

LESSON PLAN: World History

Lesson Title: Integrating Faith and Life and Culture

Lesson Length: One Class Period

Catholic Curriculum Standards:

General Standards

CS, H.712, GS4, Explain how religious and moral knowledge are a requisite for understanding human grandeur and the drama of human activity throughout history.

Intellectual Standards

CS, H.712, IS7 - Identify, from the Catholic perspective, the motivating values, philosophies, and theologies that have informed particular societies (e.g., Mexico, Canada, early colonies in the U.S.).

CS, H.712, IS8 - Demonstrate the ways men and societies change and/or persist over time to better understand the human condition.

CS, H.712, IS9 - Evaluate how societies provide a sense of coherence and meaning to human life, shaping and forming human culture and events.

CS, H.712, IS13 - Describe how the moral qualities of a citizenry naturally give rise to the nature of the government and influence societal outcomes and destinies.

CS, H.712, IS18 - Analyze historical events, especially those involving critical human experiences of good and evil, so as to enlarge understanding of self and others.

CS, H.712, IS20 - Evaluate how Christian social ethics extend to questions of politics, economy, and social institutions and not just personal moral decision-making.

Dispositional Standards

CS, H.712, DS4, Share Catholic virtues and values (i.e., prudence and wisdom) gleaned from the study of human history to better evaluate personal behaviors, trends of contemporary society, and prevalent social pressures and norms.

CS, H.712, DS5, Justify how history, as a medium, can assist in recognizing and rejecting contemporary cultural values that threaten human dignity and are contrary to the Gospel message.

Essential Questions: How do the main characteristics of pagan Roman culture in the first and second centuries contrast with the characteristics of Catholicism in each of the areas

of the value of the human person, class distinctions, the family, entertainment, charity, and religion? How does modern American society reflect some of the values of the Roman Empire? How can Catholics today be countercultural and imitate the Catholics of the first and second centuries to draw others to Christ.

Educational Objectives:

- The student will know the main characteristics of pagan Roman culture in the first and second centuries in the areas of the value of the human person, class distinctions, the family, entertainment, charity, and religion.
- The student will know the contrasting characteristics of Catholicism in each of these areas.
- The student will know how the ordinary Romans responded to these new values.
- The student will know how the government responded to these new values.

Learning Plan:

The class will review what they already know about Roman culture. The teacher will add pertinent information that the class might not already know. Did the Roman culture respect the dignity of the human person? What were some groups of persons that were not valued? How did the upper classes treat the lower classes? What was the position of slaves in Roman culture? Who had absolute power in the family? How prevalent were abortion, contraception, and infanticide in Roman culture? What immoral types of entertainment were common? Did the Romans have charitable institutions? What were the characteristics of Roman paganism? What kind of example was set by the Roman gods?

The class will then contrast Catholic culture with Roman culture. What was the Catholic view of the human person? Did this respect apply to every person without exception? Did class distinctions matter in Catholic culture? Point out that the second and third Popes were former slaves. What is the role of the family in Catholic life? What did the Church say about contraception, abortion, and infanticide? What was the Catholic attitude toward typical Roman entertainments such as the bloody gladiatorial games and pornographic plays? How did Catholics respond to the needs of their neighbors. Point out that during the plagues which broke out in Rome, the Catholics risked their own lives to care for their neighbors, whether or not they were Catholic. What is the true nature of God as taught by the Catholic Church?

Why did the ordinary Romans respond positively to Catholic values? Why did the Roman government launch persecutions? These persecutions did not make people less likely to convert. Why was this so?

Assessment:

Formative: The students will discuss concrete, practical ways that Catholics today (including young adults) can be countercultural and imitate the Catholics of the first and second centuries to draw others to Christ.

Summative:

The next day the students will write a comparison paragraph on how modern American society reflects some of the values of the Roman Empire.

Adapted from Seton School, Manassas, VA