

ST. PETER'S SEMINARY/KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
at *The University of Western Ontario*
Fall, 2011

Sacramental Theology T-5541A - Theology of Sacramental Reconciliation and Healing

Monday/9:30 - 11:20 a.m., Deacon Classroom

Professor: Fr. Michael R. Prieur, S.T.D.

Tel.: 519-432-1824, x. 223

E-mail: mprieur@uwo.ca

Office hours by appointment or after class on Monday

A. Course Description

A historical and theological exploration of the development of the sacraments of reconciliation and anointing of the sick. Emphasis is given to biblical and patristic sources, responding compassionately to contemporary pastoral concerns, and making sacramental reconciliation relevant in pastoral and catechetical situations.

B. Goals

This course will allow the student to grow in the following knowledge, skills and attitudes:

Knowledge:

1. To understand how the sacraments of reconciliation and anointing of the sick are part of God's plan, the "economy of salvation";
2. To understand how Christ is the primary sacrament, how the Church is the sacrament of Christ, and how these two sacraments illustrate this;
3. To understand how these sacraments are actions of the Trinity;
4. To know the biblical background of each of these sacraments and how this is to be understood in the light of modern exegesis;
5. To know the historical and magisterial development of each of these sacraments, and to be able to distinguish what is essential and constant and what is transient in their development;
6. To know how these sacraments are liturgical celebrations, and to be familiar with the various liturgical texts used in their historical development;
7. To know the key theological articulations of each of these sacraments, i.e., their matter and form, what is *ex opere operato* and *ex opere operantis* in terms of their sacramental efficacy, what is required for validity, liceity, and fruitfulness, and what is required of the ministers and the recipients;
8. To see how these sacraments are encounters with Christ and not just "things";
9. To see what are the current theological developments pertinent to these sacraments;
10. To understand the theological and disciplinary problem areas regarding sacramental reconciliation, and some of the legitimate new orientations as well as "pastoral pitfalls" in these areas;
11. To understand the specific dimensions of each of these sacraments as they affect our Christian lives regarding growing in our spirituality, prayer, life of ongoing conversion, and experiencing sickness and death in a Christian perspective, i.e., identifying with the Paschal Mystery of Christ.

Skills:

1. To develop the ability to discover and explain the various historical documents and magisterial teachings relevant to the sacrament of Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick;
2. To understand the theology underlying each of these sacraments and to be able to apply it in various environments with pastoral sensitivity and to be able to communicate it to the various kinds of parishioners (children, adolescents, married and single people, seniors) so that they can be moved to experience and celebrate these sacraments with new zeal and love;
3. To be able to connect the theology of these sacraments with the various appropriate liturgical

- themes as well as canonical ones, seeing them as an integrated but distinct whole;
4. To appreciate the cultural and social analyses surrounding each of these sacraments so that various connections can be made to create links among them so that the relevancy of all aspects is seen as complementary and not disjunctive, e.g. the relevancy of various self-help groups (A.A.);
 5. To connect the theology of sacramental reconciliation with wider issues in peoples' lives demanding reconciliation and to develop skills which allow for various kinds of celebrations of reconciliation and healing in pastoral settings;

Attitudes

1. To engender Christ's attitude of humility and zeal in being an "ambassador of reconciliation" in a world filled with dissension and division; to be aware that the whole Church is a reconciling church;
2. To instill an attitude of wonder and awe at the grand power of God's healing Spirit at work in our world of today;
3. To foster a pastoral spirit respecting both the person in his or her life-situations and the demands of the teachings of our faith, i.e., mercy-in-truth, especially regarding various ambiguous situations requiring compassion and understanding;
4. To develop a respectful attitude for various sacramental traditions regarding reconciliation and anointing in multi-cultural environments as well as appreciating how the faith and the sacraments are incultured;
5. To appreciate how God's grace is at work outside the sacraments, and how reconciliation is going on in many levels beyond the sacraments themselves;
6. To be growing in a caring and sensitive attitude in dealing with the sick and the suffering as well as celebrating the sacrament of the anointing of the sick with great sensitivity in such delicate situations;
7. To appreciate how silent presence can also be healing and restorative;
8. To develop an attitude of "eschewing extremes" in dealing with reconciliation and the dealing with the sick.

