

RS 130 "Varieties of Christianity" Spring Semester 2005
St. Michael's College, Colchester, Vermont

Faculty:

Prof. Donna Freitas, St. Ed's 233, ext. 2489, dfreitas@smcvt.edu	Prof. James Byrne St. Ed's 223, ext. 2759, jbyrne@smcvt.edu
Section A: MW 10:30-11:35	Section C: MW 1:00-2:05
Section B: MW 11:45-12:50	Section D: MW 2:30-3:35
Common Lecture: Th 2:30-3:35, Science 101	Common Lecture: Th 2:30-3:35, Science 101

Office Hours:

Prof. Byrne: Tuesdays 10.15-11.30 and Wednesdays 11.00-12.15. Other times by appointment.
Prof. Freitas: To be announced

Course Description:

RS 130, "Varieties of Christianity," is designed as an interdisciplinary, team-taught course in Religious Studies at St. Michael's. It has three main components: an introduction to the academic study of religion (both Christian and non-Christian), a historical survey of the varieties of Christianity that have existed and still exist in the world today, and a study of some important issues in contemporary Christianity.

Required Texts:

- Catherine A. Cory and David T. Landry, eds., The Christian Theological Tradition, Prentice-Hall, 2nd Ed., 2002. Abbreviated "C&L". **Please pay close attention to the set reading for each class; not all readings are in page order (for some classes you are required to read an earlier or later section of the textbook).**
- The Bible. Any modern translation will suffice as long as it has both Old and New Testaments, and is not a paraphrase edition. The New Revised Standard Version, paperback, is available for optional purchase in the bookstore.
- Selected Readings accessible through this website and/or at the reserve room in the library.

Expectations/Requirements:

1. Class participation: **10%**. (Attendance, discussion, quizzes, or other participation elements designed by your professor). Unexcused absences will significantly lower this grade.
2. Two 5-page papers: **20% each**. Paper #1 due on February 16 (Paper # 1) and Paper #2 due on April 20 (Paper #2).. For Paper #1, on the Bible, a list of topics from which you may select will be presented in class at the appropriate time. Paper # 2 is a report on a visit to a Church service and some research into the Christian Church whose service you attended. Each paper is worth 20% of your overall grade. Late papers cannot be accepted. If the assignment is not submitted on time, a different (and more difficult) assignment may be given for partial credit.
3. Two examinations: a Mid-Term on March 3, and a Final Exam during exam week. The Mid-Term is worth **20%** of your final grade and the Final is worth **30%**.

Note: Your section leader (either Prof. Byrne or Freitas) is solely responsible for your grade. You should know, however, that the professors will compare notes in order to promote fairness in grading and honesty among students.

Academic Integrity Policy:

Consistent with the policies of Saint Michael's College, each student is to do his or her own work. Of

course, studying together for exams is encouraged, but any cheating on an exam or paper will result in failure of the course. Cheating includes (but is not limited to) giving or receiving answers on an exam, or using unauthorized notes during an exam. Once an exam begins, no one will be allowed to leave the exam room except in dire emergency. You are encouraged to use the Writing Center and discuss with one another the topics for your papers, but there should be no formal collaboration on the actual writing of any paper. Be very careful about proper citations and use of other authors' works in your papers: all quotations and material based on the work of others must be cited. Any form of plagiarism (using the work of others as if it were one's own work) will result in failure of the course. If you are uncertain about proper format and style for the paper, consult your professor.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday, Jan. 17 Introduction and orientation to the course. What is religion? Here is an interesting website that tracks numbers of adherents in various world religions and Christian denominations:
<http://www.adherents.com/>

Wednesday, Jan. 19

Dimensions of world religions. Reading: (to be completed BEFORE the class): C&L 1-11

The Study of Religion

Thursday, Jan 20.

LECTURE #1: Profs. Byrne & Freitas, "Nature and Study of Religion, Approaches and Methods"

Monday, Jan. 24

Discussion: Nature of Myth

Reading: Examples of myths. The Professors will provide some myths from various traditions for each class to consider.

