

ITALY–CROSSROADS OF CHRISTENDOM

COURSE SYLLABUS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

While Christianity was born in the middle East, it was Italy that became, within a few decades after Christ's resurrection, the Crossroads of the Christian world. For two thousand years Christians from East and West, North and South, have come to Italy to serve Christ and his Church. In this course, we'll be examining the lives and work of many great Christians that spent all or part of their lives in central Italy. The apostles Peter and Paul, the native Italians Sts. Benedict, Clare, and Francis, the Spaniard St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Greek missionaries Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the great artists Michelangelo and Raphael, all these and more will be the subject of our study. Our learning will take place not in the classroom, but on site in Rome, Subiaco, Assisi, Florence, Orvieto, and Ostia. The goal of this interdisciplinary course will be to give the student an appreciation of the depth and breadth of the Catholic culture represented by the abundant monuments to faith to be found in central Italy and to allow the student to focus his or her own particular interests on those aspects that he or she finds most meaningful or interesting.

GRADING

I use the following scale as a general (not mechanistic) guide for determining letter grades:

A	100-93	4.0	C	76-73	2.0
A-	92-90	3.7	C-	72-70	1.7
B+	89-87	3.3	D+	69-67	1.3
B	86-83	3.0	D	66-63	1.0
B-	82-80	2.7	D-	62-60	0.7
C+	79-77	2.3	F	59-0	0.0

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

1. **Active participation** in all scheduled tour activities (worth 30% of your grade)
2. **A two page reflection paper** summing up the one or two most significant ways the trip contributed towards your education (20% of your grade)
3. **At least 400 pages of collateral reading** from the course bibliography or other sources uncovered from research. This reading can entirely revolve around your research topic if you wish, or it can

cover a number of areas. Please submit a sheet entitled: "Collateral Reading" and list the material you read with page numbers. One item that is required for all as a part of the reading is Pope John Paul's Letter to Artists (reprinted from *Inside the Vatican*, May 1999) a xeroxed copy of which is being distributed with this syllabus.

4. **A Research paper** of 8-10 pages on a topic of your choice related to a person, place or thing connected to Italy and touched upon in tour (this together with your reading constitutes 50% of your grade). This paper can have a focus on spirituality, history, architecture, archeology, theology, art, etc. You must include a formal bibliography with at least five sources. Here are some examples of appropriate and sufficiently specific topics:

- The meaning of Martyrdom in the letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch (theology)
- Discernment as taught by St. Ignatius Loyola (spirituality)
- The importance of poverty in the spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi (spirituality)
- The Theological Meaning of Michelangelo's ceiling in the Sistine Chapel. (Art)
- John XXIII's contribution to Ecumenism (history & theology)
- Pius XII, the Nazi's, and the Jews (history)
- St. Hippolytus and the Early Roman Liturgy according to the *Apostolic Tradition* (liturgy)
- The Story of the Excavations under the Vatican: Is it really Peter's Tomb? (Archeology)
- The Christological Teaching of Pope St. Leo the Great (theology)

- **Nota Bene** (note well) that no topics are overly general like "St Francis of Assisi" or "Pope John XXIII." The topic must be specialized enough that you can really say something meaningful about it in 8-10 pages (2,000-2,500 words). So more appropriate topics on the aforementioned persons would be "The Meaning of Poverty in the Spirituality of St. Francis" or "Pope John XXIII and Ecumenism."

5. **Due Date for both written assignments:** hard copies of both papers must be faxed or emailed (preferred) to me no later than July 20, 2012. Please keep a copy of any essay you submit in case your original gets lost in transit. If you should submit the papers by fax, please confirm via email that all pages were indeed received by the professor and that all were legible.

Tips on the Reflection Paper

Here it is quite appropriate to use the first person ("I") and to bring in personal experience. This assignment is intended to encourage you to reflect upon your entire trip and pull it together around key insights or experiences and show what it added to your graduate education. While spirituality is indeed an important part of the trip as well as the IRPS education, make sure your paper does not read like a couple of pages from your spiritual journal. It is fine to note that the trip was moving and inspiring—but you need to express in what way it was inspiring, what site we visiting had most to do with this, and why.

