STMM 571 The Art of Spiritual Direction
Valerie Lesniak, PhD
Summer, 2013
June 17, 2013-June 28, 2013
Monday-Friday 9:00-12:00 pm
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"Oh heart,
sit with someone who
knows the heart;

Go under the tree
which has fresh
Blossoms."
-Rumi

Course Description:

This course is designed for those who are interested in becoming spiritual directors. It seeks to introduce participants to the art of spiritual direction and to assist them in developing practical skills for this ministry. Participants will consider various approaches to spiritual direction, the nature and purpose of spiritual direction, its historical roots, and some dynamics of the process of direction. Participants will also have the opportunity to discern their own call to the ministry of spiritual direction.

Course Objectives:

- To become familiar with roots, traditions, and various models of spiritual direction
- To explore the nature and purpose of spiritual direction and how it is being defined today
- To reflect on the dynamics of the process of spiritual direction
- To consider theological and anthropological assumptions underlying the practice of spiritual direction
- To reflect upon the roles of prayer and desire in the spiritual direction conversation
- To become responsive listeners and engage in the practice of spiritual direction
- To consider obstacles to life in the Spirit and various forms of desolation

STM MATS Learning Outcomes:
In particular, this course is designed to assist students in helping to meet the following STM MATS learning outcomes:

- Ability to reflect theologically on the central themes of the Christian Tradition;

- Ability to listen and respond to how the Spirit is active and alive in local, global and cosmic communities;
- Ability to discern and nurture spiritual experience in relation to self and others;
- Ability to be a responsive discerning listener who can enter another's worldview

Pre-Session Preparation:

Please review the syllabus below. The readings designated for each day will be the primary focus for our discussions. **It is critically important that you read the material before hand. I suggest that you take each book and take notes that will help you review the material before each class during the summer session. Three books (the one by Allen, Bumpus and the third by Kisly) we will be reading ONLY the chapters designated in the syllabus and listed above. We will be reading and using the entire books by Bidwell, Sheldrake, Phillips and Silver. You may find it helpful to read and take notes according to the assigned readings for each day found in the syllabus.**

Pertinent articles assigned in the syllabus can be found in the **Course Reader** which can be purchased at Seattle University's Reproduction Department. Please check with the Reproduction Department (206-296-6180) for availability of the Course Reader. Articles are designated with a "*" in the syllabus.

Required Texts

Allen, Joseph J. Inner Way: Toward a Rebirth of Eastern Christian Spiritual Direction. Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2000.
ISBN: 1-885652-34-8
Portion of the book we will be using:

- *Inner Way,* pp. ix-57.

Bidwell, Duane R. Short Term Spiritual Guidance. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004.
ISBN: 0-8006-3658-9

Bumpus, Mary Rose and Rebecca Langer, editors. Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery. A Spiritual Directors International Book. Harrisburg/London: Morehouse Publishing, 2006, 65-81, 125-145.
ISBN: 0-8192-1994-0
The TWO Chapters that will be used in class:

- Bowen, Maria Tattu. "Dimensions of the Human Person in Relationship and the Practice of Supervision." In *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery,* 65-81.

- Liebert, Elizabeth. “Supervision as Widening the Horizons.” In *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery,* 125-45.

Kisly, Lorraine, ed. The Inner Journey: Views from the Christian Tradition. Parabola Anthology Series. Sandpoint, IN: Morning Light Press, 2006: ISBN 978-1-59675-008-1

The eight Chapters that will be used in class:

- Christopher Bamford, “The Gift of the Call,” 2-11.
- Bede Griffiths, “Winding the Golden String,” 14-19.
- Thomas Hopko, Living in Communion,” 179-192.
- Thomas Keating, “Awakening to the Present,”46-53.
- David Steindl-Rast, “Become What You Are,” 66-79.
- David Steindl-Rast, “Learning to Die,” 236-249.
- Kallistos Ware, “Image and Likeness,” 148-161.
- Irma Zaleski, “The Door to Joy,” 162-168.

