### The Passionists

of Holy Cross Province and St. Paul of the Cross Province Office of Mission Effectiveness



### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Holy Cross Province and St. Paul of the Cross Province are delighted to announce the launch of a new series of educational and formational opportunities throughout the year. Prayer, reflection and study are the central and constant tasks of our formation as Christians. Albert Einstein said, "Intellectual growth should commence at birth and only cease at death." The apostle Peter wrote, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity" 2 Peter 3:18. Growth in our spiritual lives is a biblical imperative. The expectation of Scripture isn't that we grow old together, but that we grow in our faith together.

St. Paul of the Cross often referred to his whole-hearted commitment to on-going learning. To Fr. Paul Cerruti, his former spiritual director, St. Paul of the Cross, at age 47, wrote in 1741: "God, who chooses the weak and ignorant of this world, has deigned to give me some ability for learning... I have been engaged in studies to which I have made an effort to continue as much as possible."

The goal of this complimentary *Passionist Family Formation e-Learning* (PFFeL) is to help deepen our understanding and appreciation of our Christian faith as a Passionist Family who keep our focus on the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Presentations will be offered by Passionists and other faculty at Catholic Theological Union. Having the experience and imagination of scholars and experts from Catholic Theological Union will help us deepen our faith and offers us a further opportunity to integrate the Passionist charism in our daily lives.

**Passionist Family Formation e-Learning** will be a cohesive course of six 90-minute sessions each year, offering a full perspective on scripture, spirituality and Catholic theology. Participants will be asked to commit to the entire set of six sessions. This program will supplement, not replace, any Passionist charism formation activities on the local level.

The sessions will be live, online (Zoom) and open to all lay and vowed Passionists of both American provinces. At the outset, the program foresees multi-year cycles, each cycle consisting of six 90-minute sessions per year (Fall through Spring). Each session will contain both presentation and Q&A periods. The sessions will be held on the second Thursday of the month as listed on the following page and will begin at 6:30 PM, Chicago time. There will be a Passionist host who will oversee the entire program, helping participants prepare for each session. The host will assist participants to integrate the specific topic with our Passionist spirituality.

Use this link to register: <a href="https://form.jotform.com/212095360138148">https://form.jotform.com/212095360138148</a>. If you have any questions, contact Fr. Don Webber, CP, at <a href="ptfel2120@passionist.org">ptfel2120@passionist.org</a>. Looking forward to serving you with this special resource that will support and strengthen us in our mission as a Passionist Family.



This program draws on Provinces' collaboration with Catholic Theological Union (CTU) in Chicago. Passionist seminarians have attended CTU since its beginning in 1968 and many Passionists have enjoyed sabbaticals there. Holy Cross Province has sponsored laity for a week at CTU for its Summer Institute in June and sponsored individuals who desire to pursue a CTU pastoral degree (Master of Arts in Ministry) for ministry in the Province. We look forward to these programs continuing, complemented by our new series of educational and formational opportunities.



#### Session 1 - People of Faith Robin Ryan, CP

#### September 9, 2021

The opening session of the course will focus on topics that lie at the foundation of our lives as Catholic Christians. We will explore the meaning of revelation and the ways in which people experience God's self-revelation. We will also discuss the dynamics of faith – faith as confession, commitment and confidence. And since in this course we will not only be studying theology but also doing theology, we will reflect on what it means to engage in the work of "theologizing".

# Session 2 - Creation and Covenant Dianne Bergant, CSA October 14, 2021

This session will begin with an overview of the Old Testament, focusing on two key components of the Pentateuch or "Torah": the account of creation that begins the Pentateuch, and the notion of the Covenant that crowns the story of the Exodus. The account of creation in the opening chapters of Genesis reflects the Bible's view of the origin and destiny of humanity. The account of the forging of the Covenant at Sinai reveals God's relationship to the people Israel and the basis for their responsibility to God. Both notions are important for the theology of creation that is becoming more and more crucial today.

## Session 3 - The Call to Prophecy Kate Oxsen, PhD November 11, 2021

The emergence of the prophetic movement in Israel is also a key component of the Old Testament and will be the focus of this session. Major prophets such as Elijah, Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah, and Isaiah speak as the "conscience" of Israel, challenging the infidelities of the monarchy and calling the people back to their bond of love with God. We are aware that such a role continues in the church and our world —in those people of integrity who speak the truth in times of need.

### Session 4 - The Gospels as the Heart of the New Testament Don Senior, CP February 10, 2022

The Four Gospels are the primary source for the Christian encounter with Jesus Christ. This session will trace the Catholic perspective on the emergence and purpose of the Gospels; their rich diversity; and their unique way of proclaiming the mission, death, and resurrection of Jesus. As Pope Francis has reminded us, the heart of the Christian life is an encounter with the Jesus of the Gospels.

### Session 5 - Paul, Apostle for the Twenty-First Century Don Senior, CP March 10, 2022

The Letters of Paul form a major part of the New Testament and continue to serve as a challenge to the ongoing renewal of the Church. This session will recall the inaugural experience of Paul and some of the key convictions of his theology, particularly his emphasis on the dying and rising of Christ as the pattern for Christian life. Some of the most powerful images for the life of the church are found in Paul's writings.

### Session 6 - Gazing on the Face of Christ Robin Ryan, CP April 14, 2022

Every Christian has an image of Jesus Christ that informs their faith. This image is like a mosaic that is comprised of pieces drawn from many different sources and experiences. It is important for believers to allow that image to interact with key sources in the Christian tradition: the New Testament portraits of Jesus; the official teachings formulated in the councils of the early church; the work of classical theologians and spiritual writers; and contemporary reflection on Jesus articulated from a variety of perspectives. In this session participants will be invited to reflect on their own portrait of Jesus and allow it to be enriched and refined through interaction with these sources.