

# Sacraments of Vocation: Holy Orders & Matrimony

## Class Overview

Welcome to the “Class” overview! The objective of this class is to continue your preparation as Lay Ecclesial Ministers called to carry forward our Lord Jesus Christ’s mission to make the Kingdom of God a reality in the world. To this end, we will be exploring the Sacraments of Vocation as conduits of grace that transform the very nature of our hearts so that we can then bring the light of Christ to a world that has lost its way.

When you get to the reading list remember to breath: it’s not that bad—really. Also, try to pray the Sacred Scripture passages so that they do not end up as sound bites.

Three ministry reflections have been provided to help center your hearts in gratitude, hope and charity that I hope you will embrace as you prepare for the time we will spend together.

Also, there is a homework assignment that can be completed before or after the class as there are benefits to both approaches and, given where you are at in your formation and state of life, I feel confident that you can do this.

### Introduction & Opening Prayer

Given that living a sacramental life calls us to embrace and share a vibrant prayer life, I look forward to hearing from those class members who would like to volunteer to lead the opening and closing prayers.

### Holy Orders:

Our reflection on the Sacrament of Orders will briefly touch upon how the ordained ministry of the Church serves not only the People of God but all peoples and nations and then, in small groups, we will explore expectations of the ordained clergy as it affects lay ministry. Presentation topics include the following:

- Theology of Orders
- Threefold order of Ordained Ministry: Bishop, Deacon, and Priest
- Call to Orders and Ordination
- Service of Charity and Mercy

### Small group discussion/break

### Matrimony:

Over the years, I have found that reflections on marriage quickly take on lives of their own and as such I never quite know where they are going to take us so, I always trust the Holy Spirit and follow along. One thing that we do know is that marriage as the Father intended in the beginning is foundational to His plan of salvation in Christ and as such we will touch upon the following before breaking into small groups to discuss where the Holy Spirit has brought us:

- Marriage as the primordial sacrament
- Jesus elevates marriage to a sacrament of the Church
- Ministers of the Sacrament
- Marriage as a Sacrament of Salvation and an Image of the Church

### Small group discussion/break

### Final thoughts & Wrap up, Closing Prayer & Blessing

Time permitting we will have a large group discussion on the Sacraments of Vocation.

Thank you everyone!

In Christ,

Deacon Craig



## Ministry Reflections

**“The unfolding mystery of Christ is God’s response to the human yearning for pure, infinite love implicit in any genuine interpersonal relationship”** (*Meeting God in Today’s World*: H.U. von Balthasar).

**“Jesus’ victory over death reveals that there is no sin against life, no matter how great, that cannot be forgiven. There is no interior wound that cannot be healed, no broken self-image that cannot be restored, no habit or disorder that cannot be set right—all by the power of the infinite love pouring out from Jesus’ pierced side. This is the message of hope that we are to bring to a world that has lost its bearings”** (*Men & Women are from Eden*: Dr. Mary Healy 109).

**“...the ties which unite the faithful together are stronger than those which separate them: let there be unity in what is necessary, freedom in what is doubtful, and charity in everything** (Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World ¶92 Pope John XXIII).



# Sacraments of Vocation: Holy Orders and Matrimony

## Reading List

The following selections are meant to help provide some background and context to the subject matter that we will be covering in class as well as to serve as a resource for your ministry. Additionally, the selection for Matrimony should provide insight for the homework assignment if needed.

### Holy Orders

Paragraphs 1536-1600 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* focuses on Holy Orders—about seventeen pages—and it would be great if you have a chance to read through this section however only the following paragraphs are assigned:

CCC 1536, 1547-49, 1554-56, 1562-64, 1569-73, 1581-82, 1585-88

Additionally, from Sacred Scripture: Acts 6:1-6, 1Tim 3:1-13, 5:17-25, Jn 13:1-20, Luke 22:14-20

### Matrimony

Paragraphs 1601-1666 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* focuses on Matrimony—about sixteen pages—and it would be great if you have a chance to read through this section however only the following paragraphs are assigned:

CCC 1601-08, 1614-17, 1639-42, 1646-50, 1652-53, 1655-58

Additionally, from Sacred Scripture: Matt 5:1-12, 5:27-32, 19:1-12, Eph 5:21-33



## Sacraments of Vocation: Homework Assignment

**Dr. Luke Timothy Johnson is a well known scholar and theologian who has taken the letters of St. Paul and summarized St. Paul's understanding of faith as follows:**

**Faith is not belief. Faith includes belief but it is much more. Faith is a gift from God--who created us and has claim to us--that calls for a person's living response to God in love, gratitude, obedience, fidelity, trust, and belief that Jesus is Lord.\***

**In one or two paragraphs describe how you see a sacramental marriage as a reflection of this understanding of faith.**

**\*Please note that this is not a direct quote but rather a synthesis from the audio book by Luke Timothy Johnson *The Apostle Paul*.**

