

Description:

This course traces the historical development of vowed religious life in the Catholic Church and explores the meaning of the vowed life in the contemporary world. It is particularly intended for those in initial formation for religious life.

Main Objectives:

1. To understand vowed life as a way of discipleship within the universal call of all Christians to holiness.
2. To understand the vowed life as a charism within the life of the church that has a cultural context and continues to evolve through history.
3. To frame and engage the critical questions of religious life in terms of the post-modern ecclesial and societal context.

Procedures and Evaluation:

The course will consist of lectures and discussion. Participants will be responsible for required readings, weekly outline questions, participation in class discussions, periodic synthesis papers, and a final integrating essay. Students will be evaluated on the clarity, accuracy and insight demonstrated in their class discussions and synthesis papers, and on the degree to which their final essays clearly, creatively and adequately demonstrate that they have met the main objectives for the course.

Required Texts:

- Pope John Paul II. *The Consecrated Life*.
- Merkle, Judith A. *A Different Touch: A Study of Vows in Religious Life*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1998.
- Prévallet, Elaine, SL. *In the Service of Life: Widening and Deepening Religious Commitment*. St. Louis, Missouri: Loretto Earth Network, 2002.