



Nazarene Theological Seminary

1700 E Meyer Blvd • Kansas City, MO 64131 • 816/268-5400 • www.nts.edu

SPF560 — *Christian Spiritual Practices: Sacraments & Asceticism* (3 credit hours) Module @ Kansas City Campus Fall 2010

Essential Information

Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available at http://support.nts.edu/index.php/Essential_Information. Additional technical support information can be found at <http://support.nts.edu>.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose and Master of Divinity Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS bookstore procedures
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *A Handbook for Inclusive Language*

All standard courses at NTS span a 14-week period from the beginning of coursework to the completion of coursework. **This course commences on Monday, July 12, 2010 and finishes on Friday, October 15, 2010, with class sessions held daily from Tuesday, August 24 – Friday, September 3, 2010, 8:00am – 12:15pm in Room #301.**

A course syllabus will sometimes go through more than one version, reflecting scheduling updates and/or the addition of detail as the course unfolds. The document footer indicates the version #. Students are responsible for the latest version of the syllabus which will be made available along with email notice in *Moodle*.

Instructor Information

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Catalog Description

This laboratory course in spiritual formation explores the interplay of world-affirming and world-denying practices of the Christian spiritual life—the sacramental and the ascetical (e.g., baptism, Holy Communion, sacred art & music, nature, marriage & family, fasting, exercise, celibacy, living simply,

Sabbath). Students will study, practice, and theologically reflect on these as biblical, historical, and psychological perspectives are brought to bear on the experience of class members individually and in the context of congregational leadership. Students culminate the course by articulating a spiritual theology of sacramental and ascetical living, and designing a strategy for the implementation of select practices in their personal and congregational contexts. This course satisfies a “Ministries of Formation” Domain elective in the MDiv program and can count toward the Certificate in Spiritual Formation.

Course Outcomes

This course focuses on Objectives #1 & 3 of the MDiv program at NTS: *The practice of the Christian disciplines of worship, prayer, contemplation, study and service within the community of the Seminary and in and through specific congregations and the wider church; The development of wisdom and discernment through engagement with the intellectual challenge of the literature of the Christian faith, by the critical, scholarly study of the history and theology of Christianity, and of the literature and practices of Christian spirituality, ethics and ministry.* (Current catalog available at <http://www.nts.edu/nts-catalog>)

It does so by providing students with the opportunity to:

1. Intensify and regulate the practices of fasting, Sabbath-observance, and Eucharist in a context of support and accountability. [Assignments # 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10]
2. Learn from and examine their lives through the lenses of the sacramental and ascetical traditions of the Christian faith. [Assignments # 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11]
3. Strategize and strengthen personal & communal discipline with respect to the means of grace. [Assignments # 5, 7, 10, 11]
4. Clarify a theology of sacraments and asceticism for spiritually formative Christian ministry. [Assignments # 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11]
5. Develop skills in leading others in sacramental and ascetic practices. [Assignments #5, 7, 10]

Church of the Nazarene COSAC Competencies

For students pursuing ordination in the Church of the Nazarene, this course contributes substantively to the fulfillment of the following Course of Study Advisory Committee (COSAC) Ability Statements found in the *Sourcebook on Ordination* (United States of America Edition—validated February 2006), available at <http://www.nazarenepastor.org/cms>:

Content	Ability Statements
CN20	Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry.
CN22	Ability to articulate the distinctive characteristics of Wesleyan theology.
Character	Ability Statements
CH6	Ability to pursue holy character (Christlikeness) by practicing faith formation & the classic Christian disciplines as a means of grace
CH 7	Ability to locate, understand, & use the resources for individual & corporate spiritual formation
CH 8	Ability to take responsibility for his or her own continuing spiritual development
CH 11	Ability to maintain the practice of Sabbath & healthy self-care
CH 14	Ability to maintain a healthy balance between family, church, & community commitments

Required Texts & Course Materials

Chittister, Joan. *The Rule of Benedict: Insights for the Ages*. New York: Crossroad, 1992. [180 pp. ISBN: 9780824525033]

Jung, L. Shannon. *Sharing Food: Christian Practices for Enjoyment*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006. [197 pp. ISBN: 9780800637927]

Osborne, Kenan B. *Community, Eucharist, and Spirituality*. Liguori Publications, 2007. [144 pp. ISBN: 9780764815577]

Ward, Benedicta (Trans). *The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks*. Penguin Classics, 2003. [240 pp. ISBN: 9780140447316]

Winner, Lauren F. *Real Sex: The Naked Truth About Chastity*. Brazos Press, 2005. [192 pp. ISBN: 9781587431975]

Wirzba, Norman. *Living the Sabbath: Discovering the Rhythms of Rest and Delight*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006. [176 pp. ISBN: 9781587431654]

Course Assignments & Requirements

Before Classes Begin

1. Secure the required course texts and begin reading according to the schedule in the Course Calendar below.
2. For at least five (5) of the six weeks you are to:
 - a. Fast from food for a minimum of 8 continuous non-sleeping hours that contains a dedicated block of at least 1/2 hour of prayer
 - b. Practice Sabbath by refraining from work and delighting in God & God's creation for a minimum of 6 continuous non-sleeping hours
 - c. Receive the Lord's Supper
 - d. Submit a *Practices Report* indicating your level of participation in the previous week's practices and including a minimum of 2 paragraphs of theological and formational reflection on (i) your week's experience with these practices, and (ii) the week's assigned readings. The *Practices Report* Forms are available in *Moodle*.

[Due: Mondays as per Course Calendar Course Outcomes: 1, 2 COSAC Outcomes: CN20, CH6-8, 11, 14]
3. Interview someone from a religious faith other than Christianity about their ascetical & sacramental practices. If possible, visit a service or other event where their devotional practice is evidenced. Write a brief Report (approximately 4 pages) summarizing the interview, describing any observed practice, and commenting on the theological & practical significance of this for your understanding of the Christian spiritual life.
[Due: Friday, August 13 Course Outcomes: 2, 4 COSAC Outcomes: CN20, 22, CH7]
4. Participate in an online discussion forum in Moodle:
 - a. Introduce yourself to the rest of the class (brief biographical info. & description of current context)

- b. Share a few highlights from your journey with the Practices (blessings, challenges, things learned, questions)
- c. Respond to the postings of at least two (2) of your classmates with feedback, conversation, and further questions.

[Due: Post & respond between Friday, August 13 and Friday, August 20 Course Outcomes: 1, 2, 4
COSAC Outcomes: CN20, CH6]

During Classes

5. Attend classes. This is critical in an intensive course because of the length of each session and the momentum build from day-to-day. Missing more than one class day will negatively affect your grade.

[Due: NA Course Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 COSAC Outcomes: CN20, 22, CH6- 7]

6. Complete the required course text reading according to the schedule in the Course Calendar below.
7. Develop & submit a Proposal outlining your plans for introducing & leading a shared spiritual practice into your local congregation (or other ministry context) that integrates *both* sacramental *and* ascetical dimensions of the Christian life. You can team up with others in the class who are a part of the same community. The Proposal must include:

- Your name and a description of your ministry community/context
- The “need” this shared practice will address & its potential Gospel value for those who participate (and the life of your Church if you are working with a smaller group)
- A description of your proposed shared practice, explaining both the sacramental & ascetic dimensions of it, i.e., how it will help the group to say an integrated YES and NO
- A description of your role and tasks in preparing for & leading the shared practice
- A timeline and to-do list to guide your planning for, communications regarding, and execution of the shared practice.

[Due: Friday, September 3 Course Outcomes: 1, 3, 4, 5 COSAC Outcomes: CN20, CH6, 7]

After Classes End

8. For at least four (4) of the six weeks you are to:
 - Fast from food for a minimum of 8 continuous non-sleeping hours that contains a dedicated block of at least 1/2 hour of prayer
 - Practice Sabbath by refraining from work and delighting in God & God’s creation for a minimum of 6 continuous non-sleeping hours
 - Receive the Lord’s Supper
 - Submit a *Practices Report* indicating your level of participation in the previous week’s practices and including a minimum of a paragraph of theological and formational reflection on your week’s experience with these practices. The *Practices Report* Forms are available in *Moodle*.

[Due: Mondays as per Course Calendar Course Outcomes: 1, 2 COSAC Outcomes: CN20, CH6-8, 11, 14]

9. Participate twice (2 times) in an online discussion forum in Moodle:

First time:

- a. Share a few highlights from your journey with the Practices since classes ended (blessings, challenges, things learned, questions)

- b. Share your experiences of introducing/leading sacramental & ascetical practices in your ministry context (what you're noticing, learning, finding difficult, have questions about)
- c. Respond to the postings of at least two (2) of your classmates with feedback, conversation, and further questions.

[Due: Post & respond between Friday, September 17 and Friday, September 24]

Second time:

- a. Share your personal intentions for/commitments to sacramental & ascetical practices once this course ends.
- b. Share a key theological insight you've gained from this course and how you will use it to guide the writing of your YES & NO Paper.
- c. Respond to the postings of at least two (2) of your classmates with feedback, conversation, and further questions.

