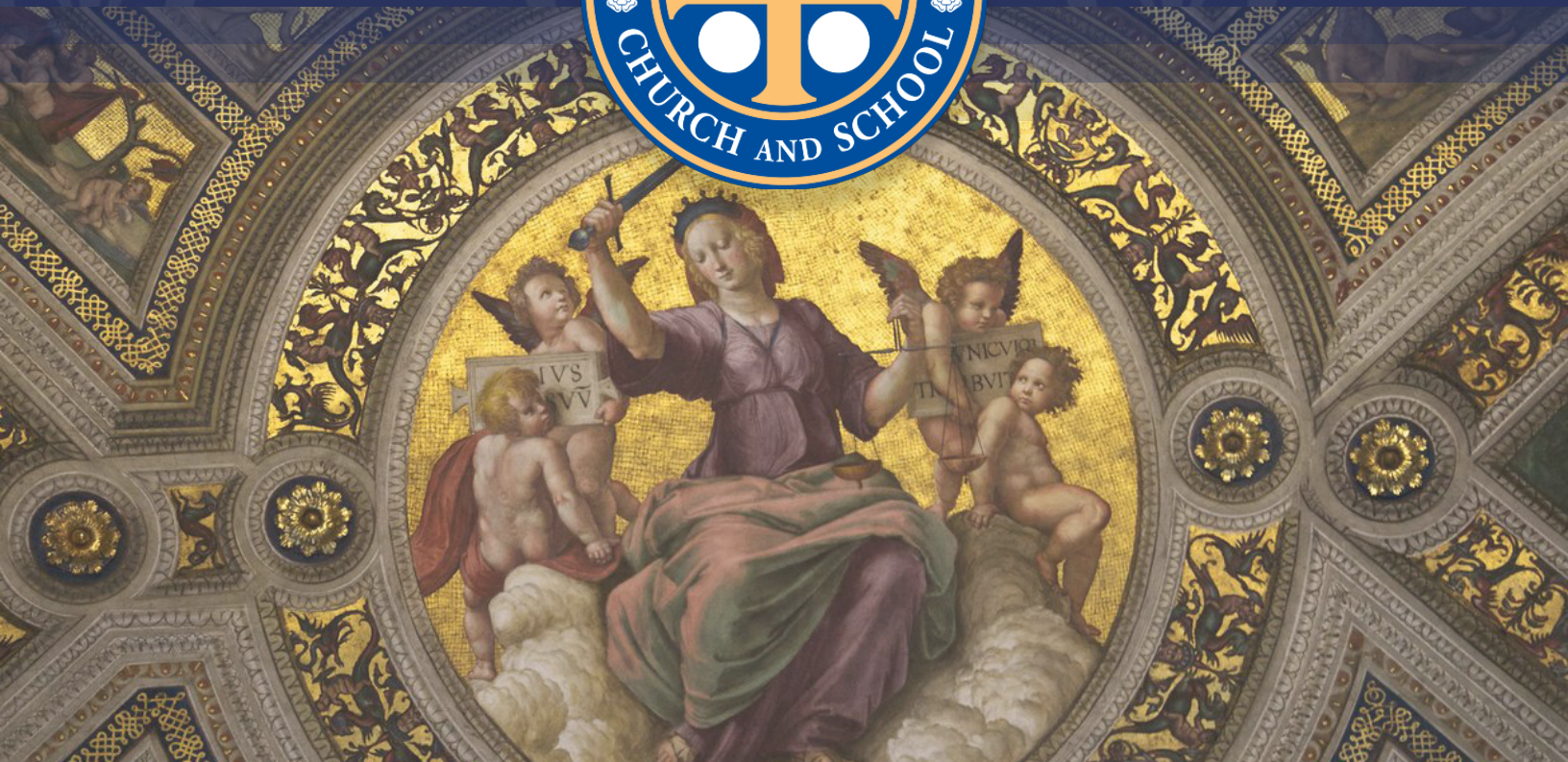
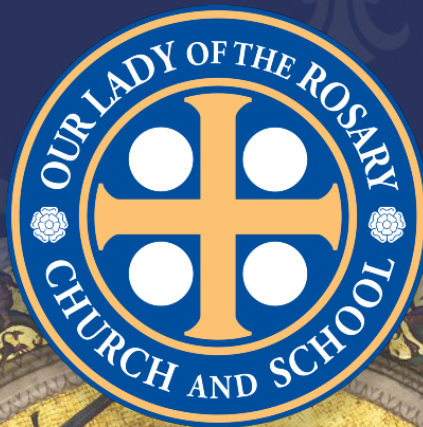




