Fr. Robert Christian, OP (DSPT), available by appointment: 510-596-1807; rfchristianop@gmail.com

**Course Description:** This course will introduce students to systematic theological reflection on the sacraments in general and on each of the seven sacraments. The focus of the course will be on the Catholic tradition, but the contributions of other traditions will also be noted. The course will approach the sacraments from the perspective of *lex orandi, lex credendi*. That is, the liturgies of the sacraments will serve as the point of departure for exploring, systematically, what the Church believes Christ does in the sacraments. The systematic exploration of general sacramental theory will be especially assisted by some of the pertinent writings of Thomas Aquinas, Edward Schillebeeckx, and the Catholic magisterium, whereas for the seven sacraments in particular, both Thomas Aquinas and contemporary theologians will be used.

Requirements: Two brief papers of approximately 2000 words apiece, each treating of one question to be drawn from a list of topics provided by the professor. There shall be a written final examination based upon questions distributed to the class two weeks before the end of the semester. At the time of the exam, students will be given seven questions to answer from the list that was distributed two weeks earlier.

Intended audience: MDiv, MA, and MTS students.

**Course Goals and Outcomes:** In the sacraments, one encounters the power of the Cross of Christ with the certitude that Christ’s saving action is present. Each sacrament expresses an aspect of the “personality” of the Church, and thereby, an aspect of the vocation of each Christian. Whether or not one receives all the sacraments, none of them is superfluous to one’s understanding of Christian discipleship. The sacraments, therefore, assist one in understanding the Church as the universal sacrament, and in understanding Christ as the primordial sacrament of God. The sacraments are intelligible as effective signs of Christ and the Church, yet because they communicate divine effects, they can never be exhaustively described.

As a result of this course, students will be able (1) to describe the nature and effects of the sacraments, and the ways in which the Savior works in the sacraments; (2) to describe and analyze some of the key controversies over each of the sacraments in light of the Church’s history, tradition, and teaching office (magisterium); (3) to analyze contemporary questions in sacramental theology from the perspective of the Church’s liturgical and theological traditions; (4) to imagine what future shape the celebration of the sacraments might take, in harmony with the Church’s tradition; and (5) to carry out research in this field, through being introduced to important concepts and issues in it.

**Format:** Most classes will be composed of a lecture with questions and discussion.

**Intended Audience:** This course is intended for MA Theology students, MDiv students, and MTS students; other students at least at the Master’s level may be admitted with permission of the professor.

**Requirements:**
A. **This course requires two brief papers** of approximately 2000 words each. Each essay will treat of one of the following topics:

1. Why are there seven sacraments? Present and critique other theories for a greater or lesser number, and comment on the *significance* of the number in the East and the correlation of the same seven sacraments in East and West.

2. Issues surrounding the administration of sacraments to infants (i.e., persons who have not attained the “age of discretion”). The Eastern churches routinely administer Baptism, Chrismation, and Communion to infants. The Latin church only administers Confirmation to infants in danger of death; otherwise, Baptism alone is given to infants, and even then, only when there is a well-founded hope that the infant will be raised in the faith. Some Protestant traditions baptize only those who have attained the use of reason. Complicating matters further, the Latin church has at times endorsed the validity of Holy Orders and Matrimony conferred on infants, whereas today canonical praxis would judge such “sacraments” to be null.

3. Discuss the theological method used by the International Theological Commission in its 2007 document *The Hope of Salvation for Infants Who Die without Being Baptized*.

4. Relying on Thomas Aquinas, discuss the difference between considering sacraments as *causes* of grace and as *occasions* of grace.

5. Why, when treating of the matter and form of sacraments, does Schillebeeckx speak of an “implicit, unparticularized, but nevertheless real” manifestation of Christ’s will? With regard to the same issue, compare the positions of Thomas Aquinas and Martin Luther.

6. What is a sacramental character? Why, according to Thomas Aquinas, is it permanent? If Thomas is correct in saying that it lasts even after death, what is the *point* of a sacramental character in the afterlife?

7. Describe the differences among the effects of the sacraments of Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, and the Eucharist as far as the forgiveness of sins is concerned. Why, in the continuous rite for the sick, is it hoped that communion (viaticum) will be the last sacrament received before death?

8. Discuss what is meant by saying that Christ instituted the sacrament of Matrimony.

9. Thomas Aquinas taught that each of the orders in the *cursus honorum* conferred a sacramental character. There were seven such orders. Which degree of orders did *not* confer a character, according to Thomas, and why? Why did Thomas hold that although there were seven characters conferred in the degrees of Holy Orders, there were nevertheless not thirteen sacraments, but only seven?

