

CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS:
A SENIOR CAPSTONE YEAR
IN THEOLOGY



A YEAR-LONG COURSE OF CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS IN LINE WITH
THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS'
DOCTRINAL ELEMENTS OF A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

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Diocese of Richmond

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Office of the Bishop

My dear friends,

This year the Office of Catholic Schools, under my direction, issued a new 4-year curriculum for the instruction of theology in our Catholic high schools. This curriculum will make our instructional content in theology consistent with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Curriculum Framework*. In addition, the new curriculum ensures that students across the Diocese will focus on the same subject matters in the same year of study.

Within the new curriculum, seniors in high school will embark upon a new course of study in Catholic apologetics. This course will allow students to concentrate their senior year on a deeper understanding of topics which are uniquely Catholic. As our young people prepare to graduate, this curriculum will equip them to understand, and explain their Catholic faith.

I believe this special initiative to prepare our students for the future is a great step toward our diocesan-wide evangelization effort, *Encounter the Joy of the Gospel and Set the World Ablaze*. I am grateful to our Catholic school administration, faculty, and staff for their consistent dedication to the education of our young people.

With prayerful best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely yours in our Lord,

Most Reverend Francis X. DiLorenzo
Bishop of Richmond

Summer 2014

CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS: A SENIOR CAPSTONE YEAR IN THEOLOGY

Course Description: For the final and 4th year of Theology in the Catholic High School, students will firm the foundation of Catholic theology and belief through a year-long course in Catholic apologetics. Students will be able to defend the teaching and belief of the Catholic faith in the areas of Theology of God, the Authority of the Catholic Church, the Sacraments of the Church, and the selected Moral teachings of the Church. Particular emphasis on the dangers of relativism will be faced, while building a strong and competent understanding of a full life within the Catholic Church.

Course Requirements: Students completing the course will have a working knowledge of the essential teachings of the Church. Students will complete a summer reading assignment (*Mere Christianity*) and regular readings throughout the year relevant to explaining and defending the faith. The course will move them through basic Christian and Catholic apologetics. Students should be able to defend any of the teachings of the Church from a Biblical, Catechetical, and Pastoral approach. Students will specifically work toward embracing the fullness of the Church's teaching and achieve competence in explaining and, when necessary, defending the faith. This course will require a working knowledge of each of the sections. Along with regular on-going course work, each student will complete a year-long "capstone experience" project which will take a deeper look at one particular aspect of the Catholic Faith, culminating in a presentation and defense before peers and faculty.

Competency Areas:

1. Who is God?

In this segment, students will be able to express the basic arguments for the existence of God, for the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ, and explain the role of the Holy Spirit. Students will be able to explain the role of Jesus Christ as miracle worker and Savior, and His Resurrection. An articulation of the theology of the Blessed Trinity will also be essential, along with the Catholic response to suffering.

2. What is Truth?

Students here will first claim an understanding of God as the author of natural and divine law. They will articulate that the fullness of God's truth has been entrusted to the Catholic Church. Students will explain and defend the Scriptural and Traditional reasons for the Church hierarchy. Further, in this section there will be a clear teaching on the idea of relativism and the Church's claim to absolute truths.

3. How do we Pray?

In this section, students will be able to explain and defend the basics of the Sacraments of the Church. A specific emphasis should be placed on the teachings regarding the Sacraments that are frequently challenged by the secular world. In particular, there will be a focus on the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the Eucharist, and Matrimony. Students will also deepen their understanding of and need for the devotional life of prayer.

4. How do we Live?

In this section, students will come to learn the aim of life and how true freedom and happiness come from a moral life lived in response to God's love. Along with demonstrating an understanding of eternal life, sin, and free will, students will be able to propose why moral choices are never simply personal. There will be a particular emphasis on morality as it relates to marriage and children, addressing common challenges that the secular world presents.

Challenge Topics: As well as covering each of the four competency areas, each section has a list of Challenge Topics. In each section, each of the Challenge Topics need be covered. For each of the Challenge Topics, the class will be presented with an assigned Church Truth along with the pre-determined challenges to that Truth. A student or group of students *or the teacher or guest presenter* will present the Truth, walk through the challenges to that Truth, and defend the Church's teaching. Particular attention to articulating the faith in a positive and convincing way is essential. While the students should have a significant role in presenting the Challenge Topics, Catholic guest presenters such as Priests or Deacons, administrators, youth ministers, or colleagues in other subject fields should be strongly considered.