Gov't & Econ Curriculum

Grade 12



Course Overview

Course Description

This course explores the nature and purpose of government through the integrated lens of classical philosophy, American civics, and Catholic social teaching. Students will examine the origins of political order, the foundations of American self-government, and the moral demands of economic life. With an emphasis on virtue, justice, and the common good, the course seeks not merely to inform citizens—but to form them.



Why We Teach It...

We teach Government and Economics to form citizens who understand that liberty demands virtue and that justice is the aim of law. In a time of political confusion and moral drift, students must recover the enduring truths of human nature, authority, and the common good.

Through the study of classical philosophy, American founding principles, and Catholic social teaching, students learn that politics is not merely about power, but about the pursuit of the good; that economics is not merely about profit, but about purpose. Above all, this course seeks to cultivate wisdom—so that students may not only live freely, but govern rightly.








Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

-  Identify the key forms of government and distinguish their strengths and weaknesses.
-  Recall the foundational documents and principles of American constitutional government.



Course Objectives | Continued...

-  Explain the core teachings of Catholic social doctrine regarding law, authority, economics, and the common good.
-  Analyze primary texts in political philosophy, American civics, and Catholic teaching with clarity and precision.
-  Articulate reasoned arguments about justice, rights, and policy in both written and oral form.
-  Apply principles of sound economics and just governance to historical and contemporary issues.
-  Understand that man is a political and moral creature, ordered to both freedom and responsibility.
-  Recognize that law, rightly understood, is rooted in reason and aimed at justice.
-  Affirm that political and economic life must serve human dignity, virtue, and the good of all.

Source Material

Aristotle, Politics (Selections – Books I, III, VII)

Cicero, On Duties, On the Laws (Excerpts)

St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I-II Q90–97 (On Law)

The Declaration of Independence

The U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights

The Federalist Papers (Nos. 1, 10, 51, 78)

George Washington, Farewell Address

Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address, Second Inaugural

Catechism of the Catholic Church, §§1897–1917, 2401–2463

Pope Leo XIII, Rerum Novarum

St. John Paul II, Centesimus Annus, Evangelium Vitae

Marx, Communist Manifesto

Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations

George Orwell, Animal Farm



Central Themes

- ☞ Man is a social and political being, ordered by nature and grace to life in community.
- ☞ Justice is the constant and firm will to give each his due, and law is its servant when rightly rooted in reason and the moral order.
- ☞ Liberty is not the license to do as one pleases, but the freedom to do what is right under the guidance of virtue and ordered authority.
- ☞ The common good is the shared moral, spiritual, and material flourishing of a people, and must guide both political and economic life.
- ☞ The American Founding represents a unique synthesis of classical reason, Christian heritage, and political prudence.
- ☞ Economic life is a moral endeavor, and the Church calls for its ordering according to justice, solidarity, and subsidiarity.

Key Concepts

Natural Law

Justice

Civic Virtue

Federalism

Separation of Powers

Checks and Balances

Republican Government

Democracy

Political Authority

Natural Rights

Rule of Law

Constitutionalism

The Bill of Rights

Judicial Review

The Common Good

Human Work

Private Property

Stewardship

The Dignity of Labor

Free Markets and Moral Limits

Distributive Justice

Subsidiarity in Economics

Capital and Labor

Just Wage

Consumerism and Materialism

Communism & Marxism

Capitalism

Utilitarianism



On Writing

All written work in this course integrates Our Lady's Writing Curriculum, a program rooted in the tradition of the classical oration and the progymnasmata—the ancient exercises that trained students in the art of eloquence, clarity, and persuasion. Students will be guided through structured stages of composition, learning to narrate, describe, argue, and exhort with both precision and grace.