Sheldrake, Philip. Befriending Our Desires. Toronto: Novalis Press, 2001. ISBN: 2-89507-177-2

Phillips, Susan. Candlelight: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2008. ISBN 978-0-8192-2297-8

Silver, Anne Winchell. Trustworthy Connections: Interpersonal Issues in Spiritual Direction. Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 2003. ISBN: 1-56101-252-1

Course Requirements

1. Class attendance each day
2. Participation in small group exercises, dyads and triads
3. Keep a journal reflecting upon one’s own sensibilities, skills, and challenges for the ministry of spiritual direction
4. Three 5-6 page reflection papers: due June 17; June 24; June 28 **(See description below)**
5. Oral review and interview (if requested by instructor)
6. Critical and engaged reading of texts and articles

Paper 1: **Due JUNE 17**: Exploring your own experience of Spiritual Direction

This paper is primarily a reflection paper. It is intended to foster a critical awareness of your own experience of Spiritual Direction. Please use the following questions to help frame your reflection paper. We will use this reflection paper as part of our conversation on the first day of the class.

Exploring your experience of being a directee

- How long have you been in spiritual direction? How often do you meet with your director? Describe the environment in which the spiritual direction conversation takes place. Where do you sit etc.
- In what ways do you prepare for a spiritual direction session?
- How do you open the spiritual direction conversation with your guide?
- What topics do you discuss in the spiritual direction conversation? Have you noticed that you do not discuss certain topics? Why is this so?
- What interior movements have you experienced within the spiritual direction conversation itself? How do you know when something strikes home to you? Does your body play any role in your process?
- Has silence played a role in your direction sessions? Prayer?
- Can you recognize any "rituals" that surround your spiritual direction process?
- What image or metaphor do you have of yourself as directee? That you have of your director? That you have of what you are experiencing in direction?
- What criteria do you use when you describe your spiritual direction session as being a "good" session?
- If you have changed spiritual directors, why did you do so? How did you do this?
- How do you know interiorly that the spiritual direction session is over?
- How do you end your sessions?
- Do you have any after session process? If so what is it?

Paper II: Due: June 24: Assumptions and Images of God and the Human Being

This paper is a synthesis paper. It is intended to invite you to reflect more deeply on the underlying assumptions you bring to spiritual direction about God and the human person. Describe some of the assumptions and image you have of God and the human person. Compare and contrast those assumptions with any of the authors we have been reading such as Hart, Johnson, Bidwell, and or Rahner. How do you understand God to be present in spiritual direction?

Paper III: Due June 28: Sensibilities, Skills, Challenges, Call to Ministry of Spiritual Direction

This paper represents part of an ongoing discernment process about call and readiness for the ministry of spiritual direction. Reflect upon the journal you have been keeping during the quarter. In this paper, describe the basic sensibilities you have for the ministry of spiritual direction. What skills do you possess what would assist you in discovering with another the life of the Spirit? What challenges confront you as you think about yourself as a spiritual director? At this moment in time, what is your sense of your call to the ministry of spiritual direction? This paper will provide the basis of a final review and interview.

Tentative Course Schedule

(Schedule may be adjusted at the discretion of the instructor to meet the learning needs of the participants.)

June 17 Experience of Spiritual Direction

Introductions- Our Experiences of Spiritual Direction
FIRST REFLECTION PAPER DUE
Description of Responsive Listening
Large Group Exercise in Responsive Listening

June 18 Glimpses and Signs of the Life of the Spirit

What is Experience?
Experience of God in the World Today
Arenas of Human Experience
Experience of God: Biblical and Mystical Perspectives
Small Group Praxis

Assigned Readings:

*Burghardt, Walter. "Contemplation: A Long Loving Look at the Real." Found in the Course Reader.

Required Reading Books:

- Bidwell, Duane R. *Short Term Spiritual Guidance*. Chapter 2, 13-25.
- Bowen, Maria Tattu. "Dimensions of the Human Person in Relationship and the Practice of Supervision." In *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery,* 65-81.

