

DTHY 4568: Interiority and Life of Prayer
Instructor: Louis Roy, OP

Guidelines for the essay

One essay of 7 pages (neither less nor more) in Word, standard print (for example, Times New Roman, 12 points), double-spaced, including footnotes (10 points) and a short bibliography, which should be no more than one page, and which will include only article(s) or book(s) you have actually read, at least partly, for the essay; your bibliography is in addition to the 7 pages. If you choose a text discussed in class, you must add at least one text by the same author. Each essay must bear on more or less than 25 pages, depending on how difficult those pages are.

The four main qualities of a theological essay are: correct interpretation of your sources, clarity regarding the ideas introduced, order in the presentation of the arguments, and good thinking, especially in your assessment of the position(s) you discuss.

Quote primary literature more often than secondary literature.
Introduce subtitles; avoid merely reporting the contents of texts; do not insert long quotations; avoid very long paragraphs; leave some room for discussion.

Your paper must be a discussion of the life of prayer, not an assessment of your spiritual journey or situation. Moreover, your paper must be in the style of theology, not about church history. So don't say much about spiritual persons or mystics as individual figures; instead, mention their understandings of spirituality.

For ideas about an author to be selected, see the Bibliography. You may write on an author not mentioned in the Bibliography.

Before handing each one of your essays, sleep on it, that is, leave at least one full day without looking at it, and then return to it, reread it attentively with a view to taking account of any obscurity, and revise it accordingly. Make sure that the clarity and the structure of your essay is evident. Good structuring means *one* main idea per section and *one* secondary idea per paragraph.

Your first step will be to email me a first draft of your Introduction (not more than one page) and of your Bibliography (not more than one page). That introduction must say how you would handle your topic and must announce the sections of your paper, and I will tell you whether I can approve it. Later, you may rephrase your Introduction and revise your Bibliography, provided your sections remain the same, although their order may change.

As you hand in each of your essays, please ask the professor if he has access to the article(s) or sections of the book you wrote about. If he doesn't, either send him electronic copies or lend him physical copies of the book(s).

The essay is due on Monday, December 20, but it can be sent any time before.

Students who are not taking this course for the credit may nevertheless write an essay and the professor will send his feedback on it.