

SAINT FRANCIS UNIVERSITY IN FRANCE

SUMMER 2017

Early and Medieval Church History and Architecture

Focus on Pilgrimage

Instructor: Mr. Eric Créma

Course Description:

A series of illustrated lectures (with a focus on hands-on learning) on the topic of pilgrimage to understand the significance of this human phenomenon as explained through the medieval Church's overall history.

This course aims to make clearer the policies of the Roman Catholic Church across Western Europe – and especially France - during the Middle Ages. In the first class on pre-historical times and Antiquity, we will examine the birth of spirituality and abstract thought in mankind, and then move along to the emergence and development of Christianity during the Roman Empire.

The following classes will focus more on the secular sides of the Church's policies in the course of the Middle Ages. We will investigate how the Church promoted the cult of saints and relics – hence the pilgrimages – to educate the population at large and how the Gregorian Reform ensured the Church's political independence. The course will also focus on the Church's attempts to establish a theocracy over Europe through the various crusades (including the Albigensian Crusade in the South of France) and the fight against heresies with a relevant focus on the Cathar Heresy as the course will take place in the heart of Cathar country.

Obviously, the course would not be complete without a study of the two main styles of religious architecture of the Middle Ages i.e. the Romanesque/Norman and Gothic styles with special attention being given on the design of pilgrimage church sites.

These lectures come complete with one-day or half-day field trips relevant to the issues studied in class.

Students will be provided with reference documentation as well as the slideshows used during the classes.

Required reading:

- Stephen O'SHEA: *The Perfect Heresy – the Life and death of the Cathars*

Students will be assigned specific chapters to study for their presentations though they will have to read the whole book.

Reading on the book mentioned above should start as soon as you decide to participate in the program.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the course, the students should be able to:

1. Identify the basic chronology and facts of the history of Christianity and the medieval Church.
2. Develop critical thinking through the study of diverse interpretations of historical events.
3. Draw historical analogies between present-day religious policies and those of the past.
4. Develop an appreciation for the attempts to understand the human experience.
5. Identify the different styles of religious architecture.
6. Understand and appreciate the importance of history and heritage.

Course Requirements:

Students will be asked to:

1. Attend class sessions/field trips and participate in groups discussions on the topics raised in class.
 2. Write a short review (1 to 2 pages) of each field trip bearing in mind its relevance to the program and the classes.
 3. Write a contextual essay (4 to 6 pages) on an issue posed from the classes/field trips, and the required reading.
 4. Make a short presentation (in small groups) on the required book.
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CLASSES & FIELD TRIPS Daily schedule

Arrival Toulouse Saturday, June 10

Pre-class: Sunday, June 11, late afternoon

- presentation of Course
- Western Society & Church

Class I: Monday, June 12, 10:00-12:00

Intro Class

- Understanding the Heritage

Field trip I: Monday, June 12, afternoon

- Saint Cecilia Cathedral in Albi (Architecture and Politics)

Class II: Tuesday, June 13

Origins of Pilgrimages

- Birth of Spirituality (Prehistory)
- Antiquity/Early Christianity (10:00-12:00)

Middle Ages Part One

- Cult of Saints and Relics/Pilgrimages
- Architecture - Romanesque/Gothic – (6-7:30pm)

Field Trip II: Wednesday, June 14, day trip

Toulouse

- Saint Sernin's Basilica (the martyrdom of Saturnin)
- The Jacobins' church (birthplace of Dominican Order)

Class III: Thursday, June 15

Middle Ages part Two

- Catharism and the Albigensian Crusade (10:00-12:00)

Middle Ages part Three - The Fight against Heresies

- The Mendicant Orders
- The Holy Inquisition (6-7:30pm)

Field trip III: Friday, June 16, day trip

Carcassonne

- The City of Carcassonne

Class IV: Saturday, June 17, 10:00-12:00

- Open discussion on "The Perfect Heresy"

Departure Sunday, June 18

GRADING

● <u>Short reports on field trips:</u>	40 points
● <u>Exposés on guided reading:</u>	40 points
● <u>Final written assignment:</u>	40 points
● <u>Active participation:</u>	10 points
Total:	130 points