

RS 320G/CAS 410J Catholic Imagination and Film
MW 2:30-3:45 Loyola 5
Office: Loyola 32 **Hrs:** MW 10:15-12:15*; W 1:20-2:20
*Meet in Cafeteria MW 11:30-12:15

SPRING, 2006 Dr. Thomas B. Leininger
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REQUIRED TEXTS

Greeley, Andrew. *The Catholic Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000)
Keenan, James F., S.J. *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts from the Catholic Tradition* (Lanham, MD: Sheed & Ward, 2004)
Website Documents (posted as announced in class or via e-mail)

READINGS & DISCUSSION SCHEDULE (Tentative)

1. W Jan 18 **Sacramental Imagination** Michael Himes, "Finding God in All Things"

2. M Jan 23 Reading: Greeley, "Introduction: Sacraments of Sensibility"
Recommended Reading: Rausch, "A Living Tradition" & "Sacraments & Christian Initiation" in *Catholicism in the Third Millennium* (DML reserve)

3. W Jan 25 Reading: Greeley, ch. 1: "Sacred Place, Sacred Time"
Film: *Gangs of New York* (Martin Scorsese, 2003, 167m; Herbert Asbury 1927 history)
Recommended Reading: McBrien, "Catholicism," "Sacramentality, The Principle of" and "Symbol"
Recommended Scorsese Films: *Mean Streets* (1973, 110m) or *Last Temptation of Christ* (2000, 163m)

4. M Jan 30 Reading: Brown, *The Spirit of Protestantism*, "Contents"; pp. 3-31; 40-50 (DML Reserve)
Guest Speaker: Dr. Kari Kloos, "Protestant Imagination and Sensibilities"

5. W Feb 1 Film: *A River Runs Through It* (Robert Redford, 1992, 123m; Norman Mclean novel)
Recommended Protestant Films: *Luther*, *The Apostle*, *Tender Mercies*, and *Left Behind*

6. M Feb 6 Reading: Greeley, chs. 2-3: "Sacred Desire" and "The Mother Love of God"
Guest Speaker: Frank Resendez, "Hispanic Catholicism and Mary, Family, and Sex."

7. W Feb 8 Film: *Like Water for Chocolate* (Alfonso Arau, 1992, 105m; Laura Esquivel novel)
Group 1: a. Gardner Waterman b. Katy Stickle c. Conor Duffy

8. M Feb 13 Reading: Greeley, chs. 4-5: "Community" and "Hierarchy"

9. W Feb 15 Film: *Fight Club* (David Fincher, 2000, 139m; Chuck Palahniuk novel)
Group 2: a. Ross Murphy b. Chelsea Ruller c. _____
Recommended: *It's a Wonderful Life*, *The Godfather Part I*, and *Lord of the Rings* (Peter Jackson)

10. M Feb 20 Reading: Greeley, ch. 6: "Salvation";

11. W Feb 22 Film: *The Mission* (Roland Joffe, 1986, 126m; Robert Bolt novel)
Group 3: a. James Friedman b. Sebastian Koprowski c. Ryan Reynolds

12. M Feb 27 Reading: Greeley, ch. 7 and Conclusion: "Sensibility and Socialization" and "The Enchanted Imagination"

13. W Mar 1 Film: *Brothers McMullen* (Edward Burns, 1995, 98m)

Group 4: a. Meggie Sampson b. Jen Kentfield c. _____

Thursday, Mar 2 at noon PAPER 1 is DUE in basket marked "Papers for Dr. Leininger" in L32

Mar 4-12 No Classes: **Spring Break**

14. M Mar 13 **Catholic Moral Imagination** Reading: Keenan, ch. 1: "Love"

15. W Mar 15 Film: *Jean de Florette* (Claude Berri, 1987, 122m; Marcel Pagnol novel)

Group 5: a. Tim Etzkorn b. Maureen Carey c. Emily Dufficy

Recommended: *My Father's Glory* and *My Mother's Castle* (Claude Berri)

