

MLFM Course Descriptions

MLFM 610 - Faith and Family: Personal Perspectives (4)

In this first summer intensive session students begin with an orientation retreat regarding the MLFM program. Additionally, individuals will develop communication skills and participate in community building activities. Throughout the session various aspects of leadership will be blended into the discussions.

MLFM 611 - Marriage and Family Spirituality (3)

This course will offer a comprehensive presentation of the various strands of Christian spirituality with special attention to their contribution to marriage and family life. The charismas of Benedictine, Dominican and Ignatian spirituality will be explored. The course will also analyze key biblical passages, and the role of spirituality in contemporary marriage and family life.

MLFM 612 - Family Ministry and Family Systems (3)

Ministers, who work with families, know the complex and challenging questions asked about faith development within family life. Looking at family systems will provide a deeper understanding for the ways families interact. We will explore the sacred ground of home, and also examine how parishes can respond to needs by promoting catechesis, liturgy and rituals, prayer, justice and service to strengthen today's families, called by Vatican II to be "Domestic Church". We will also explore ethical and moral issues associated with marriage and family, and look at families in their complexity and diversity.

MLFM 613 - Faith Development and the Lifecycle (3)

This course connects the dynamics of Christian faith with various states in the human lifecycle. Various theories of human development will be reviewed and evaluated over and against the tradition of faith growth. The cultural context for faith will be addressed especially in the life of faith in a secularized, postmodern society. The manner in which Faith is passed on in community, especially in family, will be explored.

MLFM 620 - Faith and Family: Social Perspectives (4)

This course focused on the social context for family life and faith formation. The interaction of Person, Community and Culture creates the setting from which persons-in-relationship grows. The patterns and processes of interpersonal development are explored through the lens of theology, spirituality, psychosocial development and cultural diversity. Ministry to this matrix of personal and communal growth will also take on the forms of dialogue, collaboration and ongoing process. Attending to interpersonal experience, historical frameworks and narrative sharing become the basic ingredients of holistic growth especially that that occurs in family and other close relationships.

MLFM 621 - Family Evangelization and Catechesis: Religious Education & Family Life (3)

Communicating religious faith from one generation to the next requires a process of transmission that is intergenerational in intent and holistic in content. This course focuses on ways the families incorporate the fundamental processes of a faith traditions into their life. With a Christian focus this would include family prayer, liturgical or ritual expression, narration of the faith tradition and witness to the life implied in that tradition. All of this is accomplished in a family manner. Attention is given to developing an awareness of God's presence in ordinary family interaction and the social outreach of the family to the world, especially attending to the needs of the poor and creating a more just and peaceful world.

MLFM 622 – Sacramentality of Community & Its Presence in Marriage and Family Life (3)

The sacramentality or sacred dimension of all creation is one of the most important developments in contemporary theology. This notion bridges the gap between the so-called secular and religious spheres. This expanded notion of the sacred is founded on the combining of the theologies of creation and redemption. The course includes the sacramental dimensions of marriage, a theology of human sexuality, the family as domestic church and the connection between the sacraments of the local church (parish) and the parallel sacraments of the home.

MLFM 623 - Foundations of Faith and Family in Scripture (3)

This course provides an overview of the various passages and patterns found in the Bible that specifically relate to family life. This includes the historical and cultural setting for each reference. Contemporary biblical scholarship is used to bring forth the deeper meanings of each section that is studied. Ways in which families include a religious dimension to their lives are considered from both a Jewish and Christian perspective.

MLFM 630 – Faith and Family - Global Perspectives (4)

Family life exists in the midst of specific cultures and milieus. So too does the religious faith of its members. But the family also participates in a wider context both as receiver of its images, ideas and social structures and as a contributor to its ongoing development. In this course, we will explore the complex relation of family and today's global community. We will explore the impact of social change, both near and far, on the family and its life of religious faith. We will expand the awareness of the family's place in the rapidly changing global scene. A deeper understanding of social and cultural change, the role of diversity in a pluralistic environment, the presence and influence of personal and family violence, the reality and effects of family migration, the growing phenomenon ecumenical and interreligious families, will be explored as part of the family's efforts to survive and thrive. The family remains the smallest and most vulnerable human community, and those seeking to assist families must take into account its inner life as well as all those forces extrinsic to the family which influence its vitality.

MLFM 631 – Critical Issues in Human Life (3)

Given advancements in medical science and in light of new approaches to health care, families are faced with a wide variety of new possibilities and health care decisions unprecedented in history. Many of these cluster around conception and birth, while others arise near the time of death. Many health care issues contain ethical or moral dimensions. This course will address the full gamut of topics connected with maintaining health, increasing vitality during one's lifespan and the responsibilities faced by all in caring for self and others close to us. Foundational for these decisions are the values associated with human dignity, a Christian perspective on life and death and the complex economics associated with family survival.

MLFM 632 – Leadership and Organizational Dynamics (3)

Church ministry at all levels has profited for the many insights and suggestions that flow from a deeper understanding of how social organizations operate. The functions of creative leadership and skilled management play an important role in the survival of all organization, but especially church communities. Parish life is becoming more complex and demanding resulting from increased expectations of parish life and diminished resources both financial and personal to meet those expectations. Part of this course explores various approaches and methods needed for personal and spiritual survival in complex organizational systems.

MLFM 633 – Capstone Course (3)

Capstone course or project for demonstrating knowledge and skills gained in the MLFM program. Students will show through creating a project (written and enacted) of the learning and skills that they have mastered through in the program. They will be judged on how well they can apply solid theory to practical application in the context of meeting a pastoral or ministerial need of a local community. Projects must be pre-approved by the program staff. Students will also provide an annotated bibliography which was used for their project.