Writing is not treated as a mere skill, but as a moral and intellectual discipline—a means of pursuing truth and communicating it rightly. In keeping with the classical model, students will imitate excellent forms, internalize timeless principles, and ultimately express their own judgments with charity, courage, and rhetorical power.

Assessments

Summative: 45 %

- Unit Exams
- Essays (Persuasive & Expository)
- Recitations
- Artifacts

Formative: 35 %

- Oral Forms Recitation
- Artifacts
- Weekly Writing Assignments
- Essay Process

Conscientiousness 20 %

- Pop Quizzes
- Homework
- Classwork
- Participation



Scope & Sequence

Unit 1	The Origins of Government	2 Weeks
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Week 1-2 **Overview**

Students will examine the nature of man and the foundations of political life. Through close reading of classical and biblical texts, they will consider why man cannot flourish in isolation, and how natural law and the pursuit of justice give rise to political communities. Students will reflect on the essential features of authority, the common good, and the moral obligations of both rulers and the ruled.

Great Question(s)

Why do humans form governments?

Central-One-Idea

Man is by nature a political creature, ordered not to isolation but to community. Government arises from the demands of justice and the natural inclination to live with others in harmony. To govern justly is to act in accordance with reason, nature, and divine law.

Key Terms

Nature of Man; Authority; Political Animal; Common Good; Justice

Sources: *Politics* by Aristotle; *On Duties* by Cicero; *Genesis* (Sacred Scripture)



Unit 2 | Forms of Gov't; Foundation of Law 3 Weeks

Week 3-5 Overview

Students will explore the types of political regimes and the moral and structural conditions that allow them to endure or decay. By studying classical and theological texts, they will distinguish between good and corrupt forms of government, and consider what makes a regime just. Special attention will be given to the role of virtue, law, and ordered liberty in preserving a republic and resisting tyranny.

Great Question(s)

- *What distinguishes a just regime from a corrupt one?*
- *How does law—natural, human, and divine—shape and limit political power?*
- *What makes a republic stable, and how can it guard against tyranny?*

Central-One-Idea

A just regime is ordered toward the common good and governed by reason. When grounded in eternal and natural law, political authority leads men toward virtue. When severed from truth, power degenerates into tyranny.

Key Terms

Regime (Politeia); Tyranny; Monarchy; Aristocracy; Oligarchy; Polity; Eternal Law; Natural Law

Sources: *Republic, Books VIII–IX by Plato Summa Theologiae, I–II Questions 90–97 (On Law) by St. Thomas Aquinas*

Week 6-10**Overview**

Students will investigate the philosophical foundations and political principles that shaped the American founding. Drawing from classical reason and Christian moral insight, the Founders articulated a vision of government rooted in natural rights, ordered liberty, and the rule of law. Students will analyze key texts to understand how principles such as consent, separation of powers, and federalism were designed to preserve freedom and guard against tyranny.

Great Questions

- *What is the origin and purpose of natural rights?*
- *Why must legitimate government be based on consent?*
- *How does the separation of powers protect liberty?*
- *Can a large republic preserve the common good?*
- *How does America's founding vision combine reason and faith?*

Central-One-Idea

The American founding wedded classical political wisdom with Christian moral order. By grounding government in natural rights, consent, and the rule of law, the Founders sought to establish a republic capable of securing both liberty and virtue.

Key Terms

Natural Rights, Social Contract, Consent of the Governed, Federalism, Separation of Powers, Checks & Balances

Sources: *Declaration of Independence*; *The Federalist Papers* (Nos. 1, 10, 51, 78); John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 2–5; Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, Book I (Chs. 1–3), Book XI (Ch. 6)



Week 11-14 Overview

Students will study the structure and principles of the United States Constitution, focusing on how it seeks to balance liberty with order. Through foundational texts, they will explore how the separation of powers, federalism, and protections for civil liberties aim to restrain tyranny and preserve self-government. Particular attention will be given to the problem of factions, the logic of Constitutional design, and the enduring role of the rule of law.