16. M Mar 20 Reading: Keenan, ch. 2: "Conscience"

17. W Mar 22 Film: *Manon of the Spring* (Claude Berri, 1987, 113m; Marcel Pagnol novel)

Group 6: a. Meaghan Woolridge b. Mary Kennelly c. _____

18. M Mar 27 Reading: Keenan, ch. 3: "Sin"; Film Lecture (viewed in class): Himes, "Eucharist"

19. W Mar 29 Film: *Babette's Feast* (Gabriel Axel, 1987, 102m; Karen Blixen novel)

Group 7: a. Caitlin Connelly b. Jessica Carrico c. Jason Deich

20. M Apr 3 Reading: Keenan, ch. 4: "Suffering"

21. W Apr 5 Film: *The Passion of the Christ* (Mel Gibson, 2004, 127m)

Group 8: a. Alisa Noble b. Rachel Howatson c. Breanna Symmes

Recommended Film: *The Shawshank Redemption* (Frank Darabont, 1994, 142m)

Thursday, Apr 6 at noon PAPER 2 is DUE in basket marked "Papers for Dr. Leininger" in L32

22. M Apr 10 Reading: Keenan, pp. 96-100 and ch. 7: "Practicing the Corporal Works of Mercy";
Leininger, "Principles of Catholic Social Teaching" (on website);
Film Lecture (viewed in class): Sr. Helen Prejean

Recommended: Cunningham, "The Forgiveness of Sins," ch. 10 of *Reading is Believing* (DML Reserve)

23. W Apr 12 Film: *Dead Man Walking* (Timothy Robbins, 1996, 122m; Helen Prejean, CSJ nonfiction)

Group 9: a. Drew Annenberg b. Charlie McGlynn c. Sarah Bolger

24. M Apr 17 Film (to be viewed before class): Kevin Burke, S.J. "Remembering Romero" (DML Reserve); also review "Principles of Catholic Social Teaching"

25. W Apr 19 Film: *Romero* (John Duigan, 1989, 105m)

Guest Discussion Leaders: Romero House members who traveled to El Salvador

Recommended: *Salvador* (Oliver Stone, 1986, 123m)

26. M Apr 24 Reading: Keenan, ch. 9 "Hope and Leadership," and "Conclusion: To Live Likewise"
Film: To be selected by students and viewed before this Monday class.

27. W Apr 26 Last Class Meeting

Friday, April 28 at noon FINAL PAPER is DUE in basket marked “Papers for Dr. Leininger” in L32

Recommended Texts (On reserve at DML except as noted):

Blake, Richard A., S.J. *Afterimage: The Indelible Catholic Imagination of Six American Filmmakers* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2000)

Brown, Robert McAfee. *The Spirit of Protestantism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965)

Cunningham, David S. *Reading is Believing: The Christian Faith Through Literature and Film* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2002)

McBrien, Richard P., ed. *The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995) [Available in the reference area at DML]

Rausch, Thomas P. *Catholicism in the Third Millennium* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003)

DESCRIPTION

How do Catholics imagine the world? Are there characteristically Catholic ways of doing so? How do these imaginative dispositions inform Catholic living and community? This course will use readings and films to explore these questions. We will give special emphasis to examination of the sacramental and moral dimensions of Catholic imagination.

Our approach will not be limited to filmmakers who identify themselves as Catholics or who claim to treat Catholic themes. Rather, we will take a broader approach that seeks to understand Catholic imagination by examining how (and to what extent) diverse films do or do not concretize Catholic ways of imagining the world. At the same time, we will consider how Catholic imagination might significantly enrich our lives as persons from diverse religious and secular traditions.

Students should acquire an understanding of (1) central elements of a Catholic worldview including its moral dimensions (2) how this worldview can be expressed in film (3) how such expressions can form the way we make sense of and live in our world. Our goal is that, as we learn in these three areas, we will experience the challenge and enjoyment of discovering and developing our own abilities and interests.

