

# Master of Arts in Ministry Program

## *For Laity*

St. John's Seminary, Brighton, MA

### Course Descriptions

2009-2010

#### I. Biblical Studies

##### **SJS OT 500 Old Testament**

This course is a basic introduction to the Bible for men and women preparing for ministry in the Catholic Church. Special attention will be paid to the development of the Bible and its authority as "Word of God" in the Roman Catholic Church. In this course we will focus on books of the Old Testament up to the time of Alexander the Great and the confrontation between Israel and the Greek world. The presentation of material will be done according to the historical critical method.

Sirois	Th 7:30-9:30pm	Fall
	Wed 10:00-12 noon	Spring (St. Mary's of the Nativity, Scituate)
	Tues 6:00-9:00 pm	Summer Session II (May 25-July 27)

##### **SJS NT500**

##### **New Testament**

This course provides a critical introduction to the New Testament writings, their historical background, the stages of Gospel tradition, and key theological issues. While particular emphasis will be placed on the Gospels and Pauline Literature, all of the writings will be examined with regard to their focus on Jesus Christ and on the faith, thought and discipleship of the earliest Christian communities.

Sirois	Th 7:30-9:30pm	Spring
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##### **SJSPC558**

##### **Reading the Bible as Sacred Scripture**

Addressing the Synod of Bishops last year (2008), Pope Benedict underlined the importance of bridging the gap between scriptural exegesis and theology. This course will explore strategies for doing that, first, by introducing students to various critical interpretive approaches to the sacred text and then by exploring practical ways of actualizing the text in prayer and ministry. Students who enroll in this course should have completed the Introduction to the Old Testament and the Introduction to the New Testament.

Sirois	Th 5:00-7:00 pm	Spring
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#### II. Spirituality & Formation

##### **SJS PC555**

##### **The Spirituality of the Psalms**

The Book of Psalms, the "Praises" of ancient Israel, has been the prayer book of Jews and Christians in all generations. This course will introduce students to the Psalms as scripture. With the help of the commentaries of Augustine as well as more recent scholarship, students will discover the rich spirituality of these texts and learn to actualize their possibilities for prayer and pastoral ministry.

Sirois	Tues. 7:30-9:30pm	Fall
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SJS TH609

**God and the Mystery of Suffering**

In this course the student will explore the meaning of human suffering by reflecting on scriptural teaching concerning human suffering, as well as on important philosophical and theological issues related to human suffering.

Keaty

W 6-9pm

Summer Session III (June 16-July 28)

**V. Philosophical**

**SJS PH 500**

**Faith and Reason**

This course serves to introduce the student to the role of philosophy in the discipline of theology. To accomplish this goal the student will examine how theologians of different historical eras have made use of various philosophical insights. In the process, students will gain a familiarity with philosophical concepts that have become important in the study of theology.

Van de Moortell

T 7:30-9:30pm

Fall

**VI. Ethics - Foundational Studies**

**SJS MT 500**

**Moral Theology for the Lay Apostolate**

Happiness is to be found in embracing the true ends of our nature. The universal call to holiness, which is at the heart of the Second Vatican Council's teaching, is therefore the path to true happiness. We will seek to understand this intrinsic dynamism of human nature as illuminated by the moral realism of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and John Paul II's encyclical *Veritatis splendor*. Grounded in the fundamentals of moral theology, we will then turn our attention to urgent moral (especially bioethical) issues of the day in light of *Humanae vitae* and *Evangelium vitae*. Clarity in moral theology is crucial to carrying out the lay apostolate: to leaven all aspects of the world with the truth and beauty of the Gospel.

D. Franks

Thurs. 5-7 pm

Fall

**VII. Ministry in Church and Society**

**A. Church Policy and Law**

**SJS MM 500**

**Canon Law**

Canon law is the system of rules that govern Church order and discipline. This course will present an overview of the nature, history, and function of Church law, and will introduce students to the norms of the 1983 Code of Canon Law--primarily Book I (general norms), Book II (laity, clerics, and the Church hierarchy), Book III (the teaching office), Book V (temporal goods) and Book VI (sanctions). The objective of the course is to introduce basic structures and functions of the Church as addressed by the Code, and to familiarize students with those canonical norms helpful to their effective ministry in the Church.

Strickland

Thurs. 7:30-9:30 pm

Spring

**SJS MM 610**

## **Marriage & Canon Law**

This course is a study of marriage in the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, focusing upon the canonical prescriptions for its valid and licit celebration. Topics covered include marriage preparation, issues relating to the celebration and recording of marriage, matrimonial consent and impediments, and the annulment process.

