

STMM 593 CREATIVITY AND SPIRITUALITY

PRE – COURSE PREPARATION:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will focus on the gift of creativity, the birthright of every human being, as an essential component of Christian Spirituality. Human creativity will be explored in the context of cosmic creativity. The meaning of creativity and the creative process and their relationship to spirituality will be examined and experienced through lecture, reflection, dialogue and various art forms. The insights of Christian mystics and artists will be incorporated and highlighted throughout the course.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Briggs, John and F. David Peat. (2000) *Seven Life Lessons of Chaos: Spiritual Wisdom from the Science of Change*. New York: Harper.
- Fox, Matthew. (2002) *Creativity: Where the Divine and the Human Meet*. New York: Tarcher/Putnam.
- Kallos, Stephanie. (2004) *Broken for You*. New York: Grove.
- Nachmanovitch, Stephen. (1990) *Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art*. New York: Tarcher/Putnam.

A **packet of articles** available from SU Reprographics in March 2006.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Kincannon, Karla M. (2005) *Creativity and Divine Surprise: Finding The Place of Your Resurrection*. Nashville, TN. Upper Room Books
- May, Rollo. (1975) *The Courage to Create*. New York: Bantam.
- Richards, M. C. (1989) *Centering: In Pottery, Poetry, and the Person*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University.

1. Required Reading:

Please take notes and keep track of any questions or concerns that emerge for you as you read the required books with your head and your heart. The questions and concerns that emerge for you, but **not the notes**, can be included in your *Creativity Journal*.

2. Creative Project

As you prepare for this course, choose an art form (story, poetry, dance, fabric art, collage, creative ritual, painting, etc.) to express your spiritual journey. Engaging especially with the first four journal questions will help you with your project. Be sure to keep track of your creative process in your journal and date the entries. Having your creative project mostly completed before the course begins is strongly recommended.

You might also want to consider how your creative project is reflective of your relationship with God, Jesus, others, creation, your body and yourself as well as your prayer and justice life (i.e. your spirituality). Your creative project will be presented on the final day of class. The project, your reflection and presentation of it will be 50% of your grade.

3. **Creativity Journal**

The purpose of the journal is to help you process the course materials, to reflect on the readings and the creative experiences you will participate in during class time and to become familiar with your own creative process. It is a tool to help you with the process of self-reflection and articulation of your spirituality and creativity. The journal materials should be kept together. Write neatly on one side of the page (or type, if you prefer). Identify and date all the entries and keep them in chronological order. Number all the pages. Include significant questions or concerns that arise for you from readings, class lectures and creative experiences.

You are also asked to engage with and reflect on the first four questions and choose three others (out of the next five) that follow. They must be included in your journal.

Reflection questions/exercises to support you in your Creative Project to be included in your journal:

- Each time you engage with your Creative Project reflect on your experience. (awarenesses, ahas, struggles, resistances, etc.)
- Describe the experience of and the image(s) of creativity throughout your life.
- As you reflect on your childhood, what forms of creativity did you engage? (drawing, music, movement, etc.) What supports did you find or have for your creative expressions?
- What is standing in the way of developing your creativity now?

Choose any three of the following questions/exercises and record your answers in your journal:

- Take a walk in creation and pay attention to what you observe and list 15 – 20 of them. Try to engage various senses (e.g. yellowing leaf, gentle breeze, musty scent, etc.).
- Empty a junk drawer or old box of photographs. Reflect on the objects/pictures slowly. Note any connections or metaphors that emerge for you.
- Reflect on and write about an experience of illness that you have lived through. Explore the experience metaphorically. What insights does this illness teach you about yourself? (Be especially attentive to the body parts that are involved. What are they saying?)

- Make a list of ten quotes from some of your favorite writers and/or poets. Be sure to provide references to the quoted materials.
 - What activities, circumstances, people and/or situations help you to nourish your creativity?
4. **Materials to bring to the course:**
- a. a **shoe box**
 - b. a **drawing pad** and **oil pastels**
(a box of 25 colors would be best)
 - c. a **bag with items of meaning** and/or **curiosity** for you (feathers, beads, screws, bolts, coins, buttons, pictures, textured papers, ribbons, paper and/or cloth scraps, etc.)
5. **Supply fee** for the course: **\$10.00**
You can bring cash with you. If you write a check, please make it out to **Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace** or **CSJP**
6. Please **wear comfortable clothing** for the week.
7. Please return the completed Questionnaire by **Friday, July 14, 2006** to:

Alexandra Kovats, csjp, Ph.D.
1104 21st Avenue East
Seattle, WA 98112
or e-mail to: jutkacsjp@aol.com

Thank You!

Blessings on your creative becoming!

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Name: _____ **Ministry:** _____

1. Why are you taking this course?

2. Name **three goals** you hope to achieve during this course.

A.

B.

C.

3. What fears/concerns do you have about this course?

A. Fears...

B. Concerns...

4. What is your experience of creativity?

5. What questions/concerns do you have about spirituality and creativity as you reflect on your own life experience?

6. What themes/ topics/concerns emerge for you regarding spirituality and creativity in light of your ministry?

7. What situations/processes/activities provide the best learning for you?

8. Further comments/suggestions/information. . .

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