



BIBLICAL PASTORAL COURSE for Ministers of the Word of God

The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord [...]. Therefore, like the Christian religion itself, all the preaching of the Church must be nourished and regulated by Sacred Scripture.

Constitution of Vatican II on Divine Revelation Dei Verbum 21

The Synod called for a particular pastoral commitment to emphasizing the centrality of the word of God in the Church's life, and recommended a greater "biblical apostolate", not alongside other forms of pastoral work, but as "a means of letting the Bible inspire all pastoral work". This does not mean adding a meeting here or there in parishes or dioceses, but rather of examining the ordinary activities of Christian communities, in parishes, associations and movements, to see if they are truly concerned with fostering a personal encounter with Christ, who gives himself to us in his word.

Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Verbum Domini 73

Spirit-filled evangelizers are evangelizers who pray and work. Mystical notions without a solid social and missionary outreach are of no help to evangelization, nor are dissertations or social or pastoral practices which lack a spirituality which can change hearts. These unilateral and incomplete proposals only reach a few groups and prove incapable of radiating beyond them because they curtail the Gospel. What is needed is the ability to cultivate an interior space which can give a Christian meaning to commitment and activity.

Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium 262

"In the light of St. Arnold Janssen's vision for periodic religious missionary renewal, the Centro Ad Gentes aims to serve as a venue for ongoing formation for Divine Word Missionaries, members of the Arnoldus Family, their mission partners, and for lay people, religious, and clerics, as a Church called to share in the mission of Jesus, the Word Incarnate."

From the "Mission Statement of CAG"



Dei Verbum



September 4 – November 4, 2019

Ad Gentes Center
Nemi (Rome), Italy



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Via dei Laghi bis, 52
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A Short Look on the Past of the Dei Verbum Course

The original idea for the Dei Verbum course was to start a biblical-formation program for those engaged in the Biblical apostolate. Fr. Ludger Feldkämper SVD was thinking of the shores of Lake Gennesaret in the Holy Land as the setting for the course, but for practical reasons it was changed to Italian Lake Nemi in whose vicinity the present Center “Ad Gentes” (CAG) is located.

The first Dei Verbum Biblical-Pastoral Course was launched on August 9, 1987, with Fr. John Füllenbach SVD its director. It lasted for 18 weeks and 28 participants took part in it. From the very beginning the course was opened for lay people, religious and priests from all over the world.

As a joint venture between the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) and the Catholic Biblical Federation (CBF), the course was organized – with few exceptions – every year until 2015. Altogether 27 batches prepared the total of 616 alumni, among them 147 SVDs, 131 diocesan priests, 237 other religious, and 101 lay people for work in the biblical apostolate in their respective life-situations.

Now a reshaped edition is to start, lasting 60 days – an allusion to the distance of 60 stadiums between Jerusalem and Emmaus that two of the disciples were walking with Jesus – to let the heart rekindle with the Word of God and become facilitators to others (cf. Luke 24:13-35).

Present Objectives of the Dei Verbum Course

The inspiration of the specific objectives draws from the address of John Paul II given on April 7, 1986 to the CBF Executive Committee: *“There is a great need for the solid formation of ministers of the Word of God, of all who teach and preach the Gospel of salvation... Ministers of God’s Word – priests, deacons, and other lay-people – should be immersed in the Scriptures through constant reading and diligent study, accompanied by prayer. As far as possible, they should be acquainted with the insights of modern biblical scholarship”.*

The course thus looks to provide three main objectives: (1) accompany in attentive **reading** and diligent study of the Scripture in order to understand it properly; (2) enable **interiorizing** of the Word of God, through introduction into some selected themes, daily common liturgical biblical prayer, sharing and functions [a 5-day long guided retreat is part of the program]; (3) inspire to find suitable ways in **communicating** the Word of God in today’s world.

The focus is on developing practical skills and insights. Also the written project which is to be prepared by the participants toward the end of the course serves both as integration of knowledge, skills and insights gained during the course, and preparation for the service in their own local Church.

Contact Address for Applicants and Info

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For Whom It Is

The course is opened for all who are/will be engaged in biblical apostolate ministry (priests, religious, and laity – both men and women). Its specific aim is the formation of ministers of the Word.

Conditions for Acceptance

The basic requirements are (1) good command of English, (2) bachelor’s degree or its equivalent, (3) basic orientation in theology and (4) age < 60 years. Since the course is primarily for the training of leaders in biblical apostolate ministry, the formal recommendation of a bishop/major religious superior/director of a Catholic Church institution who wants to make effective use of the participant’s training for future ministry is required.

Fee

The total fee is € 4.260,- for board and lodging, as well as course expenses. It does not include any personal expenses. Provided funds are available, a limited number of partial scholarships can be granted for those particularly in need.

Deadline for Registration

All applications must be submitted latest
April 15, 2019.

