Course Description

It is not obvious that the Catholic Church and its teachings have much to do with politics. Realists say that politics has its own laws and logic to which a Christian must conform. Radicals agree that politics is incompatible with Catholic faith but insist that Catholics should have nothing to do with it. Should a Catholic be involved in politics, then? If so, what does his or her faith have to do with the conduct of politics? How the Church views the political order is the first order of business in Catholicism and Politics. But if the Church does offer guidance for the political order, then of what does it consist? How ought Catholics to view the state’s policy towards war, religious freedom, human rights, the death penalty, abortion, economics, global poverty, immigration, health care, and the environment? How ought Catholics to vote? Face issues of conscience? Deal with the Church’s own past sins?

The goal of Catholicism and Politics is to train students to approach these questions from a Catholic perspective. The course begins with an investigation of classic Catholic ideas about politics as found in Scripture and in tradition up through the Second Vatican Council. It then examines how the Church thinks about a range of contemporary issues and how it draws from its classical thinking in doing so. A highlight of the course is a series of dramatic debates in which students bring alive Catholic political issues in the context of a fictional Church gathering: a canonization hearing on the policy of Pope Pius XII towards the Holocaust, and a session of the “Council of South Bend.”

Course Objectives

1) Students will learn to think about politics analytically from a distinctively Catholic perspective.

2) Students will gain a strong familiarity with enduring concepts in Catholic political thought through reading key sources from the Catholic tradition, including the Bible, classical thinkers such as Augustine and Aquinas, and landmark papal encyclicals.

3) Students will acquire a familiarity with the Catholic Church’s teachings on contemporary political questions and develop the ability to evaluate them critically.
4) Students will learn to articulate and defend normative views about disputed political questions based on the Catholic tradition and to express these views through speaking and writing. This will take place through several modes of learning, most important among these being the dramatic debates, where students will debate issues such as the role of Pope Pius XII in the Holocaust, health care, Islam and politics, political forgiveness, and immigration.

Readings

- All readings and movies are available EITHER on Sakai OR on the internet via the given URL

- For Bible passages, please use the New American Bible, Revised Edition found online at the site of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: http://www.usccb.org/bible/

Course Requirements

- Mid-term take-home examination (25%)

- Dramatic debate: Canonization Hearing on Pius XII and the Holocaust or a session of The Council of South Bend (total of 30%):

- Final examination (25%)

- Class participation (reading quizzes, contribution to discussion, etc.) (15%)

- Contribution to class online forum. Each student is expected to post at least one thoughtful comment to the forum every week. Thoughtful means informed by readings for the class and involving a point of view and reasons for it. (5%)

Policies

- **Attendance.** You are expected to attend every class session. Excused absences consist of 1) preventive illness; 2) death in the family; 3) a university-sponsored event for which a note of excuse is provided. You’re granted one “grace” unexcused absence, beyond which each unexcused absence results in the drop of the final grade by one point (on a 100-point scale). In addition, class begins on time. Being more than 15 minutes late without excuse counts as an unexcused absence for that session.
• Use of laptops, smart phones, and other electronic devices during class is not permitted.

• Eating during class is not permitted.

• Honesty. Cheating of any kind carries significant penalties. I adhere to the University’s Honor Code: see http://www.nd.edu/~hnrcode/index.htm. I consider you, a student taking this course, to be bound by the pledge: “As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty.”
Introduction
(Tuesday, August 22nd)

Readings
• Daniel Philpott, “One Professor’s Guide.” (You might be interested in the accompanying article in the summer 2009 issue of Notre Dame Magazine, “To Redeem the Time,” which can be found at http://magazine.nd.edu/news/11885/#)

Old Testament
(Thursday, August 24th)

Readings:
• Deuteronomy 17:8-20
• 1 Samuel: Chapter 8, Chapter 10:1, Chapter 10:17-27, Chapter 11:15, and Chapter 12

New Testament
(Tuesday, August 29th)

Readings:
• Matthew 5:38-44; Matthew 22:15-22; John 18:28-19:27; Romans 13:1-7; and Colossians 1:15-19

