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| Logo  Description automatically generated | **MTO145.5**  **Spirituality for 21st Century Disciples** |
| **Semester 1, 2024** |



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| Unit Supervisor & Lecturer | Fr. Nemanja Mrdjenovic (nemanji@gmail.com) | | |
| Delivery | 19 February – 7 June  Thursdays, 6.00pm-8.000pm  E-learning (Online) | | |
| AQF Level | 7 | Credit Points | 6 |

**UNIT DESCRIPTION**

The unit provides students with the ability to articulate the biblical, spiritual, and ethical bases for Christian discipleship, to reflect on the appropriation of these in their own lives as developing leaders, and to gain a general understanding of such issues for Church members. The unit is structured around four modules. (1) An exploration of New Testament texts and theology regarding the nature of Christian discipleship. (2) An exploration of personal and communal practices of Christian discipleship as described in spiritual literature, the Lives of the Saints, and the biographies of contemporary disciples, with students engaging in reflection on their own beliefs, values, and practices. (3) An introductory understanding of the nature of Christian ethics in Australian society against a global context and the implications for Christian beliefs, values, and living. (4) An examination of a range of approaches to spiritual development in the Orthodox tradition, including contemporary approaches and consideration of forms of spiritual development appropriate to the student’s own experience.

**PREREQUISITES**

None

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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| **ON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THIS TASK THE STUDENT WILL BE ABLE TO:** | **RELATED CONTENT** | **RELATED ASSESSMENT** |
| 1. Explain how biblical motifs of Christian discipleship as expressed in the New Testament are relevant to 21st century Christians | Lectures 1-13 | Minor Essay |
| 1. Discuss formative practices of Christian discipleship and spirituality, both corporate and individual, with a view to identifying some foundational practices that are suitable for personal development | Lectures 1-13 | Presentation and Report, |
| 1. Apply basic ethical frameworks for decision-making from a Christian perspective | Lectures 1-13 | Presentation and Report, Major Essay |

**CHANGES MADE SINCE LAST OFFERED** (in response to Student Unit Evaluations)

N/A.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Taushev, Archbishop Averky. *The Struggle for Virtue: Asceticism in a Modern Secular Society*. Jordanville: HTP, 2014.

Vlachos, Hierotheos. *Orthodox Spirituality: A Brief Introduction*. Levadia, Greece: Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 1994.

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS/BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Brianchaninov, Saint Ignatius. *The Arena: Guidelines for Spiritual and Monastic Life*. 2nd ed. Complete Works of Saint Ignatius Brianchaninov. Jordanville: HTP, 2012.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship*. London: SCM Press, 1995.

Climacus, Saint John. *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. Translated by Colm Luibheid. The Classics of Western Spirituality. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1982.

Chryssavgis, John. *Light Through Darkness: The Orthodox Tradition*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2004.

Frame, Tom. *Losing My Religion: Unbelief in Australia*. Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009.

George, Archimandrite. *Theosis: The True Purpose of Human Life*. Mount Athos: Holy Monastery of Saint Gregorious, 2006.

Hart, David Bentley. *Atheist Delusions: The Christian Revolution and Its Fashionable Enemies*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.

Haught, John. *Science And Religion: From Conflict to Conversation*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1995.

Lewis, Clive Staples. *Mere Christianity*. London: William Collins, 2016

Muse, Stephen (ed.). *Raising Lazarus: Integral Healing in Orthodox Christianity*. Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2004.

Perekrestov, Elena. *Alexander Schmorell: Saint of the German Resistance*. Jordanville: HTP, 2017.

Rose, S. *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future*. Platina: St. Herman Press, 1997.

Seraphim of Sarov, Saint. *The Aim of Christian Life: The Conversation of St Seraphim of Sarov with N.A.Motovilov.* Saints Alive Press, 2010.

Sheridan, Greg. *God Is Good for You*. Crow’s Nest: Allen and Unwin, 2018.

Woloschak, Gayle. “The Compatibility of the Principles of Biological Evolution with Eastern Orthodoxy.” *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2011): 209-231.

Vlachos, Hierotheos. *Orthodox Spirituality: A Brief Introduction*. Levadia, Greece: Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 1994.

Zecevic, Aleksandar. *Truth, Beauty, and the Limits of Knowledge: A Path from Science to Religion*. San Diego: University Readers, 2018.

