

Conrad Grebel University College  
University of Waterloo  
TS 681: Personal Spirituality  
Fall 2020

**Synchronous Class Time:** Zoom on Thursdays 1:00 – 2:30 pm  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89224681954?pwd=ektBVGhjQS84RUdNRzBHVUpuR3ErQT09>

**Instructor:** Assistant Professor Carol Penner  
**Office Hours:** Thursday 12:00 – 1:00 pm, zoom office hours with same link as above  
**Email:** c2penner@uwaterloo.ca

### Course Description:

In this course we will learn about spiritual practices for daily living by reading and discussing spiritual classics from the Christian tradition. All of the books are still in print many centuries after they were written. Through a careful examination of the texts, we will explore how spirituality is expressed differently over time, noting the diversity inherent in the author's time period, geography, denomination, gender, culture and race. How can these guides deepen our spiritual lives in today's world? Every week we will highlight a spiritual practice, and have an opportunity to practice and discuss it.

### Learning Goals:

1. Students should be able to describe a wide variety of classic spiritual practices from different Christian denominations and time periods.
2. Students should be able to critically analyze how cultural contexts shape spiritual practices.
3. Students should be able to discuss the relationship between spirituality and theological themes such as ecclesiology, soteriology, missiology and justice.
4. Students should be able to demonstrate comparative skills, finding similarities and differences between classic spiritual texts.
5. Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to analyze power dynamics in the church that can lead to marginalization.
6. Students should be able to reflect on their own spirituality after sampling a variety of spiritual practices.
7. Students should demonstrate the ability to listen deeply to other voices in our learning community.

## Required Reading Materials:

Texts: (all available free, on-line, and published in many translations and editions)

St. Augustine, *Confessions*.  
Bingen, Hildegard of. *Scivias*.  
Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together*.  
Brother Lawrence. *The Practice of the Presence of God*.  
Bunyan, John. *Pilgrim's Progress*.  
Day, Dorothy. *On Pilgrimage*  
Guyon, Jeanne. *Short and Easy Method of Prayer*.  
John of the Cross. *Dark Night of the Soul*.  
Julian of Norwich. *Revelations of Divine Love*.  
Kempis, Thomas à. *The Imitation of Christ*.  
Laubach, Frank. *Letters by a Modern Mystic*.  
Loyola, Ignatius. *The Spiritual Exercises*.  
Nee, Watchman. *The Normal Christian Life*.  
Sales, Frances de. *Introduction to the Devout Life*.  
Teresa of Avila. *The Way of Perfection*  
*The Cloud of Unknowing*.  
Thurman, Howard. *Jesus and the Disinherited*.  
Ugolino, Brother. *The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi*.  
*The Way of a Pilgrim*.  
Woolman, John. *The Journal of John Woolman*.

## Articles:

Sheldrake, Philip. "Chapter 1: What is Spirituality?" In *Spirituality: A Brief History*, 1-20.  
Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.

## Evaluations:

Assignment	Weighting	Due Date
Classic Books Précis	20%	Every class (excluding first and last class)
Journal: My Spiritual Life	30%	Part A: Sept 24 Part B: Dec 3
Comparative Contemporary Book Review	40%	December 10
Class Attendance and Participation	10%	Weekly

## Assignments:

#1. Classic Books Précis (20%)

Goal: To demonstrate the ability to summarize and concisely articulate the reading.

Due Date: Weekly (excluding first and last class)

Length: strict maximum 100 words

Each week, you will be given a portion of ONE of the two assigned books to analyze.

Your précis answers this question:

“How does this book describe the path to intimacy with God?”

The précis is due on LEARN Dropbox one hour before class begins: each week several students will be asked to share their précis in class as a discussion starter.

## #2. Journal: My Spiritual Life (30%)

Goal: To demonstrate your ability to think about your own spiritual life.

This assignment has two components

- a) Part A. Write a short spiritual autobiography. What paths have been helpful in taking you into God’s presence, or has this been elusive? Paths might include church attendance, the guidance of a spiritual leader, scripture, visions or dreams, or various types of prayer. Describe a meaningful spiritual experience you have had. What are your hopes for your spiritual life? What are your feelings about or hopes for your spiritual life?