[Due: Post & respond between Monday, September 27 and Friday, October 8]

[Course Outcomes: 1, 2, 4 COSAC Outcomes: CN20, CH6]

10. Develop & submit a Report of the outcomes from introducing & leading a shared spiritual practice into your local congregation (or other ministry context) that integrates *both* sacramental *and* ascetical dimensions of the Christian life. The Report must include:

- Your name and ministry community/context
- A description of the event(s)/process(es) you introduced into your ministry setting
- The outcomes, with reference to your original goals & hopes as stated in your Proposal; how has this practice helped the group to say an integrated YES and NO?
- Looking ahead, a statement of what might be a next step
- A summary of what you observed & learned theologically (vis-à-vis the Gospel) as well as ministerially/ecclesially (vis-à-vis life in the Church) through this communal practice

[Due: Friday, October 1 Course Outcomes: 1, 3, 4, 5 COSAC Outcomes: CN20, CH6, 7]

11. Write a "Yes and No" Theology & Practice Paper of approximately 10 pages that will serve as a summative articulation of your learning from the semester, i.e., pulling it all together. Drawing from the other assignments and including the course texts, provide (a.) a substantive theology of the ascetical & sacramental dimensions of the Christian life (theoretical grounding), and (b.) a rich description of how you will live them out in terms of personal & communal practices at this point in your life (practical application). Include bibliography & proper reference citations.

[Due: Thursday, October 14 Course Outcomes: 2, 3, 4 COSAC Outcomes: CN20, 22, CH7-8, 14]

Distribution of Student Learning Hours

	Pre-module Hours	Module Hours	Post-module Hours	Total Hours
Face-to-face Class Sessions		38		38
Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.	1		3	4
Reading	39	6	0	45
Writing	9	2	26	37
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	7	1	7	15
Exams & Quizzes	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	56	47	36	139

Method for Submitting Assignments

This course requires internet access to NTS *Moodle* for instructional information about assignments and electronic assignment submission. Unless otherwise instructed, do not send assignments to the professors via email. Your electronic submissions will automatically be linked to the “Grades” area of *Moodle* to which you have access for viewing your grades. Contact support@nts.edu with technical questions or for assistance.

Form and Style Expectations

All formal written documents are to be carefully proof-read for correct spelling and grammar before submission; it is the responsibility of the student to ensure “clean” copy, even if it means securing assistance. Students will observe Inclusive Language usage guidelines as found at http://www.wynkoopcenter.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=53&Itemid=85. All research-based written documents are to utilize complete in-text source citation with accompanying bibliography or reference list, according to Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*, 7th edition, Revised by Wayne C. Booth, et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Inclusive Language

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.

Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams

Grades for late assignments will be affected as follows: 5% reduction per day. No assignments received after Monday, October 18 will be graded. An absence from the final class session will be considered a missed exam, and require make-up work for the student to be eligible for a passing grade.

Additional Costs

None.

Course Grading

Attendance & Class Participation	5%
Weekly Practice Reports	35%
Interreligious Interview	10%
Shared Practice Leadership Proposal & Report	20%
Yes & No Theology & Practice Paper	30%

Grade Standards:

“A” (90%) - EXCEPTIONAL WORK (surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives)

“B” (80%) - GOOD WORK (strong, significant achievement of course objectives)

“C” (70%) - ACCEPTABLE WORK (basic, essential achievement of course objectives)

“D” (60%) - MARGINAL WORK (inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives)

“F” (<60%) - UNACCEPTABLE WORK (failure to achieve course objectives)

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities, Accordingly NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies which have been beneficial for the student in the past.

Course Calendar

Before Classes Begin

Week of	Due	
July 12	Course Texts secured; Read: Ward, intro-87	
July 19	Practices Report 1 by July 19; Read: Ward, 88-end	
July 26	Practices Report 2 by July 26; Read: Chittister	
August 2	Practices Report 3 by August 2; Read: Winner	
August 9	Practices Report 4 by August 9; Read: Wirzba; Interview Report by August 13	Participation in Online Discussion Forum between August 13 & 20
August 16	Practices Report 5 by August 16; Read: Jung	
August 23	Practices Report 6 by August 23; Classes begin August 24 (see schedule below)	

