

Course Title: "Pilgrimages Inner and Outer: Letting the Body Mentor the Soul"

Instructor: Martha E. Stortz, Augsburg College stortz@augsborg.edu

Course Description:

Feminists have reintroduced Christian theology to the body, not as a lesser partner to the soul, but as a site of wisdom and insight. They tap experience as a source for theology, inviting the body to mentor the soul. Practices tap the body's wisdom and experience's insights.

This course explores the history of the practice of pilgrimage, a practice that signaled both physical path and interior journey. We will read the stories of pilgrims, like Egeria and Teresa of Avila, John Bunyan and Geoffrey Chaucer. We will encounter sites of pilgrimage, like Rome, Jerusalem, Santiago de Compostela. Finally, we will conclude with a quick look at post-modern pilgrims, like Phil Cousineau and Joyce Rupp, as well as post-modern sites of pilgrimage, like Emily Dickinson's home, Graceland, and The Holocaust.

The course treats students as themselves pilgrims, the course itself as a pilgrimage, and assignments as the chronicle of a journey.

Learning Goals: Where We are Going....

1. The course will probe pilgrimage as a practice, by:
 - a. situating it in the broader literature on Christian spiritual practices;
 - b. treating the course itself as a kind of pilgrimage, and including both physical and intellectual with the subject;
2. The course will examine some of the historical and contemporary literature on pilgrimage, by:
 - a. reading accounts from pilgrims ancient, modern, and post-modern;
 - b. examining sites of ancient and medieval, modern and post-modern pilgrimage;
3. Finally, the course will explore the enduring significance of pilgrimage as a metaphor for the spiritual life, by:
 - a. asking participants to keep a pilgrim diary along the way;
 - b. contracting with each other to see their spiritual lives as a pilgrimage – at least for the duration of the course.

Course Outcomes: Figuring Out Where We've Been....

1. By the end of the course, participants will have both experienced and learned more about the importance of practices.
2. By the end of the course, participants will know more about the history of Christian pilgrimage.

3. By the end of the course, participants will have an appreciation of pilgrimage as a metaphor for the spiritual life.

Texts:

Cousineau, Phil, *The Art of Pilgrimage* (Conari Press, 1998).

Day, Dorothy, *On Pilgrimage* (Eerdmans, 1997).

Rupp, Joyce, *Walk in a Relaxed Manner* (Orbis, 2005).

Sellner, Edward C., *Pilgrimage...exploring a great spiritual practice* (Sorin Books, 2004).

Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle* (Wilder, 2008).

The "Pilgrimage" Psalms: Psalms 120-134

Martha E. Stortz and Lisa A. Fullam, "The Progress of Pilgrimage"

<http://www.theprogressofpilgrimage.blogspot.com>

Additional chapters and articles will be available on **Moodle**.

Tentative Roadmap: Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

Week 1: Preparation: Packing and Gathering Gear

1. Songs for the journey: Psalms 121, 122, 125, 126

2. Practices:

Physical and spiritual assessments

Gear lists for the physical and spiritual journeys

Journaling

3. Theories: what is "pilgrimage"? What does it do?

Cousineau, *Art*, pp. 1-88.

Sellner, *Pilgrimage* pp. 1-97.

Elie, Paul, "On Pilgrimage," from *The Life You Save May Be Your Own: An American Pilgrimage* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003), pp. ix-xiv. **Moodle**.

4. Traveling Companion: Egeria

Selections from Egeria's *Diary of a Pilgrimage: Ancient Christian Writers, Vol. 38* (Newman Press, 1970), selections. **Moodle**.

Week 2: Journey: Finding a Way Forward

1. Songs for the journey: Psalms 127, 128, 129, 130

2. Practices:

Directions, map, compass

Walking a labyrinth

Prayer: intentional dislocation, displaced destination, sabbath, unburdening

Journaling

3. Theories: What is it like to be underway?

Cousineau, *Art*, pp. 89-158.

Sellner, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 99-161.

Rupp, Joyce, *Walking*, selections.

Miles, Margaret A., "A Society of Aliens: Pilgrimage," from *Practicing Christianity*, (Crossroad, 1988), pp. 43-62. **Moodle.**

4. Traveling Companion: Teresa of Avila

Selections from *Interior Castle*.

Week 3: Re-Entry: Returning to the Familiar Made Strange

1. Songs for the journey: Psalms 131, 132, 133, 134

2. Practices:

Unpacking

Sharing the journey

Taking leave

3. Theories:

Cousineau, *Art*, pp. 159-232.

Sellner, *Pilgrimage*, pp.

Turner, Victor and Edith Turner, "Pilgrimage as a Liminoid Phenomenon," in *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 1-39. **Moodle.**

4. Traveling Companion: Dorothy Day

Selections from Dorothy Days, *On Pilgrimage*.

Assignments:

1. Class participation: I expect students to come prepared to read and discuss the assigned readings: 25%

2. Daily chores: There will be assignments due in advance of each class, and I expect students to post them on-line and/or present them in class or in writing, as stipulated. 25%

3. Pilgrim journal: Students will be keeping a pilgrimage journal throughout the course, chronicling their progress through the spiritual and physical dimensions of the course. I encourage students to include visual material, as appropriate and authentic to their experience. We will be presenting these on the final days of class, June 23rd and 24th. I will collect and return these. 40%

4. Daily songs: Finally, I will ask students to open with a brief (20 minute) devotion that draws on the psalm for the day. This may involve silent meditation, intercessory prayer, image, mantra repetition, chanting. 10%