Required Texts: Each of the four Competency Areas has a list of required texts. Those with asterisks indicate that the material is available online for free. While the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is readily available online, students should be encouraged to purchase one if they are able.

Grading: Because this is a capstone course, grading should reflect both the command of the entire course materials *as well as* an intense comprehension of the individual topic chosen by the student. To that end, the following grading structure is in place for the course.

Grading for Semester I:	
Catholic Social Teaching Unit (3-weeks)	20%
<i>Could be a test, paper, or other means of evaluation</i>	
Grading on Assigned Readings (to be determined by instructor):	30%
<i>This may take place by quizzes or short reflection papers, or class participation</i>	
Milestone 1: Evangelization Project	25%
Milestone 2: Literature Review	<u>25%</u>
Semester I Grade	100%
Grading for Semester II:	
Milestone 3: Active Dialogs and Journals	20%
Final Project/Paper	50%
Final Project/Defense	<u>30%</u>
Semester II Grade	100%

Grading Continued:

Nine-week grades should be calculated based on work completed at the time of reporting. In the second semester, the third nine-week grade will be weighted only on Milestone 3, the active dialog and journals. Thus, instructors should be careful to warn students the importance of that work for the reporting of the nine-weeks grade.

In schools where year-end grades are computed by simply averaging the first and second semester grades, together, that process should be followed. In schools where the year-end grade is given only by a final calculation including the entire year, the following calculation should be used:

Catholic Social Teaching Unit (3-weeks)	10%
<i>Could be a test, paper, or other means of evaluation</i>	
Grading on Assigned Readings (to be determined by instructor):	15%
<i>This may take place by quizzes or short reflection papers, or class participation</i>	
Milestone 1: Evangelization Project	10%
Milestone 2: Literature Review	10%
Milestone 3: Active Dialogs and Journals	10%
Final Project/Paper	25%
Final Project/Defense	<u>20%</u>
Final Grade	100%

FIRST SIX WEEKS: WHO IS GOD?

God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man. He calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength.

- Catechism of the Catholic Church, I.

Required Texts: *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraphs 26-73*

*Dominus Jesus: The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith**

*These texts available on-line without charge.

Essential Content:

1. Who is God? How do we know He exists?

Students will be able to show that man can know of the existence of God based on natural reason. They should know and comprehend the basic proofs of the existence of God, including the proofs of Saint Anselm and Saint Thomas Aquinas. They must be able to articulate man's ability to speak of God and to defend the belief that God communicates with and through man.

2. Who is Jesus Christ? Why is He the Savior?

In this section, students will be able to explain the fall of man and our choice for sin. A basic articulation of free will, the fall, and our need for redemption will be essential as a ground work for explaining the role of Jesus in humanity. This section will cover the historical basis for the life of Jesus of Nazareth, and elucidate and explain the divinity and humanity of Christ. Christ's essential role for salvation should be clear.

3. What is the Blessed Trinity?

Students will work through the role of each of the three persons in the Blessed Trinity. A basic apologetic for the working of the Holy Spirit should be included. The history of the development of the Blessed Trinity as a basis for the nature of God is essential.

4. If the nature of God is good, why is there suffering?

Students will learn about the nature of God: God is all good. Evil is the absence of that good. Why God allows suffering must be considered. This section will explore the reasons for suffering in the world today due to free will, sin, and evil. Students will also understand the idea of redemptive suffering. They will be able to convey why a good God allows suffering.

Challenge Topics for Section I, Who is God?

