

Saint Mary's College High School Religious Studies

Course Outline

Course Name Faith and Religion	Teacher Ms. Clare McCormick
Room Number 510 (at the base of the Cronin stairs)	Period 2,4,5,6
Semester Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 (inclusive)	Contact Information cmccormick@stmchs.org ext. 217

Course Description

In *Faith and Religion*, we will examine the basic beliefs and foundational principles of the Catholic Christian tradition. As a springboard to other courses in religious studies, *Faith and Religion* is a prerequisite course that contains the essentials of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* while using language, examples, and concepts that are geared to young people.

This course is roughly divided into four sections that encompass an outline of the tenets stated in the *Apostles Creed*, an introduction to *Liturgical and Sacramental Traditions*, an overview of *Morality and Social Justice*, and an exploration of *Prayer*. In addition, we will investigate the roles and uses of sacred scripture and sacred tradition, and look at the lives of several saints including Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and John Baptist de La Salle, the founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

While *Faith and Religion* is required in order to graduate from Saint Mary's College High School, the student does not need to be Catholic in order to positively engage in open-minded academic discourse, and honest, personal inquiry regarding religion and spirituality.

Big Ideas

Each student will better understand the roles and uses of religion, and Catholicism in particular, in present day North American culture and society.

Each student will better understand the communal and personal value of spirituality, from a Catholic Christian perspective, for a life well lived for others and for self.

Each student will better understand the Gospel message of Jesus Christ as a celebration of the meaning of Christian living.

Each student will better understand that *living* the Gospel message of Jesus Christ requires dedication, devotion, and discipline.

Essential Questions

Can religion and spirituality be separated?

Is it possible to struggle with faith, with religious issues, or with characteristics and teachings of the Catholic Christian tradition and still be considered a Catholic Christian?

Because of Jesus's call, is it possible to ignore the call to peace and the call to love when confronted by the injustices that occur in the world?

Core Tasks

Each student will continually develop the critical thinking skills required to understand the nuances, subtleties, and complexities of religion and spirituality, and particularly the doctrine and dogmas of the Catholic Church.

Each student will continually develop the analytical writing skills required to effectively express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas about religion and spirituality.

Each student will continually develop the rhetorical verbal skills required to justify their conviction, experiences, and values about religion and spirituality.

Required Materials

Textbook:

Singer-Towns, Brian. *The Catholic Faith Handbook*. (Second Edition) Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2008.

Writing and Reflecting:

An organized and dedicated binder for *Faith and Religion*;
Sufficient looseleaf paper [3 hole punched and *not* spiral bound notebook paper];
A dark blue or black ink pen [no neon gel pens, please!]

Project Work:

Access to computers, multimedia software, and the Internet [available on campus]

Academic Expectations

All grades are earned. Work should be printed or typed.

All assignments and projects are due on the assigned date. No late assignments are accepted unless accompanied with an excused absence note.

Each student is responsible for submitting assignments or completing tests *immediately upon his/her return* if an extra curricular or co curricular activity prevents the student from attending the class in which the assignment is due, or in which the test is taken.

Behavioral Expectations

Enter and leave the classroom quietly by the proper doors.

Be in your seat when the bell rings.

Be respectful during prayer, whether Catholic or not.

Remain in your seat unless told otherwise by the teacher.

Raise your hand and wait to be recognized before speaking.

NO hats, food, drinks, gum, cell phone or iPod use allowed during class!

The instructor will dismiss the class, not the bell.

Evaluation Criteria

Facts and Information: each student can recall essential foundational details through short answer minor tests, worksheets, and other small assessment instruments.
(25%)

Analysis: each student can identify the relationships between facts and information through long answer minor tests, homework assignments from the text, and minor projects.
(25%)

Synthesis: each student can interpret and summarize minor and major ideas in her or his own words through short answer essays, major projects, and chapter exams.
(25%)

Presentation: you can effectively communicate your understanding of the facts and ideas to others through long answer essays, group projects, and major exams.
(25%)

Grading Guidelines

A [Outstanding: 90 – 100]

... completes all assignments and projects; participates consistently in class activities as an active questioner, commentator, and listener; exhibits superior comprehension

and organizational ability in testing, speaking, and writing; exhibits unusual insight or originality in work; is consistently and actively engaged and self-directed for learning; a model citizen in attendance and behavior.

B [Very Good: 80 - 89]

... completes all assignments and projects; generally participates in class activities as an active questioner and listener or as an occasional commentator; exhibits good comprehension and organizational ability in testing, speaking, and writing; exhibits consistently good work, but is not characterized as unusually insightful or original; shows initiative, but tends to rely on teacher direction.

C [Satisfactory: 70 - 79]

... completes most assignments and projects; participates in class activities as an interested learner or an infrequent commentator; exhibits fair comprehension and organizational ability in testing, speaking, and writing; sees what is explicit but reveals little insight or originality; relies on teacher direction.

D [Minimum Achievement: 60 - 69]

... does not complete all assignments and projects on time or at all; participates in class activities as a listener, and comments only if prompted; exhibits minimum comprehension or organizational ability in testing, speaking, and writing; often misses explicit connection between content and themes; relies on teacher direction.

F [Failure due to Unsatisfactory Achievement: 0 - 59]

... does not complete assignments and projects; rarely or never participates in class activities in any capacity; exhibits little comprehension; consistently misses explicit connection between content and themes; relies upon but fails to follow teacher direction.

Acknowledgment

Please sign and date this course outline and have a parent or guardian do the same to acknowledge that this course outline has been read and understood.

[student-musician signature]

[date]

[parent or guardian signature]

[date]