SPIR 60003: Spiritual Life and Leadership
(3 Semester Hours)

Instructor: Timothy Robinson

Prerequisites: none

Description of Content: This course introduces the practice of the Christian spiritual life and the work of spiritual formation in Christian community. Attention will be given to both classical and contemporary expressions of Christian spirituality, the integration of spirituality, theology, and ethics, and to the role of spiritual discipline in the lives of seminarians and religious leaders. Significant class time will be devoted to experimentation with and practice of spiritual disciplines, and reflection on those experiences.

Course Procedures: lectures, discussion in small and large groups, contemplative exercises

Objectives:
1. To become familiar with the broad outlines of the diverse history of Christian spirituality and historic spiritual practices, developing the ability to evaluate religious experience and articulating how figures and practices from history can inform contemporary spirituality and ministerial practice.
2. To develop a personal “rule of life” (plan of spiritual practice), articulating how the rule can help one integrate the various dimensions of selfhood, spiritual experience, and ministerial practice.
3. To reflect on and articulate an understanding of the relationship between theology and religious experience.
4. To reflect on and articulate an understanding of the relationship between spirituality and ethics (or, classically framed, between “contemplation and action”), and how spiritual practices support ministries of justice and reconciliation.

Requirements:
1. Attendance and participation (including weekly reading responses)
2. Developing and living a “rule of life” throughout the semester and writing a reflection paper about the experience
3. Written response papers to several “spiritual classics”
4. Paper on prayer

Texts:
5. Other readings as assigned

Grading procedures:

1. Attendance and participation (includes weekly responses to readings): 25%
2. Rule of life and paper: 25%
3. Paper on prayer: 25%
4. Response papers to spiritual “classics:” 25%