C. ASSESSMENT

1. Expectations of this course

The practice of sacramental reconciliation has undergone some dramatic changes since Vatican II, both in theory and in practice. For many reasons our pastoral ministry is faced with a wonderful challenge since many people are searching for a meaningful way of handling their deepest sentiments of human weakness, guilt, sin and reconciliation with one another and with God. It is hoped that we can discover some of the ways that these fundamental themes can be explored from BOTH an experiential and theological/historical approach so that we can be better ministers of reconciliation in our church and world in the 2000s.

2. Benefiting from our pastoral experience

Each fourth and fifth year student has been in pastoral ministry for at least a year. Most, if not all, have been exposed to some kind of programs dealing with sacramental reconciliation. All have spoken to people about this sacrament. Other students in the course also have had some rich experiences with this sacrament. We hope to build on this rich mix of experience in this course.

The academic requirements are designed to corroborate fresh readings with your pastoral experiences. It is an opportunity to read materials which can give you BOTH solid theological insights regarding the history and practice of Reconciliation as well as new pastoral ways of applying these insights. The purpose of the readings is not simply to pass the course, but to discover some great ideas as to how we can make reconciliation RELEVANT to a world that desperately needs it, but does not quite know how to experience it in their lives today.

This year, we also want to do some collaborative learning with those who are involved with pastoral experience in presenting our Roman Catholic teachings regarding sacramental reconciliation. Some of these most experienced individuals are teachers in our Catholic school system and those involved in various RCIA programs.

Specific Assignments for everyone:

a. One class seminar: The seminar list follows these instructions. We will discuss the expectations of these seminars along with good sources. Each presenter is expected to prepare a brief handout of one or two pages for each member of the class so that they can use this summary in their future pastoral ministry. The focus of these seminars is to be as **pastoral** as possible both in preparation as well as in content and in the prepared summary. **(An essay could replace this, due to the numbers in the class.)**

b. Interview with a priest sometime this term:

You will all be speaking with a parish priest sometime this term, I hope! This academic year I would like you to bring up the subject of the sacrament of reconciliation with one of these pastors, associate pastors or pastoral ministers. I would like you to "take the pulse" regarding sacramental reconciliation as it is being handled today in our parishes. Specific questions will be handed out in class for this interview. (Note: There will be another occasion to speak to a parish priest regarding the Art of the Confessor. This will be done next term.)

c. An oral test at the end of the course.

This is a brief 20 minute oral test with the teacher as to the key insights and helps you discovered this term regarding reconciliation and sacramental reconciliation that have helped you both personally and in your understanding of pastoral ministry. This will be done at the end of the term. This is a kind of personal evaluation for yourself and for the instructor as to what was most useful in our learning this term. It will also give us part of the objective mark for the course.

There are three areas of discussion for this test:

- i. an overview of the material covered in the course, including all handouts;
- ii. a discussion of the interview with the priest-confessor;
- iii. a discussion of the assigned materials in the Resource Text.

d. Marks for the work done:

1. Seminar.....	50
2. Interview with parish priest.....	10
3. Oral Conversation at end of term.....	40
TOTAL.....	100

D. TEXTBOOKS

- Coffey, David M., *The Sacrament of Reconciliation*, Collegeville, Minn., Liturgical Press, 2001.
- Kasza, John C., *Understanding Sacramental Healing*, Chicago/Mundelein, Illinois, HillenbrandBooks, 2007.

E. STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

- I A world in search of the meaning of reconciliation: fresh dimensions for the 21st century
- II Revisiting Sin and Forgiveness in a culture of death and denial: hinges of hope for today
- III Conversion, Forgiveness and Reconciliation : *The Good News of Sacred Scripture*
- IV History of Sacramental Reconciliation: Phase I : Solemn Penance (100 - 500 a.d.): applications for our times
- V History of Sacramental Reconciliation: Phase II: Individual Penance (500 - 1100 a.d.): then & now
- VI History of Sacramental Reconciliation: Phase III: Theology & Practice (1100 - 1900 a.d.)
- VII History of Sacramental Reconciliation: Phase IV:20th Century Renewal (1900 - 2000+)
- VIII Sacramental Reconciliation: Phase V: New Concerns since the *Ordo Paenitentiae* (1973)
- IX Catechesis for Conversion: Pastoral Strategies
- X Reconciliation in the 21st century: the big and little picture
- XI The Sacrament of the Sick: Part I: Overview of concerns and development:
 - A. Sickness and Suffering in our pastoral ministry
 - B. History of the Sacrament of the Sick
- XII The Sacrament of the Sick: Part II: Theology of the Sacrament in a growing mode
- XIII The Sacrament of the Sick: Part III: Pastoral Practice

F. POLICIES REGARDING SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

Students are responsible for knowing the University’s academic policies and regulations and any particularities of their own course of study. These can all be found at the University’s website (<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>). Ignorance of these policies is not an excuse for any violation thereof. The following policies are particularly important to note:

- I Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates as given above. Assignments may not be dropped off at the office or submitted electronically.
- II It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments are completed on time. For a serious reason, a student may approach the professor before the due-date, and may be granted an extension at the discretion of the professor. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean’s Office. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission. Medical accommodations for work less than 10% will be dealt with on a case by case basis with the professor. No medical documentation will be required for this.
- III No electronic devices will be allowed during tests or examinations, unless approved in advance by Student Services at the University or King’s.
- IV Students who miss tests will negotiate a “make-up” date with the professor. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean’s Office.

- V **Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt by quotation marks and/or footnotes. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically of what constitutes a Scholastic offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Students may be required to submit their work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

- VI **Selection and Registration of Courses:** Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all prerequisite course(s) have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any anti-requisite course(s) that they have taken.

G. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliography No. 1: Basic Resources

A. Some Official Church Documents

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Ottawa, CCCB, 1997, #1440-98;
Code of Canon Law, Rome, 1983, canons 959-97;
John Paul II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation "Reconciliatio et Paenitentia"*, Rome, 1984.
Rituale Romanum, Ordo Paenitentiae, Roma, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanus, 1974; (*The Rite of Penance*, N.Y., Catholic Book Publishing, 1975.)
John Paul II, Apostolic Letter in the form of *Motu Proprio, Misericordia Dei*, Apr. 7, 2002

B. More Recent Comprehensive Texts:

Cuschieri, Andrew, *The Sacrament of Reconciliation: A Theological and Canonical Treatise*, Lanham, Md., Univ. Press of America, 1992; (a veritable goldmine of solid resources for the "expert" in this field;)
Coffey, David M., *The Sacrament of Reconciliation*, Collegeville, Minn., Liturgical Press, 2001; (solid theological assessment of sacramental reconciliation; many new insights)
Dallen, James, *The Reconciling Community--The Rite of Penance*, NY, Pueblo Publishing Co., 1986; (perhaps the best U.S. authority on reconciliation; very thorough;)
Tierney, Clement, *The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation*, NY, Costello publishing, 1983; (best theological treatment of conversion, the Paschal Mystery, etc.)

C. Some Recent Periodical Updates useful for class preparation:

Chicago Studies, Vol. 34, no. 2 (August, 1995); (an excellent assessment of where we are at today regarding confession, etc. Cardinal Bernardin's comments re. general absolution are very insightful; good stuff re. the "root sin" experiment)
Études Canadiennes en Liturgie, Raymond Vaillancourt, "La Pénitence dans l'existence contemporaine", Année, 1993, numéro 5, pp.7-98; (superb summary of the history of penance, stressing the theology of conversion, and with an excellent bibliography of french resources at the end;)
National Bulletin on the Liturgy, Vol. 26, no. 135 (1993). "Reconciliation for a Broken World"; (general sociological overview, but somewhat shallow;)
National Bulletin on the Liturgy, "The Reconciling Church", Ottawa, Vol. 29, no.145 (Summer, 1996), 67-113; (all seven articles are by James Dallen giving his latest insights drawn from his recent presentations in Western Canada; good insights;)
National Bulletin on the Liturgy, "The Rite of Penance: Trying It Again For the First Time", Vol. 34, no. 164 (Spring, 2001), 5-53; "The Rite of Penance: A Sharing of Pastoral Wisdom", Vol. 34, no. 165, 68-107; (good Canadian update)

