

High School



“Take heart, it is I; have no fear.”

(Matthew 14:27)

High School Rationale / Overview.....	3
The Creed.....	5
The Old Testament	9
The New Testament	13
Prayer in the Christian Life.....	17
The Sacraments.....	21
Christian Morality	26
Church History.....	30
Catholic Social Teaching.....	34
Apologetics.....	37
Recommended Prayers.....	40
Recommended Reading – Saint’s Lives.....	41
Recommended Reading – Other Topics	42
Recommended Teacher and Parent Resources.....	42

High School Rationale / Overview

What is the purpose of religious education?

Religious education treats nothing less than the meaning of life itself. We are created to know, love and serve God, and to be with Him forever in Heaven. We learn the truths about God and His Church so that we might love and serve Him and our neighbor as we should. These truths are summed up in the person of Jesus Christ, who is “the Truth” (John 14:6). **“The ultimate aim of religious education is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity”** (Pope John Paul II, “On Catechesis in our Time” [CT] 5).

Why is this subject worth studying?

Christian teaching is the crown of human knowledge, because it is knowledge given to us by God about Himself. St. Thomas remarks that Sacred Doctrine chiefly concerns those things that by their sublime worth transcend human reason, while other sciences consider only those things that are within reason's grasp. Further, this knowledge is the means by which we come to God and fulfill our ultimate purpose.

How will this subject be useful in the secular society in which I live?

Secular knowledge is a tool that can be used for good or ill, to benefit society or destroy it. Hence, it is not enough to study the arts and sciences without also understanding the moral and religious purpose that must guide their application. “For an education in which religion is altered or non-existent is a very dangerous education...No one should be ready to believe that instruction and piety can be separated without harmful consequences” (Leo XIII, “On St. Peter Canisius,” n.16). The new forms of experimentation with human embryos and cloning are one of many areas that reveal the crisis of science without moral guidance.

How does this subject fit in with other academic subjects?

Religion is not an art (composed by man) nor a science (discovered by man) – it is fundamentally a form of wisdom, beyond the arts and sciences, given to man by God, allowing us some share in God’s knowledge of himself: “This is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the nations” (Deut. 4:6).

What subjects are included as component parts of religious education?

Religious education is distinguished into two parts:

- 1) Sources of Christian teaching – (Scripture and Tradition)
- 2) Means by which we apply this teaching to our own lives for growth in holiness (Moral life, Sacraments, Prayer).

What “roadblocks” do most people have in receiving religious education?

While there are many roadblocks today, including widespread secularism, poor catechesis for three generations and little family or cultural support, we will focus on two prominent obstacles. The first obstacle is the notion that all that matters in the realm of faith is interior disposition (not formation and knowledge). This stems from the misconception that if something is experimentally provable it is “fact”, while all else (Revelation included) is no more than “opinion”, “value”, or “sentiment”.

Thus “facts” about God lack importance. This leads to “loving” a God that one does not know. Another prominent roadblock is at the opposite end of the spectrum and leads to learning about a God that one does not love. It is the notion that all that matters is exterior actions, or “going through the motions” and learning facts to get a grade or receive a Sacrament. This incorrect view does not see the importance of a relationship with God. This stems from a lack of personal conversion and living faith. Facts learned are not connected to the life of the learner and are a cultural observance at best, a tedious set of rules at worst. Both roadblocks lead to a shallow, often short-lived faith and the rejection of religious education.

How do I deal with these roadblocks?

Regarding the former obstacle, Christian Revelation must not be presented as one opinion among many about God, but as the fullness of truth about Him, revealed by Him in the person of His Son. Statements that have God as their source are “facts” and not just “feelings,” even if they cannot be scientifically proven.

Regarding the latter obstacle: We must dedicate the “first stage in the catechetical process...to ensuring conversion” (GDC 62). This is accomplished through exhortation (the delivery of the basic Gospel message, also called the kerygma, which is Greek for a proclamation) and prayer. **While kerygma and prayer are especially presented on retreats and at youth group gatherings, they must also permeate every religion class. If they do, religious education will not be seen as disconnected facts, but as an intelligible whole that leads students “to intimacy with Jesus Christ” (CT 5). If this core message is received and responded to in prayer, the rest of our religious education will form more than students of theology, but disciples of Jesus Christ.**

What are the essential points of the kerygma?

The kerygma, called the basic “Gospel” message, or, “good news” consists of five key points:

- **God has created man with a purpose** - to know, love, and serve Him in this life and to be happy with Him forever in the next (i.e., for a relationship with Himself that is to culminate in eternal glory).
- **Man chose to reject God.** He lost the relationship for which he was created, He lost participation in Divine life, and is thus wounded at his core. Every person is born in a state of Original Sin (a state of separation from God).
- **Jesus Christ, God-man, is the only solution to this problem.** He makes it possible for us to return to our purpose and destination in glory by his coming, dying, rising, and ascending (Paschal Mystery).
- **Conversion and faith**, (“Repent and believe in the good news.” - Mark 1:5) with the help of grace, is the appropriate response to Christ.
- **We are to become part of God’s family**, the Church, wherein we receive the Sacraments, (which link us to the Paschal Mystery and breathe divine life/salvation into our souls) and cooperate with grace to partake in the mission of the Redeemer.

Why is Prayer an essential component of every Religion Class?

It is God’s desire that we not just know about Him, but that we know and love Him in an intimate way. To enter into a relationship with any person, conversation is necessary. Prayer is conversation with God. It is a lifting of our minds and hearts to God, speaking with Him and listening to Him. To know, love, and serve God, we must have a daily prayer life. This conversation with God softens the heart of the student to respond to the kerygma, the Gospel message, and it allows the teaching that is received to become a means for loving Jesus Christ in a deeper way. Therefore, it is essential that students spend time in prayer each day in order to develop a habit of daily prayer. To this end, every religion class should include a period of time for prayer. One form of prayer that is particularly fitting for a religious education setting is *Lectio Divina*, or “Praying with Scripture” in which a passage of Scripture is read, silently reflected on and a personal application to life is made.

Go to www.dioceseoflacrosse.com. Click on Offices & Ministries, followed by Catechesis/Praying with Scripture for prayer worksheet and more information.

The Creed

Foundation

God has revealed the truth about Himself so that we may know Him. It is through knowing God that we come to love and serve Him in this life in order that we may be eternally united with Him forever in Heaven. Without a sound knowledge of the truths of the Faith, we cannot truly love and serve God as we should.

Since earliest times, the Church has provided a summary of the essentials of the revelation of God in what is called the Apostles' Creed (CCC 194). "*The Apostles' Creed* is so called because it is rightly considered to be a faithful summary of the Apostles' faith," communicated to them by Jesus Christ (CCC 194). The Apostles' Creed provides us with the key points of who God is and the work that He has accomplished for our salvation. The Creed provides Catholics with the common language of faith, which is "normative for all and unites all in the same confession of faith" (CCC 185).

The Apostles' Creed, in presenting the Story of Salvation History (the Story of the Bible) in a compact form, is the interpretive key to help us understand the Bible. Knowledge of the Creed is therefore imperative in order to grow spiritually and morally and to grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ by frequent, prayerful reading of the Word of God. St. Jerome wisely said, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ" (CCC 133). (See Introduction Section –God's Plan of Salvation History for the full teaching).

Note: Sacred Art, the captions that go under the Sacred Art if displayed as a timeline on the wall, and the outline for presenting God's Plan of Salvation History can be downloaded from the Diocesan website: [www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/office and ministries/catechesis/SalvationHistoryinArtwork](http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/office%20and%20ministries/catechesis/SalvationHistoryinArtwork)

Purpose

This course will give students a correct understanding of each of the Articles of the Creed, which is a summary of the whole Faith. As life is ordered to knowing and loving God, proper knowledge of the Faith draws students to grow in their love for God and leads to peace of mind. Living the truth in justice and love in a committed way leads to peace of heart. Therefore, students will be guided to "embrace the Creed of our life-giving faith" (CCC 197).

Through the study of the Creed students will be able to explain and defend the revealed truths. Explaining and defending the Creed to lead others to Christ is a necessary part of a living faith.

Further, students will see the relationship between Sacred Scripture and the Creed. The Creed provides the foundation blocks of what we believe in giving us an overview of God's plan for our salvation, which in turn, helps us to read and interpret the Scriptures correctly. The study of the Creed also provides the introduction and foundation to all other subjects in the Religion Curriculum.

Note the distinction: The *Faith* refers to what we believe, i.e. the teachings of the Catholic Church while the *virtue of faith* refers to belief in God (CCC 1814).

Roadblocks

One should be aware of possible roadblocks to understanding the Creed. One roadblock is the opinion that a correct faith is not necessary to have a healthy love for God. This mistaken view holds that love is all that counts, rejecting the knowledge of God through the "standard of teaching" (CCC 197). We cannot, however, love God if we do not know Him and/or if we believe wrong things about Him, that He is an evil, unjust or tyrannical God or a "Santa Claus" God, Who merely gives gifts. Moreover, a healthy love for God must include the truth of who God is: the knowledge that He has revealed to us in order for this love to grow and be effective

spiritually and morally. That is to say love for God includes growing in faith and hope in Him and love of neighbor for the love of God.

Pope Benedict addressed this issue in his Wednesday audience of April 5, 2006. *“The Church of love is also the Church of truth, understood above all as faithfulness to the Gospel that the Lord Jesus entrusted to His followers...The Church is entirely of the Spirit, but has a structure – apostolic succession – that has the responsibility to safeguard that the Church always abides in Christ’s gift of truth, from which the capacity to love also proceeds.”* We refer to this teaching office of the Church as the Magisterium which *“Christ endowed the Church’s shepherds with the charism of infallibility in matters of faith and morals”* (CCC 890). Another roadblock is the mistaken view that objective truth does not exist, thus “religious truth” does not exist. Rather, there is a collection of intelligent sounding opinions, which are mostly contradictory and all have equal weight. This view eventually leads to rigorous skepticism.

Finally, there is a misguided tendency today to believe that there is truth about God but it is secret and not available to public religion. This Gnostic heresy holds that there are an enlightened few and only the few really know.

Essentials

“I Believe” – “We Believe”

I. Our capacity for God

The desire for God is written in the human heart, because we are created by God and for God; God never ceases to draw us to Himself. Only in God will we find the truth and happiness we never stop searching for” (CCC 27, 355, 1434-1436, 1700, 1718, 1965, 1969, 2541, 2764).

II. God comes to meet us

God reveals Himself to us so that we can know Him and love Him. “God has revealed Himself fully by sending His own Son” (CCC 50-53, 73).

III. We must respond to God in faith

God invites us to respond to His loving address. The obedience of faith is our response to God, and our response is always His gift of grace (CCC 142-144). “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God – not because of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9; see also Philippians 2:12b-13).

The Profession of the Christian Faith

I. God the Father

A. “I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth”

1. The Holy Trinity: (CCC 231-237, 243-244).
2. Creation and Divine Providence: (CCC 295-296, 302-305, 317, 321).
3. Angels, Good and Bad: (CCC 328-329, 391-395).
4. Nature and Origin of Man: (CCC 355-358).
5. Original Sin: (CCC 396-400, 410-411).

