

**TH/SP6/730**  
**Intercultural Theology and Spirituality (3 Credits)**  
**Spring 2023**

Instructor: Hyuk Cho  
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Office Location: #420 VST  
Office Hours: Please feel welcome to come and talk with me. To make an appointment, check with me at class or by email to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Class Dates and Times: Wednesdays, 9:00 am to 12 noon

❖ **Course Description**

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Who is the Other? In a society so culturally and religiously diverse as Canada, how do we, current and future leaders of church and society, build just relations with the Other without breaching the Other's identity? This course explores these questions and their spiritual implications for our time and place. A particular focus of this course will be on introducing the understanding of the Other, the paradigm shifts in mission, interreligious relations and intercultural engagement. The goal is to foster critical theological reflection and deepen spirituality in intercultural relations to create a safe, welcoming in-between space where constructive dialogue and bold discipleship take place. This course is designed for students preparing for work in congregational ministry, spiritual care and social ministry. This is a cross-listed course in theology and spirituality.

❖ **Prerequisites**

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Normally, students have completed at least one graduate course in Theology or equivalent (TH500 or equivalent).

❖ **Required Texts**

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- Jung Young Lee, *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1995).
- Mary Jo Leddy, *The Other Face of God: When the Stranger Calls Us Home* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2011).
- Thich Nhat Hanh, *Living Buddha, Living Christ* (New York: Riverhead, 1995).
- Paul F. Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002).

- Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997).

Other readings shall be available on library reserve or provided online at Populi.

### ❖ Learning Outcomes

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After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

1. analyze and discuss theological and spiritual issues in the intercultural context.
2. acknowledge how the church has been connected to colonialism and the effects on faith and culture.
3. discuss major intercultural themes in different forms of contemporary issues in theology and spirituality.
4. articulate biblical perspectives of intercultural issues.
5. discuss contemporary theology and spirituality from religious pluralism and intercultural perspectives.
6. demonstrate knowledge of the modern anthropological notion of culture and be able to assess its implications for an understanding of faith as responsive to the needs and challenges of intercultural contexts.
7. discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the models of interreligious relations.
8. explore the intimate connections between the inner life of Christian spirituality and the “outer life” of engagement in the faith community’s life and work.
9. develop skills in leading discussions on intercultural theology and spirituality and creating safe, welcoming in-between spaces.

### ❖ Class Format

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This class meets for three hours a week over 11 weeks. The basic arrangement of class time will be a biblical reflection, lecture and class presentations. Biblical reflection will introduce the topic(s) of the class. Lectures will be offered to introduce, clarify, connect and expand the context and substance of the readings in order to help students integrate the course materials with their own theological understanding and spiritual practices. In the class, case studies and problem-solving activities will be given to deepen and enrich our theological imaginations and create a transformation in our spiritual practices.

This is a hybrid course. Online students will engage with the professor and class online using Zoom. The Zoom link will be uploaded to Populi for synchronous students, and a link to the recording of the class will also be posted to Populi for asynchronous students following the class.

### ❖ Expectations and Assignments

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1. **Reading and assignments:** You are expected to read all “Required Reading” **before** class and to complete assignments as outlined in the syllabus within the specified dates of the

course and term. Advanced students should read “Recommended Reading” before the class

2. **Informed participation:** Class sessions are an important part of the learning experience. Because discussion is a key part of the class and nurtures an engagement with course materials, your questions and comments are valued and will be a factor in the overall grade. To this end, it is expected that you will have done the readings and be prepared to contribute.
3. **Academic honesty:** You are expected to adhere to VST’s requirements for academic honesty as published in the Student Handbook.
4. **Inclusive language:** In speaking and writing, inclusive language is expected when making reference to humans and a variety of metaphors are anticipated when making reference to God.
5. **Eight (8) journal entries or reading reflections:** Each student must submit a total of 8 reflection papers until week 11. The 450-500 word paper must be submitted by Wednesday midnight PST). Creative engagement with the required reading(s), lecture, and ongoing discussion are expected. It is not meant to be a summary of the readings. This one (1) page paper should be typed in a single space format, Times New Roman, 12pt font and 1- inch margins.
6. **One (1) final integrative paper due on Wednesday, April 19, 2023.** This paper should focus on a topic or issue germane to the course and investigate, analyze, and appraise its implications in a contemporary context. The assignment is both integrative and research-oriented; it offers the flexibility to research a topic or issue that interests you, while also requiring you to assess the relevance of your research to some of the materials read/discussed during the course, drawing your own conclusions in the process. The final paper should be typed in a double space format, Times New Roman, 12pt font and 1- inch margins.

