



“My dream for the Archdiocese is to be able to awaken in the hearts of many a yearning for holiness. If we are able to succeed in this area, we will need an army of Spiritual Mentors who will be trained to help guide and assist others in developing a rich life of prayer. I am very grateful for the presence of the Holy Family School of Faith Institute in the Archdiocese with their special expertise in the area of Spiritual Direction. I am thrilled with their willingness to help form others to be Spiritual Mentors.”

—Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann

Our Program

The Catholic Spiritual Mentors Program is a course of study combining distance- learning courses with five-day intensive sessions offered at Savior Pastoral Center in Kansas City, Kansas. The program aims to form Spiritual Mentors to serve as guide and companion to others on their journey to holiness. It is designed for Catholics who have a desire to develop a deep prayer and sacramental life, a desire to increase their knowledge of the Catholic faith, a desire to grow in the virtues and a desire to help others do the same.

As guide and companion to another on his or her journey to holiness, a Spiritual Mentor is someone guided by the Holy Spirit in strictly following the teachings of the Church while teaching and supporting the mentee in spiritual matters.

People who are committed to these practices will grow in Holiness:

1. Daily mental prayer with a resolution
2. Frequent sacramental life
3. Being mentored
4. Mentoring others
5. A plan of life
6. Formed in the principles of decision making
7. Supported by a community of mentors and ongoing formation

What is a Spiritual Mentor?

A Spiritual Mentor is one formed to:

- pray for the mentee as well as for the relationship with the mentee
- listen to God and to the mentee
- meditate daily on the Word of God
- protect confidentiality
- advise the mentee on the significance of the sacraments
- teach the mentee how to prepare for an intimate and open presentation of self to God in the sacrament of reconciliation and the value of thanksgiving after reconciliation
- teach the mentee how to prepare for and receive the Eucharist and the value of thanksgiving after Mass
- share the teachings of the Church on faith and morals
- teach how to make decisions and choices according to Church Tradition and morals
- grow in the virtues
- help the mentee formulate a rule of life/plan of life
- speak out on the various states of life
- support the mentee in his or her state of life and vocation
- console the mentee in difficult or challenging times
- hold the mentee accountable for suggestions given

A Course of Study

The Catholic Spiritual Mentors Program combines distance-learning courses with intensive sessions offered at Savior Pastoral Center in Kansas City, Kansas. The in-residence sessions cover the following topics:

Prayer and Spirituality
Liturgy and Sacraments
Virtue and the Moral Life
Discernment

The cost for the session includes all the courses in the session, course materials, room and board during the session unless you're a commuter. A new price structure is being developed, and you'll be contacted once details are confirmed.

Distance Learning Courses

(subject to change)

Catechism Part I. This course is designed to provide a thorough formation in Part I of the Catechism. This course will cover the basic doctrines of the Catholic Faith, their basis in divine revelation and their practical application in Christian life. Topics discussed include Trinitarian theology, creation, salvation history, ecclesiology, Christology, soteriology, divine revelation, Mariology, and Catholic spirituality.

Prayer & Spirituality. Christian life is lived in relationship with eternal Persons, one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. From the doctrines (creed), participation in the mysteries (liturgy and sacraments), and use of our freedom (morality) flows a call to continual communion with the Persons of the Trinity (CCC #2558). This continual communion and relationship is lived in prayer and in service to our neighbor. This course serves as an overview of “Part IV” of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Catechism Part II. This course is designed to provide a systematic and thorough understanding of the Liturgy and Sacraments as articulated in Part II of the Catechism. Course content overviews liturgy and sacramental theology; the sacraments of initiation; sacraments of service; sacraments of healing; development of virtue; and foundational moral principles.

New Testament. Life of Christ. This course is an overview of the structure, themes, message, and content of Matthew’s gospel which will more deeply investigate the fulfillment of God’s covenants and promises in Jesus the Christ, as Son of David; investigating more deeply Jesus’ identity, the meaning of the Kingdom, the eschatological significance of the Temple, and the Great Commission...serving as a foundation for ensuing courses in ecclesiology.

