

CHRTC 380 – Winter 2009
Christian Religious Education and the Child

ON-LINE Winter Term, 2009

Quotes of Note:

“Before children observe and study anything else, they observe and study their teacher.”
(Teacher Manual, Grade Two, *Born of the Spirit* Catechetical Program)

“No methodology ... can dispense with the person of the catechist. The charism given by the Spirit, a solid spirituality and transparent witness to life, constitutes the soul of every method. Only [the teacher's] own human and Christian qualities guarantee a good use of texts and other work instruments.” (*General Directory for Catechesis* #156)

“The special character of the Catholic school and the underlying reason for its existence, the reason why Catholic parents should prefer it, is precisely the quality of the religious instruction integrated into the overall education of the students.” (*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* #66)

Instructor Information:

Instructor: Jack Kelly
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Office hours: Room SJC 009 – by appointment

Course Description:

“Key themes relevant to the faith search of children: the life and teachings of Jesus, the challenge of the Good News in our culture, and the meaning of belonging and commitment to Church. The roles of school, family, and parish in religious education and the development of a faith nurturing school culture. Curriculum related areas of study will include: Christ, scripture, sacrament, church, morality, and faith development.”

Course Objectives:

Teaching – Education Mission

- Project current trends in society and faith towards the education of students in our schools.
- Review writings on Catholic education with a view especially to the methods of teaching and learning.
- Reflect on what it means for a Catholic school to be a ‘faith community’.
- Develop a working knowledge of the spirit and theology of the religious education curriculum used in Catholic elementary schools in Alberta, through a study of the main themes underlying the current resources used in various programs.

Spiritual Formation

- Facilitate teachers exploration of their own faith journeys and calling to the teaching ministry in Catholic schools
- Reflect upon and discuss any questions or issues of importance to students in their faith journey.

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Human formation and Integration with Teaching Skills

- Investigate the spiritual and religious dimension of teaching in a Catholic elementary school in our present times
- Develop and share teaching materials that demonstrate the permeation of faith values across the curriculum and are of immediate practical use in classrooms.

Pastoral Ministry

- Enable teachers to deal effectively with the deep questions of faith and morals being addressed by elementary school students
- Build the skills needed to understand the role of the contemporary culture in assessing issues in religious education.

Social Ministry

- Show evidence of constant growth to be a more Christ-like leader in Catholic education.
- Examine aspects of building a Christ-centered community within Catholic schools, therefore giving unity and hope to all who are associated with the school
- Reflect on what it means to be a Catholic school in a pluralistic society.

Online Courses and Learning:

In most cases, students taking this course have never taken an online course before. Don't worry about that. Previous experience shows that most students pick up the online methodology quickly.

You need to be aware that this course is **not** self-directed learning, nor is it independent study. Like any university class that you have taken there is a timetable for this class. We go through a module each week. You need to keep up with that schedule. Also you must actively participate in the online discussion portion of the course on a regular, ongoing, and persistent basis. It is like an electronic check on your attendance.

Texts and Materials:

Required:

- Bollan, J. (2007). *The light of his face: Spirituality for Catholic teachers*. Dublin: Veritas.
- Paprocki, J. (2007). *The catechist's toolbox: How to thrive as a religious education teacher*. Chicago: Loyola University Press.

Recommended:

- Bible – I recommend *The College Study Bible* by St. Mary's Press. It is newly issued and some copies have been ordered for the bookstore.
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It can be purchased in most religious bookstores. Although it is available online (<http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc.htm>) there is nothing like having the book in your own hands.
- Durka, Gloria (2002). *The teacher's calling: A spirituality for those who teach*. New York: Paulist Press.
- Laplante, Richard (1985). *Do you mean what we mean? A Catholic school lexicon*. Edmonton: Alberta Catholic Schools Trustees Association. (You can borrow a copy from me if you are interested)

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- Richardson G., Parsons J., and Savage L. (2002). *Tools for teaching: Philosophy and ideas you can use*. Edmonton: Duval House Publishing.
- Palmer, Parker (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco: Josey-Bass Publications.
- Treston, Kevin (1993). *A new vision of religious education*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications. (This text is out of print, but copies are still available from former 380 students)

Course Assignments and Requirements:

Assignment	Due Date	Point Total
Initial Project	Thursday February 5, 2009	20
Mid Term Evaluation	Friday February 13, 2009	20
Second Project	Thursday April 9, 2009	20
Learning Group Participation	Ongoing	20
Final Examination	Friday April 17, 2009 (tentative date)	20
		100

Assignments are due on the dates given. In the case of difficulty, consult with the instructor. Assignments may not be accepted if they are more than two days late. A ten percent penalty may be deducted from late assignments.

