

SPFM 5201 Spiritual Formation Journey

North Park Theological Seminary

Summer Semester JT/S3

Class meetings: June 5–6, 6-9pm; June 7, 9am–5pm

1 credit hour

Instructor: Dr. Deborah R. Penny

Small Group Leaders:

Course Description:

Spiritual Formation Journey is the introductory course in spiritual formation at NPTS. Participants will be encouraged to reflect upon historical Christian traditions that have shaped and formed the Church and its influence on one's own formation history. To identify and recall the presence of the Holy Spirit during times of celebration and grief in one's unique spiritual journey. In addition to class interaction there will be formation groups where we listen for God in the stories of others. The practice of spiritual direction will be introduced.

Course Objectives:

1. Gain a fuller understanding of the scope of Christian spiritual formation through readings of church history, traditions, and practices.
2. Share experiences from one's personal life story through active involvement in formation groups.
3. Recognizing the presence of the Triune God in the past, present, and future as followers of Christ and led by the Holy Spirit.
4. This course contributes toward the MDiv, MACF and MACM learning outcomes of demonstrating a theologically grounded ministerial identity committed to caring for the spiritual formation of the self, individuals, and communities.

Reading Requirements:

***Streams of Living Water*, Richard Foster, 1998, Harpers Collins, New York**

***A Spiritual Formation Workbook*, James Bryan Smith & Lynda L. Graybeal, 1991, Harpers Collins New York**

Supplemental Readings

Class Scheduled Dates & Assignments:

Sept 25, 2019

Introduction

Describe course material and requirements

Small Group Description

What is Spirituality?

Objectives

1. Discover the rhythms of one's spiritual life.
2. Connect spiritual practices with their historical context.
3. Reflect on how various spiritual practices impact his/her own spiritual formation journey.
4. Evaluate his or her current prayer practices in relation to results of the prayer style assessment.
5. Reflect upon an individual who has embodied one of the contemplative streams.

June 5th, 2025

Read: Streams of Living Water

Chapter 1 – Imitatio: The Divine Paradigm and

Spiritual Formation Workbook: Introduction and Session 1

Lecture: The Contemplative Tradition and the Charismatic Tradition

Objectives:

1. Describe each tradition and its connection to Christ/Church
2. Identify historical figures of each tradition
3. Integrate tradition in personal life
4. Engage and reflect on class material in cohort learning

Small Group

Define and practice

Chapter 2 The Contemplative Tradition: Discovering a Prayer-Filled Life,

June 6, 2025

Chapter 3 – The Holiness Tradition – Living a Virtuous Life

Spiritual Formation Workbook - Sessions: 2, 3 & 4

Objective

1. Describe each tradition and its connection to Christ/Church
2. Identify historical figures of each tradition
3. Integrate tradition in personal life
4. Engage and reflect on class material in cohort learning

Formation Group Topic: Foster lists 3 potential perils of the Holiness Tradition: Legalism, Pelagianism and Perfectionism. Dialogue with your group on these perils.

Chapter 4 – The Charismatic Tradition – Discovering the Spirit -Empowered Life

Foster writes: “Frankly, there are no “no charismatic Christians.” How can he write that and what is your reaction to it?

Objectives:

1. Critique diverse views of the writer and conversation
2. Articulate argument of one’s belief

Small Group

Chapter 5 – The Social Justice Tradition – Discovering the Compassionate Life

June 7, 2025

Chapter 6 The Evangelical Tradition – Discovering the Word Centered Life

Spiritual Formation Workbook – Session 5 & 6

Objectives:

1. Examine one's own cultural development and spiritual practices with respect to other cultures' spiritual practices.
2. Critique the issue of justice in spiritual formation.
3. Integrate understanding of evangelizing and its impact on one's own spiritual formation
4. Identify contemporary models of the Evangelical Tradition

