

School of Theology and Ministry
Seattle University
901 12th Avenue, PO Box 222000
Seattle, WA 98122-1090

Summer Quarter 2014

COURSE INFORMATION

STMM 561 Contemporary Christian Spirituality and Prayer

July 21-25, 2014 (M-F, 9am-4pm)

Classroom: TBD

Prerequisites: none

INSTRUCTOR

Sr. Alexandra Kovats CSJP PhD

Office: TBA

Office Hours: by appointment

Office Phone: 206 322 8560

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REQUIRED TEXTS

Cannato, Judy. (2006) *Radical Amazement*. Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books.

ISBN: 1-893732-99-1

Keating, Thomas et al. (2008) *Spirituality, Contemplation and Transformation: Writings on Centering Prayer*. Brooklyn, NY: Lantern Books.

ISBN: 13: 978-1-59056-110-2

McLaren, Brian. (2011) *Naked Spirituality: A Life with God in 12 Simple Words*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

ISBN: 978-0-6-185401-9

Rohr, Richard and friends. ed. (2006) *Contemplation in Action*.

New York, NY: Crossroad. **ISBN: 0-8245-2388-1**

Vennard, Jane E. (2003) *Embracing the World: Praying for Justice and Peace*.

San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. **ISBN: 0-7879-5887-5**

(this book is back on a "print on demand" basis!)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Bass, Dorothy C. ed. (1997) *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. **ISBN: 0-7879-3883-1**

Faulkner, Mary. (2011) *Women's Spirituality: Power and Grace*.

New York, NY: Penguin.

Rohr, Richard and Joseph Martos. (2005) *From Wild Man to Wise Man:*

Reflections on Male Spirituality. Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony's Messenger

ISBN: 0-86716-740-8

Ulanov, Ann and Barry. (1982) *Primary Speech: A Psychology of Prayer*.

Atlanta: John Knox Press. **ISBN: 0-8042-1134-5**

In preparation for July 23rd, Wednesday afternoon, please read the following articles/resources that explore insights about women's spirituality, men's spirituality, African American, Hispanic, Asian American and GLBTQI spiritualities. You are expected to familiarize yourself with these different spiritualities and be able to discuss them in class. The articles can be found on the Internet as of now. If you can't find these resources and have other articles/resources you are welcome to substitute them and share pertinent bibliographical information in class. Two of the books among the recommended texts pertain to women's and men's spirituality (Faulkner and Rohr) as well.

WEB RESOURCES FOR VARIOUS SPIRITUALITIES

Women's Spirituality

Search: "articles on women's spirituality"

Girard, Phoebe. "The Aging Spirit: A Woman-to-Woman Journey Toward Aging and Spirituality." *Aging Today*. Volume XXVII, #4 (July-August 2006)

<http://www.can-nm.org/Agingtodayreprint.pdf>

Other authors: Elizabeth Johnson, Kathleen Fischer, Joan Chittister, etc.

Men's Spirituality

Search: "articles on male spirituality" or "articles on masculine spirituality"

Rohr, Richard. "Masculine Spirituality" *Praying: Spirituality for Everyday Living*.

September-October, 1988. www.malespirituality.org/masculine_spirituality.htm

Muesse, Mark W. *Men at Midlife: Male Spirituality and the Second Half of Life*. (2004)

www.explorefaith.org/lifelines/men_midlife.html

Other authors: Keith Drury, John Nelson, Matthew Fox, Thomas Hart

Hispanic Spirituality

Search: "articles on Hispanic spirituality"

Rodriguez, Jeanette, "Mestiza Spirituality: Community, Ritual and Justice" *Theological Studies*, June 2004

<http://www.ts.mu.edu/readers/content/pdf/65/65.2/65.2.4.pdf>

Garcia, Alberto. "Christian Spirituality in Light of the US Hispanic Experience." *Word and World*, Volume XX, Number 1, 2000

http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/20-1_20th_Century/20-1_Garcia.pdf

African American Spirituality

Search: "articles on African American spirituality"

Davis, Cyprian. "Black Catholic Theology: A Historical Perspective.", *Theological Studies*, Number 61, 2000.

