One in every six people on earth, one in every four Americans, and one in every twenty North Carolinians is Catholic, actively or nominally. If only for this reason, understanding the Catholic Church and its adherents is important. In this course, we will discuss many things including the beliefs, structure, aims, successes, and failures of the Catholic Church. This course will provide students with a more sophisticated understanding of the contemporary Catholic Church, regardless of previous knowledge or standing with regard to religious faith. Religions change constantly. This change is not only inevitable, it is essential to their survival. Students will learn how to distinguish between confessional and academic study of religion, read religious texts critically, and understand debates within a religion without necessarily being a part of it.