

THL 211.061 Moral Theology

Jumbo-Doc with Assignment Guidelines

Spring 2018

Sister Marie Kolbe Zamora, OSF, S.T.D.

Contents

November 2017 Note	2
Active Reading	2
Active Reading	2
Four-fold strategy for Active Reading	2
1. Note Taking	3
2. Summarizing.....	3
3. Answer the Question “What Have I Learned?”	3
4. Ask Questions.....	4
Reading Questions.....	5
Rationale.....	5
Submission and Guidelines	5
Rubric for Reading Questions: _____ / 40 pts.....	6
Beatitudes Reader Response.....	6
Rationale.....	6
Submission and Guidelines	7
Summary / Analysis / Application Presentation	7
Rationale	7
Submission and Guidelines	7
Possible Texts to Use:	8
Guidelines for preparing the Document / PowerPoint.....	8

November 2017 Note

At the Submission of this Jumbo Doc (10 November 2018), assignments have been described in their entirety and due dates have been assigned. The one task yet to be accomplished to complete this document is the assigning of points and the generating of rubrics. This will have to wait until later in November. Hopefully, however, this document gives all course participants enough information with which to begin to organize their course work for the Spring semester.

Active Reading

Active Reading

The reading within the course is arranged in such a way as to provide the participant with an ordered introduction to major ecclesiological topics. Active engagement of the readings proposed for each class session is absolutely necessary for success in this course. While this is an area that, strictly speaking, has no points allocated to it, the level of success with which each course participant has actively engaged the reading will be evident during our class sessions. The paragraphs below are meant to help everyone have an idea of what is meant by active reading.

Active Reading is NOT:	Active Reading IS:
Skimming the texts	Reading that is accompanied by various strategies / complementary activities to ensure 1) that the reader remains alert and focused during the reading, 2) comprehension of what was read and 3) learning.
Merely reading the text	
Highlighting the text	

Four-fold strategy for Active Reading

This four-fold strategy for active reading is not mandatory for this course; course participants are not required to submit the documents that they would create if they followed this four-fold strategy. At the same time, this four-fold strategy for active reading, if followed with diligence, **GUARANTEES** three outcomes:

1. It **guarantees** that each participant will have intelligent questions to submit each session.

2. It **guarantees** that each participant will successfully complete the **Theological / Catechetical Instructions**. This guarantee is based on the participant having walked through academic exercises that result in a physical document that can be used as the foundation for the **Theological / Catechetical Instructions**.
3. Each course participant will be better / stronger / more competent in engaging college level work.

1. Note Taking

Take handwritten notes on the reading as you go. These handwritten notes should include the following:

- Brief outline of main ideas within paragraphs (with page number of the paragraph)
- Quotations that capture important main ideas (with page #)
- Words / terms that you have never seen before and that you need to look up.

This is the most tedious part of active reading. The goal of this strategy is to create a document that contains an outline of what the author is saying and NOT create a record of the things you happened to LIKE about what the author said. Do NOT begin a note with "I was struck by . . ." or "I was really moved by . . .".

2. Summarizing

Once you have completed your notes outlining a particular chapter or section of a book, the next step to active reading would be for you to **summarize your notes in your own words**. Nothing ensures that you remember what you have read better than writing the main points of what you have read in your own words. This summary should be shorter than your notes.

3. Answer the Question "What Have I Learned?"

This question might seem to repeat what you did in the summary section of active reading, but it is NOT. When you take time to explicitly state what you have learned, you are placing yourself and your previous knowledge / experiences in dialogue with the text; you are stating how this reading has moved you beyond what you knew (or thought you knew). This section is shorter than the summary.

4. Ask Questions

The final task in this four-fold strategy for active reading is taking the time to write down questions that you still have after having completed the reading. We are accustomed to thinking that questions reveal ignorance or stupidity. As a result we have been conditioned to AVOID asking questions in favor of looking for the right answers. Contrary to this deeply ingrained conditioning, it is important that each one receive this message: it is **the inability to ask questions that reveals ignorance**. The person, on the other hand, who is able to formulate a good question reveals true learning.

Examples of Good questions:

- Questions that are based on what one is reading
- Questions reveal a comprehension of the reading
- Questions that reveal the ability to compare what one is currently reading to what one has read in the past or was lead to believe
- Questions that apply what one is reading to other areas of knowledge / experience
- *Sometimes* a question regarding what the author might have meant can be good, particularly when you are relating what the author said to other things that you think you already know.

Examples of not so good questions

- Any question that you can figure out by a fast Google search or by consulting a dictionary
 - Meaning of terms
 - Who the people are whose names you have met for the first time
- A question regarding what the author meant is not worth writing down when it reveals the reader's inability to comprehend written English. While it happens that one might struggle to comprehend what a sentence means, this kind of question is best asked out loud in class or out loud in a study group.

We have been so conditioned to be afraid of questions that we think the BEST thing to say after finishing reading for class is "I don't have any questions." We think that to say this means that we have understood everything and that we are in good shape for the

test. HOWEVER, when a person concludes the reading of a difficult / complicated text with the statement that they have no questions, they reveal that they have NOT engaged the text at all. Rather, they have “merely read it” and “consumed” what it had to say without digesting what it had to say. To use what might be an unusual image, the person without questions at the end of a complicated or difficult read is like a person with a mouth full of food that they refuse to chew or swallow.

