

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY (DM 9313)

Summer Term 2016 (June 14-17, 20-24, 2016)

Instructor: Ruben L.F. Habito, Professor of World Religions and Spirituality

111B Kirby; Office phone: 214-768-4334 Email: rhbito@smu.edu

Course Description:

A study of the biblical roots, historical grounding, theological implications and contemporary contexts of Christian spirituality and formation in light of God's action in creation. Students will appropriate an integrated and reflective praxis of spirituality for leadership in their context of ministry.

Intended Learning Outcomes: Students will...

1. Encounter the contours and complexities of the study, and content of Christian Spirituality through historical, biblical, theological, and contemporary lenses.
2. Read and be read by writers in the field of Christian Spirituality.
3. Explore various forms of spiritual practice in the Christian tradition, and especially learn to engage in spiritual practices of solitude, silence, and prayer as individuals and in community.
4. Explore the intimate connections between the inner life of Christian spirituality and the "outer life" of engagement in the social and ecological dimensions of our human existence.

Requirements for Credit:

1. Regular attendance and active participation in the two-week class sessions, including reading of assigned material (or viewing/listening, in case of audio-visual resources), electronic submissions of reflections on themes addressed in class, three class presentations (one on a theme in the history of Christian spirituality [15 minutes]*, and two on a reading of a primary text [5-7 minutes each]**). *Items marked with an asterisk in the class schedule below are required reading for all, and may be selected for individual class presentations: one asterisk* for a theme in history of Christian spirituality, two asterisks** for a primary text or texts of a spiritual writer. Presenters will be assigned on the first class day.*
2. Participation in practicum, consisting of assigned spiritual exercises during the course of the two-week period of classes.
3. Submission of final paper (ca. 15 pages double-spaced, or 3000-4000 words) on a class-related theme, due .

Each class session will consist of four segments: a) historical study; b) reading of texts on spirituality by noted Christian authors; c) a lecture by the instructor and discussion with class on a specific theme in Christian spirituality in history and in contemporary setting (further suggested readings and references on particular themes will be provided with each session); and d) a practicum session (class to be divided into small groups to form Circles of Trust).

Schedule:

June 14, Tuesday

Introductory: What is “Spirituality?” What is distinctive about Christian Spirituality? What are the various forms of Christian spirituality that have found expression in the life of individuals and communities of faith, in history and in the contemporary scene? This first session will provide an overview of course, explanation of readings and requirements, introduction of practicum exercises and formation of Circles of Trust.
Read: ICS, Introduction, pp. 1-52; STCC Introduction, pp. 11-21. SF, ch. 1, pp. 1-16, and Palmer, “Being Alone Together” (e-file).

June 15, Wednesday

- a) Biblical Foundations of Christian Spirituality: A Survey
Read: Bowe, “Biblical Foundations of Spirituality”* (e-file).
- b) Texts: Gustavo Gutierrez, ICS pp. 448-454**; Walter Rauschenbusch, ICS pp. 372-375**. Thomas Merton, *Praying the Psalms*, pp. 10-25**.
- c) Thematic study: Reflections on scriptural foundations of Creation spirituality, Liberation spirituality, prophetic spirituality, Lamentation spirituality, Apocalyptic spirituality, Evangelical spirituality.
- d) Practicum: Lectio Divina
Read: SF, ch. 2, pp. 17-30.* (In Circles of Trust: select from) 1) Ps. 23. 2) Ps. 22
3) Mt. 6: 9-13

June 16, Thursday

- a) Spirituality of the Early Church, Origins and Flowering of Monasticism
Read: STCC pp. 25-44*, 55-72.* ICS, pp. 53-88.
- b) Texts: John Cassian (365-435), ICS pp. 113-119**; Desert Fathers and Mothers** (e-file).
- c) Thematic study: Other-worldly vs. This-worldly spirituality in Christian life and praxis.
- d) Practicum: Approaches to Contemplative Prayer: Toward being a Contemplative in Action.
Read/Discuss: SF, ch. 3, pp. 31-52; Bourgeault, “Method of Centering Prayer” (e-file)

