

Formed by the Spirit

The Newsletter of the Southwark
Diocesan Spiritual Formation Group

Opportunities, events, resources and articles
on prayer and spirituality

Issue 23: February 2015



Contents:

What's on? Events, courses, opportunities...	2-5
Reflection: Dad Dancing	5
Tools for prayer: Listening to the Spirit	6
Tools for prayer: Letting the day go to God	7
Reflection: Spring	8

Over the land half-freckled with snow half-thawed
The speculating rooks at their nests cawed,
And saw from elm-tops, delicate as a flower of grass,
What we below could not see, Winter pass.

[Thaw by Edward Thomas]

What's on?

Events, courses, opportunities...

Hearts on Fire

*A course for groups
for the Lent or Easter seasons*

'Were not our hearts burning within us
while he was talking to us on the road,
while he was opening the scriptures to us?'
[Luke 24:32]



Using the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus as a connecting thread, these 5 sessions explore how we can open ourselves afresh, or for the first time, to the presence of Jesus on our road and the work of the enlivening Holy Spirit.

Each session begins with a moment within the Emmaus story. As the account of this encounter unfolds we open ourselves to allow Jesus to talk with us about our own road. The sessions also contain a reflection on a psalm linked with the theme of the week, a group activity, times of prayer and questions for sharing and discussion. Reflection exercises for the time between sessions are also provided. The course is laid out for use by groups but can also be used as individual reflection material.

To find this resource go to:
<http://www.southwark.anglican.org/HeartsOnFire/Honf-main>

Walk the labyrinth

Lent – the spring-time of the soul
A reflective workshop and
labyrinth walk as we prepare for Lent
at St. John's Waterloo,
[opposite IMAX / main line station]
Saturday February 14th
10.30am to 3.30pm



There is a stand alone workshop at 1.30pm but you are free to come and walk the labyrinth at other times during the day.
Other labyrinth walking days at St. John's Waterloo: in 2015: May 2nd and October 31st
Further information from Les Acklam
lesacklam@gmail.com

SPIDIR Course in Spiritual Direction



Second Tuesday in each month

March 2015 to 2017, 10.00 – 15.30
at St. George the Martyr,
Borough High Street, SE1 1JA.

Course Leaders: Bidy Taylor, the Revd Tony Lucas and the Revd Cynthia Jackson.
Termly fee £75 (concessions available).

Applications to Bidy Taylor:
jmandcb.taylor@gmail.com or the Revd
Tony Lucas: tonylucas@googlemail.com
Application forms can be downloaded from
the SPIDIR website: www.spidir.org.uk
Interviews to be held early in 2015.

Events at the Meditatio Centre

St Marks, Myddelton Square,
London EC1R 1XX
phone: 020 7278 2070
email: meditatio@wccm.org
www.wccmmeditatio.org/programme

Milestones

Laurence Freeman OSB.
Talk 1: Childhood

Wednesday 18 February 2015 18:30 - 21:00

In this series of talks, Fr Laurence will show how the journey of meditation deepens the journey of life and gives us courage and vision to live life as fully conscious travellers.

Introduction to the Enneagram.

Saturday 21 February

Meditation & Mental Health.

A Six Week Course
beginning Wednesday 4 March

Lenten Retreat Day.

Saturday 7 March

Poetry as Contemplative Path.

Saturday 14 March

Bereavement.

Saturday 21 March

Art and Spirituality Network [ASN]

Spring into Creativity

Saturday March 7th
at Forest Hill Quaker Meeting House.
10.30am - 4.30pm

Led by Andrew Norwood, John Harley,
Maggie and Melvyn Freake and Elaine Giles

Join us for a day designed to help us keep the ASN growing. There will be opportunities to deepen our facilitation skills and explore the way workshops are structured and held. Also there will be time for our own creativity and contemplation. This will be a practical and hands on day for anyone who wants to get more involved in the ASN – from leading retreats to helping with publicity.

www.artandspirituality.net
artandspirituality@gmail.com

Join us for a morning of prayer, quiet and meditation as we explore
Deserts and Living Water.

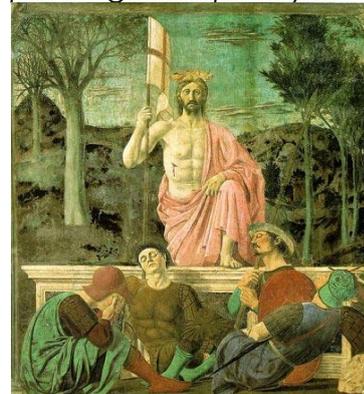


Saturday 21st March, 10am to 1pm
Sanderstead Methodist Church
Limpsfield Road, CR2 9DA

Coffee or tea will be served from 9.30
This morning is offered by *Ways into Prayer*, an Ecumenical Group working together to share different approaches in the exploration of prayer. Contact trevanewallbank@blueyonder.co.uk or chris.chapman@southwark.anglican.org

Exsultet! Rejoice!

