

# **The Institute for Christian Formation**

## First Year

First Semester (Launch date – September 10, 2020)

### **Module 1**

#### **Introduction**

Faith formation is lifelong. The Institute for Christian Formation program is intended to assist each person on his or her spiritual journey of faith with ongoing, dynamic faith formation. Regardless of the amount of formation one has received in life, faith formation remains a vital priority of the baptized Christian to grow closer to Jesus Christ and to deepen one's relationship with Him each day if we seek to do so. We welcome laity, religious sisters, brothers and priests as students to join our sessions and to participate in the formation opportunities provided by the weekly classes focusing on the truths of the Catholic faith. Each session of class will be referred to as an educational "module." There will be two modules presented each Thursday evening by an assortment of excellent professors. A schedule of dates is included. In the first session, students will learn the particulars of the two-year program as the professor walks the students through an overview of the program. The objectives and learning goals of the programs' expectations will be presented during this first session. The reference "CCC" indicated at the end of each module refers to the Catechism of the Catholic Church as the source of the information.

The first module will cover the material in the Prologue of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and will introduce students to the Catechism itself and to other basic sources for learning about the Catholic Faith.

### **Module 2**

#### **The Human Person's Capacity for God (Natural Theology)**

This module will consider how God has already placed within nature itself certain ways that we can come to know His existence and His concern for us, even though our fallen condition leaves us in need of His assistance both in order to know Him and His will without error or obscurity. This module will consider the capacity and also the limitations of human language and concepts for coming to know God as he really is. This module will advance through the beginning articles of the CCC up to n. 49.

### **Module 3**

#### **Divine Revelation and its Transmission**

This module teaches that God has revealed Himself in a supernatural way and provided the gift of faith so that we might know Him personally and enter into a true relationship with Him.

## **Module 4**

### **Sacred Scripture: Two Testaments, One Book**

This module presents the Bible as one book that is different from any other text in human history by virtue of its divine inspiration and inerrancy. It examines the role of the Church in defining the canon of Scripture and guiding its interpretation, the relationship between the Old and New Testaments and the normativity of both for Christian Faith, and the importance of Sacred Scripture in the life of the Church and of Christians.

## **Module 5**

### **What is Faith?**

This module explores the notion of faith both as a free human act and as a divine gift: the human response to God's self-revelation, which is a kind of supernatural vision rendered possible only by God's gift. The ecclesial nature of the act of faith, manifest in the liturgical Credo, will be examined.

## **Module 6**

### **“I Believe in God”: God's Personal Reality**

This module considers the specific credal statements such as those in the Scriptures, at Nicea and Constantinople that have formed the faith of believers over centuries. Then the unity of God, truth and love as attributes identified with his very being, and the revelation of His Fatherhood will be considered.

## **Module 7**

### **Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Almighty**

This module will trace the hidden riches of the words we say in prayer so often: “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” It will consider the unfolding of this doctrine in the Church's history through the early Councils. This module will close by highlighting God's absolute omnipotence — which no evil power can ever rival (vs. dualism) — as the ground of our invincible hope.

## **Module 8**

### **Creator of Things Visible and Invisible**

This module will explore God's creation of the universe out of nothing and His continual providence, guiding the universe to a destiny decreed in advance by Him, leading no doubt concerning His final victory over evil. It will consider the material and spiritual dimensions of His creation.

## **Module 9**

### **The Human Person Created by God**

This module will consider the dignity of the human person in the image of God, and the unity of the human race, as well as the duality of male and female in God's plan. It will consider the two-fold nature of "paradise," as both the beginning and the restored destiny of the human race.

## **Module 10**

### **The Fall of Angels and Humans**

This module examines the reality of sin, and the misuse of created freedom as the source of all evil in the universe, is the primary focus of this lesson. The effect of sin on the whole of human nature is a consequence of the fact that we were not created as isolated individuals but as one human race, within which the actions of each have repercussions for all.

## **Module 11**

### **Who is Jesus of Nazareth? (Part One)**

This module focuses on the Incarnation of the Son of God as the central event of human history, prepared for and foretold by the events and Prophets of the Old Testament. The meaning of the Holy Name of Jesus and his identity as the "Christ", his Divine Sonship and our confession of Him as "Lord" will be studied. The key Christological teachings from the First Council of Nicea to the Third Council of Constantinople will be summarized.

## **Module 12**

### **Who is Jesus of Nazareth? (Part Two)**

This module considers the important role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the mystery of the Incarnation. Her Divine Motherhood and Perpetual Virginité will be highlighted, as well as the mysteries of our Lord's life leading up to his Public Ministry. His Baptism and temptation in the desert will be reflected upon. Finally, his public life as recorded in the Gospels, up to his messianic entrance into Jerusalem will be studied.