Professor Byrne's Class only: [Native American Lore](#). Please print and read these six creation myths and bring the texts to class (Read numbers: 34, 36, 50, 59, 68, 74). As you read the myths try to think about some of the following: what is the creator like?; why does the creation come about?; do the myths say anything about the roles of women and men?; what roles do animals play?; if you are familiar with the creation stories in the Book of Genesis, can you see any parallels between Genesis and these myths?

Wednesday, Jan. 26

Discussion: Religion & Myth

Reading: C&L 13-28; From the Bible: Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-4.

NOTE: from now on, until notified otherwise, please bring your Bible to class each day.

The Jewish Roots of Christianity

Thursday, Jan. 27

LECTURE #2: Prof. Trumbower "The Hebrew Bible"

Readings (to be completed BEFORE the lecture): Jeffrey Trumbower, "[Introductory Remarks on the Hebrew Bible](#)"; also from the Bible: 2 Samuel 7-8 and Jeremiah 27-28.

Monday, Jan. 31

Discussion: The Hebrew Bible

Reading: C&L 29-43; From the Bible: Exodus Chapters 1-21.

Wednesday, Feb. 2

Discussion: The Hebrew Bible.

Readings: C&L 44-56, plus handout on the Moabite Stone. From the Bible: read 2 Kings 3, Psalm 2 and Psalm 89. PAPER #1 TOPIC INTRODUCED.

Thursday, Feb. 3

LECTURE #3: Prof. Trumbower "The Historical Jesus in the Context of Second-Temple Judaism." Readings (to be completed BEFORE the lecture): From the Bible: Zechariah 9 and 14; Malachi 3-4; Mark 1 and 11; and from the Pseudepigrapha: Psalms of Solomon 17 (Xerox handout).



Above: A scroll from ca. 100 BCE containing the biblical Psalms, found near the Dead Sea in 1947. For more on the Dead Sea Scrolls, [click here](#).

Monday, Feb. 7

Discussion: The Historical Jesus.

Readings: C&L 57-81 and 374-377 "The Quest for the Historical Jesus." From the Bible: 1 Corinthians 1 & 15 (the earliest account of the death and resurrection of Jesus, written by the apostle Paul around the year 50 C. E.).

PBS has some interesting material on Jesus and the early Christians; to view the website, [click here](#).

Wednesday, Feb. 9

Discussion: The Gospels.

Readings: C&L 81-88. From the Bible: Matthew 5-7; Luke 10:25-41; Luke 15:1-32; John 1



View of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, with the 7th century Muslim "Dome of the Rock" at left and the Western or "Wailing Wall" in the foreground. The Wailing Wall is the lone surviving portion of King Herod's Temple complex from the 1st century B.C.E.. It receives its name from the "wailing" of Jews

Earliest Varieties of Christianity

Thursday, Feb. 10

LECTURE #4: Prof. Byrne. "The Earliest Varieties of Christianity"

Readings (to be completed BEFORE the lecture): Acts 1-9 (from the bible)

Monday, Feb. 14

Discussion: Paul: Power and belief in early Christianity

Readings: C&L 89-102; From the Bible: selected texts from the Letters of Paul.



Wednesday, Feb. 16

PAPER #1 DUE TODAY. In class discussion of findings from the papers.

Thursday, Feb. 17

LECTURE #5 : Prof. Freitas. "Christian Identity and the Early Church". Readings to be completed before the Lecture: C&L 103-122 and [Perpetua's Diary](#)

Monday, Feb. 21: MID-TERM BREAK. No Class

Wednesday, Feb. 23

Early Christianities. Readings: C&L 123-152 and the [Nicene Creed](#).

Thursday, Feb. 24

LECTURE #6: Professor Berube: The Rise of Islam. Readings: C&L, pp. 167-181 (NOTE: please read the correct chapter in the textbook!)

