

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM

I. HISTORICAL SKETCH

1. **Brief History of the Concept of Philosophy.** Philosophy, myths and ancient religions. The sapiential ideals of classical philosophy (Aristotle, Plato). Philosophy in the Christian Era: Reason and Faith. Christian wisdom (St. Augustine, St. Thomas). Scholastic Philosophy. The rationalist conception of philosophy and the crisis it underwent. Modern science and philosophy. Positivism, Neo-positivism and Scientism. Search for a philosophical method in 20th century philosophy (Phenomenology, Existentialism, Analytic philosophy). Brief description of the state of philosophy in present-day culture.

II. THEMATIC DISCUSSION

2. **The Nature of Philosophy.** Meaning of the term "philosophy". Scope of study: rational investigation of the ultimate (or primary) questions that every reality gives rise to. The philosophical outlook: sense of wonder in front of reality. Natural ontological knowledge, pre-scientific knowledge of the world ("implicit philosophy"), and philosophy as explicit and developed knowledge. Being and its principles as object of realist and metaphysical philosophy. Universality of being: philosophy as all-encompassing knowledge.

3. **Philosophy in Human Life.** Philosophy, common sense, ideology. Purpose and significance of philosophy in human life and in culture: speculative and practical aspects. Value and importance of studying philosophy. Some philosophical values: truth, profundity, essentiality, foundation. Critique of philosophical relativism.

4. **Philosophy and the Sciences.** Difference in the approach and type of abstraction employed by philosophy and by the particular or positive sciences. The metaphysical perspective proper of philosophical research. Interaction between philosophy and the sciences. The philosophical presuppositions of the sciences. Positivism and Neo-positivism.

5. **Philosophy, Christian Faith and Theology.** Harmony between faith and reason. Philosophy and its importance to the believer. Christian Faith as guide to philosophy in the believer. Philosophy's relative autonomy from and orientation to the knowledge from Revelation. Critique of absolute separation between philosophy, and faith and theology. The use of philosophy in theology. Christian Philosophy.

6. **Philosophy and the Church.** The Church's interest in philosophy and culture for its work of evangelization and for theological and pastoral reasons. Obstacles to Christian faith posed by certain philosophical positions. The Encyclical Aeterni Patris. The authority of St. Thomas Aquinas in the teaching of philosophy and theology. Vatican Council II and post conciliar magisterium on philosophy and on the teaching of philosophy.

7. **Method and principal areas of philosophy.** Plurality and unity of philosophical systems and research methodology. Intellectual experience and other external sources of philosophical doctrines. The process of discovering and giving rational expression and foundation to philosophical principles and doctrines. Importance of the metaphysical and realist methodology. Brief organic description of the areas of philosophy. Importance of knowledge of history in philosophy. Philosophy as a sapiential habit related more to certain virtues of sound knowledge than to the different objective methods. Philosophical formation and its place in formation. Risks that derive from an inadequate method and approach in philosophical research and teaching.