Great Questions

- *How does the Constitution guard against the tyranny of factions?*
- *What is the relationship between liberty and law in a republic?*
- *How do the separation of powers and federalism preserve freedom?*
- *What makes a constitution just and enduring?*

Central-One-Idea

A just republic requires more than popular will—it must be governed by law. The U.S. Constitution channels political energy through carefully ordered structures that secure liberty, limit power, and uphold the dignity of the human person.

Key Terms

Factions; Civil Liberties; Constitutionalism

Sources: *The U.S. Constitution*

The Federalist Papers (Nos. 1, 10, 51)

Week 15-16 Overview

Students will explore the origins and philosophical justification of the Bill of Rights, focusing on its role in preserving liberty through a prudent balance of tradition and adaptation. They will consider the arguments for and against including a bill of rights, particularly in Federalist No. 84, and reflect on the amendment process as a form of political memory—ensuring that justice and natural rights remain safeguarded across time.

Great Question

Why did the Founders believe liberty required written limits on government power?

Central-One-Idea

The Bill of Rights is not merely a legal document, but a moral and philosophical expression of the natural rights that precede government. By amending the Constitution to include it, the Founders acknowledged both the permanence of truth and the prudence of reform.

Key Terms

Amendment; Freedom; Reserved Powers; Federalism

Sources: *Bill of Rights; Federalist No. 84; Tenth Amendment Center resources*

Week 17-18 Overview

Students will study landmark Supreme Court cases to understand how the judiciary interprets constitutional rights and governmental powers. They will examine how legal reasoning reflects different philosophies of law, and consider the tension between legal fidelity and judicial innovation. Central to this unit is the question of what it means for a court to do justice: not merely to enforce outcomes, but to uphold the enduring principles of the Constitution.

Week 17-18 **Great Questions**

- *What authority does the Supreme Court have to interpret the Constitution?*
- *Can courts preserve justice without becoming law-makers?*

Central-One-Idea

The court is not the author of law but its interpreter. True justice demands that judges exercise wisdom and restraint, remaining faithful to the text, tradition, and moral foundation of the Constitution, lest the law become the servant of power rather than truth.

Key Terms

Judicial Review; Due Process Clause; Originalism
Judicial Restraint vs. Judicial Activism; Living Constitution

Sources: *Marbury v. Madison* (1803); *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954); *Roe v. Wade* (1973)

Week 19-20 **Overview**

Students will explore the everyday responsibilities of citizens in a free republic, including voting, jury duty, and engagement in civil discourse. Emphasis is placed on the connection between virtue and liberty, and how participation in civic life sustains the common good.

Great Question

Can liberty endure without virtuous citizens?

Central-One-Idea

A republic depends not only on laws and institutions, but on citizens who practice virtue and fulfill their duties for the sake of the common good.

Unit 5 | Continued...

6 Weeks

Week 19-20 Key Terms

Civic Responsibility; Virtue; Voting; Jury Duty; Natural Law and Civil Law

Sources: *Catechism of the Catholic Church* §§2238–2246; *Local voting guides*; *U.S. Civics test materials*

Unit 6 | The Myth of Modern Man

2 Weeks

Week 21-22 Overview

Students will challenge the modern reduction of man to a producer or consumer by recovering classical and Christian understandings of human nature. Through reflection on leisure, virtue, and telos, they will examine how economic life must be ordered to man's higher purpose.

Great Questions

- *What is man for? What is money for?*
- *Can a just economy exist without a true vision of the human person?*

Central-One-Idea

Economics cannot be rightly ordered without knowing what man is. A society that forgets man's telos will trade justice for utility and freedom for material comfort.

