



# TYNDALE

• SEMINARY •

## Course Syllabus Spring & Summer 2013

### CELTIC SPIRITUALITY SPIR/HIST 0639

JUNE 3 – 7, 2013

MONDAY – FRIDAY, 9.00 AM – 4.00 PM

#### INSTRUCTOR:

Ray Simpson

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#### Office Hours:

Monday - Friday 9.0 am – 5. 0 pm GMT

To access your course materials, please go to [www.mytyndale.ca](http://www.mytyndale.ca). Note that all official Tyndale correspondence will be sent to your [@MyTyndale.ca](mailto:@MyTyndale.ca) e-mail account. For information how to access and forward Tyndale emails to your personal account, see [www.tyndale.ca/it/live-at-edu](http://www.tyndale.ca/it/live-at-edu).

#### I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Celtic spirituality which has become so popular today, appeals to the mind, body and spirit. This course is intended to introduce us to the spirituality of Christianity in Celtic lands in the 5-7<sup>th</sup> centuries, and of Celtic spirituality in certain later periods, including today and possible applications today. This may include themes such as: creation, holistic redemption, culture-friendly evangelism, rhythm and rule, prayer and worship, penance and pilgrimage, , art and poetry, presence and contemplation, heaven in everyday life, wisdom, nurture and soul friendship, community and the doctrine of the Trinity as expressed by various Celtic saints, new monastic churches.

## II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate in their final assignment a critical understanding in the areas of the spirituality of Christianity in Celtic lands in the 5-7<sup>th</sup> centuries, and of Celtic spirituality in certain later periods, including today.
2. Read and use set primary and secondary texts both critically and empathetically, identifying in their book review their audience, context and purpose; evaluating means of identifying and applying transferable lessons for contemporary Christian faith, practice and leadership.
3. Demonstrate in their final assignment paper an ability to relate the holistic approach of Celtic Spirituality to individuals, church and society today, to identify challenges, and to understand differences and similarities in historical frameworks, and paradigms.
4. Identify in their final paper relevant sources of information, including on-line, showing an ability to evaluate them, and a methodology for applying insights.
5. Demonstrate in the reflection on the spiritual exercises an ability to use sensing and creative faculties in applying Celtic spirituality to personal life, or corporate worship and to describe experiences honestly and clearly.

## III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### A. REQUIRED TEXTS

Davies, Oliver. *Celtic Spirituality (World Classics of Spirituality)* New York: Paulist Press ISBN: 10: 0809138948.

McIntosh, Kenneth. *Water from an Ancient Well: Celtic Spirituality for Modern Life*. New York: Anamchara Books, 2011. ISBN: 978-1-933630-98.

Simpson, Ray. *Exploring Celtic Spirituality with Study Guide*. Buxhall, Stowmarket: Kevin Mayhew Ltd, 2005. ISBN: 978-1-84417-186-6.

### B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING:

Adam, David. *Borderlands: the best of David Adam's Celtic Vision*. Sheed & Ward 2000, ISBN-10: 1580510701.

Bede. *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Oxford University Press, ISBN: 019288660.

Bradley, Ian. *Celtic Christian Communities: Live the Tradition*. Northstone Publishing, ISBN: 1896836437, 9781896836430.

Bradley, Ian. *Celtic Christianity: Making Myths and Chasing Dreams*. Edinburgh University Press, 1999, ISBN: 9780748610471

De Paor, Liam. (trans & commentary) *Saint Patrick's World: the Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age* (Soft cover). University of Notre Dame Press, ISBN: 0268017573.

Mitton, Michael. *Restoring the Woven Cord*. BRF 2010, ISBN: 978 1841018003.

Newell, Philip. *Christ of the Celts: The Healing of Creation*. Hardcover: 160 pages; Jossey-Bass, 2008. ISBN-10: 0470183500.

O'Loughlin, Thomas and Sheldrake, Philip. *Journeys on the Edges: The Celtic Tradition*. Orbis Books 2000, ISBN-13: 978-1570753374.

Rees, Elizabeth. *Celtic Saints in their Landscape*. Amberley Publishing, ISBN: 978-1-4456-0108-3.

