

VIRTUE, VICE *and* ADDICTION

Spring, 2017. Instructor: Fr. Luke Dysinger, O.S.B.,

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COURSE SYLLABUS

DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the interface between theories of addiction and traditional Christian ascetical theology. The first part of the course (sections §1-5) will provide a survey of the Christian theology of virtue and vice. Readings will be taken chiefly from primary sources, which will be studied as guides and sourcebooks for models of conversion, moral decision--making, and spiritual progress. Emphasis will be placed on: (1) notions of repentance and the call to conversion as the authentic basis for Christian asceticism; (2) traditional philosophical and theological models of virtue, vice, and moral *ascesis*; and (3) the dynamic interrelationship between moral-ascetical practice and contemplative vision.

In the second part of the course (sections §6-11) medical and psychological understandings of the phenomenon of addiction will be studied. Psychiatric definitions and controversies concerning the definition of addiction will be considered from the perspectives of the 2013 fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)*. Treatment strategies for addiction will be studied, especially the Twelve-Step model that is the basis of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and which has been widely adapted with varying degrees of success to a complex mixtures of compulsive behaviors that are popularly termed "addictions". In the final section of the course (§12) attention will be paid to the need to distinguish between addictions that require medical/psychological intervention and compulsive behaviors that can be effectively understood and addressed by Christian ascetical theory.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will be able to interpret, explain, and apply contemporary theories of addiction as well as the teachings of the Catholic Church concerning virtue and vice in the contexts of pastoral counseling and the sacrament of reconciliation, with careful attention to the multicultural diversity of Catholic Christians.
2. Students will develop familiarity with relevant texts from the following authors: Aristotle; Cicero; Evagrius Ponticus; John Cassian; Augustine; Gregory the Great; Thomas Aquinas; the *DSM-5*; *Alcoholics Anonymous*, *The Big Book*. Students will be able to recommend appropriate material from these texts in the context of pastoral counseling.
3. Students will recognize the ontological meaning of human acts and develop the ability to carefully assess choices that either facilitate or impede the acquisition of virtue.
4. Students will appreciate the multicultural factors and diversity of experiences that influence human freedom, the formation of conscience, the understanding of sinfulness, propensity towards addiction, and models of holiness.

COURSE FORMAT AND EVALUATION:

1. CLASSROOM DISCUSSIONS

- a. This course will combine assigned textbook and online readings. Active participation in classroom discussions is essential, and will figure into the final evaluation, as detailed below in §4.b.
- b. Participation in classroom discussion will be assessed according to three criteria: (1) demonstration that the student has comprehended the assigned readings and lectures; (2) pastoral response to the material, including examples and/or further reflection on the implication of the materials presented; (3) pastoral quality and content of students' responses to other students' observations.
- c. The term "pastoral" in this context includes the students' capacity to apply church teaching in a way that is both comprehensible and sensitive to the situation of the individual(s) with whom they interact and/or to whom they minister.

2. EXAMINATIONS

- a. The midterm and final examination will consist of essay questions based on pastoral situations.
- b. Students are required to submit their answers within one week of the date the exams are posted: these must be typed, double-spaced, and contain appropriate references.

3. RESEARCH PAPER

- a. Instead of the midterm and final examinations, a research project may be undertaken. Topics for the research project include: any ethical issue or author discussed in class; or a comparison of the approaches taken by two different authors. The goal of the research project is to demonstrate familiarity with official Church teaching and current ethical and medical thought in the area of virtue, vice, and addiction.
- b. The project will take the form of a written paper between ten and twelve pages in length, double-spaced, including appropriate references.
- c. In lieu of a written research project, students who prefer the medium of verbal presentation may offer the results of their research as a 20-30 minute powerpoint or web-page presentation, including recorded narrative, intended for use in teaching. The presentation must be of the same academic quality as a graduate-level paper and include appropriate references
- d. The research paper will be due on the day scheduled for the final examination.