Virtue. The course begins with an analysis of human flourishing/happiness and introduces the concept of virtue as its indispensable condition. The entire Christian life is then presented according to the cardinal, theological virtues and the Commandments as stated in the Catechism. Since virtue demands balance, a special emphasis is placed on properly distinguishing and harmonizing grace/nature, terrestrial pursuit/heavenly ambition, soul/body, self/neighbor, and individual/ community within the pursuit of holiness.

Theology of the Body. Pope John Paul II brought about a powerful revival in the Catholic discussion on the meaning of the human body created male and female. In light of Christ’s statements on marriage and divorce and the original intent in Eden, this course serves as an overview to understand the task (TOB #59) God has assigned every man and woman in the grace of Christ to spiritually mature and be made capable of recognizing the spousal meaning proper to the body. Raising our eyes beyond merely human horizons and towards the eternal, the Pope’s insights as well as the principles taken from other official Church documents will then be applied to more specific issues.

Salvation History I. This course is an introduction to the basic biblical structure, genres, and theological significance of Sacred Scripture. Using the narrative approach, the course follows the story of God’s people from Genesis to the establishment of the Davidic Kingdom. Throughout presentations, particular attention is paid to critical terms and concepts, as well the necessity for internalizing the word of God through both prayer and apostolate.

Salvation History II. A continuation of Salvation History I, beginning with the decline of the Davidic line and the division of the Kingdom of Israel. The histories of the Northern and Southern tribes are then recounted, culminating in the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions, respectively, followed by the time in captivity, the return of the Jews to their home, their efforts at restoration, and the revolution of the Maccabees. Throughout, care is taken to integrate the

various historical, prophetic and wisdom texts in each phase of the story. The course concludes with a consideration of messianic fulfillment of the Old Testament in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In-Residence Sessions

Prayer & Spirituality. This in-residence session is designed to unpack for the students the essentials of Christian prayer and spiritual growth, drawing heavily upon Scripture and the Church's rich spiritual Tradition, as well as sound Christian anthropology. The session includes practicums on the basics of Spiritual Mentorship and establishing a prayer life.

Liturgy & Sacraments. This in-residence session is designed to deepen the students' understanding of the sacraments of the Church. After intensive catechesis on the elements, efficacy, and effects of the sacraments in general, all seven sacraments are treated individually, with particular emphasis of pastoral questions that frequently arise in the context of spiritual mentorship.

Virtue and the Moral Life. An integral part of spiritual growth is the development of virtue, which facilitates human cooperation with grace in daily living. After a recap of the landscape of the interior life and the human person's capacity for supernatural life, the session will provide an extensive overview of the virtues, with particular emphasis on the theological virtues, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and selected human virtues, including the four cardinal virtues. The session includes practical, intensive training on pastorally addressing difficult moral issues in the context of mentoring others' virtue development.

Discernment. What is God asking of me? One cannot answer this question without discernment. This in-residence session seeks to give the student the tools that allow them to identify various and particular ways through which the Holy Spirit speaks to them. This in-residence session immerses the student in the basic principles of discernment, including a discussion of concepts such as growing in self-knowledge, interior indifference, how to make the most out of one's own Spiritual Mentoring journey and how to support others in their vocation. The presentation includes engaging case studies that illustrate these concepts.

Meet the Team



Dr. Mike Scherschlight

President and Founder

Dr. Mike Scherschlight is the founder and president of the Holy Family School of Faith Institute. Mike has a Doctorate in Sacred Theology (STD) from the Marianum in Rome. He is the author of our Catechism series and the on-line series, Faith Foundations used to certify catechists throughout the United States. He is a dynamic theologian who trains catechists and spiritual mentors, leads pilgrimages and is the founder of the lay movement called, “The Movement of the Holy Family,” which renews the home and family life through encouraging its members to evangelize through friendship, good conversation, and praying the Rosary.



