

Please Note: this is
a Syllabus for
January 2009
placed online for
students to review

M 300 Spiritual Journey Workshop
January 20-25, 2009
1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Format:

At our first class session, we will start with a discussion about what spirituality means to us. Useful preparatory readings would be essays such as Emerson's "Self-Reliance" or Channing's "Likeness to God" or the writings of spiritual teachers such as Thomas Merton, Parker Palmer, and Dorothy Day. Or bring a favorite of your own. There are no required readings for the course.

The general structure of the classes will be to begin with a few minutes of silent centering every day. Then we will all do a check-in relating how we are feeling to the extent each person feels like doing so.

The main portion of our time will be the exploration of each participant's spiritual journey. Everyone will share *once* during the week with the group some aspect of his/her spiritual life and/or practice. For example, students in the past have talked about a book and what it has meant to them in their spiritual growth. Others have shared a practice, such as Zen meditation, or quilting, or drawing, or music making, that provides spiritual discipline and enrichment for them. Some have related a life experience that has been particularly meaningful for them. The group is expected to participate actively through discussion of and reflection upon these presentations of our spiritual journey.

These presentations should be an hour or so in length, plus discussion. Usually we can do two presentations a day. Students will be asked at the first session to sign-up for the rest of the week.

Requirements:

As already noted, *one presentation* during the week will be asked of every student. Obviously what each student wants to present should be thought about and prepared before coming to the intensive. Active *class participation* is also expected from everyone because the purpose of this workshop will be the sharing of and learning from our individual spiritual lives. A *written summary* of each presentation will be required in order to receive a pass grade for *one half-course credit*. Because the course changes with every class, it may be repeated for a total of a full credit.

Questions or clarifications can be asked of the *instructor* (Rev. Dr. Neil Gerdes) by telephone at 773-256-3000, x. 225 or by e-mail at ngerdes@meadville.edu.