

E – 5107 Catholic Environmental Ethics: Sources, Norms, and Issues

Professor Dawn M. Nothwehr, OSF, Ph.D.
Spring Semester 2010
Thursdays 8:30 – 11:15 a.m. Classroom 304
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MOODLE: <http://union.ctu.edu> [password will be given in class]

Course Description

Care for the Earth is more than an Earth Day slogan. Catholic doctrine and Catholic moral theology provide a rich grounding for dealing with the complex and often perplexing issues that constitute today's environmental crisis. This course examines key theological and ethical sources and norms that can assist us in achieving conversion from our abusive relationships with the Earth, to moral, sustainable and reverential ways of living.

Required Texts - available from <http://www.ctu.edu/e-bookstore>

1. John Hart. *What Are They Saying About Environmental Theology?*
ISBN # 0 – 8091 – 4230 – 9 Paperback
Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2004.
2. Jame Schaefer. *Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics: Reconstructing Patristic and Medieval Concepts.*
ISBN # 978 – 1 – 58901 – 268 – 4
Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009.
3. Christine E. Gudorf and James E. Hutchingson, *Boundaries: A Casebook in Environmental Ethics.* Note to Students: (Do not buy the older edition. The 2010 edition is substantially different.) Due to a special arrangement with the authors and with Georgetown University Press, we have been given the privilege of using the “final galley proof” version of the forthcoming **SECOND EDITION** (May 2010) of this text. You will be given a password that will allow you **READ ONLY** access to this material via MOODLE.

Recommended Texts

Robert Traer. *Doing Environmental Ethics.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2009.
Leonardo Boff. *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor.* Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997
Drew Christiansen and Walter Glazer, eds. *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment.* Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1996.
Carol J. Dempsey & Mary Margaret Pazdan, Eds. *Earth, Wind, and Fire: Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Creation.* Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2004.
Michael S. Northcott, *A Moral Climate: the Ethics of Global Warming.* Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2007.
Dawn M. Nothwehr, ed. *Franciscan Theology of the Environment: An Introductory Reader.*

Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 2003. [Now available through St. Anthony Messenger Press, Cincinnati, OH]

David Toolan, *At Home in the Cosmos*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2001.

Books on Reserve - CTU Paul Bechtold Library

Due to copyright restrictions several readings may be placed on reserve. These items will be indicated in the Schedule of Assignments with **

Learning Outcomes and Assessment:

MDiv –2. Knows and articulates the Roman Catholic tradition and applies it accurately, proficiently, sensitively, and faithfully ; 2.1 Interprets the Roman Catholic tradition in a faithful, historically critical and culturally sensitive manner; 2.2 Analyzes and interprets the Bible for believing communities; 2.3 Analyzes various kinds of texts, themes issues, and methods in a judicious and reflective manner; 2.4 Communicates the Roman Catholic tradition in written and oral forms; 2.5 Engages the moral and social implications of the Roman Catholic tradition; 2.6 Probes the Roman Catholic tradition as a living faith ever relevant to new situations

MAPS – 2. In the area of articulating the Roman Catholic tradition; 2.1 Interprets the Roman Catholic tradition in a faithful, historically critical and culturally sensitive manner; 2.2 Analyzes and interprets the Bible for believing communities;

MA - 1. The graduate of the Master of Arts program: 1.4 Demonstrates proficiency on engaging in academic study and research; 1.5 Knows the content of particular areas of the Catholic tradition appropriate to the Master's level; 1.6 Demonstrates familiarity with contemporary issues in Christian living today; 1.7 Recognizes and critiques the strengths and weaknesses in diverse schools of theology; 1.9 Profits from and utilizes a variety of theological and cultural perspectives; 2.2 (Research) Demonstrates knowledge of a variety of theological methods used in intentional ways

EDM 1.1 Minister out of a well articulated theology of ministry, 2.2.3 Reflect systematically upon Religious tradition, 2.3 Correlate critically these sources

Course Requirements and Items for Assessment:

Depending on class size, participants will form teams or sign up as individuals to make presentations of the readings for the sessions from February 11th – April 29th (see #3 below). The first half of each class session will consist of team or individual presentation(s). The presentation(s) should be collectively no longer than forty-five minutes. This will be followed by forty-five minutes of class discussion and comments by the professor.