- Liebert, Elizabeth. “Supervision as Widening the Horizons.” In *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery,* 125-45.
- Griffiths, Bede. “Winding the Golden String.” In *The Inner Journey: Views from the Christian Tradition,* 14-19.
- Keating, Thomas. “Awakening to the Present.” In *The Inner Journey: Views from the Christian Tradition,* 46-53.
- Zaleski, Irma. “The Door to Joy.” In *The Inner Journey: Views from the Christian Tradition,* 162-68.

June 19 Historical Perspectives on the Practice of Spiritual Direction

Assigned Readings:

- Allen, Joseph, *Inner Way,* pp. ix-57.
- * Ruffing, Janet, “Typological History of Spiritual Direction.”
- Bidwell, *Short Term,* pp. 1-12.

June 20 Theological and Anthropological Assumptions
Assumptions about God and Human Beings

Assigned Readings:

- *Hart, Thomas, “Toward a Healthy Spirituality: Ten Guiding Principles.
- *Johnson, Elizabeth Ann, “Classical Theology.”
- * James J. Bacik. “Rahner’s Anthropology: The Basis for a Dialectical Spirituality.”
- Ware, Kallistos. “Image and Likeness.” In *The Inner Journey: Views from the Tradition, 148-161.*

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June 21 What is Spiritual Direction?

Relationship: Hospitality, Compassionate Loving, Respect Diversity
Mystery of Encounter
Small Group Praxis

Assigned Reading:

- *Hart, Thomas, “Pastoral Counseling or Spiritual Direction: What’s the Difference?”

- *Taylor-Stinson, Therese. “Black Spirituality and the Art of Spiritual Direction.”

- Phillips, Susan. *Candlelight: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction.* Preface, Introduction, and Part One, xi-xiii, 1-18, 21-92.

June 24 The process of Spiritual Direction

Preparation
Initial Sessions
Dialogical Process
Ethical Issues
Small Group Praxis
SECOND PAPER DUE
Assigned Readings:

- Silver, Anne Winchell. *Trustworthy Connections: Interpersonal Issues in Spiritual Direction.* Chapters 1-7, Appendix 1 and 2, 1-79, 111-143.

June 25 Prayer and the Hopeful Imagination

Imagination as Source of Transformation/Hopeful Imagination
The Place God Comes to Meet Us
Small Group Praxis

Assigned reading;

- *Gill, Jean “Distractions in Prayer: Stumbling Blocks or Steeping Stones?”
- Bidwell, Duane R. *Short Term Spiritual Guidance*. Chapters 3 and 4, 26-51.
- Phillips, Susan. *Candlelight: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction.* Part Two, 95-162.

June 26 Desire and Transformation

Prayer in the Spiritual Direction Relationship
Befriending our Desires
Desire as a Source of Transformation
Small Group Praxis

Assigned Reading:

- Sheldrake, Philip, *Befriending our Desires,* pp. 9-145.

June 27 Obstacles to Life in the Spirit/Obstacles to Effective Direction

Assigned Readings

- *Aufauvre, Brigitte-Violaine, “Depression and Spiritual Desolation.”
- Bamford, Christopher. “The Gift of the Call.” In *The Inner Journey: Views from the Christian Tradition,* 2-11.
- 2. Hopko, Thomas. “Living in Communion.” In *The Inner Journey: Views from the Christian Tradition,* 179-92.
- 4. Steindl-Rast, David. “Become What You are.” In *The Inner Journey: Views from the Christian Tradition,* 66-79.
- 5. Steindl-Rast, David. “Learning to Die.” In *The Inner Journey: Views from the Christian Tradition,* 236-49.

July 28 Settings and Purpose of Direction

Purpose of Spiritual Direction
Ending of Direction Relationships
Small Group Praxis

- **Paper III due**

Closing and Evaluation

Assigned Readings;

- Bidwell, Duane R. *Short Term Spiritual Guidance*. Chapter 6, 69-83.
- Phillips, Susan. *Candlelight: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction. Part Three and Conclusion,* 165-252.