II. God the Son

A. “I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord”

1. The Incarnation: (CCC 461, 463).
2. True God and True Man: (CCC 464, 478).

B. “He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and was born of the Virgin Mary”

1. Mother of God: (CCC 495, 506, 509, 723, 971, 1674, 1814, 2767).
2. Christ inaugurated the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The Catholic Church is the seed and beginning of this Kingdom: (CCC 541-542 567).
3. Proclamation of the Kingdom: everyone is called to enter (CCC 543-546).
4. Signs of the Kingdom: (CCC 547-550).
5. The Apostles sent to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal: (CCC 551).

6. The Keys of the Kingdom: (CCC 551-552).
7. The path to the Kingdom: the call of Discipleship: (CCC 1724-1726, 2098, 863, 897-913).

C. “Jesus Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.”

1. Salvation: (CCC 604-611, 615-617, 619).
2. In the Paschal Mystery, Jesus accomplished the coming of His Kingdom (CCC 542, 571, 654).

D. “He descended into hell, on the third day He rose again”

1. Jesus opened the gates of Heaven for the souls of the just: (CCC 636-637).

E. “He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father

1. The entrance of Jesus’ humanity into God’s heavenly domain” (CCC 665).
2. Jesus is our mediator between God and man: (CCC 667).

F. “From thence He will come again to judge the living and the dead”

1. On Judgment Day, Christ will achieve the definitive triumph of good over evil (CCC 675-679, 681-682).

III. God the Holy Spirit

A. “I believe in the Holy Spirit”

1. Through His grace, the Holy Spirit awakens faith in us: (CCC 684).
2. Sanctifier: The Holy Spirit builds, animates, and sanctifies the Church (CCC 733-741, 747).

B. “I believe in the Holy Catholic Church”

1. Instituted by Jesus Christ: (CCC 763-766).
2. We participate in the three offices of Christ as priest, prophet and king: (CCC 783-786).
3. Marks of the True Church: One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. (CCC 813,823, 830-831, 857).
4. Christ’s Faithful – Hierarchy, Laity, Consecrated Life (CCC 934-945).
5. The teaching office of the Church or Magisterium is protected from error. (CCC 890, John 14:26).
6. Communion of Saints: (CCC 962).
7. Mary – Mother of the Church: (CCC 975).

C. “I believe in the forgiveness of sins”

1. Divine Power: (CCC 976, 981).

D. “I believe in the resurrection of the body”

1. Jesus conquered death: (CCC 997, 1010).

E. “I believe in life everlasting”

1. The Church encourages preparation for the hour of our death” (CCC 1014).
2. The Particular Judgment: (CCC 1021-1022).
3. Heaven: (CCC 1023).
4. The Final Purification, or Purgatory: (CCC 1030).
5. Eternal Punishment of Hell: (CCC 1033, 1057)
6. The Last or General Judgment: (CCC 1038-1039).
7. The Kingdom of God in its fullness: (CCC 1042-1045).

Recommended Resources

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Compendium, Catechism of the Catholic Church

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
(800) 235-8722

Introduction to Catholicism – The Didache Series

Rev. James Socias
Midwest Theological Forum

God Calls You – Dominican Series, Volume I

Priory Press

The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth

Saint Mary's Press, (800) 533-8095 or www.smp.org.

Father McBride's TEEN CATECHISM

Based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church
Alfred McBride, O.Praem.,
Our Sunday Visitor
(800) 348-2440 or www.osv.com.

Catholic and Christian, 20th Anniversary Edition

Alan Schreck,
www.catholicfreeshipping.com

The Old Testament

Foundation

The Bible is the inspired Word of God and is without error. The Old Testament is part of Divine Revelation in which God began to speak to us, revealing who He is and teaching us about Himself through His chosen people, Israel. In our prayerful study of the Sacred Scriptures, we encounter the living God and the power of His Divine grace. Further, the Bible tells us what we need to know about God and how to respond in faith in order to be saved - to share in the eternal life of joy with God. (2 Peter 1:4)

We are to read the Scriptures under the guidance of the Church. Jesus Christ entrusted to the living, teaching authority of the Church alone the authority and “the task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition” (CCC 85). This teaching authority, consisting of the pope and the bishops in communion with the pope, is called the Magisterium. The Magisterium provides the boundaries so that we are able to read the Bible properly (CCC 112-114).

Although there are many books of the Bible, there is one story. This story is about the love of God for His people. The Old Testament conveys how God created us out of love, for the purpose of being united with Him through sanctifying grace, which is a share in His Divine Life. When Adam and Eve rejected God’s love and were separated from Him through the loss of sanctifying grace, God promised to send His Son to forgive our sins and to reunite us with the Blessed Trinity. The Old Testament portrays the long journey toward salvation in a process of Covenants (solemn agreements between God and man) through which God gradually draws us back to Himself beginning with His chosen people, Israel. The Old Testament leads to the coming of the Savior in the New Testament and the establishment of the Catholic Church by Jesus Christ in the new and eternal Covenant (CCC 60).

Purpose

This course will guide students to understand how to read Scripture. Namely, students will be taught to distinguish the literal and spiritual senses; how to read the Scriptures “in accordance with the Spirit who inspired it” by using the authority of the Church to interpret the meaning that God wants to convey through the sacred books; and always surrounding their reading of Scripture with prayer to the Holy Spirit for guidance (CCC 109-119).

Second, the course will assist students, in light of their Christian beliefs, to understand the Old Testament and how the people and events prefigure the coming of Christ in the New Testament. Further, students will learn how to apply what they learn from God’s Word to their own life. Understanding the big picture of God’s plan for our salvation and His complete faithfulness and infinite love through the events of the Old Testament will draw students to be strengthened in faith, more firm in hope that leads to greater trust and deeper love for God. Through the study of Scripture, young people will grow in their commitment to be disciples for Jesus Christ.

Roadblocks

There are several roadblocks, which can inhibit the proper understanding of the Scriptures. First is the lack of faith in miracles. This leads to skepticism toward the Scriptures that God would intervene in history to help His people. One example of God’s Divine intervention was at the Red Sea, which many are unable to accept as true history. Without belief in miracles, many believe that Scripture is a cultural artifact, which merely relates the myths of the Hebrew people. If the Bible is read with doubt, many things will be incorrectly read into the meaning, which God intended to reveal through the human authors.

Another roadblock can be “chronological snobbery”, which can permeate our attitudes and leads to the belief that we are wiser than people of the past because we know more scientifically. However, the truths of human nature do not change, and in the Scriptures God reveals these truths to us with clarity and certitude. We need to accept, in a spirit of humility, the Bible for what it truly is, the Word of God. Rather than wanting to change the

meaning of a text to fit a current train of thought, we need to accept what God wanted to reveal to us by the words, addressing difficult aspects of the interior life such as forgiveness and purity of heart.

Essentials

I. **Divine Revelation**

To know who God is and what He wants, God had to reveal Himself and His plan of loving goodness. God's plan is that we are to be united with Him by sharing in His divine life. (CCC 50-53, 1066-1068, 1996-2000, 2823)

A. The Word of God: God is the author of Sacred Scripture (CCC 105-114).

B. Inspiration: God inspired the human authors of the sacred books to write exactly what He wanted and no more. Inspiration is not dictation. Dictation would not allow for personal style, culture, language and individuality (CCC 106, 135-137).

C. Saving Truth: The inspired books teach the truth and are without error (CCC 107).

D. Canon of Scripture: The Church was created by God to teach us what we need to know. The Catholic Church existed before the Bible. It is the Church, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit that gave us the books of Scripture and interprets them (CCC 120).

II. **The Old Testament**

The forty-six books of the Old Testament are arranged according to their most important functions (CCC 120-123).

A. The Law: Moses wrote the first five books which are called the Law. The Pentateuch is the inspired record of God's creation of man and woman, their loss of union with God, and the foundation of a Divine plan for the reparation of that loss. The Ten Commandments are given to Moses to help the people know how to be faithful to God. With the loss of grace in the Original Sin, the people were not able to follow the Law.

B. History: These 14 Books trace the history of the people of Israel from the conquest of Canaan through the end of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and on to the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple. Some books tell the stories of faithful followers of God.

C. Wisdom: The Wisdom Literature relates stories about God's love, His mercy and justice, our divine destiny, and the futility of hoping in worldly things. Teachings are also given that are intended to guide us in living a joyful life.

D. Prophecy: God sent prophets to bring His message to the people. These words were about: impending disasters if the people did not return to the one, true God; words of comfort that they would be restored from the disaster; most importantly, the promise of the coming Messiah who would free His people from their slavery to sin.

III. **History and Law**

(CCC 54-64, 396-405)

A. God created Adam and Eve in His image and likeness and invited them to union with Himself. This is the reason for their (and our) dignity.

B. In the Original Sin, Adam and Eve lost union with God. Through the loss of sanctifying grace, Adam and Eve no longer had a share in God's Divine Life.

C. God did not break off His Revelation when our first parents sinned, but promised them a Savior.

D. God at once sought to save humanity part by part, gradually through the Covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses and David. God gave Moses the Covenant of the Ten Commandments so that the Israelites would know the ways of the Lord and remain close to Him through obedience.

E. The history of the Hebrew nation reveals that they were unable to keep God's Laws because of their inadequacy without God's sanctifying grace. The Law was not enough.

IV. The Major Prophets and Wisdom

(CCC 128, 130, 2585-2589, 1196, 1174-1178)

- A. Isaiah:** Isaiah prophesied the coming of the Messiah. The Son of God will take on human flesh and will be a Suffering Servant, giving His life for the forgiveness of humanities' sins. God and man will once again be reunited.
- B. Jeremiah:** Jeremiah called the people to repentance during very dark times. This prophet was greatly persecuted for speaking the truth of impending destruction due to the Chosen People's disobedience to God. Jeremiah also prophesied that the Savior would make things new, changing the heart of man by his becoming one with God (Jeremiah 31:31-34).
- C. Elijah:** Elijah prefigures the work of Jesus. He is a type of Christ e.g. the raising of the widow's son, the fast for 40 days etc. These prefigurements in the Old Testament are called typology.
- D. The Psalms:** The songs and poems of praise that were written by David speak of God's greatness, His love for humanity as well as the Incarnation of Jesus and His Passion. The universal Prayer of the Church integrates the Psalms in making the hours of the day holy.
- E. Job:** Job is an example of a Wisdom book. In the midst of his suffering Job discerns that God is preparing a good (the Savior) that is greater than the goods of this earth. "I know that I shall see my Redeemer... and I shall see God" (Job 19:25, 26). Another lesson from the book of Job is that the innocent suffer because they are being prepared for something greater than this life.

Recommended Resources

The Bible

The Catholic Youth Bible Revised, Pray It, Study It, Live It
Saint Mary's Press

Understanding the Scriptures – The Didache Series
A Complete Course on Bible Study
Midwest Theological Forum
Rev. James Socias

Love's Revelation: Old Testament, New Testament, Catechetics, Church History,
The Priory Press, (773) 478-3033

Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts

Dei Verbum: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation
Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 1965

Providentissimus Deus: On the Study of Holy Scripture
Encyclical Letter, 1893
Pope Leo XIII

Teen Guide to the Bible
Alfred McBride, O.Praem., Our Sunday Visitor
(800) 348-2440 or www.osv.com.

The Great Adventure: A Journey Through the Bible (4 hour series)
Jeff Cavins, Saint Joseph Communications, (800) 526-2151
www.saintjoe.com.
Additional Resources/Handouts on Diocesan website
www.dioceseoflacrosse.com. Click on Faith Sharing Groups.