Due Date: September 24

Length: 1000 words

- b) Part B. Continue with Part B of your spiritual autobiography. Which book from this course resonated most with you? Was there a certain spiritual practice from this class that was particularly meaningful? Reflecting on what you wrote in Part A, has this course changed or challenged any of your thinking or practices? How is the present day world context or your personal experience influencing your spiritual life? Are there specific insights that you have gained from your classmates?

Due Date: December 3

Length: 1000 words

## #3. Comparative Book Review (40%)

Goal: To demonstrate your ability to analyze two books on spirituality, and place them in historical context with other spiritual literature. You will have a chance to share about your books in our last class.

Due Date: December 10

Length: 2500 words

Choose two books from the lists below. At least one book must be from List One. The majority of writers we are looking at in this course have been Western white people; List One gives us the opportunity to engage with other voices. In this paper you will:

- i. Give a short background about each author, such as their age, gender, race, denomination, culture, geographical location and historical context, commenting on how these shape their writing. (500 words for both books)
- ii. Summarize the spiritual path each writer takes, and the spiritual disciplines they recommend. (500 words for both books)

iii. Compare and contrast your books with each other and with the other books we have read in this course. (1000 words)

- Do you see similarities in organization, theme or style?
- Do the two books share a time period or cultural milieu?
- How do your books refer to the church and its sacraments, or to scripture?
- How are these books different from or similar to other books in the course?
- Are there spiritual dilemmas or practices present in your book that are unique?

iv. Respond personally to the books--did they resonate with you? Why or why not? (500 words)

### List One

Boff, Leonardo. *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997.

Câmara, Dom Hélder and Francis McDonagh. *Essential Writings*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009.

Chan, Francis. *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook: 2013.

Charleston, Steven. *Sanctuary of the Spirit*. Oklahoma City: Red Moon Publications, 2017.

Graves, Marlena. *A Beautiful Disaster: Finding Hope in the Midst of Brokenness*. Ada, MI: Brazos Press, 2014.

Frankl, Victor. [\*Man's Search for Meaning\*](#). Boston: Beacon Press, [1946] 2006.

Gray, Bonnie. *Finding Spiritual Whitespace: Awakening Your Soul to Rest*. Ada, MI: Revell, 2014.

Hillesum, Etty and J. G. Gaarlandt. *An Interrupted Life: The Diaries from 1941-43*. New York: Henry Holt, 1996.

Howard, Charles Lattimore. *Pond Rive Ocean Rain: Find Peace in the Storms of Life*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2017.

Kandiah, Krish. *God is Stranger: What Happens When God Turns Up*. Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2017.

Kurtice, Kaitlin. *Glory Happening: Finding the Divine in Everyday Places*. Orleans: Paraclete Press, 2017.

Kurtice, Kaitlin. *Native: Identity, Belonging and Rediscovering God*. Ada, MI: Brazos Press, 2020.

Sawatzky, Jarem. *Dancing with Elephants: Mindfulness Training for those Living with Dementia, Chronic Illness or an Aging Brain*. Winnipeg: Red Canoe Press, 2017.

Stonechild, Blair A. *The Knowledge Seeker—Embracing Indigenous Spirituality*. Regina: University of Regina Press, 2017.

Tutu, Desmond and the Dalai Lama. *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World*. New York: Avery, 2016.

Twiss, Richard. *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys: A Native American Expression of the Jesus Way*. Downers Grove, ILL: IVP Books, 2015.

Weems, Renita. *Listening for God: A Minister's Journey Through Silence and Doubt*. New York: Touchstone, 2000.

Yamasaki, April. *Sacred Pauses: Spiritual Practices for Personal Renewal*. Waterloo, ON & Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013.