Reading Questions

Rationale

As indicated above, true learning is revealed in the questions a person is able to ask. *Anybody* can look up the right answers on Google. Only the intelligent can digest what they have learned into a question that widens the conversation.

Submission and Guidelines

Each session, each participant will submit 2 questions that were generated by the reading that they completed for that session. This means that by the end of the course, each participant will have submitted 20 questions.

For differentiating between good and poor questions, please see the above section on “Questions” included in the “Four-fold Strategy for Active Reading.”

Each assignment / question should contain the following elements:

1. Complete Bibliographical Information on the book / text from which the question was generated.
2. A **quotation from the reading** that gave rise to the question. The quotation should be accompanied by a page or a paragraph number for reference (annotation).
3. Articulate your question
4. Explain why this is a question for you. The need to explain why this is a question for you excludes the possibility that you ask the meaning of words, who people are or the location of geographical terms. No one wants to say “this is a question for me because I did not want to look up the word in the dictionary” or “because I did not take the time to Google the name / location.”

Possible reasons that you have this question could be:

- a. Perhaps what you read does not square with something else that you thought you knew
- b. Perhaps what you read does not square with something else you read in the same document
- c. Perhaps what you read does not square with something else you read in another document.
- d. Perhaps what you read seems to be critical of a practice in your life or your parish that you take for granted.

Rubric for Reading Questions: _____ / 40 pts

Component	Possible Points	Earned Points
Three questions submitted	3	
Submitted / Uploaded to Joule on time	3	
At least one of the questions is on primary source reading	4	
Document contains the complete Bibliographical information for all texts from which a question has been generated	5	
Quotation upon which the question is based is included (with annotation)	5	
Question manifests real learning / comprehension of reading	10	
Explanation of the thought process that lead to the question is comprehensible	10	

Beatitudes Reader Response

Rationale

The Beatitudes as completing the Decalogue are at the heart of Christian existence and therefore at the heart of living a moral life as a Christian / a member of the Baptized. For this reason it is important that each course participant be given the opportunity to think through the Beatitudes

in general and one of the Beatitudes in particular. In addition to this theological rationale, this assignment is designed to give course participants the opportunity to complete all of the steps involved in doing theological research (note taking, summarizing, identifying what has been learned and asking questions that might lead to future reading).

Submission and Guidelines

Each participant will choose one of the chapters (from 3 – 10) out of Pinckaers' *The Pursuit of Happiness – God's Way* and prepare a Word document in which they complete all four steps enumerated in the "Four-fold strategy for Active Reading" listed above. The guidelines that are included in the above section are to be followed for this assignment.

Due Date: 22 January

Summary / Analysis / Application Presentation

Rationale

Patristic and Papal teaching as well as statements made by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith are readily available to all Catholics, yet few seem to engage these sources for themselves. At the level of the content of this course, this assessment is designed to help Catholics (particularly those engaged in ministry) discover and engage these sources for themselves and create a presentation that enables them to share these resources with others. At the level of method, this assessment is designed to help students of theology do the necessary research that enables them to learn, analyze and apply the teachings contained in the resources they engage.

Submission and Guidelines

Each participant will prepare a Word document OR a PowerPoint presentation in which they provide a summary and analysis of a Patristic document OR a recent Papal document OR a statement issued since 1960 by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on some moral issue. As they prepare this document / presentation, each participant should keep in mind that they are working to discover what it means to live the life of Christ . . . to be Christiformed . . . to have Christ living in each of the baptized.

The document of PowerPoint should:

- summarize what the document teaches
- draw out the implications of this document for what it means to exist as a Christian in the world
- Include a pastoral plan for promoting awareness and action on the moral issue or issues covered by the document you are presenting
- State what the participant learned
- Ask Questions that were raised during the course of this work

The document / PowerPoint must include a Bibliography.

Due Dates:

- Outline due at Session V (5 February). At this time, you will be asked to give a 5 minute synopsis of the work you hope to do in this paper.
- Final paper is due at the last session (19 March). At that time you will also be asked to present your work to the class.

Possible Texts to Use:

- Patristic Texts:
 - St. Basil the Great, *Homilies on Social Justice*
 - St. Augustine, *Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount*.¹
- Papal Documents:
 - Pope Paul VI. *Humanae Vitae* (The Transmission of Human Life), 1968. **ONLINE:** http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html
 - Pope John Paul II. *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life). Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2008. **ISBN:** 978-1555863166 **ONLINE:** http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae_en.html
 - Pope Benedict XVI. *Caritas in Veritate* (Charity in Truth). Washington, D.C. USCCB, 2009. **ISBN:** 978-1-601370-049 **ONLINE:** http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
 - Instruction *Dignitatis Personae* on Certain Bioethical Questions, 2008
 - Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its origin and on the dignity of Procreation (*Donum vitae*, 1987)
 - Declaration on Euthanasia (1980)
 - Declaration on Certain Questions concerning Sexual Ethics (1975)
 - Declaration on Procured Abortion, 1974

Guidelines for preparing the Document / PowerPoint

- The goals of this project are:
 - A. To discover what your text teaches about what it means to live in Christ
 - B. To reflect on what your text teaches about what it means to live in Christ
 - C. To create a presentation (either a paper or a PowerPoint) in which you:

¹ This text is available online at the following link: <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1601.htm>

