



St Patrick's  
Pontifical University

**St Patrick's Pontifical  
University, Maynooth**

in association with

**The United Dioceses of  
Cork, Cloyne and Ross**



Church of Ireland  
**United Dioceses of  
Cork, Cloyne & Ross**

# Certificate in Christian Studies

An Introduction to Christian  
Faith for Adult Learners



# Introduction



**The Certificate in Christian Studies – a Level 7 Certificate course of St. Patrick's Pontifical University – is a two year part-time course for all who wish to explore the Christian faith.**

**The programme provides a structured introduction to: scripture, theology, church history, ethics, liturgy, and ministry.**

**Once again we plan to run this course locally in Cork, Cloyne and Ross. The organisation of the course will be overseen by our Diocesan Further Education and Training Officer with the support of St Patrick's Pontifical University.**



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Cork, Cloyne & Ross**

This is one of the outcomes recommended in our on-going process Charting a Future with Confidence.

We are now inviting people to do the course here in Cork, Cloyne and Ross. In many ways it is more than a course. It is a process:

- We are all disciples; called together to learn, serve and grow.
- We all have gifts and are called by God to use those gifts in a host of ways: formal and informal.
- Learning and ministry are things we do together, in community.

## **Who is it for?**

- Do you want to deepen your understanding of the Christian faith?
- Would you like to explore contemporary issues from a faith perspective?
- Would you like to gain a recognised third-level award from a major theological academy?

*Then this course is for you.*

The course is for anyone who wants to learn more about God, and think more deeply about their involvement in God's work in the world and in the Church.

## **Do I need qualifications to do the course?**

Any adult learner can do the course, as long as you are prepared to attend, and to join in the discussions and activities.

## **What does it involve?**

The course will be delivered locally – as well as online – in the Diocese at a central venue such as Northridge House (Saint Luke's Charity Education Centre).

The course will be delivered with adult learners in mind. This means that there will be a range of styles, not just lecture input, but also, discussion, questions, and fieldwork, for example.

Each module will vary. A typical module may include an introductory Saturday, 3 or 4 evening seminars, and a field trip.

## **Will I get a qualification?**

Modules carry credits from St Patrick's Pontifical University, and it is possible to gain the Certificate.

### **Will there be written work and assessments?**

Some of the sessions will require short written responses or reflections. Assessment may be by e.g. an essay (1,500 words), fieldwork, portfolio, book review or project, depending on the module.

### **How much will it cost?**

The course will be substantially supported by the Bishop's Continuing Ministerial Education Fund. You will be responsible for your own travel costs, and, in addition, are asked to make a contribution of €200 for three modules. Money should not stop someone from doing the course, however, as some grants may be available for those who need them.

### **What will we study?**

Here is the outline of the course.

## **1 THE BIBLE: Exploring the Word**

The module forms an introduction to the bible as the central text of Christian belief. The scriptures are considered as documents of faith and are explored within the context of their historical development, cultural and sociological context, and contrasting literary styles.

Modern approaches to the study of the bible are outlined and emphasis is laid on evaluating the application of the bible for contemporary Christian belief. Reflection on key scriptural texts is an important part of the learning experience.

## **2 CHRISTIAN LITURGY: Worship and the people of God**

The module introduces participants to an understanding of the place of worship within the Christian community. The course presents an overview of the theological basis of worship and its historical development across a number of key traditions. Contemporary worship is considered from the perspective of effective liturgical planning, resources and leadership.

## **3 THINKING ABOUT GOD: Faith seeking understanding**

The module is an introduction to the way in which Christians think and speak about God. The Creeds are explored as the foundational statements of what Christians believe about the nature of God and of Christian revelation and salvation. Consideration is given to the language used in talking about God and the relationship

between revelation and human experience. Contemporary issues are also explored especially those which present challenges to Christian belief in today's world. These include issues which arise from contrasts between the world views of biblical writers and those of contemporary insights shaped by scientific research and the social sciences.

## **4 MISSION AND MINISTRY: Sharing the Good News**

At the heart of Christian faith is the belief that the Gospel is lived out in the life of the Church and is proclaimed to the world.

This module introduces participants to the basis of Christian mission and ministry. Included is a consideration of the theological basis of the Church's outreach and a reflection on the influence of social context in framing the mission of the local church.

## **5 ETHICS: Christian faith and moral choices**

Christian faith makes particular demands in relation to the task of practical living. Christians are faced with many issues and questions to which responses are required from the perspective of belief in God.

Sometimes these responses are clear-cut while others are much more complex. In an age where scientific advances have redefined our knowledge of key aspects of the world and human experience, questions emerge as to how these advances impact on faith and Christian understanding. The module examines the way in which Christians make decisions in today's world and how the Church might respond to some of the contemporary issues of human experience.

## **6 CHURCH HISTORY: Christianity in Ireland**

This module is an introduction to the development of Christian faith in Ireland and also examines its context within the wider European experience.

Key historical milestones are examined and particular emphasis is placed on the manner in which historical understanding helps to shed light on present experience. The module also explores unresolved historical questions and the relationship between Christian history and contemporary Christian belief.



# Application Form

You can post your application form  
to the address below, or email  
[furthereducation@corkchurchofireland.com](mailto:furthereducation@corkchurchofireland.com)

Your name:

Your address:

Your email address:

Your phone number:

## United Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross

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