The second half of the class session will then be devoted to discussion of the assigned Case Study in light of the readings for that class session. The focus will be on specific sources, norms, and issues contributing to the developing Catholic environmental ethical tradition. This will include critique of the strengths and limits of the methods under consideration for present-day work in environmental ethics.

1. Attendance & active participation in class discussions & presentations. [M Div 2.1; MAPS 3.3;3.4; MA 1.4; EDM 1.1]

2. Abstract and Analysis Papers — For 4 of the 12 scheduled classes (starting February 11th),

select one of the Recommended Readings for the session and write a 2-3 page (double spaced) paper in which you begin with an abstract of the author's work and then proceed to analyze the work. This is not primarily a summary of the work, but your critique of the author's work based on your knowledge of ethics and ethical theory. You should show the significance of the work for the development of Catholic environmental ethics. Post the file of your abstract on the Forum link provided on MOODLE for the date your reading is assigned. (See the Guidelines for Writing Abstracts at the end of this syllabus.) [M.Div 1.3, 2.3, 3.1; MA 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.3, 3.2, 3.3; EDM 2.3, 2.4, 2.5]

3. Lead a class session — Depending on the class size, all students will be assigned to plan and lead at least one seminar session. Prior to the session you will lead; you (and your partner) must meet with the professor and review the session plan in detail. Prior to meeting, you should have read the Required readings and at least have the main ideas from each of the Recommended readings in mind. You should bring a draft of your plan for the presentation. This draft will be the basis of your conversation with the professor. (A sign-up sheet for leading sessions will be circulated at the February 4th class.) [M.Div 1.3, 1.4, 2.3, 3.5; MAPS 3.3;3.4; MA 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 2.2; EDM 1.2]

3.1 Lead a short discussion of a reading from Schaefer. See March 4 and March 11.

4. Final Paper: Please plan to submit a detailed proposal and outline of your project or paper (see below) to the professor via a file attachment, using the Assignment link provided on the March 25th section of the MOODLE course site. The professor will provide you with critique, comments, or approval on or before April 8th.

M.Div. and MAPS students, a 15-20 page ecotheological issue project / paper, in which the student explores how Catholic Social Teaching concerning the environment provides direction for the resolution of a concrete environmental problem. The pastoral project needs to show how the conclusions of the paper bear concretely on preaching, catechesis, and social action in a parish setting. [M. Div. 2.1-2.6; MAPS 2.1, 2.2]

(a) Select a specific environmental problem that faces the people in your country.

(b) Explore the historical, social, political, economic, ecological dimensions of the problem. Use knowledge from the pertinent scientific fields and basic environmental literacy in your analysis.

(c) Ground your analysis of the issue using Christian doctrinal sources, the Catholic magisterial teachings from your local Church, statements from the Roman Magisterium and other resources explored in this course, and show the critique this moral wisdom brings to bear on the problem. (d) Draw conclusions and make a recommendation for the resolution of the problem.

M.A. students, a 20-25 page research paper dealing with any element of the Catholic environmental ethics tradition, demonstrating research and articulation appropriate for the student's MA track. Students need to be explicit about the advantages/disadvantages, strengths & weaknesses of the ethical method used to arrive at a potential resolution to the problem posed in the paper. Please submit a written proposal to the professor prior to beginning work on this paper. [MA 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3].

D.Min. students, a 20-25 page research paper dealing with any element of the Catholic environmental ethics tradition, showing the interplay between experience, culture, and tradition. Please submit a written proposal to the professor prior to beginning work on this paper. [EDM 2.2].

EXPECTATIONS

Policy on Late Assignments and Final Papers

Students should not presume that late assignments or papers will be accepted. Only in the very rare instance will provision be made for tardiness. This is because the very success of a seminar depends on the timely and mutual cooperation of all participants. Final papers are due on May 12th at 4:00 p.m. If you believe you have a valid reason for an extension for the final paper, kindly consult with the professor and bring the proper form from the Registrar with you to the consultation. Without proper documentation for an extension the paper grade will be lowered one grade point for each day past the due date.

