

**Course Syllabus**  
**TRH2455 – Living in the Spirit:**  
**Modern Orthodox Spirituality**  
**Trinity College**  
**Toronto School of Theology**  
**September to December (Fall) 2021**

***Instructor Information***

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Instructor: Dr Paul Ladouceur  
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Telephone: 2021: n/a. 416-978-2170 (in-session only; no messages)  
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Office Hours: By appointment, online.

***Course Identification***

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Course Number: TRH2455  
Course Format: 2021: Online only.  
Course Name: Living in the Spirit: Modern Orthodox Spirituality  
Course Location: 2021: n/a. Larkin Building, Room \_\_\_\_  
Class Times: Online course available in Quercus from September 7, 2021.  
First live session: Tuesday, September 14, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. ET. The connection link will be communicated to registered students.  
Prerequisites: None

***Course Description***

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This course covers modern approaches to the Orthodox concept of *theosis*, the movement of the Christian into complete life in, through, and with God, through Christ and the Holy Spirit. The course focuses in particular on the leading Orthodox spiritual personalities, movements and writings of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The writings include works of contemplation, monastic and non-monastic texts, sermons and catecheses. Classroom and online students will be evaluated on the basis of participation and presentations of texts, a review of a modern work of Orthodox spirituality, and a research essay.

***Expanded Course Description***

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While maintaining a broad thematic continuity with Orthodox spirituality of the first millennium, the rich corpus of Orthodox spiritual writings since the fourteenth century reflects influences and problems typical of the wide range of historical and geopolitical circumstances of Orthodox Christians over the centuries, nurtured by the religious climates of Russia, Romania, Greece, Mount Athos, the Christian Middle East, and Western Europe and North America. Personalities and writings to be studied will be considered in both their historical and personal contexts and will be situated within broad themes characteristic of modern Orthodox spirituality, such as the “Philokalic” and hesychastic revival beginning in the late eighteenth century, the Jesus Prayer, spiritual guidance, monastic renewal, liturgical

spirituality, spirituality in times of revolution, persecution and exile, and spirituality in a secular environment. With modern times there are strong external pressures from contemporary secular culture, from the Enlightenment to scientific positivism, militant and non-militant atheism, existentialism and modernism. Leading figures of the Church – clergy, monastics and lay people – respond to these challenges, witnessing to Christ in their lives and their writings, which have a powerful impact and colour modern Orthodox life.

Readings in a Course Reader of texts will include selections from major Orthodox pastoral and spiritual authors of Russia, Greece, Mount Athos, Romania, Serbia, the Christian Middle East and Western Europe and North America. Authors include St Nicholas Cabasilas, St Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain, St Seraphim of Sarov, Fr Arseny of Russia, Alexander Men, Joseph the Hesychast, Mother Gavrilia, St Silouan the Athonite, Elder Cleopa, Dumitru Staniloae, Matta El-Meskeen, St Nicholas Velimirovitch, Alexander Eltchaninov, St Maria of Paris, Lev Gillet, Elisabeth Behr-Sigel, Paul Evdokimov, Anthony Bloom, Archimandrite Sophrony, Alexander Schmemmann, and Kallistos Ware.

## **Course Resources**

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### **Required Reading**

*The Burning Bush: A Modern Philokalia (Readings in Modern Orthodox Spirituality)* (“Course pack”)

### **Required Course Books**

One book (for book report) to be selected from the following:

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom, *Essential Writings* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010). ISBN: 978-1570758669.

Igumen Chariton of Valamo, *The Art of Prayer: An Orthodox Anthology* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966; 1997). ISBN: 978-0571191659. [Mostly extracts from St. Theophanes the Recluse.]

*Father Arseny 1893-1973: Priest, Prisoner, Spiritual Father* (Yonkers NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1998). ISBN: 978-0881411805.

John of Kronstadt, *My Life in Christ* (Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Monastery, 1957). Complete version free online: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/kronstadt/christlife>. (28 Jun 2021)  
For the book review: Part I, pages 1-249. Or this book of extracts: *Spiritual Counsels of Father John of Kronstadt: Select Passages from My Life in Christ*. W. Jardine Grisbrooke, ed. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989). ISBN: 0913836923.

Matthew the Poor, *Orthodox Prayer Life: The Interior Way* (Yonkers NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003). ISBN 978-0881412505.

Alexander Men, *The Son of Man* (Oakwood Publications, 1998). ISBN: 978-1879038288  
(Out of print).

