story Presenters: ____________
  - Writing the Body of Christ Presenters: ____________

Reading

5) Methods of Theological Reflection
- Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Theological Reflection: Methods*
  - Speaking of God in Public Presenters: ____________
  - Theology in Action Presenters: ____________
  - Theology in the Vernacular Presenters: ____________

Reading:
- Note: Graduate students are responsible for knowing all seven methods, undergraduates are responsible for understanding four methods.

6) One Spirit, Many Gifts: Opportunities for Ministry
Guests from various ministries based in interests of the class and availability of guests.
Mental Health, Addictions

Examples of Theological Reflection (Theological Reflection Due Oct. 25)

Preparation for Ministry Placements
Exploration of facets of ministry and learning goals. Choose an area of ministry you are interested in or in which you hope to be engaged. Make a site visit, begin to reflect on your learning goals related to future ministry.


Reading:

7) Moral and Spiritual Development/
Reading: October 25

8) Ministry Visits
Reading Week Nov. 1

9) Engaging Diversity, Indigenous Culture and Spirituality
Ministry Visit Discussion Nov. 15
Culture and Spirituality

Reading: Gula, *Just Ministry*, The Dynamics of Power 117-155
Sexuality, Confidentiality 156-188.

10) Collaborative Ministry
November 22
Leadership, Identifying and working through pastoral problems in ministry

11) Establishing and Maintaining Pastoral Relationships/Boundaries
Reading: Remen, “Helping, Fixing, or Serving” [source](https://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/honors/docs/communityengagement/HelpingFixingServing.pdf) November 29

12) Conclusions
December 6
Take Home Exam/Papers due December 15