

YMIN 223 Community, Ritual & Mission: Nourishing the Christian Life Ministry
FALL 2025 - DRAFT SYLLABUS - Graduate Program in Pastoral Ministry

- Tuesdays - September 23 - December 9 (excluding November 25 and December 2) (online via Zoom)
- Final projects will be presented during class on December 9.
- Deacon Kevin Staszko + kstaszko@gmail.com + Office hours: by appointment only

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Community, Ritual & Mission: Nourishing the Christian

This course investigates the core elements for building welcoming, inclusive Christian communities as modeled by Jesus in his ministry. Approaching youth ministry work as a member of a pastoral leadership team, it also examines how to empower young people for their mission in the world by accompanying them into full life in their church community. In addition, this course explores the sacraments and rituals that foster a gospel spirituality and ministry engaged in reaching out to others, especially those in need. Specific attention will be given to the sacraments of initiation and vocation and the ways that these relate to mission

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course addresses the following Goals and Objectives of the GPPM Program:

Goal 1B Students will gain a broad theological foundation that will undergird inquiry into a select area of concentration. *(theological knowledge)* Students will integrate their core theological competencies in their chosen area of concentration.

Goal 2A Students will develop pastoral skills, ministry knowledge, and liturgical fluencies in at least one key field of study relevant to Christian ministry. *(pastoral proficiency)* Students will demonstrate a depth of practical and theoretical knowledge in their area of concentration.

Goal 3A & B Students will become competent leaders dedicated to serving the Church and to creating community in parish and other pastoral settings. *(leadership skill)* Students will employ historically informed knowledge of the tradition to assess theological positions and pastoral issues. Students will apply skills from their area of concentration for use in their faith community.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE / TOPICS

- Week 1: Class Orientation & Introductions, Creating Pastoral Teams
- Week 2: What is ministry? What is discipleship? Discernment, Formation, & Accompaniment
- Week 3: What does effective ministry to young people look like? It's All About Relationship
- Week 4: What is a parish? A Community of Communities
- Week 5: What is christian initiation? The Ultimate Disciple-Making Process
- Week 6: What is collaboration? The Pastoral Team Approach
- Week 7: What is the role of the ministry leader? Competence, Accountability & Co-Responsibility
- Week 8: What is pastoral imagination? Creativity, Strategy, and Risk
- Week 9: Independent Work in Pastoral Teams on Final Project
- Week 10: Presentation of Final Projects / Group Feedback

COURSE WORK

Informed and Engaged Class Participation: Attendance is expected at all classes. Thoughtful and reflective participation is expected, including sharing comments and questions throughout the course and via Camino, our online class platform. Two students per class will be asked at random to share their reflections on the weeks' reading.

Pastoral Teams: Students will be organized into pastoral teams that will gather once per week for at least an hour. Small group work will be building toward a final group project. Students will take turns as note-takers at small group sessions. The note-taker will turn in a 1-2 page summary of the group discussion each week.

Weekly Reflection: a one page reflection on your takeaways from the reading assignment will be due each week.

Written work will be evaluated on quality of content, organization, clarity of expression, grammatical correctness, and appropriate citations.

Final Project, Presentation & Paper: Each Pastoral Team will be tasked with creating an innovative sacramental preparation process for an existing population in an actual parish and diocese. The process will be a capstone project which will synthesize learnings from the lectures, reading, and small group discussions. At the end of the quarter, each team will present their project to the class. A final paper is required from each student that documents the research, vision, scope and development of the project (8-10 pages). PowerPoint presentations and other media tools are required and should be submitted along with the paper. Guidelines will be presented in class.

GRADING

- 1/3 attendance, informed/engaged class & pastoral team participation;
- 1/3 reflection papers on reading
- 1/3 final paper/project/presentation

READINGS

Church Documents:

Listen, Teach, Send: A National Pastoral Framework for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults, USCCB.

<https://www.usccb.org/resources/National%20Pastoral%20Framework%20YYA%20APPROVED5.pdf>

Christus Vivit: Post-Synodal Exhortation to Young People and to the entire People of God, Pope Francis, Vatican Press,

2019. <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost-exhortations/documents/papa-francesco-esortazione-ap-20190325-christus-vivit.html>

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC, 1999.

<https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/adult-faith-formation/our-hearts>

Order of Christian Initiation for Adults, USCCB, "General Introduction, Page 15-40.

<https://bookstore.magnificat.net/pub/media/flipbook/OCIA-USCCB-Web/14/>

Halbach, Matthew, *New Directory for Catechesis - Highlights and Summary for Pastoral Leaders*, Twenty Third Publications, New London, CT, 2020.

