

# MARYVALE INSTITUTE



A DISTANCE-LEARNING COURSE LEADING TO THE

## MA IN CATHOLIC APPLIED THEOLOGY

VALIDATED BY

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Copyright: Maryvale Institute February 2021

# **The Maryvale Institute**

## **A Place Steeped in History**

The site of Maryvale has been in Catholic occupation since the Middle Ages. Formerly ‘Oscott House’, it came to the Church in 1702 at the bequest of Father Andrew Bromwich who had inherited the property from his family. From 1794 to 1838 it was the home of Oscott College, the first Seminary to open in England. In the time of the College the historic Chapel of the Sacred Heart was inaugurated. In 1846, after the removal of the College to the larger purpose-built premises 3 miles away, John Henry Newman and his community, who had recently been received into the Church, were granted the former Seminary as a house of retreat and study. It was Newman and his confreres who gave it the name ‘Maryvale’, after St Philip Neri’s church in Rome, and it is specified in the Papal Brief as the location of the first English Oratory of St Philip in 1848. The following year saw Maryvale become a Novitiate of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and was visited by St Eugene of Mazenod. During much of this period the Chapel also functioned as a local parish church. From 1851-1980 the Sisters of Mercy ran an orphanage and established a school for poor children. The present Catholic college for theology and catechesis developed out of the Adult Centre for Catechetics opened by Archbishop Dwyer in 1980. In the autumn of 1999, the Sisters of the Order of the Most Holy Saviour of Saint Bridget (Bridgettines) came to Maryvale to a newly-built convent. The Sisters have a special call to work and pray for unity and it is providential that they should come to Maryvale with its desire to foster unity inside the Church, between churches, and locally, in a city where good inter-faith relations are crucial. The Sisters’ charisms of hospitality, contemplation, and their regular liturgical life have also enhanced the life of the Institute.

## **Over Thirty Years’ Experience in Part Time, Distance Learning in Catholic Theological Studies**

Maryvale is both a place of worship and pilgrimage and a specialist institute, or college, which teaches Catholic Theology, Catechesis and Religious Education at every level from short, informal courses to BAs, MAs and research degrees. The Institute has a mission to provide opportunities for Catholic formation and education in all places where English is spoken by offering courses in basic skills, evangelisation, catechesis, theology, Christian culture, spirituality, marriage and family and apologetics. Teaching is delivered online through a combination of lectures, interactive course materials, seminars and tutorials.

The Shrine to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a popular place of pilgrimage. The House has a well-equipped library, together with multi-media and audio-visual resources. The grounds include a Rosary walk with Stations of the Cross. There is ample car parking space and easy access to numerous sites of historic interest, the facilities of Oscott College and Birmingham City Centre.

Maryvale courses are monitored according to the highest standards which are assured by its Academic Standards Committee. Maryvale Institute is part of the Birmingham

Diocesan Trust and is governed by the Maryvale Council, to which a variety of committees report. The quality of the Institute's structures, staffing and processes are recognised in the accreditation given by Open University in the United Kingdom and by the Ecclesiastical Faculté of Notre Dame in Paris.

The Institute's Certificate for the Formation of Catechists is recognised by the Congregation for the Clergy in Rome. These bodies ensure the national and international recognition of the Institute's degrees, diplomas and certificates.

## **The Master of Arts in Catholic Applied Theology**

This MA Programme leads to the Open University award of Master of Arts (OU). It is suitable for professional workers in pastoral ministries, those involved in the fields of religious education, catechesis and leadership in schools, and, indeed, anyone wishing to deepen their knowledge of various aspects of Catholic Theology, Ethics and Spirituality. The programme offers the intermediate awards of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma as optional 'stopping-off' points.

The programme is open to candidates with an honours degree (2:2 or above), or an equivalent professional qualification, and at least two years' relevant experience. The Institute welcomes students whether or not they are from the Catholic community.

### *Aims of the Programme*

The Programme aims to:

- Enable students to engage in an informed, systematic and critical manner with Catholic Theology, Philosophy and the human sciences
- Equip students to exercise responsibility and independence in their studies and research and to be able to apply the fruits of these critically and creatively

### *Structure*

This MA is a 30-month, distance-learning course which commences each January.<sup>1</sup> In the first 12 months, students study four modules consecutively. These are introduced by pre-recorded lectures delivered via our VLE (Moodle), and students then work through specially designed online texts, and associated reading, submitting assignments based upon their study of this material. Each of the four modules requires at least 15 hours per week of study time and coursework spread over approximately 10 weeks i.e. 150 hours in all. Students also complete a research methods assignment.

