

ENCOUNTER



SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

Mission Statement: Drawing from the richness of our Catholic heritage and identity, we seek to teach, equip, activate and deploy disciples to be able to demonstrate the supernatural power and love of the kingdom of God in their spheres of influence.

Overview: The Encounter School of Ministry is a two year school located in the Diocese of Lansing Michigan operating with multiple satellite campuses. The school covers eight quarters of content to empower students to live a supernatural life of mission and evangelization. For the New Evangelization to be effective, there is a pressing need for the faithful to be formed and equipped in the power of the Spirit. Starting from our identity as beloved sons and daughters of God sharing in Christ's offices of priest, prophet and king, students receive training, equipping and activation to discover and grow in the gifts of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of evangelization and the building up of the Church. Not only will they cultivate essential ministry skill sets, but they will grow in greater intimacy with God and be prepared to spread the kingdom of God in their given spheres of influence.

Approach: The Encounter School of Ministry seeks to provide a safe environment for students to grow in greater maturity in the gifts of the Holy Spirit for mission. Through the context of long term discipleship over a two year period, there is a culture of humility, feedback and accountability that is necessary to effectively pastor people into greater maturity in their spiritual gifts and ministry. Through mature and seasoned teachers presenting the curriculum, this school utilizes a combination of worship time, lecture, interactive practicums, small group discipleship and practical homework assignments that put into practice what was taught in class.

Encounter School of Ministry Leaders

Fr. Mathias Thelen

President of Encounter Ministries and

S.T.L. from the Angelicum University in Rome
Pastor of St. Patrick Church in Brighton, MI

Patrick Reis

Executive Director of Encounter Ministries

M.A. from Holy Apostles College and Seminary, Connecticut

Dr. Mary Healy

Lead Curriculum Advisor

S.T.D., Pontifical Gregorian Univ.
Professor of Theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary and Member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission

Encounter School of Ministry Featured Teachers

Peter Herbeck

Author & Vice President of
Renewal Ministries

Dr. Ralph Martin

S.T.D. from the Angelicum
University in Rome
President of Renewal Ministries

Joe Philip

M.A. from Franciscan University
Associate Director of Encounter
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Sarah Kaczmarek

Director Alpha Catholic Context
Pastoral Director for Encounter
Ministries

Aaron Richards

Director of Damascus Catholic
Mission Campus

Dan DeMatte

M.A. from Ohio Dominican
University
Director of Damascus Catholic
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Encounter School of Ministry Quarter Descriptions

YEAR 1

Quarter 1: Identity and Transformation

Before students receive teaching and training in particular areas of ministry, they need to know who they are and whose they are. The first quarter focuses on our identity as sons and daughters of God who have received an inheritance to do the works of Jesus and even greater works (Jn 14:12). Throughout the quarter students work to shift from a performance based mentality where their value and identity comes from what they do for God and into an identity where their value comes from who they are as sons and daughters of God alone. Students learn about the nature of transformation by the renewal of the mind and seek to shift from thinking from an earthly perspective to a heavenly perspective in regard to ministry (Matt 16:23).

In each class students come to understand and experience their identity as temples of the Holy Spirit, be convicted of the new nature we have received from Jesus through baptism, live in the power of the Holy Spirit and respond to the authority we have received to expand the kingdom of God for a life of mission.

Quarter 2: Power and Healing

Before Jesus gave the Eucharist or even the Holy Spirit to his disciples, he called his disciples to preach the Gospel and expected them to heal the sick (Mt 10:7-8; Luke 10:9). Jesus never proclaimed the Gospel without demonstrating and confirming the message with accompanying demonstrations of power - with physical healing being the most frequent sign. In this quarter, students learn a theology of healing that includes the role of healing in evangelization and the wisdom that healing ministry is done from a place of love and compassion for the sick. They will also learn a basic non-Sacramental prayer model for healing ministry and receive many opportunities in a safe and humble environment to participate in healing prayer both as individuals and in team settings. Students will also receive sessions on understanding the role of faith in healing ministry, words of knowledge for healing, the power of peace and how to overcome the discouragement that we can experience when healing does not occur. Overall, students will gain greater confidence to respond to Jesus' invitation that "all who believe" can be used by God to bring healing to the world around them (Mk 16:18).