10. Describe the historical ambivalence toward the practiced introduced into the European continent by Irish monks, of frequent auricular confession (followed by the application of tariffed penances), and apply the issues of history to questions today about the utility of frequent confession of sins.

The first essay is due on Friday, October 30; the second is due on December 4.

**B. Attendance and Active Participation**

Students are to be prepared for class lectures and discussions and to participate in them attentively and actively.

**C. Final Examination**

The final exam is a written exam on the entirety of the course content. Two weeks before the exam date, students will receive a list of questions from which the final exam questions will be drawn. On the date of the examination, each student will receive seven questions from the overall list, and will answer all of the seven.

**D. Summary of Grade Composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>General Description</th>
<th>R.P. Grading Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Deep understanding and insights are expressed in a clear, penetrating, and engaging manner, with virtually no errors.</td>
<td>mostly “E”s, no “U”s</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>Content, structure, and expression are all adequate, free of significant faults.</td>
<td>no “U”s – or mostly “E”s with 1 “U”</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Effort is evident, but significant errors or shortcomings are also present.</td>
<td>a few “U”s</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>Many serious deficiencies in content, structure, and expression are present.</td>
<td>several “U”s</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>There is a failure to execute the most basic elements of the assignment.</td>
<td>mostly “U”s</td>
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Grading Scale: A=100, A-=97, B+=93, B=90, B-=87, C+=83, C=80, C-=77, D+=73, D=70, F=0.

Grades for papers are assigned to criteria which are based on DSPT’s *Research Readiness Paper Review Form*, as well as DSPT’s *Rubric for Life-long Learning* and *Rubric for Effective Leadership*. 
Texts for Required Reading:

A. The current rites of each sacrament according to the liturgy of the Latin church.

B. Magisterial Documents:


__________.


C. Theological Sources


**Optional Reading**


Except for the books for which a cost is listed, all readings are to be supplied free of charge in class or through some online means (for Church or papal documents where no URL is listed, online versions are easily found.). All prices listed include shipping as found at www.bookfinder.com (new/used, rounded up, US shipping included); prices may vary considerably. At the instructor’s discretion, additional, brief readings may be assigned as the course progresses, depending on the students’ needs or interests, or other considerations.

If you are buying from Amazon.com, please consider ordering through the DSPT Amazon Bookstore at the DSPT website (http://astore.amazon.com/dspt-20/about).
Plan for the Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09.11</td>
<td><strong>Course Introduction</strong></td>
<td>The theological context of the study of the sacraments.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>The sacramental imagination.</td>
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<td>Christ as the primordial sacrament; the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation.</td>
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<td>Sacramental communication via words and signs: the notions of matter and form, <em>ex opere operato, ex opere operantis, sacramentum tantum, res et sacramentum, res tantum</em>.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E. Schillebeeckx, Foreword, Intro., and Cap. 1, and pp. 91 ff.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>L. Walsh, Capp. 1-3.</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.18</td>
<td><strong>A. Sacraments in General</strong></td>
<td>The notion of a sacramental core: what can and cannot change (giving rise to the question of what could or should change).</td>
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<td>Sacramental causality; the effects of sacraments (character and grace).</td>
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<td>The history of the enumeration of the sacraments (why are there seven?), ranging from medieval theories (e.g., Peter Damian’s 12 sacraments) to the Reformation’s acceptance of two; the problem of counting Holy Orders, three in number, as one sacrament.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>E. Schillebeeckx, Cap. 3</td>
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<td>Thomas Aquinas, <em>ST</em>, III, 60-65</td>
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<td>09.25</td>
<td>The question of the institution by Christ of each sacrament.</td>
<td>The interrelationship of the sacraments among themselves, according to Thomas Aquinas and Liam Walsh. E. Schillebeeckx’s idea that each sacrament expresses an aspect of the personality of the Church.</td>
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<td>Thomas Aquinas, <em>ST</em>, III, 60-65</td>
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<td>L. Walsh, Capp. 1-3.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Baptism</strong></td>
<td><em>Baptism</em>: its rites; its ritual relationship to Confirmation (Chrismation) and Eucharist.</td>
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<td>The current <em>form</em> of Baptism; evidence that the form may have changed.</td>
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<td>The question of the intention of the minister and the intention of the recipient: ecumenical and ecclesiological ramifications.</td>
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<td>10.02</td>
<td>The effects of Baptism.</td>
<td>The peculiar question of the remission of Original Sin.</td>
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<td>The history of the practice of baptizing infants. Discussion of when and why...</td>
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the practice of baptizing infants is justified.