T3: The Teen Timeline
Mark Hart, Ascension Press, (800) 376-0520 or visit
www.AscensionPress.com.
8-part study on DVD with comprehensive Study Kit materials.

The Great Adventure: A Journey Through the Bible (24 hour series)
Jeff Cavins, Tim Gray and Sarah Chrismeyer
AscensionPress, (800) 377-0520 or visit
www.AscensionPress.com.

You Can Understand the Bible,
A Practical and Illuminating Guide to Each Book in the Bible
Peter Kreeft, Ignatius Press
(800) 651-1531, www.ignatius.com.

A Father Who Keeps His Promises
Scott Hahn

The New Testament

Foundation

The New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. God kept His promises of the Old Testament and sent His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Savior of the world. We needed a Savior to reunite us with God. Jesus suffered, died, rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven so that our sins could be forgiven and so that we could receive a share in His Divine Life through the Sacraments of the Church. Jesus established the Catholic Church by choosing twelve Apostles as the foundation, giving them His teachings and instituting the seven Sacraments. The Church was publicly manifested through the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles at Pentecost. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul are an extended commentary on the Gospels and its application in daily life.

The “Good News” is that God has united Himself with man in three ways: the union of the divine nature and the human nature in Jesus Christ; the union of God and man through sanctifying grace received in the Sacraments; the union of God and man in glory through the Beatific Vision.

Purpose

The heart of the New Testament - and of the whole Christian Faith - is the person of Jesus Christ. If students do not understand the New Testament, they cannot understand who Jesus Christ is, and thus they cannot understand the whole Christian faith. “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ” (St. Jerome).

This course is to assist students to fully embrace and commit to the fact that Jesus Christ is God, our Savior, who was born to die and rise for the forgiveness of our sins and to bring us back into union with God. Further, that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament, founding a new and eternal Covenant and fulfilling the multitude of Old Testament prophecies. This understanding is essential because this knowledge is the necessary foundation for conversion and faith, and a lifetime of discipleship so that we can “accomplish faith’s goal, our salvation” (1Peter 1:9).

Students will also come to understand that the New Testament reveals how we, as part of the Church, are to continue Jesus’ work of bringing about the Kingdom of God on earth: through receiving the Sacraments and cooperating with God’s grace; by being faithful in daily prayer; by loving God and our neighbor; by forgiving those who have harmed us; through teaching all that He has commanded (Matthew 28:19-20).

Roadblocks

There are several roadblocks to understanding the New Testament. First is the mistaken notion that Jesus is not God, but merely a good man and teacher. This reduces Our Lord to the status of a great moral teacher along with Buddha, Gandhi, and Confucius and fails to grasp the central message of the New Testament.

Another roadblock is a lack of faith in miracles. Without belief in miracles, many miss the central claim of the New Testament (Jesus’ divinity) and end up believing that Scripture is a cultural artifact, which merely relates the myths of the people from 2,000 years ago. If the reader is biased by a doubt that God can and does intervene in human history through miracles, he will read into these historic accounts things not intended in their writing.

Finally, there is often the misguided tendency today to focus only on the all-embracing love of Jesus with no regard for sin and its effects. Such a view fails to acknowledge the call for repentance and conversion, which were central to Jesus’ message; it fails to acknowledge the great price by which we were saved from our sin (See 1 Peter 1:18-19); and it fails to acknowledge the final judgment, which He told us to prepare for. Jesus did indeed reach out to and welcome sinners, but He also told them to “Go and sin no more” (John 8:11).

Essentials

I. Divine Revelation

The oral Tradition “comes from the Apostles and hands on what they received from Jesus’ teaching and example and what they learned from the Holy Spirit.” The Scriptures, written under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit, developed from Tradition. “Both must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.” “The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living, teaching office of the Church alone” (CCC 74-87, 105-114, 120, 134-141).

Unity of the Old and New Testament

(CCC 128-130, 489, 121-122, 708, 1094-1095, 2055, 1965, 2568, 2585)

A. The Word of God: God is the author of Sacred Scripture. (CCC 105-114)

B. Inspiration: God inspired the human authors of the sacred books to write exactly what He wanted and no more. Inspiration is not dictation. Dictation would not allow for personal style, culture, language and individuality. (CCC 106, 135-137)

C. Saving Truth: The inspired books teach the truth and are without error (CCC 107).

D. Canon of Scripture: The Church was created by God to teach us what we need to know to reach Heaven. The Catholic Church existed before the Bible. It is the Church, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit that gave us the books of Scripture and interprets them. (CCC 120)

II. New Testament

The twenty-seven books of the New Testament are arranged according to their most important functions. There is a unity in God’s Revelation and His plan: “The New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is unveiled in the New” (CCC 124-133).

A. The New Law: The four Gospels, the heart of all the Scriptures, give us the New Law and the story of the founding of the Church. “The New Law is a law of love, a law of grace, a law of freedom.” Jesus said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you” (John 13:34). It “is the grace of the Holy Spirit received by faith in Christ, operating through charity.” “It uses the Sermon on the Mount [expressed particularly in the Beatitudes] to teach us what must be done and makes use of the Sacraments to give us the grace to do it” (CCC 1965-1986).

B. History: The Acts of the Apostles gives us the history of the early Church beginning with the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven.

C. Wisdom: The letters written by the Apostles present to us the way to live as Christians.

D. Prophecy: John, in the Book of Revelation, transmits to us the word of the Lord in symbols and images, which are very similar to the symbols and images of the Old Testament prophets.

III. Jesus: Life, Death and Resurrection

“Yes, God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him may not die but may have eternal life” (John 3:16).

A. Incarnation: The Savior was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born to the Virgin Mary who was “full of grace.” The Son of God assumed a human nature: to save sinners by reconciling us with God; so that thus we might know God’s love; to be our model of holiness; and to make us partakers of the divine nature. (CCC 456-463, 484-511)

B. Jesus' Public Ministry: (CCC 512-594)

1. **What Jesus did:** "...Jesus went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38b).
 - Jesus forgave sins through His authority as God.
 - Jesus healed many people by miracles that proved that He is God.
 - Jesus chose the 12 Apostles on which He founded His Church with Peter as head, instituted the Sacraments and gave the Apostles the secrets of the mysteries of the Kingdom (Matthew 13:11).
2. **What Jesus taught:** "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mark 1:15). The Catholic Church is the Kingdom of God on earth.
 - Jesus Christ proclaimed the Kingdom of God (CCC 541-542).
 - o The demands of the Kingdom and its Magna Carta – the Beatitudes (cf. Matthew 5-7).
 - o The heralds of the Kingdom (cf. Matthew 10).
 - o The Mysteries of the Kingdom (cf. Matthew 13).
 - o The children of the Kingdom (Matthew 18).
 - o Vigilance and fidelity demanded of whoever awaits its definitive coming (Matthew 24-25).
 - Jesus' Message: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may give life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10)
 - o Liberation from sin and the Evil One, in the joy of knowing God and being known by Him, of seeing Him, and of being given over to Him (CCC 543-546).
 - This Kingdom and this Salvation are available to every human being as grace and mercy
 - o Through interior renewal, a profound change of mind and heart (cf. Mt. 4:17).
 - o Through a life lived according to the Gospel.
 - o Through the spirit of the Beatitudes.
 - o Through self-denial, perseverance and the Cross

C. The Paschal Mystery: Jesus saved us through His Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven. In accepting the Father's will, Jesus sacrificed Himself on the Cross for the forgiveness of our sins. At the foot of the Cross, Jesus gave Mary to us as our Spiritual Mother. The Catholic Church was born when His Sacred Heart was pierced giving us the water of Baptism and the Blood of the Eucharist. Jesus overcame the power of Satan, sin and death in His Resurrection (CCC 595-667). Christ perfectly fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament Covenants.

IV. The Holy Spirit and the Catholic Church

The Apostles continued the work of Jesus which was made possible through the Holy Spirit coming upon them at Pentecost. The Apostles were empowered to do what Jesus did: to hand on His teachings, to govern through service to the Church, and to sanctify through celebrating the Sacraments (CCC 731-747, 763-776, 858-862, 874-896).

The first Christians "devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and the prayers" which we understand to be the Creed, the moral life, the Sacraments and Sacramental living and the prayers, which are the four pillars of the Catechism (Acts 2:42).

V. St. Paul and the early Church

In Saul's conversion, Jesus asked him, "Why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:4) In Our Lord's words, we come to understand the Church as His Mystical Body.(CCC 787-795)

In the letters that the Apostles wrote to the churches that they founded, we are given the Wisdom to know how we are to live out what Jesus did and taught. For example, Jesus instituted the Sacrament of

the Eucharist at the Last Supper. But St. Paul clarifies the importance of receiving the Holy Eucharist worthily in his first letter to the Corinthians.

VI. St. John and the Book of Revelation

Christ revealed the contents of the Book to St. John through visions. St. John foretells the victory and triumph of the Kingdom of God on earth over all the powers of darkness. This was a fulfillment of Christ's promise: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). The book manifests how the ultimate end of history is the joy of the blessed united with God.

"Central to the visions that the Book of Revelation describes are the extremely significant images of the Woman who gives birth to a male Child, as well as the vision that complements it of the Dragon, which has already fallen from the skies but is still very powerful. This Woman represents Mary, the Mother of the Redeemer, but she also represents the entire Church - the People of God throughout the ages - the Church that, at all times, gives birth over and over again to Christ with great pain. She is always threatened by the power of the Dragon. She seems weak and defenseless. Yet, while she is threatened and pursued by the Dragon, she is also protected by God's consolation. In the end, this Woman conquers. The Dragon does not conquer. This is the great prophecy of this book, which gives us confidence...We have before us a typical paradox of the Christian life, where suffering is never perceived as having the last word; rather it is seen as a passageway to happiness and, in fact, that happiness itself is already mysteriously permeated with the joy that springs forth from hope. Therefore, John, the visionary of Patmos, was able to end this book with a final desire that pulsates with ardent expectation. He invokes the Lord's final coming: "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20).

(Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, August 23, 2006.)

Recommended Resources

The Bible

The Catholic Youth Bible Revised, Pray It, Study It, Live It
Saint Mary's Press

Fireside Catholic Youth Bible, New American Bible
Fireside Catholic Publishing,
www.FCYB.com

Understanding the Scriptures – The Didache Series A Complete Course on Bible Study
Midwest Theological Forum
Rev. James Socias

Love's Revelation: Old Testament, New Testament, Catechetics, Church History
The Priory Press, (773) 478-3033

Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts
You Can Understand the Bible, A Practical Guide to Each Book in the Bible
Peter Kreeft, Ignatius Press (800) 651-1531

Dei Verbum: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation

Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 1965

Divino Afflante Spiritu: The Most Opportune Way to Promote Biblical Studies

Encyclical Letter, Pope Pius XII, 1943

Teen Guide to the Bible

Alfred McBride, O.Praem., Our Sunday Visitor
(800) 348-2440 or www.osv.com.

