

PASTORAL THEOLOGY 5276A

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Ethical Issues and Pastoral Ministry

Fr. Peter Keller

519-495-0912

pkeller2@uwo.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course aims to heighten students' awareness concerning specific aspects of pastoral ministry in which ethical decision-making is necessary. It serves to facilitate students' integration of their theological and pastoral studies as well as previous pastoral experiences. The course will provide students with foundations, principles and practical resources from which they may make prudent judgments in their ministry and thereby represent Christ and the Church responsibly. The course will highlight effective means of ministering ethically to the needs of individual persons, parish communities and to the minister him/herself.

GOALS:

This course will assist students' growth in the following areas of knowledge, skill and attitudes:

KNOWLEDGE:

- To understand theological foundations (from scripture and church documents) which underpin ethically based practices for decisions of pastoral ministry.
- To gain a base of knowledge regarding ethical principles that inform decision-making and ministry practice in the day-to-day exercise of ministry (i.e. principles regarding: maintaining proper boundaries, the use and limits of confidentiality, collaboration in ministry, conflict resolution methods.)
- To be aware of legal requirements legislated by Church and civil authorities regarding specific aspects of ministry (i.e. confidentiality in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the duty to disclose information about sexual impropriety toward minors, copyright laws)

SKILLS:

- To recognize when proper boundaries are being challenged or violated in circumstances of ministry.
- To develop the skill of dealing with parishioners' projections onto oneself (based on the parishioners' feelings toward God and Church) in a healthy and mature way.
- To perceive challenges to the effectiveness of counseling, such as instances as transference or counter-transference, and to be able to address these appropriately.
- To maintain proper human resources management methods in the workplace (i.e. through proper job postings, development of job descriptions, maintenance of contracts of employees, annual personnel appraisals.)
- To establish norms within one's ministry for the monitoring of parish volunteers (i.e. through proper screening, vulnerable persons checks, ensuring team rather than individual supervision and chaperoning of minors.)
- To be able to respond properly to allegations of sexual harassment in the workplace and allegations of sexual abuse, following proper legal prescriptions and diocesan protocol.
- To facilitate the resolution of inter-personal conflict with others, and to mediate between individuals or groups who are in conflict with one another.
- To develop time management skills which will serve the needs of the community to which one is assigned, as well as the minister's personal needs for health and balance.

ATTITUDES:

- To recognize each person who seeks services in ministry as deserving respect and esteem by virtue of being created in the image and likeness of God.
- To thirst for justice so that no one within his/her community is treated with special preference or consideration because of economic, intellectual, or professional status.
- To accept all persons as ends to be served in themselves, and never to use parishioners as means toward the end of the minister's personal gain, pleasure or advancement.
- To accept that, as a minister, the student has his/her own needs, and should feel comfortable about ensuring that these needs (for rest, relaxation, friendship, and leisure) are cared for - outside of pastoral relationships.
- To desire the maintenance of a healthy workplace, wherein each staff member is supported, appreciated, and given ample opportunity to receive guidance and support in their work.

- To appreciate the calling to be part of a collegiality of ministries, involving others in professional pastoral ministry (i.e. priests, deacons, pastoral ministers, CYM's) as well as the many volunteers who share their expertise, knowledge, and pastoral zeal.

ASSESSMENT:

CLASS PARTICIPATION - 15%

Students will only gain from the course as much as they contribute to it. It is important for those preparing for ecclesial ministry to develop a common vision and appreciation for ethics in ministry through dialogue. Students therefore are encouraged to openly share their insights and experience with one another.

READING JOURNAL - 40%.

Students shall maintain a journal, noting insights gained from the assigned reading materials, together with questions or comments raised by the reading. At two designated dates during the term, these journals shall be submitted for review and grading.

PERSONAL CODE OF ETHICS 45%

As a way for students to personally integrate the many themes discussed in this course, they shall prepare a personal code of ethics (a paper of five to seven pages). This code is to be developed in such a way that it may be used later (during annual retreats or on anniversaries of ordination or mandating for ministry) as a self-reflection and examination of how one has utilized the principles and practices taught in this course during their life and ministry.

REQUIRED READING:

A number of journal articles and excerpts from texts will be assigned (as outlined on the supplementary Reading Schedule) to help prepare students' reflection on topics being discussed in each class.

In addition to these texts so the first document to be read is:

- CCCB. Responsibility in Ministry. A Statement of Commitment. Ottawa: Concacan, 1996. http://www.cccb.ca/site/Files/Resp_Min_E.pdf
- Pope Francis' most recent letter
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2018/documents/papa-francesco_20180820_lettera-popolo-didio.html

OUTLINE OF CLASS THEMES

SEPTEMBER 6

Overview and expectations of the Course and Reflection on Pastoral Experience

SEPTEMBER 13

Theological foundations for Ethical Pastoral Ministry

SEPTEMBER 20

Honesty and Confidentiality in Ministry

SEPTEMBER 27

The Use of Power in the Pastoral Relationship

OCTOBER 4

Setting Boundaries: in Counseling and Relationships with Parishioners

OCTOBER 11

Fall Reading Week -No Class

OCTOBER 18

The Harm Caused by Sexual Abuse

OCTOBER 25

Awareness of and Response to Sexual Harassment

NOVEMBER 1

Leisure and Entertainment in the life of Ministry

NOVEMBER 8

Supervision of Staff (hiring, evaluation, discipline, and ongoing support)

NOVEMBER 15

Stewardship of Parish Resources

NOVEMBER 22

Leadership Skills in Families of Parishes I:

NOVEMBER 29

Co-responsible Ministry and the Role of Leadership

DECEMBER 6

Leadership Skills in Families of Parishes II:

Resolving Conflict and Responsible Pastoral Planning

MAJOR RESOURCE FOR THOSE TO BE ORDAINED:

The Directory for the Ministry and life of Priest 2013. (A copy will be provided)

[http://www.clerus.org/clerus/dati/2013-06/13-13/Direttorio EN.pdf](http://www.clerus.org/clerus/dati/2013-06/13-13/Direttorio_EN.pdf)

UNIVERSITY POLICIES ON WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Policies regarding Submission of Assignments and Tests
 - a. It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments can be completed on time.
 - b. Assignments are to be handed in at the class on the due date. Assignments may not be dropped off at King's or submitted electronically.
 - c. For a serious reason, a student may be granted an extension. On the form provided, the student is to write a brief explanation of the reason for the extension. This is to be signed by the teacher, with the extended date noted. A copy of the extension notice is given to the Dean.
 - d. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean's Office.
 - e. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission.
 - f. No electronic devices will be allowed during tests or the examination, unless approved in advance by Student Services at the University or King's. (This refers to students with disabilities who have permission to use a word processor to write their exams/tests.)
 - g. 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.
2. Internet References
3. If references are given from Internet sites the exact designation of the site must be given a hard copy of the page from which the quote is taken or to which the reference is made.
4. Academic Offences
 - a. "Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:
<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.Pdf>
 - b. "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."
5. Style

Your assignment style guide is found at

<https://www.stpetersseminary.ca/Resources-/For-Our-Students/Essay-Style-Guide/300>