- Truth: God, who is unbegotten, is the creator of everything that is or ever was.
 Challenge: Who made God?
 Evolution proves God does not exist.
- Truth: God is all-loving and all-good.
 Challenge: Natural disasters.
 Suffering of the innocent.
 Disease and famine.
- Truth: Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
 Challenge: History is ambiguous about the identity of Jesus.
 Not all Jews accepted Him as Messiah.
 Jesus is a moral teacher, but nothing more.
- Truth: Jesus worked real, living, active miracles and still does.
 Challenge: Historical analysis can explain away miracles.
 Many who ask for miracles do not receive them.
 Miracles are less prevalent today.
- Truth: Jesus Christ alone is the source of all Salvation. Without Him, no one would be saved.
 Challenge: There are many religions that have good beliefs; what does it matter that they do not believe in Jesus.
 Many religions help make people moral.
 Jesus can offer good life-lessons without His life being essential for salvation.
 Many people are born into cultures or religions and do not hear of Jesus.
- Truth: God is One: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each Person is fully God; none is the same as the other.
 Challenge: If each Person is fully God, Christians must have more than one God.
 How can Jesus be fully God and also the Son of the Father?
 If the Holy Spirit is exists, shouldn't we experience the power that is highlighted in Acts?

SECOND NINE WEEKS: WHAT IS TRUTH?

“Francis of Assisi tells us we should work to build peace. But there is no true peace without truth! There cannot be true peace if everyone is his own criterion, if everyone can always claim exclusively his own rights, without at the same time caring for the good of others, of everyone, on the basis of the nature that unites every human being on this earth.”

- His Holiness Pope Francis, Exhortation to the Diplomatic Corps of the Vatican City State, 22 March 2013

Required Texts: *Absolute Relativism* by Chris Stefanik

Veritatis Splendor, Pope Saint John Paul II, Paragraphs I-34 and I18-120*

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraphs I878-1948, 2030-2051, 2234-2246, 2464-2513*

Essential Content:

I. Who is the source of all truth?

Students should come to the conviction that Jesus Christ Himself is the author and source of all Truth. In this section, an emphasis on God as the source of all Truth, including natural and divine law, will be essential. A review of the differences between natural and divine law, and the different places that the Church teaches and proclaims these laws is essential. Students will also cover the concept of the natural law applying universally, to all people as a good for all mankind. Finally, the role of the Church as the pillar and guardian of all truth must be articulated and drawn out including both Scriptural and Traditional bases.

2. How and why does the Church protect, defend, and proclaim Truth?

Students should be able to trace the origin of the Catholic Church, including the role of the Church as the protector of Truth. The history and religious belief of the hierarchical Church should be reviewed, including the way that the Pope, Bishop, and Pastor are tasked with announcing and defending the Truth of Jesus Christ. There need also be an emphasis on how the Church wrestles with issues of the modern world, including the formation of society and community and including how and why the Church might stand in opposition to government(s) for their actions which are contrary to the Truth.

3. What is relativism? Why is it an enemy of the Truth of God?

Students will be introduced to what Pope Benedict coined as the “Dictatorship of Relativism.” In this section, working with the brief text by Stefanick, students will understand how relativism plays a role in the destruction of the preaching and teaching of essential Truth. Students should work to understand specific ways that relativism has thwarted the teaching of the Church, reasons why moral relativism is destructive for the good of man, and how spiritual relativism robs man and woman from the Truth of the Christian virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love.

Challenge Topics for Section II: What is Truth?

- Truth: Jesus Christ is the author of all Truth.
 Challenge: Many religions believe similar truths that existed before Christianity.
 Jesus Himself referred to Hebrew Scripture and the Jewish faith to share moral lessons.
 Some of what Jesus teaches can be reasoned without faith.
- Truth: There is a natural law which is accessible to all human beings regardless of background, experience, or faith.
 Challenge: The natural law is not defined by any one person or institution, and thus it is hard to define.
 The natural law describes how things are, not necessarily how they should be.
 Some people may know the natural law, but nothing obligates them to follow it if they are not religious or a part of a community.
- Truth: Jesus Christ has entrusted all truth to the Church.
 Challenge: Non-Catholics follow the same or similar truths without the Church.
 The Church sometimes fails to live the teachings of Christ.
 Not all Catholics believe everything the Church teaches.
- Truth: The Pope and the Bishops in Communion with him can speak infallibly on issues of faith and morals.
 Challenge: The Pope is subject to sin and other human error.
 It seems some Bishops do not always agree on issues of faith and morals.
 Different Popes have allowed sin or seemed to “change policy” in the Church.
- Truth: The Church has a responsibility to call the people and governments of the world to make decisions that are best for the common good.
 Challenge: There should be a separation of Church and State.
 The Church’s teaching cannot be “forced” on people who are not Catholic.
 When religions assert themselves in foreign policies, it leads more to war than peace.

