

# PLIT 235: The Sacraments of Healing

## *Syllabus for Fall Quarter 2024*

Eugene R. Schlesinger, Ph.D.

Office: Kenna 307

Email: [eschlesinger@scu.edu](mailto:eschlesinger@scu.edu)

Phone: 408-441-7153

Office Hours: TBD

---

**This is a draft syllabus and so subject to change.**

### **Meeting Times**

Monday Evenings 6:00–9:00. Santa Clara University Campus and via Zoom.

### **Course Description**

A consideration of liturgical prayer in relation to the experience of sickness and dying. Examination of the theological, historical, and pastoral aspects of ministry to the sick and dying based on the rites. In this course we will be especially concerned with developing a theology of healing which is both based upon and within which are situated the sacraments of healing. We will consider the relation of healing to illness, sin, and death. (Elective, 4 Units)

### **Learning Goals**

This course focuses on two specific learning goals of the GPPM: 2 and 4.

- **Goal 2: Pastoral Proficiency**
  - Familiarity with ministerial practices in various manifestations of church life, expressed in concrete pastoral applications which include discernment, compassion, and ministries of accompaniment.
- **Goal 4: Diversity Fluency**
  - Awareness of and critical engagement with how one's own culture influences ministry, and then to engage in ministries that build the community of Christ and are sensitive to and respectful of all cultures and traditions, and individuals who vary by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and dynamics of wealth, poverty, and power.

### **Course Components:**

Class Participation: Active participation is essential to this class. Weekly sessions will involve some presentation from the professor, but will mainly be an opportunity for student discussion of issues that are raised by the week's readings. *Each student should come to class sessions with one to three questions (from the readings, or just germane to the week's topic) that he or she would like to be sure we discuss.*

Reflection Papers: Over the course of the quarter, you will write six shorter papers (1–2 pages). Three attend to the issues of justice and diversity in pastoral ministry that are evident in the readings for the week (e.g., racism, sexism, classism, disability concerns, economic injustice, clericalism, abuse, immigration justice, climate justice, agism, or other forms of marginalization) (LO 4). Three attend to the pastoral application of the liturgical texts we are examining. How do these rites inform the church's ongoing mission? (LO 2). With six papers spread over ten weeks, you have some degree of latitude and choice, but you are expected to be proactive in selecting which weeks to write papers for (and you should be aware that not all weeks have a liturgy assigned). More details are available on Camino.

Funeral Plan: As part of our consideration of the *Order of Christian Funerals*, and as an exercise in liturgical planning and pastoral care, you will make a plan for your own funeral, including arrangements and pricing, readings, music, and an outline of the liturgy. Details will be available on Camino. (LO 2).

Final Project: Your final project will be related to the course material, and should be pastorally appropriate for your present or future ministry. By the fourth week of class, you should present me with a one-page proposal in which you indicate the nature and scope of your project. This will allow me to approve the suitability of the project and point you towards appropriate resources. By week seven, you will provide me with an outline of your project.

### **Option One: A Research Paper**

This option consists of a research paper exploring an academic topic of interest, directly focused on one or more central liturgical/theological theme explored in the course (**Learning Objective 2**). The paper should represent original research, insights, and interpretation and be 10 - 12 pages in length (not including the cover page and bibliography). Your project needs to also take into account matters of diversity, justice, inclusion, and marginalization in contemporary society and parish life (**Learning Objective 4**).

### **Option Two: A Pastoral Project for a Specific Parish Community**

Through the creation of the pastoral project, the student will demonstrate liturgical/theological competency and pastoral application of the course readings, lectures, class discussions, and especially study and competency in the dynamics of one of the sacraments of healing (we will construe this broadly enough as to include the viaticum and funeral rites).

This project has two parts: 1) all the elements needed for the pastoral project and 2) a paper (6 - 8 pages) that articulates the liturgical and theological themes from one particular liturgy or liturgical element. The paper will also include a pastoral analysis of the parish community and presentation of the hoped-for effectiveness of the pastoral project. (**Learning Objective 2**). Your pastoral project should also explicitly attend to issues of diversity, access, inequality, and marginalization in society and parish life to satisfy **Learning Objective 4**.