June 17, Friday

- a) Mendicant Spirituality, Reforming Piety of Devotio Moderna
Read: STCC, pp. 83-108*; 109-142*
- b) Texts: St. Francis and St. Clare, ICS, pp. 163-168**;
- c) Thematic study: The spirituality of New Monasticism.
- d) Developing a Rule of Life
Read and Discuss: SF, 137-146.
(**Note:** Preparation for following Monday’s practicum: Read: SF, pp. 69-82. Abstain from one full meal, either Friday, or Saturday, lunch or dinner. Reflect on the experience and prepare for sharing in Circles of Trust on Monday.)

June 20, Monday

- a) Lutheran, Reformed, and Wesleyan Spiritualities
Read: STCC, pp. 145-170*; 202-234*; 303- 331*;

- b) Texts: Martin Luther, ICS, pp. 211-216**; John Calvin, ICS, pp. 230-235**; John and Charles Wesley, ICS, pp. 318-332**
- c) Thematic study: Spiritual Movements challenging established institutions.
- d) Practicum: The Practice of Self-Emptying—Fasting and Prayer (cf. above, June 17 note.)

June 21, Tuesday

- a) Spanish Mystical Tradition: Ignatian and Carmelite Spirituality
Read: STCC, pp. 171-201*; pp. 235-268*
- b) Texts: Ignatius of Loyola, ICS, pp. 244-254**; Teresa of Avila, ICS, pp. 255-261**;
San Juan de la Cruz, ICS, pp. 262-268**
- c) Thematic study: Mystical Currents in Christian Spirituality
- c) Practicum: Self-Examination, Confession, Awareness
Read and Discuss: SF, pp. 83-100.

June 22, Wednesday

- a) African and African American Spirituality
Read: “African Spirituality” (e-file); STCC, pp. 332-361*; Holmes 2004, pp. 90-137*
- b) Texts: Howard Thurman, ICS pp. 405-408**; Martin Luther King, Jr., ICS, pp. 425-430**; James Cone, ICS, pp. 431-438**
- c) Thematic study: Forms of contextually inspired spiritualities in Christian tradition.
- d) Practicum: TBD

June 23, Thursday

- a) Feminist/Womanist and Women’s Spirituality
Read: STCC, pp. 365-418; pp. 430-459*
- b) Texts: Phoebe Palmer, ICS pp. 350-354; Simone Weil, ICS pp. 395-401**; Joan Chittister, *Called to Question*, pp. 26-36** (e-file)
- c) Thematic study: Ecological Spirituality
- d) Practicum: TBD

June 24, Friday

- a) Christian Spirituality in Interfaith Light.
Read: “Spiritual Formation in a Multifaith World” (e-file)
- b) Texts: Thomas Merton, “The New Consciousness”** (e-file); Ellen Birx, *Selfless Love*, pp. 191-210.** (e-file)
- c) Thematic study: Christian Spirituality informed by Interreligious Encounters
- d) Practicum: Sharing Take-aways and Insights from Class Experience.

Additonal/Alternative/ Sessions: (For Reference only)

1. a) Anglican and Orthodox Spirituality.
Read: “Anglican Spirituality,” STCC pp. 269-302; “Orthodox Spirituality” (e-file)

- b) Texts: Rowan Williams, “The Hospitality of Abraham” (e-file)
 - c) Thematic Study: *Theosis* and implications for Spiritual Path
 - d) Practicum: Praying with an Icon (Rublev’s Trinity) (Circle of Trust)
2. a) Enneagram in Christian Spirituality. What is the Enneagram, and how does it shed light on the spiritual path? Read: “Enneagram in Ministry” (e-file).
- b) Text: Dietrich Koller, “An Enneagram Sermon on Christmas,” + “The Repentance No One Regrets” (e-files)
 - c) Thematic Study: Enneagram and Prayer. How different enneagram types relate to modes of prayer and spiritual practice.
 - d) Practicum: sharing enneagram perspectives from different typologies (Discussions within Circle of Trust).
3. a) Visit to a Meditation Center: Maria Kannon Zen Center, at White Rock UMC. Read: “Attuning to the Breath” (e-file). View: “Fundamentals of Zen Practice,” “Fruits of Zen Practice (www.mkzc.org)
- b) Text: Birx, “How to meditate” (e-file); “Zen and Spiritual Exercises” (e-file)
 - c) Thematic Study: Christian contemplation and Buddhist practice.
 - d) Practicum: Sit in stillness for 25 minutes, walking meditation 5 minutes. Tea ceremony.

