

The Institute for Catechesis and Formation

Course Outline for Instructors



ICF 103 – The New Testament

God's covenant of love with the human person is fulfilled in the life, death and resurrection of His only Son, Jesus Christ. This course picks up the "Story of Salvation" in its fulfillment in the coming of Christ and the establishment of His Church. It will begin with an introduction to the Gospels, Apostolic preaching and the origins of the Church, and conclude with the conversion, preaching and travels of St. Paul.

Texts: The Bible: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/>

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC):
<http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc.htm>

Supplemental Reading/Additional Resources:

Dei verbum: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/councils/v2revel.htm> (DV)

Interpretation of the Bible in the Church:
<http://www.ewtn.com/library/curia/pbcinter.htm> (IBC)

St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology: <http://www.salvationhistory.com/>

Week 1: Origins of Scripture and the New Testament

CCC 101 -130; Mark 1-3;4:26-32; 8:22-38; 9:1-8, 30-32; 10:13-16, 32-34; Interpretation of the Bible, B1, Formation of the Canon; CCC 101-130

What is the Bible? (DV 2, 6)

- The word of God
- God's revelation of Himself to us
- God makes Himself *known* to us through a gradual process
- God reveals Himself in order to enter into a relationship with us

Through an utterly free decision, God has revealed himself and given himself to man. This he does by revealing the mystery, his plan of loving goodness, formed from all eternity in Christ, for the benefit of all men. God has fully revealed this plan by sending us his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. CCC 50

Biblical Authorship

Sacred Scripture is a work of God and the human person (IBC, part I, F. This is a discussion of the Fundamentalist approach to Biblical interpretation that gives a good explanation of the connection between Divine inspiration and the human contribution to God's Word.)

- Divine inspiration
- Human authorship

God did not simply "dictate" the words of Scripture to the human authors, but used their own abilities to transmit what His Holy Spirit inspired in them to write. (CCC 106; DV 9)

The Canon of Scripture

Canon (Greek) – "rule"

The Church is the authority on the Canon of Scripture (which books are authentically works of God's Revelation). The Church does not "make" a particular book eligible to be included in the Bible; She *discerns* that each of the books to be included are indeed part of God's revelation and *authorizes* it to be included in the Canon. (CCC 120; DV 8, 11)

Biblical Interpretation (CCC 115-118)

The Church employs certain principles when interpreting Sacred Scripture, taking into account:

- The sacred author’s intention
- The content and unity of the whole of Scripture
- Reading Scripture within the living Tradition of the whole Church
- Being attentive to the analogy of faith
(CCC 109-114; CGB pp. 26-28)

The Senses of Scripture (CCC 115-118; CGB pp. 34-35)

We read Scripture on both a *literal* and *spiritual* level. What is conveyed in Scripture is **true** – and it is God’s word; but Truth is communicated to us using various literary styles (myth, poetry, allegory), as well as through an account of historical events.

Scripture communicates theological truths, moral precepts, and spiritual meaning to help us grow in faith and come to understand God’s Word, His love and His promises to us.

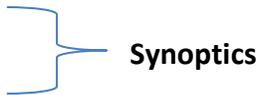
The *Catechism* further subdivides the *spiritual* sense in which we read Scripture:

- Allegorical (the Christological significance)
- Moral (the application to our lives)
- Anagogical (the meaning leading us toward the life to come in eternity)

The New Testament

I. Gospels (“good news”) and Acts–

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts of the Apostles



Synoptics

II. New Testament Letters –

Romans
1&2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1&2 Thessalonians
1&2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews

III. Catholic Letters –

James
1&2 Peter
1, 2 & 3 John
Jude
Revelation

Formation of the New Testament – CGB p. 20-21

Inspiration: the doctrine that the Holy Spirit, working through human authors and employing all the processes of human literary creation, remains the primary author of Scriptures. Because the Scriptures are inspired, the message they intend to convey about God and His plan for His creatures is authentic and free from error (inerrancy).

Canon of Scripture: guideline, standard, rule. The official list of books which the Church accepts as inspired Scripture.

