I have recently added as a text in this class James Martin’s *My Life with the Saints*. This text opens a variety of stories of exceptional lives, not all of “official saints” from the long history of the church, but also of more recent origin. In this iteration of the course I accented in particular the stories of two Americans, Thomas Merton and Dorothy Day. Merton was a contemplative, whose prayer life connected especially to the natural surrounds of his monastery in Kentucky. Dorothy Day was the founder of The Catholic Worker movement, which not only offers hospitality to the poor but also began local farms that raise local produce and supply the hospitality houses in the major cities—a set of practices clearly related to sustainability themes. Day and Merton show us another way of living, and also connect this to essential Catholic social teaching.
Especially for Catholics, thinking about this is guided by the tradition of “Catholic Social Teaching”; we’ll consider this tradition by reading through Pope John Paul II’s encyclical (letter, really) written to mark the 100th anniversary of the first papal encyclical about politics in the modern world. How to live well morally and politically does involve policies, but, more than that, it involves who we look up to and follow in the pattern of our lives. We will complete the course by considering the lives of some exemplary Christians, often called “saints,” who show us in real-life terms what following Christ might look like, in many different ways. They also teach us about Christian practices that form and sustain this Christ-likeness, like worship or prayer.

**Student Learning Objectives:**
- To understand the broad outlines of Christian history since the time of the New Testament
- To understand key struggles, practices and beliefs of early Christians
- To explore connections between a personal and intellectual struggle and religious faith
- To consider the challenge of the Christian Church to the modern world
- To express theological ideas clearly and with reasoned support, both orally and in writing

**Required Texts:**
- Augustine. *Confessions.*
- C. S. Lewis. *Mere Christianity.*
- Justin Martyr & Mark Minucius Felix. *We Don’t Speak Great Things - We Live Them.*
- James Martin, S.J. *My Life with the Saints.*
- John Paul II. “On the Hundredth Anniversary” (available on-line).

**Course Policies, Required Work and Grading:**
A successful class always requires a genuine effort to learn on each student’s part. This requires, first, that students **attend class.** Please do not skip class; attendance will be taken, often by brief unannounced reading quizzes. Missing more than 2 classes (unexcused) is excessive and will result in a lowered participation grade. If you must be absent for some good reason, one that is beyond your control (like sickness), contact me either by phone message or email and I can excuse you. **Second,** please **be an active participant** and conduct yourself **well** in class. Come on time, stay awake, turn off your cell phone (no texting in class), don’t talk or read other things during lecture, ask good questions and help answer them, disagree with the professor if you have good reason, smile occasionally (more if possible), come and visit me in my office if you have questions or concerns, etc. Please remember that the University’s “Academic Code of Honesty” applies to all class work ([http://matrix.scranton.edu/student_handbook/policy_academic_code_honesty.html](http://matrix.scranton.edu/student_handbook/policy_academic_code_honesty.html)). Violation of the code (e.g., plagiarism on papers or cheating on exams) can result in automatic failure in the class. **Third,** please **stay current with all your assignments.** Reading will be assigned for every class period. Do it thoroughly in advance, underline and take notes on the reading, formulate your own questions about it, checking through any help questions posted on “Angel.” Prepare any written and oral assignments in a timely way. Late assignments will be penalized by a reduction of at least one grade increment. (If you are late, please let me know, and explain why.) Also, leave adequate time for preparation for the exams, and take good notes in class so that you will have something ordered to study. **Fourth,** please **allow your own thinking to be challenged.** Theology requires thought, wrestling with ideas, more than it requires rote memorization. This means your opinions matter, but they will matter even more if you can put them to the test. The readings will present you with things you have not thought of before, and not all of them you will agree with. But don’t dismiss them; rather, think them through, and let them challenge and reorder some of your own thoughts.
Grading will be based on student performance on (1) Papers, (2) Tests, and (3) Participation. Besides reading the assignments, attending lectures and participating in class discussion, students will be required to complete the following work:

- **PAPERS (2):** 30% - 2 (1200 words each), worth 15% each
- **EXAMS (3):** 45% - 2 in-class exams and a final, counting 15% each.
- **PARTICIPATION:** 25% - This will include different reading responses, which will mainly be in-class (pop) quizzes, but also sometimes some brief in-class writing responses, ANGEL postings, etc. Attendance and discussion participation will be factored into this grade. The participation grade may be enhanced with extra credit projects available occasionally during the term.

Other Information:

**Students with Disabilities:** In order to receive appropriate accommodations, students with disabilities must register with the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence and provide relevant and current documentation. Students should contact Mary Ellen Pichiarello (570-941-4039, LSC 577) or James Muniz (570-941-4218, LSC 580) for an appointment. For more information, please visit [www.scranton.edu/disabilities](http://www.scranton.edu/disabilities).

**Writing Center Services:** The Writing Center focuses on helping students become better writers. Consultants will work one-on-one with students to discuss students' work and provide feedback at any stage of the writing process. Scheduling appointments early in the writing progress is encouraged.

To meet with a writing consultant, call (570) 941-6147 to schedule an appointment, or send an email with your available meeting times, the course for which you need assistance, and your phone number to: writing-center@scranton.edu. Online appointments are also available - connecting virtually using Google Docs and Google Talk.

**Professor Contact:**

My office is #409 Loyola Science Center, and my telephone extension is #4302. E-mail is charles.pinches@scranton.edu. Office hours are Mon. & Wed. 12:00-2:00; Tues. & Thurs. 1:00-2:20 p.m. If these are inconvenient, call or email for an appointment.
Reading Assignments (1st Half)

The readings listed below are to be completed before class on the date listed. Any quizzes will concentrate on the assigned reading for that day.

Unit I: Early Christianity and its Defenders

2/4 - Introduction, 1st class
2/6 - “Martyrdom” (handout); We Don’t Speak Great Things - We Live Them, pp. 9-24; 69-71.

2/11 - WDSGTWLT, pp. 25-44.
2/13 - WDSGTWLT pp. 44-66

2/18 - WDSGTWLT pp. 72-99.
2/20 - WDSGTWLT pp. 100-131

Unit II: St. Augustine's Life and Faith

2/25 - Augustine’s Confessions, Books I & II
2/27 - Augustine, Books III & IV

3/4 - Augustine, Books V & VI
3/6 - Augustine, Books VII (chaps. 1-12, 21) & VIII (Paper #1 Due - Augustine)

3/11 - Augustine, Books IX & X (chaps. 1-8; 27-29)
3/13 - Exam #1

SPRING BREAK