The Early Church
(Thursday, August 31st)

Readings:
• “From the Letter to Diognetus,” in Oliver O’Donovan and Joan Lockwood O’Donovan, eds., From Irenaeus to Grotius, pp. 12-14

The Augustinian Turn
(Tuesday, September 5th)

Readings:
• Selections from Augustine, in O’Donovan and O’Donovan, pp. 113-119, 131-136, 140 (beginning with “From City of God, Book 5”) -163

The Politics of the Middle Ages
(Thursday, September 7th)

Readings:
• Selections from Paul E. Sigmund, ed., *St. Thomas Aquinas on Politics and Ethics*, pp. 14-17 (stop at “Chapter 2”), 26-29, 44-56 (including Qu. 97), 61-73 (including Qu. 69)

*The Church and The New World*
(Tuesday, September 12th)

**Movie**
• *The Mission*, find on Sakai

*The Church vs. the Modern State*
(Thursday, September 14th)

**Readings:**
• *Syllabus of Errors* (1864), sections V, VI, IX, X, and postscript required (rest recommended). (Find at: [http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm](http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm))

*Canonization Hearing: Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust*
(Tuesday, September 19th)

*Political Themes in the Second Vatican Council*
(Thursday, September 21st)

**Readings:**
• *Gaudium et Spes*, sections 1-12, 23-28, 40, 42, 73-93.

*America and Americanism*
(Tuesday, September 26th)

**Readings:**
• Weigel, George, “Catholicism and the American Proposition,” pp. 38-44
• Steinfels, Peter, “Reinventing Liberal Catholicism,” pp. 30-39

**Deneen/Munoz National Review**

**Mid-Term Examination**
Liberation Theology and Social Justice For the Poor
(Tuesday, October 3rd)

Readings:
- Gutierrez, Gustavo, *Essential Writings*, pp. 23-33, 143-148, 194-197
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the “Theology of Liberation,”* entire

Radical Catholicism
(Thursday, October 5th)

Readings:

War and Peace
(Tuesday, October 10th)

Readings:
- *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, pp. 213-226

Transforming the International System
(Thursday, October 12th)

Film:
- *Liberating a Continent: John Paul II and the Fall of Communism*

** FALL BREAK **

Religious Freedom
(Tuesday, October 24th)
Readings:

- *Dignitatis Humanae*, entire, find at

John Paul II’s Gospel of Life  
(Thursday, October 26th)

Readings:
  (Find at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae_en.html)

The Death Penalty  
(Tuesday, October 31st)

Readings:
- *Dead Man Walking*, find on Sakai

Catholic Economics  
(Thursday, November 2nd)

Readings:

Immigration  
(Tuesday, November 7th)

Readings:

The Church and the Sins of Its Own Past  
(Thursday, November 9th)

Readings:
- International Theological Commission, *Memory and Reconciliation*, introduction and sections 1, 3, 4, and 5 (Find at:
On Being a Catholic Politician  
(Tuesday, November 14th)

Guest:  
Michael Hamann, County Auditor, St. Joseph County

The Environment  
(Thursday, November 16th)

Guest:  
Fr. Terry Ehrman

Readings:  
Laudato Si, entire (Find at:  
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html)

How Should I Vote?  
(Tuesday, November 21st)

Reading:  
• Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, entire  
(Find at:  

** Thanksgiving Break **

The Council of South Bend: Health Care  
(Tuesday, November 28th)

The Council of South Bend: Islam  
(Thursday, November 30th)

The Council of South Bend: Forgiveness  
(Tuesday, December 5th)
A Litany of Catholics in Politics  
(Thursday, December 7th)

Movie:
- *A Man For All Seasons*, find on Sakai.