I cannot grade your experience, of course! Your grade, rather, will depend upon the depth of reflection demonstrated by your paper and the degree to which you articulate your insights clearly, in an interesting and organized fashion. For format, follow pertinent format instructions for research paper (below). No bibliography or footnotes/endnotes are required for this essay.

Tips on the Research Paper

I grade essays based on both their form and their content. Here are some of the things I'm looking for:

A. Form

1. Please make sure you have paper proof-read by someone else before handing it in! Grammar, punctuation, spelling, & style all count! Watch out for incomplete sentences (fragments) and run-on sentences (more than one independent clause in the same sentence without appropriate punctuation).
2. Always italicize or underline titles of books (e.g. *The Great Divorce*).
3. All non-English words (e.g., *agape*) must be italicized or underlined.
4. Make sure all paragraphs hang together.
5. Make sure the essay has good introductory and concluding paragraphs that clearly state your main point. (Make sure you have a main point!)
6. Please type and double-space the paper using 12 point Roman font (Pica typewriter) or equivalent, leaving a one inch margin on all four sides of the paper.
7. Credit every idea you borrow from another writer, even if it is not a direct quote. To neglect this is plagiarism. You do not, however, have to credit tour leader commentary or discussions. When citing a book for the first time, do a full footnote or endnote (your choice, though I prefer footnotes if you have a computer program that can do them). Subsequent citations can be abbreviated such as Timmermans, *Perfect*, 35 (for Felix Timmermans, *The Perfect Joy of St. Francis*, page 35). For bibliographic and footnote format, see Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, & Dissertations*, 6th edition (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1987) (ISBN 0-226-816253-7). It's a paperback costing \$8.95 that's worth owning. If there is a more recent edition available, that's even better.
8. Please number all pages of the text (except the first page) & staple them together. No paper clips or report covers please.
 9. Stay within the specified page limit of 8-10 pages! I will not read any more than ten pages.

B. Content

1. Demonstrate depth of understanding of the topic or writers you are considering.
 2. I always like to see you draw connections between what we've discussed during the tour, things you've learned in other IRPS courses, and the topic you are writing about.
 3. Have a clear point to make around which everything is organized. Make sure the essay does not ramble aimlessly. Stick to the theme of the essay.
 4. Make sure you support your opinions as best as you can with specific references to things you've read while researching the topic. Avoid too many long quotes (more than 3 lines) however.

What makes for a poor grade on a research paper:

- (1) A poor bibliography filled with only secondary sources like encyclopedia articles and popular biographies.
- (2) Summarizing the events of a saint's life (like St. Benedict) or of a historical period (like the Renaissance)

- (3) Failure to identify a very specific topic and stick to that topic throughout the whole paper.
- (4) Failure to present your ideas in an organized fashion.
- (5) Failure to have a thesis or main conclusion.
- (6) Failure to substantiate your thesis with facts.
- (7) Failing to follow the footnote/endnote & bibliographic rules to be found in Kate Turabian (Chicago Manual of Style rules).
- (8) Lots of careless typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors.

What makes for a great grade on a research paper

- 1. Use of primary (e.g., the writings of St. Ignatius) as well as secondary sources (contemporary biographies about St. Ignatius).
- 2. Identifying a very specific, narrow topic and sticking to that topic.
- 3. Organized presentation of ideas (try outlining your paper before writing it)
- 4. Having a thesis or conclusion.
- 5. Proving that conclusion with facts.
- 6. Following Kate Turabian's rules for footnotes, endnotes, & bibliography.
- 7. Careful proof-reading of your paper by another before you hand it in.

Video tapes:

Ignatius Press (800-651-1531) has an ample selection of videos relating to Catholicism in Italy. For two inspiring true stories about Catholic heroism in Nazi-occupied Italy, see "The Scarlet and the Black" (Gregory Peck and Christopher Plummer) and "The Assisi Underground" (Ben Cross and Maximilian Schell). "The Agony and the Ecstasy" (Charlton Heston) is the colorful story of Michelangelo and the Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. "Brother Sun, Sister Moon" is Franco Zeffirilli's account of the conversion of St. Francis (magnificent scenery). Ignatius also offers a variety of videos that comment on the architectural and artistic treasures of Rome and environs.