Bias-Free Language – See Student Handbook 4.2.6

Netiquette and Nethics – See Student Handbook 4.2.22

Copyright Policy – See Student Handbook 4.9

Statement on Academic Integrity – See Student Handbook 4.2.23

Academic integrity demands that a student acknowledge all sources employed in the preparation of written assignments, whether in the use of exact quotations, or in substantial reproduction of ideas. Failure to do so (plagiarism) will result in a failing grade for the course and may also result in dismissal.

Grading Scale – See Student Handbook 4.2.18

Grading of Formal Written Work

A- 93-96 very good	C+ 77-80 sufficient
B+ 89-92 good	C 73- 76 borderline
B 85-88 solid	D 70- 72 poor
B- 81-84 adequate	F 69 or below failure

The "A" range:

These grades reflect superior work that is well above the average level of competency in writing. Work at this level reflects an ability to critically engage the material being discussed. This would include an ability to analyze texts and ideas in a way that interests and excites the reader and that assists the reader in viewing the issue in a new light. The work will be coherent and have a well-formulated argument or thesis that the reader will easily be able to grasp. This includes a logical progression of ideas between and within paragraphs giving the paper a sense of wholeness. Writing at this level will be fluid, clear, precise, and grammatically correct. It will not only make sense, the reader should find it compelling.

The "B" range:

These grades reflect work that is above average. It will be obvious to the reader that thought has been given to the topic. In general summary and narrative have been avoided in favor of critical analysis. The writing contains a clearly stated thesis or argument that provides the shape of the work. In general, all parts of the paper support and strengthen the thesis. Ideas will be adequately developed and an effort to be clear and coherent will be apparent. On the whole the work will flow well and contain few, if any, grammatical errors.

The "C" range:

Work at this level indicates competence, but also exhibits problems. Sufficient thought may not have been given to the topic. There might be too heavy a reliance on summary or narrative rather than argument and critical analysis. The thesis may be uninteresting and not excite or engage the reader or the thesis may not be sufficiently developed. The work may lack unity with little logical progression or connection of thoughts between and within paragraphs. The relation of all parts of the work to the central argument or thesis may be unclear, and the style of writing may be too colloquial or obscure, thus, making it difficult for the reader to understand and follow your position. The lack of clarity or coherence may be directly related to poor grammar and weak writing skills.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

WEEK – I February 4: Introduction to the Seminar Topics and Procedures

Schaefer, Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics:

“Introduction: Reading the Catholic Theological Tradition through an Ecological Lens,” 1-16.

Gudorf & Hutchingson, Boundaries, “Theory in Environmental Ethics,” 3-27.

Holmes Rolston, III, “Ecology: A Primer for Christian Ethics,” Journal of Catholic Social Thought 4/2 (Summer 2007): 293-312.

See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings.

Sources I – Creation, Redemption, Incarnation

WEEK – II February 11: The First Testament: Genesis and Beyond

Dempsey & Pazdan, eds. Earth, Wind, and Fire

C. Dempsey, “Creation, Evolution, Revelation, Redemption,” 1-20.

A. Laffey, “The Priestly Creation Narrative: Goodness and Interdependence,” 24-34.

A. Clifford, “Foundations for a Catholic Ecological Theology of God,” in D. Christiansen & W. Glazier, eds., And God Saw It Was Good, 19-42.

James B. Martin-Schramm, Christian Environmental Ethics: A Case Study Method, “Christian Resources & the Ethics of Ecological Justice,” 33-46.

Gudorf & Hutchingson, Boundaries

“We’re All in This . . . Alone,” 29-44.

See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings.

WEEK – III February 18: The Second Testament – Jesus Christ in the Gospels and More

Dempsey & Pazdan, eds. Earth, Wind, and Fire

B. Bowe, “Soundings in the New Testament Understanding of Creation,” 52-66

B. Reid, “Sabbath the Crown of Creation,” 67-76.

S. McGinn, “All Creation Groans in Labor,” 114-123.

Duncan Reid, “Enfleshing the Human,” in Earth Revealing-Earth Healing ,69-84.

Denis Edwards, “For Your Immortal Spirit is in All Things,” in Earth Revealing-Earth Healing, 45-68.

Gudorf & Hutchingson, Boundaries

“For Ecological Health or Profit,” 49-66.