Simpson, Ray. *Celtic Daily Light*. Kevin Mayhew Ltd, ISBN 1-84417-099-3.

Simpson, Ray. *Celtic Spirituality: Roots, Rhythms, Relationships*. Grove Books, ISBN: 1-85174-530-0.

Simpson, Ray. *Celtic Journey* CD/DVD. Kevin Mayhew Ltd.

### **Some samples of internet resources for optional surfing**

Columbanus' sermons: [www.ucc.ie/celt/published/T201053/index.html](http://www.ucc.ie/celt/published/T201053/index.html)

Some English translations of prayers from the Carmina Gadelica collection:

[http://www.faithandworship.com/Carmina\\_Gadelica\\_celtic\\_prayers.html](http://www.faithandworship.com/Carmina_Gadelica_celtic_prayers.html) On the same website click on to the *Celtic Year* menu:

[http://www.faithandworship.com/Praying\\_through\\_the\\_Celtic\\_Year.html](http://www.faithandworship.com/Praying_through_the_Celtic_Year.html) Read the trial liturgies for the Celtic Year.

Read an Orthodox article: 'A Gift of Hospitality – Saint Brigid, Abbess of Kildare' (available at <http://www.roca.org/OA/107/107e.html> )

Look at the webpage: <http://www.unc.edu/celtic/topics/crosses/crosses.html> and look for some other images of Celtic Crosses and Christian artwork. Make a list of, or draw, some Celtic symbols. Add a caption after

A web site from a Celtic tattoo shop on Rhode Island, USA mixes Pagan, Christian and post-modern ideas with some excellent pictures of original high crosses. [www.tribal-celtic-tattoo.com/CelticCrossTattoo.htm](http://www.tribal-celtic-tattoo.com/CelticCrossTattoo.htm)

For a taste of Irish poets visit: <http://www.rc.net/wcc/ireland/everses.htm> or read extracts from poems attributed to Columba, Dallán Forgaill and Beccan: <http://logismoitouaaron.blogspot.co.uk/2009/06/sage-across-seasst-columba-of-iona.html>

Read about the Ruthwell Cross at: [www.umilta.net/hilda.html](http://www.umilta.net/hilda.html)

- *Carmina Gadelica* on <http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/celt/cg1/>
- A selection of Celtic poetry from many periods available at: [http://archive.org/stream/lyracelticaantho00sharuoft/lyracelticaantho00sharuoft\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/lyracelticaantho00sharuoft/lyracelticaantho00sharuoft_djvu.txt)

Study manuscript pages of one of the Illuminated Gospels, e.g. Lindisfarne Gospel:

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/sacredtexts/lindisfarne.html> and  
<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/features/lindisfarne/home.html>

The full text of Margaret Stokes' *Early Christian Art in Ireland* is available online at

<http://www.archive.org/stream/earlychristianar017079mbp/earlychristianar017079mbp.djvu.txt>

Kuno Meyer's *Selections from Ancient Irish Poetry* is available online at

<http://mithrilstar.org/bibliography/celts.html> www.biblioireland.com/3057/medieval-irish-lyrics-with-the-irish-bardic-poet/

The Book of Kells: Google 'Images for the Book of Kells'.

The Lindisfarne Gospels: [www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/lindisfarne/accessible/introduction.html](http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/lindisfarne/accessible/introduction.html)

The Book of Durrow: [www.art-imagery.com/book.php?id=durrow](http://www.art-imagery.com/book.php?id=durrow)

The Lichfield, or St. Chad Gospels [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lichfield\\_Gospels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lichfield_Gospels)

Visit [http://www.allsaintsbrookline.org/celtic\\_saints/ita.html](http://www.allsaintsbrookline.org/celtic_saints/ita.html) to find out more about Ita.

Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People on-line:

<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/basis/bede-book1.asp>

Rule of St. Columba and other rules <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columba-rule.asp>

#### IV. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

*The assignments are designed so that students can provide evidence of serious reflection and reading of texts and demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes (II above).*

##### 1. **Class Participation:** 10 % of final grade

*Student participation will be graded on a scale of A – D.*

A. Excellent preparation, offers analysis, synthesis and evaluation of material; contributes significantly to the quality of on-going discussion (9-10 marks).
B. Good preparation, offers interpretation and analysis of material; contributes significantly to the quality of on-going discussion (6-8 marks).
C. Adequate preparation but no evidence of analysis or interpretation; contributes appropriately when called upon (4-5 marks)
D. Present, not disruptive, but offers little understanding or engagement (1-3 marks).
Non-attendance or disruption may result in a 0 mark.

