Required Books

The following books are required for the course. Where they are not available in electronic form, please purchase hard copies online from your preferred bookseller. All other readings will be available in PDF form through Blackboard.


Optional Books

The following books are optional for the course.

Introduction and Objective

This course introduces theologies of ministry as scholarly resources for making sense of ministry. A premium will be placed on both understanding these theologies and on articulating one’s own theology of ministry in dialogue with our studies.

In keeping with the Student Learning Objective of the GSRRE, students will articulate the relationship between religious tradition and professional practice, by understanding how ministerial work in a situation is reconstructed through critical and appreciative engagement with theological discourse.

Coursework

Participation

Successful completion of the course presumes that students will be active participants. Students should fully prepare themselves for all work and practice respectful interaction, including the use of inclusive language.

Written Work

Week Zero Assignments

For Week Zero, a Short Essay (“Practical Theology of Ministry: Opening Paper”) and Self-Introduction are required. See the assignment in Week Zero in Blackboard. Due Friday at 5:00pm EST.

Short Essays: Modules One through Seven

Beginning with Module One, and continuing through Module Seven, students must post a Short Essay to the Discussion Board.

In 300-350 words, and in direct relation to the module topic, draw a critical connection between a concern or topic raised by the interview(s), reading(s), and podcast. Be sure to discuss: What is the shared (or contested) concern/topic, how is it related to the course material for the Module, what is your perspective about it, and how does your discussion bear on your ministry (or your theological study of ministry)? Each week, post your Short Essay to the discussion forum labeled Module X Discussion by 5:00pm EST on Thursdays.

Essays should be: written in Microsoft Word; within the required word count; single-spaced; clearly written and cleanly edited; stylistically conformed to the Chicago/Turabian style manual for footnotes, etc; saved and posted as “[Lastname] [Module #]” (for example, Beaudoin 1), and posted as an attachment to the Discussion Board.
“A” papers reflect excellent grounded interpretation: submitted on schedule, meeting all style requirements, showing close, clearly argued, and careful attention to course material and the student’s situation; “B” papers are superior; “C” papers are adequate. (This coursework meets the Student Learning Objective.)

Peer Responses on Short Essays: Modules One Through Seven

After you have posted your Short Essay (Modules One through Seven), read all Short Essays for the Module, and post at least two 75-150 word responses to other students’ essays by 5:00 EST on Fridays.

“A”-quality comments excellently move the conversation forward by making connections. Comments should be timely, substantial, specific, and constructive relating of other students’ work to course material, to other students’ papers and comments, or to other relevant matters ingredient to the Module. “B”-quality comments do so in a superior way, and “C” in an adequate way.

Module Eight

For Module Eight, a “Final Essay” is required. See the assignment in Module Eight in Blackboard. This is due on Thursday at 5:00pm EST. Students are required to comment on two of these essays by Friday at 5:00pm EST.

Final Project

The Final Project assignment is listed in Blackboard. This project should be sent directly to the professor as an attachment via email.

Note on Plagiarism

Please be familiar with the GSRRE policy regarding plagiarism. Plagiarized work will result in failing the assignment and the course.

Note on Disabilities

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, course work, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services (Rose Hill - O’Hare Hall, Lower Level, x0655 or at Lincoln Center – Room 207, x6282).
Course Schedule

“Week Zero”
8 March-11 March

Please complete the Week Zero assignments (Self-Introduction and Short Essay) that will introduce you to others in the class and allow you to write out your present theology of ministry.

Module 1: (Re-)Entering the Conversation
11 March-18 March

What is “theology of ministry?” Where does it come from, and for what is it? What has the “place” of theology of ministry been for you?

Reading:

• Emma Percy, *Mothering as a Metaphor for Ministry* (London: Ashgate, 2014), Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9

Interviews:

• Rev. Brian Clary, St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church, Brookline, Massachusetts
• Prof. M. Shawn Copeland, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

Module 2: (Beyond) Foundations
18 March-25 March

We will deepen appreciation of what foundations might be, and how they work, in theologies of ministry. We will learn about the appeal of — and to — foundations in religion research and in students’ own experience. Students will explore a non-foundational approach to theology of ministry.

Reading:

• José Ignacio González Faus, *Builders of Community: Rethinking Ecclesiastical Ministry* (Miami: Convivium, 2012), pp. 13-93


Interviews:

• Rev. Dr. Eileen Campbell-Reed, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota
Module 3: Lay Ministry—and Beyond?
25 March-1 April

We will explore lay ministry as an unruly thread that, when tugged, pulls at many important matters in theology of ministry: what lay persons contribute to ministry, how their contribution can be understood theologically, and what deep questions lay ministry puts to the entire ministerial enterprise.