Descriptions

- 1 A time-limited one-hour, multiple choice, online **Mid-term examination** covering the first five modules and counting **20%** toward the final grade will be written at a time of the student's choosing on **Friday, February 13, 2009**.
- 2 A time-limited online **Final Examination** covering Modules 6 to 13 and a summary of the entire course and counting **20%** of the final grade will be posted on **TBA** and will be return by email to the instructor no later than 23:59 the same day.
- 3 **Participation in learning groups - 20%** of final grade. This is an **extremely important part** of the online course experience. You are expected to check the course discussions on a daily basis and respond at least two or three times for each module. There will be **four** assessments is worth **5%** of your final grade. The Assessments will be posted as follows:
 - After Module Three, Assessment Date January 28, 2009
 - After Module Six, Assessment Date February 18, 2009
 - After Module Nine, Assessment Date March 18, 2009
 - After Module Thirteen, Assessment Date April 15, 2009
- 4 There will be two **Course Projects** required of each student. They will each involve Internet research and application of the findings to a teaching situation in a Catholic elementary school. Each project will count for 20% of the final grade.

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Note Well: Extensions will be granted only in the case of incapacitating illness, severe domestic affliction or other compelling reasons. Late papers will not receive comments, but will receive a grade. However, any assignment more than five calendar days late may not be accepted and may be marked as 0. Note also, that the instructor **will not** read beyond the word limit. He means it!

General Expectations:

- 1 **Integrity** - both in written work and in online class discussion honesty is presumed - there is no room for sophistry.
- 2 **Engagement and respect** - the student is expected to honour the opinions and confidences of the instructor and other students and to actively engage the material.
- 3 **Eagerness** - as the name "study" implies, eagerness is the disposition called for in the student.
- 4 **Erudition** - a desire to actually expand one's knowledge is the fire from which growth will emerge.

Examinations:

In case of absence during mid-term examinations re-writes will only be allowed with a documented "excuse" from your Dean's Office. These re-writes will be arranged with the instructor.

Grading:

This course follows the letter grading system introduced by the University of Alberta on September 1, 2003. Marks for each requirement will be recorded as raw point scores and the SUM of these will then be converted to a percentage, which in turn is converted into a final grade according to the table below ("**St Joseph's College Undergraduate Grading Scale**"). The percentage mark resulting from the entire term work and examination then produces the final letter grade for the course. The normal course section average range for a 300 level course is a B-. Grading in this course will fall within the normal range. Marking and grading are not identical. **Note Well:** When calculating a final grade student achievement, participation, attendance (evaluated by visits to the web site) and relative performance will be considered.

Assignments and exams are to be completed as outlined. Weights assigned for term work and the mid term evaluation will not be shifted to the final exam. The guidelines of the University on plagiarism will be strictly enforced. Please read them thoroughly. For information regarding the grading system visit <http://www.grades.ualberta.ca/>.

Other Stuff:

Each assignment will have detailed instructions and an evaluation rubric. All assignments and tests in this course are to be submitted **digitally**. No paper assignments or tests will be accepted. Students in this section of the course must be proficient at electronic submissions of papers and tests. Students must also be proficient in accessing their University of Alberta computer accounts and emails.

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The instructor of this course assumes that you have either already taken CHRTC 250, are currently taking it, or have a basic understanding of Catholic theology.

This section of CHRTC 380 has a website. You are expected to use the course web area to send and receive email within the course, download materials sent by the instructor, and participate in the discussion activities. To access the web page and materials go to <http://www.ualberta.ca/>. From there, click on eClass. On the next page click on Logon to Vista. Then enter your CCID and password.

Please Note:

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.” (GFC 29 SEP 2003)

☛ Plagiarism and Cheating:

All students should consult the “Truth-In-Education” handbook or Website (<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/>) regarding the definitions of **plagiarism** and its consequences when detected.

☛ Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular daily attendance is essential for optimal performance. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections 23.4.2 and 23.4.3 of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

In this course, your attendance is gauged by your ongoing participation in discussion forums and is observed on an ongoing basis.

☛ Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult in advance with an instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension. Otherwise, assignments may be handed in one class-day after the stated deadline without penalty.

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Professionalism

Students are expected to conduct themselves professionally as part of the process of learning to become a teacher in a Catholic school. The following list of attributes should be recognized and followed both while you are an education student and a future teacher and while you are an active teacher in Catholic schools:

- ❑ Showing concern, empathy, and respect for colleagues and students
- ❑ Attending class and meetings regularly and promptly
- ❑ Being prepared and organized for every class
- ❑ Contributing to the class and school community
- ❑ Displaying an ethical and professional attitude
- ❑ Fostering learning -- yours and others
- ❑ Creating a collaborative environment
- ❑ Projecting commitment, responsibility, enthusiasm, and initiative
- ❑ Reflecting ongoing learning and professional development
- ❑ Exhibiting growth in spiritual development and faith practices

Criteria to be used in this course for evaluation of professional attitude and participation:

- ❑ Attendance and punctuality, reporting absences
- ❑ Completion of quality work on time
- ❑ Meeting learning commitments
- ❑ Active engagement in class activities and discussions
- ❑ Positive contribution to the learning climate
- ❑ Volunteering to assist with learning and administrative functions
- ❑ Taking initiative and accepting responsibility
- ❑ Developing self-awareness and reflection
- ❑ Ongoing participation in class prayer and spiritual formation