T3 Thy Kingdom Come

4 DVD Set – 8 sessions with Leader's Guide, Teen Study Kit, and Timeline
Mark Hart
AscensionPress, (800) 377-0520 or visit
www.AscensionPress.com

T3 Acts of the Apostles

4 DVD Set – 8 sessions with Leader's Guide, Teen Study Kit, and Timeline
Mark Hart
AscensionPress, (800) 377-0520

Prayer in the Christian Life

Foundation

God made us for Himself, to know, love and serve Him. To enter into a relationship with any person, communication is necessary. This is also true in the spiritual life. Prayer is communication with God, opening our minds and hearts to Him. To know and love God, we must talk with and listen to Him on a daily basis. Through prayer we encounter God. It is natural and instinctive to speak to the One who gives us all things.

To serve God, we need the grace that comes to us through prayer. “Prayer is a vital necessity” for without prayer, the Christian life becomes feeble and lacks vitality and our salvation is impossible (CCC 2744). Each person must learn how to pray. The Holy Spirit is the interior Master of Prayer who teaches the children of God how to pray (CCC 2650-2651).

Purpose

We do not know how to pray on our own. We need to be taught. Scripture warns us that we can pray badly: “You ask and you do not receive because you ask wrongly” (James 4:3). An example of praying wrongly would be to pray for something for selfish reasons. Therefore, we need to learn how to pray well. Jesus taught the Apostles to pray (Luke 11:1-4, Matthew 6:1-15). Jesus sent the Holy Spirit so that we would pray for the right things and in the right way (Romans 8:26-27). Today, the Church continues the work of Jesus and teaches us how to pray and offers us a treasury of devotions as a means for enriching our prayer. A good way to study the devotions of the Church is through the lives of the saints.

Another purpose of the course is to guide and assist the students in developing the daily habit of prayer. We live our faith to the extent that we have a committed prayer relationship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Further, it is through prayer and discernment that we come to know the vocation to which God has called us and for which He has gifted us.

Roadblocks

Unfortunately, many believe that a Catholic upbringing and a working knowledge of the Faith is adequate to be a good Catholic today. A habit of daily prayer is seen as an unnecessary extra. However, it is through daily prayer that we encounter Jesus personally and come to know and love Him, rather than simply knowing about Him. Prayer is a dialogue, a conversation with God, not just simply talking to God, but also being still in His Presence in order to listen to Him. It is helpful to consider what is entailed in developing and deepening a friendship, realizing the same applies to our relationship with Jesus Christ.

Another roadblock is that people do not understand how to overcome temptations and difficulties in prayer such as busy lives, our noisy culture and the difficulty of perseverance during dry periods. Therefore, it is correct to say that being faithful in prayer requires effort, perseverance as well as wise guidance and direction for growth in prayer.

A third roadblock can be seen in our “quick serve society.” People can wrongly think that prayer is about getting material things, and that prayer will make something happen magically. This desire for God to be a “sugar daddy” is completely self-serving and neglects the importance of submitting to God’s will. Further, if prayers are not answered instantly, prayer tends to be dropped and thought to be useless. Rather, prayer is our relationship with the living God and about our good, through aligning our wills with God’s will and asking for what we need in that context. God desires what is best for us, and He answers our prayers according to His perfect love (CCC 2735-2737). His response to a prayer might include saying “no” for our good.

Essentials

I. Necessity of Prayer

(CCC 30, 2559-2567, 2658, 2744, 2839-2849)

- A. Desire for God in our heart:** God created us with a desire for union with Him. We find peace in prayer because our hearts are restless without God and they will not rest until they rest in Him. Prayer is our response to God's initiative of love and grace. (CCC 28, 355, 1237, 2097-2098, 2101-2105, 2566, 2559, 2763)
- B. Resisting temptation and overcoming the slavery to sin:** Winning the battle against temptations and sin "become possible only through prayer." (CCC 2732-2733, 2744)
- C. Growth in Holiness:** We are strengthened in daily prayer to become more like Christ in loving and forgiving others and growing in the life of virtue. (CCC 2607-2615, 2656-2658)
- D. Necessary for salvation:** Without God's grace that we receive through prayer and the Sacraments, we cannot know God, be faithful to Him nor be united with Him in Heaven. (CCC 2742-2745)

II. Prayer in Scripture

- A. Old Testament figures:** (CCC 2568-2584).
- B. The Psalms** (CCC 2586).
- C. Jesus teaches us how to pray and hears and answers our prayer** (CCC 2607-2616)
We talk with Jesus as we would with someone that we love; we know the depth of His love in that He died on the Cross for us.

III. How to Pray

Prayer must come from the heart (CCC 2700).

A. Aims of Prayer – The acronym ACTS

1. **Adoration:** (CCC 2628).
2. **Contrition:** (CCC 2631).
3. **Thanksgiving:** CCC 2637-2638).
4. **Supplication:** (CCC 2629, 2632-2633).

B. Forms of Prayer: (CCC 2699 -check).

1. **Vocal Prayer:** Praying aloud (CCC 2700-2704).
2. **Meditation:** Engaging thought and imagination in the mysteries of Christ, which we apply to our own life (CCC 2705-2708, 2723).
3. **Contemplation:** The highest level of prayer, which is a unique gift from God that allows us to be at peace in the Divine Presence (CCC 2709-2719).

C. The Our Father: The Perfect Prayer and summary of the Gospel (CCC 2759-2865).

D. The Liturgy: In the liturgy, we find communion with God. Liturgy is "the participation of the People of God in 'the work of God.'" Liturgy includes the Holy Eucharist, the other six Sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours as well as the Liturgical Year and Sacramentals (CCC 1069, 1163-1178, 1324-1326, 1382, 1667-1673).

1. **The Eucharist:** the highest form of prayer is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. (CCC 1373-1374, 1366-1367)
2. **The Liturgy of the Hours:** Praying the Psalms to keep the hours of the day holy. (CCC 1174-1178)

E. Devotions: Mother Church guides our prayer through various prayer forms: The devotional life is our daily, personal prayer times in which we deepen our knowledge and love of Christ. The devotional life disposes us to “active participation” in the Holy Mass (CCC 1674). Devotions taught should include but not be restricted to:

- o **“Praying with Scripture”** *Lectio Divina* – this practice is strongly encouraged by Pope Benedict XVI and other Magisterial documents. (Go to www.dioceseoflacrosse.com for details. Click on Offices & Ministries, followed by Catechesis/Praying with Scripture for meditation sheet and more information.) (CCC 2708, 1177)
- o **The Rosary** (CCC 971, 2678, 2708)
- o **Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction**
- o **Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus** (CCC 478)
- o **Chaplet of Divine Mercy**
- o **Stations of the Cross** (CCC 1674)
- o **Spiritual Reading, especially the lives of the saints** (CCC 2705-2708)
- o **Litanies**
- o **Novenas**
- o **Intercessory Prayer**
- o **Pilgrimages** (CCC 2705-2708)

IV. Developing a relationship of love with God in prayer (CCC 2685-2691, 2725-2745)

- A. When to Pray:** On Sundays and holydays, every morning and night, before and after meals, in thanksgiving to God for His love and His gifts, in all dangers, temptations, and sufferings. “To pray always” means to have your heart constantly open to Jesus and aware of His Presence (Luke 21:36). This is impossible without consciously choosing specific times to pray (CCC 2697).
- B. The Battle of Prayer:** Prayer is not easy. The battle is against ourselves and against Satan who does not want us to pray, to keep us from union with God (see Mt 26:41). Against dullness and laziness, we are to pray with humility, filial trust and perseverance. (CCC 2725)

Recommended Resources

The Bible

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Compendium, Catechism of the Catholic Church

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
(800) 235-8722

Retreat With the Lord – A Popular Guide to the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola

Servant Publications
John A. Hardon, S.J.

Basic Book of Catholic Prayer: How to Pray and Why

Fr. Lawrence Lovasik, Sophia Press, (800) 888-9344
www.sophiainstitute.com.

Understanding the Catechism: Prayer

Charles Chesnavage

Prayer for Beginners

Peter Kreeft, Ignatius Press
(800) 651-1531, www.ignatius.com.

Prayer Primer, Igniting a Fire Within

Father Thomas Dubay, S.M.
Ignatius Press, (800) 651-1531, online at www.ignatius.com

The Sacraments

Foundation

God the Father created us for union with Himself and always intended to make us His children by sharing His divine life with us. God the Son's Paschal Mystery (Suffering, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension) conquered the sin that separates us from God and enabled the Father's plan to take effect. Through the seven Sacraments of the Church, the Holy Spirit accomplishes this plan in us today, linking us to the grace flowing from the Paschal Mystery.

Purpose

We were created for union with God. Through the Sacraments, we are made children of God and are empowered to live accordingly. The more we understand the Sacraments, the more we are able to receive and put into action the grace we receive through them. The more we receive and put that grace into action, the more we become fully who we are created to be as we are empowered to live up to the "high standard of ordinary Christian living" (Pope John Paul II, "On the Beginning of the Third Millennium," n. 31).

Roadblock

There is a common, mistaken notion that we do not need signs and rituals to understand spiritual things. However, we do learn about spiritual things through our sense experience. We need to engage our senses in the worship of God. Even the most primitive tribes have developed external signs and rituals in their attempt to encounter unseen realities. God, who made us, knows this. By His Incarnation, Jesus took on a human nature and allowed men to see, hear and experience Him. (See 1 John 1:1-2). In a similar way, we encounter Jesus through the Sacraments that He instituted.

There are numerous misunderstandings connected to the Sacraments. For example: Why do infants need Baptism? Is Jesus truly present in the Eucharist? Why must we confess our sins to a priest to receive God's forgiveness? Why is the Sacrament of Marriage indissoluble? The course should address these and other questions.

Essentials

I. Definition

The Sacraments are efficacious signs instituted by Christ to give grace. (CCC 774, 1084, 1115, 1131)

A. Efficacious Signs: A Sacrament is a sign/symbol of grace that causes what it symbolizes to actually occur. (Unlike stop signs, which do not necessarily make someone "stop" or hugs which do not necessarily make "affection" occur.) (CCC 950, 798, 1084, 1127-1131, 1584, 2003, 1692, 2839)

B. Instituted by Christ: The Sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ, as is recorded in Sacred Scripture, and were celebrated by the Church since its inception (though particular rituals have developed over time). (CCC 1114)

C. Sacraments in Scripture

(please see: See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Section III, The Sacrament of Charity, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Pope Benedict XVI, and *Sacraments in Scripture, Salvation History Made Present*, Tim Gray)

1. Baptism:

John 3:1-8 Jesus' Baptism, the start of the new creation in Christ (CCC 1224).

Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus' commission to baptize in the Trinitarian formula.

John 19:34 Blood and water flowed from the pierced side of the crucified Jesus as a type of Baptism (CCC 1225).

Romans 6:3-4 We are baptized into the death of Christ.

Colossians 2:12 We are also raised to life with Christ through baptism.

1Corinthians 10:1-4 The crossing of the Red Sea represents Baptism.

1 Peter 3:20-21 As wickedness was wiped out in the flood, so is sin washed away in Baptism.

Old Testament Foreshadowing:

Genesis 7 Noah's ark is a prefiguring of salvation by Baptism (CCC 1219).

Exodus 14:21-28 Crossing the Red Sea – through water to redemption

"The crossing of the Red Sea announces the liberation wrought by Baptism" (CCC 1221).

Joshua 4 Joshua leads the Israelites over the Jordan and into the Promised Land.

"Baptism is prefigured in the crossing of the Jordan River" (CCC 1222).