**SEMESTER PROGRAM**

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| **Date** | **Week** | **Lecture (Online)** | **Readings** |
| Feb 22 | 1 | Spirituality in the context of New Testament writings | Barbu, L. (2009) “The ‘Poor In Spirit’ And Our Life In Christ: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective On Christian Discipleship.” *Studies In Christian Ethics*,  22.3, 261-274.  Hopko, T. (2016) in *Orthodox faith: Spirituality*. Yonkers: St Vladimir’S Seminary. Available at: https://www.oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/spirituality. |
| Feb 29 | 2 | Discipleship in the New Testament texts | Trakatellis, Bishop D. (1985) '"Ακολουθεί μοι/Follow me" (Mk 2.14) Discipleship and Priesthood” Greek Orthodox Theological Review, 30.3, 271-285.  Kvalbein, H. (1988) “‘Go therefore and make disciples’: The Concept of Discipleship in the New Testament.” *Themelios*, 13, 48–53. |
| Mar 7 | 3 | The Church of The Holy Spirit | Afanasiev, N. (2007) “The Royal Priesthood”, The Church of The Holy Spirit, University of Notre Dame. (<https://books.google.com.au/books?id=7EIFDgAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=sr&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false>)  Chrissavgis, J. (1987), “The Royal Priesthood (Peter 2.9)” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 32.4, 373-377. |
| Mar 14 | 4 | Patristic understanding of Discipleship | Louth, A. (2004) “’Beauty will save the world’: the formation of byzantine spirituality”, *Theology Today*, 61, 67-77.  Wesche, K. P. (1999). “Eastern Orthodox Spirituality: Union with God in Theosis”, *Theology Today*, 56(1), 29–43. |
| Mar 18 | **Non-teaching week** - First week of Great Lent | | |
| Mar 28 | 5  Minor Essay Due | Asceticism | Taushev, A. (2014), “Asceticism”, *The Struggle for Virtue: Asceticism in a Modern Secular Society*. Jordanville: HTP, 11-25.  Papathanassiou, A (2016), “Christian Fasting in Postmodern Society: Considering the Criteria”, SVTQ, 60 1-2, 249-268. |
| Apr 4 | 6 | Martyrdom | Dragas, G. (1985), “Martyrdom and Orthodoxy in the New Testament Era – The Theme of Μαρτυρία as Witness to the Truth”, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 30:3, 287-296.  Mrdjenovic, N. (2022) “Christian martyrdom as a catalyst for discipleship in the Eastern Orthodox Church: a case study of modern Serbian Orthodox martyrs and confessors”, *Astra Salvensis*, 20.2, 47-64. |
| Apr 11 | 7 | Christian understanding of freedom | Payne, D (2016), “Towards an Orthodox Understanding of Religious Freedom: An  Exploration of the Theological Resources for Engaging Religious Pluralism”, *Journal of*  *Church and State*, 59:4, 608–625.  “The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today’s World”, <https://www.holycouncil.org/-/mission-orthodox-church-todays-world>  St. Gregory The Great (2007), “How the Spiritual Director Who Lives Well Should Teach and Advise the Laity”, *The Book of Pastoral Rule*, NY: St Vladimir’s Press. |
| Apr 18 | 8 | Public Faith | Volf, M. (2011), “Human Floursihing”, *A Public Faith: How followers of Christ Should Serve*  *the Common Good*, Brazos Press, 55-74  “Church and Politics”, *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church* (2000), https://mospat.ru/en/documents/social-concepts/ |
| Apr 25 | 9 | Online Discipleship | Mrdjenovic, N. (2020), “Against Spiritual Infection-  Social vs. Spiritual Distancing”, *Orthodox Christianity, https://orthochristian.com/129707.html*  Twenge, J. (2017), “Irreligious: Loosing my religion (and Spirituality)”, *iGen: Why Today’s Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood- And what that means for the rest of us*, Atria Books, 119-142.  Wit, P. (2002), “Internet: a religious sheepfold: the Coptic Orthodox religious regimes in the diaspora”, The Journal Of Eastern Christian Studies, 54:1/2, 91-108. |
| May 2 | **Non-teaching week** - Holy Week | | |
| May 9 | **Non-teaching week**- Bright Week | | |
| May 16 | 10 | Discipleship in the scientific realm | Woloschak, G. (2011), “The Compatibility of the Principles of Biological Evolution with Eastern Orthodoxy”, *SVTQ*, 55:2, 209-231.  Knight, K. (2013), “Science and the Eastern Orthodox Church: Historical and Current  Perspectives”, *Science and Christian Belief*, 25:1, 37-52. |
| May 23 | 11 | Spirituality in the consumerist society | Davis, E. (2001), “Slaves or Sabbath-Keepers? A Biblical Perspective on Human Work.” *Anglican Theological Review*, 83:1, 25-40.  Heintzman, P. (2015), “Chrostian Perspective on Leisure”, *Leisure and Spirituality: Biblical, historical, and contemporary perspectives*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 175-214. |
| May 30 | 12  Major Essay Due | Sacramental Spirituality | Meyendorf, P. (2003), “Liturgical Life in the Parish”: Present and Future Realities”, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 48:1-4, 143-153.  Streza, C.I. (2013), “The Divine Liturgy in Orthodox Spirituality: The Mystery of Man’s Personal Encounter with God through Worship and the Ascetical Life”, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 58:1-4, 141-167. |
| Jun 6 | 13 | Prayer as Healing | Chirban, J. (1993), “Healing and Orthodox Spirituality”, *The Ecumenical Review*, 45.3, 337-344.  Corneanu, Metr. N. (1995),”The Jesus Prayer And Deification”, SVTQ, 39, 3-24.  Muto, S. (2009), “The Character Of A Spiritual Healer”, *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care*, 2.2, 238-244. |