Monday, Feb. 28

Discussion on Islam

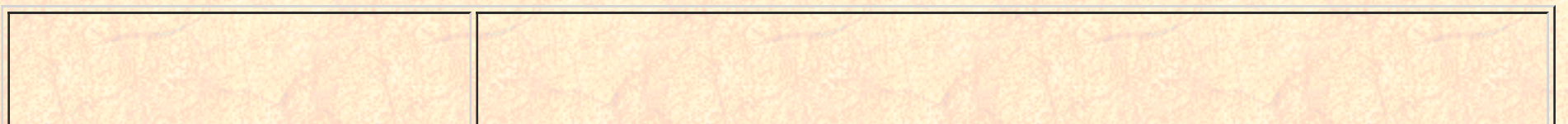
<http://www.islamfortoday.com/>

Pictures of the [2005 Haj](#)

Wednesday, Mar. 2

Eastern Orthodoxy. Readings: C&L 153-166 (NOTE: please read the correct chapter in the textbook!)

Thursday, Mar. 3 MID-TERM EXAMINATION





Medieval Catholic Christianity

Monday, Mar. 7

Discussion: Early Medieval Christianity. Readings: C&L 182-195.

Wednesday, Mar. 9

Discussion: The High Middle Ages.

Readings: C&L 196-214 and Pope Gregory VII, [Dictatus Papae](#).

Thomas Aquinas, 1225-1274

Optional: For more Medieval Resources, [click here](#).

For images of reliquaries, click here:

http://www.louvre.fr/anglais/collec/oa/oa3254/oa_f.htm

http://www.louvre.fr/anglais/collec/oa/oa0049/oa_f.htm

<http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/stc02010.jpg> (This is Catherine of Siena's, in which you can actually see her head)

Thursday, Mar. 10

LECTURE # 6 Prof. Freitas, Medieval Christian Mysticism

Readings: Teresa of Avila, "[The Interior Castle](#)"

Optional: [Introduction](#) to "The Interior Castle" (you might find it helpful to read this introduction)

Spring Break: March 14-18. Have a great vacation!

Monday March 21.

Christian Art and Music of the High Middle Ages.

Reading: C&L: 249-258

Wednesday March 23.

Christian Reformers before the Reformation: Wycliffe, Hus and Erasmus.

Readings: C&L 230-243 and selected extracts from the writings of Wycliffe, Hus and Erasmus.

Reformation Varieties of Christianity



Martin Luther, 1483-1546



Jean Calvin, 1509-1564

Thursday March 24.

LECTURE # 7 Prof. Byrne, "The Protestant Reformation"

Readings (to be completed BEFORE the lecture) C&L 230-258

Monday, Mar. 28

Discussion: Martin Luther and John Calvin

Readings: C&L 259-284; Martin Luther, ["The Freedom of a Christian"](#).

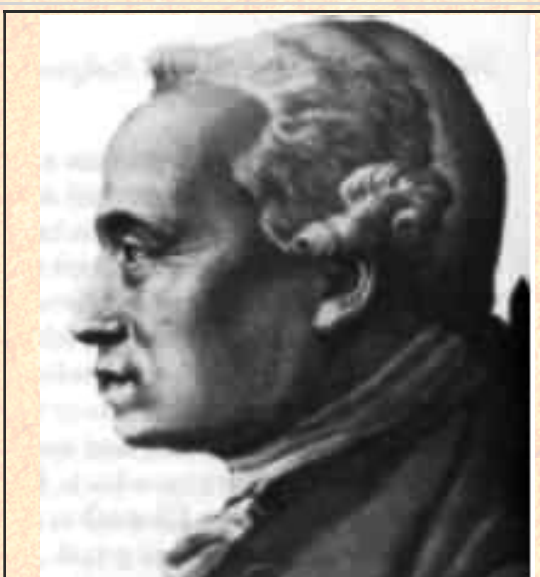
For more on Martin Luther, [click here](#). For more on John Calvin, [click here](#).

