
THE SACRAMENT *of* MARRIAGE *and* THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY (ThM 528)

Spring, 2022. Fr. Luke Dysinger, OSB

Phone: 805 482-2755 ext 1057. Office Hours: Mon & Wed. 9:00-10:00 or by email appointment

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COURSE WEBSITES: <http://ldysinger.stjohnsem.edu> [alt: <http://ldysinger.com>]; <https://www.stjohnsonis.com>

COURSE SYLLABUS

DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the theological implications of Sacrament of Marriage and the understanding of Christian family in the Roman Catholic tradition. The course integrates the catechetical, doctrinal, historical, and moral aspects of the Sacrament and family. The personal and social dimensions of the family and the Sacrament of Matrimony studied in light of patristic, medieval, secular modernism and contemporary perspective, with emphasis on “The Theology of the Body” and practical theological approaches for contemporary parish ministry and evangelization. “The Theology of the Body” includes the history and development of Catholic doctrine concerning the sacramentality and holiness of marriage, the moral and spiritual significance of Christian celibacy, and the “language of the body:” namely, recognition of the ontological meaning of human acts and careful assessment of choices that either facilitate or impede the acquisition of virtue.

In order to profit from the cultural and ethnic diversity of the student body, students are encouraged to bring to classroom discussion sources that illustrate the development of their own cultural traditions: including, for example, the unique contributions of Hispanic and Asian Catholicism; as well as the theological, canonical, liturgical, and spiritual emphases that distinguish Western Catholicism from Eastern traditions such as the Maronite, Chaldean, Melchite, Malabar, and Ruthenian churches.

The course format consists of both lecture and discussion.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The student understands and is able to articulate the historical circumstances that provided the context for the unique theological and pastoral approach of the Church regarding the Sacrament of Marriage.

The student understands and is able to articulate pertinent statements from the Holy See and the USCCB concerning the family and the Sacrament of Matrimony.

The student understands and is able to articulate cultural differences in people’s approach and controversies realistic vision of the stability and psychological maturity that comes from the Sacrament of Marriage and the nuclear and extended families.

The student understands and is able to articulate how to integrate a diversity of pastoral situations in theological reflection and appropriate, comprehensible advice concerning ethical dilemmas in marriage and family.

The student understands and is able to apply canonical regulations and associated catechetical reference pertaining to marriage and the sacrament of matrimony in counseling and leading in prayer people of different backgrounds, ethnicities, ages and disabilities.

COURSE FORMAT *and* EVALUATION

1. This course will combine lecture and class discussion based on assigned readings. Active participation in class discussions is essential, and will figure into the final evaluation.
2. A take-home final examination will consist of three case-studies. Students will have one week to return their answers, which should be typed, contain appropriate references, and be submitted electronically by email in doc, docx, or pdf format.
3. A research project **due on or before April 25, 2022** will be undertaken concerning the teaching of Natural Family Planning in the parish setting. Students are to contact the Office for Family Life in their respective dioceses and determine what resources are available in their diocese, including trained teachers, online resources and “apps”. The presentation or paper should be oriented towards encouraging awareness of natural family and teaching at the parish, deanery, or diocesan levels, as appropriate. It must include evidence that the appropriate diocesan offices have been contacted and reflect conversation with the appropriate officials. The seminary student body represents a broad spectrum of multicultural diversity, with a concomitantly wide range of preference for either verbal or written presentations. In recognition of this, students will be offered the opportunity of choosing either:
 - A. a written research paper of between eight and twelve pages, including appropriate references; or
 - B. an oral presentation lasting twenty to twenty-five minutes using Powerpoint or student-designed webpages, Since the presentation will not be given during class, a digital video recording of the presentation must be submitted, or an audio recording of the presentation must be embedded in the Powerpoint.
4. Late work will be accepted for a grade only if the professor grants an extension of the deadline: requests for extensions must be submitted in writing with a clear explanation of the reason for the request. Out of fairness to those who submit their work on time, late work for which an extension has been granted will normally be graded down by one-half letter grade for each day it is late.
5. In research and on exams students must clearly distinguish between their own words and sources they are citing. Failure to credit sources that are cited constitutes plagiarism and may result in a grade of “F”.
6. Submission of the midterm examination and research project is required for successful completion of the course. The final course grade will be computed as follows:

Class participation	20%
Final Examination	40%
Research paper or oral presentation	40%

DIVERSITY

The course will explore the diverse ways the Church’s responds in various settings.

