1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

In the world in which cultural flux seems more rapid and overwhelmingly violent than the human person can tolerate, it is essential to clarify our sense of the meaning of life. In this course we specifically will seek to understand the longing of the human heart in light of Catholic Christian belief. The primary underlying presumption of the course is that the deepest desire of all people is to be loved and to love. The spiritual journey, then, is seen as a life-long process in learning to love. At the core of growth in understanding the implications of love is a worldview which incorporates an understanding of God, the human person, the world and the relationships among the three. Our sources for understanding this worldview are Scripture and Tradition.

The course will focus on what it means to live the Christian vocation of faithful citizen. In this way we will seek to understand Christian life and living in as integrating both personal and civic (public) dimensions of one life. As persons, we are wired for relationships. Our lives are fulfilled in living out Christ’s one commandment, “Love one another as I have loved you.” Social justice is a constitutive element of Christian living in its public dimension.

Among other things, our discussions and dialogues will focus on the Trinitarian origins of our life in the Spirit, the reality and relationship between nature and grace, the person and community, freedom, sin, conversion, the sacramentality of life, growth in holiness and the nature and meaning of prayer. The greatest challenge facing Catholics is to develop a spirituality of communion in the Church which is “the home and the school of communion [and love]” (John Paul II, NMI 43). In light of this all themes covered during this semester will seek to address various aspects of this spirituality.

2. TOPICAL OUTLINE

2.1 Introduction – Entering the School of Love: The Origin and Destiny of Christian Life – “Educational, Ecclesial Community in Progress”
- Groanings of the Spirit: The Longing
- What is spirituality?
- Relation of spiritual theology to other areas of theology
- Schools of spirituality
- Educating to love

2.2 The Search for Meaning - Openness of the Human Person to God
- Various approaches
- Intellectual meaning
- Affective meaning

2.3 The Judeo-Christian Founding Myth: Origins and Relationships
- God, The Person and the World
- The Nature of the Human Person

2.4 Telos: Fullness of Life in the Godhead
• God as Community
• Human Person - Essentially Social/Relational
• Reaching Out

2.5 Freedom, Responsibility, Grace and Destiny
• Human Brokenness and The Longing for Wholeness
• Sin and Unredeemed Existence
• Limits and the Liminal

2.6 The Call to Transformation and Restoration
• Closedness and Openness of Human Person
• Psychic, Intellectual, Emotional and Religious Conversions

2.7 Human Growth and Development in the Life of the Spirit
• The notion of stages of growth
• From vice to virtue
• Purgative, illuminative and unitive ways
• Growth in freedom
• Integrity

2.8 Christian Habits of the Heart (Virtue)
• The concept of virtue
• The cardinal virtues
• Theological virtues: faith, hope, charity

2.9 Christian Primary Language: “Pray Always”
• Types of prayer: adoration, praise, thanksgiving, petition
• Practical union with God
• Discernment: See, understand, judge, act

2.10 Life in Community: The Birthing and Nurturing Body – The Church
• Covenant
• The Institutional Context of Growth: Where you are person, you become human, and you become free
• Meeting Point: The Sacramental Life

2.11 Generating Life: The Community Sent and Sending
• “By their fruits you will know them.”
• Solidarity and justice
• Evangelization and Mission: “To The Ends of the Earth”

3. TEXTS
3.1 Required Texts

### 3.2 Supplemental Texts


### 4. PEDAGOGICAL METHOD
Lecture and group discussion.

### 5. REQUIREMENTS

#### 5.1 Attendance:
Regular and punctual attendance and preparation for class.

#### 5.2 Class Participation:
Active participation in class discussions and preparation of opening prayer for classes.

#### 5.3 Written Assignments:

1. Every *Wednesday day at the beginning of class*, the student will submit, in hard copy, a one-page, New Times Roman font #12, double-spaced with one-inch margins with header at
the top of each page with your name, course #, and date, summary on the material discussed in the previous week’s class. The paper will include
• a succinct summary of the material cover in class discussions, and
• the student’s appropriation and application of the material.

2) Two seven-page (+/-) summary papers of the essence of the content of von Hildebrands’s text, Transformation in Christ.
   • Summary paper #1 covering Chapters 1-9: Due: March 4th at the beginning of class.
   • Summary paper #2 covering Chapters 10-18: Due: May 6th at the beginning of class.

5.4 Examination: Comprehensive final written exam – May 13 from 5:30 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. (Tentative)

5.5 Please note that on Wednesday, January 21, you will be responsible for having read the first four chapters of D. von Hildebrand’s, Transformation in Christ. Be ready to discuss the contents of these chapters in class. The class discussion will be facilitated by Ms. Jan Skrehot. In light of the discussion you will write a two-page summary of the discussion which will be turned in at the beginning of the class on Wednesday, Jan. 28.

5.6 THE WRITTEN WORD: GET IT RIGHT!
This means that you must strive for total accuracy in grammar, spelling, punctuation, standard usage, sentence construction, paragraph formation, and documenting sources. Writing is, among other considerations, a test of our self-respect and respect for our readers. It is the writer’s obligation to communicate ideas intelligibly and correctly. A careless, inaccurate writer loses the respect of readers and shouldn’t expect to be heard. A reader should not have to struggle through muddled sentences and annoying inaccuracies and errors to find the writer’s “content.” Often I give papers or even individual sentences a “fog rating” on a scale of 1 to 10. If the writing is incorrect, the content is irrelevant. Getting it right means scrupulously revising and editing your paper before submitting it. Rule number one: no accuracy, no content.

6. GRADING
Final grade for the course will be determined on the basis of the following:
• Class attendance and quality of participation (30%)

• Assigned papers: Note well, that all papers must be grammatically perfect and reflect graduate level competency; they must be in New Times Roman font #12, double-spaced with one inch margins with header at the top of each page with your name, course #, and date. (40%)
  o Any delay in submission of papers without express permission from the professor prior to the due date of the paper, will result in an automatic reduction of one letter grade from the determined grade of the paper.

• Final examination (30%)

7. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY (University of St. Thomas Policies & Procedures, Student Handbook, Section 3.)
1. Definition
• Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:
  o Cheating on an examination or test, for example by copying from another’s paper or by using unauthorized materials before or during the test;
  o Plagiarism, which one represents as one’s own the work of another, whether published or not, without acknowledging the precise source;
  o Knowing participation in the academic dishonesty of another student even though one’s own work is not directly affected;
2. **Penalty**
   - The penalty for an incident of academic dishonesty is, at the discretion of the professor, either a mark of zero for the work in question or the grade of an “F” for the course.