2. Confirmation:

Luke 3:22 At Jesus' Baptism, the Holy Spirit comes upon Him. From His anointing at Baptism, Jesus took on the role of priest, prophet, king (CCC 436, 1286).

Luke 4:18 Jesus reveals that He fulfills the Scriptures through the power of the Spirit.

John 14:16 Jesus promises to send the Spirit of Truth.

Acts 2:3-4 The mission of the Church began with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The Apostles are strengthened to become witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Acts 8:14-17 Peter and John anoint the Samaritans and they receive the Holy Spirit.

Acts 10:38 Peter speaks of Jesus' anointing with the Holy Spirit and power.

Old Testament Foreshadowing:

Exodus 40:12-15 Moses anointed Aaron with the office and mission of priest, which evokes images of the New Testament priesthood.

1 Samuel 10:1 The prophet Samuel anoints Saul as king.

1 Samuel 16:13 "The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David" as Saul anointed him as king. "Those consecrated to God for a mission were anointed in His name" (CCC 436).

Isaiah 61:1 The prophets foretold that the Messiah would be anointed with the Spirit.

Joel 3:1-2 Joel prophesied that the Holy Spirit would be poured out in the final days.

3. Eucharist:

Matthew 26:26-29 At the last supper, Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist.

John 1:29 John addresses Jesus as the Lamb of God (CCC 608)

John 6:31-38 Jesus calls Himself the living Bread which came down from Heaven.

John 19: 4 John describes Jesus' crucifixion taking place at the hour of the sacrifice of the Passover lambs.

John 19:36 Like the Passover lambs, no bones were broken when Jesus was crucified.

Acts 2:42 The Apostles dedicated themselves to the breaking of the bread (Eucharist).

1Corinthians 11:24-27 Paul describes the institution of the Holy Eucharist.

Revelation 5:6 In his visions of the heavenly liturgy, John saw "a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain."

Old Testament Foreshadowing:

Genesis 22:7-8 The sacrifice of Isaac prefigures the sacrifice of Christ. (CCC 614).

Exodus 12:1-28, 43-51 The Israelites are commanded to sacrifice and eat the unblemished lamb. The blood of the Passover lamb prefigured the Lamb of God who would shed His Blood for the forgiveness of our sins (cf. CCC 1340).

Exodus 16:1-4 God provides manna in the desert for the Israelites.

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 The Messiah is described as a "suffering servant" and Passover lamb.

4. **Reconciliation:**

Matthew 1:21 Joseph is told that Jesus “will save His people from their sins.”

Matthew 9: 5-6 Jesus speaks of His authority to forgive sins and the freedom that comes from the forgiveness of sin.

Matthew 16:19 Jesus gives the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven to Peter and the power to bind and loose.

Luke 15:11-32 The Parable of the Lost Son reveals the mercy of the Father.

John 20:21-23 The risen Christ gives the Apostles the power to forgive sin (CCC 1461).

2Corinthians 5:18-20 Jesus gave us the ministry of reconciliation through the Church in the priesthood.

Old Testament Foreshadowing:

Genesis 3 Adam and Eve commit the Original Sin and separate themselves from God.

2Kings 25 The Babylonian captivity and exile from the Promised Land reveals how sin separates us from God. Return from exile would come about through forgiveness of sin.

Psalms 95:8 Sin is described as “hardness of heart.”

Jeremiah 31:31 The prophet speaks of the New Law written on our heart, a sign of the New Covenant (CCC 1965-1966).

2 Samuel 12:1-14 David recognizes his sin and seeks repentance from the Lord.

5. **Anointing of the Sick:**

Matthew 8:2-3 Jesus desires to heal people.

Mark 1:32-34 Jesus “has come to heal the whole man, body and soul; He is the physician the sick have need of” (CCC 1503). Jesus’ true mission is to forgive sins, giving us new life in Christ.

Luke 7:22 Jesus identifies Himself as the One who heals and cleanses.

James 5:14-15 The power of prayer and anointing bring healing.

Old Testament Foreshadowing:

Exodus 15:26 “It is the experience of Israel that illness is mysteriously linked to sin and evil” (CCC 1502).

Job 19:25 Job has strong faith and proves the point that suffering and illness are not necessarily linked to personal sins.

2Kings 5:14-15 Through Elisha, God heals Naaman of leprosy. Elisha is a type of Christ.

6. **Holy Orders:**

Luke 22:19 Jesus instituted the priesthood of the New Covenant.

John 10:14-15 The priesthood is the office of the good shepherd, who offers his life.

John 19: 34-37 Jesus offers Himself to the Father as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. “The priesthood of the Old Covenant is fulfilled in Christ Jesus, the ‘one mediator between God and men’” (CCC 1544).

Hebrews 5:5-10 Jesus is the priest, victim, and altar.

Hebrews 8-9 The priest acts in the person of Christ, the one high priest of the new and eternal Covenant.

1John 2:2, 4:10 Jesus is the victim of atonement on the altar of the Cross.

Old Testament Foreshadowing:

Exodus 19:6 The Israelites are to be a kingdom of priests.

Exodus 29:1-30 Moses is given the rite for the consecration of priests.

Exodus 32:29 Because of the sin of the Golden Calf, the first born son is no longer the priest. Due to their faithfulness, the Levites are ordained in the service of the Lord.

Zechariah 12:10-13:1 The prophet tells of the cleansing of the people from sin.

7. **Matrimony:**

Matthew 19:8-11 *Divorce and the breakdown of marriage is the result of sin.*

Mark 2:19-20 *We see Jesus as the Bridegroom and the Church as the Bride.*

John 2:1-12 *Jesus changes water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana and elevates marriage to a Sacrament, a sign that effects grace. This grace allows faithfulness to marriage vows (CCC 1613).*

John 3:29 *Israel goes into the wilderness to hear John, who is the “friend of the Bridegroom.”*

Ephesians 5:31-32 *Marriage can be compared to the union of Christ and the Church.*

Old Testament Foreshadowing:

Genesis 2:18-25 *God instituted the union of man and woman in marriage (CCC 1604).*

Genesis 16 *Abraham did not wait on the Lord and the problems continue today.*

1Kings 11:4-12 *Solomon broke the law of Moses in taking many wives and suffered drastic consequences. This was not God’s original design for marriage.*

Isaiah 54:5 *God is described as Israel’s husband.*

Jeremiah 31:32 *God is steadfast in His love and completely faithful. God’s love foreshadows the “unity and indissolubility of marriage” in the New Covenant (CCC 1611).*

Hosea 1:2- 2:20 *The prophet Hosea reflects the new marital covenant between God and Israel in the New Testament.*

- D. To Give Grace:** The Sacraments bring us into the union with God that we were created for by imparting sanctifying grace to our souls. Sanctifying grace is a participation in God’s divine life.

II. **The Church**

In this, the “age of the Church,” Jesus Christ acts in and with His Church, dispensing the fruits of the Paschal mystery to the world by giving us His divine life through the Sacraments. (CCC: 1076)

III. **Effects**

Through each Sacrament God acts in us in a different way. (CCC: 1074, 1128, 1212, 1420-21, 1533-35)

- A. Our Disposition** determines the effectiveness the Sacraments have in our lives. (CCC 1310)

- B. The Sacraments of Initiation** (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) initiate us into the family of God by making us sharers in the divine nature (Cf. 2 Peter 1:4). They initiate us into the Church and commission us to partake in Her mission of bringing Jesus Christ to the world. (CCC 1212)

1. **“Baptism...”** “unites us with Christ who died and rose for our sins...”. (CCC 1213, Glossary)
2. **“Confirmation** completes the grace of Baptism, by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit which seal or ‘confirm’ the baptized in union with Christ and equip them for active participation in the worship and apostolic life of the Church” (CCC 1285, Glossary).
3. **The Eucharist** is Jesus Christ, Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. Reception of Jesus in the Eucharist completes Christian Initiation. (CCC 1322) The Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life” (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church 11).

- C. The Sacraments of Healing** (Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick) bring about healing, restoration, and salvation among the faithful. (CCC 1420)

1. The Sacrament Reconciliation heals our relationship with God, which is wounded by venial sin and restores the relationship when it is broken by mortal sin. When we are in the state of mortal sin, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is the necessary path back to God (CCC 1395, 1422, 1446).
2. Anointing of the Sick strengthens us to face sickness with courage, cleanses us of sin, and, if God wills it, heals us physically. (CCC 1499)

D. The Sacraments at the Service of Communion (Marriage and Holy Orders) are directed toward the salvation of others. These Sacraments are particular consecrations and empowerments to particular services in the Church. (CCC 1533)

1. **Holy Orders** is “the Sacrament of Apostolic Ministry by which the mission entrusted to the Apostles continues to be exercised in the Church through the laying on of hands” (CCC Glossary). The three degrees of Holy Orders are deacon, priest, and bishop. Without Holy Orders we would not have the Eucharist, Confirmation, Reconciliation, or Anointing of the Sick. (CCC 1536)
2. **Matrimony** is ordered to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children. Jesus raised marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament, transforming the marital covenant to a wellspring of sanctifying grace and a sign to the world of the love between Christ and the Church. (CCC 1601)

IV. Rites

Students should be familiar with the Rite for the celebration of each Sacrament. The following essentials are to be covered: the *matter* (essential symbols such as water in Baptism), the *form* (essential words), who can receive the Sacrament, and who administers it (CCC 1075).

Recommended Resources

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Compendium, Catechism of the Catholic Church
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
(800) 235-8722

Introduction to Catholicism – The Didache High School Textbook Series
Midwest Theological Forum
Rev. James Socias

Catholicism and Life: Commandments and the Sacraments
Ascension Press, Hayes, Hayes and Drummey
(800) 376-0520

Love’s Revelation – The Dominican Series
The Priory Press

Sacraments in Scripture: Salvation History Made Present
Tim Gray, Emmaus Road Publishing,
(800) 398-5470, www.emmausroad.org

Inaestimabile Donum: Instruction Concerning Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery
Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship, 1980

Familiaris Consortio: The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World
1981 Apostolic Exhortation Pope John Paul II
Pauline Books and Media

The Meaning of Vocation: In the Words of John Paul II
Scepter Press, 1997

Casti Connubi: Christian Marriage
1930 Encyclical Letter
Pope Pius XI

Sacerdotalis Caelibatus: On Priestly Celibacy
1967 Encyclical Letter
Pope Paul VI

Declaration on the Ordination of Women for the Ministerial Priesthood
Pope John Paul II, 1976

Vita Consecrata: Consecrated Life
1996 Apostolic Exhortation
Pope John Paul II

The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth
Saint Mary’s Press, (800) 533-8095 or www.smp.org.

Father McBride’s Teen Catechism
Based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church
Alfred McBride, O.Praem., Our Sunday Visitor (800) 348-2440 or www.osv.com.

Christian Morality

Foundation

Endowed with intelligence and will, man is “made to the image and likeness of God.” Although everyone possesses this image by nature, the perfection of the image in our soul is only possible by grace, and is finally completed in glory. To share more and more in the image and likeness of God means that we know and love Him more deeply. The Christian life is a combat against sin strengthened by grace that allows us one day to know and love Him perfectly in Heaven. While revelation teaches the moral law in its perfection, the precepts of that law are founded on human nature, and evident to reason.