## **Module 13**

### **Jesus the Messiah of Israel**

The past modules have unfolded the history leading up to the Incarnation and have culminated in the history of Jesus' life on earth. With the benefit of this global perspective, in this present module we will focus on the continuity and discontinuity between Jesus' identity and mission and those of Israel with its institutions. Specifically, the relationship of Jesus to the Law of Moses and the Temple will be considered. Finally, against the backdrop of Israel's monotheistic faith, Jesus' revelation of the Holy Trinity will be expounded.

## **Module 14**

### **Jesus the Lamb of Sacrifice**

This module invites us to come to understand how the Incarnation was seen as the focal point of all human history and the fullness of God's revelation to the human race, the highest point of this revelation is reached in His Paschal Mystery. The meaning of the Cross as the outpouring of God's love for the world and its redemptive power will be expounded. Today's module closes with the mysteries of Good Friday and Holy Saturday with Jesus in the tomb while the world waits in silence and in hope.

## **Module 15**

### **Descended into Hell, Risen from the Dead**

This module examines Christ's "descent into hell" which will be considered as God's eloquent expression of the extent to which He is willing to go to save sinners. In the Person of His Son He has bridged the chasm between Heaven and Hell, annulling the distance between God and sinners. His victory over sin and death will be palpable as we experience the empty tomb with the disciples and see through their eyes the Savior risen from the dead.

## **Module 16**

### **Jesus Our King and Judge on the Last Day**

This module will present the Ascended Christ as our Judge on the last day, a Judge who has also made Himself our partner and friend along life's journey. As our Redeemer and Savior, He beckons us to a life of holiness in the certain hope of His gracious assistance and limitless mercy.

First Year - Second Semester (Spring 2021)

## **Module 17**

### **I Believe in the Holy Spirit**

This module communicates to students the truth about the Holy Spirit and how God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. Our knowledge of faith is only possible in the Holy Spirit. To be in touch with Christ we must first have been touched by the Holy Spirit.

## **Module 18**

### **The Mystery of the Church**

This module clarifies how the Catholic Church is the universal sacrament of salvation, the place of encounter between mankind and Jesus Christ. We will learn about the Church's origin and foundation in Christ, her mission and the gifts she bestows upon the baptized.

## **Module 19**

### **People of God, Body of Christ**

This module offers an understanding of the Church as the Body of Christ and as the People of God. We will examine the characteristics of the people of God and explore the deeper meaning of what it means to be priestly, prophetic and royal people of God.

## **Module 20**

### **One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic**

This module presents the profound mystery of the Church's unity and that she is one because of her divine source in the Trinity of Persons. The sole Church of Christ is that which our Savior, after his Resurrection, entrusted to Peter's pastoral care, commissioning him and the other apostles to extend and rule it. The Church was constituted and organized as a society in the present world and subsists in the Catholic Church.

## **Module 21**

### **A Day with the Holy Spirit: Practical Advice**

This module probes deeply the intense, personal relationship that the baptized Christian is invited to enjoy with the Holy Spirit in one's daily life. Students will learn more about the sacred mystery of the third person of the Trinity.

## **Module 22**

### **Listening to the Holy Spirit: Lectio Divina**

This module offers students the opportunity to learn the practice of Lectio Divina, one of the Church's traditional ways of praying with Sacred Scripture. There will be an opportunity to practice it in class and continue on their own. The Church teaches that Lectio Divina is one of the most efficacious ways to learn to hear God's voice speaking personally to you.

## **Module 23**

### **Roles and Ministries in the Church**

This module explores the hierarchical structure of the Church and how the Spirit's gifts have been distributed among the baptized, giving rise to the Church's various ministries and charisms. Students will learn about the distinct, but complementary roles of clergy, laity and consecrated men and women in the life of the Church.

## **Module 24**

### **Mary and the Communion of Saints**

This module invites students to be enriched by understanding the Church's teachings on the Blessed Virgin Mary, her role in the life of the Church and in the lives of believers. We will also reflect on the union of all those who are united to Christ our Head, both on earth and in Heaven, as understood by the doctrine of the communion of saints.

## **Module 25**

### **The Church and the Forgiveness of Sins**

This module will articulate the truth of the Apostle's Creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins and then learn how Jesus tied forgiveness of sins to faith and Baptism. It is through the Sacrament of Penance that persons are reconciled with God and the Church.

## **Module 26**

### **I believe in the Resurrection of the Body**

This module will emphasize the importance of belief in the resurrection of the dead which is an essential fact of the Christian faith from its beginning. The confidence of Christians is the resurrection of the dead and hence we live as a people in hope.

## **Module 27**

### **The Four Last Things**

This module will examine the Four Last Things of the Christian faith: death, judgment, heaven, and hell as part of the Catholic faith. As people of faith, we live our Christian lives with hope to live in eternity with God.

## **Module 28**

### **The Sacraments: Foretaste of Heaven**

This module deeply probes how the Sacraments, and in particular, the Sacred Liturgy, are a participation in the life of Heaven. We will learn why the Sacraments are the central, life-giving events of the Church.

## **Module 29**

### **Meeting Christ in the Sacraments**

This module invites students to learn how each sacrament brings us into a deeply personal encounter with Jesus Christ and were instituted by Him for this purpose.

## **Module 30**

### **Baptism: The Gateway of Heavenly Life**

This module provides the truth and importance of Baptism as the basis of Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door to access other sacraments. Only through Baptism are we freed from sin and reborn as children of God to become members of Christ, incorporated into the Church, and made sharers in the Church's mission.

## **Module 31**

### **The Sacrament of Confirmation**

This module studies Confirmation as one of the Sacraments of Initiation and essential for completion of Baptismal grace. Confirmed souls become more perfectly bound to the Church and enriched with special strength of the Holy Spirit. Confirmed become soldiers of Christ to defend the truth of the Catholic faith with holy courage.

## **Module 32**

### **Volunteer Opportunities for Christian Service**

This session will explore the intention of Christian service and the expectation of Christians serving others.

The Semester and first year of the program will end in Lent with a Communal Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. May God bless our students, professors, and families.

Second Year - First Semester (Fall 2021)

## **Module 33**

### **In-Class Assessment and Feedback**

This module will provide an opportunity for us to take stock of the progress made so far through the Catechism to consolidate and deepen our appreciation of the material and to raise questions on points that remain as yet unclear.

## **Module 34**

### **How to Participate in Holy Mass (Chapel)**

This module will delve more deeply into a reality that is all-important; our participation in the Mass. It will consider the principle dimensions and parts of Holy Mass as a sacrifice that represents the one perfect sacrifice of Our Lord on Calvary while allowing us to participate in it.

## **Module 35**

### **The Holy Eucharist: Source and Summit (Part I)**

This module will consider the Sacrament of the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Church's life of worship. We will reflect upon its history and development under the continued influence of the Holy Spirit.

## **Module 36**

### **The Holy Eucharist (Part II)**

This module focuses on the distinctive principles of the Holy Eucharist as a Sacred Banquet in which the faithful receive the Lord's true Body and Blood and are transformed by it, being made one in the Body of Christ, and receiving the promise of eternal glory.

## **Module 37**

### **The Sacrament of Reconciliation**

This module will probe the immense gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, its various elements and its effects, assisting us to participate in it more consciously, willingly and fruitfully.

## **Module 38**

### **The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick**

This module unfolds the Church's teaching on the Anointing of the Sick by which the Lord's own healing ministry endures in his Church for the sake of the bodily and spiritual healing, enabling the suffering and the dying to be joined more closely to the passion of Our Lord, Jesus.

## **Module 39**

### **The Gift of Holy Orders**

This module focuses on the Sacrament by which the ministry of the Apostles is passed down from age to age by the laying on of hands in the different degrees of Deacons, Priests, and Bishops.



## **Module 40**

### **Matrimony and the Domestic Church**

This module reflects on the great Sacrament by which Christian spouses are called to make present in their lives and show forth to the world the love of Christ for his Bride, the Church, in a bond that is everlasting, faithful, and fruitful; establishing in their homes a “Domestic Church.

## **Module 41**

### **Sacramentals and Popular Devotions**

This module presents important elements of the Church’s worship beyond the seven Sacraments, encompassing devotions of the Christian people and accompanying this devotion by means of official prayers in key moments such as blessings, processions, exorcisms, and funerals.

## **Module 42**

### **Celebration of Marian Devotion and Praying the Rosary**

This module will entail a common experience of veneration and devotion of the Blessed Virgin Mary while reciting the words of the Church’s most cherished prayers, including those by which the Archangel Gabriel greeted Mary at the moment of the Incarnation.

## **Module 43**

### **Introduction to Life in Christ**

The module embarks upon a new dimension of catechesis considering the Christian faith not merely as a set of beliefs to be held but as a “Way” to be lived out in our actions as the true key to human happiness.

## **Module 44**

### **Moral Decisions, Feelings and Conscience**

This module probes the main aspects of moral decision making, the object and end of human action, as well as the nature and role of conscience.

## **Module 45**

### **Virtues and the Christian Life (pp. 443-452)**

This module moves beyond the notion of individual moral decisions to the establishment of stable habits of upright thinking and living know as virtues. It will also consider the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. CCC nn. 1803-1831.