## List Two

- Dillard, Annie. *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. New York: Harper's Magazine Press, 1974.
- Doherty, Catherine De Hueck. *Poustinia: Christian Spirituality of the East for Western Man*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1975.
- Hammarskjöld, Dag. *Markings*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 1974.
- Kelly, Thomas R. *A Testament of Devotion*. San Francisco: Harper One, 1941.
- Lamott, Ann. *Travelling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith*. New York: Anchor Books, 2000.
- Lisieux, St. Therese of Lisieux. [Story of a Soul](#). New York: Image Books/Doubleday, [1922] 2002.
- Merton, Thomas. *New Seeds of Contemplation*. New York: New Directions, 1973.
- Nouwen, Henri. *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*. Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1980.
- Palmer, Parker. *A Hidden Wholeness: A Journey Toward an Undivided Life*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2004.
- Peterson, Eugene. *Leap Over a Wall*. San Francisco: Harper One, 2011.
- Rohr, Richard. *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2011.
- Rolheiser, Ronald. *Forgotten Among the Lilies: Learning to Love Beyond our Fears*. New York: Doubleday, 2005.
- Ten Boom, Corrie with John L. Sherrill and Elizabeth Sherrill. *The Hiding Place*. Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour Publishing, 1971.
- Voskamp, Ann. *One Thousand Gifts: A Dare to Live Fully Right Where You Are*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.
- Willard, Dallas. *Renovation of the Heart*. Colorado Spring: The Navigators, 2012.
- Wright, N. T. *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection and the Mission of the Church*. New York: Harper One, 2008.
- Wurmbrand, Richard, George Verwer, and Dale Rhoton. *Tortured for Christ*, 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2017.

## #4. Class Attendance and Participation (10%)

Being present and participating in class discussion and activities is essential for the pedagogical method of this course. Students are expected to enter our zoom meeting having listened to the mini lectures on LEARN, read the required reading for the day, done their précis, and with readiness to discuss what they've learned. Class participation is assessed not by how much you talk, but rather by how present you are in the discussion as a listener and a participant. If you are unable to make the class, please let the instructor know by email if you will be absent. For those who find the synchronous class problematic because of internet connections, please join by telephone (information on LEARN Class One). If you miss three classes, even for unavoidable reasons, an alternative assignment will be assigned.

## Course Schedule:

Week	Readings	Spiritual Practice
1. Sept 10	Group A and B: Sheldrake, "Chapter 1: What is Spirituality?" (focusing on p. 11-15) (pdf on LEARN)	Devotional Reading
2. Sept 17	Group A: Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> (397-400) Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a> . Read pp. 13-64 (Books I – IV). Mobile download <a href="#">here</a> .  Group B: Hildegard of Bingen, excerpt from <i>Scivias</i> , Book One, Vision One (1151-42). Read online <a href="#">here</a> , (read the whole document...it's easier to read if you copy and paste it into a Word document). For images of how the book looked see <a href="#">here</a> , for closeup of the original illustrations of the manuscript look <a href="#">here</a> .	Spiritual Journaling
3. Sept 24	Group A: Brother Ugolino, <i>The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi</i> (early 1300s). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a> . Read pp. 10-62, Chapters 1-27. Mobile and audio download <a href="#">here</a> .  Group B: Anonymous - <i>The Cloud of Unknowing</i> (ca. 1350-1400). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a> . Read pp. 25-87 (Chapters 1-50). Mobile and audio download <a href="#">here</a> .	Silence, Solitude and Mindfulness
4. Oct 1	Group A: Thomas à Kempis – <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> (1418). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a> . Read pp. 5-60 (Books I and II). Mobile and audio download <a href="#">here</a> .  Group B: Julian of Norwich – <i>Revelations of Divine Love</i> (ca. 1393-1413), Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a> . Read pp. 2-61, (Chapters 1-30). Mobile and audio download <a href="#">here</a> .	Dreams, Visions, Insights
5. Oct 8	Group A: Ignatius Loyola – <i>The Spiritual Exercises</i> (1522-1524). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a> . Read pp. 21-78. Mobile and audio download <a href="#">here</a> .  Group B: Frances de Sales – <i>Introduction to the Devout Life</i> (ca. 1593-1622). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a> . Read pp. 10-84, Parts I and II. Mobile and audio download <a href="#">here</a> .	The Examen
Oct 15	Reading Week	