<http://www.ts.mu.edu/readers/content/pdf/61/61.4/61.4.3.pdf>

White, Vanessa C. "Authentically Black and Truly Catholic."

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/OPINION/09/05/white.catholic.black/index.html>

Asian Spirituality

Search: "articles on Asian spirituality"

Senno, Tony. "The Traits of Philippino Spirituality" *Mission, The Xavier Way*, Summer 2000.

http://www.xaviermissionaries.org/M_Life/NewsArchive/AsiaNews/Phi_TraitsSpirit.htm

Richards, Kathleen. "Young, Asian American and Christian." *East Bay Express*. April 2, 2008.

<http://www.eastbayexpress.com/eastbay/young-asian-american-and-christian/Content?oid=1089129>

GLBTQI Spirituality

Search: articles on lesbian Christian spirituality" or "articles on gay Christian spirituality"

Wink, Walter. *Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality* .

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=1265>

Alison, James. *Following the Still Small Voice: Experience, Truth and Argument as Lived by Catholics*. 2003

www.jamesalison.co.uk/texts/eng02.html

Crippin, Stephen. *Dancing with the Queen of Sheba*. Sermon. August 29, 2010.

<http://www.stpaulseattle.org/sermons/082910.html>

Lesbian, Gay Christians

www.lgcm.org.uk/resources/

Other authors: Rev. Patrick Cheng, James Alison

Course Description

This course introduces the student to the most important themes in contemporary Christian spirituality and to a variety of approaches to prayer. Applying these themes (ecological awareness, embodiment, contemplation and action dialectic, etc.), students reflect upon and articulate their personal spirituality and evaluate theological and pastoral implications of different approaches to spirituality and prayer. Class sessions will include lecture, prayer experiences, reflective times, and discussion.

OBJECTIVES

1. To become familiar with the key elements of contemporary Christian spirituality and how these themes find expression in one's personal life.
2. To experience and become familiar with a variety of prayer forms which will enable one to practice those forms which express and enhance one's personal spirituality.
3. To deepen one's process of self-reflection and to be able to articulate one's relationship to the God of one's understanding.
4. To deepen one's appreciation of the sacredness of all life.
5. To reflect on and evaluate the pastoral implications of the different approaches to prayer and Christian spirituality.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Ability to reflect theologically on the central themes of the Christian Tradition.
- Knowledge and interaction of religious/spiritual experience and culture in their ecumenical and multicultural dimensions.
- Ability to discern and nurture spiritual experience in relation to self and others.
- Ability to lead from spiritual depth toward practice for justice and wholeness in the world.
- Ability to articulate one's relationship to with God.
- Ability to be a responsive, discerning listener who can enter another's worldview

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

1. July 21
AM **Introduction to Course: Reflections on Spirituality**
Discussion Focus: personal spirituality
2. July 21
PM **Overview of Christian Spirituality**
Discussion Focus:
3. July 22
AM **Key Themes of Contemporary Christian Spirituality**
Discussion Focus: Radical Amazement
4. July 22
PM **Spirituality: The Dance of the Mystic**
Discussion Focus: Contemplation in Action
5. July 23
AM **Spirituality: The Dance of the Prophet**
Discussion Focus: Naked Spirituality
6. July 23
PM **Spiritualities: Multi-cultural, Gender, Gay/Lesbian**
Discussion Focus: On line Resources from Syllabus
7. July 24
AM **Prayer: An Overview of Christian Prayer**
Discussion Focus: Spirituality, Contemplation and Transformation
8. July 24
PM **Prayer: Images of God**
Discussion Focus: personal images of God
9. July 25
AM **Prayer: Embodiment/ Stages and Approaches**
Discussion Focus: Embracing the World
10. July 25
PM **Pastoral Implications Regarding Spirituality and Prayer**

We will also participate in various prayer experiences during our classes.

PRE-COURSE and COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attend all class sessions.**
2. **Read all the required texts before class.**

Please read the books with your “head and heart.” Take notes (for yourself) and keep track of questions, resistances, “ahas” and concerns that emerge for you.

3. **Establish or re-affirm a 15 minute daily prayer practice** at least a month before the course begins.

