

**Ashland Theological Seminary
DM 945
Spirituality of Henri Nouwen
Dr. JoAnn Ford Watson
April 21-25, 2008**

I. Theme Statement

Gleaning the works of the spiritual master, Henri Nouwen, for spiritual thoughts and insights about God, the spiritual life, the church, and the world.

II. Why We are Teaching This Class

This course will expose the student to the writings of the great contemporary spiritual writer and master, Henri Nouwen. The class will foster a depth of understanding of themes of the spiritual life from Nouwen's works. Topics such as God, Christ, prayer, silence, community, ministry, church, and world will be addressed. Students will integrate Nouwen's spiritual themes into some aspect of their ministry context.

III. What We Will Accomplish in this Class

To provide depth of understanding and insight into the spiritual life from the life and spiritual works of Nouwen.

To expose students to the spirituality of Nouwen through an investigation into the themes and movements of his many and varied works.

To equip students in some aspect of Nouwen's spirituality so that they can incorporate this into their own ministry of spiritual formation.

IV. How the Class is Set Up

This course integrates lecture, group process, discussion, case study, and student reflection. Class attendance is as outlined in the Student Handbook. Except for emergencies, which do not include regular parish responsibilities, attendance at all sessions is required.

V. What the Time Allocation is for This Class

It is expected that the student will devote roughly 150 hours total to this course. A suggested breakdown of these hours is: 30 hours in the classroom, 70 hours of reading (required texts and other related works), and 50 hours of writing.

VI. Assigned Texts

Students will read all texts before coming to class and be prepared to discuss spiritual themes during class time.

La Noue, Deidre. *The Spiritual Legacy of Henri Nouwen*. New York: Continuum, 2000. ISBN: 0-8264-1283-1.

Nouwen, Henri J.M. *The Inner Voice of Love: A Journey Through Anguish to Freedom*. New York: Doubleday, Image Books, 1996. ISBN: 0-385-48348-1.

_____. *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*. New York: Doubleday, Image Books, 1992. ISBN: 0-385-47307-9.

_____. *Turn My Mourning into Dancing: Finding Hope in Hard Times*. Compiled and edited by Timothy Jones. Nashville: Word Publishing, Thomas Nelson, 2001. ISBN: 0-8499-1711-5.

_____. *The Way of the Heart: Desert Spirituality and Contemporary Ministry*. Harper San Francisco, 1981. ISBN: 0-86683-913-5.

VII. What You are Expected to Do in Class

A. One Reflection Paper

Due the first day of class. April 21, 2008. 10%

To be on one of Nouwen's works not assigned in class. See selected bibliography attached. Please acquire this Nouwen book on your own.

The reflection paper should be 4-5 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 point font. Choose at least two spiritual themes within the text and discuss the themes and reflect upon their influence and impact in your spiritual life and ministry. The reflection paper will be shared in class.

B. Journal

Due the first day of class, April 21, 2008. 20%

The Nouwen texts, *The Inner Voice of Love* and *The Way of the Heart* will be read reflectively, with journal and pen available. Entries should be made whenever you sense the Lord speaking to you through the material or feel particularly enlightened or stirred by the section you are reading. The journal should indicate date, book, page, and reference quote and reflections on spiritual insights for your life and ministry. The journal will be shared in class.

C. Minor Paper

Due 60 days after the last day of class. Due June 25, 2008. 30%

The minor paper should be 10 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font. It should examine spiritual themes of Nouwen from the assigned texts, *Turn My Mourning into Dancing*, and *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. Prominent spiritual themes of Nouwen should be identified and addressed from these works and cited with references. Integration and reflection into the student's spiritual life and ministry context should also be given. This paper focuses on the spiritual integration of themes and reflection on themes as well as the impact of Nouwen on the student's own spiritual growth.

D. Major Paper

Due 60 days after the last day of class. Due June 25, 2008 40%

15 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font. Six week program of Nouwen's spirituality implemented in the student's ministry context of spiritual formation. Students will use some aspect of Nouwen's work and spirituality in their own context. This can include a reading group, prayer group, spiritual lessons, classes, sermons, or retreats that use Nouwen's works and themes. Students will design and implement this program and offer their own reflections and the participants' reflections for six weeks. Students will design the Nouwen program of choice and have defined it by the end of class April 25, 2008

Students with Disabilities

For students who have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let the professor know early in the quarter (preferably the first week) so that your learning needs can be appropriately met. In order to receive accommodations, documentation concerning your disability must be on file with Classroom Support Services, 105 Amstutz Hall, 419-289-5953. Please contact them with any questions you may have.

Ashland Theological Seminary Academic Integrity Policy

Ashland Theological Seminary seeks to model servant leadership derived from biblical standards of honesty and integrity. We desire to encourage, develop, and sustain men and women of character who will exemplify these biblical qualities in their ministry to the church and the world. As members of the seminary community, students are expected to hold themselves to the highest standards of academic, personal, and social integrity. All students, therefore, are expected to abide by the academic integrity standards outlined in the Student Handbook

Bibliography

Students choose one of these books to read and write their reflection paper. Students must acquire this book on their own.

Nouwen, Henri. *Adam: God's Beloved*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1997.

_____. *Bread for the Journey: A Daybook of Wisdom and Faith*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1997.

_____. *Clowning in Rome: Reflections on Solitude, Celibacy, Prayer, and Contemplation*. Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1979.

_____. *Creative Ministry*. New York: Doubleday Image Books, 1971.

_____. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. New York: Crossroad, 1989.

_____. *Lifesigns: Intimacy, Fecundity, and Ecstasy in Christian Perspective*. New York: Doubleday Image Books, 1986.

_____. *Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World*. New York: Crossroad, 1992.

_____. *Out of Solitude: Three Meditations on the Christian Life*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1974.

_____. *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*. New York: Doubleday, 1975.

_____. *The Genesee Diary: Report from a Trappist Monastery*. New York: Doubleday, 1976.

_____. *The Living Reminder: Service and Prayer in Memory of Jesus Christ*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1981.

_____. *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*. New York: Doubleday Image Books, 1972.

_____. *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*. New York: Doubleday Image Books, 1972.

_____. *With Burning Hearts: A Meditation on the Eucharistic Life*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994.

_____. *With Open Hands*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1972. Rev. ed. 1995.