Reflecting on the Easter Mysteries through scripture, paintings and poetry



April 21st and 28th 6.30pm to 8.30pm
in Trinity House, London SE1 1HW
Led by Sr. Magdalen Lawler SND

These evenings aim to deepen our understanding of the Easter Season using scripture, enhanced by the contemplation of well-known paintings. Poetry will help us to find language for the unfolding mystery of death and resurrection within our own lives

Magdalen Lawler is a Roman Catholic Sister of Notre Dame. Since 1980 she has worked in retreats and has a special interest in the relationship between spirituality and the visual arts. To book contact

chris.chapman@southwark.anglican.org
020 79399474

Jesus at prayer

*Guidance on prayer
that meets the reality of our lives*



*Tuesdays May 5th and 12th 10.30am to 1pm
in Trinity House, London SE1 1HW*

Led by Chris Chapman,

Gazing at Jesus, what do we learn about the what, why, when and how of prayer? We will explore Jesus' teaching and practice concerning prayer and the practical help this might provide us. In the first session we will reflect on Jesus at prayer at pivotal points in his ministry. In the second session we will open up Jesus' words on prayer and how these might speak to our own context.

We will use insights from the Gospels and spiritual writings across time.

To book contact: 020 79399474

chris.chapman@southwark.anglican.org

Seeking Stillness 2015

River of Life

Saturday 25th April 10 am– 12.45pm

Venue: St James, Riddlesdown

As the river runs across smooth, sandy, muddy or stony places, so does the course of life. Allow yourself some time this morning to explore the ebb and flow of life with the imagery of the river.

Rainbow and Cloud

Thursday 21st May 7pm -9pm

Venue: St James, Riddlesdown

Even amidst the cloudiest days light and colour are waiting. Clouds may obscure our light, but they cannot destroy the source which has been in the centre of creation from its very beginning. Here rainbows may be found, symbol of hope and promise.

For further information and to book your place for one or more of the Seeking Stillness times please e-mail:

j.hoskins233@btinternet.com

Sisters of St. Andrew

99 Belmont Hill, SE13 5DY 020 8852 1662

welcome@sisters-of-st-andrew.com

www.sisters-of-st-andrew.com

The Sisters of St. Andrew are now offering an extensive programme of quiet days, training events and individually guided retreats from their new home in Lewisham. Brief outlines of some events are given below but for full details and costs see their website.

Listen

A Silent Retreat Week-end to discover a taste of the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius
Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd February 2015

'Come back to me'

A Retreat Day using art and creativity
Saturday 28th February 2015

'Taste and see that the Lord is good'

5 to 8 day Individually Guided Retreat
Sunday 19th to Tuesday 28th April

Journeying from Ascension to Pentecost

Quiet Day

Saturday 16th May, 10am to 3pm



Nourishing the Soul

Saturday 13th June 10am to 4pm

A day to explore and experience different ways of Praying

For you O Lord my soul in stillness waits

Sunday 19th to Tuesday 28th July

5 to 8 day Individually guided retreat

The Sound of Silence

Saturday September 26th, 10am to 4pm

A day to explore and experience the value of silence in everyday life

Finding God in the Ordinary

Saturday 13th October 2015, 10am to 4pm

Exploring different ways and models of giving Retreats in Everyday Life



Holding a Balance

Finding God in a complex world



Retreat Association Conference
22-25 June 2015
at The Hayes Conference Centre,
Swanwick.

Talks, workshops, discussion groups
resources, worship and reflection with
opportunities to network and take part
in creative activities

Guest speakers include Dr Rowan Williams,
Fr Christopher Jamison OSB, Revd Graham
Sparkes and Margaret Rizza.

Key contributors include psychiatrist and
writer Iain McGilchrist, theologian and writer
Revd Barbara Glasson, artist Sophie Hacker,
liturgist Emily Walker and poet Pádraig Ó
Tuama.

More details on the conference can be
found at: www.retreats.org.uk
Email: info@retreats.org.uk

Dad Dancing

*We played the flute for you
and you did not dance*
Matthew 11; 17

I have begun to dance more, drawn by the space in our kitchen and the bounce of the painted floorboards. For beholders it is a startling example of dad dancing in all its glory, a creative freestyle that fails to win the plaudits of the judging panel. But I dance on, moved by Elvis or Ella Fitzgerald or whatever music has the rhythm to speak to my feet.