HOW TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES

1. **Textually Informed Class Participation and Consistent Attendance**

- ✧ Attend each class (attendance at every class meeting matters) with
 - a) the assigned texts completed and in hand,
 - b) at least one question or reflection on the readings (I may ask you to write this on the board at the start of class), and
 - c) answers to any reading questions provided by the professor (e.g., on the course website).
- ✧ During class, ask and answer questions and offer reflections in a manner that demonstrates thoughtful reading of the assigned texts and consultation of a dictionary on important yet unfamiliar terms.
- ✧ You are responsible for all announcements and material covered in each class. Form “buddy” groups of 3-4 students who will pick up handouts, graded assignments (if you grant them permission), take notes, and pass on changes in the syllabus or other announcements made in class whenever one or more of their buddies are absent. *If you become ill* and/or are unable to attend at a class meeting, it is your responsibility to obtain these items from another class member and ask the professor questions remaining **after** you have read them.

2. **Quizzes**

At the start of many class meetings you will have a short quiz designed to assess how well you have completed and reflected upon the assigned readings/viewings. To encourage preparation, I typically allow

you to use your notes but not the text. The short time allowed requires that you have taken good notes on the text. I will drop your two lowest grades for these in-class exercises.

A student who is absent or arrives after an in-class quiz or writing exercise is given earns a zero. You may avoid a zero only if you submit, **prior to the start of class** (e-mail is fine but follow up with a printout at the next class meeting), a one page, single-spaced typewritten a) reconstruction of the argument in the assigned reading for a Monday class and, b) analysis of the evidence that the film does or does not embody the concepts in the week's readings (for a Wednesday class). The reconstruction of assigned reading must follow this format: 1. Thesis: in 1-2 sentences state the main point advanced; 2. Support: 2-3 most important reasons offered in support of thesis; 3. Analysis (this must constitute **50% of your paper**): your own critical reflection on why the argument was or was not persuasive, what was left out that you would add, what would follow if one accepted the speaker's argument, etc. If you are writing on film due on a Wednesday, your paper must include 1. Key Concept from the Course: explain in 1-3 sentences 2. Brief Description of the Film: 3-4 sentences and 3. Analysis (this must constitute **50% of your paper**): your critical reflection on the relevance of the concept for analyzing the film as well as the questions and possible insights the film generates for understanding the concept.

3. Learning Exercise: How a Film Illuminates a Catholic Theme

Teams of two students will have 20 minutes to help the class learn how a 5 minute film or television clip (shown by the team to the class) can help us to understand what the assigned readings for that week have to say about a central theme in a Catholic worldview. The total time allotted for the group is 25 minutes. One member of the team (or a backup person) **must arrive 10 minutes before class** to set up and test to make sure the film clip will run properly. You may select a clip from the assigned film for the day or from another film or television show. I encourage you to find a clip that provides the most thought provoking, creative, and apt expression of the argument in the readings. The two essential items to address are to enhance our understanding of:

- 1) the central argument in the assigned reading,
- 2) how the film concretely illuminates what the assigned readings say about the Catholic theme. (*This is your most important task!*)

If possible, try doing this through a hands-on, interactive learning exercise followed by your summary of what can be learned. Your presentation should leave the class with questions (written on the board) to stimulate critical reflection among the class about the meaning ("How to interpret the text, film, or their relationships?"), implications ("What difference might it make if one imagined the world as the text or film suggests?"), and/or evaluation of the assigned reading and film ("Does the text/film provide valuable insight into the human condition?" "Why or why not?" "Are their weaknesses or problems with its claims?"). Don't worry about discussing all of your questions on the board as the class will have an opportunity to discuss them at greater length after your presentation. **Before class**, the team needs to have, **written on the board**, a) the central theme to be addressed; b) the name of the film/television show (for the clip); and c) thought provoking questions. In addition, the film clip needs to be cued up *before class*.

