

## Style Guide for Submitted Papers

Most scholarly writing in the humanities is governed by the style guide of the Modern Language Association. Their official website is <https://www.mla.org/MLA-Style>

However, for more practical applications of their guide, see <https://www.easybib.com/guides/citation-guides/mla-format/>

### Format

- Your font should be Times New Roman 12 point.
- Your paper should be written in Microsoft Word and sent as an attachment to an email so that it can be opened without distorting the formatting.
- All your sources should be cited; scripture within the text, and other sources at the end of the paper. In this situation your sources are not so much a check on your scholarly integrity as a help to the reader who wants to pursue the topic. If you have found a particularly acute quotation someone else might want to use it in a sermon.

### Development

- These papers are theological reflections within the discipline of coherent argument. Thus they should be organized in a logical fashion, using connecting words to show contrast (“on the other hand,” “and yet,” “at the same time,”), likeness (“likewise,” “reminds me of,”), consequence (“and so,” “If...then,” “what follows”), chronology (“to begin with,” “then,” “later,” “finally”), continuity (“This idea...,” “Such a discovery...,” “...fell to David. *His...*) and so on. These markers help your reader to follow the development of your argument.
- They should be focused on presenting a new insight in a way that convinces the reader of its value. You may not be arguing a legal case, but you want your essay to center on one main point, the reader’s takeaway.
- Within the framework of that one point you should provide specific, concrete examples that help the reader see, hear, feel, experience the thing you are describing. You will also have to tell the reader exactly how the examples illustrate your main point.
- At various stages through the essay, but especially in the conclusion, you will have to answer the question, so what? Why is this point important to the reader? How does it affect their spiritual life, their parish, their mission?