

# **CONTEMPORARY MORAL & SOCIAL ISSUES**

*Mrs. Carolyn James*

## **SCOPE AND SEQUENCE**

In this course, students address personal and social issues that relate to the development of a mature conscience, rooted in Christian principles. We will explore the concerns of personal choice, responsibility, the fundamental dignity of the human person, freedom, law, authority, and the gospel of peace and justice as they relate to the individual's moral choices and spiritual growth. As additional sources for topics of discussion, we will use articles, videos, and documentaries about current personal, local and global issues facing our society.

Students completing the 11<sup>th</sup> grade Contemporary Moral and Social Issues course will:

- Recognize the importance of personal responsibility in making well thought out decisions, and realize how the consequences of those decisions affect others and the world around them.
- Demonstrate familiarity with and the ability to apply the steps for decision-making based upon Christian principles, human dignity, and compassion for others.
- Identify the effects of sin on society and the individual, and realize that forgiveness is essential to gaining personal freedom.
- Realize the importance of developing a well-formed conscience, and recognize its right relationship to authority.

**TEXTS:**        ***GROWING IN CHRISTIAN MORALITY*** by Ahlers, Allaire and Koch  
                     ***CMI Folder of printed materials***

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **I.        Morality: Choosing the Person You Become**

- definitions of morality*
- society's values*
- what's good?*
- moral maturity*
- importance of self-esteem*

#### **Chapter 1 Test**

### **II.       Christian Vision of Morality**

- Jesus, model of full humanness*
- who we are / where we're going*
- importance of love*
- how we are called to respond: virtues*

#### **Chapter 2 Test**

### **III.      Helps Along the Way**

- the gift of relatedness*
- tuning in to God / the gift of grace*
- our community of relationships*
- help from society*
- teachings from Scriptures / Church*
- Sin / God's mercy / reconciliation*

#### **Chapter 3 Test**

### **IV.**

### **V.       Moral Decision Making**

- the LISTEN process*
- understanding conscience*

#### **Chapter 4 Test**

### **VI.      Wise Judgment: Good Conscience in Action**

- virtues and character*

- b. *environmental ethics*
- c. *sticky situations / rationalization*

**Chapter 5 Test**

**VII. Justice: Love's Minimum**

- a. *love and justice*
- b. *essential human rights*
- c. *dimensions of justice*
- d. *service and the common good*

**Chapter 6 Test**

**VIII. Courage: Facing Fear for the Sake of the Good**

- a. *what is a hero?*
- b. *overcoming our fears*
- c. *the way of Jesus*

**Chapter 7 Test**

**IX. The Journey to Wholeness**

- a. *wholeness, not perfection*
- b. *the true meaning of freedom*
- c. *self love vs. selfishness*
- d. *mature relationships*

**Chapter 8 Test**

**X. Honesty: Creating Trust**

- a. *the meaning of integrity*
- b. *honesty vs. lying*

**XI. Respect for Persons**

- a. *the Golden Rule*
- b. *to be valued vs. to be used*
- c. *sex and violence*
- d. *prejudice and stereotyping*

**XII. Compassion: Solidarity with Those Who Suffer**

- a. *the homeless and marginalized*
- b. *Jesus, the model*

**XIII. Respect for Creation**

- a. *environmental ethics*
- b. *global problems and solutions*
- c. *renewing the earth*

**XIV. Reverence for Human Life**

- a. *a consistent life ethic*
- b. *technology and morality*
- c. *euthanasia*
- d. *death penalty*
- e. *war*

**XV. Peacemaking: Handling Conflict with Creativity**

- a. *creative strategies*
- b. *loving one's enemies*
- c. *meaning of forgiveness*
- d. *working toward justice and peace*

**FINAL EXAM**

## **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

*Plagiarism* - Students are expected to comply with IHHS's policy on academic integrity.

*Study Materials* – You are expected to bring your textbook and notebook to class every day.

*Tests and Quizzes* – Tests will be given at the end of each unit. Pop quizzes based on the previous day's readings may be given at any time.

*Attendance* – If you are absent, it is *your* responsibility to find out about any assignments missed and to catch up on class notes. Please check the class website for assignments. If you miss a quiz or a test due to an excused absence, expect to take the test on the day you return.

*Tardiness and Personal Needs* – You are expected to be on time for class with all the study materials necessary, and having taken care of all your personal needs such as snacks, beverages and bathrooms visits. Students will not be allowed to go to their lockers during class. After one warning, a student will lose five points each time she forgets to bring what she needs.

*Class Participation* – Oral participation in class is **essential**. Students are expected to participate actively and respectfully in class with thoughtful questions, reflections, or other input. Disrespectful behavior such as interrupting others or making scornful remarks and facial expressions will reflect negatively on your grade. Thoughtful participation is worth 10% of your final grade.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

All homework papers are to be **typed**, in a *simple font*, and no less than *12 point*.  
Number each question, space between each one, and respond in complete sentences.  
Your heading goes to the left of the paper. For example:

**Name**  
**Class**  
**Date**

**Page # or Page # and Activity # (or Title if it is a paper)**

Three reflection papers and/or oral class presentations are required in which students are expected to integrate material read and discussed in class with their own insights and opinions

A late assignment will have points docked. Parents will be notified if there is a pattern of missing assignments. A valid request for an extension on any assignment or project will be considered *in advance* or in the case of a family or personal emergency. Please see me, as this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

When using a computer for your assignments, **SAVE OFTEN** and **PRINT EARLY!** Malfunctioning computers, disks or printers are not acceptable excuses for late work *unless* accompanied by a note of verification from a parent.

Homework assignments, chapter tests, reading quizzes, writing/oral presentation projects, and oral participation compose 80% of the final grade. The final exam is worth 20% of your final class grade.