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Guide to Citing Theology Resources in MLA format

The MLA handbook does not provide precise instructions for citing documents of the Church. The following are guidelines for citations in various formats, e.g., print, web, database, etc. A document may be in multiple formats. Cite accordingly.

No matter what the format of the source, there are a few “rules of thumb” when it comes to Catholic Church documents.

Most papal and episcopal documents are treated as *books*, not as letters or chapters. This means they are *italicized* or underlined, rather than put in quotation marks. Do not use online automatic formatting for Catholic Church documents, such as www.easybib.com, as these treat the following as letters or chapters, which is incorrect. Follow the guidelines, and do it yourself.

These include the following:

Papal encyclicals

Papal decrees

Council documents (e.g., Vatican II documents)

Apostolic letters

Apostolic exhortations

Anniversary documents commenting on previous encyclical letters

Bishops' statements

Primary works (e.g., works of antiquity through the Middle Ages, such as from Irenaeus, Augustine, Aquinas, etc.)

While the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is treated as a book, a catechetical document is treated as a chapter and put in quotation marks. An example would be the headings: “The Desire for God.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

With regard to papal documents in print or EBook form, indicate the translation or edition you are using in the bibliography. This is not necessary in the citations. Example:

All Vatican II documents are taken from:

Flannery, Austin, editor. *Vatican Council II: Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations*. Costello Publishing, 1996.

In parenthetical citations, give *either* the Latin or English title. This may be abbreviated. Note that the *EV* for the *Latin* is italicized (or underlined), but the *CCC* for the *English* is not.

Examples:

(*The Gospel of Life* 13)

(*Evangelium Vitae* 13)

(*EV* 13)

(*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1234)

(*CCC* 1234)

Below is an example of the footnote or endnote format for the 1st entry:

John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter, Evangelium Vitae: On the Value and Inviolability of Human Life* (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1995) 7; par. 13.

Subsequent footnotes or endnotes:

Evangelium Vitae 7; par 13

Evangelium Vitae 7

On the Value and Inviolability of Human Life 7; par 13

How does the document title appear in the bibliography?

You have several options in MLA with and without the English translation, and remember that these titles are either *italicized* or underlined.

Examples:

John Paul II. *Encyclical Letter Evangelium Vitae*.

John Paul II. *Encyclical Letter Evangelium Vitae: The Gospel of Life*.

John Paul II. *Encyclical Letter Evangelium Vitae. The Gospel of Life*.

John Paul II. *The Gospel of Life (Evangelium Vitae)*.

How does the document title appear in the footnotes and endnotes?

You have several options with and without the English translation, and remember that these titles are either *italicized* or underlined.

John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Evangelium Vitae*

John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Evangelium Vitae, The Gospel of Life*

John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Evangelium Vitae: The Gospel of Life*

John Paul II, *The Gospel of Life (Evangelium Vitae)*

No matter what the source, below are guidelines for bibliography and citations in the various formats (remember, the title can appear in any of the configurations above).

Print Resources

Book - Encyclical

John Paul II. *Encyclical Letter Evangelium Vitae: The Gospel of Life*. United States Catholic Conference, 1995.

Parenthetical citation:

(*Evangelium Vitae* 24)

(*EV* 24)

(*The Gospel of Life* 24)

1st footnote or endnote:

John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter, Evangelium Vitae, The Gospel of Life* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1995) 24; par 4.

Subsequent footnotes or endnotes:

Evangelium Vitae 24; par 4

Evangelium Vitae 24

The Gospel of Life 24

Book – Council Documents

Bibliography

Second Vatican Council. *Lumen Gentium. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*. 7 Dec. 1965. Edited by Austin Flannery, Castello Publishing, 1966.

Citations: See above

Primary Texts and Books with a translator

Bibliography:

On the Trinity, On Christian Doctrine, and City of God are taken from:

Augustine. *Augustine of Hippo: Selected Writings*. Translated by Mary Clark, Paulist Press, 1984.

Regarding citation of a compilation of primary works, the primary work is cited with the citation type (e.g., section, paragraph, book, chapter, etc.), usually not the page number.

Note: Primary works (usually works of antiquity through the Middle Ages), either as a compilation or single work, in parenthetical citations normally are listed by the work and not the author. See examples below from Augustine, Aquinas, and Aristotle.

