

**DRAFT**  
**Subject to change. Full**  
**syllabus available in Canvas**  
**May 20<sup>th</sup>.**

**Loyola Institute for Ministry**  
**Loyola University New Orleans**

## **History of Christian Spirituality**

### **LIM G828-Y1G0E**

**Summer 2026**

**Instructor:** Deborah Wilhelm, D.Min.   **Office Hours:** By appointment, email me to set up a meeting  
**Email:** [dwilhelm@loyno.edu](mailto:dwilhelm@loyno.edu)

**Important!** You will be notified by email to your Loyola email address when your course web site is available (normally the week before class begins). Please reply to the instructor's email when you receive it to confirm that you are ready to begin the course.

### **Course Description**

This course presents an introduction to the variety of experiences and expressions of Christian spirituality from the roots in the Hebrew Scriptures to contemporary spiritual writings. It will focus on monasticism, mysticism, and modern apostolic spirituality as a way of exploring the recurring questions and challenges that shape the human search for God. Through primary sources, the student will be introduced to many classical spiritual writers.

### **Course Goals**

By the end of this course, students should be able to

- understand the growth and development of Christian spirituality.
- read classics in the history of Christian spirituality.
- explore contemporary trends in the study of spirituality.
- reflect on their own approach to God in light of course material.
- appreciate the varied ways that people respond to God's invitation to life in the Spirit.

## Required Texts

*Please order the required texts as soon as possible from the bookstore of your choice.*

Aumann, Jordan. *Christian Spirituality in the Catholic Tradition*. Ignatius Press, 1985. ISBN-13: 978-0-89870-068-8. This text provides an introduction and an overview of the history of spirituality that will help the student understand the broad development of Christian spirituality through the centuries. The book also gives a helpful background to the individual authors presented in the Egan anthology. This book is available to read online at the Internet Archive Library after creating a free account: [https://archive.org/details/christianspiritu0000auma\\_d211](https://archive.org/details/christianspiritu0000auma_d211).

St. Benedict. *The Rule of St. Benedict*. Vintage-Doubleday, 1998. ISBN-13: 978-0-375-70017-0. This is the foundational document of monasticism that still shapes religious life. Its simplicity allows the reader to grasp the spirit and practical aspects of monasticism. Other versions are acceptable, including online versions such as at [https://www.solesmes.com/sites/default/files/upload/pdf/rule\\_of\\_st\\_benedict.pdf](https://www.solesmes.com/sites/default/files/upload/pdf/rule_of_st_benedict.pdf).

Harvey Egan. *An Anthology of Christian Mysticism*. 2nd edition, Liturgical Press, 1991. ISBN-13: 978-0-8146-6012-6. This is an excellent anthology of mystical writers. Egan gives helpful introductions in addition to selections from the authors themselves. He does focus on mystical writings, so often other authors and less mystical writings of authors are not included.

Additional readings and media as included in the Canvas course.

## Evaluation and Course Requirements

### Sequence of Topics/Calendar of Assignments

Weekly sessions in this course run from Tuesday–Monday. Please note that all assignments must be completed by Midnight on Monday, the last day of the weekly session, except for Week 1; you must complete your personal introduction by Sunday, 5/31 by 11:59pm Central Time, or risk being administratively dropped from the course.

Session	Topic	Assignments
Week 1 May 26– June 1	Introductions (May 25, Memorial Day Holiday)	Introduce self; complete readings; complete Initial Understanding
Week 2 June 2–8	The Roots of Christian Spirituality in Scripture and in the Early Church	Complete readings, media, discussion questions
Week 3 June 9–15	Foundations of Monasticism	Complete readings, media, discussion questions; attend optional synchronous class meeting

Week 4 June 16–22	The Growth of Monasticism (June 19, Juneteenth Holiday)	Complete readings, media, discussion question; attend required small-group class meeting
Week 5 June 23–29	The Spirituality of the Middle Ages	Complete readings, media, discussion questions
Week 6 June 30–July 6	The Growth of Mysticism (July 3, Independence Day Holiday)	Complete readings, media, discussion questions
Week 7 July 7–13	Women Mystics of the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Centuries	Complete readings, media, discussion questions
Week 8 July 14–20	Ignatian and Carmelite Spirituality	Complete readings, media, discussion questions; attend required small-group class meeting
Week 9 July 21–27 August 1	Modern and Contemporary Spirituality	Complete readings, media, discussion questions; attend optional synchronous class meeting
Week 10 July 28–31	Final Assignment and Course Evaluation	Final Assignment due 7/28 11:59 pm CDT

Wednesday, August 5: due date for posting final grades

### Week One Assignments

- 1) Read overview in Canvas
- 2) Participate in a Discussion on Canvas by introducing yourself and greeting your fellow students
- 3) Indicate your preferences for synchronous class meetings (attendance is optional).
- 4) Review the syllabus and learning agreement
- 5) Complete the Initial Understanding Assignment
- 6) Read assigned texts and view video (texts and video are in Canvas)

### Assessment

Each student's final grade will include the following parts:

		Percentage of Grade	
		Graduate	CEU
1	Substantive participation in weekly discussion via online postings	60%	90%
2	Spiritual Formation	10%	10%
3	Final Paper	30%	–

### 1) Substantive participation in weekly discussion via online postings (60% graduate / 90% CEU)

The modules of this course include assignments for reading, video segments, and discussion questions. These are provided in the weekly modules in our Canvas course. In addition to reading all the materials assigned and watching assigned videos, all students will also be expected to participate in the class discussions online.