Apocrypha (Greek, *hidden*): as used by Catholics and Orthodox, refers to books which are similar in age or subject matter to biblical books but which have not been accepted into the canon of authentic Scripture. Some apocryphal books (ex. Protoevangelium of James) were influential in the Church, while others are clearly heretical.

4 Main Criteria for inclusion in the canon:

1. Author – an apostle or someone who knew an apostle
2. Date – apostolic age
3. Content – orthodox (consistent with apostolic teaching)
4. Significance – importance to the major Churches

By 400 the Church (East and West) agrees on the Canon and it is closed. Once the canon is closed, nothing more can be added. It was necessary to collect Scripture into an authentic, orthodox canon to combat heresies – Marcion (2 separate Gods)

The New Testament is first transmitted by oral tradition, and eventually written. Jesus taught orally, and His disciples (and their followers) wrote down His life and what He taught in narrative form. Paul's letters are the earliest writings, and the Gospels followed them.

Gospel (oral proclamation of the *good news*) – evangelion

Message (preaching of the Kingdom by Jesus, and the apostolic preaching) – kerygma

The Gospels

Matthew, Mark and Luke – referred to as the *Synoptic Gospels* (to see together). There are similarities in these three Gospel accounts that set them apart from **John's** gospel.

	Mark	Matthew	Luke	John
Author	John Mark	Matthew (Apostle)	Luke, the co-worker of Paul	John, Son of Zebedee (Apostle/the Beloved Disciple)
Date	mid-60's	pre-60, or 80-90	between 80-90	90's
Audience	Rome (Gentile Christians)	Antioch (Jewish Christians)	Gentiles (Roman Empire)	Jewish Christians who were probably open to Samaritans and other Gentiles
Christology	Son of God, Christ, Messiah, Son of Man, Miracle worker	Teacher/Rabbi, New Moses, Lord, Christ, Son of Man/David	Christ/Messiah, Lord, Servant, Savior	Emphasis on Divinity of Christ, Word/Logos

The Synoptic Gospels – Mark

Authorship:

- By Tradition, Jerusalem youth, probably a Gentile Christian (Acts 12:12, 25 "John Mark")
- Missionary with Paul (Acts 13:5, 13; 15:36-40; 2 Tim 4:11; Philemon 1:24)
- "Cousin" of Barnabas (Col 4:10)
- Peter's "son" (1 Pet 5:13)
- Friend and co-worker of Peter and Paul
- Not an eye witness, but probably wrote from memory of conversations w/Peter.

Audience:

- Persecuted Christian community, likely in Rome (or possibly Alexandria)
- Explains Jewish customs, which indicates he is writing to non-Jews

Dates:

65-70 AD

Style:

- Grammatically poor/sentence structure and vocabulary simple
- Written quickly; Christians in the midst of persecution
- Necessary to instruct and to strengthen Christians in the faith in face of persecution

- Literary device – parataxis: a chain of sentences combined by the conjunction “and,” in order to keep the quick pace.
- Everything is immediate; we are “on the move” with Jesus, and He is teaching Christians how to suffer.
- “Immediately” – we are hurried toward the Cross.
- Gospel begins and ends quickly. No genealogy because there isn’t time.
- Jesus is a man of actions more than words (18 miracles and 4 parables) and is traveling constantly.

Major Themes

- Kingdom of God (Mark 1:15; 4:30-32)
- Discipleship (Mark 1:16-18; 2:14; 3:31-35)
- Emphasis on the suffering of Christ
- *The Way* – will you follow Jesus on faith?
- Christ is always travelling – making His way to the Cross. This is also the way of the Christian

Identity of Jesus

- Jesus’ deeds reveal who He is (Mark 1:28; 2:10-12; 3:1)
- Messianic secret (Mark 1:34; 3:12; 5:43; 8:26)
- Suffering Messiah (Mark 8:31; 9:31-32; 10:32-34)
- Low Christology – in contrast to John’s gospel, focus on human nature and build to divinity (Mark 3:5; 3:50; 6:34; 10:14; 10:16)
- Son of God (Mark 1:1; 9:7; 15:39)