Reading:

• Jose Ignacio Gonzalez Faus, Builders of Community: Rethinking Ecclesiastical Ministry (Miami: Convivium, 2012), pp. 97-165


Interviews:

• Rev. Dr. Emeka Obiezu, NGO Committee on Migration, United Nations, New York City
• Ms. Maggi Van Dorn, Dominican Academy, New York City

Optional Reading:


Module 4: Risk and Inclusion, Centers and Margins
1 April-8 April

We explore theological frameworks for--and pastoral experiences of--inclusion and exclusion in and through ministry, so as to deepen in thought and practice ways of more responsible, broader, and deeper openness and inclusion in and through ministry.
Reading:

• Diarmuid O’Murchu, Inclusivity: A Gospel Mandate (Maryknoll, Orbis: 2015)

Interviews:

• Prof. Hossfman Ospino, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts
• Sr. Jeannine Gramick, New Ways Ministry, Mount Rainier, Maryland

Optional Reading:

• Yvette A. Flunder, Where the Edge Gathers: Building a Community of Radical Inclusion (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2005), Introduction, Chapter 1 (“Creating Community’’”), Chapter 2 (“Sustaining Community’’), pp. ix-xiv, 1-40


Module 5: Nature Ministry: Animals, Earth, Cosmos
8 April-15 April

We investigate the theological ways that ministry engages nature and ecological awareness (from animals to earth to cosmos) and the implications for ministry and theology today.

Reading:


• Charles Camosy, For Love of Animals: Christian Ethics, Consistent Action (Franciscan Media, 2013)

Interviews

• Sr. Miriam MacGillis, Genesis Farm, Blairstown, New Jersey
• Prof. Courtney Goto, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts

Optional Reading:

• Roman Catholic Bishops of Appalachia, “This Land is Home to Me” (1975), and “At Home in the Web of Life” (1995) -- (one document with both pastoral letters)
Module 6: Addressing Social Injustice  
15 April-22 April

We investigate how poverty and other social inequalities are addressed by (theologies of) ministry. Students gain a greater critical purchase on their agency in regard to social inequality through ministerial decision-making.

Reading:

• Gemma Tulud Cruz, Toward a Theology of Migration: Social Justice and Religious Experience (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), Chapter 1 (“Living on the Edge”), pp. 13-31; Chapter 4 (“Journeying Together in Faith”), pp. 77-104.

Interviews:

• Rev. Dr. Gary Hall, National Cathedral, Washington, DC
• Rev. Theodora Brooks, St. Margaret’s Episcopal Church, New York City

Additional Material to View and Read:

Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition:

☐ (1) Video about 2710 Bainbridge Avenue action (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xifN1NUokps)
☐ (2) Read through their website material to learn about what they do and why: http://northwestbronx.org/

Optional Reading:


Module 7: Ministry Amidst Religious and Non-religious Diversity  
22 April-29 April

What are theologically-informed ways of practicing ministry amidst, and learning from as well as contributing to, religious and non-religious diversity?

Reading:


• Susan Katz Miller, Being Both: Embracing Two Religions in One Interfaith Family (Boston: Beacon, 2013), chapters 1, 3, 11 (pp. 1-19, 40-53, 204-221)

• Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook, God Beyond Borders: Interreligious Learning Among Faith Communities (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014), chapter 2, pp. 30-51

Interviews:

• Prof. John Thatamanil, Union Theological Seminary, New York City
• Prof. Elena Procario-Foley, Iona College, New Rochelle, New York

Optional Reading:

• Society of Jesus, General Congregation 34, Decree 5 (“Our Mission and Interreligious Dialogue”) (1995)

• Jacques Berlinerblau, How to Be Secular: A Call to Arms for Religious Freedom (New York: Mariner, 2013), Chapters 1, 11, 12 (pp. 3-19, 171-209)

• Susan Crawford Sullivan, Living Faith: Everyday Religion and Mothers in Poverty (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2011), Chapter Six, “‘I Don’t Get to Church Anymore’: Capacity, Stigma, and Exit, and Religious Individualism” (pp. 156-177)

Module 8: “Bring it on Home:” Reviewing and Renewing Your Theology of Ministry
29 April-6 May

Students will review their learning over the course and take the measure of the renewal of their theology of ministry by creating a culminating project, and by commenting on the projects of others.

• Prepare Module Eight Short Essay (assignment in Blackboard), and comment on at least two Short Essays of other students

• Final Project (assignment in Blackboard) due 9 May