## 2. Spiritual Exercises and Written Reflections 20% of final grade

Do any three of the following. Write a few sentences of response and reflection (or a prayer or poem) on each and submit them before or with your main assignment by July 30.

*The aim of these is to give the instructor evidence that you have completed and understood the point of the exercises, and have achieved Outcome 5 above: Demonstrate in the reflection on the spiritual exercises an ability to use sensing and creative faculties in applying Celtic spirituality to personal life, or corporate worship and to describe experiences honestly and clearly.*

### 1) **A Celtic approach to creation.**

“There is no plant in the ground but is full of His virtue... no form in the strand but is full of His blessing ....nothing beneath the sun but proclaims His goodness” (Alistair Maclean *Hebridean Altars*). Jesus said “Observe the birds... flowers...”. Look at one or more thing in nature. When something affects you ask “Why do I feel/think/like this? What might it (or God) be saying to me?”

### 2) **Two Celtic ways of praying.**

Stories of Celtic saints such as Brigid and Kevin portray them as praying with their arms stretched out in the shape of the Cross. Jesus said “Take up your cross...”. Try cross-shaped praying: Stand or lie with your hands stretched out to remind you of Jesus on the cross. Seek empathy with Jesus’ suffering, merciful, intercession for the world. How does this affect your attitudes and your subjects of intercession?

And/or try circle praying: Either physically walk round a place, or visualise a place, person or situation and mentally, or with your index finger, circle them using the format “Circle ... O Lord, keep good (or ...) within, keep harm (or ...) without”.

### 3) **A Celtic understanding of human nature.**

Philip Newell suggests that the Celtic tradition defines human beings by “the beauty of their origin in God” more than by “the ugliness of their failings”. “The light which lightens every person ...” (John 1: 9). Saint Aidan referred to a possibly pagan beggar as ‘that child of God’. Do this “5 P” exercise: i) **Pause**: Become aware of and let go of pre-conceptions that belittle human beings; ii) **Presence**: become aware that God is in the present, past and future of yourself and another person unlike you; iii) **Picture** yourself or/and another flowing in the full potential of their God-given body, mind and spirit; iv) **Ponder**: What do you learn as a result of this new awareness?; v) **Promise** to make specified changes.

### 4) **A Celtic approach to spiritual disciplines.**

Celtic Christians emulated the ascetic 4<sup>th</sup> c. desert “Athletes of Christ” and the “green (or blue) martyrs”. “Run the race ....athletes exercise control in all things...” (1 Corinthians 9: 24, 25). They live life as a pilgrimage and detach themselves (or fast) from anything that gets in the way of God. Visualise the possessions, projects, points of view, people,

pastimes, practices or places which you would have to leave behind if you went into physical exile. Which of these clutter your spirit even as you are? Which of these would it be beneficial to let go of? (Only submit non-confidential examples).

5) **The presence of “heaven in everyday life”.**

Mystical prayer, intuitive, liminal experiences, angels and a sense of heaven feature in Celtic spirituality. Jesus “raised his eyes to heaven”. Visualise Jesus doing this within you. What perceptions come to you? Recall a liminal moment, a mental picture or sense impression “from beyond” which you or another have experienced. Read a biblical or Celtic story of an angel. What speaks to you?

6) **Rhythm of life values**

In the light of this course define the rhythm of life values you espouse.. Express this succinctly by a caption (one or two sentences) underneath each of eight arrows:

- The arrow pointing from you to God (e.g. “as in heaven”)
- The arrow pointing from God to you.(e.g. “presence”)
- The arrow you point at yourself (e.g. “disciplines”)
- The arrow pointing to others ( individuals e.g. “relationship”)
- The arrow point to others (the world, e.g. “justice”)
- The arrow pointing to the land (e.g. “integrity/healing”)
- The arrow pointing from the land to you (e.g. “fruitfulness”)

A. Excellent reflection of the above aims and Outcome 5 (17 - 20 marks).
B. Good reflection of the above aims and Outcome 5 ( 12-16 marks).
C. Little reflection of the above aims and Outcome 5 (7-11 marks)
D. Poor or no reflection of the above aims and Outcome 5 (0-6 marks).