Earth Revealing-Earth Healing

WEEK – IV February 25: Uniquely Human – Mediators Between God and Creatures

[Sign-up today to lead a discussion of one of the readings for 3 / 4 and 3 / 11 class sessions]

Denis Edwards, “Human Beings within the Community of Life,” in Ecology at the Heart of Faith, 7-26.

Dawn M. Nothwehr, The Franciscan View of the Human Person: Some Central Elements. Note:

You will be given a password that will allow you READ ONLY access to this material via MOODLE.

Gudorf & Hutchingson, Boundaries: "Heart Thieves," 68-81.
See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings.

Sources II – Reconstructing Patristic & Medieval Concepts

WEEK – V March 4: Values & Virtues Foundational for Environmental Ethics class discussion
NOTE: Please time your presentation carefully so as to allow equal time for all presentations & discussion.

Schaefer, Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics:

- "Valuing the Goodness of Creation," 17-42.
- "Appreciating the Beauty of Creation," 43-64.
- "Reverencing the Sacramental Universe," 65-102.
- "Respecting Creation's Praise for God," 103-120.
- "Cooperating with the Integrity of Creation," 121-148.

See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings

WEEK – VI March 11: Values & Virtues Foundational for Environmental Ethics class discussion

NOTE: Please time your presentation carefully so as to allow equal time for all presentations & discussion.

Schaefer, Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics:

- "Acknowledging Kinship and Practicing Companionship," 149-192.
- "Using Creation with Gratitude," 193-231.
- "Living Virtuously within the Earth Community," 231-254.
- "Loving the Earth," 255-266.
- "Modeling the Human in an Age of Ecological Degradation," 267-286.

See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings

WEEK – VII March 18 – NO CLASS SESSION – Spring Break

WEEK – VIII March 25: Scientific Materialism Final Paper/Project Proposals Due Today

David Toolan, At Home in the Cosmos-

Chapt. 3 Imperial Ecology and the Death of Nature, 41-58.

Chapt 4 The Competitive Ethos Triumphant, 59-74.

Appendix A: The Relationship between Science and Religion, 241-243.

Gudorf & Hutchingson, Boundaries

"Must Java Have No Forests, 83-99

See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings.

WEEK – IX April 1 – NO CLASS SESSION – Holy Thursday

Norms & Issues – Catholic Social Teaching

WEEK – X April 8:

John Hart, What are They Saying about Environmental Theology? Chapt 1 – Creation, Creatures, and Community Consideration, 7-22.

D. Christiansen, “Ecology and the Common Good,” in D. Christiansen & W. Glazier, eds., And God Saw It Was Good, 183-193.

C. Firer Hinze, “Catholic Social Teaching and Catholic Ecological Ethics, And God Saw It Was Good, 165-177.

Gudorf & Hutchingson, Boundaries, “Guardian Angels of Angel Oaks,” 142-158. [More

WEEK – X April 8: CONTINUED

See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings.

CST Documents Discussed:

Vatican Council II - Gaudium et Spes and Lumen Gentium,

John Paul II – Address – Puebla Mexico (Jan. 1979)

Address – Des Moines, IA (Oct 1979)

Address – The Ecological Crisis (Jan 1, 1990)

Apostolic Constitution – Ex Corde Ecclesiae (1990)

Encyclical – Centesimus Annus (1991)

Address – Respect Human Rights (Jan 1, 1999)

Holy See – Earth Summit 1992 – Archbishop Renato Martino

Holy See – World Summit on Sustainable Development 2001 – Archbishop Renato Martino

Catechism of the Catholic Church – select sections

Compendium of Social Doctrine – Chapter 10

WEEK – XI April 15:

John Hart, What are They Saying about Environmental Theology? Chapt 2 – Common Ground and Common Good, 23-37.

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Water, An Essential Element for Life (2003)

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Water, An Essential Element for Life-An Update (2006)

Stephen M. Gardiner, “Survey Article: Ethics and Global Climate Change,” Ethics (April 2004):555-600.

Gudorf & Hutchingson, Boundaries

“Water: Economic Commodity or Divine Gift,” 121-140.

See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings.