4. EVALUATION

- a. Students must clearly distinguish between: (a) their own work; and (b) ideas or text they have taken from other sources, including the Internet, published texts or audio-visual materials. The requirement to distinguish clearly between one's own work and the research of others applies equally to written and oral presentations. Failure to give credit to cited sources constitutes plagiarism and will result in a grade of "F" for the material presented and may result in failure of the course.

b. The final course grade will be computed as follows:

Classroom Discussion	20%
Midterm Examination (or Research Project)	40%
Final Examination (or Research Project)	40%

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS: (required selections available through course website)

1. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
2. *Treatment Strategies for Substance and Process Addictions*, ed. Robert L. Smith, (American Counseling Association, Alexandria VA, 2015); e-book available through SJS Library.
3. *The Praeger International Collection on Addictions*, ed. Angela Browne-Miller (Praeger Publishers, Westport, CT 2009): vol. 1, *Faces of Addiction, Then and Now*; vol. 2, *Psychobiological Profiles*; vol. 3 *Characteristics and Treatment Perspectives*; vol. 4, *Behavioral Addictions from Concept to Compulsion*.
4. *Treating Addictive Behaviors, Processes of Change*, ed. W.R. Miller, N. Heather (Plenum Press, NY, 1986).
5. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5)*, (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)
6. *Thoughts Matter for Practicing the Spiritual Life*, by Mary Margaret Funk. (Continuum 2004).
7. *Alcoholics Anonymous: The Big Book, 4th Edition*, (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services 2002). *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, (A.A. World Services 1954)

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED TEXTS: these are listed below under *Course Outline and Readings*, and may be downloaded from the course website.

1. *Praktikos, On Thoughts, Antirrhethikos*, Evagrius Ponticus.
2. *Institutes and Conferences*, John Cassian.
3. *The Biology of Desire, Why Addiction is not a Disease*, Marc Lewis, (Public Affairs, New York, 2015).
4. *Assessment of Addictive Behaviors*, ed. D. Donovan, G. Marlatt (Guilford Press, NY, 2005).
5. *Introduction to Addictive Behaviors*, Denis L. Thoms (Guilford Press, NY, 2006).
6. *Relapse Prevention, Maintenance Strategies in the Treatment of Addictive Behaviors*, ed. G. Marlatt, D. Donovan, (Guilford Press, NY, 2005).
7. *Goodman & Gilman's The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics*. 12th edition, ed. L. Brunton, B. Chabner, Björn C. Knollmann, (McGraw Hill Medical, NY, 2011). ISBN: 978-0-07-162442-8

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

- Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, (Sheed and Ward, 1980).
- Ken Bazyn, *Seven Perennial Sins and Their Offspring*. (Continuum, 2002), ISBN 0826414370
- Simon Blackburn, *Lust*. (Oxford Univ. Press, 2003) ISBN 0195162005
- Gabriel Bunge, *Earthen Vessels: The Practice of Personal Prayer According to the Patristic Tradition* tr. Michael Miller, (Ignatius Press, March 2002) ISBN: 0898708370
- Donald Capps, *Deadly Sins and Saving Virtues* (Fortress, 1987) ISBN 080061948X
- Liz Carmichael, *Interpreting Christian Love* (T&T Clark/Continuum, 2004) ISBN 0567080722.
- F. L., Cross & E. A. Livingstone, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, (Oxford University Press). Michael Eric Dyson, *Pride* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2005) ISBN 0195160924
- Joseph Epstein, *Envy* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2003) ISBN 0195158121
- Henry Fairlie, *The Seven Deadly Sins Today* (Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1979) ISBN 0268016984
- Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline, the Path to Spiritual Growth*, (Harper, 1978) ISBN 0060628391.
- Mary Margaret Funk, *Tools Matter for Practicing the Spiritual Life*, (Continuum 2004)). ISBN: 0826416551.
- Gary B. Kaplan, M.D., and Ronald P. Hammer Jr., Ph.D., ed, *Brain Circuitry and Signaling in Psychiatry, Basic Science and Clinical Implications* (The American Psychiatric Society, 2002)
- Petros Levounis, M.D., M.A., and Abigail J. Herron, D.O., ed. *The Addiction Casebook*, (The American Psychiatric Society, 2014)
- C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*, (Harper/Collins, repr. 2015), *The Great Divorce*, (Harper/Collins, repr. 2015)
- Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, (Univ. Notre Dame Pr., 1984) ISBN 0268006113.
- Brian Patrick McGuire, *Friendship and Community; the Monastic Experience 350--1250* (Cistercian Pub., 1988). Josef Pieper, *Faith Hope Love, New edition* (Ignatius Press, 1996)
- Francine Prose, *Gluttony* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2003) ISBN 0195156994
- Solomon Schimmel, *The Seven Deadly Sins: Jewish, Christian, and Classical Reflections on Human Psychology* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1997) ISBN 0195119452
- Judith Shklar, *Ordinary Vices* (Belknap Press, 1985) ISBN 0674641760
- RB 80 *The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with Notes*, (Liturgical Press)
- B. Sadock, & V. Sadock, *Kaplan and Sadock's Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry, Ninth Edition*, (Kluwer & Lippincot, 2009)
- Columba Stewart, *Prayer and Community*, (Orbis Books, 1998) ISBN: 1570752192.
- Adolphe Tanqueray, *The Spiritual Life, A Treatise on Ascetical and Mystical Theology*, (Desclee, New York, 1930). Although out-of-print for many years, the first 427 pp. of this text may be downloaded from the **Course Documents** section of this course.
- Phyllis Tickle, *Greed* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2004) ISBN 0195156609
- Robert A. F. Thurman, *Anger* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2004) ISBN 0195169751