THIRD NINE WEEKS: HOW DO WE PRAY?

“To pray is to talk with God. But about what? About what? About Him, about yourself: joys, sorrows, successes and failures, noble ambitions, daily worries, weaknesses! And acts of thanksgiving and petitions: and Love and reparation. In a word: to get to know him and to get to know yourself: 'to get acquainted!'”

- Saint Josemaría Escrivá, *The Way*, 91

Required Texts: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Paragraphs 2558-2758, 1077-1092, 1113-1134*

Essential Content:

I. How do we pray in the devotional life of the Church?

This section must consider the fact that the Catholic is connected to the Lord Jesus through a life of great personal prayer. While an emphasis will be placed on the Sacramental life of the Church, there must be a cursory knowledge of the many forms of prayer in the Church. This should include devotion to the Most Blessed Sacrament, Sacred Scripture, the prayer of the Rosary, Catholic meditation and contemplation, and extemporaneous prayer. Students should know the Church’s belief in intercessory prayer, the role of the Priest, and the Saints, especially Mary, the Mother of God. An understanding of the difference between Catholic and non-Catholic Christian prayer is essential. Students will be provided with opportunities to engage in these devotional prayer experiences.

2. What are the Sacraments of the Church?

In this section, students must have a working command of the role of the seven Sacraments of the Church. A review of why and how the Church celebrates each of the seven Sacraments is essential. The role of the Church as the defender of these Sacraments is important. Students should be able to articulate why Sacraments must be celebrated within the Church (with the exception of Holy Baptism) and the Scriptural and Traditional Origin of each of the Sacraments. Students should be able to explain the Church’s teaching of the Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation, the Discipline of the Sacraments, and the reasons for excommunication. Students should also understand why Sacraments are reserved for Catholics in a state of Grace.

3. Why can’t the Sacraments be changed?

In this section, students will consider more in depth the Sacraments of Matrimony, Holy Orders, and the Eucharist. This section will examine what some within the Christian community have argued should be changed. The Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist will be discussed from a historical, spiritual, and theological point. The reservation of Ordination to men alone will be understood including the reasons why this Sacrament cannot be conferred on women. Finally, the Sacrament of Matrimony between one man

and one woman for life will be defended against the rising tide of society's attempt to redefine marriage.

Challenge Topics for Section III: How do we Pray?

Truth: There are many devotional prayers of the Church which lead us closer to Christ. The Lord Himself taught us to pray in these ways. Tradition has shown us this prayer leads souls to Heaven.

Challenge: Memorized prayers are not "real prayers."
Saint Matthew 6:7.
We should pray from the heart, not from memory.

Truth: The Blessed Virgin Mary was conceived without sin, is ever-Virgin, and was Assumed into Heaven by the Power of God.

Challenge: We don't know if Mary sinned or not.
The Bible does not say that Saint Mary was assumed into heaven.
The Bible says Jesus had brothers.

Truth: The Blessed Virgin Mary and all the Saints intercede and pray on our behalf. We can and should ask for their intercession and prayer.

Challenge: Jesus is our only mediator.
Why would we "pray to" a Saint when we could pray directly to Jesus?
Once people die, they concentrate on Jesus in Heaven, not on the people on Earth.
Statues and images of the Saints distract us from Jesus. Kneeling in front of a statue is like worshipping it.

Truth: Jesus is really, truly present in the Holy Eucharist in Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. Transubstantiation is a theological truth.

Challenge: Holy Communion is a memorial meal.
If it was truly Jesus, people would never miss Mass and would be at Church all the time.
If it still looks like bread and tastes like wine, then it has not really changed.
The Eucharist is just a symbol to remind us of Jesus.
If the Eucharist was real, it would make us cannibals.

Truth: The Sacrament of Penance is required for us when we commit mortal sin and is the best means of forgiveness for all sin.