Key Terms

Anthropology; Telos; Leisure; Stewardship; Materialism; Utility; State of Nature

Sources: *Josef Pieper, Leisure: The Basis of Culture (selections)*; *Catechism of the Catholic Church* §§1700–1706, 2401–2407



Week 23-25 Overview

Students will examine the philosophical and moral foundations of classical capitalism, exploring how markets depend on private property, free exchange, and human creativity. They will then confront the moral challenges posed by consumerism, inequality, and economic systems detached from the dignity of the person and the common good.

Great Questions

- *How do markets serve human freedom and flourishing?*
- *What happens when profit becomes the highest good?*
- *Can capitalism serve justice without virtue?*

Central-One-Idea

Markets can promote freedom and prosperity, but without moral limits and concern for the poor, capitalism becomes a danger to both the soul and society.

Key Terms

Property; Markets; Division of Labor; Materialism
Inequality; Consumerism; Moral Vacuum

Sources: *Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations (Book I, Chapters 1–2); Catechism of the Catholic Church §2423; Pope Leo XIII, Rerum Novarum §§2–5*



Unit 8

Three Rival Theories: Communism 3 Weeks

Week 26

Overview

Through Orwell's *Animal Farm*, students will examine the rise of Communism in Soviet Russia and the corrupting effects of collectivism, propaganda, and power.

Great Question

Can equality be achieved without truth?

Central-One-Idea

When justice is separated from truth and dignity, equality becomes a mask for tyranny.

Key Terms

Allegory; Totalitarianism; Collectivism; Propaganda; Class Struggle; Equality vs. Equity

Source: *George Orwell, Animal Farm*

Week 27-28

Overview

Students will analyze the theory of Communism as presented by Marx and contrast it with Catholic teaching on justice, freedom, and natural law. They will examine how Communism's materialist vision undermines the person and leads to oppression.

Great Questions

- *Can a just society be built on class conflict?*
- *What happens when law is no longer rooted in nature or God?*

Central-One-Idea

Communism promises equality through force, but in rejecting freedom, religion, and natural law, it replaces injustice with tyranny.

Key Terms

Bourgeoisie; Proletariat; Historical Determinism

Sources: *Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto (Sections I–II); Pope Leo XIII, Rerum Novarum §§15–21*



Week 29-30 Overview

Students will explore Distributism as a Catholic alternative to both capitalist concentration and socialist collectivism. Drawing on the thought of G.K. Chesterton and the Church's social teaching, they will consider how wide ownership of productive property, family-centered economic life, and small-scale localism offer a vision of justice rooted in human dignity. Distributism is not a utopian blueprint, but a recovery of moral and economic sanity—an economy where people own, work, and belong.

Great Questions

- *What kind of economy best reflects the dignity of the human person?*
- *Can widespread property ownership restore both liberty and justice?*

Central-One-Idea

A just economy begins not with profit or production, but with the person. Distributism seeks to restore justice through the widespread ownership of productive property, rooted in the family and guided by subsidiarity and solidarity.

Key Terms

Distributism; Productive Property; Subsidiarity; Solidarity; Economic Participation; Guild-Based Production

Sources: *G.K. Chesterton, The Outline of Sanity (Chapters 1–3); Catechism of the Catholic Church (as context for subsidiarity, solidarity, property, and labor—esp. §§2401–2463); Selections from Papal encyclicals (Rerum Novarum, Quadragesimo Anno)*



Course Catechism

This section is structured as a series of questions and answers—intended to cultivate wisdom, virtue, and a love of tradition in the soul of the reader. Drawing from classical education, Christian orthodoxy, and the accumulated insights of Western civilization, this catechism aims to form not only the mind but the moral imagination.



Each question is crafted to provoke contemplation, and each answer is more than mere information—it is a small liturgy of truth, designed to be memorized, internalized, and lived. In the tradition of ancient catechisms, this section assumes that learning is not just for passing tests, but for becoming someone.

Section I | What is Man?

Q: Who is man?

A: *Man is a rational and moral being, made in the image of God, ordered to truth, virtue, and life in community.*

Q: What distinguishes man from beast?

A: *Man alone is capable of reason, self-sacrifice, and worship, and is thus responsible for justice.*

Q: What is man for?

