

**THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION IN MINISTRY**  
**MS 3XD3**  
**MCMaster DIVINITY COLLEGE**

**Instructor:** Wendy J. Porter, Ph.D.

**Location:** Room TBA

**Credit Units:** 3

**Term:** Fall 2015 (Term 1)

**Time:** 4 Saturdays 9:00–4:00

**Class Dates:** Saturdays, September 26, October 31,  
November 14, December 5

**Contact Information:**

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**Course Description for THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION IN MINISTRY**

The ability to reflect on experience with eyes and ears tuned to how God may be present and at work in a situation is foundational to the development of wisdom and discernment in our inner spiritual lives and to being engaged in meaningful ministry. One of the richest hands-on ministry practices for personal, professional, and spiritual growth is the intentional practice of reflecting theologically on real experience, whether you are doing it on your own or with a small intentional group. Even more beneficial is the rewarding challenge of sharing this perspective and process with others so that they can use it, and, in turn, share it with others.

If you are interested in developing this part of your life and ministry, and helping others to do the same, then this course is designed to help you accomplish that goal. Together, we will explore answers to questions of how and why theological reflection is crucial to our everyday lives and ministry. We will look at how theological reflection has developed as a theological discipline. We will draw on that knowledge to develop personalized plans, so that we can actively engage in the art and discipline of leading theological reflection in ways that resonate with us. We will see how theological reflection may transform not only our own practice of ministry, but the way we live, and even who we are.

Your ministry may consist of one-on-one counseling, congregational and family care, chaplaincy, parish nursing, or the more public roles of ministry, such as preaching, teaching, or worship-leading. Or you may be primarily interested in how the spiritual discipline of theological reflection might be valuable for your own life today or for some future or developing ministry. Whatever your personal or professional goals, during this course I will invite you to explore personal embedded and deliberative theology, to discover how theological reflection can shape us and our ministry, to experiment with the various resources, to develop the thought and skills necessary for engaging in and leading others in theological reflection, and to design methods that fit you and your ministry that you can take them with you and continue to use and develop them.

**MDC Specializations**

The four specializations for this course are **Christian Worldview** (CW, the default for MTS), **Counselling and Spiritual Care** (CS), **Church and Culture** (CC), and **Pastoral Studies** (PS, the default for MDiv). Where possible, you are encouraged to shape assignments and choose supplemental reading in a way that helps you to achieve your specific goals for ministry and personal development within your specialization.

For the **Christian Worldview (CW)** specialization, you should shape assignments (particularly the final assignment) and choose supplemental reading to assist you in using theological reflection in responding to the world around you, whether you are engaged in areas of para-church ministry, lay ministry leadership, or general theological study. Active and self-motivated engagement in this course should help you to develop how you think about the world around you, give you a broader perspective on how you can interact with those around you who hold other worldviews, increase your sensitivity towards a more global perspective on life and ministry, and give you a creative tool for engaging church history and tradition as a voice in intentional theological reflection.

For the **Counselling and Spiritual Care (CS)** specialization, you should shape assignments (particularly the final assignment) and choose supplemental reading to assist you in using theological reflection as a flexible and nuanced approach to your work in chaplaincy, pastoral work with families, NGO work, or in social ministries. Active and self-motivated engagement in this course should help you to develop your listening and observation skills, provide an adaptable approach to intervention and crisis care, give you a day-to-day tool for ongoing chaplaincy ministry, and prompt creative and sensitive venues for assessing and addressing ethical issues in spiritual care.

For the **Church and Culture (CC)** specialization, you should shape assignments (particularly the final assignment) and choose supplemental reading to assist you in using theological reflection as a highly adaptable approach to pastoral work with youth, worship leadership, denominational leadership, church planting, cross-cultural ministry, NGO work, or other developmental and culturally sensitive ministries. Active and self-motivated engagement in this course should provide you with a thoughtful approach and creative tool to weave biblical and theological knowledge together with the specific context of your ministry, to bring theological reflection into conversation with the world of contemporary culture, to bring a distinctively Christian point of view into cultural issues, and to assist in the interface of various cultures in a single ministry location.

For the **Pastoral Studies (PS)** specialization, you should shape assignments (particularly the final assignment) and choose supplemental reading to assist you in using theological reflection as a flexible and nuanced approach to pastoral leadership or other full-time vocational ministry leadership. Active and self-motivated engagement in this course should help you to develop a flat-structured method for strategic community-engaged leadership, to craft a model for engaging and assessing the various voices in a particular leadership problem, and provide you with tools for making thoughtful and forward-moving decisions. It should assist you to develop spiritual skills and competencies in those you work with, and to recognize the diversity of voices and spiritual temperaments involved in intentional theological reflection.

