

**Introduction to Ritual Studies**

*Prof. Dr. Thomas Quartier OSB*

**Description:**

The discipline of Ritual Studies provided a wide range of research and practical material on various kinds of ritual behavior. Ritual can be defined as human practice with a symbolic meaning. The anthropological phenomenon of ritual gains as theological quality when it comes to liturgy. Liturgists study ecclesial practices from different points of view: historical, systematical and empirical. Ritual draws our attention to the performative dimension of liturgy. What does the concrete enactment of liturgical tradition mean? How does liturgical ritual relate to the ritual repertoire in different cultural contexts? What can be said about liturgical roles and participation understood in a ritual sense? In this course, students get to know basic concepts of Ritual Studies and their relevance for the study of liturgy today.

**Bibliography:**

- Quartier, Thomas (2016). Monastic Experiences of the Liturgy of the Hours. Empirical Liturgical Theological Explorations. In: *Questions Liturgiques* 97, 167-189.
- Selected chapters from: Bell, Catherine (2006). *Ritual. Perspectives and Dimensions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Aim:**

- Students gain knowledge central concepts of Ritual Studies;
- Students acquire skills to interpret liturgical practice from the perspective of Ritual Studies.
- Students learn to reflect on their own ritual repertoire.

**Method:**

- During the lectures, basic concepts of ritual studies are presented which are related to the literature;
- For each concept a liturgical example is presented;
- Together with the professor, students reflect on liturgical practice using the concepts presented.

**Exam:**

Written paper (4 pages)

**Language skills:**

Passive understanding of English (discussions can be in Italian, too)

**Meetings:**

Thursday 16 February 2017 15.00-18.00hrs