

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS OF JESUS

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Bob Schihl

Phone: 757-499-4494, x308

E-Mail: BobS@stgregorysva.org or rjschihl@catholicapologetics.org

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class will address the serious question whether Jesus had other blood "brothers and sisters" who would also be children of His Blessed Mother, Mary. Then, was Mary a virgin *after* the birth of Jesus? We will look at the question with the eyes of Catholic believers and we will make our argument using the New Testament of the Bible exclusively.

This course is designed not only to be interesting and informative in itself, but to also become for you a trial experience to study on-line. I want you to see how easy it is to study by yourself, at your own pace, when you have time, at no tuition costs, no classes to go to, no texts to buy, no examinations and no grading (remember when you once thought you would learn more at school if you could study what you wanted and do it by yourself?) This is that opportunity. Give us a try.

RATIONALE/COURSE OVERVIEW

We will begin with the Bible verses which raise the question that there were who were "brothers and sisters" of the Lord around during Jesus' lifetime. They are even named. How does that settle with the fact that we Catholics believe that Mary remained "ever a virgin" before, during and after the birth of Jesus. Many non believers throw this up to us Catholics when they confront the "ever virgin" status of the Blessed Virgin. If there were other blood siblings of Jesus, what happened to them after the Ascension of Jesus into heaven after His resurrection? What does the New Testament mean by "brothers and sisters" of the Lord?

This course will use only direct quotations from the New Testament and the understanding of family relationships within the tribe of Judah at the time of Jesus.

PREREQUISITES

The first "prerequisites" are that there is no tuition for this class, no textbooks to buy, no classes to attend at church, no examinations to take and no grading. How better can learning be? Each of us learns when we want to learn, not because we have to.

Perhaps there is a "prerequisite" to this class. You really have to commit to finish this class.

COURSE OUTCOMES (What you be able to do when you finish this class.)

At the end of the class, you should be able to prove to understand for yourself and be able to prove to others that Jesus did not have blood brothers and sisters and that Mary did indeed remain ever-a-virgin.

COURSE MATERIALS

Recommended materials: I would recommend that you have a Bible with you while you take this class (and others that will follow). People ask me all the time what translation of the Bible should they use. It is better that we all use the same translation, first because it is the translation that I use for all my courses. What scriptures you read on the screen during this course is the same that you will find in your Bible. Second, I use the New American Bible, the same translation we Catholics use during every Mass, Good enough reason to use it. You will probably recognize many verses. Now, there is a "new, revised" edition

available as of spring 2011. I do not think many of us will notice the changes, so it does not matter whether you get the earlier edition or the new revised one.

The **New American Bible Revised** edition is available on-line at

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/>

Another recommended resource that you might find helpful for this class is an e-book I wrote and that is available free from my Internet site. For this Mary dogma, you might find the chapter on *Mary, The Mother of Jesus: Saint* on the Website at <http://www.catholicapologetics.org>. The download site is <http://catholicapologetics.org/CBAPPTF/>.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Information and **EDU 2.0** and **YouTube** access

I would request that you read the instructions I have prepared for your benefit in accessing and using our class delivery Website EDU 2.0. They are available at St. Gregory's Church homepage (<http://stgregoryvabeach.org/>). There is one for beginning registration on EDU 2.0 and one for getting started with a class.

The second way to access this teaching unit is through YouTube. Access to the teaching site for this class can be made through my Web site at www.catholicapologetics.org/aff/. Click on the Courses tab at the top. You may find access from the St. Gregory the Great homepage also.

Contacting Your Instructor

I offer you the opportunity to contact me. You may also use my telephone extension at St. Gregory's, also listed above, as well as my e-mail addresses listed at the top of this page.

Attendance

Obviously, learning by distance does not involve a physical attendance as you remember from your school experiences. But there is a "virtual" attendance and that means accessing our learning site and progressing through the on-line material at a reasonable rate. Set goals for yourself. Set your available time aside at least weekly to go on-line and to access the files with the course content for that week. I want you to be aware that I am able to know when and for how long you spend on-line. If you are having problems, just contact me at any of my contact points, by phone or e-mail.

Participation

I ask nothing more from you but that you complete the class and cover the materials I present to you. Remember that while there is no tuition, the cost of what we have prepared for you is covered by the church; St Gregory's does not pass expenses on to you. In a sense, you are using God's money that supports this Web site, my time and energy as well as compensating my background and academic experience. Please, if you sign up for this learning opportunity; remain faithful to yourself, to me and of course, to God and His Church.

POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Bookstore

For other resources about the topic of this class, Mr. Bernard Hamilton, operator of the St. Gregory the Great Bookstore, has a wide range of books that are for sale. He knows this class and is prepared to make recommendation for purchase allowing you to go beyond the content of this class.

Technical Support

I understand that many of us, including myself, are not experts in computer programming and Internet access. Our fellow parishioner, Randy Broadwell, is the technical administrator of EDU 2.0 for St. Gregory's. He has generously offered himself and his knowledge of the class. You may contact him by clicking on the Contact button at the bottom of EDU 2.0's pages. Randy will help you for this Web site (EDU 2.0) and this class (St. Gregory the Great educational site) only. Sorry, personal computer needs are not a part of his obligation to us.

COURSE LESSONS (Week-by week)

This particular class is not a lengthy one. When I first designed it, I intended it for a two-hour block of time in a classroom setting. In rerecording my slide presentation and adding my voice-over (and picture insert) I knew that most people would not have a two-hour block of time to commit to this course. Hence, I have broken the full presentation into smaller files. That means you need not commit to a lengthy period in order to study with me. On the other hand, you can move from file to file for as long as you have time to put into it. This will be self explanatory when you go into the Courses portion of the Web site.

Happy learning! Any questions or comments? E-mail me at BobS@stgregorysva.org or at rjschi1@catholicapologetics.org.