### **Intended Learning Outcomes of Knowing, Being, and Doing**

Our paradigm of learning at MDC is an integration of knowing, doing, and being. Learning anything requires that we take personal responsibility for our own learning, so in order to accomplish the goals and experience the promises of this course, you will need to take responsibility for your own learning and participate fully as an engaged learner. There are **five** main assignments for this course, and through full engagement with them, as well as assigned and self-selected reading, in-class discussions, lectures, presentations, collaborative learning, and papers and projects, you should accomplish most or all the items in the list below. Go ahead and

check each one off throughout the semester when you have accomplished it to your own satisfaction:

### **Knowing**

- Read and thoughtfully consider the assigned texts, and choose and reflectively read other relevant materials pertinent to your specialization.
- Determine which things that you read are the most important to you, and why.
- Identify one or more significant areas of your own embedded theology.
- Ask good questions and seek thoughtful answers (in class, of your reading, and through your assignments).
- Understand the value of theological reflection.
- Recognize the risk inherent in theological reflection, including possible outcomes.
- Perceive what is valuable and relevant in the various models of theological reflection.
- Most importantly, know God more deeply through intentional theological reflection.

**Include your own specialized “Knowing” goals here. What specific things do you want to know by the end of this course?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Being**

- Become a more theologically integrated person through the discipline and resources of theological reflection.
- Become a more insightful and discerning ministry practitioner.
- Become a more theologically attentive listener.
- Become a more intuitive recipient of God’s work in your own life.
- Become a more astute observer of God’s work in the lives of others and in the world around you.
- Become a more sensitive facilitator of people encountering God’s presence in their lives.

**Include your own specialized “Being” goals here. How do you want to be different by the end of this course?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Doing**

- Implement theological reflection in an important scenario in your own life.
- Analyze and thoughtfully evaluate specific methods of theological reflection.
- Prepare a working definition of theological reflection.
- Demonstrate ways to creatively incorporate the various resources for theological reflection (Scripture, Christian history/tradition, experience, culture, logic/reason, discernment).
- Assess the role of theological reflection for your own specific ministry needs.
- Provide thoughtful peer reviews of other working models of theological reflection.
- Create a new method or creatively adapt an existing method for your ministry.
- Apply your working model of theological reflection in a test case.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of your working model of theological reflection.

Revise and refine your model and generate a plan for how you can take it with you to refine and develop in your future life and ministry.

**Include your own specialized “Doing” goals here. What specific things do you want to *have done* by the end of this course?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Course Textbooks\***

Required textbooks for this course are:

1. Howard W. Stone and James O. Duke, *How to Think Theologically* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2nd edn, 2005, or 3rd edn, 2013).
2. Elaine Graham, Heather Walton, and Frances Ward, *Theological Reflection: Methods* (London: SCM Press, 2005).
3. Elaine Graham, Heather Walton, and Frances Ward, *Theological Reflection: Sources* (London: SCM Press, 2007).

Please purchase your textbooks from the Divinity College’s book service, READ On Books, Room 218, McMaster Divinity College. Bernice Quek provides these books at reasonable prices as a service to the Divinity College, and students that enroll in a class but purchase their books elsewhere make reasonable planning difficult. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class and are available for advance purchase at READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1; phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). website: <http://www.readon.ca/>

You are also encouraged to read widely in this subject area according to your interests, ministry challenges, and chosen specialization. See a selected bibliography at the end of this syllabus.

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

In this course, you have **five** main assignments. One allows you to choose a personal scenario that has some kind of tension in it, and creatively engage in theological reflection on it. One gives you the opportunity to read one or two books relevant to your specialization and to respond to how they challenge you in theological reflection. One offers you the opportunity to choose, explore, and assess three examples of theological reflection in Scripture. One prompts you to select, investigate and present one method of theological reflection to the rest of the class and creatively engage your classmates to participate in it. The final one helps you to develop your own approach to doing theological reflection, test it out, provide your own assessment of it, and reflect on the process. You will take this working model with you when you go, hopefully to further refine for ongoing ministry and personal development.

#### **READING:**

For 1<sup>st</sup> Class Day, September 26: Read Stone and Duke, *How to Think Theologically*.  
 Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Days. October 17: Your selected book(s) for the Reading Response.  
 For 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Day, October 31: Read Graham et al., *Theological Reflection: Methods*.  
 For 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Day, November 14: Graham et al. *Theological Reflection: Sources*.

