

<b>Module Title:</b>	<b>Sacraments of Vocation: Matrimony and Orders and the Ethics of Marriage and Human Sexuality</b>
<b>Module Code:</b>	<b>605 TVOC</b>
<b>Level:</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Credit Rating:</b>	<b>20 Credits</b>
<b>Duration:</b>	<b>Student Learning Time: 200 hours</b>
<b>Teaching Hours:</b>	<b>40 Hours</b>
<b>Academic Responsibility:</b>	<b>David Blowey OFM Conv, STD Don Miller OFM, PhD Philippe Yates OFM, JCD</b>

### **Module Aims:**

This module teaches the function and place of (a) Matrimony, and (b) Holy Orders, facilitating an exploration of the biblical tradition of the Sacraments of Vocation in the Catholic-Christian tradition before continuing the analysis with an examination of the historical development of the theological and liturgical aspects of those sacraments. Further effort is made to show the application to today's ministry and to elucidate the canonical ramifications. Students are prepared for ministering both to married couples and those preparing to wed, assisting them in the integration of the religious responsibilities and challenges inherent in the marriage-vocation. In the realm of Sacred Orders — whether they be lay or clerical students — students learn to identify the ministerial roles and responsibilities in the diaconal, presbyteral, and Episcopal spheres and thus participate more fully in the sanctifying office of the Church. In the case of both sacraments, understand the spiritual values implicit in their biblical foundations will assist the students in their own psychological and spiritual maturation, a key element in order to be able to minister to others. The students learn to articulate a deeper knowledge of the interpretation and application of the traditions of the Catholic Church, inclusive of personal integration of the responsibilities inherent in these Social Sacraments.

The student is familiarised with a critical ethical understanding of teaching on the Sacrament of Marriage and Human Sexuality in the Roman Catholic Tradition. The course critically examines the state of the institution of marriage in present day society in order to help the students apply the Church's teaching to practical situations in a sensitive pastoral manner with due discernment as well as to give the students a critical understanding of the practice of the canon law of marriage and its theological underpinnings. Students are taught the covenantal nature of the relationship between a husband and wife. They also deepen their appreciation of the Roman Catholic moral tradition concerning sex/sexuality.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the module students should be able to:

1. demonstrate a sufficient expertise to critically approach pastoral situations and academic texts concerning both the Sacrament of Matrimony and of Orders.
2. demonstrate an in depth understanding of the canon law of the Catholic Church concerning marriage and the process of declaring a marriage null, coupled with an ability to apply the teaching of the Church to cultural situations.
3. demonstrate an ability to evaluate critically and present both orally and in writing the Roman Catholic tradition concerning human sexuality and marriage.
4. demonstrate an ability to argue from principles to practical decisions in dealing with issues

for which there is often no “right” answers and, at the same time, to show sensitivity to the balance between objective principles and personal privacy necessary in pastoral situations.

### **Indicative Module Content:**

The Sacraments of Vocation are at the Service of Communion and Mission; they confer a special grace for a particular mission in the Church to serve and build up the People of God, contributing in a special way to ecclesial communion and to the salvation of others. This module will build on the relevant elements already introduced in the Sacraments module (411 TISA), presenting each of the two Sacraments of Vocation from a four-fold perspective: biblical, dogmatic, liturgical and canonical.

#### **A. Matrimony**

- Marriage in the Plan of God's Church
- Biblical Theology of Married Life
- Historical Development of the Formalization of the Sacrament
- Post-Vatican II Matrimonial Theology
- Practical Issues:
  - (a.) Ministry to Divorced/Separated Christians;
  - (b.) Mixed Marriages

#### **B. Holy Orders**

- Ministry in the Life of the Church (Lay Ministry)
- Priesthood of the Old Covenant
- The Priesthood of Jesus Christ
- Post-Biblical Developments
- Post-Vatican II Ministerial Developments: (a.) Episcopal Ordination; (b.)
- Presbyterial Ordination; (c.) Diaconal Ordination; (d.) “Minor Orders” or “Ministries”
- Practical Issues:
  - (a.) Ordination of Women;
  - (b.) Priestly Celibacy

Roman Catholicism views the Institution of Marriage as a Sacrament. Therefore it is more than just a social convention. Marriage is a covenant which models God's covenant with humankind and Jesus' covenant with the Church as a community. The purposes of Marriage, as indicated by the Second Vatican Council, are the unity of the couple and the procreation/education of children. Marriage is, thus, the proper and only moral context for genital behaviour.

This module examines the teaching of the Catholic Church in the light of the theology, psychology, sociology, morality and law of marriage and human sexuality.

### **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. In applying canon law the students will be given the task of working in groups to argue the application of the law to invented matrimonial situations. Students will receive peer evaluation of the effectiveness of their presentations of the arguments.

## Assessment:

The module will be assessed through two written essays; one for each specific part of the module, of not less than 2,500 words each chosen from a selection of questions proposed by the instructors.

## Indicative Essay Titles

1. Marriage is: "directed towards the salvation of others; if (it) contribute(s) as well to personal salvation, it is through service to others that (it) (does) so" (Catechism of the Catholic Church n. 1534). Integrating the concepts taken from Christian Anthropology, critically analyse the theological notions of the "personal sanctity" of a spouse in his/her Christic ministry towards his/her partner.
2. "Though they differ essentially and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless ordered to one another." (LG 10) analyse and critically assess both their ontological differences and their interrelatedness.
3. What is a possible pastoral approach to a couple, one or both of whom have a previous sacramental marriage and now have a stable marriage with children and want to receive the sacraments.
4. What is a possible pastoral approach to a homosexual person seeking a heterosexual marriage?

## Illustrative Bibliography

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*The Code of Canon Law* (1983). Collins.

Canons 1055-1155, 1671-1707 of the *Codex iuris canonici* of 1983. For example in:  
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New Testament and Their Implications for Today.* Fortress Press.
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of the Magisterium: a Course in the  
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Reflections and Questions.* Fowler Wright  
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