Challenge: I can tell Jesus I am sorry on my own.
A Priest is a sinner and cannot forgive our sins.
If you are saved, nothing more is required.
If Confession were real, you could just do whatever you want and then confess it later.
Jesus is our only mediator.

Truth: Men alone can be ordained to serve as Deacons or Priests.

Challenge: Jesus only ordained men because of the laws of the time and society; He would

want women priests now.

Men and women all share the same Baptism and should be able to have equal opportunities to serve the Church.

Other Christian communities have women “priests.”

Women played an important part of Jesus’ ministry.

Truth: Marriage is not a right; it is designed by God so that one man and one woman may join together for life for the two-fold plan of begetting children and getting to heaven.

Challenge: If two men or two women cannot marry, then we are saying they cannot love each other.

People with Same-Sex Attraction should have the right to have the Church bless their love, too.

As long as it isn’t the Church doing it, there is nothing wrong with Homosexual Marriage (civil marriage is okay).

Homosexual couples can adopt children, and then they will have a family, too.

Some heterosexual couples are infertile or past the age of having children, but they can still get married.

FOURTH NINE WEEKS: HOW DO WE LIVE?

“Freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought.”

– Pope Saint John Paul II, Homily to the Church in Baltimore, 8 October 1995

Required Texts: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Paragraphs 1730-1774*

*15th World Youth Day, Address of the Holy Father John Paul II, Vigil of Prayer**

*Humane Vitae, Pope Paul VI**

Contraception: Why Not? By Dr. Janet Smith (article could be read, or talk could be listened to by the class)*

Essential Content:

I. How can I be happy both in this life and forever with God?

In this section, students will come to the knowledge that God desires our happiness and out of love, not only saved us, but has given us a moral code. Students will comprehend that true freedom can only be found by choosing to live as God asks, as response to that love. The reality of the enslavement of sin, hell, heaven, and free-will will be discussed. This section will also counter the prevailing idea that personal sin hurts no one, while challenging students to see that Christ must inform every aspect of their lives.

2. Why and how does God ask us to respect that He is the source of all life?

Here, students will understand God’s plan for procreation and why sex is reserved for Marriage. The teaching on why sex must be open to life will be discussed, along with the evils of seeking to prevent, end, or create life outside of the marital act. Issues such as contraception, abortion, IVF, surrogacy, egg/sperm harvesting, and genetic engineering should be addressed in light of God’s plan for new life and the respect for all human persons. Students should grasp the dangers of distorting the gift of sexuality through cohabitation, fornication, adultery, and pornography. A brief overview of Natural Family Planning should also be given.

Challenge Topics for Section III: How do we Live?

- Truth: God created us to live a life centered on Him; by living a Christ-centered life, we will find true freedom and happiness.
- Challenge: I know best what will make me happy.
Success lies in rising through the ranks, making a name for myself, and becoming financially secure and independent.
I need to look out for myself; no one else will.
It's harmless to read my horoscope, have a lucky charm, or take part in things like séances, crystal balls, or palm reading.
- Truth: Heaven is the fullness of communion with God for eternity. Hell is eternal separation from God for eternity. Our action, will, and faith determine how we will spend eternity.
- Challenge: I believe in Heaven, but not hell.
If God is so loving, He would never let anyone go to hell.
People who are "good" will go to Heaven, even if they reject the Church or God.
Hell is reserved only for evil masterminds like Hitler and bin Laden.
- Truth: Marriage is a sacrament that mirrors the faithful and fruitful love of the Trinity.
- Challenge: It's better to live together first to see if a marriage will last.
People fall out of love; they shouldn't have to stay together.
The Church has no right to interfere with what I do in the privacy of my home.
How can "love" be wrong when it feels so right?
If life and babies are so good, it can't be wrong to seek assistance from the medical community.

*Note: This particular Truth and Challenges could go on with limitless directions. Allow the course of the discussion, including the Church's teachings on marriage and life, to direct the flow of the conversation. This would be a good way to tackle one or more of the things listed in essential content.