In the second year of the programme, three further modules are studied in this manner, and a dissertation proposal produced. Each of these four items requires at least 15 hours

---

<sup>1</sup> Students may seek permission to take up to five years to complete the MA. A fee is charged for extra time taken.

per week of coursework and study time spread over approximately 10 weeks i.e. 150 hours in all.

The final 6 months of the course focus on the writing of a dissertation.

Throughout the academic year, students are supported through online lectures, group seminars and one-to-one tutorials. Telephone and email helplines are available.

It is possible, within the structure of the MA Programme, to terminate with the award of a Postgraduate Certificate (after Year 1) or Postgraduate Diploma (after Year 2). Students who satisfactorily complete the Diploma may proceed to the final stage of the MA programme.

The final requirement for the Master's degree is the dissertation, a report of 20,000 words on a topic chosen by the student and conducted by independent personal research, with tutorial advice and supervision. The dissertation constitutes the chief academic test of the course. Its main purpose is to provide students with the opportunity to draw together the elements of the taught course in order to focus upon a subject of both academic and personal significance, through reflection upon theoretical sources and, where appropriate, the analysis of real-life situations.

### ***Content***

Students follow one of four 'pathways' through the programme which constitute particular specialisms. The four pathways are:

#### *1. MA in Catholic Applied Theology (Religious Education and Catechesis)*

This pathway aims to deepen the students' knowledge and understanding of the main areas of Catholic theology and the principles of Catholic education and catechesis, enabling them to reflect critically and creatively on issues pertinent to intellectual engagement with the Catholic worldview and with the transmission of the faith.

Modules studied focus on: *Catechesis: Purpose, Nature, Method* OR *Foundations of Catholic Religious Education; God and Salvation in Jesus Christ; Philosophical and Theological Anthropology* OR *Human Dignity: Foundation of Western Culture and Civilisation; Scripture for RE and Catechesis; The Church; Liturgy and Sacraments* OR *Prayer and the Spiritual Life; Moral Formation; Research Methods.*

#### *2. MA in Catholic Applied Theology (Spirituality)*

This pathway aims to foster knowledge and critical understanding of the relationship between spiritual theology and the foundational doctrines of the Catholic faith, enabling students to reflect critically and creatively on issues pertinent to spirituality and spiritual formation.

Modules studied focus on: *Christian Anthropology; God and Salvation in Jesus Christ; Prayer and the Spiritual Life; Doctrine and Spirituality: Learning from the Fathers* OR *Learning from Monasticism; Psychology for Spiritual Formation; Mind and Heart: Medieval Spirituality;* OR

*Examining the Spiritual Traditions of the Early Modern Church (16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries); Catholicism and Contemporary Currents of Spirituality; Research Methods.*

### 3. MA in Catholic Applied Theology (Marriage and Family)

This pathway aims to deepen the students' knowledge and understanding of the Catholic vision for marriage and family particularly as informed by the teaching of Pope John Paul II, and to enable them to reflect critically on this knowledge and understanding in response to the need to enrich marriage and family life.

Modules studied focus on: *Marriage in Sacred Scripture; Christian Anthropology; An Introduction to Fundamental Moral Theology; The Sacrament of Marriage; Marriage and Family in the Teaching of the Church; Love, Marriage and Family: A Psychological Perspective; The Contemporary Socio-Political Context of the Family; Research Methods* (in developing this pathway, the MA faculty has worked closely with the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family in Rome).

### 4. MA in Catholic Applied Theology (Apologetics)

This pathway aims to foster knowledge and critical understanding of the rational grounds for the Catholic faith, intellectual objections to it, and the range of possible responses, enabling students to expound and defend the faith in the modern world.

Modules studied focus on: *Introduction to Apologetics; Human Dignity: Foundation of Western Culture and Civilisation; Philosophy, God and Science; The Historical Jesus; Catholic Sexual Ethics; Controversial Issues from Church History; Controversial Issues in Modern Apologetics; Research Methods.*

## **Teaching and Learning Methods**

A *collaborative-learning* approach is followed on the course, with course materials specially prepared by the Institute's team of academic, educational and pastoral specialists. Students follow the course at home by accessing pre-recorded lectures which introduce each module, and then working through the online texts, exercises, designated readings, and assignments which constitute the module. Online seminars are provided throughout the academic year during which issues relating to particular modules or projects can be engaged with in a group setting. One-on-one tutorials using various online conferencing platforms are also provided, giving students the opportunity to discuss academic and pastoral issues with the Programme Director, and other members of staff.