Final Examination: Thursday, December 14th, 10:30-12:30
It’s October 2017 and Pope Francis has just released word that the Church will be holding an ecumenical council in December 2017. He issued the news suddenly and hastily, much as Pope John XXIII did back in 1962 when he called the Second Vatican Council. Thanks for the advance notice, Holy Father! This one will occur in South Bend, Indiana on the campus of the greatest university in the world. Among the fruits that the Pope hopes will come from the Council is a series of encyclicals that offer guidance on issues that are both urgent for our time and unsettled in the Church’s social teaching. He knows that in order to write a good encyclical, he must depend on the expertise of the Church’s best minds. What more natural a source than the students in Catholicism and Politics? Taught by Professor Philpott, they are brilliant, well grounded in the tradition, eloquent, and good looking. He asks the students of this class to serve jointly on an Ad Hoc Pontifical Council on Social Issues (AHOPOCSI). On behalf of the students, Professor Philpott graciously accepts.

Organization of the Council

In early December, then, the Pope will hold a session of the AHOPOCSI that will focus on a particular question, considering arguments on both sides of each issue. Being politically savvy, the pope has recruited both hawks and doves within the church. Knowing of the sparkling quality of the students involved, he expects great insights to emerge.

The two issues, with rough hawk and dove positions, are:

1) Is it the duty of governments to provide universal health care?
   - Hawks: No. Health care is ambiguous in its meaning (how much is enough?) and dependent on the ability of a regime to provide it. Whether it ought to be provided by the state is a contingent question, depending on budgetary issues, the likely consequences of creating large bureaucracies, dangers of governments using health care to promote unjust practices, and the like. Perhaps a case can be made for it in a given country but it is not a universal duty.
   - Doves: Yes. Health care is an essential part of human flourishing and a human right. It follows the governments have a duty to provide universal health insurance or something much like it. It is unlikely that economies will generate adequate health care for everyone, particularly the poor, on their own, and so it is the duty of the state to guarantee it. This duty reflects an ethic of care that in turn reflects the justice of right relationship depicted in the Bible.

2) Should the Catholic Church take up a robust dialogue with Islam?
- **Hawks.** No. Or at least, any dialogue with Islam must honestly confront Islam with the irrational violence and terrorism in its ranks, its failure to support religious freedom, its treatment of women, and its lack of democracy and be honest about the theological differences between Catholicism and Islam.

- **Doves.** Yes. The Church ought to welcome a vigorous dialogue with Islam in which the two sides focus on common religious, moral, and political beliefs and stress their agreement. Like all religions, Islam is a multivalent religion and is capable of peace and justice. Finding common ground on issues of peace and justice is essential for world peace.

3) Should states vigorously incorporate forgiveness into their politics with other states?

- **Hawks:** Forgiveness, though Popes Benedict XV and John Paul II commended it to nation-states, should rarely if ever be practiced by heads of state. At best, it can be practiced by individuals and members of the church regarding political events. But generally, it does not belong in statecraft.

- **Doves:** What Benedict XV and John Paul II proposed was a visionary practice that should be incorporated more vigorously into state behavior in order to make the world a more peaceful place.

At the Council of South Bend, hawks and doves will present speeches in favor of their arguments. Teams of students will be assigned to argue one side of one of this issue. The structure of each session is as follows:

Hawks’ speech: 20 minutes  
Doves’ speech: 20 minutes  
Preparation time: 5 minutes  
Hawks’ questioning of Doves: 10 minutes  
Doves’ questioning of Hawks: 10 minutes  
Audience participation: 10 minutes

**What The Pope Expects of Participants**

The hawk and dove positions outlined above are stated only very roughly. It is the job of each team to research the details and substance of the position, decide what its specific argument is going to be, formulate it into an outline, and then present it through speeches at the Council. Concretely, each team is required to produce two major “products”: 1) its oral presentation at the Council;
2) a transcript of the team’s presentation. The speech ought to present a thesis that encapsulates the entire hawk or dove argument and then defend the thesis through convincing sub-arguments, reasons, and evidence. The pope is particularly keen to know that your argument is continuous with past church teaching. Your speech, then, should refer to 1) basic sources of Catholic doctrine, including scripture and classical teachings, drawn from the course readings; 2) church documents from the Vatican II period on forward; and 3) relevant secular (and in one case, Islamic) books, articles, internet sites, and other sources. See Professor Philpott’s “What Makes For an A Paper and Presentation” posted on Concourse. Team members should work together in developing a plan of research, finding and reading sources, and combining the findings into a common presentation at the Council of South Bend. You are required to draw upon at least seven sources in your research, including at least three that are not exclusively internet sources.