Alexander Men, *An Inner Step Toward God: Writings and Teachings on Prayer* (Paraclete Press MA, 2014) ISBN-13: 978-1612612386.

Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain, *Unseen Warfare: The Spiritual Combat and Path to Paradise* (Yonkers NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1989). ISBN: 978-0913836521.

Writings of Saint Silouan the Athonite in: Archimandrite Sophrony, *Saint Silouan the Athonite* (Yonkers NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2002). ISBN: 978-0881411959.

Mother Maria Skobtsova, *Essential Writings*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002). ISBN: 978-1570754364.

*Monastic Wisdom: The Letters of Elder Joseph the Hesychast* (Florence AZ: St Anthony's Greek Monastery, 1998). ISBN: 978-0966700015.

Elder Porphyrios, *Wounded by Love: The Life and Wisdom of Elder Porphyrios* (Athens: Denise Harvey, 2005). ISBN: 978-9607120199.

### Recommended Secondary Sources

Élisabeth Behr-Sigel, *The Place of the Heart: An Introduction to Orthodox Spirituality* (Torrance CA: Oakwood Publications, 1992; St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2012). ISBN: 978-0881414523.

Placide Deseille, *Orthodox Spirituality and the Philokalia* (Wichita KS: Eighth Day Press, 2008).

Paul Evdokimov, *The Ages of the Spiritual Life* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998). ISBN: 978-0881411751.

Georges Florovsky, *The Byzantine Ascetic and Spiritual Fathers* (1933), in *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky*, Vol. 10 (Vaduz: Büchervertriebsanstalt, 1987).

Online at: [www.holytrinitymission.org/books/english/fathers\\_florovsky\\_4.htm](http://www.holytrinitymission.org/books/english/fathers_florovsky_4.htm).

John Meyendorff, *St Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality* (Crestwood NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974). ISBN: 978-0913836118

A Monk of the Eastern Church [Fr Lev Gillet], *Orthodox Spirituality: An Outline of the Orthodox Ascetical and Mystical Tradition* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996). Out of print.

Dumitru Staniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality: A Practical Guide for the Faithful and a Definitive Manual for the Scholar* (South Canaan PA: St Tikhon's Seminary Press, 2002).

### Course Website

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access Quercus, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, which contains the link to the website for your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> . Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask Sydney Yeung ([divinity@trinity.utoronto.ca](mailto:divinity@trinity.utoronto.ca)) for further help.

The Trinity College Faculty of Divinity will communicate the temporary id and password to registered course auditors. Auditors have full access to all online material, live sessions and to the library of Trinity College. Auditors do not receive a T-Card and may not borrow from other University of Toronto libraries (UTL) or have access to digital material through the UTL.

## ***Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes***

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Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following outcomes:

### **(A) IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS**

- to work with both primary and secondary sources and to gather, analyze and prepare materials for reflection and engaged class discussion
- to improve their reading and critical thinking skills
- to write essays integrating analysis and reflection on primary and secondary sources

### **(B) IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES**

- name and describe in their historical, geographic and personal circumstances the principal figures (especially saints, elders and other holy men and women) who have marked in Orthodox spirituality from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the early 21<sup>st</sup> century
- describe and assess the major features, movements and writings in Orthodox spirituality during this period
- discuss and assess, following a critical reading and review, a major Orthodox spiritual writing of modern times
- identify and appraise the principal primary and secondary sources pertinent to Orthodox spirituality in modern times

### **(C) IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

- employ insights gleaned from Orthodox pastoral and spiritual writings during this period to their own spiritual life and formation
- to manage his or her own learning
- to demonstrate behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility

### **(D) IN RESPECT OF MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP**

- to demonstrate qualities and skills necessary for ministry, further study, and community involvement
- to exercise initiative, personal responsibility, and accountability in both personal and group contexts
- apply the main Orthodox pastoral and spiritual writings from the modern era to their pastoral ministry or service within the church

## ***Evaluation***

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### **Requirements – Classroom and Online Sections**

The final grade for the course will be based on the following areas:

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| • Class Participation                        | 30% |
| • Review of one of the Required Course Books | 30% |
| • Research essay                             | 40% |

## Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter	Other qualities expected of students
<b>A RANGE: Excellent: Student shows original thinking, analytic and synthetic ability, critical evaluations, and broad knowledge base.</b>				
<b>A+</b>	90-100	4.0	Profound and Creative	Strong evidence of original thought, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound and penetrating critical evaluations which identify assumptions of those they study as well as their own; mastery of an extensive knowledge base
<b>A</b>	85-89	4.0	Outstanding	
<b>A-</b>	80-84	3.7	Excellent	Clear evidence of original thinking, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound critical evaluations; broad knowledge base
<b>B RANGE: Good: Student shows critical capacity and analytic ability, understanding of relevant issues, familiarity with the literature.</b>				
<b>B+</b>	77-79	3.3	Very Good	Good critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; good familiarity with the literature
<b>B</b>	73-76	3.0	Good	
<b>B-</b>	70-72	2.7	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level.	Adequate critical capacity and analytic ability; some understanding of relevant issues; some familiarity with the literature
<b>FZ</b>	0-69	0	Failure	Failure to meet the above criteria

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

**Late work.** Arrangements must be made in advance for work submitted after the deadline for individual assignments. If circumstances (such as medical or compassionate difficulties) require that work be turned in late, contact the instructor at the earliest possible juncture to agree on a new timeline and other details.

Students who for exceptional reasons (for instance, a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = 'standing deferred') beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm>) or college grading policy.

## **Policies**

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**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges [http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

**Back-up copies.** Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

**E-mail.** Important course information will be sent by email. All students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at [www.utorid.utoronto.ca](http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca). The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. The instructor may send messages to all students via the e-mail facility in Quercus, which uses student utoronto e-mail addresses. The utoronto e-mail mailbox may be configured to forward incoming correspondence to an external e-mail address if wanted. Students should ensure that forwarding works properly so that they do not miss e-mail sent to the utoronto e-mail address.

**Anti-harassment policy.** As we all adjust to online classes and lectures, and increasingly participate in virtual learning environments, students are reminded of the expectation that we all demonstrate respect for one another. As outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, the University of Toronto does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities especially when based on grounds protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code. The University of Toronto recognizes its commitment to human rights, equity and inclusion and acknowledges the disproportionate impact COVID-19 has on various parts of our community. COVID-19 is not isolated to people of any particular ethnic origin, place of origin or race. Equity, diversity and respect must remain integral as we continue to transition during these challenging times. The institution will monitor and address discriminatory comments or behaviour including on U of T's online platforms and classrooms.

In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, no person shall engage in a course of vexatious conduct that is directed at one or more specific individuals, and that is based on the race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age marital status, family status or disability. This includes:

- Racial slurs or "jokes"
- Insults due to racial identity
- Online posts of cartoons or pictures, in a workplace or school that degrade persons of a particular racial group
- Name-calling due to race, colour, citizenship, place of origin, ancestry, ethnic background or creed
- Pseudonyms or handles that are inappropriate about ancestry, colour, citizenship, ethnicity, place of origin, race, or religion.

The University of Toronto's Equity Offices remain available to students to provide support on equity issues that arise as a result of COVID-19. Students are encouraged to support one another and the University's commitment to human rights and our values of diversity, inclusion, and respect in managing any inappropriate comments or disruptive behaviours. If you experience or witness inappropriate comments or behaviours in your classes, you are encouraged to contact your instructor. If you can, take and share a screenshot of the inappropriate content with your instructor so they can follow-up with you and address the conduct.

## ***Course Schedule***

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- Unit 1 – Course introduction. Orthodox Spirituality from the 14th to the 18th Centuries.
- Unit 2 - The “Philocalic Renewal” in Greece, Romania and Russia.
- Unit 3 - Overview of the impact of the main historical events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on Orthodoxy. Spirituality in Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries.
- Unit 4 - Spirituality in Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries (continued).
- Unit 5 – Spirituality in Greece.
- Unit 6 – Spirituality on Mount Athos.
- Unit 7 – Spirituality in Romania.
- Unit 7 – Spirituality in Serbia.
- Unit 8 – Spirituality in the Christian Middle East.
- Unit 9 – Orthodox Spirituality in the West 1 (Fr Sergius Bulgakov; Fr Alexander Eltchaninov; St Maria of Paris/Mother Maria Skobtsova).
- Unit 10 – Orthodox Spirituality in the West 2 (Fr Lev Gillet; Elisabeth Behr-Sigel; Paul Evdokimov; Nadejda Gorodetski).
- Unit 11 – Orthodox Spirituality in the West 3 (Metropolitan Anthony Bloom; Archimandrite Sophrony (Sakharov); Metropolitan Kallistos Ware).
- Unit 12 – Orthodox Spirituality in North America (Fr Alexander Schmemmann; Orthodox Saints of North America; Monasticism in North America).

This syllabus is subject to change in accordance with the regulations in the TST *Basic Degree Handbook*.