An *academic tutor* is assigned to each student for each module of study. This tutor provides support and direction through seminars, and also through written response to the academic paper produced by the student at the conclusion of a module. For a list of academic tutors, see the [MA Student Handbook](#) (available from the Institute website [www.maryvale.ac.uk](http://www.maryvale.ac.uk) -- click on 'Study with us' -- 'Handbooks and Regulations'), pages 7-8. Short biographies, recent publications and research interests of tutors are listed on the [Research Centre](#)

webpage (a link is available on the 'Current Students' drop-down menu; scroll down to the staff section).

In order to participate in this programme of study, students should need to ensure they have access to a computer with a good internet connection, and a suitable microphone and webcam. A computer headset (earpieces/phones and microphone) is highly recommended.

## **Assessment**

Each module is assessed through a written assignment of 3000-5000 words. The final piece of work undertaken for the award of MA is the dissertation which is 20000 words.

Coursework and dissertations are assessed initially by academic tutors, moderated by the Programme Director and all assessed work, including all the dissertations, is scrutinised by an external examiner. All reports and marks are made available to the Board of Examiners, which is responsible for taking the final decision on all cases.

## **Student Support**

The Programme Director acts as *personal tutor* to help guide students through the programme and to monitor both the students' progress and the effect of the course on them. Contact with the personal tutor is normally by letter, email, or by pre-arranged telephone or video calls, in addition to scheduled online interactions at key points throughout the academic year (see *Teaching and Learning Methods* above). Students are also encouraged to network via e-mail, cluster groups and the course Facebook group. Maryvale employs a librarian who is able to assist in the location of books and articles. Whenever possible, a chaplain will be available at residential weekends to make the Sacrament of Reconciliation available.

Additional support for students with a learning difficulty, disability or health condition that impacts upon their study is arranged by the Institute's Accessibility Coordinator. If this applies to you, please complete the [Accessibility Form](#) enclosed in the enquiry pack and return to the Accessibility Coordinator (address and email provided on the form).

## **Modules to Be Studied**

### **FOR THE MA IN CATHOLIC APPLIED THEOLOGY (RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND CATECHESIS)**

#### **Year One**

- Module One: Catechesis: Purpose, Nature and Method OR Foundations of Catholic Religious Education
- Module Two: God and Salvation in Jesus Christ
- Module Three: Philosophical and Theological Anthropology OR Human Dignity: Foundation of Western Culture and Civilization
- Module Four: Scripture for RE and Catechesis

#### **Year Two**

- Module Five: The Church
- Module Six: Liturgy and Sacraments OR Prayer and the Spiritual Life
- Module Seven: Moral Formation
- Research Methods

#### **Year Three**

Dissertation in the area of RE and Catechesis (20, 000 words)

### **FOR THE MA IN CATHOLIC APPLIED THEOLOGY (SPIRITUALITY)**

#### **Year One**

- Module One: Christian Anthropology: A Call to Love
- Module Two: God and Salvation in Jesus Christ
- Module Three: Prayer and the Spiritual Life
- Module Four: Doctrine and Spirituality: Learning from the Fathers OR Learning from Monasticism

#### **Year Two**

- Module Five: Psychology for Spiritual Formation
- Module Six: Mind and Heart: Medieval Spirituality OR Examining the Spiritual Traditions of the Early Modern Church (16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> centuries)
- Module Seven: Catholicism and Contemporary Currents of Spirituality
- Module Eight: Research Methods

#### **Year Three**

Dissertation in the area of Spirituality (20, 000 words)

## **FOR THE MA IN CATHOLIC APPLIED THEOLOGY (MARRIAGE AND FAMILY)**

### **Year One**

- Module One: Marriage in Sacred Scripture
- Module Two: Christian Anthropology: A Call to Love
- Module Three: Living in Christ: an Introduction to Fundamental Moral Theology
- Module Four: The Sacrament of Marriage: 'Loving as God Loves'

### **Year Two**

- Module Five: Love and Fruitfulness: Marriage and Family in the Teaching of the Church
- Module Six: The Contemporary Socio-Political Context of the Family
- Module Seven: Love, Marriage and the Family: a Psychological Perspective
- Research Methods

### **Year Three**

Dissertation in the area of Marriage and Family (20, 000 words)

## **FOR THE MA IN CATHOLIC APPLIED THEOLOGY (APOLOGETICS)**

### **Year One**

- Module One: Introduction to Apologetics
- Module Two: Human Dignity: Foundation of Western Culture and Civilization
- Module Three: Philosophy, God and Science
- Module Four: The Historical Jesus