## Required Reading

- *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, Volume 1. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1990.<sup>1</sup> ISBN: 978-0-8146-6015-7
- Bruce T. Morrill, *Divine Worship and Human Healing: Liturgical Theology at the Margins of Life and Death*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-81466-217-5
- Genevieve Glen, ed. *Recovering the Riches of Anointing: A Study of the Sacrament of the Sick*. Liturgical Press, 2002. ISBN: 978-08146-2775-7.
- Robert L. Fastiggi, *The Sacrament of Reconciliation: An Anthropological and Scriptural Understanding*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-59525-043-8

## Schedule of Topics and Readings

Our course will follow a progression from a general theology of healing to a consideration of the Pastoral Care of the Sick, Leading to Viaticum and Funeral Rites. We will conclude with a consideration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. While this order is different than the order in which most people experience these sacraments (e.g.,

---

<sup>1</sup> This volume is an excellent resource, containing all of the rites we will be considering, and more (e.g., the rites of initiation and of marriage). I have selected it because it is the simplest and most economical way for you to get your hands on all the material we need. However, if you wish, you may substitute individual editions of the following rites: *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum*; *Order of Christian Funerals*; and the *Rite of Penance*. What you lose in affordability by purchasing individual rites, you gain in portability, which can be very helpful in actual ministry. For the purposes of our class, you need to be sure that what you have contains: (1) The Introduction for each rite, and (2) the text of the rite itself.

typically reconciliation is received before anointing of the sick, and certainly before the Viaticum or one's funeral), there is an important theological payoff, which we will develop over the course of the quarter.

Typically readings will be referred to by the author's last name, with the exception of the rites themselves, all of which appear in *The Rites of the Catholic Church*. When a reading is assigned from *The Rites*, you are only expected to read the Introductory material carefully, the actual rites can be skimmed so you have a general idea of their shape and contents. We will discuss them in more depth in class. So, for instance, on October 9, you are assigned Part I of the *Pastoral Care of the Sick*, this material goes from pages 790–843 in *The Rites*, but you will only read the material on pages 790–93, 797, 801–3, 814–19, 831, and 841 in detail. The rest can be skimmed. When this occurs, I provide you with both the inclusive range and the pages you need to read carefully, the pages to be read carefully are in bold.

Please bring any assigned readings to class, and always bring your copy of *The Rites*, and a Bible, regardless of what's been assigned.

## **Part 1 – Toward a Theology of Healing**

- Monday 9/23      Introduction & Syllabus  
Ferrari, "Unbalanced Reading" (Camino).  
Morrill, chapter 3  
Biblical Reflection Exercise: Foundations of a Theology of Healing.
- Monday 9/30      Wood, "The Paschal Mystery"  
Morrill, Chapter 4.

## **Part 2 – The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick**

- Monday 10/07      General Introduction to Pastoral Care of the Sick (The Rites, 778–89)  
Empereur extracts (Camino).  
Drumm, "The Practice of Anointing"  
Irwin, "The Development of Sacramental Doctrine."
- Monday 10/14      **Indigenous People's Day: No Class**
- Monday 10/21      Part One of *Pastoral Care of the Sick* (The Rites 790–843: **790–93, 797,**

801–3, 814–19, 831, and 841).  
Morrill, chapter 5.  
*Final Project Proposals Due*

### **Part 3 – Care for the Dying and the Dead**

- Monday 10/28      Morrill, Chapter 6  
                             Huels, “Ministers and Rites for the Sick and Dying.”  
                             Parts 2–3 of Pastoral Care of the Sick (The Rites, 844–904: **844–51,**  
**860–61, 872, 875–77, 883–84. 887–88)**
- Monday 11/04      Morrill – Chapter 7  
                             *Order of Christian Funerals*: General Introduction (924–938), Vigil  
                             and Related Rites and Prayers (940–944), Funeral Liturgy (967–974),  
                             Rite of Committal (992–994). Please glance at the other material in  
                             *Order of Christian Funerals*

### **Part 3 – The Sacrament of Reconciliation**

- Monday 11/11      Fastiggi, Chapters 1–4  
                             Introduction to *The Rite of Penance* (*The Rites*, 525–44)  
                             **Final Project Outlines Due**
- Monday 11/18      Empereur (Camino)  
                             Fastiggi, Chapters 5–6

**Funeral Plan Due Sunday 11/24 at 11:59pm.**

**Monday 11/25      Thanksgiving Break No Class**

- Monday 12/02      Fastiggi, Chapter 7 and Conclusion  
                             Peruse *The Rite of Penance* (The Rites 545–629)

**Final Projects Due by Tuesday December 10, 11:59pm**  
**Absolute Deadline for All Work: Friday December 13, 12:00pm (noon)**

## **Policies**

## Attendance

Regular attendance is an important part of any class, and is factored into your participation grade. Attendance is all the more essential in a course like this where we meet only once a week. In general, this course observes the following policy:

- Students in the Dioceses of San Jose, San Francisco, and Oakland are required to attend class in person. Students in other locations may attend via Zoom.
- I will gladly excuse absences if they are for documented legitimate causes (medical treatment, jury duty, University mandated travel, bereavement). Please submit documentation from a medical professional, the appropriate University office (e.g., Student Life, Athletics), clerk of court, etc. Whenever possible, students should let me know about absences beforehand.
- I will overlook one excused absence each quarter.
- Excused absences beyond the first will result in a half letter grade reduction of your course grade (not just participation).
- Any unexcused absence will result in a half letter grade reduction of your course grade.