Parenthetical Citation:

(*On the Trinity* I.i.2)

Note the I.i.2 refers to “Book.chapter.paragraph.”

1st footnote or endnote

Augustine, *Augustine of Hippo: Selected Writings*, trans. Mary Clark (Ramsey, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1984) *On the Trinity* II.i.2

Subsequent footnotes or endnotes

On the Trinity II.i.2

Single Primary Source book with a translator

Bibliography:

Augustine. *Confessions*. Translated by Henry Chadwick, Oxford UP, 2009.

Parenthetical citation:

(*Confessions* VII.ii.3)

1st footnote or endnote:

Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009) VII.ii.3.

Subsequent footnotes or endnotes:

Confessions VII.ii.3.

Print book one volume of a multi volume set

Bibliography:

Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*. Translated by Thomas Gornall, vol. 4. Blackfriars, 1964.
60 vols.

Regarding citations, the exact location of the text, not the page number, is needed. Often the *Summa Theologiae* is abbreviated *ST*.

Parenthetical citation (any of the following are acceptable):

(*Summa Theologiae* I-II, Q.3, Art. 2, ad. 1)

(*Sum* I-II, 2, ii, ad. 1)

(*ST* I-II, Q. 3, Art. 2, ad. 1)

(*ST* I-II, Q 3, A 2, ad. 1)

(*S.T.* I-II, 2, ii, a. 1)

1st footnote or endnote:

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, trans. Thomas Gornall, vol. 4 (London: Blackfriars, 1964)
I-II, 2, ii, a.1 (or any of the section formats, above).

Subsequent footnotes or endnotes:

Summa Theologiae I-II, 2, ii, a.1 (or any acceptable variation).

Sacred text print version

Bibliography

The Holy Bible. Rev. Standard Version, Meridian, 1962.

1st Parenthetical citation:

(Prov. 25.21, RSV)

Subsequent citations from the same translation:

(Prov. 24.21)

Another type of Bible

Bibliography

The New English Bible with the Apocrypha: Oxford Study Edition. Edited by Samuel Sandmel,
Oxford UP, 1976.

Parenthetical citation:

(Prov. 25.16, NEB).

Subsequent citations from same translation:

(Prov. 26.17).

Footnotes or endnotes: Normally, even when using footnotes and endnotes, biblical citations remain in text, as the reader wants to know immediately the biblical reference. The reasons to use a footnote with a biblical citation are for an explanation or a cross-reference.

Electronic Resources

Papal encyclical *found online*

Bibliography:

Benedict XVI. *Encyclical Letter Caritas in Veritate. The Vatican.* The Holy See, 2009. 3 Mar. 2013, www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0141/_INDEX.HTM.

(Note the date the encyclical was written and the web publication date are listed.)

Parenthetical citation:

(*Caritas in Veritate* 72)

(CV 72)

1st footnote or endnote:

Benedict XVI, *Encyclical Letter, Caritas in Veritate*, The Holy See, 2009, Web 3 Mar. 2013, sec. 72 <http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0141/_INDEX.HTM>

Subsequent footnotes or endnotes:

Caritas in Veritate 72

Electronic book *from online database with translator and editor*

Bibliography

Aristotle. *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by David Ross, edited by Leslie Brown, Oxford UP, 2009. *eBook Academic Collection (EBSCOhost)*, ezproxy.sjcme.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=298419&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Note: If a source offers a permalink, use that link instead of the URL, as shown in the example.

Parenthetical Citation:

(*Nicomachean Ethics* 1094a 1-2)

(*Nic. Ethics* 1094a 1-2)

(NE 1094a 1-2)

Footnotes and endnotes:

Follow formatting for web source.

Note on editors and translators: For a book with both a translator and an editor, list them in the order in which they appear on the title page.

Journal article *from online database*

Bibliography

Smith, Jonathan. "The Diaconate in the History of the Church." *Theological Studies*, vol. 72, no. 4, 2013, pp. 787-812. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials*, doi: 10.1177/0040563916666822.

The article has been assigned a DOI (Digital Object Identifier), so it is included in the citation.

Parenthetical citation:

(Smith 788)

Footnote or endnote:

Follow formatting for web source.