A: *Man is for beatitude: to know, love, and serve God—and to govern himself and others in accord with truth.*

Q: Is man sufficient unto himself?

A: *No. Man requires family, Church, and society to flourish, and must live in fellowship with others under just authority.*

Q: What happens when man forgets who he is?

A: *He becomes either a tyrant or a slave, and forgets both justice and joy.*



Section II | On Government & Justice

Q: What is government?

A: *Government is the authority by which a people orders itself toward peace and justice.*

Q: What is law?

A: *Law is an ordinance of reason for the common good, made by one who has care for the community.*

Q: What is the origin of law?

A: *All just law finds its origin in eternal law and natural law, written by God into the heart of man.*

Q: What is justice?

A: *Justice is the virtue of giving to each what is due—whether to God, neighbor, or the common good.*

Q: What are the six basic forms of government?

A: *Monarchy, aristocracy, polity—and their corruptions: tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy.*

Q: Which form is best?

A: *The best is that which most effectively promotes virtue, safeguards freedom, and honors the law.*

Q: What is tyranny?

A: *Tyranny is the rule of one for his own good rather than the good of the people.*

Q: What did the Founders believe about man?

A: *That man has natural rights, but that liberty cannot survive without virtue and law.*

Q: What are natural rights?

A: *Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—granted not by government, but by nature and nature's God.*



Section II | On Gov't & Justice (Continued...)

Q: What is the Constitution?

A: *A covenant between the people and their government, designed to preserve liberty through ordered restraint.*

Q: What is the purpose of the Constitution?

A: *To limit power, secure justice, and allow a virtuous people to govern themselves.*

Q: What is federalism?

A: *A balance of power between national and local authorities, preserving liberty through decentralization.*

Q: What is the Bill of Rights?

A: *A statement of civil liberties that protects the individual from tyranny and reminds the government of its limits.*

Q: Why do republics fail?

A: *Republics fail when the people abandon virtue, forget history, and seek comfort more than courage.*

Section III | The Courts & the Law

Q: What is the role of the courts?

A: *To interpret the law faithfully and apply it with justice, never to invent new laws.*

Q: What is judicial review?

A: *The power of the courts to determine whether laws are consistent with the Constitution.*

Q: Can courts be wrong?

A: *Yes. When they reject natural law and moral order, they become a source of injustice.*



Section IV | The Virtue of Citizenship

Q: What is citizenship?

A: *Citizenship is both a privilege and a duty, calling each person to serve the common good through virtue and participation.*

Q: What are the duties of a citizen?

A: *To obey just laws, vote with discernment, serve on juries, pay taxes, and defend the Constitution when needed.*

Q: What are two ways a person can become a U.S. citizen?

A: *By birth or by naturalization.*

Q: What is one promise made by someone who becomes a U.S. citizen?

A: *To support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States.*

Q: What is the rule of law?

A: *The principle that everyone, including leaders, must obey the law.*

Q: What are the first ten amendments to the Constitution called?

A: *The Bill of Rights.*

Q: What are two rights of everyone living in the United States?

A: *Freedom of speech and freedom of religion.*

Q: What is the highest law of the land?

A: *The Constitution of the United States.*

Q: What does it mean to vote with discernment?

A: *To vote according to truth and justice, after studying candidates, laws, and principles with care.*

Q: What is civil discourse?

A: *Speaking the truth in love, listening with patience, and arguing with charity for the sake of the common good.*

Q: Why is jury duty a noble act?

A: *Because it places the judgment of one's neighbor into the hands of fellow citizens and demands integrity and justice.*



Section V | Economics & the Human Person

Q: What is the purpose of economics?

A: *To provide for human needs, support the family, and serve the common good—never merely to accumulate wealth.*

Q: What is capitalism?

A: *An economic system based on private property and market exchange; good when guided by virtue, dangerous when guided by greed.*

Q: What is communism?

A: *A false vision of equality that denies property, suppresses the soul, and centralizes power in the state.*

Q: What is distributism?