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“The seminary student body represents a broad spectrum of multicultural diversity, with a concomitantly wide range of preference for either verbal or written presentations. In recognition of this, students will be offered the opportunity of choosing either an oral presentation or a research paper.” (*Course Format and Evaluation*, no. 3, above):

REQUIRED TEXTS *and* CATHOLIC TEACHING DOCUMENTS:

(all of the following may be downloaded from the course website)

- Pope Leo XIII: *Arcanum Divinae Sapientiae*.
Pope Pius XI, *Casti Conubii*.
Pope Pius XII, *Sacra Virginitas*.
Pope St. Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae, Sacerdotalis Caelibatus*.
Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et Spes* (esp.§47-52); *Dignitatis Humanae* (esp.§5).
Pope St. John Paul II: *Catechesis on Genesis and Exodus; Catechesis on St. Paul; Evangelium Vitae; Familiaris Consortio; Mulieris Dignitatem; God the Author of Marriage; Human Love and Respect for Life; Responsible Parenthood; Veritatis Splendor; Vita Consecrata; Fruitful and Responsible Love*.
Pope Benedict XVI: *Deus Caritas est (God is Love); On Family and Christian Community; Caritas in Veritate (on Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth)*
Pope Francis: *Lumen Fidei* §52-54 (2013); *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013); *Catecheses on the Family* (2014-2016); *Laudato Si* (2015); *Amoris Laetitia* (2016); *As A Loving Mother* (2016); *You Are the Light of the World* (2019).
The Catechism of the Catholic Church, selections.
SCDF: *The Reception of Holy Communion by the Divorced and Remarried Members of the Faithful; Dignitatis Personae (On Certain Bioethical Questions)*.
Coleman, Gerald, *Human Sexuality, an All-Embracing gift*, (Alba House).ISBN: 081890643X
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RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- Ashley, Benedict, *Theologies of the Body: Humanist and Christian* (The Pope John Center)
Brown, Peter, *The Body and Society, Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, (Columbia Univ. Press, 1980).
Bayer, Edward, and McCarthy, Donald, *Handbook on Critical Sexual Issues*.
Cahill, Lisa, *Between the Sexes, Foundations for a Christian Ethics of Sex*.
Colom, Enrique and Angel Rodriguez-Luno. *Chosen in Christ to be Saints: Fundamental Moral Theology*. (Rome, Italy: University of the Holy Cross, 2014). (available also in Spanish and Italian)
The council of the Matrimoniad: A New Voice in the Church. *Fertility Acceptance and Natural Family Planning, A Catholic Viewpoint on Fertility Appreciation, and the Concept of Wellness in Health Care, Genital Encounter and Contraception, A Faith Perspective* (Family Action Publications).
deHaro, Ramón García, *Marriage and the Family in The Documents of The Magisterium, A Course in the Theology of Marriage*, ISBN 0-89870-459-6 (Ignatius Press, 1993),
Durkin, Mary, *Feast of Love, Pope John Paul II on Human Intimacy*.
May, William, *Catholic Bioethics and the Gift of Human Life*, ISBN 0-87973-683-6 (Our Sunday Visitor, 2000).
Monks of Solesmes, *The Human Body, Papal Teachings* (St. Paul Editions, 1960).
Pope John Center, *Human Sexuality and Personhood*.
Pope John Center, *Moral Theology Today: Certitudes and Doubts*.
Rhonheimer, Martin. *The perspective of morality : philosophical foundations of Thomistic virtue ethics*. (Washington, DC: Cath.U.Am.Press, 2011). (Available also in Spanish and Italian)
Vandenberg, Thomas L., *A Companion for the Pastoral: A sign of our Time*.
West, Christopher, *Theology of the Body Explained*, ISBN: 0-8198-7410-8. (Pauline Books and Media).

