PMIN 205, Winter 2027 - DRAFT

NOTE: The syllabus shared below is from the Spring 2026 course. The overall objectives and themes of the course will remain largely the same, though the schedule, particular readings, and assignment may be revised.

The texts that will be required for Winter 2027 are listed here. Others may be added before the start of the quarter.

- The documents of the Second Vatican Council. I strongly recommend the 1996 translation by Austin Flannery, OP (Amazon link here). The documents can be accessed in other languages and translations online at www.vatican.va as well.
    - Students are welcome to read the conciliar texts, as well as any other papal/magisterial texts for our course, in the language of their choosing. In class, we will be referencing the English translations from Flannery and/or the Vatican website.

- Kristin M. Colberg and Jos Moons, SJ, *The Future of Synodality: How we Move Forward From Here* (Liturgical Press, 2025)

- Richard R. Gaillardetz, *By What Authority?* (Liturgical Press, 2018, revised and expanded edition – do not mistakenly buy the first edition!)

- Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent*, revised 2nd edition (Orbis Press, August 2023)

PMIN 205: Ecclesiology
Spring 2026, Santa Clara University
Tuesdays, 6pm–9pm

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Course Description

This course provides theological foundations in ecclesiology (the study of the church) for graduate students in pastoral ministry. Grounded in the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council and postconciliar and contemporary developments, especially synodality, this course explores the nature and mission of the church as the pilgrim people of God in communion, theologies of ministry, and teaching and governance in the church. These topics are considered in theological, historical, global, and feminist perspectives.

Required texts

We will read large portions of the texts below, so per fair use copyright law, you should purchase or borrow these books in their entirety.

- The documents of the Second Vatican Council. Recommended English translation is Austin Flannery's inclusive translation (1996). The documents can be accessed online at www.vatican.va as well.
    - Students are welcome to read the conciliar texts, as well as any other papal/magisterial texts for our course, in the language of their choosing. In class, we will be referencing the English translations from Flannery and/or the Vatican website.
- Kristin M. Colberg and Jos Moons, SJ, *The Future of Synodality: How we Move Forward From Here* (Liturgical Press, 2025)
- Brian Flanagan, *Stumbling in Holiness: Sin and Sanctity in the Church* (Liturgical Press, 2018)
- Richard R. Gaillardetz, *By What Authority?* (Liturgical Press, 2018, revised and expanded edition)
- Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent,* revised 2nd edition (Orbis Press, August 2023)
- Edward P. Hahnenberg, *Ministries: A Relational Approach* (Crossroad, 2003)

Other assigned texts will be available on Camino.

Learning Outcomes

This course primarily addresses two learning outcomes of the Graduate Program in Pastoral Ministry's MA Degree:

Goal 1: Students will gain a broad theological foundation that will undergird inquiry into a select area of concentration.

> Objective A: Students will demonstrate an understanding of Fundamental Theology, Christology, Ecclesiology, Ethics, Hebrew Bible, and the New Testament according to the competencies articulated by each of these areas.
>
> *We will work toward this goal through critical reading of key texts, class discussion, lectures, short papers, and option 1 for the final paper/project.*

Goal 3: Students will become competent leaders dedicated to serving the Church and to creating community in parish and other pastoral settings.

> Objective A: Students will employ historically informed knowledge of the tradition to assess theological positions and pastoral issues.
>
> *We will work toward this goal through critical reading of texts, class discussion, and options 2 and 3 for the final paper/project.*

Course Components

Attendance: Class discussion will be essential to your and others' learning in this course. Regular attendance is particularly important given that we only meet once a week, and only for 10 weeks. I will excuse absences for unavoidable, legitimate reasons (ex. jury duty, bereavement, university-mandated travel, urgent medical treatment for yourself or dependents) but you should alert me beforehand whenever possible. I may ask for documentation. Unexcused absences will result in a 5pt deduction from your final grade.

Lectures: In our class meetings, I will do some lecturing in order to provide you with historical/theological content relevant to our subject matter, draw out the key contributions and implications of our course texts, and facilitate your critical thinking about key concepts and questions in contemporary ecclesiology and their application for your ministry. These lectures will be conversational in style and will be interspersed with class discussion (small group and large group).

Active participation & engagement. All students are expected to come to class having read the assigned texts and prepared to discuss them. A good practice in this regard is to prepare 2–3 questions or comments on the day's material, it's relation to other course content, and/or implications for your ministry.