**Diploma Students:** Eight (8) journal entries or reading reflections

**Basic Degree Students (M.Div., MAPPL and MATS):** about 3,750 words (exclusive of footnotes and bibliography) with a research depth of 10-15 entries beyond course texts plus eight (8) journal entries or reading reflections.

**Advanced Degree Students (Th.M):** about 5,000 words (exclusive of footnotes and bibliography) with a research depth of 15-20 entries beyond course texts plus eight (8) journal entries or reading reflections.

## ❖ Course Schedule

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### Week 1, January 18: Introduction

Biblical Reflection: Genesis chapters 3 & 4; John 6:1-15

- Required Reading
  - Lee, 1-27; ➤ Schreiter, 1-45.
  - 1.1. Werner Ustorf, "The Cultural Origins of 'Intercultural' Theology," in *Intercultural Theology: Approaches and Themes*, eds. Mark J. Cartledge and David Cheetham (SCM Press, 2011), 11-28.
  - 1.2. Henning Wrogemann, "Intercultural Theology as In-Between Theology," *Religions* 12, no. 11 (2021): 1-9. <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/12/11/1014>  
Henri J. M. Nouwen, "[Embracing the Brokenness](#)," YouTube (17:43).
- Recommended Reading
  - 1.3. Kathryn Tanner, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology* (Fortress, 1997), 25-58.

### Week 2, January 25: Boundary, Difference and Hybrid

Biblical Reflection: John 4:1-30

- Required Reading
  - Lee, 29-76, ➤ Schreiter, 46-83.
  - 2.1. Shawn Copeland, "The Power of Difference: Understanding, Appreciating, Critiquing Difference," *The Ecumenist* 43, no. 2 (Spring 2006), 1-10
  - 2.2. Elizabeth Edman, *Queer Virtue: What LGBTQ Know About Life and Love and How It Can Revitalize Christianity* (Beacon, 2016), 1-17.
- Recommended Reading
  - 2.3. Jeannine Hill-Fletcher, "We Are All Hybrids" in *Monopoly on Salvation?: A Feminist Approach to Religious Pluralism* (Continuum, 2005), 82-101.

### Week 3, February 1: The Other

Biblical Reflection: Luke 10:25-37

- Required Reading
  - Leddy, 1-72.
  - 3.1. Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo* (Duquesne University Press, 1985), 85-101.
  - 3.2. Sallie McFague, "Consider the Lilies of the Field: How Should Christians Love Nature?" in *Super, Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature* (Fortress, 1997), 26-44.
  - Robin Levinson-King, "[Faith and Spirituality in the Time of the Pandemic.](#)" BBC News, Toronto (Jan 3, 2020).
- Recommended Reading
  - 3.3. Mayra Rivera, *The Touch of Transcendence: A Postcolonial Theology of God* (Westminster John Knox, 2007), 55-82.

**Week 4, February 8: Doctrine of Discovery, *Missio Dei* and Reconciliation**

Biblical Reflection: Exodus 23:31-33

- Required Reading
  - Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "Calls to Action" (2012).  
[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls\\_to\\_action\\_english2.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf)
  - 4.1. Robert Allan Warrior, "Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians: Deliverance, Conquest, and Liberation Theology Today," in *Native and Christian*, ed. James Treat (Routledge, 1996), 93-104.
  - 4.2. World Council of Churches, *The Church for Others* (1967), 55-95.
  - 4.3. Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, "Entering Someone Else's Garden: Intercultural Mission/Ministry," in *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today* (Orbis, 2011), 72-87.
- Recommended Reading
  - 4.4. Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Abingdon, rev. ed., 2019), 49-96.