Chapter 7 – The Incarnational Tradition – Discovering the Sacramental Life

Spiritual Formation Workbook – Session 7 & 8

Objectives

_Describe what is the impact of an incarnational life

1. Articulate one’s story of sacrificial living

Small Group

Group Presentations

Take Away

Evaluations

Closing Prayer

Additional Course Guidelines

1. Confidentiality: a signed “NPTS Confidentiality Statement” must be on file. This form will be provided. Discussion in class and group is protected under this statement.
3. First week of semester, participants make an appointment to meet with their spiritual director and actually meet together within the first seven weeks of the semester.
4. An integrative reflection paper is required in this course and its due? (date is in accordance with the grade submission date). All quotes by authors, presenters, instructors, and the Bible must be noted and cited (see below in Submission Details). These quotes may make your final paper more than 5 pages in length.

Reflect on topics covered in the main class and small groups. What is stirring in you? How is your story being formed at this season of your life? Notice the themes and specific points of each lecture. Identify and implement 3 spiritual/prayer practices. Reflect on your awareness of the movement of God in your life. Integrative reflection papers are by nature personal. Use of the pronoun “I” is appropriate and expected. Refrain from summarizations or generalizations such as “the class struggled with the theme of death”. This is about your life and your unique journey with God.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from other written material/internet/television.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.

Grading Rubric: 80 points is required for a passing grade

In Class (20 points)

- Participation in group spiritual practice, exhibit understanding of practice

Small group participation (20 points)

- Participate in small group with peers and group leader

Spiritual Direction – two are required for the course (20 points)

- This is a reprint of what is in the NPTS catalog: *Spiritual practices are integral to the formation of the whole person while drawing us closer to the Triune God. NPTS teaches a variety of courses which include spiritual practices throughout the MDiv, MACF and MACM degree programs. Prayer practices in their diversity is familiar to Christian sojourners and are deeply rooted in scripture. Spiritual direction is a spiritual practice and is grounded in the New and Old Testaments and Christian tradition. It is a ministry of listening, presence, and discernment and required in all spiritual formation courses. This practice further contributes toward the MDiv, MACF and MACM learning outcomes of demonstrating a theologically grounded ministerial identity committed to caring for the spiritual formation of the self, individuals, and communities.*

Final Paper (40 points)

Should include reflections of three spiritual practices:

1. At least one from your prayer style
 2. One from a prayer style not your own
 3. Your experience with spiritual direction
- Thorough explanation of experience (student and other participants)
 - Reflection of feelings and understanding of practices, what worked and/or did not.
 - Identify and discuss common themes of spiritual formation in course readings and from 2 other readings, (see bibliography below)
 - Articulate and discuss how personal learning and practices will impact current and future ministry settings.

Bibliography

Bakken, Kenneth. 2000. *The Journey into God*. Minneapolis: Augsburg.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. 1959. *The Cost of Discipleship*. New York: Touchstone.

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Downey, Michael. 1997. *Understanding Christian Spirituality*. New York: Paulist Press.

- Foster, Richard. 1998. *Streams of Living Water*. New York: Harpers Collin.
- Guenther, Margaret. 2011. *Walking Home, From Eden to Emmaus*. Harrisburg: The Morehouse Publishing.
- Holmes, Barbara. 2004. *Joy Unspeakable, Contemplative Practices of the Black Church*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress.
- McClendon, Adam. 2012. *Defining the Role of the Bible in Spirituality: "Three Degrees of Spirituality" In American Culture*. Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care 2012, Vol. 5, No. 2, 207-225
- Nouwen, Henri J.M. 1975. *Reaching Out, The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*. New York: Double Day.
- Scazzero, Peter. 2017. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Smith, James Byron & Graybeal, Linda L. *A Spiritual Formation Workbook*. 1998. New York: Harpers Collins
- Thomas, Marjorie. 2005. *Soul Feast, Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Wuellner, Flora. 1998. *Feed My Shepherds*. Nashville: Upper Room.