



Spring 2018

<b>Meeting days:</b> Thursday	<b>Instructor title and name:</b> Rebecca Laird
<b>Meeting times:</b> 6-9pm	<b>Phone:</b> 619 849 2993
<b>Meeting location:</b> BAC 104	<b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:rlaird@pointloma.edu">rlaird@pointloma.edu</a>
<b>Final Exam:</b> Thursday 4/5	<b>Office location and hours:</b> T 1-5, W 10-noon and by appointment
<b>Additional info:</b> Mandatory attendance at Revolution of the Heart: The Counter-Cultural Spirituality of Henri Nouwen Feb. 9-10 at University of San Diego, \$25 fee. Must pre-register. See below for details.	<b>Additional info:</b>

**PLNU Mission To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send**

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores spiritual formation and vocational discernment through the writings of Henri Nouwen.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will be able to

- 1) Analyze the major themes in Nouwen's writings
- 2) Synthesize the relationship of contemplative prayer and practice to social and political action
- 3) Apply Nouwen's work to their own vocational discernment and ministry practice

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

1. Jonas, Robert, ed. *The Essential Henri Nouwen*. Shambala, 2009. 978-1-59030-664-2
2. Nouwen. *The Genesee Diary: Report from a Trappist Monastery*. Doubleday, 1978.\*
3. Nouwen. *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*, Doubleday, 1992. 0-385-47307-9.
4. Nouwen. *Ministry and Spirituality: Creative Ministry\*, The Wounded Healer, Reaching Out\**. Continuum, 1998. 0-8264-0910-5. (This is a compilation volume. Books can be purchased separately.)
5. Nouwen. *Making All Things New\*: An Introduction to the Spiritual Life*. HarperCollins, 1981. 0-06-066326-0.

\*These titles are on reserve in Ryan Library.

**Registration at The Revolution of the Heart Conference. Contact Roxanne Burns at [rburns@sandiego.edu](mailto:rburns@sandiego.edu) or (619) 260-4656 to register at the student rate. ACT NOW!!! Limited student seats for the conference.**

**COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS**

DATE PRESENTED	CLASS CONTENT OR ASSIGNMENT	ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE
1/11	Course overview Who was Henri Nouwen? Moving From the House of Fear to the House of Love Together	
1/18	The Nature and Mystery of God Sacred Creation and the Body	Jonas, <i>Essential Henri Nouwen</i> , Intro and Chp 1-2 Nouwen, <i>Return of Prodigal Son</i> , Prologue, Intro and Part 1  Discernment Essay #1 In 3-4 pages answer these questions for as the “younger son/child” in dialogue with the readings for today. Five citations from the readings are required. <i>When have you left home? What did you wish to leave behind? What did you hope to gain? What would returning home demand of you? What might it offer?</i>
1/25	Prayer and Contemplation  Student Presentation: <i>Thomas Merton, Contemplative Critic</i>	Jonas, 3 <i>Return of the Prodigal Son</i> , Parts 2 & 3  Discernment Essay #2 in 3-4 pages answer these questions as the “elder son/child” in dialogue with the readings for today. Five citations from the readings are required. <i>When have you felt resentful, unkind, selfish or without joy? Where in life might you struggle with duty that feels like a sort of slavery? Who are you jealous of? How has or might gratitude become a discipline of freedom for you?</i>
2/1	No class	
2/8	Friendship and Community Special Guest: Sr. Sue Mosteller	Excerpt from <i>Home Tonight</i> (canvas)  Bring two questions for Sue Mosteller from the reading
2/9-2/10	Revolution of the Heart Conference at University of San Diego Friday night, Saturday morning/afternoon Theme: Social and Political Action	Jonas, Chp. 13  Nouwen’s intro to <i>We Drink from Our Own Wells</i> by Guitierrez (canvas)
2/15	Drinking Our Cup/Befriending Brokenness Student Presentation: <i>Can You Drink the Cup?</i>	Jonas, Chp 4  Nouwen, <i>The Wounded Healer</i> —all of it. (Found in Ministry & Spirituality)