The speeches at the Council should contain all the virtues of a standard paper, rigorous and careful in their argumentation, but should also appeal to the heart. They should involve attention-grabbing introductions and conclusions, superb rhetoric, metaphor, rhetorical questions, invocations of spiritual themes, voice projection and modulation, eye contact, colorful illustration, and emotion. You are expected to use at least three of the rhetorical techniques mentioned in class. You are to conduct the speeches entirely orally, without use of videos, power point, other electronic aids, or a chalkboard, and with no handouts. You should divide up the period of the speech so that each person speaks for roughly equal periods of time. Whether you each speak for one continuous block of time or speak in several alternating segments is up to you.

It is in the transcript that citations of your sources should appear, showing where the information in the speech comes from. You can use the parenthetical format (Philpott, 2009) to cite this information. Please include a bibliography at the end of the transcript.

Finally, each team is required to submit one week prior to the Council session at which you will speak a “plan of action” that sets forth an outline for how you will use your 20 minutes at the Council of South Bend – how you will structure your speech, what your thesis will be, who will speak when and on what subjects, etc. This need not be more than a page and the style in which you want to present it is not strictly prescribed. Professor Philpott is mainly looking to see that you have thought ahead about your strategy and that you are on track for your speech. This will be graded for completion and for basic competence but is not one of the two final products that will constitute the bulk of your grade. After receiving it Professor Philpott will review it and let you know if any major revisions are needed prior to the Council performance.

Bibliographical Suggestions to Get You Started
** See certain Catholic journals of opinion, whose contents are accessible through “e-journals” on the Hesburgh Library site. On the right is *First Things* (which also contains Protestant and Jewish perspectives) and *National Catholic Register*. More to the left are *America*, *Commonweal*, *The Tablet*, and *National Catholic Reporter*.

** Several of these journals have blogs in which debates take place over Council issues. *America*, *Commonweal*, *First Things*, and *National Catholic Reporter* have websites with some type of forum for running commentary.

** For modern Church teachings, the Vatican website is an outstanding and comprehensive source of documents. [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

** For positions of the U.S. bishops conference on Council issues and other great resources, see the conference’s website at [http://www.usccb.org/](http://www.usccb.org/)

** An excellent blog on the Church’s teaching on various political and social issues is: [http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/?eng=y](http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/?eng=y)

** See also – and conduct searches in – various Catholic news services, including Catholic News Services and Zenit.
Appendix 2: CANONIZATION HEARING FOR POPE PIUS XII

For some time now, the process to canonize Pope Pius XII has been underway in the Catholic Church. Yet in recent years, especially in the past decade, intense public controversy has arisen over Pius XII’s response to the Holocaust. His harshest critics accuse him of being “Hitler’s Pope,” i.e., virtually complicit in the Holocaust. His strongest supporters see him almost diametrically opposite, i.e., as a heroic rescuer of hundreds of thousands of Jews. Others fall somewhere in between. Because of this controversy, Pius XII’s canonization cause is highly controversial. Some worry that beatifying and then canonizing Pius XII would greatly harm the Church’s relations with the Jews, which the Church has done so much to cultivate in the last quarter century. Others reply that postponing the process would only offer a tacit condoning of slanderous accusations against Pius XII, create the false impression that the Church acted poorly toward the Holocaust, and harm the Church’s reputation in general. Much is at stake.

In order to decide how to proceed, Pope Francis is quite interested in knowing: Just how ought the world to regard Pius XII’s behavior towards the Holocaust? Remember that the standard for canonizing someone is heroic love. Even if one did not think that Pius XII was Hitler’s Pope, one might still argue that his behavior was not heroic love. He might still be judged a saint in the end but this episode of his life does not contribute to it, though it also may not detract from it. Or, one could argue that his behavior was indeed heroic or that it is at least consistent with a larger life of heroic love.