4. **Choose one of the texts** (either on the required or recommended list) **and write a 1000 word (four page, double spaced) typed, reflection paper** about the book addressing the following:

What do you consider to be the main points made by the author in the book? Include quotes and page numbers where relevant.

Engage in dialogue with ideas from the text including some of your own reflections, experiences and questions.

Due: first day of class, July 21, 2014. (or you may choose to send it to me electronically to cosmicdancer@comcast.net on or before July 21st)

5. Denominational Interview and Write Up

Seek out a spiritual and/or pastoral leader in your denomination and interview them about their understanding and experience of spirituality and their spiritual practices.

Suggested questions during the interview:

What is your understanding and experience of spirituality? What are some images or metaphors that support your understanding and/or your experience of spirituality?

Who are some of the people and authors from your denomination who have significantly shaped your understanding of spirituality?

Name and describe some significant insights and characteristics of your denomination's approach to spirituality. What do you consider its strengths and its weaknesses?

Name and describe a book written by someone in your denomination that would help someone gain insights about your denomination's approach to spirituality.

What people and resources have been important influences on your spirituality and spiritual practices outside of your denomination?

Describe your spiritual practices. How do they influence your life and ministry?

What suggestions would you offer for someone who is in the process of establishing a spiritual practice in their lives?

Ask them any other questions that seem important to you in order to better understand their spirituality.

Write up the interview in a 4-5 page paper (typed, double spaced).

Due: first day of class, July 21, 2014. (or you may choose to send it to me electronically to cosmicdancer@comcast.net on or before July 21st)

6. Integration/reflection paper

This 3-4 page paper (typed, double spaced) provides you with the opportunity to reflect on how the experience of this course and the readings have clarified and expanded your understanding and experience of prayer and spirituality. You may also choose to comment on insights that challenged and/or surprised you, and articulate where you are in your search of Mystery.

Due: Last Day of Class

7. Please fill out the attached questionnaire and send it to me no later than July 12th, 2014 You can e-mail it to: cosmicdancer@comcast.net

Grade Distribution

Interview	20%
Book Reflection	15%
Integration Paper	15%
Class attendance and participation	30%
Assigned reading materials	20%

At the end of the course, students will be asked to reflect on their participation in class and the quality of attention and presence they brought to the various assignments and grade themselves. The instructor will grade the Interview, the Book Reflection and the Integration Paper.

Policies

- Attendance of all class sessions and being on time is required. Informed participation in large and small group discussions and prayer experiences is expected.
- The primary communication in this class is dialogue, rather than debate or argument so students can feel free to share and reflect on their sacred stories in a safe environment.
- Academic Honesty (including plagiarism): The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the academic policy regarding Academic Integrity as indicated on the Seattle University Registrar website, as noted in the box below.
- Disability: If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, please see related note in the box below.

University Resources and Policies

Academic Resources

- Library and Learning Commons (<http://www.seattleu.edu/learningcommons/>)
 - *(This includes: Learning Assistance Programs, Research [Library] Services, Writing Center, Math Lab)*
- Academic Integrity Tutorial *(found on Angel and SU Online)*

Academic Policies on Registrar website

(<https://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/academics/performance/>)

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Grading Grievance Policy
- Professional Conduct Policy *(only for those professional programs to which it applies)*

Notice for students concerning Disabilities

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff located in Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.

6. Describe the God of your experience, the God you have come to know. What image and/or name of God is most significant to you at this time in your life?

7. What themes/topics/concerns emerge for you regarding spirituality and/or prayer in light of your ministry?

8. What situations/processes/activities help you to learn best?

9. Do you feel called to lead a 15-20 minute prayer experience in class?

(This time segment includes a few-minute reflection and/or journaling on the experience as well.) _____

What form/type of prayer would you use? (e.g. Taize, centering prayer, movement, guided imagery, ritual, etc.) Please describe it.

10. Do you feel called to create a sacred space in the class that would be a visual reminder of the presence of Mystery and an expression of spirituality?

11. Do you feel called to be part of a panel that explores spirituality in relation to gender (male/female) ethnicity, culture and sexual orientation?

12. Further comments/suggestions/information that would help me to respond to your learning needs....

Please fill out and return by **July 12, 2014** to: cosmicdancer@comcast.net

Thank You!