*ST* III, 66-70
Schillebeeckx, cap. 2, pp. 47-89, cap. 3, pp. 91-132
ITC

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<tr>
<th>10.09 Confirmation: its rites; its ritual relationship to postbaptismal anointing, especially in Eastern churches.</th>
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<tr>
<td>The history of the “separation” of Confirmation from Baptism in the West, while the full initiation rite was maintained in the East, although the normal “subject” of the three initiatory sacraments was an infant in the East.</td>
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<td>The difficulty of distinguishing the effects of Confirmation from Baptism in such a way that Confirmation is not presented as simply a deepening of Baptism.</td>
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<td>The disputed question of the proper age to administer Confirmation.</td>
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<td><em>ST</em> III, 72</td>
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<td>R. Christian, “Midway between Baptism and Holy Orders”</td>
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<tr>
<th>10.16 Eucharist: The progress in Eucharistic doctrine following the challenge of Berengarius of Tours.</th>
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<tr>
<td>The different approaches to “consecratory words” taken in West and East.</td>
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<td>The notion of substance and transubstantiation; the relationship between the substance and the accidents in the Eucharist.</td>
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<td>The notion of real concomitance in the Eucharistic species.</td>
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<td>The relationship of the notions of sacrament and sacrifice.</td>
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<td>The Eucharist and the remission of sins.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ND, chap. 15 (including initial refs.); <em>CCC</em> 1322-1419 and related biblical texts; <em>SCG</em> IV 61-69; <em>ST</em> III 73.1-6; matter: bread and wine <em>ST</em> III 74.1; transubstantiation: <em>ST</em> III 75.1-8; mode of Christ’s presence: <em>ST</em> III 76.1-3; accidents <em>ST</em> III 77.1-2; form <em>ST</em> III 78.1; Effects: <em>ST</em> III 79.5, 7; Reception: <em>ST</em> III 80.1, 6; minister: <em>ST</em> III 82.1-2, 4; The rite of the sacrament: sacrifice: <em>ST</em> III 83.1; <em>RAS</em>, Chap. 4</td>
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<tr>
<th>10.23 The Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation</th>
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<tr>
<td>The question of God’s initiative in human justification, and its relation to human effort.</td>
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<td>The earliest forms of penance, particularly public penance performed by penitents (sometimes inducted into an “order” of penitents) which separated them from the Eucharistic community.</td>
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**Bibliography: Select Works of Note**

*Note: Inclusion of works here does not imply the professor’s endorsement of their contents. Some books have Library of Congress call numbers listed for your convenience, used at the GTU Library, but many books without such call numbers listed are in fact available at the GTU Library.*

**Bibliographies:**


Elenchus bibliographicus. Nos. 2-3 of each vol. of Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses. Louvain Journal of Theology and Canon Law. Louvain: E. Peeters, 1924-. [Each year, issue 2-3 (September) of EThL contains a bibliography for publications during the previous year from throughout the world, according to various indices, including the topics “Sacramentology” and...*
“Liturgy.” In the GTU Library, the *Elenchus bibliographicus* volumes are not with the periodicals, but are in the reference section, at Z 7753 E4]*


Martimort, A. G., ed. *The Church at Prayer*. 4 vols. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992. [at the beginning of each chapter; many refs. are to works in French, with many in German, Italian, and English.]


online, see bibliographies by William J. Harmless, S.J., at http://moses.creighton.edu/harmless/bibliographies_for_theology/Sacraments_0.htm

There are excellent online electronic search databases, most of which require some sort of subscription. GTU students have access to many of these resources through the GTU Library. Some are accessible from off-campus with password access, others may be available only on-site at the library. Check with library staff for the resources currently available.

**General Works, Sacramentality, and General Doctrine of the Sacraments:**


**Baptism:**


**Confirmation:**

*DSPT  Theology of Sacraments: ST-3067  Fall 2015  R. Christian, OP* 12


**Eucharist:**


**Penance:**


**Anointing of the Sick:**


DSPT Theology of Sacraments: ST-3067 Fall 2015 R. Christian, OP 16


**Holy Orders:**


**Matrimony:**


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**Liturgy and Sacraments**


**Louis-Marie Chauvet**


**Roman Catholic Ritual Texts**


*Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1983. [978-0814613214; $16/$13]


**DSPT Theology of Sacraments: ST-3067 Fall 2015 R. Christian, OP**


Other Catholic Church Documents of Note:


Congregation for Clergy et al. Ecclesiae de mysterio. Interdicasterial Instruction On Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priest (15 August 1997). [co-signed by eight Vatican dicasteries, including the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith]