Week 2: The Gospels – Matthew and Luke

Matthew 1; 2:13-23; 5-9:34; 10; 12-13; 18-19; 24-25; Luke 1:31-33, 68-79; 2:30-38; 3:21-38; 4:14-15; 5:12-32; 7:11-17, 36-50; 9:46-48; 10:25-42;

11:27-28; 13:10-17; 15; 16:19-31; 17:11-19

Matthew

Author:

- By Tradition, Apostle (Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13)
- Galilean tax collector (Mt 9:9; 10:3)
- “Levi” (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27)

Audience:

- Educated Jews who believe in Jesus and are arguing with other Jews (possibly in Galilee or Antioch)

Dates:

75-90 AD

Style:

- Semitic influence
- Well-informed about Jewish customs (unlike Mark)
- Jesus is concerned with the Law (ex. Mt 19) and how He is the fulfillment of the Law
- Some Christian polemic against the Jews (Christians had formally split from Judaism and were expelled from the synagogue; Mt 12:33 – brood of vipers)

Major Themes:

- Close relationship with the Old Testament (Mt 1:1)
- Kingdom and Church (Matthew 16:18; 18:17)
- Prophecy and fulfillment. Jesus’ teaching is emphasized – Rabbi.
- Matthew cites the OT and Christ’s fulfillment of it. Mt 1:21; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:54; 27:9. Jesus is an authority on the Law
- Genealogy is concerned with Jewish custom (begins with Abraham. Mt 1:1-17) Inclusive of Jews and Gentiles – universal notion of salvation. (Compare w/Luke.)
- Slower pace than Mark – more time to develop themes

Identity of Jesus:

- Son of David (Mt 1:1; 9:27; 12:3; 15:22)
- Called teacher by opponents (Mt 12:14, 19, 32)
- Called Lord by followers (Mt 8:25; 14:28)

- Fulfiller of the Law (Mt 5:17-19)
- Giver of the New Law (Mt 5:1-7:28)
- Emmanuel – God is with us (Mt 1:23)
- Parallels to Moses – flees to Egypt; slaying of the male babies; 40 days (fast); Mt. Sinai as place of encounter – Mount of the sermon in which Jesus gives the New Law (Beatitudes, Mt 5)
- Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law
- Proclaim coming of the Kingdom
- Sayings – Sermon (Mt 5-7); discipleship (Mt 10); parables (Mt 13)
- Miracles (Mt 8:1-9:34)
- Sin and reconciliation (Mt 18)
- End times (Mt 24-25)

Luke

Author:

- By Tradition, physician & companion of Paul (Col 4:14; 2 Tim 4:11; Philemon 1:24)
- Luke was likely a Gentile Christian convert
- Well-educated Greek “historian”
- Beloved physician
- A co-worker of Paul and with him in Rome.

Audience:

- Gentile Christians in an urban setting, becoming complacent (possibly Antioch or Greece)

Dates:

75-90AD

Style:

- Elegant, literary
- Literary prologue – opens as a work of history and refers to others who have written Gospels
- Sophisticated language and knowledge of Jewish customs.
- Writes to the Gentiles
- Downplays the role of the Romans in Jesus’ death (persecutions dying down; no longer an immediate threat)

Major Themes

- Along with John, Luke speaks the most about Mary
- Gospel of mercy, of the marginalized (Luke 5:12-32; 7:36-50; 9:46-48; 15:1-7; 15:11-32; 16:19-31)
- Salvation for all (Luke 3:23-37)
- Women are prominent:

Prophetess Anna (2:36-38); Women of Galilee (8:2-3); Mary Magdalene (8:2); Martha and Mary (10:38-42); Widow of Nain (7:11-16); Bent woman (13:10-17); Lost coin (15:8-10); Woman who blesses Jesus' mother (11:27-28)

- Prominence of the poor
- Gentleness: downplays the failures of the apostles; doesn't show Jesus angry
- Prominence of the Holy Spirit
- Everything is part of the plan of God
- Prayer has a distinctive role for believers (Lk 3:21, 6:12, 11:1, 18:1)
- Theology of glory – the Cross is a glorious opportunity for God to break into history
- Jesus' Sonship is revealed after the Baptism in the Jordan, and genealogy follows.
- Genealogy – traces Jesus to Adam (new Adam); **toledoth** – generations. Luke puts Christ in the context of creation.
- Covenant, Kingdom of God, Messiah