A: *An ideal (although hard to achieve) economy of widespread ownership, rooted in family life, local production, and the dignity of work.*

Q: What makes an economy just?

A: *When it respects human dignity, protects the weak, promotes virtue, and serves the needs of all.*



Section VI | Recitations

Q: What would it take to form a nation that is both free and just—and what kind of people must we become to preserve it?

A: *“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union...”*

Q: If you believed your rights came from God and not from kings or governments, how would you speak—and would you be willing to suffer for it?

A: *“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...”*

Q: If true law begins with the law of God, what happens to a people who forget it—and what becomes of liberty when virtue is lost?

A: *“I am the Lord thy God... Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steal...”*

Q: In a world obsessed with efficiency, speed, and self-interest, what kind of person must you become to live wisely, love well, and remain free?

A: *“Love the quick profit, the annual raise, vacation with pay. Want more of everything ready-made...”*



Week 1

Weekly Logos

What is Man?

“To understand government, we must first understand man. If we do not know what he is for, we will never know how he ought to be ruled.”

This week, students explore the foundation of political life in human nature, the moral order, and the question of law and authority. We begin with Genesis, laying the theological groundwork for man as a rational and relational being. Aristotle and Cicero guide students toward the classical conviction that law and justice begin in human nature—not in the will of rulers.

What Are We Assessing?

The Facts

🏛️ Definitions of justice, common good, and authority

🏛️ Sabbath rest is the goal of man

🏛️ Aristotle’s definition of man as a political animal

🏛️ The biblical account of man’s creation and dominion

What Are We Assessing?

The Skills

🏛️ Identify key political terms in primary texts (e.g., polis, telos, justice)

🏛️ Explain the relationship between nature, purpose, and law

🏛️ Summarize Aristotle’s argument that man is a political creature

🏛️ Compare the biblical and classical views of man’s social nature

🏛️ Give instruction of common topics & classical oration



What Are We Assessing? | The Truths

“Law is not the creation of man’s will, but the discovery of man’s nature.”

These truths unify every element of the lesson:

Man is created with a purpose—to live in community and pursue justice.


Political authority exists to secure the common good in accord with natural law.


A just society must first be grounded in a true understanding of the human person.

Assessments | Suggested Types

 Reading Annotation: Genesis 1–2 and Aristotle, Politics Book I (selections)

 Short Written Reflection: What is man for?

 Vocabulary Quiz: Nature of Man, Political Animal, Justice,

 Discussion: “What is the difference between power and authority?”



Pacing | By Week

<i>Day</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Homework</i>
Monday	Introduction to Political Philosophy; What is man? Begin Genesis 1–2	Read Genesis 1–2; Define nature, telos, authority
Tuesday	Genesis & Nature: What does it mean to be made in the image of God?	<i>Read Politics Book I.1–2; Outline Aristotle’s argument</i>
Wednesday	Aristotle: Man as Political Animal; begin vocabulary work	Begin vocabulary chart (5 terms); prepare oral definition
Thursday	Cicero and Justice; What is law? Begin group discussion prep	Read Cicero, On Duties I.6–8; Reflection: What is law?
Friday	Socratic Seminar or Guided Discussion: Man, Law, and Justice	Vocabulary Quiz review; Begin short reflection paragraph



Teacher Tips

- 1. Use Visual Aids:** Diagram Aristotle's concept of the polis; chart how biblical dominion leads to civic responsibility.
- 2. Recite Definitions Often:** Drill terms such as justice, authority, and common good out loud, connecting definitions to text.
- 3. Highlight Language and Logic:** Break down key passages to show how precise definitions (e.g., of man) lead to moral conclusions.
- 4. Make the Questions Philosophical:** Ask not just "What is law?" but "What must be true about man for law to be just?"
- 5. Connect Grammar to Truth:** In student writing or speech, emphasize clarity and order as expressions of truth.



Appendix

Essays In This Course...