Purpose

While the moral law is present in the heart of everyone, everyone does not see its precepts clearly and immediately. “[S]inful man needs grace and revelation so moral and religious truth may be known by everyone with facility, with firm certainty and no admixture of error” (CCC 1960). This class should assist the student to have a well-formed conscience. “The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings” (CCC 1783; cf. n.2039).

Utility

In the modern age, many look to science to solve the problems that confront humanity. But modern science cannot teach us about right and wrong. Indeed, “[s]cience and technology are ordered to man, from whom they take their origin and development; hence they find in the person and in his moral values both evidence of their purpose and awareness of their limits” (CCC 2293). Indeed, for technological progress to help man, it must be “at the service of the human person, of his inalienable rights, of his true and integral good, in conformity with the plan and the will of God” (CCC 2294).

Place in the overall curriculum

Since we are made to God's image, in so far as the image implies *knowing and loving God*, after the Creed has been explained, which gives an account of the Triune God, it is fitting to treat of His image, *i.e.*, man, who has knowledge and free-will. “The dignity of the human person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God; it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude” (CCC 1700).

Roadblocks

The greatest impediment to receiving Christian morality is the error common in our times of “moral relativism.” According to this view, there is no truth in the realm of morality, no set of standards by which we can judge. A variant of this is “cultural relativism,” where right and wrong are social determinations, and cannot be judged by human nature or Divine Revelation.

Further, moral teaching demands life experience for complete comprehension. This is precisely what young people lack. Consequently, they approach the moral life more from what they imagine to be the case than from what they actually know. They struggle to understand the long-term consequences of bad behavior, or the long term benefits of good behavior.

Finally, many young people receive minimal moral instruction in the home. Consequently, the language of morality is often strange to them.

Essentials

I. The Moral Life and the Human Soul

Must one be good if one wants to be truly happy?

- A. Happiness & the Beatitudes:** “The beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness. Through the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches that true happiness is very different from the way that the world conceives it, e.g. the attainment of money, fame, health, or pleasure. (CCC 1718, 2541, 27, 355-356, 1024, 1700, 1439, 2764)
- B. Will & Free Choice:** Happiness is not the result of chance, but of choice. We must make the right choices to be happy (CCC 1731).
- C. Human Passions:** Happiness involves the feelings, but it is more than a feeling. Further, if we act rightly, our feelings will fall into line with our choices. But our feelings are not by themselves guides to right action (CCC 1768).

II. The Ten Commandments and the Moral Law

How should we then live?

- A. The First Tablet – Love of God:** Charity first of all directs to the love of God, who should be loved above all else.
 - 1. **Worship of the One God:** God alone is to be worshipped. This is a duty that concerns men not only individually but also socially (CCC 2105).
 - 2. **Reverence for His Name:** We should do nothing to injure the honor due to God, His Church or the Saints. “God’s name is holy, and we should not abuse it” (CCC n.2143).
 - 3. **Honor for the Lord’s Day:** By dedicating Sunday as a day of worship of God and charitable work, we remember the gifts of our creation and redemption.
- B. The Second Tablet – Love of Neighbor**
 - 1. **Loving one’s neighbor in action**
 - **Respect for our parents:** After God, we must honor and obey those who gave us life and nurture (CCC 2197). The Fourth Commandment also requires us to obey secular and religious authorities who govern for the benefit of the common good (CCC 2234).
 - **Respect for life:** Life is a gift from God, and no private person can take another person’s life on his own authority through murder, abortion, euthanasia etc. Neither can any person take his own life (CCC 2268-2281).
 - **Respect for marriage and family:** God has given us the ability to share in His creative work through the marital union. Human sexuality is ordered to sacramental marriage (CCC 2360-2362, 2348-2350). This union mystically signifies the union of Christ and His Church (cf. Pope John Paul II, “Theology of the Body”).
 - **Respect for property:** External goods (land, house, clothes) are a means for us to care for our neighbors in need and ourselves (CCC 2401).

2. **Loving one's neighbor in speech**

- Respect for the truth: The truth is a common good that belongs to each and every man. We must not lie, even for the sake of a "good intention" (CCC 2464, 1753).

3. **Loving one's neighbor from the heart**

- Freeing the heart from lust: Jesus teaches us not only to refrain from lustful actions, but even lustful thoughts (Mt. 5:28; CCC 2518).
- Freeing the heart from greed: The Beatitudes teach us that our happiness lies not in external goods: "Where your heart is, there is your treasure also" (Mt. 6:21; CCC 2534).

III. The Foundation and Final End of God's Law

How is human nature the basis for the moral law? How does grace allow us to come to perfect happiness in God? How does sin prevent this happiness?

- A. Human Nature and the Moral Law:** The moral law is the standard for making right choices. It is called the "natural law" when it refers to the way the law is written on every human heart (CCC 1955-1956). It is called "divine law" when we describe how that law is revealed in Scripture, both in the Old and New Testaments (CCC 1952). The moral law finds its ultimate source in the Eternal Law of God (CCC 1951-1952).
- B. Grace:** Obedience to God's law is impossible without God's assistance. *Grace* is our participation in God's life, and allows us to follow Him (CCC 1997).
- C. Sin:** Willful disobedience to God's law is called "sin" (CCC 1849-1850). Sin gives the illusion of happiness without lasting joy or peace (CCC 1723).

IV. Moral Judgment

How does one apply the moral law to one's own actions?

- A. Conscience & Law:** The judgment of conscience depends on the moral law. Conscience is an *application* of the moral law – one does not "create" the law: "Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey" (CCC 1776).
- B. Components of Moral Choice:** The components of a moral choice are the object, the intention and the circumstances (CCC 1750-1754). "A *morally good* act requires the goodness of the object, of the end, and of the circumstances together (CCC 1755).
- C. Proportional Goods and Evils:** "It is an error to judge the morality of human acts by considering only the intention that inspires them or the circumstances (environment, social pressure, duress or emergency, etc.) which supply their context. ...One may not do evil so that good may result from it" (CCC 1756).

V. Love and Friendship

Why are friendship and community necessary for happiness?

- A. Friendship and Society** are essential for man's perfection and happiness (CCC 1879, 1936). Bad friendships lead people away from the right path (CCC 1868-1869).
- B. Supernatural Charity:** "Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God" (CCC 1822).
- C. The Order of Charity:** "God has willed that, after Him, we should honor our parents to whom we owe life and who have handed on to us the knowledge of God" (CCC 2197, see Ephesians 6:1-3).

Recommended Resources

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Compendium, Catechism of the Catholic Church

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
(800) 235-8722

Our Moral Life in Christ - The Didache Series

Midwest Theological Forum
Rev. James Socias

Morality: The Catholic View

Servais Pinckaers, OP
St. Augustine's Press

Responding to God, Volume II, Dominican Series

The Priory Press, (773) 478-3033

Your Life in Christ, Foundations of Catholic Morality

Michael Pennock
Ave Maria Press

The Hidden Power of Kindness

Rev. Lawrence G. Lovasik

Character Building, (refer especially to the chapter on friendship)

David Isaacs
Four Courts Press

The Screwtape Letters

C.S. Lewis

Mere Christianity

C.S. Lewis

Back to Virtue: Traditional Moral Wisdom for Modern Moral Confusion

Peter Kreeft
Ignatius Press

Dear Brother Thomas

Jeff Arrowood
Marshfield, WI

Veritatis Splendor (The Splendor of the Truth)

Encyclical Letter. August 6, 1993
Pope John Paul II

Evangelium Vitae (The Gospel of Life)

1995 Encyclical Letter Pope John Paul II

Humanae Vitae (Of Human Life)

1968 Encyclical Letter
Pope Paul VI

Fulfillment in Christ: A Summary of Christian Moral Principles

Germain Grisez and Russell Shaw

50 Questions on the Natural Law: What It Is and Why We Need It

Charles E. Rice

Father McBride's Teen Catechism

Based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church
Alfred McBride, O.Praem.
Our Sunday Visitor

Theology of the Body for Teens, Discovering God's Plan for Love and Life

Theology of the Body for Beginners

Jason and Christalina Evert, Mark Hart,
Brian Butler and Christopher West
Ascension Press, (800) 376-0520,
www.AscensionPress.com.

Romance without Regret (video)

Jason and Christalina Evert
Catholic Answers (888) 291-8000
www.catholic.com.

Teacher Resource – geared toward Marriage Preparation

Good News about Sex and Marriage,

Answers to Your Honest Questions about Catholic Teaching
Christopher West, Servant Publications, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Church History

Foundation

Christianity is a historical faith. It is not founded on legends and myths, but situates itself among the facts of recorded history, as one sees in the Gospel of Luke: “in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother tetrarch of Iturea and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilina, under the high priests Annas and Caiphas: the word of the Lord was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert.” (3:1-2)

More importantly, it is not only a historical faith, but also a faith that tells us the meaning of history, and reveals the consummation of history in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ: “Christ is Lord of the cosmos and of history. In Him human history and indeed all creation are ‘set forth’ and transcendently fulfilled” (CCC 668).

Purpose

The purpose of this course is to understand the Catholic Church as a divine institution, founded by Jesus Christ, and guided by the Holy Spirit, as it has contributed to the holiness of her children over the ages. If one is to understand the Church as a divine institution, one must study her history, especially as exemplified in the lives of her saints. “The saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult moments in the Church’s history” (CCC 828; Pope John Paul II, “On the Lay Members of Christ’s Faithful People,” n.16). Particular attention will also be given to the development of doctrine and practice of the Faith over time.

Place in the overall curriculum

This course supplements, indeed perfects, the secular history courses that the student receives elsewhere. A study of Western Civilization is gravely deficient without a study of the Catholic Church. Indeed, through her foundation of schools and college, hospitals and charitable institutions, and so many other works beneficial to the common good, the Church is the mother of civilization (cf. Pope Leo XIII, “On the Evils Affecting Modern Society” 5). A course on Church History is essential because Christ is the center of history. Therefore, to truly understand history, it cannot merely be “The City of Man,” the relations of nations to each other but a complete understanding of “The City of God,” the relations of nations to God (The City of God, St. Augustine).

Roadblocks

The student, through previous education and popular culture, will have already received a “history” of the Church that is profoundly negative. The contributions of the Church to civilization and culture have been belittled, and the sins and failings of her sinful members have been amplified.

Further, young people have been exposed to a view of the Church, which treats it exclusively as a human institution. Students have not been taught it’s divine dimension. “The Church is in history, but at the same time she transcends it. It is only “with the eyes of faith” that one can see her in her visible reality and at the same time in her spiritual reality as bearer of divine life” (CCC 770).

Essentials**I. First Age (50 – 700 A.D.)**

Pre-Christian Age: the pagan understanding of the world before receiving the truth of Divine Revelation. Origin and Development of the Church in the ancient Græco-Roman world (from the birth of Christ to the close of the seventh century). Christian Age: Human reason is informed by faith and improved by Divine Revelation.

A. First Epoch: The foundation of the Church by the Apostles, those few but all-important years in which the messengers of God's Kingdom, chosen by Christ Himself, laid out the ground-plan for all subsequent development of the Church (Apostolic Epoch).

Birth of the Church (CCC 766, 617, 478, 1340, 1151, 1992, 2669)

B. Second Epoch: The expansion and interior formation of the Church amid more or less violent but ever persistent attacks on the part of the Roman government (Epoch of Persecutions).

C. Third Epoch: The close union between Church and State, by the consequent privileged position of the clergy and the complete conversion of the Roman state (The Christian Empire).