**ASSIGNMENT 1: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION “DINNER PARTY”****Due:** Beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> Class Day, **Saturday, September 26****Length:** 1500 words.**Marks:** 15%**Grading Rubrics:** To be uploaded on Avenue to Learn.**Specializations:** Choose “guests” that relate to your area of specialization.**Submission:** Upload your assignment electronically to the Avenue to Learn Class Dropbox.

This is an **imaginary dinner party**. Choose a guest to represent each area outlined below. Thoughtfully choose a real-life problem, event, or crisis that has been troubling for you personally or in your ministry, something that prompts you to ask or wonder where God is—or where he is at work—in the situation. This assignment provides you a way to begin using Theological Reflection in a real-life situation in your own spiritual life and ministry.

**Description:** Describe the scenario from your own perspective. Be brief, clear and objective. Do not make any value judgments at this point. **(150 words.)**

**Scripture:** Choose a guest from Scripture, or someone with deep understanding of Scripture. How would this person thoughtfully bring Scripture to probe this situation or problem (not just a list of verses or proof-texts)? This person should be discerning in their choice of passage(s), and should show evidence of deep, honest personal wrestling with Scripture in relation to the issue. **(150 words.)**

**Christian History / Tradition:** Choose a historical guest to represent a well-thought-through historic Christian perspective on the issue. How did believers in the past struggle with or address a similar issue? (Think creatively before you say, “They didn’t.”) How does this person (thinker, writer, artist, participant) from Christian history influence current thinking about the issue? **(150 words.)**

**Experience:** Invite a guest who shares a personal experience that relates to the situation. This could be your own voice. How does personal experience challenge or influence awareness of God’s presence in this situation? **(150 words.)**

**Culture:** Choose a guest from a contemporary/generational/ethnic culture that has some bearing on the issue. How does this guest bring challenges, complexities, or even creative solutions? How do they cause you to think more deeply about how God is at work? **(150 words.)**

**Reason and Logic:** Invite a guest that can weigh the various contributions and help to assess how you could move forward in some way. For instance, if Christian history seems to contradict contemporary culture, or Scripture seems to contradict personal experience—how is this resolved? Do you live with the ambiguity? If the problem requires action or response on someone’s part, how do you move forward? **(150 words.)**

**Discernment:** Choose a guest with great wisdom and discernment. How would this guest direct you in your theological reflection about this matter? How would this reflect the discernment and wisdom of the Holy Spirit? **(150 words.)**

**Action:** At the end of the dinner conversation, where *do* you conclude that God is at work in this situation? Is there some kind of response that you or your community should make, some action you must take? If not, why not? **(150 words.)**

**Reflection on Your Reflection (!):** What have you learned about theological reflection through this process and this assignment? **(150-200 words.)**

**ASSIGNMENT 2: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION READING RESPONSE****Due: Saturday, October 17** (between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Days)**Length: 1000 words.****Marks: 10%****Grading Rubrics:** To be uploaded on Avenue to Learn.**Specializations:** Choose material relevant to your specialization.**Submission:** Upload your assignment electronically to the Avenue to Learn Class Dropbox.

In consultation with the professor, choose one or two books that directly challenge you in your area of specialization and help you to develop in the area of theological reflection. You may wish to consider biographies. Respond to these books, or the people in them, by writing a reflective response that captures how you are challenged or impacted in the area of theological reflection.

**ASSIGNMENT 3: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION IN SCRIPTURE****Due:** Beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Day, **Saturday, October 31****Length: 2000–2500 words.****Marks: 20%****Grading Rubrics:** To be uploaded on Avenue to Learn.**Specializations:** If possible, choose passages that are directly relevant to your specialization.**Submission:** Upload your assignment electronically to the Avenue to Learn Class Dropbox.