Wednesday, Mar. 30

Discussion: Other reformers and the Catholic Reformation.

Readings: C&L 284-308 and [Schleitheim Confession](#) (Anabaptist).

Enlightenment Era Varieties of Christianity



Immanuel Kant, 1724-1804

Thursday, March 31.

LECTURE # 8 Prof. Byrne, "The Enlightenment and its Relationship to Christianity."

Readings (to be completed BEFORE the lecture): C & L 324-334

Monday, Apr. 4

Discussion: The Enlightenment

Readings: Immanuel Kant, "[What is Enlightenment](#)" (Web), extracts from John Locke's "[Letter of Toleration](#)" (1690) (Web), plus the journal entry of John Wesley (1703-1791) "[I Felt my Heart Strangely Warmed](#)" (Web).

Wednesday, Apr. 6

Discussion: Impact of the Enlightenment on Christianity

Reading: C & L 334-344; Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) [Syllabus of Errors](#) (Web).

**Varieties of Christianity in the United States
(including Protestant Fundamentalism)**

Thursday, Apr. 7

LECTURE # 9 Prof. Freitas: "Varieties of Christianity in the U.S.A." Readings: C&L 345-364.

Monday, Apr. 11

Discussion: Christianity in North America

Readings: James Madison, "[Memorial and Remonstrance](#)"; Josiah Strong, "[On Anglo-Saxon Predominance](#)." Optional: For more on religion and the founding of the American Republic, [click here](#).

Wednesday, Apr. 13

Discussion: Protestant Fundamentalism.

Readings: Jerry Falwell, "[How Can I Be Saved?](#)"; [Falwell on "9/11"](#)

**Vatican Council II and
Contemporary Catholic Varieties of Christianity**

Thursday, Apr. 14

LECTURE #10 Prof. Kroger, "Vatican II and Liberal Catholics and the Restoration".

Monday, Apr. 18

Discussion: Issues in Post Vatican Council II Catholicism

Readings: C&L 365-372; "[Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions](#)" (Nostra Aetate), entire text.

Readings: Sex abuse controversy: visit this website and explore:

<http://www.boston.com/globe/spotlight/abuse/>

Wednesday, Apr. 20

Discussion: Paper 2 DUE IN CLASS: Discussion of Papers.

Liberationist Varieties of Christianity

Thursday, Apr. 21.

LECTURE #11, Prof. Freitas, "Liberationist and Feminist Theologies"

Reading: C&L 378-384.

Monday, Apr. 25

Discussion: Liberation Theology

Reading: Leonard Boff ["The Basic Question"](#); and ["Introduction to Liberation Theology"](#)

Wednesday, Apr. 27

Discussion: Feminist Theology

Reading: Mary Daly ["After the Death of God the Father"](#)

Emerging Varieties of Christianity

Thursday, Apr. 28

LECTURE # 12, Prof. Byrne, "Emerging Varieties of Christianity"

Reading: C&L, 309-323.

Monday, May. 2

Discussion: Pentecostal Christianity.

Reading: Somini Sengupta and Larry Rohter, ["Where Faith Grows: Fired by Pentecostalism"](#) (New York Times, October 14, 2003)

Wednesday, May. 4

Discussion: Emerging issues in Christianity today.

Reading: TBA

Thursday, May 5

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION and REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM

For this class please bring a card with one question about the course on it; that is, a question you would like answered. We will discuss selected questions in class.

Final Exam Schedule:

Section A (Freitas): Tuesday May 10 (1-3.30)

Section B: (Freitas): Friday May 13 (1-3.30)

Section C: (Byrne): Monday May 9 (1-3.30)

Section D: (Byrne): Friday May 13 (9-11.30)

END OF SYLLABUS

The following links have been used in previous semesters, are placed here for storage, but are not being used in the current semester

<http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore68.html>

<http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore42.html>

<http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore36.html>

<http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore59.html>

<http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore60.html>

<http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore121.html>

and Martin Luther's "[Definition of Faith](#)".