If your absences (excused or not) are interfering with your ability to effectively participate in course we will discuss the possibility of withdrawal in order to protect you from a failing grade.

## Grading Scale

The grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

- 30% – Class Participation
- 30% – Short Papers
- 10% – Funeral Plan
- 30% – Final Project

Grade	Percentage
F	0–59.99
D-	60–62.99
D	63–66.99
D+	67–69.99
C-	70–72.99
C	73–76.99
C+	77–79.99
B-	80–82.99
B	83–86.99
B+	87–89.99
A-	90–93.99
A	94 – 100

## Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of -- and commitment to -- a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic

Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states: I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code. Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. For more information about Santa Clara University's academic integrity pledge

and resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see [www.scu.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.scu.edu/academic-integrity).

### **Office of Accessible Education**

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact the Office of Accessible Education (Benson 1, <http://www.scu.edu/oea>, 408-554-4109) as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through OAE, please discuss them with me during my office hours within the first two weeks of class.

To ensure fairness and consistency, individual faculty members are required to receive verification from the Office of Accessible Education before providing accommodations. OAE will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assistive technology. Students with approved accommodations of time-and-a-half should talk with me as soon as possible. The Office of Accessible Education must be contacted in advance (at least two weeks notice recommended) to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations.

### **Accommodations for Pregnancy and Parenting**

In alignment with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and with the California Education Code, Section 66281.7, Santa Clara University provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medical needs related to childbirth. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Alternatively, a pregnant or parenting student experiencing related medical conditions may request accommodations through Disability Resources.

### **Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)**

Santa Clara University upholds a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, I encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please consult the University's Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy at <http://bit.ly/2ce1hBb> or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie, at 408-554-3043, [bguthrie@scu.edu](mailto:bguthrie@scu.edu). Reports may be submitted online through <https://www.scu.edu/osl/report/> or anonymously through Ethicspoint <https://www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethicspoint/>

## **Late Work**

If some emergency arises which makes compliance with the due date policies spelled out in the syllabus impossible in a given instance, the student must discuss the situation *in advance* with the instructor and work out some alternative. Students who miss class(es) because of involvement in university-sanctioned activities or because of the fulfillment of a legal obligation must make arrangements with the instructor for alternative assignments.

Completion of all written and reading assignments is required by the class they are due. Late assignments will receive a letter grade less than they earn for each day they are late. They will not be accepted if more than a week late excepting major personal emergencies, which must be documented.

## **Classroom Environment**

In a class like this, our success or failure turns upon your engagement with the material. The point is less “you come here and acquire a bunch of facts to remember (at least until the exam),” and more, “we come together and engage with each other and ideas.” We’re not learning information so much as we are learning how to think well. For this reason, your participation in class is essential for the class’s success. The process of our class discussions will have more to do with what you learn than any information the professor might give you in a lecture.

So, in the interest of having the best possible classroom discussions, I expect students to conduct themselves in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner at all times. We can summarize this with four basic rules for our classroom:

**Be Attentive, Be Intelligent, Be Reasonable, Be Responsible.**

To put a finer point on some of this: it is especially important that respect and courtesy be extended to your classmates, because in order to truly engage with ideas, our classroom needs to be a safe place to do so. To that end:

- a. We will be discussing potentially controversial ideas (including religion), which may be challenging to your own thoughts, beliefs, and opinions. It is important that even when we disagree with each other, or the material (or whatever) that we do so in a respectful manner. So there will be no disparaging comments about anyone on the basis of religion (or lack of religion), sex/gender/orientation, ethnicity, political viewpoints, and so on. We will be discussing (and even arguing) about ideas, not people.

- b. Think of the classroom as an opportunity to try on new ideas. You're not bound to anything you say in the classroom (though see point a above, about what sorts of remarks are permitted). Feel free to experiment with and abandon ideas.
- c. A safe space means that you are free from personal attack or marginalization. It does not mean that you are free from hearing or engaging with ideas with which you disagree, or even ideas that you find offensive.
- d. Respectful conversation means allowing others the time and opportunity to share their viewpoints. If you are monopolizing the conversation, I will ask you to give others a chance.