1. Choose three scenarios from Scripture (problems, issues, crises) that prompted some level of theological reflection for the participants. See a few suggested ones below. They do not need to show successful or positive outcomes.
  - a. For each case, provide the specific text(s) that you are using, and give your scenario a title.
  - b. Briefly describe the scenario. What was the specific struggle or problem or crisis? What details of the story are important in order to understand the struggle? (Consult scholarly commentaries or historical monographs to uncover important details.)
  - c. Describe the range of voices/participants/other influences in this theological reflection. Did any of the following play a role: Scripture, Christian or biblical tradition, personal experience, culture, reason or logic, discernment? Be aware that boundaries will likely overlap, and one person may bring more than one perspective.
  - d. What was the outcome of this theological reflection?
  - e. Where do you think God was at work in the particular situation? Did the participant(s) come to this same conclusion or not?
  - f. What are your observations about theological reflection from this single example?
2. Provide the above for each of the three examples. **(Write approx. 500–700 words for each.)**
3. Finally, bring together all three examples and provide any insights or conclusions that you can draw from them as a group. What principles emerge? What pitfalls or challenges do you see? Now that you have done this, would other examples have given you better insights? **(Reserve approximately 500–700 words for this final section.)**
4. Be prepared to share some of your observations with the rest of the class.

Some examples (you must provide the relevant Scripture passages):

Old Testament

Abraham, Hagar, and a baby / Abraham, Sarah, and a baby / Abraham sacrifices Isaac / Jacob and Esau meet up later in life / Joseph and his brothers / Joseph in Egypt / Joseph in jail / a mother and a baby named Moses / Moses called to speak for God / Aaron and the golden calves / the boy Samuel hears a voice in the night / Elijah's triumph / Elijah's despair / Job and his friends / Jonah has time to think

New Testament

Mary's pregnancy / the birth of Jesus / Jesus and miracles / Jesus heals on the Sabbath / Jesus talks with a Samaritan woman / Jesus dies / the tomb is empty / the road to Emmaus / new believers evaluate whether Paul is really one of them / are Greeks included in the church? / issues in the new churches

Note: These are just a few of the many possibilities. Choose ones that are compelling and interesting or challenging to you.

**ASSIGNMENT 4: CLASS PRESENTATIONS—SEVEN METHODS OF THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

**Due:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Day, **Saturday, November 14**

**Marks:** 20%

**Grading Rubrics:** To be uploaded on Avenue to Learn

**Specializations:** Try to incorporate how you would use this method in your own specialization.

**Submission:** In-class presentation, plus a copy of your handout to the professor.

In order to grasp the range of possibilities in theological reflection, and to assist you to develop your own model of theological reflection, you will prepare and creatively present one of the methods included in the *Methods* textbook at our "Market Day for Methods". Depending on class size, you will present this individually or work together in small groups (sign-ups will take place on the first day of class). Use the two companion textbooks, *Theological Reflection: Methods* and *Sources*, as your starting point, and add any other relevant resources. You will have **20 minutes** on the third class day to:

1. creatively present your method (**2 min**);
2. introduce interesting key players or contributors ("testimonials") (**2 min**);
3. articulate how your method is valuable and useful (**2 min**);
4. offer a brief critique of your method (honest "pros" and "cons") (**2 min**); and
5. innovatively involve the rest of the class in trying this method out (**10 min**).

If presentations are done in small groups, each student must take the lead role in presenting or conducting at least one part of the overall presentation. Provide a hand-out with an outline/overview of the presentation and pertinent information. Bring copies for the class.

**NOTE:** Your presentation should be interesting and creative, and your "product" should be something that others want to consider. Show us how it works. Engage us in trying it out. Convince us that this method is useful and valuable for theological reflection. Keep in mind that you must be well prepared in order to accomplish this in the 20 minutes provided.

**ASSIGNMENT 5: LEADING A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION GROUP (TWO SESSIONS), IN-CLASS ORAL SUMMARY, AND EVALUATIVE PAPER****Part 1 Due: 4<sup>th</sup> and Final Class Day, Saturday, December 5**

In-Class Oral Summary of Your Two Sessions

**Part 2 Due: by THURSDAY (not Saturday), December 10, by 4:00 p.m.**

Accompanying Evaluative Paper of Your Two Sessions. Submit to the Class Dropbox.

**Length: 1500 words.**

**Total Marks: 35% of the course grade.**

**Grading Rubrics:** To be uploaded on Avenue to Learn.

**Specializations:** Choose participants and material that relate to your specialization.

**Part 1: Note that you must plan this well in advance in order to complete this assignment.**

a. Assemble a small group that will meet two times (approx. 1–1½ hours each meeting). Choose approximately 5–6 people from your church or ministry setting, or draw on colleagues or friends, but not fellow classmates from this course. The two meetings could be a week apart, or on successive days. (Do **not** leave this until the end of the semester. The earlier you do this, the quicker you will understand how to lead theological reflection and be able to refine your own model.)

b. During the first meeting, *introduce* the group to Theological Reflection; i.e. what it is and how to engage in it as a group, using your chosen method. Then give the group a pre-prepared topic/case study for theological reflection, or choose a topic/case study together (and agree to send the details immediately by email), which you will use as the basis for your theological reflection at the second meeting. Ask group members to come prepared for that second meeting.

c. In the second meeting, *lead* the group in theological reflection on the topic that was prepared. Use your chosen method that you introduced in the previous meeting. Whatever your choice of method, this second meeting is where you are “test-driving” it.

d. At the final class, you will share with the class an oral summary of your experience in these two sessions, including insights and learnings from the process.

