

Joanne M. Pierce, Ph.D.**Associate Professor****Department of Religious Studies**

COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS

Department of Religious Studies

RELS 395: Saints and Sinners: Christian Exemplars as Cultural History

Spring 2006

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Joanne M. Pierce, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: W 3:30 – 4:30 pm ; R 5:30 — 6:30 pm ; F 11:00 -- 11:50 am ; and by appointment

Course Description:

This course will offer an examination of the historical and theological development of the ideals and practices of Christian life, from the High Middle Ages to the Early Modern era. The focus is on “saints” and “sinners” as windows into the attitudes and values, the fears and hopes, the virtues and vices, the piety and the heresy, of western European culture in the time of Francis and Clare of Assisi, Dante, Julian of Norwich, Luther, and Loyola. Special attention will be paid to the following themes: gendered perceptions of sanctity and sin; community and solitude; poverty and riches; feasting and fasting as religious and cultural activity.

Course Requirements:

Discussion sheets: Students will be asked to hand in short discussion sheets (2 pages) for most class meetings in preparation for class discussion. These discussion sheets present what the student sees to be one or two key issues covered in the readings assigned for that class, with special attention paid to primary sources (when assigned). They should also include some of your own reflections on why these ideas seem to be important, and should conclude with a general question for further discussion in class. These discussion sheets will serve as starting points for class discussion on the seminar topic for that day. There are eleven (11) discussion sheets assigned: students may do ten (10) out of the eleven, or do all eleven (and the lowest grade will be dropped).

[The Labyrinth: Resources for Medieval Studies](#)[The Orb: Library \(Medieval Sources\)](#)[Order of Saint Benedict: Liturgy \(Sources\)](#)[Religion and Science Fiction \(Adherents.com\)](#)[Animals and Religion \(Bibliography\)](#)

Experiential Essay: Students will be asked to write an experiential/reflection essay (4- 5 pages) on their choice of “experiences” of expressions of “sainthood.” One option will be a comparison of two different film interpretations of a saint’s life; another will be an experience of contemporary monasticism; and another will be a comparison of the Tridentine rite Mass with a post-Vatican II Mass. Other options may be offered; students may propose their own ideas to the instructor.

Paper: Students will also be asked to prepare a term paper on a person or primary source document not already discussed during the course (12-15 pages). The paper will examine how that person or document expresses a cultural model of “sainthood” or “sinner” according to the categories discussed in class (e.g. time period, class, gender). Students must consult with Prof. Pierce on their choice of topic. Brief but formal student presentations of term paper topics will take place during the last classes. Further details will be given in class.

Grade Evaluation:

50% = Discussion sheets [best 10 of 11]

10% = Experiential/Reflection Essay

40% = Final paper

100% = Final Grade

Policies:

Class attendance is expected. More than one unexcused absence may cause serious problems in understanding course material and in class participation. If at all possible, please call one of us at the office and leave a message if you expect to miss a class (due to illness or other serious reason). In some cases a note from the class dean may be necessary. Essays and papers are due on the day assigned; unexcused late work will receive grading penalties. All assignments are to be typed.

Required Texts:

Bookstore:

Armstrong, R., et. al., eds. *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works*.

Bynum, C. Walker. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*.

Fry, T., ed. *The Rule of St. Benedict in English*.

Ignatius of Loyola. *Personal Writings*.

Raitt, J., et. al., eds. *Christian Spirituality II: High Middle Ages and Reformation*.

Other Readings:

Library: Dinand Reference (DR) and/or Rehm (R)

New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality (BX 2350.65 .N49 1993; DR and R)

New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship (BV 173 .N485 1990; DR and R)

ERes:

Brownlee, “Martyrdom and the Female Voice: Saint Christine in the *Cité des dames*,” *Images of Sainthood*, pp.115-135.

P. Burke, "How to be a Counter-Reformation Saint," in Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy*, pp. 48-62.

Cazelles, "Introduction," in *Images of Sainthood*, pp. 1-17.

Dante, *Inferno* (ed. J. Ciardi), (selections).

Haskins, *Mary Magdalen*, pp.134-191.

Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love* (selections TBA).

Kieckhefer, "Holiness and the Culture of Devotion: Remarks on Some Late Medieval Male Saints," *Images of Sainthood*, pp. 288-305.

McGrath, *Christian Theology*, ch. 18 (on ERes for Pierce, Sacramental Theology)

McNamara, "The Need to Give: Suffering and Female Sanctity in the Middle Ages," *Images of Sainthood* , pp. 199-221.

Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries*, Chs. 8, 10, 14, 16.

Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 49-82, 98-129, 147-155, 316-346.

Tavard, *The Thousand Faces of the Virgin Mary*, Chs. 4-6.

Zwingli, "On the Education of Youth," in Bromiley,ed., *Zwingli and Bullinger*, pp. 96-118 .

Other readings and additional materials will be assigned and will be made available through hand-outs, in library reference, or on ERes.

Course Outline:

Class meeting :

1) 1/19 Topics: Introduction to course, and Origins of the cult of the saints

(Read M. S. Driscoll, "Saints, Cult of," in *New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship (NDSW)*, pp. 1137-1143, and B. Cazelles, "Introduction," in *Images of Sainthood*, pp. 1-17.)