You will also be asked to participate in two virtual small group sessions that you will initiate and assess. That is included as part of this participation grading.

Specific details regarding the schedule for posting, length requirements, discussion leaders, and small group meetings will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of May 20<sup>th</sup>.

### 2) Spiritual Formation (10% graduate and CEU students)

Throughout the course, students will engage in an experience of *lectio divina*, using the *Give Us This Day* app. Detailed information about this can be found in Canvas.

### 3) Final Assignment (30% graduate students)

In a 12-14 page reflective essay (page count does not include works cited page), integrate the course material, your own supplemental research, and your ministry experience in a paper that explores the major movements of monasticism, mysticism, and medieval/modern apostolic spirituality. Detailed information about this assignment can be found in Canvas.

### Grading Scale

<b>A</b>	93-100	<b>B-</b>	80-82.9	<b>D+</b>	67-69.9
<b>A-</b>	90-92.9	<b>C+</b>	77-79.9	<b>D</b>	60-66.9
<b>B+</b>	87-89.9	<b>C</b>	73-76.9	<b>F</b>	0-59.9
<b>B</b>	83-86.9	<b>C-</b>	70-72.9		

### Overall Grading Scale

Please note that the LIM grading scale uses B as the standard for graduate-quality work. A and B+ indicate graduate work done with distinction, with B- and below signifying levels below graduate standards.

Letter Grade	Quality Points	Characteristics of Student Work
A	4.0	Work done with distinction. An outstanding use of all four evaluation criteria as a catalyst for critical reflection.

<b>A-</b>	<b>3.7</b>	Work done with distinction, with a few minor corrections needed.
<b>B+</b>	<b>3.3</b>	Work of very good quality. The assignment is addressed in an exceptional manner with a good balance of personal insight and academic documentation.
<b>B</b>	<b>3.0</b>	The standard for the master's degree. The assignment is adequately addressed in a clear and concise manner with appropriate documentation. If subsequent work meets this standard of quality, the degree will be awarded.
<b>B-</b>	<b>2.7</b>	The work is slightly below the standard for master's level work. The assignment is addressed, but a number of corrections is needed to address the assignment in a clear and concise manner. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
<b>C+</b>	<b>2.3</b>	Substandard graduate work. Evaluation criteria are not adequately met in the assignment. Moderate improvement is needed. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
<b>C</b>	<b>2</b>	Less than graduate-level work. Evaluation criteria are not met. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
<b>C-</b>	<b>1.7</b>	Below average, grade does not count towards graduation.
<b>D+</b>	<b>1.3</b>	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
<b>D</b>	<b>1</b>	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>	Assignment not addressed at all, incomplete assignment, or not submitted on time.

## Course Policies

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

Students are subject to the university policy regarding incomplete grades with the following additions to university policy. Grades of Incomplete are given at the instructor's discretion. Students must complete LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources » Policies, Forms, & Services section of their Canvas course. Students should first inquire of their instructor whether or not they are eligible for an incomplete; this must occur with sufficient time to complete the process explained here. To be eligible, students may not have received an Incomplete in the previous semester, must have completed at least 75% of the course work to date, and must have at least a C or above in the course. After the instructor makes an initial assessment of eligibility, including checking with the LIM Office to ensure there was no Incomplete in the previous semester and finds the student eligible, by the due date of the course's final assignment, a student must complete and obtain all signatures for LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources section of their Canvas course and submit it to their instructor, who will forward a copy to the LIM Director. LIM graduate students may not receive Incompletes in LIM courses in consecutive semesters.

### **Attendance & Participation**

Students are subject to the university policy regarding attendance found online in the Bulletin. Students in online courses communicate their presence by active participation in weekly discussions. Each course's instructor sets requirements for how many times students must post on the Discussion Board in Canvas. Failing to post during the first week of class may result in removal from the course. If you foresee that you will be unable to post in a

given week, please contact the instructor ahead of time. Extensions for posting are given at the instructor's discretion and for a valid reason may be granted if arranged ahead of time. In extraordinary circumstances, students may arrange with their instructor to post up to two weeks after a deadline, though this may entail a grade reduction. Posts and other assignments submitted more than two weeks late may be subject to a grade of zero. If students do not post in a given week, they are considered absent. Absence for more than one week without contacting the instructor may result in removal from and failure of the course.

### **University Policies**

Please read Part 2 of the syllabus (located in Canvas) for university policies on plagiarism, AI, accessible education, and more.