Each member of the class will submit an evaluation of how well the team helped them to understand and examine the readings in light of the film. Instructor will consider these evaluations in assigning a grade. **Each team member must prepare a back up presenter** to meet your responsibilities a) if you cannot arrive 10 minutes before class or b) in the event of an unexpected absence on the day of the presentation. If no one is present to conduct the exercise, your group will receive a grade of zero.

The case discussion will be assessed on 10 point scale using the following criteria:

- a) *Facilitate Class Learning*. How well did the group help the class understand and examine the relevance of a religious studies concept for a contemporary issue/event?
- b) *Creativity and Originality*. How well did the group show creativity and originality in designing an exercise that engaged the class?

- c) *Research & Preparation.* How well did the group research their material and prepare for questions?
- d) *Responsibility for Getting the Job Done as Scheduled.* Did the group make arrangements to prepare other classmates to fill in if one or more group members should miss class (if no student is present to conduct the entire exercise, the result will be a zero for this component).

4. Three Events and Three Papers

Three Events. 5 points of the 100 possible for each paper will be based upon a one page, single-spaced, typewritten reconstruction and analysis of a public lecture on Catholicism and/or film that the student attended prior to the due date for the exam or paper and attached to the back of the exam or paper. Any of the four talks in the “Catholicism and the Modern World Speaker Series” (at 7:30 p.m. in the Science Amphitheatre on 2/2, 2/23, 4/20 and in the Mountain View Room, ALC on 2/21) meet this requirement. As long as you attend one of the lectures in that series, you may also attend a Catholic or Protestant worship service (whichever tradition is most unfamiliar to you), a public lecture on film in Denver area, or, with prior approval, some other event that will advance your learning of the course topics.

Papers. *Do NOT summarize the films in the body of your papers.* Instead provide a brief (no more than 1 page single-spaced) summary attached as an appendix to your paper, place a note in the body: “see appendix” and do not count the appendix as part of your paper length.

Paper 1: *Comparative analysis of a Protestant and a Catholic film.* 6-7 pages. The purpose of this paper is to test the argument (of Greeley and others) that Catholics and Protestants imagine the world in significantly different ways. You will select one film that Greeley would likely identify as strongly Protestant (possible examples include the recommended Protestant films in the syllabus) and another film that he would identify as strongly Catholic (possible examples include almost all other films on the syllabus). Then address the following:

- 1) Explain what, according to the course materials, distinguishes a Protestant vs. a Catholic imagination (do not exceed two pages for this step).
- 2) Discuss the evidence that supports your selection of a strongly Protestant and a strongly Catholic film.
- 3) Discuss how the two films raise challenges and/or support Greeley’s thesis (e.g., Could one argue that the both films display characteristics of both traditions?).

Paper 2: *Analysis of Keenan’s arguments concerning Catholic morality in light of a film.* 6-7 pages. The purpose of this paper is to examine Keenan’s arguments in light of a film. Your paper should address the following

- 1) Explain how Keenan understands a central element of Catholic morality, such as love, conscience, mercy and justice (do not exceed 1.5 pages for this step).
- 2) Analyze how the film provides insights into how we should love, exercise our conscience, or practice mercy and justice (Note: be sure to select a film that portrays the element discussed in step one).
- 3) Compare and contrast the views and insights from Keenan and the film in order to develop a better account of how this element of morality should shape our lives.

Final Paper: 8-9 pages.

Option One. *Film as a lens for Catholics and culture.*

- 1) Explain how an outside scholar understands the relationship between Catholics and their culture (or the mass media of the culture), e.g., Mark Massa’s book *Catholics and American Culture* or his *Anti-Catholicism in America*, or William F. Lynch’s *Image Industries* (do not exceed 2.5 pages for this step).
- 2) Examine how a film portrays or embodies the relationship between Catholics and their culture.

- 3) Using concepts/arguments from both parts of the course (Part I: “Sacramental Imagination” and Part II: “Moral Imagination”) as analytical tools, compare and contrast the two in order to develop suggestions for improving this relationship.