### **Year Two**

- Module Five: Catholic Sexual Ethics
- Module Six: Controversial Issues from Church History
- Module Seven: Controversial Issues in Modern Apologetics
- Module Eight: Research Methods

### **Year Three**

Dissertation in the area of Apologetics (20, 000 words)

## Course Timetable

An outline of the general structure and syllabus of the first year of the course is as follows:

### Year 1: Postgraduate Certificate

1. **Induction onto the MA in Applied Theology; Introduction to Research and Study Methods; Introduction to Module One:** delivered online by lecture and seminar beginning 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Assignment for Module One to be submitted by 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022.
2. **Introduction to Module Two:** delivered online by lecture and seminar beginning 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Assignment for Module Two to be submitted by 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022.
3. **Introduction to Module 3 and Research Methods Assignment:** delivered online by lecture and seminar beginning 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Draft Research Methods assignment to be submitted for tutor feedback by 26<sup>th</sup> August 2022; Assignment for Module Three to be submitted by 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022.
4. **Introduction to Module 4:** delivered online by lecture and seminar beginning 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022. Assignment for Module Four to be submitted by 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022.
5. Final version of Research Methods assignment to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

### Admission to the Programme

1. Students conform to the formal admissions requirements of the Institute, which have been approved by the Open University.
2. Candidates are normally expected to have an honours degree (2:2 or above) or equivalent academic or professional qualifications. Applicants who can show that they have covered the material of specific modules, and who have gained academic credit for this work elsewhere at a postgraduate level, may be allowed exemption for up to 120 credits (8 modules) at the Institute's discretion.
3. Apart from these academic qualifications, candidates are asked to submit in writing a 500 word statement making clear the ways in which the content and processes integral to their chosen course relate to their intellectual and apostolic aspirations. The intention here is to ensure that candidates have an understanding of the contribution that higher studies might make to their personal and professional/vocational life, and an acceptable attitude regarding the demands, intellectually and personally, that the course could be expected to make on them.
4. The Institute, with the approval of the Open University, participates in the University's credit transfer arrangements. Those interested in further information concerning these arrangements should write to the Programme Director.

## **Policy on the admission and support of students with English as a second language**

1. All higher education programmes offered by Maryvale Institute are written, delivered and assessed exclusively in English. On application the Institute requires evidence of proficiency in written and spoken English; the evidence of proficiency required for entry into courses is as follows:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS): Minimum average of 6.5 overall, with no sub-test below 6.0.
- Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP): Minimum equated score of 90.
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): Minimum paper-based total of 550, computer-based total of 213, or Internet-based total of 79.
- Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English (CAE): Minimum grade of B.
- Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE): Minimum grade of C.

2. Students who cannot demonstrate proficiency in English to the satisfaction of the Institute are required to take a short written examination which tests reading level and understanding, and facility in written English. This is designed, provided and assessed by the Institute. Dictionaries are allowed for the purposes of the exam.

3. As a standard procedure, all students for whom English is not their first language are identified at the relevant Assessment and Examinations Board.

4. Students who are deemed not to have passed may retake the exam, having demonstrated that they have undergone further instruction in English. Students who demonstrate a minimal level of proficiency may be accepted onto the course at the discretion of the Institute provided they give clear evidence of their plans for further improving their English.

## **Course Fees**

Details of course fees can be found on the enclosed 'Course Fees' sheets, and also on the [Maryvale website under 'Study with us'](#), where you will also find a link to the Institute [policy on the payment of fees](#), under 'Regulations and Policies'. The yearly fee covers tuition and the cost of all course materials, and is payable at the beginning of each academic year.

Students will incur some additional expenditure in connection with their course of study on such items as postage, extra books and the cost of having their dissertation bound.

## Application and Registration

An Application Form is enclosed with this brochure (an electronic version is available on request, or may be downloaded from the Institute website). A non-returnable application fee of £50.00 is required when making application for the course. Full fees for Year 1 are required once you have been registered for the course, and must be paid **before** the first start of the course (15<sup>th</sup> January 2021).

*Payment can be made via the Maryvale website – see instructions below. Payment must be made in Sterling. From countries outside the UK payment should be made in Sterling by way of a Banker's Draft drawn on a UK bank.*

## How to pay your Course Fees:

### 1) Paying via the website

To pay through the website, please visit the [Course Fees webpage](#)

Click on the 'Course Fees for EU Students' or 'Course Fees for Non-EU Students' tab as applicable. Scroll to the bottom of the page and select the relevant blue box (e.g. 'Register 1' is for the application fee) and follow the instructions. The website allows payment using credit and debit cards and PayPal (you do not need a PayPal account in order to use this method).