**Week 5, February 15: Interreligious Relations I: The Replacement Model**

Biblical Reflection: John 14:1-7

- Required Reading
  - Knitter, 1-60; ➤ Thich, 1-24.
- Recommended Reading
  - 5.1. Karl Barth, "The Revelation of God as the Abolition of Religion," *Church Dogmatics I/2* (T& T Clark, 1956), §17.2&3. Abridged version from *Christianity and Other Religions*, edited by John Hick and Brian Hebblethwaite (Fortress, 1980), 32-51.

### Week 6, February 22: Interreligious Relations II: The Fulfilment Model

Biblical Reflection: John 9:1-12

- Required Reading
  - Knitter, 63-106; ➤ Thich, 25-59.
- Recommended Reading
  - 6.1. Karl Rahner, "Christianity and The Non-Christian Relations [1963], in *Christianity and Other Religions*, edited by John Hick and Brian Hebblethwaite (Fortress, 1980), 52-79.

### Reading Week

### Week 7, March 8: Interreligious Relations III: The Mutuality Model

Biblical Reflection: Mark 9:2-13

- Required Reading
  - Knitter, 109-169; ➤ Thich, 60-114.
- Recommended Reading
  - 7.1. Paul Knitter, "Toward a Liberation Theology of Religions," in *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness*, edited by John Hick and Paul Knitter (Orbis, 1987), 178-201.

### Week 8, March 15: Interreligious Relations IV: The Acceptance Model

Biblical Reflection: Matthew 25:31-46

- Required Reading
  - Knitter, 173-246; ➤ Thich, 115-198.
- Recommended Reading

8.1. S. Mark Heim, *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion* (Orbis, 1995), 129-157.

### Week 9, March 22: **Diakonia and Hospitality**

Biblical Reflection: Acts 2:1-21

- Required Reading

➤ Lee, 77-99; ➤ Leddy 73-139.

9.1. John V. Taylor, *The Go-between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission* (SCM Press, 1972), 2-24.

9.2. WCC and ACT Alliance, *Called to Transformation: Ecumenical Diakonia* (2022), 42-52. <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/publications/ecumenical-diakonia>

- Recommended Reading

9.3. Letty Russell, *Just Hospitality: God's Welcome in a World of Difference*, edited by J. Shannon Clarkson and Kate M. Ott (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 23-51.

### Week 10, March 29: **The Solidarity of Others**

Biblical Reflection: Luke 14:25-33

- Required Reading

➤ Lee, 101-147; ➤ Schreiter, 98-115.

10.1. Letty M. Russell, "Spirituality of Connection," in *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* (Westminster John Knox, 1993), 182-208.

10.2. Anselm Min, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World* (T&T Clark, 2004), 134-155.

- Recommended Reading

10.3. Raimon Panikkar, *The Intra-Religious Dialogue* (Paulist, 1999), 23-40.

### Week 11, April 5: **Creative Transformation**

Biblical Reflection: Matthew 15:21-28

- Required Reading

➤ Lee, 149-173; ➤ Schreiter, 116-133.

Parker Palmer, "[Living from Inside Out](#)," YouTube (18:46).

11.1. Thomas Thangaraj, *The Common Task: A Theology of Christian Mission* (Abingdon, 1999), 31-60.

- Recommended Reading

11.2. Joerg Rieger, "Liberating God-Talk: Postcolonialism and the Challenges of Margins," in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, edited by Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner and Mayra Rivera (Chalice, 2004), 204-220.

## ❖ Additional Bibliography

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Bevans, Stephen B. *Models of Contextual Theology*. Rev. and expanded ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002.

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- Friesen, John W. *Aboriginal Spirituality and Biblical Theology: Closer Than You Think*. Detselig Enterprises, 2000.
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