Benedicta Ward, *Harlots of the Desert, A Study of Repentance in Early Monastic Sources*, (Cistercian Pub., 1987).

Wendy Wasserstein, *Sloth* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2004) ISBN 0195166302

Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, (Harper, 1988).

Vincent Wimbush, ed. *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, (Fortress Press. 1990).

Vincent Wimbush & Richard Valantasis, ed, *Asceticism*, (Oxford University Press, 1995).

COURSE OUTLINE:

Readings and Downloadable lectures are available at the course website. *N.B.: all readings described below that are not taken from required course textbooks may be downloaded from the course website.*

PART ONE. CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN ASCETICISM: VIRTUES, VICES *and* THE PASSIONS

1. ASCETICISM: THE EXERCISE OF VIRTUE

The development of the ancient Greek understanding of *ascesis* will be studied in order to appreciate the original significance of this term and its use in the early Church, as will Mt. 6:1--21 as a model and exhortation to Christian ascetical practice.

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. *Timeline of Important Figures in Christian Ascetical Theology*
2. Introduction: *The Literal and Adapted Meanings of Ascesis* (Liddell-Scott and Kittel)
3. Philo and Jesus on asceticism

2. CHRISTIAN ASCETICISM: THE ART of ONGOING CONVERSION.

Traditional and modern efforts to define and delineate the theological "domain" of asceticism will be briefly considered. The interrelationship between repentance and asceticism will be studied. Christian asceticism will be seen as a commitment to the acquisition of virtue, the elimination of vice, ongoing conversion and spiritual progress based on the experience of grace. The ancient Benedictine controversy over *conversatio/conversio* and the difficult "art of accurate repentance" will be studied in light of monastic primary sources.

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. *Pelagia the Harlot*
2. The Conversion of Gertrude the Great (of Helfta)
2. Selections from *The Life of Antony*
3. *The Rule of Benedict* and *The Rule of the Master: The Prologues*.

Textbooks:

Funk, *Thoughts Matter*, pp. 1-24.

3. VIRTUES, VICES, and the CHRISTIAN ART of CONTEMPLATION

Primary sources will be studied that describe the dynamic interrelationship between ascetical practice and contemplative vision. The ancient art of *lectio divina* will be particularly

highlighted as a key to understanding monastic ascetical practice. Evagrius Ponticus and John Cassian will be introduced.

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. Evagrius, selections from the *Praktikos* and *Chapters on Prayer*.
2. Cassian, selections from the *Institutes* and *Conferences*.

Textbooks:

Funk, *Thoughts Matter*, pp. 25--50.

4. CLASSICAL and PATRISTIC MODELS of THE SOUL, VIRTUE and VICE

Aristotle, Cicero, and Pseudo-Aristotle on the soul, virtue and vice. The "Two Ways" in the *Didache* and *Barnabas*.

