



NEWMAN INSTITUTE

KNOWING, LOVING AND SHARING THE FAITH

III. The Creed: The Profession of Faith (3 sessions)

“Jesus said, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father.’” (Jn 14:6-7)

“Truth needs to be sought, found and expressed within the “economy” of charity, but charity in its turn needs to be understood, confirmed and practiced in the light of truth. In this way, not only do we do a service to charity enlightened by truth, but we also help give credibility to truth, demonstrating its persuasive and authenticating power in the practical setting of social living.

This is a matter of no small account today, in a social and cultural context which relativizes truth, often paying little heed to it and showing increasing reluctance to acknowledge its existence.”

(Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, n. 2)

Course Description: The Creed summarizes the most fundamental truths of our faith which have been handed down to us from Christ, in and through the Church. By beginning to unpack the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, this course helps participants continue to grow in understanding of both the Triune God of Love and the call to share in building the Kingdom of God.

Reading and Reference Materials: *U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults* (US/CCA, ch. 1-13); the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC, part 1); *The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Comp., part 1).

Course Sequence:

Session One: I Believe in God the Father*

Why did God create me?

1. Man's capacity for God
2. God comes to meet Man
3. Man's response to God
4. Father and Creator
5. Heaven and earth
6. Man and the Fall

Session Two: I Believe in Jesus Christ*

Who is Jesus Christ, and how can we know him today?

1. The only Son our Lord
2. Conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary
3. Suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried
4. Descended into Hell and Rose from the dead
5. Ascended to the right hand of the Father
6. Will come again to judge the living and the dead

Session Three: I Believe in the Holy Spirit*

Who is the Holy Spirit, and what is the Church?

1. The Holy Spirit
2. The Holy Catholic Church
3. The Communion of Saints
4. The forgiveness of sins
5. The resurrection of the body
6. Life everlasting

*Each Session is 2 Hours long, plus recommended follow-up activity.

Session One: I Believe in God the Father [2 hours]
(CCC, n. 1-421; Comp. n. 1-78)

Why did God create me?

1. Man's capacity for God
2. God comes to meet Man
3. Man's response to God
4. Father and Creator
5. Heaven and earth
6. Man and the Fall

Learning Objectives:

*Discuss God's revelation in human history and His personal call to all human beings; recognize Jesus Christ as the fullness of God's revelation; define the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity as the central mystery of the Christian faith; discuss faith as the response to God's self-revelation, and the adherence to Christ in and through the community of His Church

*Identify Scripture and Tradition as modes of God's revelation; discuss Sacred Scripture as the divinely inspired Word of God; identify the four Gospels as the heart of the Scriptures

*Acknowledge the Bishops as the chief teachers of the faith; assess why the Church is a sure guide on faith and morals; recognize the Nicene Creed as a fundamental symbol of the faith

*Discuss God's creation *ex nihilo*, and the Creator's active ongoing involvement with his creation

*Analyze the dignity of the human person created in God's "image and likeness"; assess why man is called to live as a "communion of persons"

*Identify the origin of evil and the event of Original Sin; define sin and the tendency to sin which results from Original Sin; recognize the role that sanctifying grace plays in the Christian life

Recommended Follow-up: Read US/CCA, Ch. 2 "God Comes to Meet Man"; post responses to discussion questions on pg. 17; complete online course evaluation.

Session 2: I Believe in Jesus Christ (CCC, n. 422-747; Comp., n. 79-135) [2 hours]

Who is Jesus Christ, and how can we know him today?

1. The only Son our Lord
2. Conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary
3. Suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried
4. Descended into Hell and Rose from the dead
5. Ascended to the right hand of the Father
6. Will come again to judge the living and the dead

Learning Objectives:

*Summarize Church teaching on the Incarnation; identify Jesus as both truly God and truly Man; discuss the life and mission of Jesus

*Explain what the "Immaculate Conception" means; explain why Mary is called "Mother of God"; discuss Mary's role in the economy of salvation

*Analyze the meaning of the Paschal Mystery

*Explain the importance of Jesus physically rising from the dead; determine the significance of the Resurrection; describe the event of Pentecost Sunday

*Define the Ascension; discuss how Jesus' passion, death, Resurrection and Ascension give life meaning

*Analyze the centrality of the Covenant, and God's personal relationship with His people; discuss Jesus' relationship to the Law of the Old Covenant; identify the New Covenant inaugurated by Jesus

Recommended Follow-Up: Read US/CCA, Ch. 7: "The Good News: God Has Sent His Son"; post responses to discussion questions on pg. 85; complete online course evaluation.

Session 3: I Believe in the Holy Spirit (CCC, n. 747-1065; Comp., 135-217)

[2 hours]

Who is the Holy Spirit, and what is the Church?

1. The Holy Spirit
2. The Holy Catholic Church
3. The Communion of Saints
4. The forgiveness of sins
5. The resurrection of the body
6. Life everlasting

Learning Objectives:

*Assess the Holy Spirit's presence in the workings of today's Church; describe why the Holy Spirit is called "Lord and Giver of Life"

*Discuss the Church in terms of: preparation in the Old Covenant; institution by Christ; "one complex reality"; the Body of Christ, centered on the Eucharist; the baptismal call to discipleship and evangelization; "the sacrament of salvation" for the world; "outside the Church there is no salvation"; the four marks of the Church, defining "catholic"; the importance of parish involvement; the threefold office of the episcopacy; the charism of infallibility; the difference between the "priesthood of all believers" and the "ministerial priesthood"

*Define the Communion of Saints; recognize the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in salvation history

*Discuss the Church's mission to forgive sins in and through the Sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation

*Explain the "Four Last Things"; discuss the reality of Heaven and Hell; reflect on the reality of life after death

Recommended Follow-Up: Read US/CCA, Ch. 10: "The Church"; post responses to discussion questions on pg. 121; complete online course evaluation.

Additional Resources:

- Teaching the Sign of the Cross
http://www.catechist.com/archive/articles_view.php?article_id=2417.
- U.S. Bishops' video resources-- <http://www.usccb.org/media/video/index.cfm>
- Fr. Robert Barron on "What Catholics mean when they say God"--
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_Yjue8MXAI