So Pope Francis has turned to none other than Professor Philpott and his Catholicism and Politics class, having heard of the brilliance, eloquence, and good looks of the students. Further, he regards Notre Dame as the greatest university in the world. He has called for a group of students to train themselves as experts in Pius XII’s role in the Holocaust and to conduct a hearing on it to determine if it comports with a life of heroic love. Borrowing from a feature of canonization proceedings in previous times, he asks half of this group to serve as “Devil’s Advocates” and to argue against Pius XII’s canonization based on this historical episode. The hearing will take place on Thursday, September 19th in the venerable Hall of O’Shaughnessy, 9:30-10:45 am. It is important to note what the burden of argument is for each side. How the question in front of the panel is phrased makes a great deal of difference. Put formally, the question for debate is: “Did Pius XII do everything that he reasonably and ethically could have done, given his position and his resources, to oppose the Holocaust and to save Jews from death?”

Devils Advocates are charged with the task of showing that Pius XII’s behavior during the Holocaust did not meet the standards of having done everything that he reasonably and ethically could have done to stop the Holocaust and to save Jews. It is optional how strongly the Devil’s Advocates want to “set the dial.” They could argue, for instance, that Pius XII was not ignominious but that he fell culpably short of doing all that he could have done. Or, they could go further and argue that he was something on
the order of “Hitler’s Pope.” Either way, Pius XII’s behavior not only does not add to the case for his heroic virtue but detracts from it and slows down if not puts the kibosh on his canonization.

Promoters of the Cause, on the other hand, are charged with the task of showing that he did everything he reasonably could have done. They, too, have options as to how to construe his actions. They could go so far as to say that he was heroic and that this episode evidences his heroism and thus contributes to his canonization cause. Or they could argue more modestly that he was perhaps not heroic but that he exercised good judgment all things considered and that he cannot be held morally responsible for any shortcomings and weaknesses in the Church’s opposition to fascism during this most difficult of times. In this version, this episode of his life does not contribute to his life of heroic love yet also does not preclude that other aspects of his life demonstrated heroic love, thus allowing his canonization process to proceed forward.

Both Devil’s Advocates and Promoters of the Cause ought not only to make their case on the historical merits but also, in some measure, to appeal to larger principles of politics derived from the previous part of the course. Promoters of the Cause, for instance, might say that the Church was acting as a proponent of peace and justice in a way that reflects the tradition of the prophets, that calls the state to account for not being an instrument of God’s purposes as understood by Augustine, Aquinas, or St. Paul, or that defends the poor and human dignity in the way that the scriptures call for and that previous Church actors have done. They will appeal to the Bible, to history, and to great Catholic thinkers – the course up to this point is all fair game. Devil’s Advocates might say that the pope was blind to the same sorts of principles of justice mentioned above and what is more, acted more like a diplomat than a prophet and was clouded by his anti-communism from seeing other sorts of injustice like fascism. In other words, in addition to presenting evidence from this historical episode, the experts on each team ought to use enduring principles and teachings to paint a general portrait and tell a larger story about Pius XII that supports that team’s view. An analogy is the way that a trial lawyer seeks not only to establish what happened on the night of . . . but to tell a larger story about what kind of person the defendant is and what his or her general purposes were in the episode at hand.

Three primary “products” are expected from the team: 1) a written transcript of each student’s remarks in the canonization hearing, due at the end of the hearing session; 2) your actual performance at the hearing; 3) a joint bibliography showing work that the team drew from directly in preparing its presentation. (This is in addition to the team’s Plan of Action described below.)

The team will cooperate to produce a single common presentation of which each student’s speech is a part. Remember that you have some leeway in deciding exactly what that argument will be. Near the beginning of the presentation the team should state your thesis as rigorously as possible.
It is in the transcript that you turn in that you should show your citations – where did you get your information from? (You will not voice these, of course, in the speech, though you might occasionally say something like, “as Daniel Goldhagen argued,” if you want to.) You will want to use footnotes so as not to be distracted by the citations during your speech. You need not cite every detail or piece of information. A good way to do it is to place a footnote at the end of every paragraph or couple of paragraphs, saying that “the information presented in this section is drawn from . . .” Please use a major citation protocol such as the Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association, Turabian, etc.