CST Documents Discussed:

Dominican Republic Bishops – Pastoral Letter on the Relationship of Human Beings to Nature (1987)

Guatemalan Bishops – The Cry for Land (1988)

U.S. Bishops – Renewing the Earth (1991)

U.S. Bishops – Quincentenary Statement (1991)

U.S. Bishops – Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue (2001)

WEEK – XII April 22: EARTH DAY

John Hart, What are They Saying about Environmental Theology? Chapt 3 – Sacramental and Common Creation, 38-58

Bishops of the Columbia Watershed, The Columbia River Watershed: Caring for Creation and the Common Good (2001)

Gudorf & Hutchingson, Boundaries

“River Run or River Ruined,” 163-179.

See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings.

CST Documents Discussed:

Appalachian Bishops – This Land is Home to Me (1975)

Heartland Bishops – Strangers and Guests (1980)

Northwest U.S. Bishops – A Public Declaration (1987)

Appalachian Bishops – At Home in the Web of Life (1995)

New Mexico Bishops – Reclaiming the Vocation to Care for the Land (1998)

Alberta, Canadian Bishops- Celebrate Life, Care for Creation (1998)

Boston Province Bishops – And God Saw It Was Good (2000)

WEEK – XIII April 29:

Lucia A. Silecchia, “Discerning the Environmental Perspective of Pope Benedict XVI,”
Journal of Catholic Social Thought 4/2 (Summer 2007): 271-292.

Timothy E. O’Connell. The Making of Disciples,

“The Values People Live, 57-64.

“The Place of Feeling,” 65-74.

“The Dynamics of Group Experience,” 75 -85 Note: p. 86 of this reading is included in:

“The Chemistry of Relationships,” 86-101.

Gudorf & Hutchingson, Boundaries

“Planning for Climate Change,” 211-223.

See MOODLE for additional Recommended readings.

CST Documents Discussed:

Benedict XVI – Address – World Day of Peace (2010)

Social Encyclical – Caritas in Veritate (2009)

Address – World Day of Peace (2009)

Address – World Youth Day Australia July 2008

Address – World Day of Peace (2008)

Address - Italy Green Youth Rally Fall 2007)

WEEK – XIV May 6 : Discussion of Student Projects / Papers; Summaries and Conclusions.

Each student presents a 15 minute summary of their paper, indicating the thesis, method utilized, and the key conclusions / discoveries resulting from their efforts.

WEEK – XV May 13: Papers due at 4:00 p.m. Late papers – see policy above.

Guidelines For Writing Abstract And Analysis Papers

Write a 2-3 page (double spaced) paper in which you begin with an abstract of the author’s work

and then proceed to analyze the author's arguments. This is not primarily a summary of the article, but your critique of the author's work based on your knowledge of ethics and ethical theory.

1. The title and topic and author of the work should appear at the top of the page as a heading.
2. Part I of your abstract should distill and describe the author's central thesis.
3. Part II of your abstract should show the author's line of argumentation; the key moves and methods s/he utilizes to make the main point(s) of the article or chapter.
4. PART III should address the significance of this reading for the development of Catholic environmental ethics. It should be your brief critical reaction to the work, including two or three reaction/response questions that can contribute to the class discussion of the work.
5. Please turn in a printed copy to the professor. Make sure your name appears as the writer of the paper. (No name, no grade!)
6. You might find it useful to ask yourself: "Now that I have read this essay – what do I think?" What are the contributions to the Catholic environmental ethics that are discussed in this article or chapter? Then set the agenda of comments and questions for your abstract.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Library Hours: <http://www.ctu.lib.il.us/> For information, contact: Melody Layton McMahon,

Library Director Ph: 773.371.5460; mmcmahon@ctu.edu

English for Theological Education: contact Mark Schramm: mschramm@ctu.edu

Writing Handbook: <http://union.ctu.edu/mod/resource/view.php?inpopup=true&id=25261>

Student Services: contact Christine Henderson, Room 311; tel: 371-5403;

studentservices@ctu.edu

Academic Calendar: http://www.ctu.edu/News_and_Events/Academic_Calendar.html

CTU Mission Statement – see Student Handbook 1.2 [located in the main menu – upper left corner—at <http://union.ctu.edu>]