'Why now?' I wonder [and perhaps those who witness the spectacle cry]. Perhaps it is a form of repentance: a turning from my tired, self-determined ways of thinking and being and allowing the Spirit to stir my soul. Dancing is a release from worry, from self-absorption and from taking myself too seriously. Dancing is a movement to the moment: there is no space for the past or the future as the feet twist and twirl. Everything is about the music and how it works on the soul [and the soles!]. Even when I am on my own the dance is never solitary: it is always a response to the music. Someone is summoning me to move, not determining the shape of that movement but inviting me to answer as only I can answer. Slow and swift, through pain and joy the music weaves through our days. Those who respond listen to the beat; there is a stillness at the heart of their dancing. Freedom comes not from walking our own steps but dancing to the music of the Giver of Life. Would there be such violence in the world if we dared to so dance?

So for Lent I resolve to repent. It is time to leave the seats at the side of the room, move away from the drinks table and take to the floor.

Tools for Prayer

Listening to the Spirit

Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' [Luke 24:32]

1] Lectio Divina [Sacred Reading]

To be used with scripture or other spiritual writing including poetry

This way of prayer is a dialogue with the Lord. I reflect on what I have heard with Jesus, trusting him to open up what is as yet closed to me.

- I hear the passage, listening out for those words and phrases that seem to be for me today
- I reflect on these words... the way they speak to me...how they connect with the place where I am in my life...how God reaches out to me through them
- I share with God the thoughts, feelings, hopes and desires these words have awoken in me. I listen to how God speaks to me
- I rest in what I what I have received, knowing that God is with me and I am in God.

2] A form of the Examen:

The daily practice of attentiveness to God within in my experience

This way of prayer is a dialogue with the Lord. I reflect on what I have experienced with Jesus, trusting him to open up what is as yet closed to me.

- I reflect on my experience: the things I saw, thought and felt today. I notice those moments of the day that in some way touched my emotions or understanding
- I reflect on these experiences... the way they speak to me...how they connect with the place where I am in my life...how God reaches out to me through them
- I share with God the thoughts, feelings, hopes and desires these experiences have awoken in me. I listen to how God speaks to me
- I rest in what I what I have received, knowing that God is with me and I am in God.



Finger Labyrinth
Letting the day go to God

Ask God to lead you into his presence
Trace the pattern of the labyrinth slowly with your finger.
Let the motion still and calm you

At the end of the day:

As I move along the path I remember the day with God. I ponder the things that happened. I review what I felt at different points of the day. I ask God to show me the significance of what I experienced

I pause when I reach the centre. I leave here any burdens I have picked up in my day. I rest my whole being in God who is here, loving me just as I am.

As a new day begins:

I move with God into the day to come. I trace the path from the centre to the outside. He is with me and loves me just as I am. He is walking with me as I go about my day

SPRING

Days grow longer and the sun's power wakes. The first buds break and green life rises from the ground. It is spring.



Spring is a word with layers of meaning for this season within our journey in God

Spring is a metal coil pushed down hard and then released.



Winter winds, long nights and frost push life back deep underground. But the force used in pushing down becomes in time a force for life, pushing up. Every daffodil, crocus, unfurling leaf declares that life has rebounded.

Within each of us is a God given irrepressible life. Whenever we have been unloved, devalued, or crushed by events beyond our control it's as if a cold dark hand has pushed our spirit down and out of sight; but, in God, this life is waiting to rebound. There is nothing in death or in life, Paul writes, that can separate us from the love of Christ [Romans 8: 31 – 39]

Spring speaks to us of the ongoing resurrection God brings about in us and in all creation.

Spring is cool, fresh, clear water from deep underground.

At this time of year it is as if life has bubbled up to the surface and broken through in a fountain of green.



In the desert Moses struck the rock and water flowed – surprising, life giving and refreshing. Jesus spoke of the Spirit within us as a spring of living water welling up to eternal life [John 4: 1-14 and 7: 37]. In Ezekiel 47 a river flows from the Temple, and wherever the river flows it brings life and healing.

The Spirit is within you – a spring of life and love to satisfy all thirst.

Water surfaces through hard rock. This new life bursts through difficult circumstances, bringing new beginnings.

Spring is a leap forward.

Almost overnight bare branch and bare earth become a living green.



There are times when life edges forward, and time when we leap forward to a new place. There are springs on our journey with God – times when we take a decision we previously feared to make, or we commit ourselves to act even without knowing for sure what the result will be. Looking back we realise that at that moment we moved to a new place. Sometimes our journey takes us across stepping stones set far apart in the stream. The only way forward is to commit ourselves to spring forward and trust that our landing will be sure.