General Information

This course considers the history and experience of the Roman Catholic church in America, from the first French and Spanish missionaries, through the rise of the largely Irish and German immigrant church in the 19th century, to the coming of age of the American Catholic community and its participation in and response to Vatican II. Attention is given to the theology, ritual forms and cultural style of Catholic religious practice and to the history of the Catholic community and its participation in the public life of the larger American community.

The overarching questions for this course will be: What makes American Catholicism Catholic? What makes it American? and What do we learn about religion from studying American Catholicism?

Course Requirements

Preparation for class, quizzes and participation in class discussion. Each student will be asked to prepare a short (2-3 pages) reflection paper on the readings each week (except the first and last week) in response to an assigned question. (50% of grade).

Midterm (25% of grade) and final (25% of grade).

All assignments, including preparation for class, are expected to be timely, unless prior approval is given. Lateness will be penalized.

Required texts (all in paper)

Jay P. Dolan, The American Catholic Experience
Richard McBrien, Inside Catholicism
Thomas Merton, Seven Story Mountain
Brian Moore, Black Robe
Robert Orsi, The Madonna of 115th Street

Packet of readings (available from Karen Lyle)
wk.1
1/6 Introductory lecture: The Late Medieval European Church

**Colonial Catholicism**

1/8 Spanish Missions

Assignment: read Las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians*

In Class: Lecture/discussion on early Spanish missions

wk.2
1/13 Spanish Missions cont.

Assignment: read Junipero Serra, *Diary*

Dolan, pp. 15-30

reflection paper due

In Class: Lecture/discussion on Southwest missions

1/15 French Missions

Assignment: read Moore, *Black Robe*

Dolan, pp. 31-68

Lalemant, "How Father Jogues was Taken. . ."

In class: Lecture/discussion on French missions

wk. 3

1/20 English Catholics in the New World

Assignment: read John Carroll selections Dolan, pp. 69-97

reflection paper due

In Class: Lecture/discussion on Maryland Catholics

1/22 Catholics in the new republic

Assignment: read Dolan, pp. 101-124

In Class: Quiz on colonial Catholicism

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**The Immigrant Church**
wk. 4

1/27 NB: this class will be held in the evening

Who were the Immigrants?

Assignment: read Dolan, pp. 127-157

reflection paper due

In Class: Lecture/discussion on Immigrant Catholicism

1/29 The parish and the neighborhood

Assignment: read Dolan, pp. 158-220

In Class: Lecture/discussion on Immigrant Catholicism cont.

wk. 5

2/3 Devotional Catholicism

Assignment: read Taves, The Household of Faith (in packet)

reflection paper due

In Class: Lecture/discussion on devotional Catholicism

2/5 Black Catholics (NOTE: this will be an evening class)

Assignment: read Davis, History of Black Catholics, chs. 3-6

Afro-American and Catholic

In Class: lecture by Prof. Delaney

wk. 6

2/10 Anti-Catholicism and Nativism

Assignment: read nativism and anti-Catholicism selections (in course packet)

reflection paper due

In Class: Lecture by Dr. Stephanie Wilkinson
2/12 MIDTERM

WASHINGTON HOLIDAY

wk. 7

2/24 Conversion
Assignment: read Brownson selections
In Class: discussion of conversion

2/25 Evening lecture by Professor Scott Appleby

2/26 Americanism and Modernism
Assignment: read Appleby and Sullivan selections
In Class: Visit by Prof. Appleby

Coming of Age

wk. 8

3/2 Italian Catholics
Assignment: read Orsi, The Madonna of 115th St.
In Class: Discussion of Orsi
reflection paper due

3/4 Social Gospel
Assignment: read Dolan, pp. 321-348
In Class: view and discuss The Radio Priest
3/9 Schools
Assignment: read Dolan, pp. 262-293, 384-420

Everson v. Bd. of Education
Reflection paper due
In Class: Discussion of Everson

3/11 Triumphal Catholicism
Assignment: read Morris selection
In Class: view The Bells of St. Mary’s

wk. 10

3/16 Thomas Merton
Assignment: read Merton, Seven Story Mountain
reflection paper due
In Class: View film on Merton/discussion of Merton

Vatican II and Aftermath

3/18 Religious Freedom
Assignment: read Dignitatis Humanae
Murray, We Hold These Truths selections
In Class: Lecture/discussion on Dignitatis Humanae

wk. 11

3/23 American Catholicism and Vatican II
Assignment: read Dolan pp. 423-454
Gaudium et Spes
reflection paper due
In Class: Lecture/discussion on Vatican II
3/25 Vatican II and religious orders
Assignment: reading to be assigned
In Class: view and discuss Breaking Silence

wk. 12

3/30 Indigenization and syncretism
Assignment: reading to be announced
In-Class: Discussion of definition of Catholicism

4/2 American Catholicism today
Assignment: reading to be announced
In class: to be announced