



A M B R O S E  
SEMINARY

## TH662-1 / CH 662 / PT662 Prayer Paths to God (3)

Ambrose Seminary  
Fall/2007

**Instructor:** Professor Charles Nienkirchen, Ph.D.      **Office:** 5<sup>th</sup> floor / Rm 537  
**Office Hours:** W/ TH 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.                      **Office Phone:** 571-2550 Ext 5905  
    **Email:** cnienkirchen@ambrose.edu  
**Class Times:** T 6:30-9:00 p.m.                                      **Location:** Rm 645

### Required Texts

Richard Foster, Prayer. (Hodder & Stoughton/2000)  
The Way of a Pilgrim. (Shambala/1991)  
 Martin Luther, A Simple Way to Pray. (Westminster/John Knox/2000)

### Course Description

The course studies the historical theology and practice of Christian prayer through the centuries as it pertains to understanding the role of prayer within the spiritual life. It is taught from an ecumenical perspective and includes a practicum in lectio divina.

### Course Objectives

- To survey highlights in the development of the practice and understanding of Christian prayer from the first to the twenty-first centuries;
- To expose the student to prayer ‘classics’ in the Protestant, Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions;
- To expand the student’s awareness of approaches to prayer outside his/her own experience and church tradition;
- To raise the student’s consciousness as to the essential role of prayer in living a spiritual life;
- To give guidance in the discipline of praying with Scripture (lectio divina).

### Course Schedule

<b>Week 1</b> Sep 11	Course Introduction <u>Reading:</u> ‘Voices on Prayer’ (handout) ‘The Chicago Call’ (handout) Foster, pp.1-16
<b>Week 2</b> Sep 18	Praying With Jesus and the Early Church <u>Reading:</u> Bockmuehl, ‘Should We Kneel to Pray’ (handout) J. Charlesworth, ‘Jewish Prayers in the Time of Jesus’ (handout) Foster, pp.17-36

- Week 3**  
Sep 25  
Praying With Jesus and the Early Church (cont'd)  
Praying With the Monks  
Reading: Demarest, *Satisfy Your Soul*, pp.123-155 (handout)  
Smith, "The Jogging Monk" (handout)  
Foster, pp.37-58
- Week 4**  
Oct 2  
Praying With the Monks (cont'd)  
Seek the Stillness (video)  
Reading: Boers, 'Learning the Ancient Rhythms of Prayer' (handout)  
Foster, pp.59-82
- Week 5**  
Oct 9  
Praying With the Mystics  
Reading: Hocken, 'Charismatics and Mystics' (handout)  
Tozer, 'Prayers' (handout)  
'What is Mysticism?' (handout)
- Week 6**  
Oct 16  
Praying With the Mystics (cont'd)  
Praying with the Reformers  
Reading: Gibeau, 'Walking the Labyrinth' (handout)  
Foster, pp.83-108
- Week 7**  
Oct 23  
Praying With the Reformers (cont'd)  
Praying With the Methodists  
Reading: Foster, pp.109-149
- Week 8**  
Oct 30  
Praying With the Methodists (cont'd)  
Reading: Foster, pp.150-189
- Week 9**  
**NOTE: November 6 Class Cancelled (Professor is absent)**
- Week 10**  
Nov 13  
President George Durance Speaks on Prayer
- Week 11**  
Nov 20  
**Franciscan Retreat Centre** / Cochrane / 7:00 - 9:15 p.m. / Cost \$15/person  
**Note:** Arrive by 6:45 p.m.  
**PRAYER PRACTICUM #1 (Hebrews 11)**  
Reading: Gill, 'Distractions in Prayer' (handout)
- Week 12**  
Nov 27  
Fr. Benedict Groeschel, 'Praying with Scripture' (video)  
**PRAYER PRACTICUM #2 (Revelation 1)**  
Reading: Martin, 'Meditation as God Intended' (handout)  
Foster, pp.190-215

**Week 13** Praying With 19<sup>th</sup> Century Evangelical Protestants  
Dec 4 J. Edwin Orr, 'The Role of Prayer in Spiritual Awakening' (video)  
**PRAYER PRACTICUM #3 (Revelation 2)**