Identity of Jesus:

- Programmatic passage - Lk 4:14-15: Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all
- Man of Compassion (Lk 10:25-37 – Good Samaritan; 17:11-19 – 10 lepers; Samaritan returns to thank Him), and to the marginalized and women (see above) – Israel's election not only for them – sign and opening to others
- Savior (Lk 1:70-75; 2:11, 30-32; Acts 5:31) Messianic Language in Lk 1: 32-33: He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."
- Prophet (Lk 1:31-33; 2:30-35; 8:7-9; 9:35)

Week 3: The Gospel of John; the Early Church

John 1:1-18; 6:22-68; 18-21; Acts 2; 7; 9; 14-15

John

Author:

- By Tradition, son of Zebedee; one of 12 apostles (Mk 1:19; 3:17; cf. Jn 21:2)
- The “beloved disciple” and his Jewish Christian followers (Jn 19:35; 21:20-24)

Audience:

- Mostly Jews, some Gentiles, Samaritans

Dates:

90's

Style:

- Sophisticated, highly symbolic

Christology:

- High
- Emphasis on the divinity of Christ
- Prologue – Compare with the Genealogy of Matthew and Luke

Major Themes:

- Discipleship
- Soteriology
- Book of *Signs* (Jn 1:19-15:50)
- Bread of Life discourse (Jn 6: 22-68)
- Resurrection (Jn 20:1-21:25)

The identity of Jesus

- Preexistent one (Jn 1:1-14); Logos
- The “I am” Statements (Jn 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1)
- Christ, Messiah
- Lamb of God (sacrifice intended by Abraham is completed by Christ – Gn 22; Passover Lamb – Ex 12)
- In control of the Passion (John 18:1-16; 18:33-19:30)
- Possessor of God's glory (John 1:14; 2:11; 5:41; 7:18; 9:24; 11:14)

Apostolic Tradition

Following the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, the Apostles carry on the proclamation of the Gospel. The Apostolic Tradition is the foundation of Christianity –

- Summary of teachings of Christianity
- Emphasis on the Trinity
- Significance of the life, death and resurrection of Christ

Kerygma (proclamation/preaching)

The Gospel is proclaimed orally before being written

Belief is affirmed when people hear the Word proclaimed and become baptized

Kerygmatic statements –

Acts 2:22-24, 32, 36-41; 1 Cor 2:1-5; 1 Cor 2: 5-11; Phil 2: 5-11; Rom 10:8-10

The Acts of the Apostles

Author:

Luke (Gospel Evangelist; co-worker of Paul)

Dates:

64, or 75-85

Major Themes:

- Initial history of the early Church
- Account of the first Council (Jerusalem; Acts 15; Gal 2)
- First martyrdom for faith in Christ (Acts 7)
- The conversion of Paul (Acts 9)

Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-13; CCC 736-745)

Compare with Tower of Babel (Gn 11-9)

Fulfillment of Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16-17, 15:26)

Apostolic preaching begins

Now those who had been scattered went about preaching the word Acts 8:4

- Gospel first preached in Jerusalem
- Followers of *The Way* (Acts 9:2); first called *Christians* in Antioch (Acts 11:26)
- Peter is head of the Church in Jerusalem
- Continuation of Apostolic mission through Holy Orders (Acts 14:23, Acts 6:5-7)

Week 4: The Preaching of Paul

Philippians 2:5-11; 3:4-11; Galatians 1:11-18; 5:4-5; 6:14-18; 1 Corinthians 1:1-18; 5:3-4; 15; 2 Corinthians 5:14-17; Colossians 1:15-20; 3:9-10; Romans 1:1-4; 5-8; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-15

Paul

Saul: Pharisee, strict interpreter of the Law

- Born in Tarsus around 6 BC, making him more or less a contemporary of Jesus. He was a tent-maker, but well-educated, studying under Gamaliel (More on Gamaliel in Catholic Encyclopedia: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06374b.htm>)
- Committed Jew and Pharisee, and a Roman citizen
- Persecuted Jewish Christians because they were fellow Jews who became apostates, breaking certain Laws by following Christ. Saul saw Christians as *disobedient Jews*. He had a zeal for tradition, and considered his defense of it a kind of “holy war.”