Saints of the First Age

The Church's response to the movements of this age as seen in the lives of the saints:

1. **Sts. Peter and Paul** (spread of Christianity)
2. **Roman Martyrs** (named in Eucharistic Prayer I)
3. **St. Helena** (Constantine, "True Cross")
4. **St. Anthony of the Desert** (Eastern monasticism)
5. **St. Athanasius** (Arian heresy, Council of Nicaea)
6. **Sts. Augustine and Ambrose** (Confessions, Manichaeism)
7. **St. Jerome** (Vulgate, Biblical scholarship)
8. **St. Benedict** (Western monasticism)
9. **St. Gregory the Great** (Gregorian chant)

II. Second Age (700 – 1500 A.D.)

The Church as the guide of the Western nations (from the close of the seventh century to the beginning of the sixteenth).

A. First Epoch: The popes in alliance with the Carolingians, decadence of religious life in the West, isolation of the Byzantine Church and its final rupture with Rome (Trullan Synod to Leo IX, 1054).

B. Second Epoch: Interior reformation of ecclesiastical life through the popes, the Crusades, flourishing of the religious life and sciences, acme of the ecclesiastical and political power of the papacy (from 1054 to Boniface VIII, 1303).

C. Third Epoch: Decline of the ecclesiastical and political power of the papacy; decay of religious life and outcry for reforms (from 1303 to Leo X, 1521).

Saints of the Second Age

The Church's response to the movements of this age as seen in the lives of the saints:

1. **St. Dominic** (Albigensian heresy, Rosary, Inquisition)
2. **St. Francis of Assisi** (mendicant orders, Stations of the Cross)
3. **St. Thomas á Becket** (State and Church)
4. **St. Thomas Aquinas** (Summa Theologica, universities)
5. **St. Catherine of Siena** (Avignon Schism)

III. Third Age (1500 – 1789 A.D.)

The Church after the collapse of the religious unity in the West, struggle against heresy and infidelity, expansion in non-European countries (from beginning of sixteenth century to our own age). Catholic reform drew attention to devotion (renewed personal love for God in worship), discipline (reform of abuses and purified Catholic life), and doctrine (clarification of Catholic beliefs).

- A. First Epoch:** Origin and expansion of Protestantism; conflict with that heresy and reformation of ecclesiastical life (from 1521 to Treaty of Westphalia, 1648).
- B. Second Epoch:** Rupture and division within Christianity; the end of the nations unified under the Church – the end of Christendom: Luther, Calvin, Church of England etc.
- C. Third Epoch:** Oppression of the Church by state-absolutism, weakening of religious life through the influence of a false intellectual emancipation (from 1648 to the French Revolution, 1789).

Saints of the Third Age

The Church's response to the movements of this age as seen in the lives of the saints:

1. **Sts. John Fisher & Thomas More** (Anglican Schism)
2. **St. Ignatius of Loyola** (Society of Jesus, Catholic Reformation, the Spiritual Exercises)
3. **Sts. Charles Borromeo & Pope Pius V** (Council of Trent, Muhammedan incursions)
4. **St. Peter Canisius** (Lutheranism, modern Catechesis)
5. **Sts. Teresa of Avila & John of the Cross** (religious reform, mystical life through prayer)
6. **St. Robert Bellarmine** (Galileo controversy)
7. **St. Francis de Sales** (Calvinism, Doctor of the Church)
8. **Sts. Martin de Porres & Rose of Lima** (Church in South America)
9. **Sts. Isaac Jogues & Jean de Brebeuf** (French Canada, North American Martyrs)
10. **St. Margaret Mary Alacoque** (God's personal love, the Promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus)

IV. Fourth Age (1789-2000 A.D.)

The Post-Christian Age: the human mind having rejected faith. The Enlightenment is the project to “free” the human mind from Tradition, especially religious Tradition and authority. Reason tries to find its own answers without faith, apart from God. Faith, traditionally understood, is pitted against reason. The social and political effects of the Enlightenment are the effort to construct a just social order apart from the Church: liberal democracy in America, Russian Communism, European Nazism and Fascism.

- A. First Epoch:** Oppression of the Church by the Revolution; renewal of ecclesiastical life struggling against infidelity; progress of missionary activity (from 1789).
- B. Second Epoch:** Growth of the Church in America; persecution of the Church in Latin America; rise of Socialism and labor movement; encyclicals of Leo XIII.
- C. Third Epoch:** The Apparitions at Fatima and the Russian Revolution; Church under Communism; Pius XI and Pius XII versus Nazi Germany; Pius XII and the Jews.
- D. Fourth Epoch:** The Post-War World; Reign of Pius XII; Second Vatican Council; post-conciliar misinterpretation. Mass secularization and exclusion of Christian faith from social life; sexual “revolution” e.g. contraception, abortion; rise of communism and militant Islam.

Saints of the Fourth Age

The Church's response to the movements of this age as seen in the lives of the saints:

1. **Martyrs of the French Revolution** (Secularism, communism)
2. **John Henry Newman** (Oxford Movement, “development of doctrine”)
3. **St. Elizabeth Ann Seton** (Began the Catholic School system)
4. **Bl. Pius IX** (First Vatican Council, Immaculate Conception, Papal Infallibility, “Syllabus”)
5. **St. Bernadette Soubirous** (Apparitions of Mary at Lourdes, France)
6. **Bl. Miguel Pro** (Persecution of the Church in Mexico, Masonry)

7. **St. Thérèse of Lisieux** (The Little Way, Doctor of the Church)
8. **Pope Leo XIII** (The rights of workers, condemnation of Socialism)
9. **St. Maria Goretti** (youngest saint, patroness of teenage girls)
10. **Pope St. Pius X** (Modernism)
11. **Pope Pius XI** (Defense of Christian Marriage, Condemnation of Communism, Socialism, and liberal Capitalism)
12. **St. Maximilian Kolbe** (Apostle of the new Marian Era)
13. **Bl. John XXIII** (Second Vatican Council, international peace)
14. **Pope Paul VI** (Implementation of Second Vatican Council, Condemnation of Artificial Birth Control)
15. **Mother Teresa of Calcutta** (Charity to and solidarity with the poorest of the poor)
16. **Pope John Paul II** (Defense of Natural Law, Defense of Human Life, Devotion to Divine Mercy, Theology of the Body, true devotion to Mary)

Recommended Resources

The History of the Church - The Didache Series

Midwest Theological Forum
Rev. James Socias

The Compact History of the Catholic Church

Alan Schreck, Servant Books
www.catholicfreeshipping.com

Love's Revelation: Old Testament, New Testament, Catechetics, Church History

The Priory Press, (773) 478-3033

Christ the King, Lord of History and Workbook/Study Guide

Anne W. Carroll, Tan Books and Publishers
(800) 437-5876

The Church's Amazing Story

Daughters of St. Paul

The Sixteen Documents of Vatican II

Introductions by Douglas G. Bushman, S.T.L.
Marianne Lorraine Trouve, FSP
Pauline Books and Media

Epic, A Journey through Church History

10 DVD Set with Study Set, Workbook and Chart
Steve Weidenkopf and Dr. Alan Schreck
Ascension Press, www.AscensionPress.com

Catholic Social Teaching

Foundation

Man is created by God, and is meant to return to Him as his ultimate Good. Society therefore has God as its author and end. Civil law and social life should share in the eternal law of God, and positively dispose man toward his salvation. A society that acts as if “God did not exist” creates another Tower of Babel by seeking its happiness apart from God (Pope John Paul II, “Reconciliation and Penance” 18).

Purpose

Men are meant to live in society, for without it, we cannot obtain the goods that are necessary for human happiness. It is not then enough to know how to live out the moral life “individually.” One must understand what pertains to the common good of society, and how one’s happiness is fulfilled in the common good.

Utility

The moral law provides the foundation for all just social relations among men. However, the moral law is not grasped perfectly without the help of revelation and divine grace. Consequently, Christians then have an obligation to see that the divine law informs the direction of temporal society. (“Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World,” n.43) The laity assists the Church to fulfill its prophetic task in addressing the secular realm whenever human rights or the salvation of souls demands it. (ibid 76)

Place in the overall curriculum

Unlike classes in “social studies” that describe how people act or have acted in the past, Catholic social teaching explains how they *ought* to act for sake of the common good. Ultimately, life in society should assist us to live not only with each other justly in this life, but also for God in eternal life. Social teaching is therefore an extension of Christian morality in the social and political realm.

Roadblocks

Our separation between “Church” and “state” leads many to the extreme of separating religion from all social and political life. Religion becomes entirely a “private” practice once a week, unrelated to the life of the larger community. Religion, however, cannot both be a true account of human happiness and socially irrelevant. Pope John Paul II explained that “There cannot be two parallel lives in their existence: on the one hand, the so-called ‘spiritual’ life, with its values and demands; and on the other, the so-called ‘secular’ life, that is, life in a family, at work, in social relationships, in the responsibilities of public life and in culture” (Pope John Paul II, “On the Lay Members of Christ’s Faithful People,” n.59).

Further, people try to order social relationships entirely by “rights” (right to free speech, right to privacy, right to education, etc) without reference to morality. But the Church teaches that our rights are based primarily on our duties as expressed through the Ten Commandments of the moral law – duties first, then rights. The consequent right to life is founded on our duty to respect human life.

Essentials**I. Principles of Catholic Social Teaching**

- A. The necessity of the moral law:** The moral law provides the foundation for all social teaching by accounting for man's duties and consequent rights. (CCC 75, 141, 578, 1395, 1776-1778, 1855, 1950, 1972, 2558, 2611)
- B. God is the source of all civil authority:** Man does not confer authority upon himself, but flows from God to all just governments and laws. (CCC 1899-1900)
- C. The perfection of the person by the common good:** Man is not only perfected by private goods such as food and shelter, but "common goods" such as peace and truth, that come about through his life with others in community. (CCC 1905-1912)

II. First Tablet of the Law – Overview of the Moral Law

- A. Introduction to the Moral Law:** After men separated himself from God by sin, God recalled him to the moral law written on his heart through the Ten Commandments. (CCC 1949-1951, 1962, 2070)
- B. The First Tablet:** The first three commandments provide for justice and love between man and God. (CCC 2067, 2083, 2143, 2171)

III. Second Tablet of the Law I – Respect for Life and the Family

- A. The Fourth Commandment:** God commands us to honor and obey our parents, who have cooperated with God's creative power to bring us into the world. By extension, we must also honor and obey all justly established civil authorities. (CCC 2197)
- B. The Fifth Commandment:** We are to respect innocent human life, and protect it within our communities. (CCC 2258)
- C. The Sixth Commandment:** We are to promote and defend marriage, which is ordered to the good of the community. The virtue of chastity especially needs to be taught due to the effects of Original Sin (CCC 2331, 2335, 2515).
- D. The Ninth Commandment:** We are to live purity and modesty as we continue to struggle against concupiscence of the flesh and disordered desires (CCC 2514, 2517, 2519-2520).

