

BBI The Australian Institute of Theological Education

Introduction to Mission

Course Outline 2025

Course Coordinator:	Name:	Mr Patrick Fox
	Phone:	+61 2 9030 3110
	Email:	Patrick@catholicmission.org.au
	Consultation times:	Please make an appointment via email

Overview

Description

The Church is by its very nature missionary (*Ad Gentes 2*). Mission is its very reason for existing. It is the Church's beginning, endpoint, and life of the Church. It is mission which creates Church, and the Church is at the service of the mission. Mission is not an instrument of the Church, rather Church is the instrument of mission.

This course of eight sessions is for all those who want to explore the breadth and depth of their personal and professional life lived as mission, aligning that with God's dream for all creation. It is especially helpful for those in leadership roles of mission; school leaders and teachers, staff and volunteers of Catholic agencies and organisations, who work daily for the realisation of God's kingdom in the world.

Sessions

8 fortnightly sessions of 60-minute zoom input and discussion

Preparatory reading of 1 essential reading, plus extra deepening articles per session

Assessment Task

Cumulative post-session discussion board reflection on application and theory, and evolving understanding – 400 words

End of course 1,000-word summary essay on chosen area of investigation.

For participants wanting graduate credit

End of course 2,500-word essay on chosen area of mission.

Critical reflection on praxis from theory and including on theory from personal praxis.

30 demand hours equivalent

What we will explore

Part 1

We begin with Jesus and his mission in the Scriptures and the mission of the early Church. We look at the evolving ways in which the Church has understood mission throughout history according to changing contexts.

We place mission in the pivotal renewal of the Second Vatican Council followed by contemporary teaching on Mission, focussing on God's mission, Jesus and the Reign of God, and the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the world.

As mission is to evangelise or to bring the good news of the kingdom of God into every aspect of human existence, evangelisation is explored in various expressions including witness, explicit proclamation of Jesus Christ, encounter with Christ in community and transformation of human society according to kingdom values.

On a personal spiritual level, we focus on awareness and alignment of one's personal mission with one's baptismal missionary calling, and how personal integrity motivates and strengthens commitment in times of challenge.

Part 2

In the second half we explore the challenges of what mission could look like in Australia today and into the future in a synodal church.

We ask, today 'How is mission carried out?', 'By whom?', 'To whom?', and 'For what is mission?' and the role of dialogue and synodality in discerning the way forward.

Finally, we look at contemporary arenas and explore ecological conversion and justice as mission, mission among First Nations peoples, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, mission with people of other faiths, and mission as an educator.

As a final assessment exercise, participants are challenged to critique the arena of mission in which they are involved, in light of Roger Schroeder's exposition on mission as 'A Single but Complex Reality'.

Topics

- Jesus' mission in the Scriptures and the mission of the Early Church
- Historical contextual understandings of mission
- Re-founding of mission from the Second Vatican Council onwards; *Ad Gentes, Evangelii Nuntiandi, Redemptoris Missio, Evangelii Gaudium*
- Contemporary teaching on mission; *Missio Dei*, Jesus, Reign of God and the Church, the Holy Spirit
- Mission, Communion and Participation
- Mission as an Educator
- Mission among migrants, refugees and asylum seekers
- Mission among Australia's First Nations peoples
- Ecological Conversion and Justice as mission
- Mission as Interfaith Encounter

Patrick Fox



Patrick's strongest mission formation experience came through ten years living among the indigenous Q'eqchi' people of the central highlands of Guatemala, working in a full gamut of pastoral activities, catechetics, community organisation and development, and youth leadership training, where he was also a member of the enculturation advisory body "Ak' Kutan" (New Dawn) in the diocese of Alta Verapaz. Here Patrick believes he was truly evangelised by the Q'eqchi' people.

On returning to Australia Patrick began with Catholic Mission as lead of the national Mission Formation team, promoting awareness and understanding of mission through workshops with Catholic Education offices, presentations in parishes and schools, and broader media community education. He is currently the coordinator of the 'Educating with a Mission Lens' programme, developed in partnership with Catholic Education of Wollongong.

He also works nationally across dioceses and religious congregations providing training in cultural competency for mission.

His other interests include music, international politics, interculturality, international development, and enjoys learning languages; fluent in Spanish, Q'eqchi, and Malay, and conversant in Italian.

He holds tertiary qualifications in Music Education (University of Melbourne), International Development (University of New South Wales), Philosophy (Catholic Theological College, Melbourne), and Theology (Francisco Marroquin University, Guatemala).