

**Join this special course open only to parish catechists and Catholic school teachers in this diocese!** This is a 5 week online course (Sept. 5 – Oct. 9). Participants work from any computer on their own time. The course requires approximately 5 hours per week of work. High speed internet is not necessary. This course can be used as part of the catechist certification process. Upon successful completion of the course, students may apply to the diocesan lay endowment fund for reimbursement. The cost is \$40. This class will be facilitated by Karen Pesek, Director, Office of Religious Education. There is also the option of taking this class for undergraduate credit. See details on the course website.

Go to: <http://vlc.udayton.edu/> or contact [kpesek@dioscg.org](mailto:kpesek@dioscg.org) or call 417-866-0841. If you are interested, please send a message to [rfrancka@dioscg.org](mailto:rfrancka@dioscg.org) Instructions will be sent to you regarding registration and payment.

# Introduction to Christian Morality

**Course Level: Basic**

## Course Summary

As Christians, we are called to a standard of living that reflects not only the Ten Commandments but also the Beatitudes. We are created in the image and likeness of God and thus challenged to live the way of Christ. Jesus is the "way, the truth, the life." This course introduces participants to moral principles and convictions that give meaning to our actions, the role Scriptures, the Church and conscience play in shaping how we act and how our behavior is a response to our love relationships in the human community. The nature of sin, grace and virtue will be explored.

## General Course Objectives

- Participants will understand that God has revealed in Jesus how we are to live and who we are to be.
- Participants will understand the role of Scripture, Tradition, Law and the magisterium in shaping the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

## Course Materials

- **Required Book:** Pennock, Michael Francis *This is Our Faith* \$12.95 Ave Maria Press, 1998.
- **Required Book:** Connors, Russell B., Jr., *Christian Morality: In the Breath of God* \$7.95 Loyola Press, 2001. Course Structure and Highlights
- **Week 1: Foundations of Christian Life**
  - Participants will understand that Christian moral life is a response to God's love by loving others as God has loved us.
  - Participants will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the connections between morality and the sacraments.
  - Participants will understand the Christian Moral Life as active participation in Christ's work of building the Reign of God.
  - Participants will be able to explain some theories of moral development.
- **Week 2: Foundations of Catholic Morality**
  - Participants will be able to identify the beatitudes as the summary of New Testament morality.

- Participants will be able to name the cardinal virtues, the theological virtues and the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit as helps to live life like Jesus Christ.
- Participants will be able to name Scripture, Tradition, divine and natural law, human reason and the magisterium as avenues to moral Truth.
- Participants will be able to identify basic moral principles.
- **Week 3: Sin, Grace and Freedom**
  - Participants will be able to describe the nature of sin and its causes and effects.
  - Participants will be able to define moral law and natural law.
  - Participants will be able to describe the role of grace and freedom in developing a healthy conscience.
  - Participants will understand the responsibility of the Pope and Bishops to act as authentic teachers to ensure that the church remains the “pillar and bulwark of the truth.”
- **Week 4: Conscience Formation and Moral Decision Making**
  - Participants will be able to describe conscience as the capacity for goodness and rightness, as process and as judgment.
  - Participants will be able to describe and use a process for making moral decisions.
  - Participants will understand that an informed and formed conscience must always be followed.
  - Participants will be able to explain how one’s moral principles and convictions give meaning to one’s actions.
- **Week 5: The Commandments**
  - Participants will be able to explain the Ten Commandments as a road map to union with God in eternity.
  - Participants will be able to describe Jesus as the fulfillment of the Law.
  - Participants will understand that following Christ is the essential and primordial foundation of Christian morality.