## **Module 46**

### **Sin and Preparation for Confession (pp. 453-458)**

This module will aim to deepen our understanding of the notion of sin, including the distinction between mortal and venial sin. More positively, it will point toward the use of such knowledge in preparing for a good and fruitful Confession. CCC nn. 1849-1876.

## **Module 47**

### **The Person in Community (pp. 459-472)**

This module will reflect upon the fundamentally social nature of the human person, the importance of life in community, the role of authority, and the concepts of the common good and social justice. CCC nn. 1878-1942.

## **Module 48**

### **The Laws Written in Scripture and In Creation (pp. 473-481)**

This module will consider the moral law, encompassing both the Natural Law and of the Divine Law revealed in Sacred Scripture. CCC nn. 1950-1986

\* End of Fall Semester (2021) Assignment - Reflection Paper Assigned and Due Next Semester (Spring 2022)

## Second Year

### Second Semester (Spring 2022)

## **Module 49**

### **Grace, Justification, and Merit (pp. 481-487)**

This module considers the action of God's grace to cleanse us from sin and make us righteous through faith. It will study the concepts of divine grace and the merits and holiness of God's holy ones. CCC nn. 1987-2024

## **Module 50**

### **The Church as Moral Teacher and Guide (pp. 490-495)**

This module focuses on the role of the Church as our God-given teacher in the moral life and as the guarantor of the moral doctrine passed down to us from the Apostles. CCC nn. 2030-2051

## **Module 51**

### **The Ten Commandments / No Other Gods (pp. 498-518)**

This module introduces the Ten Commandments and focuses particularly on the one that stands as the foundation of the others: namely, our obligation to worship God alone without serving other “gods.” CCC nn. 2052-2132

## **Module 52**

### **God’s Holy Name / Sanctification of Time (pp. 518-529)**

This module studies the Second and Third Commandments which prescribe reverence for God’s name and the faithful observation of the Sabbath Day. CCC nn. 2142-2167

## **Module 53**

### **Our Duty to Family and to Lawful Authority (pp. 530-543)**

This module considers our natural obligation to honor our parents and all lawful authority in the political community as well as the Church. CCC nn. 2196-2232

## **Module 54**

### **The Catholic in Public Life**

This module reflects on an important dimension of the universal call to holiness, namely the responsibility of every Christian to work for the transformation of the world, its institutions, and structures in the light of the Gospel and of right reason. CCC nn. 2234-2246

## **Module 55**

### **Respect for Life (pp. 544-559)**

This module centers on the Fifth Commandment which calls us to respect and defend human life in all its forms and to promote the true dignity of human persons. The lesson will consider the Church’s teaching on the importance of avoiding war and safeguarding peace. CCC nn. 2258-2330

## **Module 56**

### **Natural Family Planning**

This module will provide an introduction, in both theoretical and practical terms, to methods of family planning that are respectful of Church teaching and harmonious with the moral law. CCC nn. 2331-2400.

## **Module 57**

### **Natural Family Planning**

This module will continue the important subject matter of the previous module and further develop the notion of chastity, especially within married life.

## **Module 58**

### **Respect for the Property of Others**

This module will consider the obligation of respect for the goods of others as an essential dimension of social justice as enshrined in the Seventh Commandment.

## **Module 59**

### **Bearing Witness to the Truth**

This module will examine the Eighth Commandment against false witness, encompassing also its positive dimension as the obligation to bear witness to the truth. It will assist in the discernment of offenses such as undue damage to the reputation of another, boasting and lying.

## **Module 60**

### **May Our Every Thought Belong to Christ**

This module will explore those unique Commandments that apply not only to our external actions but to our interior thoughts and decisions, enjoining upon us chastity of thought, chastity of heart, and control of our desires.

## **Module 61**

### **The Gift of Prayer**

This module considers the reality of prayer not merely as a human action but as a gift of God taught to us in the Holy Scriptures, enlivened by God's Spirit within us and enabling us to converse with Him as a friend.

## **Module 62**

### **The Foundations of Christian Prayer**

This module reviews the different types of prayer -- petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise -- and delves into the principle sources that inform our prayer: The Word of God, the Liturgy of the Church, and the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

## **Module 63**

### **The Life of Prayer**

This module examines some practical aspects of prayer, its various forms -- vocal, meditative, and contemplative -- while addressing the common challenges and difficulties encountered such as doubts, distractions, and dryness, thus encouraging perseverance and confidence in one's life of prayer.

## **Module 64**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

This module is devoted to the study of The Lord's Prayer as the model for all prayer, containing in its words and phrases the totality of the convictions and concerns that we bring to any prayer while approaching God as Father, by virtue of our sonship in Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit.