

Formed by the Spirit

The Newsletter of the Southwark
Diocesan Spiritual Formation Group

Opportunities, events, resources and articles
on prayer and spirituality

Issue 28: July 2016



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If we were on a ship, and to rescue us ropes attached to a rock were thrown to us, obviously we would not draw the rock any nearer ourselves, but we would pull ourselves and our ship nearer the rock...

And that is why in prayer we need to begin, not be drawing to ourselves that Power that is everywhere and nowhere, but by putting ourselves in his hands and uniting ourselves to him.

Dionysius the Areopagite

Reflection days and retreats at Wychcroft

Bletchingley, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 4NE

Metamorphosis

*Discovering the transforming power of
God within our lives*

Tuesday, July 12th 10am to 4pm



Led by Bonnie Clarke and Chris Chapman

Through scripture, prayer, visual imagery, and arts and crafts activities we will explore 4 movements within the process of spiritual growth: Hiddenness, Nourishment, Transformation in the secret place, Emergence
Cost for the day £26.50

Everybody's got to be somewhere

*Reflecting on and celebrating
the places we inhabit.*

Tuesday October 18th 10am to 4pm

Led by Chris Skilton



We will reflect on the importance of place in our lives and how place shapes our being, our prayer, our relationships.
Cost: £26.50

Dark Valleys and Green Pastures

An Individually Guided Retreat

Tuesday November 22nd to Thursday
November 24th



An individually guided retreat is largely silent but with an opportunity to meet each day, one to one, with an experienced guide.

Cost of the retreat: £125

The retreat will be led by an experienced team of spiritual guides

Holding the Light in Advent

*'The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light'*

Tuesday December 13th 10am to 4pm

Led by Jane Hoskins and Susan Oakes



A quiet day with a range of creative prayer activities. Cost: 26.50

To book for any of the above or for
information contact

spirituality@southwark.anglican.org

Service of Celebration for Grandparents

Southwark Cathedral

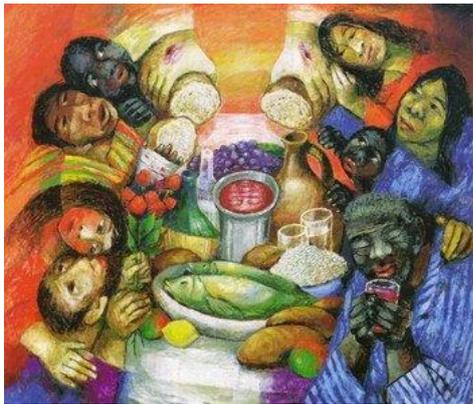
Saturday 9 July at 12 noon

Join us to remember with gratitude our own grandparents and recognise the role of grandparents today in handing on our faith. You can also attend a workshop before the service, from 9.30-11.30am 'Faith Development and Play' or 'Sharing Faith with Teenagers'. Contact Caroline Wakelam-Jones on 020 7939 9475

ministryandtraining@southwark.anglican.org

Love Bade Me Welcome:

*Praying the scriptures through the art of
Sieger Köder, poetry and song.*



12th Oct 2016, 10.30am to 3.30pm
In Trinity House, 4 Chapel Court,
London SE1 1HW

This day will explore how painting can open up the scriptures and help us relate their message to our lives. We will focus on the biblically based artwork of Sieger Köder. The day aims to be both informative and reflective. Led by Magdalen Lawler, a Sister of Notre Dame and author of a number of books on Sieger Köder's artwork including *Love Bade Me Welcome*, *Christ our Morning Star* and *Show us the Father*. Contact: Caroline.Wakelam-Jones@southwark.anglican.org

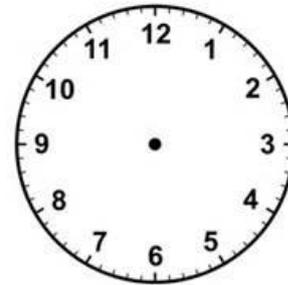
Time and Place

*A Quiet Day at St James church,
Riddlesdown*

Saturday 3rd September 10am -3pm

Led by Jane Hoskins

What time is it?



Minutes and hours, days and years, time is relative, but how we love to measure it! What time, what place is it in your day, in your life?

There will be input on the theme, personal space for prayer and stillness, prayer spaces and a creative space. For more information and to book please e-mail j.hoskins233@btinternet.com

Ways in to Prayer Blessed, Chosen, Called



A quiet afternoon
on Saturday 17th September
at Sanderstead Methodist church
102 Limpsfield Rd. Sanderstead CR2 9EF
2pm to 4.30pm (coffee from 1.30pm)
To reserve your place contact Jane
j.hoskins233@btinternet.com
or Penny ppennybird@yahoo.co.uk
020 8657 1176.

Events at The Meditatio Centre

St Marks Myddelton Sq
London EC1R 1XX

Ecology and Spirituality

Led by Prof David Tacey
Thurs 8 September 6.30 - 9.00 pm

Deep ecological awareness is a spiritual state of consciousness, and without the activation of spirit it is difficult to achieve this awareness. This talk will explore the entry into ecological awareness as an initiation into the transpersonal and universal dimensions of spirit.



Asymmetry of the Brain and Human Meaning

Dr Iain McGilchrist

Sat 17 September 10.30 am - 4.30 pm

Why *is* the brain, an organ that exists only to make connections, divided and asymmetrical? What does it tell us about the structure of the world we inhabit?

Dr Iain McGilchrist is the author of *The Master and his Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World* (Yale 2009).

For more information or to book contact
www.meditatiocentrelondon.org
T 020 7278 2070 E
meditatio@wccm.org

The Sisters of St. Andrew

The Welcome, 99 Belmont Hill
Lewisham, London SE13 5DY
Tel: 0208 852 1662

welcome@sisters-of-st-andrew.com

For details of costs and how to book go to:
<http://www.sisters-of-st-andrew.com>

Autumn programme

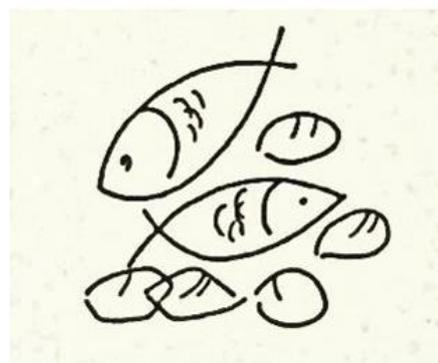
October

1st

Multiple Choices:

When to say yes, when to say no
How to go about making good decisions?
The day will include input and exercises in discernment using Ignatian tools.

Led by Sr Diane Reynolds, 10am to 4pm



28-30th An invitation to step aside

A weekend silent retreat with personal accompaniment.

Led by the Sisters of St. Andrew

November

19th The spiritual exercises of St Ignatius and the Grunewald altarpiece.

The panel of St. Anthony receiving spiritual direction from St Paul the Hermit will be our starting point.

Retreat for those who have made or give the Spiritual Exercises

Led by Sr Marie-Christine Berg

22 The spiritual exercises of St Ignatius and the Grunewald altarpiece

[see 19th November]

December

3rd **A silent pause in Advent,**
For you O Lord my soul in stillness waits.
A day to experience old and new
ways of praying

10am to 4pm, Led by Sr Regula Hug

14th **Advent quiet evening,**
God in the Ordinary,
A village, a family, a mother, a baby:
God comes to us.

Led by Sr Marie-Christine Berg, 7.30 – 9pm.

Meditative evening prayer, 7.30 to 8.30pm
On September 28th, October 26th,
November 30th and December 28th

Group supervision for spiritual directors

Led by Sr Marie Christine.

Mondays, 11am to 1pm on 19th September,
24th October, 21st November and 19th
December

London Spirituality Centre



The Courage to Connect

News, Nourishment and Networking

Saturday, 26th November 2016

10.30 for an 11.00 start – 4.30. Cost: £30

A time to:

- o Connect with other spiritual directors
- o Hear the latest news from the Centre;
- o Find out about the growing Community of Spiritual Directors;
- o Pray together and bless one another in our ministry;
- o Be inspired for the work.

With Rosemary Lain-Priestley & Antonia Lynn

For details of this and other events and courses go to:

<http://spiritualitycentre.org/>

Silence in the City

To book for any of the events below go to:

<http://www.silenceinthecity.org.uk/booking.html>

Dadirri:

The Aboriginal Gift of Contemplation

Tuesday 6 September 2016

7-9pm Refreshments from 6:30pm

Led by David Tacey

Venue: Westminster Cathedral Hall,
Ambrosden Avenue, London SW1P 0QJ.

Suggested donation £10

Living Compassion:

*Julian of Norwich's Revelations
and Our Share in God*

Thursday 6 October 2016

7-9pm Refreshments from 6:30pm

Led by Robert Fruehwirth

Venue: Westminster Cathedral Hall,
Ambrosden Avenue, London SW1P 0QJ.

Suggested donation £10



Centering Prayer

and the Road to Non-Dual Awakening

Thursday 3 November 2016

7-9pm Refreshments from 6:30pm

Led by Rev Dr Cynthia Bourgeault:

Venue: Westminster Cathedral Hall,
Ambrosden Avenue, London SW1P 0QJ.

Suggested donation £10

Christian Non-Duality - Seriously?