D. Good References for Overview of Forgiveness and Sacramental Reconciliation:

Dallen, James, and Favazza, Joseph, *Removing the Barriers: The Practice of Reconciliation*, Chicago, Liturgy Training Publications, 1991; (a light, easy-to-read and up-to-date presentation on key areas for today)

Favazza, Joseph, *The Order of Penitents: Historical Roots and Pastoral Future*, Collegeville, Minn., Liturgical Press, 1988; (excellent history of P. while looking at the specific possibility of the Order of Penitents for today;)

Fink, Peter, S.J., ed., *Alternative Futures for Christian Worship*, Collegeville, Minn., Liturgical Press, 1987; (a lot of creative ideas here; needs a critique at times;)

Gula, Richard, *To Walk Together Again: The Sacrament of Reconciliation*, NY, Paulist, 1984; (helpful re-use of "story" for Sacrament of Penance)

Haffner, Paul, "Penance", *The Sacramental Mystery*, Herefordshire, England, Gracewing, 1999; (Excellent, pithy summary of the historical development of S. reconciliation)

Hebblethwaite, Margaret & Donovan, Kevin, *The Theology of Penance*, Butler, Wis., Clergy Book Services, 1979; (a neat, succinct though somewhat dated summary of the history of the S. of Reconciliation;)

Hellwig, Monica, *Sign of Reconciliation and Conversion--The Sacrament of Penance for Our Times*, Wilmington, Del., Michael Glazier, 1982; (good overview with some valid insights even for today;)

Luitjen, E., *Sacramental Forgiveness as a Gift of God: Thomas Aquinas on the Sacrament of Penance*, Peeters, 2003.

Maloney, George, *Your Sins Are Forgiven You: Rediscovering the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, NY. Alba House, 1994; (popular, easy to read;)

Martos, Joseph, *Doors to the Sacred*, NY, Image, 1982, pp. 307-64; (good summary of the development of the S. of Penance;)

Rahner, Karl, S.J., "The Status of the Sacrament of Reconciliation", *Theological Investigations*, London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1963, Vol. II, 135-74; (amazing insights for TODAY even though written over 40 years ago!)

Rahner, Karl, S.J., "The Status of the Sacrament of Reconciliation", *Theological Investigations*, N.Y., Crossroads, 1992, Vol. XXIII, pp. 205-18;

Thévenot, Xavier, *Sin: A Christian View For Today*, Liguori, Mo., Liguori Pub., 1984; (one of the best little treatises on this that I have seen!)

Vorgrimler, Herbert, "The Sacrament of Reconciliation", in *Sacramental Theology*, Collegeville, Minn., Liturgical Press, 1992, pp. 200-25; (exquisite and insightful summary of development of P. + question of indulgences by Fr. Rahner's friend)

