

HIV/AIDS: Pastoral Issues and Strategies (3 semester graduate credits)

IPS 454-001

Instructor: Dan Lunney

18 May – 31 July 2009

Course Description:

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has challenged us right to the very core of what it means to be church for the last 27 years. This course will provide students with an opportunity to address the pastoral and ethical challenges inherent in responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The focus will be both domestic and global with emphasis on Catholic and other Christian perspectives. HIV/AIDS forces us to look at issues of stigma, poverty, racism, homophobia, sexuality, inequitable distribution of resources, power imbalances in relationships, grief, suffering, the nature of illness and death. This will be structured as a distance-learning course and will utilize videos, internet discussion and postings, excellent books and thought-provoking assignments to engage the students in applied theology. Students will have the opportunity to utilize both pastoral and social justice analysis to discover responses to HIV/AIDS which are rooted in Scripture and Tradition. Students will be encouraged to make connections between the course and their area of ministry.

Objectives:

Upon completing the course, each student will:

- have a working knowledge of the life cycle of HIV disease and its epidemiology so as to dispel myths and misconceptions held by many.
- have a solid ethical and theological foundation for addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic and to pastorally respond to our sisters and brothers living with HIV.
- be able to discuss the interconnection between vulnerability to HIV infection and injustice.
- be able to articulate a pastoral theology for responding to HIV/AIDS.

Course Requirements (internet access required):

1) Unit postings/assignments: Students will be required to complete the assigned reading for each unit. Each student will have a specific unit assignment which will be posted on the internet discussion board. They must complete the assignment by the Friday of the first week of the unit. Each student must offer a total of at least four substantial critiques, feedback and/or response to classmates' assignments using course reading and cited sources to support their postings (which will be due by the Tuesday of the second week). Each unit will begin on a Monday and conclude in ten day on a Friday.

2) DVD summary: Each student must post a summary of one of the DVD presentations in light of course materials and discussion (due June 15).

3) Pastoral response paper: Each student will conduct a pastoral interview with a person living with HIV/AIDS or write a paper on a pastoral response to the AIDS pandemic within their given ministerial area. (due July 10)

4) Course project: The course project can take the form of a paper or development of a program for your ministry setting. A one page proposal for the project including main sources is due by July 15 and the project/paper is due by July 31.

Required Texts:

1) When God's People Have HIV/AIDS: An Approach to Ethics.
Maria Cimperman. Orbis Books (September 30, 2005).

2) Ethics and AIDS: Compassion and Justice in Global Crisis

Kenneth Overberg, SJ. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (October 28, 2006)

3) Calling for Justice Throughout the World: Catholic Women Theologians on the HIV/AIDS Pandemic. Mary Jo Iozzio (Editor). Continuum. (March 2009)

Note: I realize that this is a very expensive book. I have worked closely with a number of the theologians throughout the process of developing the book and believe it is a very important addition to HIV/AIDS theology. The reality of the feminization of HIV/AIDS makes the publications of this book all the more important.

Skeletal Course Schedule:

Based on feedback from previous times when I have offered this course, I have extended the duration of the course without substantially increasing the content. This allows for us to spend more time on each unit.

Unit 1: May 18 – May 29, 2009:

HIV/AIDS: Medical, Psychosocial, and Demographic Dimensions

Unit 2: June 1 – June 12, 2009:

HIV/AIDS: Theological and Ethical Foundations

Unit 3: June 15 - June 26, 2009:

HIV/AIDS, Justice and Catholic Social Teaching

Unit 4: June 29- July 10, 2009:

The Feminization of HIV/AIDS

Unit 5: July 13- July 24, 2009:

Responses to the HIV/AIDS Pandemic

Project Due by 4 pm Central Time, July 31, 2009.

Grading:

40% Internet assignments and discussion.

15% DVD/Video Summary

15% Pastoral Paper

30% Course Project/Paper

Dan Lunney led the National Catholic AIDS Network from 2003-2007. Lunney is currently serving as a chaplain at Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center in Chicago. Lunney brings more than a decade of ministry experience in a variety of settings including: parish, hospital, hospice and community-based organizations. Lunney is a certified chaplain through the National Association of Catholic Chaplains and received his Masters of Theological Studies with an emphasis on Pastoral Ministry from St. Norbert College. Lunney completed four units of Clinical Pastoral Education from Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center and received a Certificate of Graduate Studies in Healthcare Ethics from Rush University.