Discussion Starters: For each class day, 2–3 students will prepare a very short handout for class discussion (no more than one page). That handout will include 2–3 points of the assigned texts that you found most compelling, challenging, or confusing; and 2–3 questions you would want to discuss with your classmates. These can be questions about the texts themselves and how they relate to prior texts/class conversations, questions for further theological exploration, or questions about the pastoral or ministerial application of the texts/concepts. Full details will be available on Camino.

Short papers. You will write two short papers (~5pgs each) after week 4 and after week 8 in response to specific prompts. These are not research papers, but neither are they simply reflection papers or extended journals. They will ask you to substantively engage course material on the topics covered in the first four weeks, and then the second four weeks, respectively, and apply them to your pastoral/ministerial contexts. Full details will be provided on Camino.

Final Paper/Project. You will choose one of the options below based on their own interest, ministry, and/or learning goals. By week 8, you will let me know which option you've chosen and provide a brief outline of your research topic/thesis/project.

Option 1: Research Paper: A 10–12 page research paper on a topic in ecclesiology of your choice. It must offer an original insight, argument, or interpretation of texts, and make use of 4–6 scholarly sources beyond what we have read in class (the "supplemental texts" document on Camino can be a starting point). Full details will be available on Camino.

Option 2: Ecclesiological Analysis. A 10–12 page analysis of the operative ecclesiology in your parish or ministry community. You will critically examine parish/ministry resources (e.g. websites, bulletins, mission statement, liturgies, organizational structure & personnel, finances, etc.) in light of what we have studied in this course and write an essay addressing questions such as: what models of church are implicit or explicit in your parish/ministry? How is authority exercised by various persons in this parish/ministry? To what extent does your parish/ministry reflect the ecclesiologies of Vatican II or Pope Francis? How can your parish/ministry learn from the *sensus fidei* or incorporate synodal processes?, etc. Full details will be available on Camino.

Option 3: Pastoral Project. You will create a pastoral project relevant to your current or future/hopeful ministry in which you apply course readings, lectures, discussions, etc. to your ministry. This might be, for example, a pastoral presentation on synodality; a high school curriculum unit on the church; recommendations for how your parish can respond to the synod's proposals, or improve its missionary activity, or acknowledge its sinfulness, etc. Creativity is encouraged. You will submit 1) the elements needed for the pastoral project, and 2) a paper of 5–7 pages that summarizes the project and your hoped-for outcomes of it, and explains how it applies the ecclesiological insights you gained from our course. Full details will be available on Camino.

Grading Policies

Santa Clara University uses the following grades to reflect the quality of a student's work:
A: Excellent. **B:** Good. **C:** Adequate. **D:** Barely Passing. **F:** Not Passing

Per the GPPM Bulletin: "The assignment of course grades is one of the chief means by which instructors communicate to students and the University about student achievement in their courses. Therefore, grades must be assigned after careful evaluation of students' work and meticulous consideration of the weighted value of all students' work. This evaluation is based on the criteria and procedures communicated to the students by the instructors in the syllabus. Assessment of student learning is at the sole discretion of the instructor of record. Such assessments are not negotiable."

Grades are not subject to negotiation with the instructor. A grade on an assignment will be changed only when the instructor has made an obvious error in inputting a grade; for example, a paper is handed back with the grade of 90 written on it but it was input in Camino as an 80.

The GPPM Bulletin continues: "When registering for a class, a student implicitly agrees to allow the instructor to make a qualitative judgment of his/her command of the subject matter to be expressed as a letter grade. The classroom context that is assumed in a learning community is one in which (1) grading policies are fair and clearly communicated to students, (2) grading practices are characterized by relatively good reliability and validity, and (3) grading error or bias is neutralized by enlightened sensitivity and attention to the possibility of such error or bias. Even within this context, it is possible for students to perceive that they have been graded unfairly and to seek redress. To address and resolve such cases, a procedure for such redress has been established within the College of Arts and Sciences." For these appeal procedures, see the GPPM Bulletin online.

Grading Distribution

Discussion Starter: 10%
Participation & Intellectual Engagement: 20%
Short Paper 1: 20%
Short Paper 2: 20%
Final Paper/Project: 30%

Classroom Environment & Expectations

By enrolling in and attending this course, students acknowledge the following expectations:

- **Discipleship of equals:** Students in this course will be treated equally—by the instructor and by one another—regardless of clerical status. This holds true for classroom discussion, grading, and course policies and expectations.