**Part 2:** In an accompanying evaluative paper (**1500 words**), briefly summarize the two sessions and include your own personal evaluation. What did you learn about *introducing* theological reflection to others? What did you learn about *leading* theological reflection? What else did you learn about theological reflection in the process? Having tried it, what you would change about how you teach or lead theological reflection? What would you revise in your method or model?

For the final component of this paper, outline specific steps that you would be prepared to take in order to integrate meaningful theological reflection in your life and ministry.

**Note:** Evaluation of this paper will be on the basis of depth of personal insight and growth, not on whether you made mistakes or not, or whether everything went perfectly or not. This assignment will help you to develop skills for leading theological reflection in a way that makes sense to you, to refine your approach because you have tried it out, and to give you an opportunity to set a plan in motion as to how you will integrate it in life and ministry. You are welcome to submit your Accompanying Evaluative Paper on the final class day, or take until the following Thursday (but not later) to finalize your thoughts and evaluations.



<b>Tentative Class Schedule</b>
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<b>CLASS 1—SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2015.</b>
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<b>THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION: MORE THAN A MUSING</b>
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**READING DUE:** Come to the first class having read the book by Stone and Duke, *How to Think Theologically*. This book is short but useful reading. It will painlessly introduce you to the notion and process of theological reflection, and will make the first day much more profitable.

**1<sup>st</sup> ASSIGNMENT DUE:** The **Theological Reflection “Dinner Party”** assignment is due at the beginning of the first class. It does not require research, but it does require creative and thoughtful thinking and writing. Submit it electronically to the Avenue to Learn Assignment Dropbox.

**Topics for the Day**

Introduction to Theological Reflection: “Lucy Steps Inside”

Overview of Course Syllabus

Intro to the Theological Reflection “Dinner Party”

Are You a Reflector?: Significance of Action–Reflection

What Is Theological Reflection?: Definitions and Development

Uncovering Embedded Theology

Developing Observation Skills for Theological Reflection

Discovering Deliberative Theology

Resources for Theological Reflection

<b>Reminder: 2<sup>nd</sup> ASSIGNMENT DUE:</b> between classes, on October 17. <b>Reading Response.</b>
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<b>CLASS 2—SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2015.</b>
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<b>HOW THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION SHAPES WHAT YOU KNOW, WHO YOU ARE, AND WHAT YOU DO</b>
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**READING DUE:** Come to the second class having read Elaine Graham et al., *Theological Reflection: Methods*. This book is lengthy, so begin early. It will introduce you to various ways that people do theological reflection. You will have already chosen one or more of these on the first day of class to analyze, assess, and present for your third assignment, but becoming familiar with all of them will assist you in making decisions about how you want to develop your own method of theological reflection, and how you proceed with your final assignment.

**3<sup>rd</sup> ASSIGNMENT DUE:** The **Theological Reflection in Scripture** assignment is due at the beginning of the second class. Submit it electronically to the Avenue to Learn Assignment Dropbox.

**Topics for the Day**

Risky Business?: The “What Ifs” of Doing Theological Reflection

Spirals, Funnels, Flow Charts, and Trees: Developing Your Own Model

TR Dinner Party: Who to Invite?

TR *on* Ministry, TR *in* Ministry, and TR *as* Ministry

Where the Rubber—and Reflection—Meets the Road: Leading TR in Your Ministry Context

**CLASS 3—SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2015.**  
**METHODS IN OUR MADNESS!**

**READING DUE:** Come to the third class having read through **Elaine Graham et al., *Theological Reflection: Sources***, so that you will not only be prepared for your own presentation, but will be able to engage well in the other presentations, as well.

**4<sup>th</sup> ASSIGNMENT DUE:** Come to the third class fully prepared with your **Class Presentation** on one of the seven assigned methods, and prepared to engage fully with the other presenters. Have any media materials ready, as well as handouts prepared and copied in advance for the other members of the class.

