

ST. MARY'S ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE
Fall 2019

Tuesday

6:00 – 8:30 pm

SP/ST609 Spiritual Theology

Dr. John M. Hayes

This course will be an attempt to recover some of the integrity of the connection between theology and spirituality, by our study and discussion of Mark McIntosh's seminal book and by close readings and reflection on the writings of four contemporary mystics, Edith Stein, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Dorothy Day, and Howard Thurman. Each, in his or her own context and idiom, struggled to forge a creative dialectic between his or her theological understanding of Christian revelation, spirituality, and compassionate, prophetic engagement and witness in the world.

As an attempt to replicate that integration, the end of each class time will be devoted to the presentation of various forms of Christian spiritual practice: *lectio divina*, the Jesus prayer, centering prayer, etc. The student will be encouraged to experiment with each of these and to journal his or her theological reflections on those experiences.

Course Requirements:

- **Reading:** Students will read five books; total reading assigned will be less than 900 pages.
- **Writing:** Students will write four one-page reflection papers on their readings of Christian mystics, and two eight-to-ten-page papers: one a research paper on a theological-spiritual writer of the student's choosing, the other a more personal theological reflection on the student's experience with a particular spiritual practice.
- **Other:** Students will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of their class participation.

Grades will be calculated accordingly: research paper 30%, personal reflection on particular spiritual practice 30%, reflection papers 30%, class participation 10%.

Required Texts:

- Mark A. McIntosh, *Mystical Theology: the integrity of spirituality and theology*, (Blackwell, 1998) ISBN 1-55786-907-3.
- Edith Stein, *The Science of the Cross*, translated by Josephine Koeppel, (ICS 2003) ISBN 0-935216-31-6.
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, (Touchstone, 1995), ISBN 13:9780-684-815008.
- Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness*, (Harper Collins, 1997) ISBN 0-06-061751-9.
- Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited*, (Beacon 1976/1996) ISBN 978-0-8070-1029-7