

STML 560: SPIRITUALITIES OF PEACEMAKING

School of Theology and Ministry
Seattle University
Winter Quarter, 2012

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Hunthausen, Room 100
Office Hours:
M 1:30-4:00
TTh: 8:30-10
or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Rather than examine spirituality in a merely general way, this course will analyze it in terms of the practice of liberation and non-violent action. Influenced by Latin American liberation theology, this course will look at spirituality in the concrete actualization of faith, hope and charity. The spirituality described and explored in this course poses to the human spirit the questions that rise from reality itself.

“Does hope really have meaning for humanity? Is it true that love is our most profound human truth? Is it true that the bottom most stratum of reality is composed of good and truth?”¹ Jon Sobrino argues that “there is no spiritual life without actual, historical life. It is impossible to live with spirit unless that spirit becomes flesh” (4, Sobrino)

There are many metaphors to speak of spirituality. In this course the Spiritualities of peacemaking, will articulate this spiritualities made possible by encountering God in history. In particular, we will be looking at spirituality foundational to peacemakers and their practice of nonviolent action. Sobrino identifies in historical terms peacemakers as those “who even in a time of struggle and warfare seek to humanize conflicts. They seek to conduct armed conflicts as humanly as possible. They foster peaceful means for the resolution of conflicts even amid the violence of struggle. In biblical language, he writes Peacemakers are those who long to beat their swords into plowshares.” (37, Sobrino)

This notion of non-violent resistance is broadly defined. Key, however, is an embodiment of social change that actively and persistently challenges violent and unjust conditions. In this course we will be exploring the spirituality of peacemaking as a spiritual journey of Christian non-violent resistance.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Demonstrate an understanding of the role and dynamics of human “meaning-making” in framing worldviews, and in impacting individual and collective human values formation, ethical and other forms of decision-making, and leadership ideals, goals and methodologies.

¹ Page 178 The Spirituality of Liberation, Jon Sobrino

- Demonstrate a *reflective* capacity for analyzing and articulating the student's personal spirituality and "meaning-making" influences and structure, and its impact on the student's leadership ideals, goals, and methodologies.
- Demonstrate an ability to think critically about the impact and role of religious organizations, spiritual movements, and spiritually-inspired insights and worldviews in public discourse, particularly in the articulation of public values in the United States, as well as its impact and role in the development of leadership theory and practice.
- Demonstrate an ability to lead from a posture of an articulated spiritual-depth that is consistent with the student's personally-defined values and the values of the organization in which the student works.

TEXTS

Required Reading:

- Rolheiser, Ronald. *The Holy Longing; The Search for a Christian Spirituality*. New York: Random House, 1999.
- Lederacich, John Paul. *The Moral Imaginations: The art and soul of building peace*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Kownacki, Mary Lou. *The Nonviolent Movement: Spirituality for the 21st Century*. Pax Christi USA, 2002.
- Fisher, Simon. *Working with Conflict: Skills and strategies for action*. New York: Zed Books, 2000.

Recommended Texts:*

- Wink, Walter. *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millenium*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1998
- Sobrino, Jon. *Spirituality of Liberation: Toward Political Holiness*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis 1998
- de Gruchy, John W. *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press
- Slattery, Laura. *Engage: Exploring Nonviolent Living*. Pace e Bene Press
- Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Abingdon Press, 1996
- Baum, Gregory and Wells, Harold. *The Reconciliation of Peoples: Challenge to the Churches*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis 1997
- Garcia-Rivera, Alex. *A Wounded Innocence*
- Wink, Walter. *Naming the Powers*. Fortress Press

* Students may choose to do a book review/presentation to the class on one of the recommended texts. This can be done as a team. Please see instructor for further directions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and Class Participation 10 pts

The nature of the course makes it particularly important for students to attend each class session. Please note that much of what determines the grade is dependent upon mutual discussion and interaction. Students are required to demonstrate effective group skills by actively contributing to group discussions and using constructive peer feedback that includes honesty, challenge, and mutual respect. It also includes lively discussion and timely reading of the assigned texts and viewing of the films that reflect *critical* theological and cultural assessment.

Written Works

1. **Spiritual Autobiography** (15 pts) See handout. Due Jan. 23rd
2. **Reflection Papers** (15 pts each; 30 pts total)
The second written work will be two reflection papers, 3-5 pages each, typed and double-spaced. They are to identify the central themes of the required text. You are to demonstrate an understanding of a key point of the text and respond to that theme. The first reflection paper on the non-violent movement is due **Monday Jan 30th** and the second reflection paper on *The Holy Longing* is due **Monday Feb. 17th**.
3. **PowerPoint Presentation** (30 pts)
Students are encouraged to look into their own tradition as well as the more public prophets (i.e. Monsignor Romero, Martin Luther King Jr, Dorothy Day, etc.) and present to the class a 20 minute PowerPoint on who they were, what their context was, the source of conflict, and the source of their spirituality. I invite you to be as creative as possible. Examples of this will be shown in class.
4. **Homework Assignment** (15 pts)
All students will be required to lead a class discussion on one of the chapters from *The Moral Imagination*. There are twelve chapters in his book and at the first day of class students will be asked to choose a chapter to present in class. Students have the option of presenting the chapter in a PowerPoint or a two page outline (please include page numbers next to any bullets citing material from the chapter). The purpose is not to present orally the whole chapter (that can be done in the written outline) but to choose one or two key points from that chapter and lead a meaningful discussion. Students can do this individually or as a team of two.

GRADING

Class Participation/Group Skills

Students are graded on:

- 1) Use of effective communication skills in class (rely on learnings from Pastoral Helping)
- 2) Punctual attendance
- 3) Active participation in the healthy development of the class that includes discussion of text and displaying attitudes of mutual respect and openness to transformation.

Scholastic Performance

Students are graded on:

- 1) Demonstrated ability to think in a rigorously critical and theological manner about the course material
- 2) Demonstrated ability to write (assigned papers) and speak (class discussion and presentation) in a way that shows they have engaged the material.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Date Mondays	In-Class Overview	Assignments
January 9	Review syllabus; personal introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <u>Rolheiser: The Holy Longing Parts 1-3</u> ▪ Spiritual Autobiography Paper assigned
January 16 No Class:	Martin Luther King Day NO CLASS	
January 23	View: <u>A Force More Powerful</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spiritual Autobiography Paper due ▪ Read: <u>The Non-violent Movement/Spirituality for the 21st Century</u>
January 30	Exploring nonviolent power, heart and grace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine key principles of nonviolence as articulated by Mahatma Gandhi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <u>Workings with Conflict</u> Ch. 1-3 ▪ 1st reflection paper due
February 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ View: Romero ▪ Conflict analysis and resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assignment: “Stages of Conflict” p. 19 ▪ Read: <u>The Moral Imagination</u>

February 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Touching the Moral Imagination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student-led discussions of chapters from “The Art and Soul of Building Peace” ▪ Read: Rolheiser Part 4
February 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Principles of Peacebuilding: ▪ Some Key Spiritualities within a Spirituality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ View <i>Women and Peacebuilding</i>
February 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Journey of Transformation Dismantling structural violence Sustaining Ourselves in the Spiritual Life 	<p>Read: <u>Working with Conflict</u> Part III 2nd reflection paper due</p>
March 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stages of community making ▪ Nonviolent activity guidelines 	
March 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student Presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student Presentations