Strickland                      Th 7:30-9:30 pm                      Fall

## **SJS PT 554**

### **Pastoral Planning for Dioceses and Parishes**

This practical seminar will offer participants theological grounding and basic insights about pastoral planning, as well as the opportunity to explore materials and methods used in various American dioceses. There will be analysis and assessments of these resources, their differences and their usefulness. Conversations with planners from various dioceses should aid application to local needs. 10 sessions

Evans                      Wed 7:00-9:30 pm                      Fall (St. Julia Parish, Weston)

## **B. Counseling and Psychotherapy**

### **SJS PC557**

#### **Spiritual Guidance and the Dark Night of the Soul**

This course provides an overview for relating to the experience of spiritual darkness. The course addresses topics such as: spiritual guidance and direction for times of loss, ritualizing our losses, grief and purifying darkness, guided images, and personal ways to express emptiness and powerlessness. Emphasis will be given to meditation and contemplation. Specific notable guides will be highlighted.

Curley                      TBA

### **SJS PT552**

#### **Pastoral Care of Immigrants, Refugees and Itinerants; Cultural Understandings and Ecclesial Responses**

This course highlights some of the pastoral concerns and ecclesial responses of immigrant, refugee and mobility communities who migrate from continents throughout the world to the United States. How does and how might our Church effectively evangelize, catechize and provide pastoral care? It's overview of legal, canonical, liturgical and cultural realities provide insight for pastoral care among newcomer communities.

Prefontaine                      Wed 6-9pm                      Summer Session I (May 25-July 6)

## **C. Religious Education**

### **SJS RE501**

#### **Adult Faith Formation**

An examination of the USCCB document "Our Hearts Were Burning" and Pope John Paul 11's Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* give vision to this course. The course will be attentive to issues that arise in adult faith formation with the goal of practical application to the student's own context. Foundation documents in religious education and current adult religious education programs will be surveyed. Developmental theories and adult education theory will supplement the theological writings.

Lingertat                      Tues 6-9 pm                      Summer Session I (May 25-July 6)

## **SJS RE505**

### **Mastering the Art of Catechesis**

In the grace of the catechetical process, the Church and the catechist are continuously learning how to master the art of passing on the Gospel message. Engaging in educating the baptized requires understanding of context and content as well as methodology. Studying the history, the documents, the holy women and men who have pioneered methods, and the ways of learning catechetics, give the catechist a taste of the vision and mission of evangelizing catechesis. One develops the art, by practicing, by using one's imagination. Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman declared: Faith begins, not in the work and the concept, but in the image and the symbol. Before faith is credible to reason, it must be credible to the imagination.

Kay

Thurs 7:30-9:30 pm

Spring

## **D. Spirituality and Formation**

### **SJS PC550**

#### **Spirituality for Lay Ministry**

Principles and practices for deepening Christian life and professional Church service as derived from the Catholic spiritual tradition, as taught by a few outstanding spiritual masters and as lived in contemporary pastoral settings. Main themes: prayer, conversion, holiness, love, and virtues.

Evans

Wed 6-9pm

Summer Session III (June 16-July 28)

## **E. Sacraments, Liturgy and Worship**

### **SJS ST 500**

#### **Liturgy and the Sacraments**

The goal of this course is to give the students a fuller appreciation of the liturgical life of the Church. This will be accomplished by first addressing a general understanding of what is meant by liturgy. The course will then look at each of the sacraments of the Church developing both an historical perspective of the sacraments' liturgical expression and appreciation of the theology that underlies each of the sacraments. As part of the coursework the current ritual expression of each sacrament will be addressed to see how it continues the traditions of the Church and who it expresses the theology of the sacrament.

Mahoney

T 5:00-7:00 pm

Spring

### **SJS ST606**

#### **The Mass: How to Achieve Full, Active, and Conscious Participation.**

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy states "that every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree." The Second Vatican Council was concerned that in the reform and renewal of the liturgy that the full, active and conscious participation of the people be a goal considered above all else. Since the 1970's there has been much concern whether the goal has been achieved. This course is intended to first present the theology of all parts of the Mass and each part's particular elements.

Second, the course will briefly explore the seasonal liturgical calendar to understand its importance in the proper celebration of Mass. Third, the course will address the various options that the church offers in the celebration of Mass. Fourth, the course will seek to present how we can celebrate the Mass more effectively by using its theology, the calendar and options. Finally we will explore different ways of theologically understanding the Eucharist.

Mahoney

T 5:00-7:00 pm

Fall