Module Classes

1 st WEEK	Mon, Aug 23	Class #1 Tue, Aug 24	Class #2 Wed, Aug 25	Class #3 Thu, Aug 26	Class #4 Fri, Aug 27
T O P I C S	<i>New Student Orientation</i>	Intro to Sacraments & Asceticism	The Tradition of the Desert Fathers & Mothers	The Rule of St. Benedict	Chastity: Sex in Ascetical & Sacramental Perspective
D U E	[Evening Module Classes Begin] •Practices Report 6	• Read Osborne, intro-19	• Read Osborne, 20-47	• Read Osborne, 48-64	• Read Osborne, 65-89

2 nd WEEK	Class #5 Mon, Aug 30	Class #6 Tue, Aug 31	Class #7 Wed, Sep 1	Class #8 Thu, Sep 2	Class #9 Fri, Sep 3
T O P I C S	Sabbath as Ascetic & Sacramental Practice	Sabbath (cont'd) Food as Ascetic & Sacramental Practice	Food (cont'd)	Eucharist as Fasting & Feast	Course Retrospective
D U E	• Read Osborne, 89-112	• Read Osborne, 113-end	•	•	• Shared Practice Leadership Proposal

After Classes End

Week of	Due	
September 6	Reading & Research Week (no work due)	
September 13	Practices Report 7 by September 13	Participation in Online Discussion Forum between September 17 & 24
September 20	Practices Report 8 by September 20; Participation in Online Discussion Forum between September 17 & 24	
September 27	Practices Report 9 by September 27; Shared Practice Leadership Report by October 1	Participation in Online Discussion Forum between September 27 & October 8
October 4	Practices Report 10 by October 4	
October 11	Practices Report 11 by October 11; Yes & No Paper by October 14	

Bibliography

Sacraments

- Burgess, John P. *After Baptism: Shaping the Christian Life*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005. ISBN: 9780664228842
- Colwell, John E. *Promise and Presence: An Exploration of Sacramental Theology*. London: Paternoster Press, 2006.
- deSilva, David A. *Sacramental Life: Spiritual Formation through the Book of Common Prayer*. InterVarsity Press, 2008. ISBN: 978-0830835188
- Irwin, Kevin W. *Models of the Eucharist*. Paulist Press, 2005. 384pp. ISBN: 978-0809143320
- Jung, L. Shannon. *Food for Life: The Spirituality and Ethics of Eating*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004. ISBN: 9780800636425
- Khoo, Lorna. *Wesleyan Eucharistic Spirituality*. Adelaide: ATF Press, 2005. ISBN: 9781920691318
- Leijssen, Lambert J. (Translated by Marie Baird). *With the Silent Glimmer of God's Spirit: A Postmodern Look at the Sacraments*. Paulist Press, 2006. 160pp. ISBN: 9780809144372
- Osborne, Kenan B. *Christian Sacraments in a Postmodern World: A Theology for the Third Millennium*. Paulist Press, 1999. 272pp. ISBN: 978-0809139040
- Meyers, Robin R. *Morning Sun on a White Piano: Simple Pleasures & the Sacramental Life*. New York: Galilee/Doubleday Books, 1998.

- Staples, Rob L. *Outward Sign and Inward Grace: The Place of Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1991. ISBN: 9780834122086
- Vogel, Dwight W., & Vogel, Linda J. *Sacramental Living: Falling Stars & Coloring Outside the Lines*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1999.
- White, James F. *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith*. Abingdon Press, 1999. 168 pp. ISBN: 978-0687034024

Asceticism

- Chadwick, Owen (Ed). *Western Asceticism*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1958. ISBN: 9780664241612
- Foster, Richard J., *Freedom of Simplicity: Finding Harmony in a Complex World*. New York: HarperPaperbacks, 1981.
- Harline, Craig. *Sunday: A History of the First Day from Babylonia to the Super Bowl*. Doubleday, 2007. 464pp. ISBN: 9780385510394
- Harton, F. P. *The Elements of the Spiritual Life: A Study in Ascetical Theology*. Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1947/2004.
- Heschel, Abraham Joshua (Introduction by Susannah Heschel). *The Sabbath*. New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1951/1979/2005.
- Muller, Wayne. *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives*. New York: Bantam Books, 1999.
- Ringwald, Christopher D. *A Day Apart: How Jews, Christians, and Muslims Find Faith, Freedom, and Joy on the Sabbath*. Oxford University Press, 2007. 336pp. ISBN: 9780195370195
- Ward, Benedicta (Trans). *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection*. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1975/1984. 269 pp. ISBN: 978-0879079598
- Wicks, Robert J. *Crossing the Desert: Learning to Let Go, See Clearly, and Live Simply*. Notre Dame: Sorin Books, 2007.