**N.B. Please indicate the course and your name in the additional info to seller.**

### 2) Paying by cheque

We currently accept cheque payments and bankers' drafts. Please ensure that these are made payable to **Maryvale Institute** and posted to the Finance Manager at Maryvale House. Please also send a message to the Finance Manager through the [Course Fees page](#) on the website to confirm the cheque has been sent, your course and invoice number (if you have one).

It is also possible to pay by PayPal or by internet banking (see the enclosed document "How to pay your Course Fees" for details). If you have any queries relating to payments, including requests for spreading the cost of HE course fees, please telephone (+44) 0121-360-8118 and ask for the Finance Manager, Amanda Orchard or send a message through the [Course Fees page](#) on the website.

## Admissions Process

To apply, you will need to send us your completed application and supporting documents (application fee and 500-word statement) as detailed in the application form. On receipt of these, and the references that you will have arranged to be sent to us, the person responsible for admissions to this course will arrange to interview by Zoom (or via another suitable video-conferencing platform). After this you will be notified within a

week<sup>2</sup> of the outcome of your application (all references are treated as confidential between the referee and the Institute).

Assuming that your application is successful you will be emailed an ‘acceptance pack’, including further information about Maryvale Institute and the course. This includes details of how to apply for a student card. An invoice for your fees will be sent to you in November, prior to your beginning the course. Once we have received your fees for the first year you are formally enrolled as a student of the Institute.

If for any reason your application for a place on the course is not successful, the Institute reserves the right, because of the elements of confidentiality involved in the admissions process and the collection of references, not to give you the reasons for this decision. If at any stage you are dissatisfied with the admissions process we would advise you to follow the complaints procedure of the Institute: a copy of this can be found on the Institute’s website under ‘[Study with us – Handbooks and Regulations](#)’, or you can order a copy from the Institute’s library. We will endeavour to ensure that your questions are dealt with promptly and professionally.

For further information on anything in this brochure, please contact the Programme Administrator ([postgrad@maryvale.ac.uk](mailto:postgrad@maryvale.ac.uk)) or the Programme Director ([ma@maryvale.ac.uk](mailto:ma@maryvale.ac.uk)) or call 0121 360 8118.

---

<sup>2</sup> This applies to applications received during term-time; those received during the holidays will be responded to within a week of term commencing.

# THE MARYVALE INSTITUTE



## DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

The Maryvale Institute is a data controller in terms of the 1998 legislation and has a policy in matters of data protection.

The Institute requires a certain amount of personal information for the administration of your studies, and to ensure the proper completion of your chosen course or degree. All personal information provided by you will be treated strictly in terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. This means confidentiality will be respected, and that all appropriate security measures will be taken to prevent unauthorised disclosure. The data that you provide will be used for stated purposes only. You would be advised about any further uses.

The Institute equally requires to process some data which current legislation refers to as sensitive personal data (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, marital status, health records, etc). Again appropriate security will be in place to ensure that documents such as medical certificates (possibly required by examination boards) are retained confidentially and that they are retained no longer than is necessary.

The administration of studies may extend beyond the Institute's central administration (e.g. transmission of data to academic departments, the library, the IT services, or professional bodies who accredit degrees). In other words it may include all aspects of student progress through to eventual graduation. Results of examinations are advised by letter from Programme Directors and Graduation results are posted on notice boards maintained by the Institute's Registry and may include your name and your grade. Information on degree results is regarded as public information, and published as such. In common with other Universities and Institutes we archive student records for a limited number of years after graduation, in order to be able to confirm requests from prospective employers etc. Details are also passed to our Alumni Office so that we can keep in touch with former students.

Under certain circumstances prescribed by the Act we might have to make data available without your consent. For example, in common with all other universities and institutes, we are obliged to pass information to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

At various times during your studies you will be asked for personal data by the Institute's departments, or services. You will still have full rights under the Data Protection Act, and may, if you wish, withhold personal data from publication in, for example, Web-based directories.

The Institute does all it can to ensure that all data remain up-to-date and accurate. There are some areas in which we must rely on students to tell us of changes that occur, and it is important that you keep us informed of any such changes to avoid situations where (for example) we may send vital material to the wrong address.

Any queries on these issues may be raised directly with the Institute's Data Protection Officer, who is the Institute's HE Registry Administrator.