

REL 100: Catholic Theological Reflection on Service **Dominica 2011**

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Course Description

Students engaged in service work sponsored by Le Moyne College but not explicitly related to a credit-bearing course will examine their service-related experiences in critical dialogue with Catholic theology. Students in this section will build upon their course work in REL 200: Religious Perspectives on the Human Situation in order to reflect upon their experience of service in the Commonwealth of Dominica.

Students who successfully complete this course will earn 1 credit.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. articulate qualities of a culture different from their own
2. articulate aspects of Catholic theology concerning cosmology, Christology, soteriology, sacramentology, evolution and social justice
3. explain a liturgy or church service and its relation to everyday life
4. propose a course of action to promote social justice

Method of Course:

This course will build upon REL 200, "Religious Perspectives on the Human Situation." It will engage students in critical reflection upon their service experience in Dominica by considering the role of religion/culture in the evolution of the human person.

Students will volunteer to do service in the Commonwealth of Dominica for ten days. During that time they will volunteer in at least one of the following enterprises: an elementary school, a school for the developmentally challenged, a nursing home for the poor, a construction project for the elderly poor, a daycare center for the poor, a vocational school, a women's cooperative. Students will keep a journal of their activities, re-

flecting especially on their observations of the role of “religion” [culture inspired by faith] in Dominica. They will meet daily as a group with an instructor to share those experiences and to reflect on their significance in light of assigned readings.

Topics to be discussed:

- the role of culture/religion in Dominica
 - comparisons with experiences in the U.S., especially at Cathedral Academy at Pompei
- the Judeo-Christian assertion of the meaningfulness of life
 - the role of evolution
- some reasons for social injustice
- the role of the following in the promotion of salvation:
 - Darwinian evolution
 - human endeavor
 - Jesus Christ
 - grace
 - liturgy or church service

Course requirements

Required texts:

- Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu*
- Selected articles

Participation in the Dominica Service Project
Keep a journal of activities and of initial reactions
Participate in class in Dominica

Write a five-page paper consisting of critical reflections upon the service experience in light of class discussion and readings. Due to Donald Maldari via Blackboard by Monday June 6 at 11:59 p.m. EDST. Acceptable formats: Pages, MS Word, RTF.

Computation of grade

The grade will be based upon

- the quality of class participation
 - evidence of having read the material
 - evidence of reflection upon the material
 - contribution to class discussion relating written material to lived experience
- written essay
 - Statement of thesis

Rel 100: Catholic Theological Reflection on Service
Dominica 2011

- Support of thesis
- Organization
- Effective use of texts required for the course
- Grammar, style etc.

The quality of the service is not a factor in the grade.

A, A-.....represents a mastery of the field by reason of interest.

B+, B, B-.....a student should manifest an understanding that encompasses more than the basic elements of a course.

C+, C, C-.....a student should be able to recall the basic elements of a course, understand the essential background and materials, make some applications of the basic principles and express them intelligibly.

D.....the student's performance is deficient to some degree in any of the areas outlined under C+, C or C-.

F.....the student's performance is deficient to a high degree in any of the areas outlined under C+, C or C-.

WF.....failure due to dropping a course or for excessive absence. It is the equivalent of F.

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me within the first week of class or as soon as possible.

Schedule. Classes will be for two hours each.

Date	Activity
Thursday, May 19	Travel day
Friday, May 20	<i>Divine Milieu</i> : Introduction and Part I
Saturday, May 21	Touring and recreation
Sunday, May 22	Church service, touring and recreation
Monday, May 23	<i>Divine Milieu</i> : Part II
Tuesday, May 24	<i>Divine Milieu</i> : Part III & Donald Maldari, S.J., "From Swords to Ploughshares," unpublished paper given at the College Theology Society Convention 2011.

Rel 100: Catholic Theological Reflection on Service
Dominica 2011

Wednesday, May 25	J. Matthew Ashley, "Contemplation in the Action of Justice: Ignacio Ellacuría and Ignatian Spirituality" in <i>Love that Produces Hope: The Thought of Ignacio Ellacuría</i> , Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005, 144-165
Thursday, May 26	Dean Brackley, S.J., "Spirituality for Solidarity" (2-9), "The Reality of Evil" (20-28), "Downward Mobility" (90-104), "Humility and Solidarity" (105-108) in <i>The Call to Discernment in Troubled Times</i> , New York: Crossroad, 2004
Friday, May 27	Flannery O'Connor, "Revelation" in <i>Everything That Rises Must Converge</i> , New York: The Noonday Press, 1965, p. 191-218
Saturday, May 28	Travel day