

Sacramental Theology

7.1 Module Overview									
Module Number		Module Title	Sacramental Theology						
Stage of Principal Programme			2	Semester	1	Duration. <i>(Weeks F/T)</i>	12	ECTS	5
Mandatory / Elective (M/E)	E	Hours of Learner Effort / Week	2						
Analysis of required hours of learning effort									
Teaching and Learning Modalities					✓if relevant to this module	Approx. proportion of total (hours)			
Contact Hours									
In person face-to-face					✓	24			
Synchronous									
Indirect/Non-Contact Hours									
Asynchronous									
Work Based									
Other:									
• Independent self-directed reading					✓	40			
• Research, preparation and completion of assignment and presentation					✓	50			
• Exam Preparation					✓	11			
Total						125			

Pre-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title	N/A
Co-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title	N/A
Maximum number of learners per instance of the module	120
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module.	
Role e.g., Tutor, Mentor, Lecturer, Research Supervisor, etc.	Qualifications & experience required
Lecturer	A minimum level 9 qualification in Systematic Theology or closely cognate area
	Staff - Learner Ratio X:Y
	1:120

Assessment Techniques – percentage contribution				
Continuous Assessment	30%	Proctored Exam – in person	70%	Practical Skills Based
Project		Proctored Exam - online		Work Based
Capstone (Y/N)?	N	If Yes, describe		

7.2 Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs)	
MIMLO	Related MIPLO #
On completion of this module a learner will be able to:	
1. View the sacraments in their Christological and ecclesiological contexts	1, 2, 4, 5
2. Understand the relations between symbol, sacrament and ritual	2, 4, 5

3. Understand and assess the impact and importance of Vatican II (and the major theologians of that time) on the development of Sacramental theology	2, 4, 5, 6, 7
4. Learn to critique the ritual practice of a given sacrament from its theological perspective	5, 6, 7, 8

7.3 Indicative Module Content, Organisation and Structure

This module is intended to facilitate learners to develop and refine their understanding of the Sacraments. In exploring the origin and shaping of the sacraments in the Christian tradition this module will encourage the learner to then reflect on the manner in which the sacraments should/could act as a more effective expression of the Church in the world today. Strong emphasis will be placed on the theological development of our understanding of, and celebration of, the sacraments since the Second Vatican Council.

This module aims to provide a basic knowledge of key concepts in sacramental Theology. The module will trace the emergence of the sacraments as expressions of the faith community and explore our understanding of how they function. Key elements will be identified which would help in the more effective celebration of the sacraments today including greater inclusivity.

Below is an indicative structure of the module content:

- Sacraments:
 - Exploring sacraments as part of the on-going communication of God with his people.
 - Tracing the emergence and formation of the sacraments in the early Church.
- How sacraments work:
 - An exploration of the importance of rite, ritual and communication in sacramental practise.
 - Sacrament as Symbol and not mere sign.
 - Traditional Sacramental Principles and their helping our understanding the Sacraments today
- Vatican II and the Sacraments:
 - From a scholastic understanding of validity and fruitfulness towards a view now rooted in phenomenology and existentialism.
 - Synodality and the demands it makes on the celebration of Sacraments – do Sacraments include or exclude people in the Church today
- Theologians key to progression:
 - An introduction to the sacramental theology of Dom Odo Casel, Edward Schilleebeckx and Karl Rahner
- Re-imagining the sacraments today:
 - The search for elements of a more effective communication of God’s sacraments, and their inclusive nature, by our Church today.

7.4 Work-based learning and practice-placement *(if applicable)*

N/A

7.5 Specific module resources required *(if applicable)*

N/A

7.6 Application of programme teaching, learning and assessment strategies to this module

The content of this module is delivered in lectures and recommended reading. In keeping with the principles of UDL material will be made available in a variety of modes on the VLE; text, video, podcast, with lecturers slides posted at the beginning of the course so that the learners may download in advance as a means of following the material being presented throughout the semester. Lecturers will involve some group work and

a learner presentation. The essay assignment will take some contemporary issue in Sacramental Theology to encourage the learner to reflect on this. Learners will also be asked to make an in-class presentation on a topic chosen by the lecturer or the learner, but as agreed.

7.7 Summative Assessment Strategy for this module

MIMLOs	Technique(s)	Weighting
2	Oral Presentation	10%
1-4	Essay	20%
1-4	Exam	70%

7.8 Sample Assessment Materials

Assessment will be composed of three parts

1. Presentation: 20 minute in-class presentation to include questions from fellow learners (10%)
2. Essay: 750 words (20%)
3. Final Exam: (70%)

This module is assessed by 30% continuous assessments and 70% terminal exam.

Oral Presentation: A short reflection on a chapter of a book given to the learner some weeks in advance to allow time to prepare. The learner presents this using PowerPoint to his or her peers and take questions from the floor.

Essay: A short Essay, 750 words, on a chosen topic.

Sample Essay title:

1. How can we best celebrate a Sacrament effectively?
2. Do Sacraments still speak to a modern world?
3. Sacraments today – a point of entry or a point of exit
4. Sacraments – a continuation of the communication of God with his people

Exam: Five question paper from which the learners must choose two based on topics covered during class lectures. Sample questions could include:

1. The sacraments can be simply, and effectively, seen as a continuation of the work of Jesus. Outline why this is true.
2. Sociology argues that a rite has four essential elements: a sacred act; a communitarian act; a pedagogical act; and an intercultural act. Explore these four elements with respect to any **one** sacrament today.
3. The sacraments are in crisis today. Explain what sacramental theology, and in particular an understanding of the principles of how they work *ex opere operato* but are most fruitful *ex opere operantis*, might offer to help remedy this.
4. Sacraments are not celebrations confined to a moment of time but are better celebrated if seen to emerge from the fabric of our lives. Explore how a theological awareness of this would benefit our sacramental celebrations today.
5. The Second Vatican Council did not examine individual sacraments it merely viewed them within the context of the liturgy. Outline four advances that the Council made to our understanding of the sacraments.

Marking of assessments will be in line with the Marking Assessment Guidelines as outlined in Section 3.3 of the College's [Regulations in Relation to Assessment and Standards](#) unless otherwise indicated.

7.9 Indicative reading lists and other information resources

Indicative Core Reading:

Cessario, Romanus, *The Seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023).

Drumm, Michael and Tom Gunning, *A Sacramental People* (Dublin: Colomba Press, 1999).

Osborne, Kenan, *Sacramental Theology: A General Introduction* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988).

Thompson, Richard, *The Sacraments* (London, SCM Press, 2006).

Vorgrimler, Herbert, *Sacramental Theology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992).

Indicative Other Reading:

Bell, Catherine, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford: University Press, 1997).

Cooke, Bernard, *Sacraments and Sacramentality* (New London: Twenty-Third Publications, 1985).

Irwin, Kevin, *The Sacraments: Historical Foundation and Liturgical Theology* (New York, Paulist Press, 2016).

Johnson, Maxwell E., *The Rites of Christian Initiation* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1999).

Martos, Joseph, *Doors to the Sacred – An Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church* (Michigan: Liguori Press, 2001).

Osborne, Kenan, *Christian Sacraments in Postmodern World – A Theology for the Third Millennium* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999).

Worgul, George, "Redefining the Term Sacrament", in *From Magic to Metaphor: A Validation of Christian Sacraments* (New York: Paulist Press, 1980).