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, selections on virtue and vice
2. Pseudo-Aristotle, *on the Virtues and Vices*
3. *The Didache*
4. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, selections.

5. PASSIONS and COMPULSIONS: MONASTIC, SCHOLASTIC and MODERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Monastic models of virtue and vice. The eight deadly thoughts in Evagrius and John Cassian. Aquinas on the Seven Deadly Sins. "The Passions" understood as compulsions and obsessions.

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. Evagrius, selections from the *Praktikos* and the *Antirrhetikos*,
2. Cassian, selections from the *Institutes* and *Conferences*.
3. Aquinas, selections from the *Summa Theologica*

Textbooks:

Funk, *Thoughts Matter*, selections on the eight tempting-thoughts

PART TWO. THE BIOLOGY and TREATMENT of ADDICTION

6. PSYCHIATRIC AND PHARMACOLOGICAL DEFINITIONS AND UNDERSTANDINGS OF ADDICTION

The psychology and psychiatry of Addiction. Introduction to chemical and behavioral ("process") addictions.

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. Smith, ed. , *Treatment Strategies*, selections.
2. *DSM 5*, selections
3. Goodman and Gilman, ch 26, "Drug Addictions", selections

7. THE PHARMACOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY OF “DRUGS OF DEPENDENCE”

Dependency characterized by severe withdrawal-symptoms: alcohol, opiates, cocaine.
Dependency characterized by mild withdrawal symptoms: nicotine, caffeine.

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. *DSM 5*, selections
2. Goodman and Gilman, ch 26, “Drug Addictions”, selections

8. CONTROVERSIES IN ADDICTION MEDICINE AND PSYCHOLOGY.

Can the term “Addiction” properly be used in the absence of Physiological Dependence and/or Withdrawal? Are the following popular designations appropriate or meaningful: gambling addiction; internet-use addiction; pornography addiction

READING:

Website Course Documents:

2. Sadock, *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*, selections
1. *DSM 5*, selections on substance-use disorder and gambling addiction

Textbooks:

1. Smith, ed. , *Treatment Strategies*, ch.s 7,& 8.

9. TREATMENT-STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING CHEMICAL ADDICTIONS AND THEIR SUCCESS RATES.

Medical-pharmacological treatment; Psychological therapies (individual and group).
The “12-Step Model” and Alcoholics Anonymous

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. Praeger, vol. 3, selections
2. *Alcoholics Anonymous, The Big Book*, selections
3. *The Biology of Desire*, selections

Textbooks:

1. Smith, ed. , *Treatment Strategies*, ch.s 2 & 8.

10. TWELVE-STEP TREATMENT PROGRAMS AND TWELVE-STEP “SPIRITUALITY”

The History of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Twelve Steps: group meetings and sponsors.
Follow-up and long-term commitment to a Twelve -Step program.

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. *Alcoholics Anonymous, The Big Book*, selections
2. *Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, selections

11. FORMS OF ADDICTION AND SUCCESS OF TREATMENT IN 12-STEP PROGRAMS

Addictions widely acknowledged as appropriate for 12-Step Programs: Alcoholics Anonymous; Narcotics Anonymous. Less-successful 12-Step programs: Overeaters Anonymous; Mental Health Anonymous. Twelve -Step programs and "Sexual Addictions:"; Sex-Addicts Anonymous. Controversial "Twelve -Step-inspired" programs for treatment of dysphoric sexual attraction: "Courage."

READING:

Website Course Documents:

1. Ascher, *The Behavioral Addictions*, selections
2. Sadock, *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*, selections
3. Levounis, *The Addiction Casebook*, selections

Textbooks:

Miller, *Treating Addictive Behaviors*, ch. 1 & 5.

12. ADDICTION AND ASCETICISM: OVERLAP AND THERAPEUTIC IMPLICATIONS

When is the "disease" model of addiction most useful: i.e. which addictions are primarily physiological? When is the classical model of virtue and vice more applicable: i.e.: when is the issue primarily moral rather than medical? Implications for pastoral counseling and spiritual guidance: when to refer; programs and models that are widely-regarded as helpful and proven.

READING:

Website Course Documents:

Miller, *Treating Addictive Behaviors*, selections.