**ASSESSMENT TASKS**

**Due Dates Summary:**

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| **Assessment** | **Words** | **Value** | **Due Date** |
| 1. Minor Essay | 1250 | 30% | Week 5 |
| 1. Presentation and Report | 1000 | 20% | Week (as chosen and approved) |
| 1. Major Essay | 2250 | 40% | Week 12 |
| 1. Class Participation | NA | 10% | Ongoing through semester |

**Task Description:**

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| **ASSESSMENT TASK 1**  **Minor Essay**  **30%**  *Due: Week 5*  *1250 words* |
| **Instructions**  Students are to write an essay on the following question:  **In what way is the New Testament concept of discipleship relevant to contemporary Christian spirituality?** |
| **Rationale and Expectations**  Essay is a logically structured composition addressing a clearly identified topic. Students are expected to demonstrate the ability to identify the relevance of New Testament discipleship models in the contemporary Christian spirituality, and analytical skills in addressing the problem(s) posed by the topic.  The essay will be assessed on the following criteria: depth of understanding of the topic; quality of the assessment of analysed data; appropriate referencing; contextualisation of the topics in contemporary realities; and logical consistency. |
| **ASSESSMENT TASK 2**  **Presentation and Report**  **20%**  *Due:* Deadline for registration is **Week 2**. One week after the presentation a written report is submitted to the lecturer. |
| **Instructions**  Present orally in class on one of the topics covered in the Semester and approved by the lecturer. One week after the presentation a written report is submitted to the lecturer. |
| **Rationale and Expectations**  Presentation will be assessed on the following criteria: depth of understanding of the topic; quality of the assessment of analysed data; quality of verbal and non-verbal communication, appropriate referencing and textual illustrations; contextualisation of the topics in contemporary realities; and logical consistency. |
| **ASSESSMENT TASK 3**  **Major Essay**  **20%**  *Due: Week 12*  *2250 words* |
| **Instructions**  **Essay Topic**: Significance of Christian Spirituality for effective social transformation |
| **Rationale and Expectations**  Students are to write an essay that responds to a contemporary ethical issue from a Christian perspective, drawing on an ethical framework. Students are expected to identify formative practices of Christian discipleship as well as to articulate an understanding of forms of spiritual development in the Christian tradition that may assist in responding to this issue.  The essay will be assessed on the following criteria: depth of understanding of the topic; quality of the assessment of analysed data; appropriate referencing; contextualisation of the topics in contemporary realities; and logical consistency. |
| **ASSESSMENT TASK 4**  **Class Participation**  **10%**  *Due: Ongoing through semester* |
| **Instructions**  Regular participation in lectures and class discussions. |
| **Rationale and Expectations**  Students are expected to participate in lectures and to take active part in class discussions, demonstrating their acquaintance and understanding of the appropriate week readings. Distracted behavior (e.g. on phone during class), and discourteous behavior will be penalised by 1 point (of the total mark possible). |

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT ASSESSMENTS**

Please refer to this Unit’s website tile *Assignments* for further information about assignments, assessment criteria, grading scale, and the process for late submission of assignments.

Refer to the [*Student Academic Toolkit*](https://learn.tabor.edu.au/course/view.php?id=3718)for information about academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism, referencing, formatting, and for relevant links to Tabor and faculty policy. If you are unsure, consult your lecturer or program coordinator for advice.