

Module Title:	Introduction to Moral Theology
Module Code:	502 TIMT
Level:	5
Credit Rating:	20 Credits
Duration:	Student Learning Time: 200 hours
Teaching Hours:	40 Hours
Academic Responsibility:	Don Miller OFM, PhD

Module Aims:

This module aims to introduce the students to the basic principles and methodologies of moral decision making in the Roman Catholic Tradition, to assist the students to examine how their personal experience corresponds to and/or differs from those principles and methodologies, and to help the students apply those principles and methodologies to practical situations.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the module students should:

1. understand and appreciate the relationship between objective morality (moral norms) and subjective moral responsibility.
2. Have acquired an ability to apply objective moral norms to personal and cultural situations.
3. Have formed a preliminary ability to present the Roman Catholic moral tradition orally and in writing.
4. Be able to form independent opinions, demonstrate an ability to use evidence appropriately to support conclusions and situate their argument in the light of contemporary scholarship

Indicative Module Content:

Sound moral reasoning is based on principles and methodologies. As Christian Catholics we derive those principles from philosophical reasoning, Scripture, and Tradition and we apply them using various methodologies. Knowing how to make a sound moral decision is a learned skill which allows one to move beyond “I think” or “I feel” statements. This course is geared toward helping the students learn the basic skills of sound moral reasoning while respecting personal and cultural factors in discerning various approaches to complicated moral issues.

Learning and Teaching Strategies:

The basic format of presentation will be four weekly lectures systematically treating the subject matter as described in the Indicative Module Content. Students are given specific weekly reading assignments as well as directed toward extra-curricular reading proposed by the instructor. Research interests are quickly identified and tutorial sessions, depending on individual needs of the students, arranged for clarification and direction, inclusive of suggested extra-curricular reading. Within the classroom context of lectures, active participation of students in terms of questions and, especially, discussion is strongly encouraged as a primary way of developing analytical skills, critical thinking, and clarity of expression.

Assessment:

The module will be assessed by

- a written essay of not less than 2,500 words chosen from a small selection of questions proposed by the instructor (50%),
- and a written paper treating primary as well as secondary sources according to the research interests of the student and not exceeding 2,500 words (50%).

Indicative Essay Titles

1. Discuss what role, if any, homosexual orientation might (should) play in admission to religious life/priesthood: is this a justice issue?
2. Examine whether the viewing/use of pornography in adolescent/young adult development is to be considered part of normal development or deviancy.
3. By examining the role of faith in political decision making, discuss whether a person should vote according to conscience or what the church teaches if there is a conflict between the two.
4. "The first casualty of any war is truth". Using this statement as a reference point, discuss whether government leaders should deliberately lie to maintain national security.

Illustrative Bibliography

Connors, R.B. Jr. and McCormick, P.T.(1998)	<i>Character, Choices & Community: The Three Faces of Christian Ethics.</i>	Paulist Press.
Curran, Charles E. (2006)	<i>The Moral Theology of John Paul II.</i>	T & T Clarke.
Demmer, Klaus (2006)	<i>Shaping the Moral Life : An Approach to Moral Theology.</i> Moral Traditions Series	Georgetown University Press.
Harrington, Daniel, Keenan, James F. (2006)	<i>Jesus and Virtue : Ethics : Building Bridges Between NT Studies and Moral Theology.</i>	Rowman & Littlefield.
Keating, James (2005)	<i>Moral Theology New Directions and Fundamental Issues.</i>	Paulist Press.
McCormick, Richard A. (2006)	<i>The Critical Calling : Reflections on Moral Dilemmas Since Vatican II.</i>	Georgetown University.
Overburg, Kenneth S.J. (1998)	<i>Conscience in Conflict: How to Make a Moral Decision,</i> Revised Edition,	St. Anthony Messenger Press.
Webster, John (2005)	<i>Barth's Moral Theology.</i>	T & T Clarke.