Quarter 3: Hearing God and the Prophetic Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Jesus taught us that He is the good shepherd and we are his sheep and that we hear his voice (Jn 10:4). In the first part of this quarter, students will understand that their ability to hear God's voice comes from who they are in God and not what they do for Him. Students will spend time learning

the "language of the Holy Spirit" who speaks to us through us and the discernment needed to identify his voice from either our own or the enemy's. After growing in greater understanding and confidence to hear God's voice for their own life, students will learn what it means to share in Christ's prophetic office (*Lumen Gentium* 12) and to seek out and discover the prophetic gifts of the Holy Spirit for ministry. As the Scripture teaches that we are to "earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, above all that we would prophesy" (1 Cor 14:1), our students come to understand that the prophetic gifts of the Holy Spirit are simply a matter of hearing God's voice for the world around us that would have the effect of building up, encouraging and consoling others in Christ (1 Cor 14:3). In this quarter, students will have many creative opportunities for prophetic ministry with one another and opportunities for honest feedback and growth rooted in love.

Quarter 4: Inner Healing and Freedom

God has revealed himself as the Lord who "heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds" (Ps 147:3). In this quarter, students will be equipped to engage in the ministry of inner healing and freedom. Students will have the opportunity to grow in God's heart and desire to see the broken made whole and seek to cultivate tools and skill sets to partner with the Holy Spirit to bring healing to the heart. Students will learn the anatomy of the wounds that we experience in life and how to partner with Jesus to bring freedom from the lies, unforgiveness and disorder that come as a result of these wounds. Jesus also desires his children to be free from the influence of evil spirits. This quarter also teaches how to lead people into greater freedom from the influence of the enemy and to walk in the full protection of God (Ps 91, Eph 6).

YEAR 2

Quarter 5: Power Evangelization

Up until this point, all of the content that has been presented to the students can happen inside the four walls of the Church. In this quarter students will learn practical ways to effectively preach and present the Gospel to those in need of His salvation and grow in faith to demonstrate the reality of the kingdom through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Students will learn that evangelization accompanied by demonstrations of the power of God are part of our heritage going back to the early Church (1 Cor 2:3-5). Students will learn that the Church ultimately exists to evangelize and will be exposed to the rich tradition of teaching on evangelization we have as Catholics. They will learn how to present the basic Gospel message and the response that is necessary to the Gospel. Students will learn the power of testimony to opening someone up to faith in Jesus and how to effectively share their testimony. They will discover the keys to growing in faith and boldness to evangelize and practical ways to incorporate the prophetic gifts and healing for Evangelization.

Quarter 6: Intimacy with God

As the students have spent a majority of their time growing and cultivating their ministry gifts and skill sets, they need to understand the necessity of cultivating a greater and mature prayer life and become convinced that all fruitful ministry flows from intimacy with God. Jesus ultimately died for us not just so we could get to heaven, but that we could have the same kind of relationship that He enjoyed with the Father. Jesus modeled for us what intimacy looks like and this intimacy with the Father flows through Jesus in the Holy Spirit. From the richness of our vast spiritual tradition and the teaching of the spiritual doctors of the Church, students will learn how to engage in greater intimacy with God through scripture, meditative prayer, and contemplative prayer. They will dive into the riches in the Song of Songs, learn how to worship and seek after God's own heart through the witness of David. Students will have an opportunity to grow in intercession, learn the practice of the discernment of spirits and cultivate a lifestyle of practicing the presence of God through abiding in Jesus.

Quarter 7: Advanced Ministry Training

In the seventh quarter, we will go into more advanced areas of ministry that we were not able to address in the first year. In this quarter, seasoned leaders in each major area of ministry will be presenting to the students on advanced ministry approaches to seek greater fruitfulness and faith.

Quarter 8: Leadership and Deployment

Each member of the Church has received a call from God to participate in the Great Commission. To that end, God has put various dreams and visions on the hearts of the faithful to see the kingdom of God manifest in the world. In this quarter, we equip our students first with the faith that God wants to use them and see their kingdom dreams come to pass. He is looking for great saints that want to do great things in the world for him. Flowing from that reality, we will equip our students with practical tools and skills for the ability to both integrate what they've learned with existing parishes and communities as well as the wisdom and knowledge needed to launch to build a new apostolate or ministry. Students will also learn and be inspired by current leaders in the New Evangelization that have come before them as well to propel them to go forth from the school to build the kingdom of God in their spheres of influence.