- Truth: The use of drugs and alcohol that alter mind and body, unless used strictly for medical purposes, is an offence against the dignity of the human person.
- Challenge: Certain drugs are legal in some places, here and abroad.
A little fun won't harm me or others.
Using these substances help me to be less stressed and to socialize.
- Truth: When all other possibilities for peace have been exhausted, countries may defend themselves in war if they meet the traditional elements of the just war doctrine.
- Challenge: If we are so pro-life, how can killing another person ever be right?
People will always be fighting; what good does it do to use force?
We have no right to interfere in other countries' problems.

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE PROJECT

At the core of the senior year theology curriculum is the opportunity for students to show a command of theological and spiritual aptitude in the area of one specific Catholic concept. In this project, the student will seek to become a subject matter expert on one topic in the Catholic faith. The student will learn to present the topic, defend it against heresy or relativism, find creative ways to evangelize, and ultimately defend the topic before his or her peers and faculty.

Topic: Students will choose a topic that is specific to one of the four sections of the Senior Capstone class: *Who is God? What is Truth? How do we Pray? How do we Live?* The topic should be general enough in its scope to allow enough material for research, presentation, and defense. It should, however, be specific enough that it is not an “overview” of a general topic. Suggested topics are attached, but students may suggest other topics, so long as they are specific to a Catholic subject matter that can be presented and defended. Teachers should ensure that the selection of topics vary amongst students.

While collegiality and professionalism is important, students who happen to choose the same topic should be discouraged from working together. This is to allow them to approach the topic from their own viewpoint and gather unique resources.

Notice about non-Catholic Students: Some students from other Christian ecclesial communities may ask about presenting topics which are not only specific to the Catholic faith (e.g., the role of Jesus as Savior, the defense of marriage, the truth of the Sacred Scriptures). This is perfectly acceptable; however, the defense must still use Catholic sources in its response, including the official Church teaching and history of the Catholic Church’s treatment of that particular topic. No positions which are inconsistent with the Catholic faith may be defended.

Milestones: The Project will have three Milestones, in addition to the final paper and defense.

Milestone 1: Evangelization. Students will create some way of expressing their topic in an apologetic but evangelical way. This project could be something like designing a pamphlet or brochure, or writing a script for a skit or dialog, or creating a television commercial similar the spots created by *Catholics Come Home* (www.catholicscomehome.org) which could be used to invite people to know the particular Church teaching or truth for his or her topic. The evangelization milestone should have significant content, should reflect deep thought and consideration of some obstacle or struggle that prevents Catholics from practicing the faith or non-Catholics from being open to the faith.

Milestone 2: Literature Review. Students will complete a literature review of at least seven sources (including the *Bible* and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*) that will be used in the process of designing the final paper and defense. The literature review should look at ancient primary texts and current resources available.

Milestone 3: Active dialog reflection. In this piece, the student will schedule five or more separate dialogues to be at least 20 minutes each. In that dialog, the student will share the teaching on the particular topic and answer questions about the topic. The student should speak with at least one non-Catholic, one non-practicing Catholic, and should seek a diverse crowd by age and background. The dialog is a chance to practice responding to questions or opposing opinions about the topics. The students should also ask the subjects with whom they dialog for particular challenges they face with the topic personally, or for things that allow them to believe in the Church's teaching. Students should keep notes of the dialog as they talk and those notes or journals should be turned in along with a reflection paper of 3 pages which should explain how the student learned to strengthen skills, respond to pressure, and stay focused on the topic. The opportunity to reflect on how the person could better or more effectively evangelize or make a more convincing argument is essential.

It is recommended that the instructor choose a topic of his/her own and conduct one of these dialogs with someone in the classroom for the students to observe so they will understand how it should work. Because it is not intended to be a simple interview with predetermined questions, students may need additional help in understanding how to proceed.

Capstone: The final project of the semester is the Capstone paper and defense. Drawing on work done in the three milestones, the student will write a paper of 10 pages which seeks to present the Church's teaching on the topic, the research and theology supporting the position, and the history of the Church's teaching. The paper should defend the Church's teaching from a Biblical, Catechetical, and Pastoral approach. The paper should also examine the non-Catholic or heterodox Catholic responses or challenges to that teaching and how the Church can respond in a way that is a clear and convincing argument toward the Truth. Finally, the paper should encompass an understanding of how the Catholic Church can better evangelize others to the particular topic.