Dr. Troy Hinkel

Vice President and Co-founder

Dr. Troy Hinkel holds a master’s degree in Theology from Franciscan University of Steubenville and a Doctorate in Modern European History with an emphasis on Church/State relations from the University of Kansas. Troy devotes his time to teaching as well as being a spiritual director/mentor to Catholic young adult professionals, adult parishioners, and business and lay leaders in the Greater Kansas City area. Troy is also the co-founder of the lay movement called, “The Movement of the Holy Family.”



Susan Pieper, Consecrated Virgin

Spiritual Advisor

Susan is a Consecrated Virgin of the Order of Virgins in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas. Over many years, she has been formed through an intense prayer/interior life and trained as a Spiritual Director. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Bachelor of Arts in Theology and a Licentiate in Moral Theology from the Pontifical University, the Angelicum in Rome, Italy. Susan ministers full time at the Holy Family School of Faith Institute in the Archdiocese of Kansas City, KS.



Fr. Steve Sotiroff
Program Chaplain

Fr. Steve is currently the Chaplain of the St. Francis Convent of Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George in Alton, Illinois. He has served the Spiritual Mentors Program for over 10 years as Chaplain and played a critical role in the design and implementation of the program.



Cari Hillyer
Vice President and Co-founder

Cari works for Holy Family School of Faith Institute as the Executive Director of Operations. In addition to those responsibilities, she serves as the Director of Pilgrimage Experiences.



Chris Hillyer
Executive Director

Chris plays a key role in integrating many aspects of Holy Family School of Faith as an Executive Director.



Stephanie Jacobson

Director Catholic Spiritual Mentors Program

Stephanie works for Holy Family School of Faith as the Director of the Catholic Spiritual Mentors Program and Pilgrim Coordinator for pilgrimage experiences. Stephanie serves as the primary caretaker of our CSM program participants.



Grace Quinlan

Executive Administrative Assistant

Grace works for Holy Family School of Faith providing invaluable assistance to both Cari and Stephanie in the operations of the overall organization and the Catholic Spiritual Mentors Program.

Encounter His Thirst, Help Others Encounter Him

We invite you to explore and discern if He is calling you to leave your water jar and say to His people “Come, see...”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches: “If you but knew the gift of God!” (Jn 4:10). The wonder of prayer is revealed beside the well where we come seeking water: there, Christ comes to meet every human being. It is He who first seeks us and asks us for a drink. Jesus thirsts; his asking arises from the depths of God’s desire for us... God thirsts that we may thirst for Him.

“The episode of the Samaritan woman charts the journey of faith that we are all called to pursue. Even today Jesus continues “to thirst”, namely, to desire humanity's faith and love. From our personal encounter with him, if we recognize and receive him as the Messiah, come our attachment to his message of salvation and the desire to spread it in the world.” Third Sunday of Lent, 3 March 2002, St. John Paul II

“Through his Church Christ entrusts you with the fundamental mission of sharing with others the gift of salvation, and he invites you to participate in building his kingdom. He chooses you, in spite of the personal limitations everyone has, because he loves you and believes in you. Being disciples of Christ is not a private matter. On the contrary, the gift of faith must be shared with others.” From the Vatican, 24 November 1991, the Solemnity of Jesus Christ the King. St. John Paul II

Preparing mentee to become mentor, the Catholic Spiritual Mentors Program offers formation and direction for the soul that longs to go forward in loving service to the Lord. Ask God if this is His will for you, be still and listen for that wee small whisper.

Our Patron, St. Photina

St. Photina is the Samaritan Woman martyred, with her sons Victor (named Photinus) and Joses; and her sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva, Kyriake; and Sebastian. Photina was the Samaritan Woman, with whom the Savior conversed at Jacob’s Well (John. 4:5-42).

Our Prayer for All Candidates Going through the Program

Come Holy Spirit, giver of all gifts, light of our hearts.
Guide the candidates in their assigned relationship with their spiritual mentor.
Be a light to inspire and direct them to the Father’s Will through daily meditation.
Help them call to mind You as the first and constant Director of our souls.
Foster trust in You as they grow in holiness during these two years of formation.
Give them virtue, an increasing desire to pray and all good.
And encourage them to pray for each other, too.
St. Photina, Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well – pray for them. Amen.

Contact Us



HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL OF FAITH

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