Each of the three major essays in this course will follow the structure and spirit of our Classical Writing Curriculum at Our Lady of the Rosary. Students are expected to write with clarity, order, and persuasive force, employing the Classical Oration form:

- Exordium – The introduction that gains attention and builds ethos
- Narratio – Background/context, statement of facts/narration of events
- Divisio – Outline of major arguments
- Confirmatio – 3 Proofs & Sub-Proofs (body paragraphs)
- Refutatio – Address and refute opposing arguments
- Peroratio – The conclusion: moving the heart, restating the truth

Each essay must be a minimum of 4-5 full pages, MLA formatted, and include a bibliography with at least five primary sources and three scholarly secondary sources. This level of work prepares students not only for collegiate academic writing, but more importantly, for thoughtful, ordered argument in service of truth, which lies at the heart of classical education.

Prompt I

Who possesses the legitimate authority to define and uphold justice in a political community.

Objective: Form a rich, coherent definition of justice and examine how a rightly ordered regime protects it. Include at least one historical or modern example of justice upheld—or violated.

Sources: Aristotle, *Politics*; Cicero, *On Duties*; St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (I-II, Q90–97); Genesis 1–3; Romans 13; Catechism of the Catholic Church §§1905–1927



Prompt II

Whether liberty can endure without personal and civic virtue.

Objective: Demonstrate how liberty is not license, and explore the connection between interior freedom (virtue) and exterior political freedom. You may include discussion of civic participation, religious liberty, or education.

Sources: Declaration of Independence; The Federalist Papers (esp. No. 10, 51, 84); The U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights; CCC §§1730–1748 (freedom and responsibility)

Prompt III

Compare capitalism, communism, and distributism in light of human dignity and Catholic social teaching. Which system best upholds the moral purpose of economic life, and what would it require of us?

Objective: Students must show that economics is not value-neutral. Engage questions of property, labor, justice, and the family. Conclude by proposing how a moral economy might be lived out at the personal, local, or national level.

Sources: Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*; G.K. Chesterton, *The Outline of Sanity*; Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*; Karl Marx, *Communist Manifesto*; Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*; *Animal Farm*







Close-Imitation Project | The Constitution

In *The Republic*, Plato describes five regimes—aristocracy, timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny—each flowing from a corresponding vision of the human soul. In this project, you will choose one regime (other than democracy) and write a constitution for a society that embodies its principles. But you will not write it in your own voice—you will closely imitate the language and style of a real historical figure who embodied or defended that regime type as well as closely imitate the structure/form of the U.S. Constitution.

Your goal is to bring together Platonic philosophy, historical precedent, and rhetorical imitation to produce a believable, ordered, and intellectually serious founding document. This is a chance to engage in philosophical role-play and practice the kind of writing and thinking real statesmen once performed.




Steps of the Assignment

Choose Your Regime (from Plato's *Republic*-Democracy not available):

-  Aristocracy – Rule by the wise and virtuous (Plato's ideal regime)
-  Timocracy – Rule by honor and military excellence
-  Oligarchy – Rule by the wealthy few
-  Tyranny – Rule by a single man with total power

Choose a Historical Figure to Imitate:

Select a real historical figure who either:

-  Practiced this form of government,
-  Wrote about it, or
-  Embodied its values.



Examples:

- 🏛️ Aristocracy: Marcus Aurelius, Thomas Aquinas
- 🏛️ Timocracy: Leonidas of Sparta, Napoleon (early), George Washington (military model)
- 🏛️ Oligarchy: Cicero (as a defender of the Roman Republic's elite order), Medici statesmen
- 🏛️ Tyranny: Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great, Napoleon

Ask yourself: Who would have written this constitution, and what would it sound like?

Write the Constitution (2–4 pages)

Closely imitate the U.S. Constitution along with a mixture of law, moral reflection, and political philosophy. Include:

- 🏛️ Preamble: Address the people, gods, or posterity. State your purpose and vision.
- 🏛️ Articles (5–7): Define your regime's structure:
- 🏛️ Closing Invocation or Reflection: Offer a moral or philosophical justification for the regime, echoing your chosen figure's worldview.

Use elevated, historically accurate language. Closely imitate your chosen figure's tone, sentence structure, and moral assumptions.