COURSE OUTLINE *and* READINGS

1. AN OVERVIEW OF CATHOLIC TEACHING ON MARRIAGE, CHASTITY AND THE HUMAN FAMILY

READINGS:

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, selections (course website)

INTRODUCTION: Creation (§ 355-384); Fall (§ 385-421); Eternal Life (§ 1020-1060);

MARRIAGE: Sacrament of Matrimony (§ 1601-1666); Ethics of Life (§ 2258-2330); Sexuality and Chastity (§ 2331-2350); Offenses Against Chastity (§ 2351-2356); Marital Sexuality (§ 2360-2379); Offenses Against Marriage (§ 2380-2400)

Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*. Pope St. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*. Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas est*.

2. MODERN CONTROVERSIES CONCERNING MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY: A SPIRITUAL AND THEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

A. Divorce, Remarriage, and the Sacraments [2 hrs.]

READINGS (articles): “The Nuclear Family was a Mistake”; “Marriage makes men better”; “Now What for Marriage?”

B. Ministry, Friendship, and the Universal Need for Appropriate Boundaries [2 hrs.]

READINGS: *Healthy Boundaries: Working Guidelines and Personal Strategies* Fr. Quinn Conners, O.Carm., Ph.D. *Managing Ministerial Risks*, Fr. Michael N. Kane

C. Models of Christian Modesty and Intimacy [2 hrs.]

READINGS: Coleman, Introduction, pp. xiii-xxi. C.S. Lewis: 1, *The Four Loves*, ch. 2, “Eros”, *The Screwtape Letters*, selected letters. Hauerwas, “Sex in Public” (course website).

3. ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING AND CATHOLIC MORAL PRINCIPLES

3.1. Christian Anthropology 3.2. Natural Law; 3.3. The Universal Call to Holiness; 3.4. The Human Act; 3.5. The Problem Of Good; 3.6. Social Doctrine Principles; 3.7. Conscience.

READINGS: Durazo, *Catholic Moral Principles for Decision-Making*. Pope St. John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* (course website); Pope St. Paul VI. *Dignitatis Humanae*, Coleman, ch. 1 pp. 1-42.

4. THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CATHOLIC TEACHING ON MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

A. The Early and Medieval Church. *Marriage as Sacrament* [1 hr.]

READINGS: Peter Brown, *The Body and Society*, selections, (course website). Coleman, ch. 1 pp. 42-54.

B. The Modern Church. *Sexuality and Sacramentality* [1 hr.]

READINGS: (selections on course website): *Casti Connubii*; *Gaudium et Spes* §46-52; *Humanae Vitae*; *Familiaris Consortio*; *Amoris Laetitia*.

5. THE THEOLOGY OF THE BODY *on* MARRIAGE, CHASTITY, THE FAMILY, AND FERTILITY (NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING)

READINGS: Selections from Pope St. John Paul II, *Male and Female He Created Them*, 1.1 “Catechesis on Genesis”; 1.2 “Catechesis on the Sermon on the Mount”; 2.6. “The Sacramentality of Marriage”; 2.7 “Reflections on *Humanae Vitae*”. Coleman, ch. 2.

6. MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES:

- A. Psychopathology: Psychopathy; Violence in Relationships.
- B. Addiction and Pornography.

7. FERTILITY IN MARRIAGE: THE HISTORY AND PRACTICE OF NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

- A. The Physiology of fertility and human reproduction [2 hrs.].
- B. Catholic Moral Teaching and the Practice of Contraception [1 hr.].
READINGS (selected texts): *Humanae Vitae*; *Evangelium Vitae*; *Familiaris Consortio*; Coleman, ch. 4; *Amoris Laetitia*.
- C. Natural Family Planning, Methods and Resources [2 hrs.].
Presentation by Debi Hoppe, NFP (sympto-thermal) Instructor.

