

SCIENCE AND FAITH IN SEMINARY FORMATION

For the College & Pre-Theology Programs



THE PLANNING TEAM FOR THIS INITIATIVE INCLUDES
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We will keep you posted as plans develop, and meanwhile invite you to
our website: cscnewparameters.org.

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Tucson, Arizona

Redemptorist Retreat Center



“DIALOGUE BETWEEN FAITH AND SCIENCE
ALSO BELONGS TO THE WORK OF EVANGELIZATION
AT THE SERVICE OF PEACE.”

POPE FRANCIS, *EVANGELII GAUDIUM*

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN LITERACY MEANT KNOWING HOW TO READ AND WRITE. NOW, BEING LITERATE MEANS KNOWING BASIC SCIENCE – SOMETHING MORE THAN HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL, AND LESS THAN WHAT’S AVAILABLE ON CSI, THE POPULAR FORENSIC SCIENCE TELEVISION SHOW.

WHAT ARE WE PLANNING?

We anticipate extending an invitation to major Roman Catholic seminaries in the United States to develop science courses in their pre-theology programs. College seminaries will be invited to do the same. Rectors, Academic Deans, and faculty authors of the most promising projects will gather under starry nights and sunny days in Tucson, Arizona, for encouragement from accomplished and accessible speakers and support from educators who will assist in refining proposals for implementation into the seminary curriculum.

The goal is not to make seminarians into scientists but rather to provide a challenging, increasingly necessary, rewarding and very do-able effort towards scientific literacy.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Official Church documents, especially since the Second Vatican Council, have promulgated a positive spirit of cooperation between science and theology, replacing an adversarial mindset that existed in the past. The aggiornamento of VCI reinforced time and again that we live in a world dominated by science and technology and that “recent studies

and findings of science, history, and philosophy raise new questions which influence life and demand new theological investigations” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 62). Far from being intimidated by astonishing advances in science, Pope John Paul II wrote often of the reciprocity between the disciplines of theology and science, and that “theology will have to call on the findings of science to one degree or another as it pursues its primary concern for the human person, the reaches of freedom, the possibilities of the Christian community.” (Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Reverend George Coyne, S.J.*, Director, Vatican Observatory, 1988).

And especially because . . .

To no one’s surprise, seminaries have been urged to be in constant touch with developments in science. Two of the many directives to be noted are these: “Let those who teach in seminaries . . . collaborate with men well versed in other sciences” (*GS*, 62), and in the philosophical disciplines, “account should be taken of the more recent progress in the sciences” (*Optatam Totius*, 15). Simply put, scientific literacy is necessary to respond to the signs of the times for the New Evangelization.

“TURNING TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE...WE HAVE BEGUN TO TALK TO ONE ANOTHER ON DEEPER LEVELS THAN BEFORE, AND WITH GREATER OPENNESS TOWARDS ONE ANOTHER’S PERSPECTIVES. WE HAVE BEGUN TO SEARCH TOGETHER FOR A MORE THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF ONE ANOTHER’S DISCIPLINES, WITH THEIR COMPETENCIES AND THEIR LIMITATIONS, AND ESPECIALLY FOR AREAS OF COMMON GROUND. IN DOING SO WE HAVE UNCOVERED IMPORTANT QUESTIONS WHICH CONCERN BOTH OF US, AND WHICH ARE VITAL TO THE LARGER HUMAN COMMUNITY WE BOTH SERVE. IT IS CRUCIAL THAT THIS COMMON SEARCH BASED ON CRITICAL OPENNESS AND INTERCHANGE SHOULD NOT ONLY CONTINUE BUT ALSO GROW AND DEEPEN IN ITS QUALITY AND SCOPE.”

**From a letter of Pope John Paul II to
Reverend George V. Coyne, S.J.**

Director of the Vatican Observatory

June 1, 1988