

STMM 563
History of Christian Spirituality
Winter, 2006
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Class meets in: HUNTHAUSEN HALL 100
9:00-11:50 am Tuesdays

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the history of Christian Spirituality by examining different periods and perspectives within the tradition. In addition to a general overview of the major movements, concerns and personalities, selected texts and images will be studied to examine experiences of conversion and spiritual growth, mysticism and prayer, community and compassion. The course will also consider the wisdom of the tradition as a resource for contemporary issues.

Course Goals

- *That students will have a general overview of the history of Christian Spirituality with an awareness of its major movements, personalities and issues;**
- *That different styles of prayer, community, and engagement with the world will be examined in various eras, cultures and religious perspectives;**
- *That students will have read significant primary texts in Christian Spirituality and make use of secondary source material in exploring the historical/spiritual trend under study;**
- *That students will explore how the collective wisdom of the tradition continues to offer insights today;**
- *That students will explore contemporary appropriations (written, experiential and creative expressions) of some of the historical traditions being studied.**

Required Reading

Holt, Bradley, *Thirsty for God*, Fortress Press, 2005.

Sheldrake, Philip. *Spirituality and History*. Crossroads, 1992.

A booklet of primary source reading will be distributed for each class session. Immediacy of reading the primary source material is paramount for engaging the texts.

Recommended:

Cunningham, L. and Eagan, K. *Christian Spirituality: Themes from the Tradition*. Paulist Press, 1996.

Mursell, Gordon, ed. *The Story of Christian Spirituality*, Fortress Press, 2001.

Selected Bibliography on Spirituality

Crossroad History of Christian Spirituality

McGinn, Bernard, Meyendorff, John and Leclercq, Jean eds. *Christian Spirituality: Origins to the Twelfth Century*. 1985.

Raitt, Jill, McGinn, B. and Meyendorff, J. Ed. *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*. 1987.

Durpe, Louis and Saliers, Don, eds. *Christian Spirituality: Post Reformation and Modern*. 1989.

McGinn, Bernard. *The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century*. 1992.

----- *The Growth of Mysticism: Gregory the Great through the 12th Century*. 1994.

----- *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism-1200-1550*. 1998.

The Classics of Western Spirituality: A Library of the Great Spiritual Masters. New York: Paulist Press. This series provides informative introductions to selected texts in critical translations. If you have a favorite classic, you can not go wrong in purchasing the Paulist edition of the text!

Accountability

- 1. Students may find it helpful to read the first three chapters of Holt's book before the first class on January 3.**
- 2. 60% of the class will be evaluated on active participation in class discussions and processes** and reading of assigned material.
- 3. Written Work: 40% of the evaluation.**
 - a.** Journaling/scrape booking key quotes, ideas, images from the class sessions. This record can be integrated into the final integration project. You may find it helpful to trace a theme, issue, image or concern through the readings. This can be done in whatever creative style works for the participant.
 - b.** A synthesis/ appropriation—either written/other form of artistic expression which reflects the student's attempts to integrate the course material into his/her own life and ministry. While the final synthesis project should demonstrate a mature and intellectually credible grasp of the material (i.e. a sense of historical context, interpretative skill, critical appreciation and

appropriation etc.), the project should also demonstrate the student's creative integration of the material into the particulars of his/her ministry or work. Synthesis **due March 7 and will be part of the closing ritual for the course.**

Tentative Schedule of class sessions will be given out during the first class session.