8. THE MARRIAGE COVENANT: CANONICAL ISSUES; STAGES IN MARRIAGE; TROUBLED MARRIAGES

- A. Theology of Marriage: Sacramental and Canonical Aspects. [1 hr.]
READINGS: Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*; Pope St. John Paul II: *God the Author of Marriage. The Code of Canon Law*, selections (course website). “Annulment Reform”, *NCR*, June 2017.
- B. Stages of marriage. Caring for troubled marriages and “non-binary” families: Divorce and remarriage: special pastoral and moral concerns. [2 hrs.]
READINGS: Coleman, ch. 4. SCDF: *The Reception of Holy Communion by the Divorced and Remarried Members of the Faithful*; *Vademecum for Confessors*.

9. COMMON BIOETHICAL DILEMMAS IN MARRIAGE

- A. Fertility and Pregnancy: Artificial Insemination; *In vitro* fertilization; “Embryo Adoption”; Abortion. [1 hr.]
READINGS: Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*; SCDF, *Instruction on Respect for Human Life (Donum Vitae), On Certain Bioethical Questions (Dignitatis Personae)*, Coleman, ch. 8.
- B. Finding Christ at the end of life [2 hr.]
READINGS: SCDF, *Declaration on Euthanasia, (Jura et Bona)*

10. PARISH MARRIAGE PREPARATION [1 hr.]

- A. Prenuptial Checklist: Varies according to diocese.
 - B. Inventories: FOCCUS; Prepare/Enrich.
 - C. Retreats/Courses: Engaged Encounter; Marriage Encounter; Pre-Cana.
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**RUBRIC FOR OVERALL LEARNING OBJECTIVES
AND BENCHMARKS FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

	Not Acceptable Student Performance	Acceptable Student Performance	Hoped -for Learning Outcomes
Cultural Awareness	Ignores or is unaware of cultural differences in approaches to the value of marriage and family	Continues to miss some cultural cues in case studies.	Able to respond appropriately to culturally conditioned questions and needs of the married couple and family.
Application of Canon Law and Catechism	Unaware of canons or catechetical rules on the sacrament.	Misses some connections or canonical/catechetical applications.	Able to apply Canon Law and Catechetical teaching to the situation of a married couple
Theology and History of Sacrament	Cannot connect relevant theology and sacramental history with the practice of the Sacrament.	Has a general sense of history and theology of the Sacrament.	Thorough knowledge of history and theology of the sacrament and ability to connect them to practice.
Knowledge of recent Church documents	Unaware or unobservant of Church documents.	Exhibits knowledge of Church documents.	Exhibits working knowledge of documents and able to apply them to case studies.

RUBRIC FOR THE MIDTERM CASE STUDIES AND NATURAL FAMILY PRACTICE PROJECT

A. Case presentation	Students present facts of the case but are unable to distinguish the most important issues affecting the relevant parties and are bogged down by details of the case.	Students are able to present relevant facts and can distinguish between issues but still miss significant clues from the married person's information	Students present the relevant facts of the case clearly and show a deep understanding for the underlying issues, both spiritual and psychological.
	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
B. Relevant Scripture, Canons and Church Teaching	Students confuse scriptural passages, canons or other Church teachings in their application to the case.	Students show marginal use of scripture and Church teaching documents, but miss some relevant issues.	Students are knowledgeable and conversant with relevant Scripture, canons and Church Teaching
	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
C. Pastoral Response	Students do not demonstrate sensitivity to the complexities of marriage person or exhibit rigid judgment and lack of empathy or pastoral charity.	Students are empathetic to the married person but appear to neglect the difficult issues of the case and address only surface issues.	Students ask appropriate clarifying questions and present the "mercy of the Father" in a practical way that does not try to psychoanalyze or to over-spiritualize the person's problems.
	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
D. Advice given	Students do not offer helpful advice or provide inappropriate advice.	Advice is stereotyped, not clearly adapted to the particular needs and specific issue of the married person.	Advice is truly a "healing remedy" that will help the married person to reconcile with God and neighbor.
	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10