**3. Critical Book Review: 20 % of final grade. Due on July 30 2013**

Provide a book review of about 1,000 words on one of the required or recommended reading assignments. The assigned task is to provide a careful and thorough examination of the basic issues at stake in the text, and to evaluate the relative strengths and/or weaknesses of the author’s case. Seek to express the dominant issues and argument of the work. Grading will be on the basis of Outcome 2 above: Read and

use set primary and secondary texts both critically and empathetically, identifying in their book review their audience, context and purpose; evaluating means of identifying and applying transferable lessons for contemporary Christian faith, practice and leadership.

A. Excellent critical and empathetic grasp of issues, identification of possible audience, context and purpose, identification and evaluation of contemporary applications (17 - 20 marks).
B. Good critical and empathetic grasp of issues, identification of possible audience, context and purpose, identification and evaluation of contemporary applications ( 12-16 marks).
C. Patchy critical and empathetic grasp of issues, identification of possible audience, context and purpose (7-11 marks)
D. Poor or no critical and empathetic grasp of issues, identification of possible audience, context and purpose, identification and evaluation of contemporary applications (0-6 marks).

**4. Final Essay Paper:** 50 % of final grade. Due on July 30

Submit a substantial piece of theological analysis in response to one of the questions provided for this assignment. (A list of essay questions will be distributed on the first day of class: you will need to answer only one of these questions in your essay.)

The essay should not simply report, summarize, or review class materials (though you are encouraged to draw from class lectures, discussion and readings). It should, rather, deliver outcomes 1, 3 and 4 (above). It should demonstrate thoughtful reflection, theological method or history, and should embody a conceptual argument in which strengths and weaknesses of statements and various angles of the questions are explored in fairness and at length. It should reflect evidence that the required texts have been studied. The paper should be in the range of 15-20 pages in length, double-spaced. Chose from list below or from other topics given in class.

A. Excellent reflection the above criteria. (41-50 marks).
B. Good reflection of most of the above criteria (30-40 marks)
C. Patchy or poor reflection of most of the above criteria (20-29 marks)
D. Little or no reflection of the above criteria (1-19 marks)

ESSAY TOPICS (Choose one)

Write 15-20 pages double spaced on one of the following:

- 1) “Celtic Christian Spirituality can help to reconnect twenty-first century Christians with holistic **rhythms** (e.g. prayer, work, re-creation, seasons), **roots** (e.g. in Scripture, contemplation, nature and the communion of saints) and **relationship** (e.g. with a soul friend, the local or wider community) which have been weakened in recent centuries” Give reasons why you support or qualify this statement. Explain possible meanings of holistic roots, rhythms and relationship, processes of disconnection and re-connection, illustrating your explanations with examples.
- 2) What may we glean from early Christian Celtic art (e.g. Illuminated Gospels, high stone Crosses) or poetry about distinctive or impressive elements in Celtic Christian spirituality? Describe and evaluate your chosen illustrations and the element of spirituality that they embody.
- 3) What distinguished the spiritual values, methods and models of the 7<sup>th</sup> c Irish Mission to the English (initiated by Aidan, arguably continued under a Roman framework by Cuthbert and Hilda) from Roman and other approaches? Give reasons, examples, evaluations of their relevance to today’s church..

#### **D. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK**

For proper citation style, consult the [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially [ch. 14](#). For citing scripture texts, refer to sections [10.46 to 10.51](#) and [14.253 to 14.254](#).

#### Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University College & Seminary takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students should consult the current Academic Calendar for academic polices on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System. The Academic Calendar is posted at <http://tyndale.ca/registrar>.

## E. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments

Required Reading and Class Participation	10 %
Critical Book Review	20%
Spiritual Exercises/reflections	20 %
Final Essay	50 %
Total Grade	100 %