		<p>Hernandez, Wil, "Henri Nouwen on Presence and Absence" in <i>Presence: An International Journal of Spiritual Direction</i>, Vol 18, No. 3, Sept 2012.</p> <p>Discernment essay #3  In 3-4 pages dialogue with these questions from today's readings. Five citations from the reading are required. 1. <i>Why has it become difficult if not impossible to live by a fixed ideology? Describe a belief you once held that you no longer hold. What brought about the change in your thinking?</i> 2. <i>Discuss Nouwen's statement: "The great illusion of leadership is to think that [someone] can be led out of the desert by someone who has never been there" (p 72). When has sharing your own journey enabled you to care for someone else? Have you ever been guilty of "spiritual exhibitionism?" (88) or been on the receiving end of it? How did it impact you?</i> 3) <i>Who has been an "articulate witness of Christ" for you in a time of trouble? How might your wounds allow you to become such an articulate witness for others? How do your wounds drive your vocational call to ministry?</i></p>
2/22	Sacred Mourning Student Presentation: <i>Mourning to Dancing</i>	<p>Jonas, Chp 5  Nouwen, <i>Creative Ministry</i>—all of it. (Found in <i>Ministry &amp; Spirituality</i> anthology)</p>
3/1	Conversion and Transformation Student Presentation: <i>Life of the Beloved</i>	<p>Jonas, Chp 6  Nouwen, <i>Making All things New</i>—all of it</p> <p>Discernment essay #4  In 3-4 pages dialogue with these questions from today's readings. Five citations from the reading are required. <i>What worries you? What do you long for spiritually? What false expectations or contrived needs preoccupy you? What signs of disconnectedness show up in your life? How does Nouwen's definition of obedience call you to enter into the spiritual life more fully? What does it mean to live the spiritual life for Nouwen? How does your understanding differ?</i></p>
3/8	Spring Break	
3/15	Speech, Silence, and Solitude Student Presentation: <i>Adam</i>	<p>Jonas, Chp 7  Nouwen, <i>Reaching Out</i>, Chps 1-6</p>
3/22	Forgiveness, Mercy, Compassion Student Presentation: <i>Inner Voice of Love</i>	<p>Jonas, Chp 8  Nouwen <i>Reaching Out</i> Chps, 7-9</p> <p>Discernment Essay #5 In 3-4 pages dialogue with these questions from today's readings. Five citations from the reading are required. <i>How would you describe the difference between physical solitude and solitude of the</i></p>

		<i>heart? How does contemporary society make you acutely aware of your own loneliness? When do you feel it most intensely? What do you tend to do with your loneliness? What are the present relationships that are inviting you to move out of fear and hostility toward creating a free and open space for someone else? Write a poem or prayer or create some artistic expression that captures what you have gained from this book.</i>
3/29	Easter Break	
4/5	Spiritual Motivations and Intentions Student Presentation: <i>Gracias</i>	Jonas, Chp 10 Nouwen, <i>The Genesee Diary</i> , June-August  <b>Keep a spiritual journal for 3 weeks.</b> At least 4 times a week while reading <i>Genesee Diary</i> pay attention to what God is saying through scripture, prayer, nature, other people, signs of the times, and the books you are reading and the classes you are taking. Use Nouwen's book as a guide to paying attention for purposes of discerning God's presence and call.
4/12	Time, Befriending Death Student Presentation: <i>Our Greatest Gift</i>	Jonas, Chp 11 Nouwen, <i>The Genesee Diary</i> , September and October
4/19	Challenges and Temptations Student Presentation: <i>Road to Peace</i>	Jonas, Chp 12 Nouwen, <i>The Genesee Diary</i> , November and December
4/26	No class	
	Final exam. You will be given letters from people seeking spiritual guidance. You will respond by writing "Love, Henri" letters in response that show attention to his themes and ability to quote from his books. Open book.	

#### REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

##### Required

1. Jonas, Robert, ed. *The Essential Henri Nouwen*. Shambala, 2009. 978-1-59030-664-2
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## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

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**Note:** Clearly define a grading policy to avoid any confusion concerning expectations. It is most helpful if at least two things are present: 1) a point distribution and 2) a grading scale.

<u>Sample</u> assignment distribution by percentage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5 Discernment Essays 100 pts each 500</li><li>• 3 week spiritual journal 200</li><li>• Student book presentation/review 150</li><li>• Attendance/Participation 50</li><li>• Final Exam 100</li></ul> <u>Possible points</u> 1000	<u>Sample</u> grade scale: A=93-100 A-=92-90 B+=87-89 B=83-86 B-=80-82 C+=77-79 C=73-76 C-=70-72 D+=67-69 D=63-66 D-=60-62 F=0-59
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## INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

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All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

## FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

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Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

NOTE: The following policies are to be used without changes:

## PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

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Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

## PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

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Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

## PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

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If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at [DRC@pointloma.edu](mailto:DRC@pointloma.edu). See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

## PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

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Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

