

THEOLOGY IV

Our Moral Life in Christ

Textbooks:

Our Moral Life in Christ by Rev. James Socias

The Holy Bible, *Revised Standard Version* (2nd Catholic Edition).

Prerequisites:

Completion of Theology III: The History of the Church.

Course Description:

This course is designed to train students in the fundamental principles of Moral Theology. With a foundation in this field, the students should be able to make proper moral choices throughout the rest of their lives with the goal of holiness in this life and salvation in the next.

The course will introduce the student to the reality that the human person is created to love- to choose what is good and true. Living a moral life is first a “YES” to God (never ‘simply’ a set of rules). God initiates the relationship with us and gives us the gift of His divine life. The gift we have received should overflow into a desire to love God above all things and therefore wanting to please God in all that we say and do (it is precisely in this encounter that the human person is most fulfilled). The student will know moral principles and be able to apply natural law principles as well as Church teaching to specific moral questions present in the world today. Also, the students will continue in the Christian Service program for the first semester of senior year.

Course Goals:

1. To examine the life of Jesus Christ as the Author of holiness and the source of grace
2. To understand the tremendous love God shows us in calling us to lead a moral life
3. To demonstrate that true happiness and peace come to a soul only when it is union with its creator
4. To reach out to their neighbor in true charity by loving Christ even when it is monotonous (specifically through the Christian Service Program).

Course Objectives:

1. To understand who they are in light of the Church’s moral teaching
2. To develop an understanding of the life of prayer and its importance in leading moral life

3. To engage difficult moral teaching and application and challenge others to live the life of holiness
4. To know and explain the rationale regarding the Church's teaching on issues such as contraception, stem cell research, euthanasia, capital punishment, and same sex unions.

Evaluation:

Regular homework assignments, quizzes, tests, Morality project, and participation

Supplemental Materials:

Texts: *Theology of the Body for Teens* (Ascension Press) and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Films: *John Paul II*, *Cutting Through the Spin on Stem Cells*, *Eggsplotation*, *A Profile in Courage*, and *Blood Money*.

Course Sequence:

- I. Principles of Moral Theology
 - a. Christianity includes a Morality
 - b. Characteristics of Christian Morality
 - c. Identification with Christ
- II. Moral Theology
 - a. Christian Concept of Mankind
 - b. Specificity of Catholic Morality
 - c. The Christian and the Defense of Truth
- III. Freedom and the Moral Act
 - a. Importance of the Moral Life
 - b. The Free Human Act
 - c. Man is Responsible for the Good and Evil of his Free Acts

- IV. The Moral Conscience
 - a. Conscience and Truth
 - b. Divisions of Conscience
 - c. Conscience and Law

- V. Ethical Norms and Law
 - a. Division and Kinds of Law
 - b. Meaning and Purpose of Law
 - c. Conflicts between Conscience and Law

- VI. Morality and Action
 - a. Human Acts
 - b. The Principle of Double Effect
 - c. The Historical Argument for Moral Objectivity

- VII. Sin and Conversion
 - a. Definition of Sin
 - b. Effects of Sin
 - c. Sacrament of Reconciliation

Part Two: Moral Applications

- I. Capital Punishment
- II. Abortion
- III. Euthanasia
- IV. Economics / Proper Use of Goods of Creation
- V. Family and Government

- VI. Embryonic Stem Cell Research and Cloning
- VII. Contraception, Sterilization, and Pre-Marital Sex
- VIII. Same Sex Unions
- IX. Just War
- X. Artificial Fertilization (in vitro), etc

Part Three: Theology of the Body

- I. The Original Human Experiences
 - a. Original Unity
 - b. Original Solitude
 - c. Original Nakedness
 - d. Original Sin
- II. The Four Qualities of the Human Body
 - a. Nuptial
 - b. Symbolic
 - c. Free and Fallen
 - d. Redeemed
- III. Theology of the Body and Sexual Activity
 - a. Applying the theology of the body to specific moral topics
- IV. Forgiveness and Trust
 - a. God's mercy abounds no matter what we have done or will do.
 - b. Jesus calls us to holiness and will guide us to himself and the moral life is forged in relationship with him.