Saul’s Conversion

- Acts 7: 55 - 8: 4 (the martyrdom of Stephen, the first deacon)
- Acts 9: 1-30 (Paul's conversion)
- Philippians 3: 4-11
- Galatians 1: 11-17
- *Saul* becomes *Paul* – the change in name is significant; Paul becomes a “new creation.”
- Paul stresses the *revelatory* aspect of his conversion. Paul saw Christ, who called him by name to be a disciple.

*He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, **why are you persecuting me?**"*

*He said, "Who are you, sir?" The reply came, "**I am Jesus**, whom you are persecuting. Acts 9: 4-5*

This association of Jesus Christ with the Church figures importantly in Paul’s letters, particularly Ephesians 5 (specific reference to the Church in v 32)

Paul is not one of the original 12 Apostles, but this direct, personal call by Christ gives him the authority to preach. Galatians 1:15-16 characterizes Paul’s call as a *prophetic* one

For Paul the Gospel is not a book, but the proclaiming of the risen Christ.

After meeting with Peter (Galatians 1:18), Paul begins his career of preaching to the “uncircumcised,” thus becoming “Apostle to the Gentiles.” (See Galatians 2 on Paul’s dispute

with Peter). Paul received his call directly from the Lord, yet needs the authority of Jerusalem and Peter (which he receives) to begin his ministry.

After meeting with Peter and others in Jerusalem, Paul begins to write letters to the Church communities.

Paul is the Apostle to the Gentiles

Pauline Epistles (Letters)

- At this time, a letter was a substitute for a person's *presence*. Paul writes his letters in to exhort the Church communities, and sometimes in order to correct a Church and get them back on track.
- Paul used scribes to write many of his letters, which he likely dictated and read over and approved before they were sent. Thirteen letters are attributed to Paul
- Letters are meant to be read aloud to the assembly

Structure of the Epistle

Greeting

Health wish/Prayer

Example, 1 Cor 1:1-9

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, to you who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be holy, with all those everywhere who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always on your account for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, that in him you were enriched in every way, with all discourse and all knowledge, as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will keep you firm to the end, irreproachable on the day of our Lord Jesus (Christ). God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Body of Letter – arranged in categories of rhetorical argumentation

Closing/Farewell

Example, Galatians 6:18: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen*

Major themes

- Messiah (Christ) (Phil 2:5-11; Col 1:15-20; Rom 8:3; 1 Cor 8:6)
- Righteousness (Phil 3:9; Gal 3:6, 21; Rom 4:3; 5:12-21)
- Justification (Rom 5-8; Gal 5:4-5; 1 Cor 6:11; 1 Thess 5:23)

- Gospel (Rom 1:1-4; Rom 15:19; Gal 1:11-16)
- New Creation (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Eph 2:15; Col 3:9-10; Rom 6:1-15)
- Paul's preaching focuses on the Cross, the Resurrection, and the Parousia.
 - Cross: Jesus died (1 Cor 1:17-18; Gal 6:14; Phil 2:8; Rom 5:6-11, 6:1-14)
 - Resurrection: Jesus rose from the dead (1 Cor 15:1-58)
 - Parousia (Greek, *coming*. This is the technical term for Jesus' return at the end of time): Jesus will come again (1 Thess 4:13-5:11; 2 Thess 2:1-15)

These three themes are discussed individually in many parts of Paul's letters, but combinations of two or all three are sometimes also mentioned in the same passage (1 Thess 4:14-15; Phil 2:6-11; 1 Cor 15:3-4; 2 Cor 5:14-15; Rom 8:34; 14:9)

Identity of Jesus

- 1 Cor 15: 1-8, 20-28
- Phil 2: 6-8