- **Experiential knowledge:** Our collective success and your learning in this course will come from open intellectual engagement not only with the assigned material but also with your classmates. I encourage you to bring your own expertise (professional, ministerial, or other academic) into the classroom and to be open to learning from the experiences of others.

- **Theology, not catechesis:** The task of academic theology is to critically explore the many ways in which God reveals Godself to us through scripture, tradition, reason, and human experience. This includes critical reflection on the church's doctrine, but theology is not limited to doctrinal statements (which themselves are only "fingers pointing to the moon") and is not repetition of the catechism. In this class, we will at times consider some of the church's formal teachings (as well as the differentiated status of various teachings!), but we will primarily engage the best contemporary scholarship that analyses, explores, furthers, and at times even challenges those teachings. The ability to consider diverse theological perspectives is a central part of masters-level theological and ministerial formation.

- **Mutual respect:** My expectation is that all students offer one another the freedom and space to ask questions and consider new perspectives. The classroom is an opportunity for you to try out new ideas. You are not bound to any comments or questions you offer in class, and we will not police orthodoxy in our classroom. Conversation should remain respectful at all times, meaning we allow others the time and opportunity to contribute their views and seek to understand one another as best we can, with a hermeneutic of generosity. Critique of *ideas* is acceptable—you might encounter ideas with which you disagree in this course—but critique of *persons* is not.

Language flexibility

- Students are welcome to read conciliar, papal, and magisterial texts in any language available as an official translation of the document on the Vatican website or in print. (Not permitted: running a document through something like Google Translate to produce a translation.)
- Written work for this course may be submitted in English, Spanish, or French; assignment expectations will apply uniformly regardless of language. Feedback will be given in English.
- Classroom lectures and large-group conversations will take place in English.
- Small-group conversations can utilize another language that is common to all members of the small group.

Schedule of topics and readings

Week 1 (March 31): Introduction to Ecclesiology and Vatican II

Learning Goals: understand in broad strokes the shifts in ecclesiology from Trent to Vatican I, and from Vatican I to Vatican II; overview of main themes of Lumen Gentium and Vatican II's ecclesiological vision

- Bernard Prusak, *A Church Unfinished*, 247–312 (65pp)
- Susan A. Wood, "Continuity and Development in Roman Catholic Ecclesiology" (25pp)

Week 2 (April 7): The church's origins in the Triune God and in history

Learning Goals: Describe the development from the community of disciples around Jesus to the structure of the early church; describe the relationship between the persons of the Trinity and the church; understand the distinction between ius divinum *and* ius humanum *in relation to the church's structure and development*

- Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* chapters 1, 2, and 7 (28pp)
- Brian Flanagan, "The Word and Spirit Co-instituting the Church" (14pp)
- Richard Gaillardetz, "A People Called to Community" (34pp)
- Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "'You Are Not to Be Called Father': Early Christian History in a Feminist Perspective" (28pp)

Week 3 (April 14): Women in Ministry: **Discerning Deacons Event** on campus

Note: This is a special event on campus organized by the Markey Center for Leadership in Ministry. Since my PMIN 205 course normally includes a week on women in ministry, I am having our class attend this event. More information will be provided before the event.

Learning Goals: describe a theology of the diaconate; describe the state of the question regarding women deacons and women in leadership and ministry more generally; be able to have an open dialogue about a contested issue in the church today.

- Elyse Raby, "Beyond 'Women in the Church': Gender and Ecclesiology Since Vatican II" (19pp)
- Phyllis Zagano, "The Question of Governance and Ministry for Women" (20pp)
- Pope Francis, *Querida Amazonia*, nos. 85-105 (4pp)
- Theology of the Diaconate (tbd)
- Colleen Dulle for *America Magazine*, "Everything you need to know about the Vatican's women deacons report," December 12, 2025 (7pp)
- Study Group 5 Final Report, pages 6-19 (14pp)

Week 4 (April 21): The People of God in communion

Learning Goals: Describe the significance of the location of chapters in LG; describe the universal call to holiness and equality of discipleship in Vatican II texts

- Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* chapters 3, 4, and 5 (36pp)
- Vatican II, *Unitatis Redintegratio* (23pp)
- Gaillardetz, "A People Called to Discipleship" (34pp; pages 196–201 optional)
- Amanda Osheim, "The Christian Faithful" (20pp)

Week 5 (April 28): Missionary by its very nature

Short paper 1 due

Learning Goals: Describe the mission of the church as both spiritual and social; compare and contrast Vatican II's ecclesial vision with that of Pope Francis; describe the role of lay people in the church's mission

- Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, preface, introduction, and chapter 4 (19)
- Vatican II, *Ad Gentes,* introduction and chapter 1 (11pp)
- Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (89pp)

Week 6 (May 5): A synodal church

Learning goals: Describe the theological and historical foundations of/for a synodal church; critically consider the hopes expressed in the 2021–24 Synod on Synodality; describe and evaluate possible forms of a more synodal church

- Kristin Colberg and Jos Moons, SJ, *The Future of Synodality: How We Move Forward From Here* (2025)
    - Pages 9–66, 97–161 (121pp)
        - That's Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and the start of chapter 7.
    - You can read chapter 3 if you'd like; it's a summary of the process and key events of the Synod on Synodality, but since you lived through it, this may already be familiar to you.

Week 7 (May 12): Ministry in the church: ordered communion

Learning Goals: describe the historical development of various ministries in the church; describe your role as a minister in a relational, synodal, and non-competitive church

- Gaillardetz, "A People Called to Ministry" (39pp)

- Edward Hahnenberg, *Ministries: A Relational Approach*, introduction and chapter 1 (1–38), chapter 2 sections (39–59, 85–98), chapter 3 sections (122–150) (99pp)

Week 8 (May 19): Teaching and governance in the church: Magisterium

Brief outline of final paper/project due

Learning goals: describe the development of offices in the church (including in relation to ius divinum *and* ius humanum *from week 2); describe the role of bishops as teachers and governors; describe Pope Francis's reforms and new possibilities regarding lay governance*

- *Lumen Gentium* chapter 3 (reread from week 3)
- Gaillardetz, *By What Authority*?, chapters 1, 6–9 (86pp)
- Schüssler Fiorenza, "Patriarchal Structures and the Discipleship of Equals" (22pp)
- Paul Lakeland, "Ministry & Governance: What might *Praedicate Evangelium* have started?" (4pp)

Week 9 (May 26): Teaching and governance in the church: S*ensus fidei*

Short paper 2 due

Learning goals: Describe the role of the lay faithful in the teaching office of the church; describe the contributions to the sensus fidei *of two or more groups of often-marginalized communities in the church*

- Gaillardetz, *By What Authority?*, chapters 10–12 (56pp)
- Natalia Imperatori-Lee, "*Más que cuentos:* Literary Narrative as a Resource for Ecclesiology" (33pp)
- Student's choice: one of the following chapters from *Learning from* All *the Faithful: A Contemporary Theology of the Sensus Fidei*, based on your own interest or pastoral context
    - Peter C. Phan, "*Sensus Fidelium, Dissensus Infidelium, Consensus Omnium:* An Interreligious Approach to Consensus in Doctrinal Theology"
    - SimonMary A. Aihiokhai, "A Mosaic of Identities of the *Sensus Fidelium*: The Realities of African Ecclesial Communities in Diaspora"
    - Edmund Kee-Fook Chia, "Discerning the *Sensus Fidelium* in Asia's Narrative Theologies"
    - Hoon Choi, "Storytelling as an Expression of *Sensus Fidelium:* A Korean-American Catholic Perspective"
    - Maria Clara Luchetti Bingemer, "The *Sensus Fidei* in the Recent History of the Latin American Church"
    - Anne Arabome, "How Are Theologians Challenged and Informed by their Engagement with the Sense of the Faithful in the Local/Global Church" [Kenya]

Week 10 (June 2): A holy and sinful church

Note: I will be in Rome this week for a research symposium on inclusive governance in a synodal church (June 2–5). This class session will be held asynchronously; more details forthcoming.

Learning goals: describe what it means to say the church is 'holy' (as one of the four marks of the church); describe the ways in which it is appropriate to say the church—and not simply its members—is sinful

- Flanagan, *Stumbling in Holiness: Sin and Sanctity in the Church*, Introduction and chapters 2–6 (146pp)

Final paper or project due by Tuesday, June 9, 9pm.