<https://www.amazon.com/New-Directory-Catechesis-Highlights-Catechists-ebook/dp/B08PDNY726>

Go and Make Disciples, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC,

<https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/evangelization/go-and-make-disciples/go-and-make-disciples-a-national-plan-and-strategy-for-catholic-evangelization-in-the-united-states>

Books:

Belonging: Reconnecting America's Loneliest Generation, Springtide Research Institute, 2020.

<https://www.amazon.com/Belonging-Reconnecting-Americas-Loneliest-Generation/dp/1641210893>

East, Tom, et. al., *Effective Practices for Dynamic Youth Ministry*. St. Mary's Press, 2004.

<https://www.amazon.com/Effective-Practices-Dynamic-Youth-Ministry-ebook/dp/B005QD3L0C>

Macalintal, Diana. *Your Parish is the Curriculum*, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN, 2018. (ISBN: 978-0-8146-4465-2)

<https://litpress.org/Products/4465/Your-Parish-Is-the-Curriculum>

O'Meara, OP, Thomas. *Theology of Ministry: Completely Revised Edition*, Paulist Press, 1999. (Chapters 4 & 5)

<https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=-Xjn3cYREKMC>

Robertson, Des. *A Community of Disciples*, Twenty Third Publications, New London, CT, 2012. (Chapters 3-14)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1K95g4Z-ruO8cOERa_1j7z4C7Aos3_bZU/view?usp=sharing

Sofield, ST, Loughlin & Carroll Juliano, SHCJ. *Collaboration: Uniting Our Gifts in Ministry*. Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, IN., 2001. <https://www.amazon.com/Collaboration-Uniting-Ministry-Loughlan-2000-09-01/dp/B01FEKF49W>

Sofield, ST, Loughlin & Carroll Juliano, SHCJ. *Principled Ministry: A Guidebook for Catholic Church Leaders*. Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, IN., 2011. <https://www.amazon.com/Principled-Ministry-Guidebook-Catholic-Leaders/dp/1594712638>

Weddell, Sheri. *Forming Intentional Disciples: Revised & Expanded*. Our Sunday Visitor, 2022.

<https://www.amazon.com/Forming-Intentional-Disciples-Following-Expanded-ebook/dp/B0B9V4LDJ9>

Articles on Pastoral Imagination

<https://www.religion-online.org/article/imagination-and-the-pastoral-life/>

<https://journals.sfu.ca/rpfs/index.php/rpfs/article/download/480/464/0>

Other readings as assigned.**Academic Integrity**

The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of—and commitment to—a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.

Academic integrity is part of your intellectual, ethical, and professional development. I expect you to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. I will clarify expectations on academic integrity -- including the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT and course sharing sites for all assignments and exams in this course. If you have questions about what is appropriate on any assignment, please let me know before you hand in work. For more resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see this LibGuide on Academic Integrity.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)

Santa Clara University is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment free of all forms of discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence.

Please know that as a faculty member, California law and University policy require me to report any information brought to my attention about incidents of sexual harassment or misconduct to the SCU Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX, (408) 551-3043. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures in writing assignments, class discussions, and one-on-one

conversations.

Should you need support, SCU has dedicated staff trained to assist you in navigating campus resources, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and filing a formal complaint with the University or with law enforcement. Please see the Student Resources page for more information about reporting options and resources.

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence and wishes to speak to a confidential resource who is not required to report, please contact one of the following SCU resources for support:

- SCU Wellness Center
- CAPS
- Any individual (clergy, counselors) acting in a professional capacity for which confidentiality is mandated by law.

I am happy to help connect you with any of these resources.

Accommodations for Pregnant and Parenting Students

Santa Clara University is committed to creating and maintaining a non-discriminatory learning environment for all students, including students who are pregnant or parenting. Absences due to medical conditions relating to pregnancy and childbirth will be excused for as long as deemed medically necessary by a student's doctor, and students will be given the opportunity to make up missed work. Students needing accommodations can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Students needing accommodations can also seek assistance with accommodations from the Office of Accessible Education (OAE) or from the Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX. This resource page from the Title IX Office provides information regarding support for students and employees who are pregnant or parenting.

Office of Accessible Education

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact the Office of Accessible Education as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through OAE, please be sure to request your accommodations through the OAE portal and discuss them with me during my office hours within the first two weeks of class. To ensure fairness and consistency, individual faculty members are required to receive verification from the Office of Accessible Education before providing accommodations. OAE will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assistive technology.

Students with approved accommodations of time and a half should talk with me as soon as possible. The Office of Accessible Education must be contacted in advance (at least two weeks' notice recommended) to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations.