

Nurturing Children's Faith in Uncertain Times

Fall 2025

Fridays 9-12 pm

Instructor – Dr. Débora B. A. Junker

Course Description

This course explores developmental, social, and theological perspectives on children's spirituality, emphasizing the roles of families, educators, and communities. Participants will engage with diverse traditions and contemporary issues affecting the spiritual lives of children. Through reflection and practical experiences, the course aims to help participants create supportive environments that nurture resilience, ethical awareness, and a sense of belonging. Students will articulate and demonstrate ministry skills while developing a compassionate vision for their ministry in various contexts.

Course Learning Goals

By the end of the course, participants will:

1. Understand the foundational theories and concepts related to childhood and its role in holistic development.
2. Critically assess the effects of social, cultural, and technological factors on children's spiritual growth in contemporary society.
3. Explore the importance of spiritually nurturing children in developing resilience.
4. Reflect on personal spiritual experiences and develop ethical, inclusive strategies to support children's spiritual lives.

Course Delivery Methods

Synchronous Hybrid

Bibliography

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Cavalletti, Sofia. *The Religious Potential of the Child*. Mt. Ranier: Liturgy Training Publications, 1992. ISBN 0-929650-67-0

Crosby & Crosby. *Trauma-Informed Children's Ministry: A Practical Guide to Reaching Hurting Kids* Paperback – April 13, 2022

Conde-Frazier, Elizabeth. *Listen to the Children: Conversations with Immigrant Families*. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2011. ISBN 978-0-8170-1661-6

Couture, Pamela D. *Seeing Children, Seeing God: A Practical Theology of Children and Poverty*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000. ISBN: 0-687-08426-1

Junker, Débora B. A. “Educating in Resistance to Child Soldiering: A Latina Liberation Theology Perspective,” in *Female Child Soldiering, Gender Violence and Feminist Theologies*, ed. Susan Willhauck. Cham: Springer International Publishing: Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

Mimi Larson & Robert Keeley *Bridging Theory and Practice in Children's Spirituality: New Directions for Education, Ministry, and Discipleship* Zondervan, 2020

Mooney, Carol Garhart. *Theories of Childhood: An Introduction to Dewey, Montessori, Erikson, Piaget, and Vygotsky*. Redleaf Press, 2000. ISBN: 1-884834-85-X

Reginald Blount and Virginia Lee. *Let Your Light Shine: Mobilizing for Justice with Children and Youth*. Friendship Press (June 27, 2019).