Principal Texts for Class Use:

Maas, Robin and Gabriel O’Donnell, OP, *Spiritual Traditions for the Contemporary Church*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990. (STCC)

Thompson, Marjorie. *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995. (SF)

Tyson, John R. ed., *Invitation to Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Anthology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. (ICS)

Selected References: (Excerpts for class to be provided as e-files)

Bass, Dorothy, *Practicing our Faith: A Way of Life for Searching People*. Second Edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010.

Birx, Ellen. *Selfless Love: Beyond Boundaries of Self and Other*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2013.

Bourgeault, Cynthia. *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*. Lanham, MD: Cowley Publications, 2004.

Bowe, Barbara, *Biblical Foundations of Spirituality: Touching a Finger to the Flame*. Lanham, MD: Sheed and Ward, 2003.

Chittister, Joan. *Called to Question: A Spiritual Memoir*. Lanham, MD: Sheed and Ward, 2009.

Hall, Thelma. *Too Deep for Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1988.

Holmes, Barbara. *Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practices of the Black Church*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004.

Merton, Thomas. *Zen and the Birds of Appetite*. New York: New Directions, 1968.

Merton, Thomas. *Praying the Psalms*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1956.

Rohr, Richard and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective*. New York: Crossroads, 2009.

Information Related to SMU Class Work:

Disability Accommodations:

If you need academic accommodations for a disability, you must first contact Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) at 214-768-1470 or www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Then you must schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements.

Perkins Regulations Regarding Incomplete

The grade of Incomplete is granted only in rare cases when a student is prevented by extraordinary circumstances of illness or other severe hardship, from completing some major portion of the required course work before the deadline for submission of grades for the term. Requests for a grade of Incomplete must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs no later than the University final deadline for the submission of written work (July 31). For more information, see the Perkins Catalog.

Minority Concerns and Perkins Curriculum (Ministry Courses)

In 1975 the Perkins Senate passed resolutions which bear on the relation of the Perkins curriculum to this school's common concern for the status of ethnic minority groups and of women both in education for ministry and in the ministry itself. The following statement summarizes these resolutions with respect to courses in the area of Ministry.

1. Instructors and students alike are urged to use inclusive language, images and metaphors which will give full and positive value to both the past contributions and the future prospects of ethnic minorities and women in the church and in society at large.
2. Instructors and students alike are urged to give sensitive consideration to the role of images from a predominantly white and male culture in shaping both the language and concepts of Christian theology and the models and methods of Christian ministry that are widely current today.
3. Instructors are urged to make every effort to provide--in the syllabi, assignments

and formats of their courses--opportunities for women students and students from ethnic minority groups (1) to study the functions of ministry with particular reference to their own status or tradition in the life of the church, (2) to practice the functions of ministry (when practice is an element in a course) in settings which reflect or, if possible, arise from their own status or tradition in the life of the church, (3) to receive evaluation of their practice of the functions of ministry from persons who are not only knowledgeable about and skilled in those functions, but also share their special status or tradition in the life of the church, and (4) to observe the practice of persons who, as women or as members of ethnic minority groups, provide models of effective ministry which are immediately relevant to the special status or tradition of women or members of ethnic minority groups in the church.

4. Instructors are urged to make every effort to provide--in the syllabi, assignments and formats of their courses--opportunities for all students to become acquainted with the special problems and conditions that affect women and ethnic minority groups in human society and in the life of the church, with special attention to the ways in which these problems and conditions may affect the practice of ministry.