E. Reflective Sources on Forgiveness and Reconciliation:

- Amedes, Lewis B., *The Art of Forgiving*, Ballantine, 1997;
- Augsburger, David W., *Helping People Forgive*, Westminster, John Knox Press, 1996;
- Bråkenhielm, Carl Reinhold, *Forgiveness*, Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1993;
- Breault, William, SJ., *Trying to Forgive--Four Exercises That Encourage Forgiveness*, Notre Dame Press, Ave Maria Press, 1993;
- Capps, Donald, *The Depleted Self: Sin in a Narcissistic Age*, Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1993;
- Enright, E., ed., *Exploring Forgiveness*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1998;
- Fenn, Richard K., *The Secularization of Sin: An Investigation of the Daedalus Complex*, Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991;
- Fernandez, Domiciano, *The Father's Forgiveness: Rethinking the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, Collegeville, Minn., The Liturgical Press, 1992;
- Forest, Jim, *Confession – Doorway to Forgiveness*, Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 2002; (Good stories re. reconciliation and biblical aspects; good exam. of consciences)
- Gestrich, Christoph, *The Return of Splendor in the World--The Christian Doctrine of Sin and Forgiveness*, Grand Rapids, Mi., Eerdmans, 1998; (Provocative restatement of the doctrine of sin by a respected German Protestant theologian and churchman in dialogue with modern philosophy and theology)
- Hughes, Kathleen, Favazza, Joseph A., Ludecke, Chuck, *A Reconciliation Sourcebook*, Chicago, Liturgy Training Publications, 1997. (excellent collection of prayers and exhortations on reconciliation)
- Kennedy, Robert, ed., *Reconciling Embrace: Foundations for the Future of Sacramental Reconciliation*, Liturgy Training Pub., 1998;
- McFadyen, Alistair, and Sarot, Marcel, eds., *Forgiveness and Truth: Explorations in Contemporary Theology*, Edinburgh, T.& T. Clark, 2001.
- Meninger, William A., *Process of Forgiveness*, NY, Continuum, 1997;
- Monbourquette, John, *How to Forgive – A Step-by-Step Guide*, Ottawa, Novalis, 2000. (Very helpful and practical regarding how to come to forgiveness)
- Mueller, Joan, *Is Forgiveness Possible?*, Collegeville, Minn., Liturgical Press, 1998;
- Perrin, David B., *The Sacrament of Reconciliation: An Existential Approach*, E. Mellen Press, 1998.
- Peters, Ted, *Sin: Radical Evil in Soul and Society*, Grand Rapids, Mi., Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994;
- Portmann, John, *A History of Sin – It's Evolution to Today and Beyond*, Lanham, Md., Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007 (Good update on Meninger's earlier book *Whatever Happened to Sin?* (1973))

Prieur, Michael, S.T.D., *The Sacrament of Reconciliation Today*, Bethlehem, Pa., Catechetical Communications, 1974; (Excellent summary in Part V of church development re. age of first confession)

Reconciliation: A User's Manual, Ottawa, Novalis, 2001; (A practical handbook with good examinations of conscience, SS readings, etc.)

Rey-Mermet, Théodule, C.Ss.R., *Moral Choices—The Moral Theology of Saint Alphonsus Liguori*, Liguori, Mo., Liguori Press, 1998; (Excellent work dealing with how St. Alphonsus worked out his system of probabilism to find a mean between the rigorism and laxism of his day;)

Schell, David W., ill. by Alley, R.W., *Forgiveness Therapy*, Abbey Press, 1993;

Stafford, William S., *Disordered Loves: Healing the Seven Deadly Sins*, Cowley Publications, 1994;

Theological-Historical Commission for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, *God, the Father of Mercy, (Official Catechetical Text in Preparation for the Year 2000)*, N.Y., Crossroad, 1998; (beautiful reflection on the meaning of the Fatherhood of God, reconciliation, Mary, the Trinity's sign of mercy, etc.)

Walsh, Fr. Christopher, *Untapped Power of the Sacrament of Penance*, St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2005

Weinandy, Thomas G., *The Sacrament of Mercy: A Spiritual and Practical Guide to Confession*, Pauline Books, 1997;

Woodgate, Michael, *A Priest's Guide to Hearing Confessions*, London, Catholic Truth Society, 2008.

Woods, Walter J., *Walking With Faith—New Perspectives on the Sources and Shaping of Catholic Moral Life*, Collegeville, Minn., Liturgical Press, 1998; (deals with the sacrament of penance in the bigger picture of Church History; many new insights from fresh resources; good stuff!)

Worthington, Everett L., Jr., ed., *Dimensions of Forgiveness – Psychological Research & Theological Perspectives*, Philadelphia, Templeton Foundation Press, 1998; (Good background material from mostly non-Catholic sources to understand the current phenomenon of seeking forgiveness)

Some Additional Resources

Glavich, Mary Kathleen, *The gift of Anointing of the Sick: A preparation Guide for the Sacrament*, Acta Publications, 2006.

Huffstetler, Joel W., *Boundless Love: The Parable of the Prodigal Son and Reconciliation*, N.Y., University of America Press, 2008, 77pp.

Huston, Paula, *Forgiveness: Following Jesus into Biblical Loving*, Paraclete Press, 2009.