Initial Paper Submission: The paper should be submitted for review no later than the end of the 3rd nine-weeks for an initial review. The reader should view it as a reader for a thesis paper would, making criticism, challenges, and inviting the student to re-examine and re-write sections as necessary. If the paper is also used as a research paper for Senior English, a second reader may examine the paper for grammatical correction. The initial review of the paper should require the student to do significant re-writing and re-evaluation of the topic.

Final Paper Submission: After students have been given time to rewrite, they will turn in their final paper for final approval at least two weeks before they are scheduled to present and defend their topic.

Presentation and Defense: The paper will then be presented to the class and defended before a panel of at least 3 peers (though the entire class may be present) and the instructor, a second faculty member or administrator, and a member of the clergy or area youth minister. The student will present the topic for the first 15 minutes and then respond to challenges and questions for 15 minutes.

ADDENDUM: PROPOSED TOPICS

The following are suggested topics to be considered for the year-long Capstone Project. Students may also chose a *different* topic from this list for the Evangelization Milestone, but students may not choose the *same* topic for both.

He Who Is: The Existence of God (Combating the New Atheism)
 Set Me Free: Jesus as Forgiver of Our Sin
 Did You See That?: Jesus as Miracle Worker
 Risen Indeed: The Resurrection of Jesus
 The Blessed Trinity: One God, Three Persons
 Free Will: Why Bad Things Happen to Good People
 Deliver Us: The Meaning of Suffering
 Feminine Genius: The Incredible Role of Women in the History of the Church
 Absolute Truth: An Argument Against Relativism
 One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic: Why the Catholic Church today is the Church of Jesus Christ
 The Vicar of Christ: The Authority and Role of our Holy Father
 Faith and Reason: Why Catholicism and Science Are Made for Each Other
 One Love, One Law: Natural Law
 No Separation in Truth: Why the Church Must Influence the State
 Notre Dame: The Role of the Blessed Virgin Mary as Mother of God
 Queen of Heaven: The Blessed Virgin Mary's Conception and Assumption
 Pray Without Ceasing: The History of the Rosary as a Christo-Centric Prayer
 Body, Blood, Soul, Divinity: The Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist
 Faith of Our Fathers: The Mass as Our Greatest Form of Prayer
 Behold the Lamb of God: Eucharistic Miracles
 I Confess: Why Confession is Essential to the Catholic Life
 What God Has Joined: Marriage is for Life (Divorce and Remarriage, Annulments)
 Male and Female: The Truth of Marriage
 In *Persona*:: Why The Priesthood is Reserved for Men Alone
 Clear Minds, Full Hearts: How Drug Use Fails the Christian Soul
 I Will Wait: Why Sex is Reserved for Marriage
 Negative Image: How Pornography is Contrary to the Catholic Life
 Free, Full, Faithful, Fruitful: Why Contraception is Contrary to God's Design
 Before I Formed You in the Womb: Pro-Life, Pro-Woman, Pro-Family
 God's Design: The Immorality of InVitro Fertilization
 So Close: Purgatory as God's Gift of Mercy
 Hell, Yes: The Reality of Eternal Separation from God
 A Greater Love: The Church's Teaching on Same-Sex Attraction
 To Lay Down One's Life: When War is Necessary

ADDENDUM II: ADDITIONAL SOURCES FOR INSTRUCTION

The following texts are recommended for instruction. Selections of these sources may be assigned as reading or students may make use of these resources for research. This list is not exhaustive and other readings may be used.

Beginning Apologetics paperback series, Various Authors

Catholic and Christian: An Explanation of Commonly Misunderstood Catholic Beliefs, Alan Schreck

Catholic Answers to Protestant Questions, Father John J. Pasquini

Catholicism and Fundamentalism: The Attack on "Romanism" by "Bible Christians", Karl Keating

Handbook of Catholic Apologetics: Reasoned Answers to Questions of Faith, Peter Kreeft
Orthodoxy, G. K Chesterton

Reasons to Believe: How to Understand, Explain, and Defend the Catholic Faith, Scott Hahn

Truth Be Told: Basics in Catholic Apologetics, Mark Hart

What is Marriage: Man and Woman: A Defense, Ryan T. Anderson, et.al.