Reading: Foster, pp. 216-243  
Barrett, 'Praying in the World' (handout)  
D.A. Carson, 'The Urgent Need of the Church' (handout)

**Week 14** Conclusions re: History of Christian Prayer  
Dec 11 Reading: Foster, pp. 244-274

### Course Requirements and Grading

- A. Attendance at all prayer-practicum sessions.
- B. A **review/response paper** (6-8 pages) on The Way of the Pilgrim which:
1. Summarizes the contents of the book and explains its relationship to the title (5 marks);
  2. Summarizes the nature of the prayer experience according to the book (10 marks);
  3. Reflects on the potential contributions which the book could make to the student's own experience / practice of prayer (7 marks);
  4. Identifies 5 significant questions which the book raises in the student's mind (5 marks);
  5. Gives an overall impression/evaluation of the book (3 marks).
- DUE: Tuesday, October 16/2007 (30% of final grade)**
- C. A **review/response paper** (6-8 pages) on Martin Luther, A Simple Way to Pray which includes the following:
1. A discussion of the relationship between the title and the contents of the book; (5 marks)
  2. A summary of Luther's understanding of the nature and content of the prayer experience; (10 marks)
  3. A discussion of Luther's 'prayer techniques' and their relevance to the student's personal prayer journey; (10 marks)
  4. An overall evaluation/impression of Luther's treatise. (5 marks)
- DUE: Tuesday, November 13/2007 (30% of the final grade)**
- D. A **prayer journal**, based on the 3 prayer practicums, which includes the following:
1. A separate entry for each practicum session (make sure the entries are dated);
  2. A record of physical and emotional responses and images/insights/impressions received in each session;
  3. A written prayer based on the assigned Scripture for each practicum;
  4. An overall evaluation of the value of this style of praying for your own spiritual journey and the church, collectively. Discuss strengths and weaknesses.
- DUE: Tuesday, December 11/2007 (30% of the final grade)**
- E. **Required Reading** (conscientiously done on time!) **(10% of the final grade)**

## Grading Schedule

Excellent	Very Good / Good	Satisfactory	Minimal Pass
96-100 A+	82-85 B+	68-71 C+	56-59 D+
91-95 A	75-81 B	63-67 C	50-55 D
86-90 A-	72-74 B-	60-62 C-	
			Failure
			<50 F

## Important Notes:

- A. The Registration Revision Period is September 6-14/2007. The last day to withdraw from this class or change to audit without academic penalty is November 16/2007;
- B. The last day to enter a course without permission and withdraw from courses and receive tuition refund is September 14/2007;
- C. All students who participate in the field trip to the Franciscan Retreat Centre in Cochrane are responsible for the extra \$15.00 fee.
- D. **All late assignments which have not received an officially approved extension will be granted the highest possible failing grade. Extensions will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, the hospitalization of yourself or a member of your immediate family, or a prolonged illness for which you required treatment by a physician. All requests for extensions must be received in writing at least seven days prior to the due date. Factors such as assignments for other courses, computer software difficulties, or computer printer malfunctions are not sufficient grounds for requesting an extension. If an extension has been granted it is your responsibility when submitting the paper to attach a note indicating the date to which the extension was granted and the date on which the paper is actually submitted. Retain for yourself a copy (software or hard copy) of each paper.**
- E. The title page of **ALL** assignments should include the course name and number, the professor's name, the student's name, student ID number and mailbox number. This is imperative!
- F. All assignments must be turned in by the last day of classes in order to receive credit for the course. In the event that all work has not been turned in by the end of the course, and a 'time extension' has not been approved, a failing grade will be received for the course.
- G. **No assignments will be received by electronic transmission.**
- H. Minimum standards of writing will be observed in all type-written essay assignments.

## Additional Information

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as are stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar.

Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information, contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at [privacy@auc-nuc.ca](mailto:privacy@auc-nuc.ca).

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a “Course Extension”. Alternative times for final examinations cannot be scheduled without prior approval. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination times must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the appropriate deadline. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise “due to circumstances beyond the student’s control”.

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean.

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.