

NORTH PARK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Spiritual Formation 7205, From Hostility to Hospitality, 1 credit
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8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. January 4-5, 2012
SYLLABUS DRAFT

Thus, the spiritual life is that constant movement between the poles of loneliness and solitude, hostility and hospitality, illusions and prayer. The more we come to the painful confession of our loneliness, hostilities and illusions, the more we are able to see solitude, hospitality and prayer as part of the vision of our life. Henri Nouwen, Reaching Out

Course Description:

The course will focus on the dynamic of the movement from hostility to hospitality. Hostility is the abusive violation of the otherness of persons while hospitality is the practice of personal charity and public justice. The course will explore how conflict, anger, and hurt can be transcended without being denied and how power can be used redemptively.

Course Process and Values:

This spiritual formation course is designed to increase our awareness of the movement within ourselves, in the communities of which we are a part, and in our relationship with God, between hostility and hospitality. It hopes to encourage the development of the spiritual practices that facilitate hospitality toward all God's creation and to diminish those life practices that impede genuine respect, love, justice, and transformation.

Learning Objectives:

1. To place ourselves within the tradition of hospitality practiced as a spiritual discipline.
2. To acquire capacities for attending to one's local context in practicing the discipline.
3. To reflect on one experience of practicing the discipline through service with a local ministry of hospitality.
4. To understand the purpose of a rule of life and practice writing one's own.

Guiding questions throughout are: How do we follow the Holy Spirit's leading in the inner movement from hostility to hospitality? What practices of hospitality nurture and follow from this inner disposition?

Course Requirements (Grading is pass/fail based on the following):

1. Attendance and participation
 - a. Attendance at all class sessions is required.
 - b. As an intensive, it is imperative that you attend from 8:30 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. If you cannot commit to the entire time, you may need to drop the course.
2. Completion of assigned readings
 - a. Assigned reading is on reserve at Brandel Library and/or posted on Moodle. You may wish to acquire the books and read them whole, Nouwen's *Reaching Out* especially.
All required readings are to be completed before the class meets in January.

- Henri Nouwen, “Reaching Out to Our Fellow Human Beings,” chapters 4, 5, 6 of *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life* (Image, 1986).
 - Kathleen Norris, “Hospitality,” and “Church,” pages 262-76 in *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith* (Riverhead Books, 1998).
 - Christine Pohl, “Introduction: A New Look at Old Tradition,” and “Ancient and Biblical Resources,” chapters 1 and 2 in *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* (Eerdmans, 1996).
 - (Recommended) You may wish to view Pohl’s lecture at Trinity:
<http://www.henrycenter.org/media/?id=265&type=video>
 - Eric H. F. Law, chapters 1-4 of *Inclusion: Making Room for Grace* (Chalice, 2000).
 - Jean Lambert, “Befriending in God’s Name: Preface to a Missionary Theology of God as Friend,” *The Covenant Quarterly* 46, no. 2-3 (May – August 1988): 37-68.
 - (Recommended) North American Congregation, *The Rule of the Society of St. John the Evangelist* (Cowley, 1997). Read chapters of interest to you in preparation for writing your own rule of life. Available on-line at
<http://www.ssje.org/5.pdf/cowleypdf/SSJE%20Rule%20of%20Life.pdf>
- b. You are encouraged (but not required) to use a personal journal to record your reflections on the readings. You may find the discipline of regular writing prepares you to respond to the content and process of the course lectures, discussions, and practical experience.
3. Visit and serve a local ministry of hospitality at least two times for a total of six hours of service. While you are there, learn all you can about the ministry, his history, assumptions, and values, as you note what you are learning about yourself and your interactions with others. You may wish to form a small group to complete this assignment.
- a. Possible service sites in Chicago include: Jesus People USA, St. Leonard’s House, Misericordia, The Night Ministry (and Deborah’s Place at The Night Ministry), Genesis, Chicago Coalition, Pacific Garden Mission, Open Door Shelter, North Park Friendship Center, Exodus Refugee Ministries, Mennonite Voluntary Service in Pilsen, Catholic Worker Houses, Cathedral Shelter (Episcopal), Hartwell Center (Alzheimers care)
 - b. Available in Brandel Library: Carol Southern, ed. *2009-2010 Directory of Health and Human Services in Metropolitan Chicago* (Community Resource Network, 2009). The directory is now maintained on-line, also available through Brandel Library.
4. A final reflection paper (1000-1200 words), a copy of your rule of life, and reading report are due Friday March 8, 2012.
- a. Your paper will reflect on course readings, topics discussed in class, and your service project. More than a summary of course content, the paper is an opportunity to pay attention to your own movement from hostility to hospitality. What do you sense happening within? Where might you becoming more aware of God’s work in your life?
 - b. The rule of life is an evolving document, so send your latest version.
 - c. Attach a report of your completion of required and recommended readings.

Disabilities Accommodations: Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the program's office. Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. For further information please review the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/ada>

Please note: this course is a formation and integrative course that requires your full presence. Please do not use computers for anything except note taking and remember to turn your cell phones off.

Course Topics and Schedule (May be revised and guest speakers added at the instructor's discretion)

FRIDAY JANUARY 4: THE TRADITION OF WELCOME

Hospitality in the Old and New Testament
Friendship in the Pietist Movement
Hospitality as a disposition and discipline

SATURDAY JANUARY 5: THE PRACTICE OF WELCOME

Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement
Creating an evolving Rule of Life
Local ministries of hospitality
Planning for service