The performance at the hearing will be structured as follows:

Promoters of the Cause’s speech: 20 minutes

Devil’s Advocates’ speech: 20 minutes

Preparation for question period: 5 minutes

Promoters of the Cause’s questioning of Devil’s Advocates: 7 minutes

Devil’s Advocates’ questioning of Promoters of the Cause: 7 minutes

Vox Populi (Questions from the classroom): 10 minutes

In the speeches each team lays out its argument. Each speech should contain all the virtues of a paper, rigorous and careful in its argument, but also appealing to the heart. It should involve an attention-grabbing introduction and conclusion, superb rhetoric, metaphor, rhetorical questions, invocations of spiritual themes, voice projection and modulation, eye contact, colorful illustration, and emotion. You are to conduct the speech entirely orally, without use of videos, power point, other electronic aids, or a chalkboard, and with no handouts. You should divide up the period of the speech so that each person on the team speaks for roughly equal periods of time. Whether you each speak for one continuous block of time or speak in several alternating segments is up to you. See Professor Philpott’s “What Makes For An A Paper and Presentation” posted on Sakai for further criteria.

The 14-minute period of questioning of the other team is a debate in which the respective questioners get to pose the questions for the other side. For instance, when Promoters of the Cause are questioning the Devil’s Advocates, Promoters of the Cause pose a series of questions that are designed to challenge the arguments that they just heard in the Devil’s Advocates’ speech, to which Devil’s Advocates may respond. The Devil’s Advocates’ answers may contain implicit or explicit rebuttals but they may not depart from the general subject of the Promoter of the Cause’s question. Devil’s Advocates will soon get the chance to reverse the tide and ask questions of Promoters of the Cause in the same manner under the same rules. It is recommended that both teams come to the hearing with a list of questions that they anticipate asking. But they will also
have five minutes prior to the questioning to adjust their questions and strategy according to the arguments that they have just heard from the other side.

Team members should work together in developing a plan of research, finding and reading sources, and combining the findings into a common presentation at the canonization hearing. Teams are required to draw upon at least seven sources in their research, including at least three that are not exclusively internet sources. Member of teams may work together in planning each person’s portion of the presentation and thus help one another with the written transcript that is turned in. In grading, I will look upon each transcript as the student’s own.

Finally, teams are required to submit one week prior to the canonization hearing (Thursday, September 12th) a Plan of Action that sets forth an outline for how they will use their 20 minutes at the hearing– how they will structure their common speech, what their thesis will be, who will speak when and on what sub-themes, etc. This need not be more than a page and the style in which it is presented is not strictly prescribed. Professor Philpott is mainly looking to see that you have thought ahead about your strategy and that you are on track for your speech. This will be graded for completion and for basic competence but is not one of the two final products that will constitute the bulk of your grade. After receiving it Professor Philpott will review it and let you know if any major revisions are needed prior to the performance.

Below is a fairly comprehensive bibliography of sources which you can use for your research. To narrow things down, I would recommend that Devil’s Advocates draw upon the Daniel Goldhagen essay in The New Republic, John Cornwell’s Hitler’s Pope, and the Istvan Deak piece in The New York Review of Books. The Goldhagen essay is probably the most succinct statement of the case against Pius XII. Look also at Susan Zuccotti’s and Saul Friedländer’s books. I would recommend that the Promoters of the Cause look at the Dalin and Bottum volume, particularly the introductory essay, the Ronald Rychlak First Things essay, Ralph McInerny’s book, the Ventresca book, and the recent book, Church of Spies. The Deak NYROB piece is fairly balanced and so might also be a good source for you. For everyone, the Wikipedia piece at the bottom is a good place to start, though it is not free of bias.

Finally, everyone also might benefit from Kenneth Woodward’s excellent book, Making Saints, on how the Church goes about canonizing people.

• Halecki, Oskar. 1954. *Pius XII: Eugenio Pacelli: Pope of peace*. Farrar, Straus and Young. OCLC 775305
• Pham, John Peter. 2006. *Heirs of the Fisherman: Behind the Scenes of Papal Death and Succession*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0195178343
http://en.wikipedia.o