Option Two. *Integrating sacramental and moral imagination.* Select one significant element of Catholic imagination from the Part I of the course as well as one from Part II and address the following:

- 1) Briefly explain each element and provide your own examples (do not exceed 2 pages),
- 2) Using at least one outside scholar (not from assigned readings or lectures) analyze the connections and/or tensions between these two elements),
- 3) Explain how a film brings out connections and/or tensions between these two elements
- 4) Compare and contrast 2) and 3) and discuss how these elements might make a practical difference in one’s life

More Options. *You may propose (subject to instructor’s approval) your own topic for any of these papers.* Your typewritten proposal must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the due date and it must indicate how you will demonstrate your understanding of the course concepts and materials and your ability to employ them in critical analysis.

Late papers are marked down 1/3 letter grade per 24-hour period. Papers (typewritten, double-spaced, and 14 point Times font) will be graded upon how well they

- a) **execute the requirements in the “Writing Guidelines” on the course website** [these include such things as providing an abstract and following an accepted manual of style such as Diana Hacker, *A Writer’s Reference*. 5th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2003 (available at the Writing Center)].
- b) **demonstrate depth of understanding of the course concepts and ability to employ these concepts analytically** by developing your own thoughtful examples, analogies, connections, and insights (simply paraphrasing assigned or outside texts does not fulfill the assignment), and
- c) make use of the **Writing Center** in Loyola Hall Room #1 (tel. 303-458-4039).

Plagiarism (see Hacker, 331 ff) includes a failure to properly cite and acknowledge the sources of words, arguments, and ideas that are not your own, will typically result in a failing grade *for the course* and referral to the appropriate University authority.

Rewrite. Students may turn in a rewrite of no more than one of the first two papers no later than 7 days after the day that the instructor returned graded papers to the class. **Rewrites will not be accepted without attaching**

- 1) **the original graded paper,**
- 2) **a slip showing a consultation with the Writing Center on the rewrite and**
- 3) **a redlined version of the paper** (or use of a yellow highlighter) **to indicate text changed from the original paper** (the Writing Center can show you how to do this).

If the rewrite grade is higher, I will average it with the original paper grade. If it is lower, the original grade will stand.

GRADING

Class Contribution (includes Learning Exercise, attendance, and textually informed participation)	10%
In-Class Quizzes/Writings	20%
Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	20%
Final Paper	<u>30%</u>
TOTAL	100%

A	94-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A-	90-93	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62

A	Outstanding; mastery of course material	D	Inferior work; minimally acceptable to pass
B	Very good understanding of course material	F	Fails to meet requirements; little understanding
C	Good understanding of course material	Pass	C- or higher; pass/fail student with a “D+ = F”

POLICIES

Exams must be taken as scheduled. Discuss questions about grades outside of class sessions.

Students must know and comply with the “**academic dishonesty policy**” of Regis University. I have a zero tolerance policy toward cheating, e.g., talking during an exam, using inappropriate sources of information, and submitting the work of others as your own. Cite the author if an idea is not your own.

Disabilities will be accommodated after a student has registered at Carroll Hall 225 (x4941).

Changes to this syllabus, the course requirements, office hours, etc. will be announced in class throughout the semester. Changes in office hours will be posted outside Dr. Leininger’s office door

Office Hours. On MW I teach in Loyola 22 until 10:15 a.m. To see me right at 10:15 a.m. come into Loyola 22 as I often talk with students before walking to my office in Loyola 32. On MW at 11:30 a.m. I walk to the cafeteria and am available to meet with students over lunch (please don’t hesitate to approach me there if you want to talk about anything). If you prefer a more private setting, you can meet me in my office at the other office hours. If you have class or work during the office hours, contact me after class or **by telephone** (not e-mail) to arrange an alternative time.

Correspondence. Use voicemail rather than e-mail for time sensitive correspondence.