

“Cercle d'études.” discussion group
Wednesday, 5.15-6.30
Maritain Library, 437 Geddes Hall

This spring, the Maritain Institute is pleased once again to sponsor a discussion group, the “Cercle d'études.” This title is meant to evoke a long-running discussion group hosted by the great 20th century Catholic thinkers Jacques and Raissa Maritain, devoted to open-ended explorations of vital philosophical, theological, and social issues. In that spirit, this discussion group will offer students a weekly opportunity to engage one another and faculty speakers on specific questions of deep interest.

Structure and organization: The Notre Dame Cercle d'études is meant to provide an opportunity for sustained discussion, and it is open to any student from Notre Dame, St. Mary's, or Holy Cross. It is offered as a one-credit course, but it is not necessary to enroll in the course in order to participate in the weekly discussions. In either case, there will be no outside preparation, and those who are taking the course for credit will be graded on a pass/fail basis.

Each week, we will welcome a guest faculty presenter, who will begin our conversation with a few remarks, no more than twenty minutes in length. We will then open the floor for questions and discussions, in the spirit of a free-wheeling quodlibetal session in which the guest speaker will be invited to expand upon and defend their views. The session will conclude with fellowship, coffee, and snacks.

In order to receive credit for this course, you will be required to attend the sessions and participate in the discussion. You may miss three sessions over the course of the semester, including university excused absences. If you are forced to miss more sessions due to extreme, unforeseen circumstances, come and discuss the situation with the faculty moderator. Beyond that, we confidently expect that all participants will exhibit the standards of courtesy and open-mindedness that are typical of Notre Dame students.

This discussion group is scheduled to meet on Wednesdays, 5:15pm-6:30pm in the Maritain Library (429 Geddes) beginning on January 14 and ending on April 1. During our first meeting, we will discuss possible topics and faculty presenters, and you will receive a tentative schedule for the following weeks in the second session.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Professor Jean Porter (jporter@nd.edu) or Professor Thérèse Scarpelli Cory (tcory@nd.edu). We hope to see you soon!