Week	Readings	Spiritual Practice
6. Oct 22	<p>Group A: Teresa of Avila – <i>The Way of Perfection</i> (1577). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a>. Read pp. 16-46, 67-87, Chapters 1-7, 16-20. Mobile or audio download <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Group B: John of the Cross – <i>Dark Night of the Soul</i> (ca. 1578-1591). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a>. Read pp. 13-66, Chapters I – V. Mobile or audio download <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	Praying with Beads
7. Oct 29	<p>Group A: John Bunyan, <i>The Pilgrim’s Progress</i> (1678). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a>. Read pp. 2-64, Stages 1-5. Mobile or audio download <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Group B: Jeanne Guyon – <i>Short and Easy Method of Prayer</i> (1682). Available on-line <a href="#">here</a>. Read the whole short book. Mobile or audio download <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	Pilgrimage and Stations of the Cross
8. Nov 5	<p>Group A: Brother Lawrence – <i>The Practice of the Presence of God</i> (ca. 1692) Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a>, Read the whole short book. Mobile or audio download <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Group B: John Woolman – <i>the Journal of John Woolman</i> (1774). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a>. Read pp. 27-68, Chapters I – V. Mobile download <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	Simplicity and Generosity
9. Nov 12	<p>Group A: <i>The Way of a Pilgrim</i> (1884). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a>. Read pp. 4-54, Sections 1-5.</p> <p>Group B: Frank Laubach, <i>Letters by a Modern Mystic</i> (1937). Access online <a href="#">here</a>. Read the entire document.</p>	The Jesus Prayer
10. Nov 19	<p>Group A: Watchman Nee, <i>The Normal Christian Life</i> (1938). Download the pdf <a href="#">here</a>. Read pp. 4-66. Mobile download <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Group B: Dietrich Bonhoeffer – <i>Life Together</i> (1939) Read it online <a href="#">here</a>, pp. 17-75, Chapters 1 &amp; 2.</p>	Fasting
11. Nov 26	<p>Group A: Dorothy Day, <i>On Pilgrimage</i> (1948). Read it online <a href="#">here</a>. Read the Foreward, January – May.</p>	Service through Justice and Love

Week	Readings	Spiritual Practice
	Group B: Howard Thurman, <i>Jesus and the Disinherited</i> (1949). Read it online <a href="#">here</a> , pp. 11-73, Chapters I-III.	
12. Dec 3	20 <sup>th</sup> Century Spiritual Books Sharing Research, Wrap-up and Reflection	

## UWaterloo Policies

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Arts: [Academic Integrity website](#) University of Waterloo: [Academic Integrity Office](#)

## Notes

### Citations and Plagiarism

Your sources must be fully documented, according to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16<sup>th</sup> edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). The latest edition is available on-line here:

[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/ch14/ch14\\_toc.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/ch14/ch14_toc.html). Please use the notes and bibliography system rather than the parenthetical author/date system. Using undocumented quotations from published sources, or submitting work that is not your own will have serious ramifications for your academic career.

### Tardy Assignments

Punctual submission of assignments is expected. Late assignments will be accepted only if you have talked to the instructor ahead of time for an extension. Marks may be deducted for assignments that are over one week overdue.

### Confidentiality

In the course of our discussions as we explore pastoral caregiving, the students or instructor may wish to share stories of a personal nature. It is expected that personal stories you hear in class will not be repeated outside the classroom without the express permission of the person who told the story.

### The Land on Which Our College Rests:

We teach and learn together acknowledging that we are located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe, and the Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo and Conrad Grebel University are situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers (six miles) on each side of the Grand River. Through our courses and our lives we aim to foster just relationships.

### Other sources of information for students:

**Mental Health Services** aim is to provide holistic programming and services to help you lead a healthy and balanced life. We strive to provide a secure, supportive environment for students of all orientations and backgrounds. Students suffering from problems with anxiety, depression, problems with sleep, attention, obsession or compulsions, relationship difficulties, severe winter blues, etc., may make an

appointment by phone or in person. Appointments are usually available within two days of initial contact with one of our medical doctors. All contacts are completely confidential. Phone 519-888-4567 ext. 32655.

**For students with learning differences:** The [AccessAbility Services \(AAS\)](#) office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the ASS office at the beginning of each academic term.

**Counselling Services:** Counselling Services provides free confidential counselling, in both individual and group sessions, with qualified professionals to help registered students, faculty and staff with personal concerns, educational career decisions, and strategies to studies and exams: [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocs](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocs), ext. 33528, NH Room 2080.

**The Writing Centre:** Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. Make an appointment or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit [www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre)