

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY OVERVIEW

EfM is a program in practical theology based on a set of five core principles:

- 1. Living in Community**
- 2. Regular Prayer and Worship**
- 3. Theological Reflection**
- 4. Study of the Christian Tradition**
- 5. Vocational Discernment**

Examining life through a theological lens is central spiritual discipline in Education for Ministry.

Four sources of EfM model

- 1. Action: Life experience**
- 2. Culture: Culture/Society**
- 3. Position: Cherished beliefs and values**
- 4. Christian Tradition**
 - a. Year One – Hebrew Bible with commentaries**
 - b. Year Two – New Testament**
 - c. Year Three – History of the Church**
 - d. Year Four – Christian Theology**

Four methods for bringing sources into conversation through theological reflection:

- 1. Identify a focus**
- 2. Examine/Explore a focus**

3. Connect to the other three sources
4. Apply new learning

Reading and Reflection Guide Weekly Assignments

1. Read: Assigned Readings
2. Focus: Questions or terms specific to the readings
3. Respond: Connection of reading to the unit theme
4. Practice: Application for individual or group work

EfM Curriculum

Volume A “Living Faithfully in Your World”

Volume B “Living Faithfully in a Multicultural World”

Volume C “ Living as Spiritually Mature Christians”

Volume D “Living into the Journey with God”

Each Volume contains five units

1. Unit One: Spiritual Autobiography and Listening
2. Unit Two: Theological Reflection as a Life Skill
3. Unit Three: Developing a Sustaining Spirituality
4. Unit Four: Integrating Belief, Behavior, and Doctrine
5. Unit Five: Vocation



Seminar Texts for All four Years:

Year One

- 1. *A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible* by John J. Collins**
- 2. *The Hebrew Bible: Feminist and Intersectional Perspectives* edited by Gale A. Yee**

Year Two

- 1. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey* by Mark Allan Powell**
- 2. *The Misunderstood Jew: the Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus* by Amy-Jill Levine**

Year Three

- 1. *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years* by Diarmaid MacCulloch**

Year Four

- 1. *Theology: A Very Short Introduction* by David Ford**
- 2. *Mysteries of Faith* by Mark McIntosh**
- 3. *The Christian Moral Life: Practices of Piety* by Timothy F. Sedgwick**
- 4. *My Neighbor's Faith: Stories of Interreligious Encounter, Growth, and Transformation* edited by**

Jennifer Howe Peace, Or N. Rose, and Gregory Mobley

2024-2025 Interlude Texts:

- 1. Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman**
- 2. The Four Vision Quests of Jesus* by Steven Charleston**

Suggested Study Bible Translations

- 1. The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version***
- 2. Harper Collins Study Bible: Fully Revised and Updated***
- 3. The C.E.B. (Common English Bible) Study Bible***

What EfM is not

- 1. Not only a Bible study; studies Bible in historical context and literary setting**
- 2. Not a program in personal therapy or problem solving**
- 3. Not a closed community**
- 4. Not an academic program leading to a degree or ordination program**
- 5. May become a part of the work leading to a degree or to ordination, but School of Theology does not grant course credit or recommend ordination**

Seminar Group

- 1. Method of learning**
- 2. 6-12 members**
- 3. Meets 2.5-3 hours weekly**
- 4. 36 weeks – September to June**
- 5. Trust: Confidentiality**

Participants Basic Expectations

- 1. Attend seminar sessions and/or maintain communication when there is a need to be absent**
- 2. Read materials/ complete work to best of ability**
- 3. Participate in discussions, reflections, and worship of seminar group**

Benefits of EfM

- 1. Portability: May begin in one place and continue work in another**
- 2. Accreditation: EfM grants Continuing Education Units to indicate completion of work**
- 3. Access to international network**
- 4. Training opportunity for the laity**
- 5. Connection with University of the South**
- 6. Theological Education to support the laity**