

# SPIR 220

## SPIRITUALITY AND MINISTRY

### Spring Quarter, 2026

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### COURSE SYLLABUS (*Tentative*)

*Note to Students: this syllabus is tentative—which means that most of what you see here will serve as the substance of our Spring Quarter course. But I’m still tweaking it a bit (mostly in reading assignments).*

**SPIR 220 (*Spirituality and Ministry*)** is a **fully online** course managed through ten weekly three-hour sessions on Zoom, Thursdays from 6:00p – 9:00p PT.

**Course Description:** The two words that comprise our course title are vast topics theoretically independent of each other. However, in combination they describe what could very well be called *the entirety of the Christian life*. Indeed, it can be said that in practice neither spirituality nor ministry can exist without the other. *What we do in this course is realize the extent to which that statement is true.* In the Christian tradition, spirituality is essentially relational and centered in the person and teachings of Jesus. In turn, the spirituality of Jesus constantly engages neighbor and stranger alike. In this course, we examine how ministries broadly considered in the Christian tradition need and give expression to various kinds of spirituality and how spirituality elevates human relationships to the level of vocation, apostolic service, and mission.

**Learning Objectives:** SPIR 220, as a course in the GPPM, has two main learning goals: *pastoral proficiency* and *leadership skills* in ministry. As such, it's a course weighted toward pastoral application: students will grow in a greater awareness of their own spiritual and ministerial lives as well as experiences in spiritual formation within various ministerial contexts.

**Course Approach:** As a fully online course, SPIR 220 is designed to meet the challenges of busy people while emphasizing *personal discipline* and *skillful time management*. The work of the instructor is to provide meaningful content and engaging forums for course instruction, student interaction and an overall positive online learning experience. In all of this, students can expect a certain consistency in organization and assignment:

- **Camino/Canvas:** this is SCU's course management system and the main source and calendar setting for SPIR 220.
- **Modules:** the course is divided into **four segments or modules**, each with its own set of dates, themes, reading assignments, online discussion forums and written assignments. All modules are 'open' and accessible so that students can anticipate course work or review what's transpired.
- **Readings:** all reading assignments listed below in the syllabus are from either the two required books which students should purchase in advance of the course or uploaded to Camino. Weekly Camino "Announcements" help the student anticipate the coming session, usually with guide questions to keep in mind while reading. These questions are not separate assignments and needn't be written out. They're merely to help students focus on certain topics within the readings.

#### **Required Texts:**

- Gregory Boyle, *Tattoos on the Heart* (Free Press, 2011); ISBN-13: 978-1439153154
- Michael Casey, *Fully Human, Fully Divine* (Ligouri, 2004); ISBN-13: 978-0764811494
- All other texts, video and audio sources will appear in the relevant module on Camino

#### **Course Requirements:**

- **Writing requirements** include **four reflection essays** (brief 2-3 page reflections) on the developing content of the course.
- A **final project** will serve as a capstone to the course: a **case study** on the spirituality and ministry of a person committed to both. (Details for both kinds of writing assignment will appear at our course page at Camino.)
- **Class attendance and participation** are major components of both a graduate course and one of this nature. Barring only extraordinary circumstances, I'm

presuming students will attend each session. Please keep in mind that it will be hard to pass the course and miss two sessions, for any reason.

- **Source Leadership:** each student will **choose a reading** from the syllabus to present *informally* and for discussion, either on a Saturday or Wednesday. (Again, guidelines for this will be found at Camino.)

### **Credit Apportionment:**

Participation:	25%
Discussion Leadership:	10%
Four Reflection Essays:	40%
Case Study:	25%

**Instructor feedback** reaches students through comments on papers and online discussions (emailed to each student) and, in more general ways, during onsite and online office hours. I am happy to consult with students on projects before, during or after they're written in mentoring the practices of critical thinking and written communication.

**Modules:** the course is module-driven. What that means is when students access the course at Camino, they'll go first to "modules" on the left side of the page. The four modules for the course illustrate the flow and schedule of course content. All readings and resources (excluding the Boyle and Casey books) will be found in these modules.

## ***SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS***

### **MODULE I: Foundations in Spirituality and Ministry**

**Session 1:** Topics: Introductions—the course and each other

What *is* Spirituality? What *is* Ministry?

A Personal, Spiritual Ecology (Exercise)

Identity in Ministry

Readings:

Course Syllabus

M. Casey, *Fully Human, Fully Divine* (Introduction; Chs 1-2)

**Session 2:** Topics: Approaches to Spirituality and Ministry

Readings:

- M. Casey, *Fully Human, Fully Divine* (Introduction; Chs 3-4)

- Annice Callahan, 'Images of Oppression and Liberation in Ministry' (on Camino)

- Handouts: a 'Self-Ecology Inventory'; Finding God in Ordinary Experiences (these will be reviewed during class)

**Reflection Essay #1** due later that week

**Session 3:** Topics: Christology and Ministry I  
Collaboration in Ministry

Readings:

- M. Casey, *Fully Human, Fully Divine* (Chs 5-10)
- Wilkie Au, A Spirituality for Collaborative Ministry (Wicks, pp 391-406)

## **MODULE II: Spirituality, Ministry and the Art of Theological Reflection**

**Session 4:** Topic: Reflecting on the experience of God as essential for ministry

Readings:

- M. Casey, *Fully Human, Fully Divine* (Chs 11-14)
- Anthony Krisak, 'Theological Reflection: Unfolding the Mystery'
- Joyce Rupp, 'Rediscovering God in the Midst of our Work'

**Reflection Essay #2** due later that week

## **MODULE III: Spirituality as Ministry**

**Session 5:** Topics: The Ministry of Prayer; Discernment and Prayer

Readings:

- M. Casey, *Fully Human, Fully Divine* (Chs 15-22)
- Handouts: Prayer and Prayer Forms; Discernment and Prayer

**Session 6:** Topics: The Ministry of Spiritual Direction

Readings:

- M. Casey, *Fully Human, Fully Divine* (Chs 23-25)
- S. McCarty, 'Basics in Spiritual Direction'
- Handouts: On Contemplative Listening; a Primer on Ignatian Spirituality

**Reflection Essay #3** due later that week

## **MODULE IV: Spirituality and Ministry**

**Session 7:** Topics: Ministry, Spirituality and the World: Part I

Where you are in your case studies

Reading:

- Janet Ruffing, 'Socially-Engaged Contemplation: Living Contemplatively in Chaotic Times'
- View: 'Entertaining Angels: the Dorothy Day Story'

- Session 8:** Topics: Ministry, Spirituality and the World: Part II  
Reading:  
• Gregory Boyle, SJ, *Tattoos on the Heart* (chs 1-5)  
**Reflection Essay #4** due later that week
- Session 9:** Topics: Ministry and the Spirituality of Hope  
Reading:  
• Gregory Boyle, SJ, *Tattoos on the Heart* (chs 6-9)
- Session 10:** Spirituality & Ministry: Mentors Along the Path  
• Case Study presentations and discussions (from the class)  
**Case Study due 1 Week After End of Course**