IV. Second Tablet of the Law II – Respect for Property and Truth-telling

- A. The Seventh Commandment:** We are to not only respect the need for private ownership, but also the social goods that private ownership serves. (CCC 2401)
- B. The Eighth Commandment:** We are to promote the truth as a common good necessary for the welfare of society. (CCC 2464)
- C. The Tenth Commandment:** We are not to covet the goods of another. (CCC 2534) "For where your treasure, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21)

Recommended Resources

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Compendium, Catechism of the Catholic Church

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

(800) 235-8722

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2005

Citizens of the Heavenly City

Dr. Arthur Hippler, Borromeo Press

Living Justice and Peace

St. Mary's Press, 2002

How Christ Changed the World, The Social Principles of the Catholic Church.

Msgr. Luigi Civardi, Tan Books and Publishers,

(800) 437-5876

Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions (\$3.95)

Leaders Guide (\$5.95)

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Publishing

Apologetics

Foundation

Apologetics is a field of study that has for its subject the explanation and defense of the Christian religion. One sees in the Acts of the Apostles that Christians were able to argue persuasively with those who opposed them, both Jews (6:10) and pagans (17:17). Such defenses of the faith are as necessary today as they were in beginning. As St. Peter exhorts, “sanctify the Lord Christ in your hearts, being ready always to satisfy every one that asks you for a reason of that hope which is in you.” (1 Peter 3:15)

Purpose

Catholics should be able to defend their beliefs against criticism, not only as a means for protecting the tenets of revelation from contempt, but also as a means to bring others to the Faith. Apologetics serves the honest inquirer, who wishes to understand the Faith, and may come to embrace it. It also strengthens the believer by answering the difficulties that people raise to him about his faith.

Roadblocks

Some fear an apologetics course sets out to “prove” the Christian religion, which would deny the necessary act of faith. But an apologetics course does not so much “prove” the truth of Faith, so much as to show that the arguments against it do not disprove it.

Others may feel that apologetics is “combative” and thus contrary to Christian charity. Love for the truth however gives us zeal for its defense, and it is scandalous to leave attacks of the faith unanswered. Our responses may not convert our critics, but they will certainly strengthen the Faithful.

Essentials

I. Why must we worship God?

(in response to Atheists, Agnostics, Pantheists, Materialists)

- A.** Proofs for the existence of God – Do we have any reason to believe there is a God? (CCC 31-35, 337, 1147, 1168, 1238, 2500, 1730, 1776, 2698)
- B.** The problem of evil – Why would a good God allow suffering and evil in His Creation? (CCC 309-314)

II. Why must we be Christians?

(in response to Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Deists)

- A.** Bible: Are the Sacred Scriptures myth or true history? (CCC 101-119)
- B.** Does the Old Testament predict the Savior Jesus Christ? (CCC128-130)
- C.** Are the Gospels contradictory accounts or reliable histories? (CCC124-127, 514-515)
- D.** Is there a reason to believe that the human soul is immortal? (CCC 362-366)

III. Why must we be Catholics?

(in response to Eastern Orthodox, Anglicans, Protestants)

- A.** Did Jesus Christ found the Catholic Church? (CCC 763-766)
- B.** Were priests and bishops a part of the Church from the very beginning? (CCC 871-879)
- C.** Did Jesus Christ intend to give Peter a primacy among the Apostles? (CCC 880-881)
- D.** Did Jesus Christ intend to found the “papacy” through St. Peter? (CCC 882-885, 889-892)
- E.** What does it mean to say that there is “no salvation outside the Church”? (CCC 846-848)

Recommended Resources

Beginning Apologetics, San Juan Catholic Seminars,

Father Frank Chacon and Jim Burnham

(505) 327-5343 or website www.catholicapologetics.com.

- 1 *How to Explain and Defend the Catholic Faith*
- 2 *How to Answer Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons*
- 2.5 *Yes! You Should Believe in the Trinity: How to Answer Jehovah's Witnesses*
- 3 *How to Explain and Defend the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist*
- 4 *How to Answer Atheists and New Agers*
- 5 *How to Answer Tough Moral Questions: Abortion, Contraception, Euthanasia, Test-Tube Babies, Cloning and Sexual Ethics.*
- 6 *How to Explain and Defend Mary*
- 7 *How to Read the Bible: A Catholic Introduction to Interpreting and Defending Sacred Scripture*

Catholic Apologetics Today: Answers to Modern Critics

TAN Books and Publishers

Fr. William Most

Catholicism & Reason – The Creed and Apologetics

Hayes, Hayes and Drummey

Ascension Press, (800) 376-0520

Handbook of Christian Apologetics,

Peter Kreeft with Fr. Ronal Tacelli, S.J.

Hundreds of answers to life's most crucial questions.

Theology for Beginners

F. J. Sheed

www.catholicfreeshipping.com

Born Fundamentalist, Born Again Catholic

David B. Currie

Nuts and Bolts

Tim Staples

Did Adam and Eve Have Belly Buttons?

Matthew Pinto, Ascension Press

(800) 376-0520, www.ascensionpress.com

Recommended Prayers

The following prayers are included for memorization and deeper understanding

The Sign of the Cross

Our Father

Hail Mary

Prayer To My Guardian Angel

Glory Be

Grace Before Meals

Grace After Meals

Act of Contrition

Apostles Creed

The Morning Offering

Prayer to prepare for Mass

Prayer After Receiving Jesus in Holy Communion

Memorare

The Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Hail Holy Queen (Salve Regina)

Queen of Heaven (Regina Caeli)

Prayer to St. Michael

Prayer Before Reconciliation

Prayer After Reconciliation

Act of Faith

Act of Hope

Act of Love

The Angelus

Divine Praises

Daily Examination of Conscience

Stations of the Cross

Anima Christi

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit (Veni Sancte Spiritus)

Beatitudes

Chaplet of Divine Mercy

Prayer for Priests

Litany to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Litany to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

The Magnificat

Recommended Reading – Saint’s Lives

Grade 9

- *The Curé de Ars*, Mary Fabyan Windeatt (Tan)
- *Modern Saints Book One and Two*, Ann Ball (Tan)
- *Tomorrow Will Be Too Late: A Life of St. Peter Julian Eymard, 1811-1868*
Norman B. Pelletier, S.S.S. (Emmanuel Publishing, Cleveland OH)
- *The Song of Bernadette*, Franz Werfel and Ludwig Lewisohn (Ignatius)
- *St. Benedict*, Mary Fabyan Windeatt (Tan)
- *Forty Dreams of St. John Bosco: The Apostle of Youth*, Saint John Bosco (Tan)
- *St. Gerard Majella*, Fr. Edward Saint-Omer, C.S.S.R.
- *Bells of Conquest: The Life of St. Bernard of Clairvaux* (Daughters of St. Paul)
- *Fire of Joy: The Life of St. Philip Neri*, Paul Turks (Alba House)

Grade 10

- *The Little Flower*, Mary Fabyan Windeatt (Tan)
- *Saint Catherine Laboure of the Miraculous Medal*, Fr. Joseph I. Dirvin, C.M. (Tan)
- *The Wonder of Guadalupe*, Francis Johnston (Tan)
- *Maximilian Kolbe: Saint of Auschwitz*, Elaine Murray Stone (Paulist Press)
- *Modern Saints: Book One and Two*, Ann Ball (Tan)
- *Saint Katharine Drexel: Friend of the Oppressed*, Ellen Tarry (Ignatius Press)
- *Saint John Vianney*, Leo Cristiani

Grade 11

- *Saint Paul the Apostle*, Mary Fabyan Windeatt (Tan)
- *Faustina: Apostle of Divine Mercy*, Catherine M. Odell (Our Sunday Visitor)
- *St. Thomas Aquinas*, Mary Fabyan Windeatt (Tan)
- *Edmund Campion: Hero of God’s Underground*, Herold C. Gardiner, SJ (Ignatius Press)
- *Modern Saints: Books One and Two*, Ann Ball (Tan)
- *St. Rose of Lima*, Sister Mary Alphonsus (Tan)
- *St. Rita of Cascia*, Fr. Joseph Sicardo (Tan)
- *Stories of Padre Pio, Madame Katharina Tangari* (trans. by John Collorafi) (Tan)

Grade 12

- *Saint Margaret Mary and the Promises of the Sacred Heart*, Mary Fabyan Windeatt (Tan)
- *St. Maria Goretti: In Garments All Red*, Fr. Godfrey Poage, C.P. (Tan)
- *Our Lady of Fatima*, William Thomas Walsh (Image Books, Double Day)
- *Saint Pio of Pietrelcina, Rich in Love*, Eileen Dunn Bertanzetti (Pauline Books and Media)
- *Modern Saints: Books One and Two*, Ann Ball (Tan)
- *The Autobiography of St. John Neumann*, St. John Neumann (Pauline Books & Media)

- *The Life and Thought of Edith Stein*, Freda Mary Oben (Alba House)
- *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, Andre Ravier, S.J. (Ignatius Press)
- *Story of a Soul*, Saint Therese of Lisieux. (Tan)
- *St. Francis of Assisi*, G.K. Chesterton (Image Books, Double Day)

Recommended Reading – Other Topics

- *The Life of Christ*, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen (Image)
- *The Shadow of His Wings*, Fr. Gereon Goldman, OFM (Ignatius Press)
- *The Hidden Pope, The Personal Journey of John Paul II and Jerzy Kluger*, Darcy O'Brien (Daybreak Books)
- *The Right to be Merry*, Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C. (Ignatius Press)
- *Father Elijah*, Michael O'Brien (Ignatius Press)
- *The Great Divorce*, C.S. Lewis (HarperSanFrancisco)
- *Letters to a Young Catholic*, George Weigel (Basic Books)
- *The Screwtape Letters*, C. S. Lewis (HarperSanFrancisco)
- *Witness to Hope, A Biography of Pope John Paul II*, George Weigel (Ignatius Press)
- *Did Adam and Eve have Belly Buttons?* Matthew Pinto (Ascension Press)
- *Arms of Love*, Carmen Marcoux (One Way Publishing House)
- *Return with Honor*, Captain Scott O'Grady with Jeff Coplon (HarperTorch)
- *Pure Womanhood*, Crystalina Evert (Catholic Answers)
- *Pure Love*, Jason Evert (Catholic Answers)
- *The Lord of the Rings*, J. R. R. Tolkien
- *Chronicles of Narnia*, C.S. Lewis
- *Rome Sweet Home*, Scott and Kimberly Hahn (Ignatius Press)
- *The Truth Will Set You Free, A Presentation of the Catholic Faith for Young Adults based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Michael M. Mazza (Veritas Press 1-800-705-3367)
- *The Virtue Driven Life*, Father Benedict J. Groeschel, C.F.R. (Our Sunday Visitor)
- *To Know Christ Jesus*, Frank Sheed (Ignatius Press)
- *What does God Want? A Practical Guide to Making Decisions*, Fr. Michael Scanlon, T.O.R. with James Manney (Franciscan University Press)
- *Inside Islam, A Guide for Catholics, 100 Questions and Answers*, Daniel Ali and Robert Spencer (Ascension Press)
- *Ten Prayers God Always Says Yes To* Anthony DeStefano (Doubleday)
- *Go in Peace, Your Guide to the Purpose and Power of Confession, 101 Questions* Fr. Mitch Pacwa, S.J. and Sean Brown (Ascension Press)

Recommended Teacher and Parent Resources

Raise Happy Children, Teach Them Joy!

Mary Ann Budnick

Twenty virtues: temperance, moderation, modesty, chastity, sociability, hospitality friendship, respect for others, tact, courtesy, simplicity, patriotism, prudence, flexibility, understanding, loyalty, audacity, humility, optimism and cheerfulness.

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