**Topics for the Day**

Student Presentations: “Market-Day for Methods”

Theological Reflection and . . . Worship (or insert your area of ministry)

**CLASS 4—SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2015.**

**THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION THAT FITS YOU: DEVELOPING TR FOR YOUR LIFE AND MINISTRY**

**5<sup>th</sup> ASSIGNMENT DUE:** Come to the fourth class having completed your two sessions and ready to give a thoughtful oral presentation of your experience of **Leading a Theological Reflection Group**. Note that you have up to **5 more days (but not 7)** to write and submit your accompanying written evaluation.

**Topics for the Day**

In-Class Oral Summaries of your “Leading a Theological Reflection Group” Assignment

Defining your Philosophy of TR and Action-Plan

Moving Forward with TR for your Congregation or Ministry Context

Class Art: TR through Art and Objects as an Ongoing Skill for Life and Ministry

**Our Learning Community**

This class is designed to be a learning community, a place where each member of the community can grow through positive encouragement, constructive input, and active engagement with one another, with Scripture, and with ideas. If our learning community is successful, we will each be involved in developing and strengthening our Christian faith and the vitality and effectiveness of our ministries through our mutual experience. We all come to the community as people who are being formed, and as the learning guide for this community, I aim to empower each of you as fellow-learners. I will offer information, reflection, experience, and questions for us to consider. I welcome the responsibility and opportunity to give thoughtful evaluation and feedback to your thinking, both as you offer it to the class and through submitted work, so that your growth through this class can be maximized as a result of our collaboration. As a responsible member of our learning community, I will count on you to commit yourself to the class throughout the semester, to contribute thoughtfully to class interactions, and to treat all members of our class with respect and dignity. It will be essential to our collaboration that you participate fully in each and every class and that you come well prepared.

Assignments should be handed in on time and in good order. If for some substantial reason you will not be able to submit a paper or assignment at the scheduled time, you should contact me immediately and well in advance of the due date, or you will only be eligible for a percentage of the full mark, which, unfortunately, must decrease daily. It is in your best interest to do your very best to get it ready and submitted on time.

I welcome interactions with each of you. If you have concerns or if I can assist you in any way, please feel free to make an appointment during my office hours, contact me to make an appointment for another time, or simply correspond with me through email if that is preferable.

**\*\* Statement on Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <https://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

**Gender Inclusive Language**

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in all MDC assignments.

**Successful Completion of this Class for Credit** requires that each of the assignments be attempted. Failure to make a valid attempt to complete each of these requirements may constitute grounds for failure of the course.

**Please Note: This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions as required up to and including the first week of class.**

**Theological Reflection: A Selected General Bibliography for Supplemental Reading**

- Ballard, Paul, and John Pritchard. *Practical Theology in Action: Christian Thinking in the Service of Church and Society*. 2nd edn. London: SPCK, 1996, 2006.
- Cameron, Helen, John Reader, and Victoria Slater, with Christopher Rowland. *Theological Reflection for Human Flourishing: Pastoral Practice and Public Theology*. London, UK: SCM, 2012.
- Collins, Raymond. *Models of Theological Reflection*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984.
- Entwistle, David N. *Integrative Approaches to Psychology and Christianity*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004.
- Gerkin, Charles V. *An Introduction to Pastoral Care*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1997.
- Gerkin, Charles V. *Prophetic Pastoral Practice: A Christian Vision of Life Together*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1990.
- Killen, Patricia O'Connell, and John de Beer. *The Art of Theological Reflection*. New York: Crossroad, 1994.
- Kinast, Robert L. *If Only You Recognized God's Gift: John's Gospel as an Illustration of Theological Reflection*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993.
- Kinast, Robert L. *Let Ministry Teach: A Guide to Theological Reflection*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996.
- Kinast, Robert L. *What Are They Saying About Theological Reflection?* WATSA Series. New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000.
- Kinast, Robert, L. *Making Faith-Sense: Theological Reflection in Everyday Life*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999.
- Lampman, Lisa Barnes, ed. *God and the Victim: Theological Reflections on Evil, Victimization, Justice, and Forgiveness*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Leddy, Mary Jo, and Kathleen McAlpin. *Ministry that Transforms: A Contemplative Process of Theological Reflection*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009.
- Lester, Andrew D. *Hope in Pastoral Care and Counseling*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1995.
- Lester, Andrew D. *Pastoral Care with Children in Crisis*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1985.
- Lester, Andrew D. *The Angry Christian: A Theology for Care and Counseling*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003.
- Oates, Wayne E. *Nurturing Silence in a Noisy Heart: How to Find Inner Peace*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1996.
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