For next class: Discussion sheet #1 on these readings:

Rule of Saint Benedict in English (note: what is Benedict's image of sanctity? sin?); *The Desert Fathers*, "Introduction" and selected pages (on ERes); M. Basil Pennington, "Monasticism, Monastic Spirituality," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality (NDCS)*, pp. 665-670 (skim)

2) 1/26 Topic: Early Middle Ages (to 1200): monastic and lay models of sanctity

For next week: Discussion sheet #2 on readings:

Francis of Assisi, the two *Rules* and *Testament*

Clare of Assisi, *Rule* and *Testament* (all in *Francis and Clare*);

Christian Spirituality II , Ch. 2, section II ("The Mendicants: The Franciscans");

J. McNamara, "The Need to Give: Suffering and Female Sanctity in the Middle Ages," *Images of Sainthood*, pp. 199-221.

3) 2/2 Topic: Francis and Clare

For next week: Discussion sheet #3 on readings:

Haskins, *Mary Magdalen*, pp.134-191.

Dante, *Inferno* (ed. J. Ciardi), pp.65-70 (gluttons), pp. 166-173 (simoniacs), pp. 282-288

(traitors). Wakefield and Evans, eds. *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, pp. 236- 241

(Albigensians and Waldensians, c. 1213); 249-256 (heresy and witchcraft, late 12th century); 375-404, [411- 438], 439-445 (Gui on Heresies).

Optional: McGrath, *Christian Theology*, ch. 18 (on ERes for Pierce, Sacramental Theology)

4) 2/9 Topic: Sinners and Heretics

For next week: Discussion sheet #4 on readings:

Tavard, G. *The Thousand Faces of the Virgin Mary*, Chs. 4-6.

Pelikan, J. *Mary Through the Centuries*, Chs. 8, 10, 14, 16.

E. Johnson, "Marian Devotion in the Western Church " *Christian Spirituality II*, Ch. 17, pp. 392-414.

Hines, M., "Mary," NDCS, pp. 635-645.

5) 2/16 Topic: The Virgin Mary

For next week: Discussion sheet #5 on readings:

Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, pp. 1-186.

Nuth, "Fasting," in NDCS, pp. 390-392.

6) 2/23 Topic: Sanctity, Food, and Gender

For next week: Discussion sheet #6 on readings:

Bynum, *Feast and Fast*, pp. 189-302.

Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 49-82, 98-129, 147-155, 316-346.

7) 3/2 Topic: Sanctity and the Eucharist

For next week: Discussion sheet #7 on readings:

Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*, selections (note: what is Julian's view of sanctity? sin?); other primary selections TBA

R. Kieckhefer, "Major Currents in Late Medieval Devotion," *Christian Spirituality II*, Ch. 3, pp. 75-108; B. McGinn, "The English Mystics," *Christian Spirituality II*, Ch. 8.

8) 3/9 [Spring Break - - No Class]

9) 3/16 Topic: Late Medieval Mysticism

For next week: Discussion sheet #8 on readings:

Readings from writers of the *Devotio Moderna*, TBA

K. Brownlee, "Martyrdom and the Female Voice: Saint Christine in the *Cité des dames*," *Images of Sainthood*, pp.115-135.

R. Kieckhefer, "Holiness and the Culture of Devotion: Remarks on Some Late Medieval Male Saints," *Images of Sainthood*, pp. 288-305.

J. Tracy, "Ad fontes: The Humanist Understanding of Scripture as Nourishment for the Soul," *Christian Spirituality II*, pp. 252-267

O. Gründler, "Devotio Moderna" in *Christian Spirituality II*, pp.176- 193.

10) 3/23 Topic: Late Medieval Sanctity: Erasmus, Humanism and *Devotio Moderna*

For next week: Discussion sheet #9 on readings:

Zwingli, "On the Education of Youth," in Bromiley, ed., *Zwingli and Bullinger*, pp. 96-118 .

Luther reading TBA.

M. Lienhard, "Luther and the Beginnings of the Reformation," *Christian Spirituality II*, pp.

268-299. T. George, "The Spirituality of the Radical Reformation" in *Christian Spirituality II*, pp. 334-371.

11) 3/30 TBA

12) 4/6 Topic: Protestant Reformers: Luther and Zwingli; Radical Reformers

For next week: Discussion sheet #10 on readings:

Ignatius of Loyola, *Reminiscences* and *The Spiritual Exercises*, and selected letters, TBA, in *Personal Writings*.

J. Raitt, "Saints and Sinners: Roman Catholic and Protestant Spirituality in the Sixteenth Century," *Christian Spirituality II*, pp. 454-463.

13) 4/13 [No Class - - Easter Break]

14) 4/20 Topic: Ignatius of Loyola, and Student Presentations on final paper topics (6)

For next week: Discussion sheet #11 on readings:

P. Burke, "How to be a Counter-Reformation Saint," in P. Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy*, pp. 48-62.

Other reading TBA.

15) 4/27 Topic: Summary, and Student presentations on final paper topics (9)

[16) 5/4 Study Week begins]

Saturday, 5/06: Final Exams Begin

Saturday, 5/13: Final Exams End

Final Papers Due Thursday, May 11, by 5:00 P.M.

Note: The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