Saturday 5 November 2016,

10:30am-4:30pm

Led by Rev Dr Cynthia Bourgeault

Venue: Greencoat Place SW1P 1RD

Cost for the day: £25



Adam Delving

Canterbury Cathedral has many wonderful medieval stained glass windows. The one that has always caught my eye and heart is 'Adam delving'. The window rests over the West door, passed by as you go in to the sacred space of the Cathedral and go out into the world. Adam is at work, digging the earth, preparing the way for growth. He has no shoes and few clothes; he is exposed to the hot drying sun of summer and the winds and rain of winter. A tree grows tall and strong, promising that though the soil is stony, it is also fertile. Surrounding Adam is the deep blue of the sky that is beyond measure but also intimate and enfolding.

Adam expresses the hardships but also the dignity of humankind. He is vulnerable, yet strong, dependent on what the earth will give, yet uniquely able to turn the soil, plant the seed and open the way for life. Adam knows he must work, yet the growth that will come, the fruits that will form are also harvest beyond measure of what he sows. His unshod feet express an earthed humility; he is in touch with who he is, what belongs to him to do and what can only come by gift.

Here is an image to ponder as we go in to the place of conscious awareness of God in prayer and as we go out into our work and our relationships with people, possessions and the earth.

As I gaze at Adam, another thought comes. I am also looking at Jesus the Christ, God-with-us. God is alongside us as one who labours. His eyes look at the soil that his feet touch and dig. His one intent and purpose is that the earth will bear its fruit. Ours is this earth he works. The gardener sees the fertility that only waits for the touch of one who sees beyond the stones.

Adam delving is also the all-humble God, stripped down, undefended and always at work.

Here is an image to ponder as we go in to the place of conscious awareness of God in prayer, opening our ground to one who labours for our flourishing.

Here is an image to ponder as we go out into our work and our relationships, a spade in hand and our feet unshod.

Crossing the rivers



My parents named me 'Christopher'. So not unnaturally I have found myself drawn to St. Christopher's Chapel in Southwark Cathedral. The image expresses the story familiar from my childhood. Christopher, a man of great strength, set himself to carry people across a treacherous river. One day he picked up a small boy and placed him on his shoulder. As he moved across the stream the weight on his back grew and grew until he could no longer bear it. The boy spoke: 'You are overwhelmed because in carrying me you are carrying the whole world.' Christopher – the Christ-bearer – is thus the patron saint of travellers.

The story is the stuff of legend, more a parable than historical event. But parables are there to ponder. There are rivers that must be crossed – passages that take us out of our comfortable depth and have the potential to overwhelm us: grief for the loss of one we have loved, the fear of moving beyond familiar but oppressive patterns of thinking or attitudes received from our upbringing, the struggle to bring to fruition the dreams and visions planted in our hearts in the face of uncooperative circumstances. If, as often pictured, our life in God has the character of a journey then there are many such rivers to cross and not all have sturdy bridges. In this we can help one another. For example, if you have been through some form of loss you can accompany another through their grief. It will not be the same journey, but at the very least you may know where the footholds might be found and being there in itself makes the way easier. Whether as a spiritual director, a pastoral carer, or a human being listening to and supporting another human being, we can help people move across the river. We can turn what has been difficult for us – perhaps even what *remains* difficult for us – towards the benefit of another. If we are going to do this we cannot stay on dry land, remotely passing on our good advice. We have to get our feet wet; and it is compassion that takes us into the stream where another walks. Compassion creates community; we see how our lives and experiences are intertwined; nothing is given for ourselves alone. No-one is meant to be complete outside what another can give them.

But the Christopher of the story had only half the picture. He was there to help others. He believed in himself as a strong man; so strong he could even carry those who could not walk for themselves. And then he found his limits. Anyone who gives has to become open to receive. Those who believe themselves to be strong have to know and befriend their own weakness that links them creatively with other people. Anyone who believes they can carry another person has to discover that the best they can do is to be alongside, a steadying hand and an encouraging voice. The end of the spiritual journey is not the realisation of our individual strength but the discovery of our common life, where we are Christophers for one another, both giving and receiving, supporting and being supported.

I am glad and I am wary of my name. What helps me is to remember the many times Christ has carried me through waters I could not cross alone. Often he came to me in the features of a friend or complete stranger. The foundation for our lives and our discipleship is not our strength but the memory of such moments.

In the place of God's presence

Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it...this is the house of God, the gate of heaven [Genesis 28: 16-17]

Every place is the house of God, the gate of heaven. Often, when pushed and pulled by noise and movement, it seems God is nowhere – but break the word open and you have the truth: God is *now – here*.

How do we become awake and receptive to this presence? We might try two things:

The first: To find or create a physical space in our home or environment where we purposefully [and regularly] go to be open to God.

This is likely to be somewhere where we feel at home or comfortable. It could be a corner of a room in the house, where a chair waits, a candle just sitting there invites you to light it and a bible rests ready to restore your soul. Such a space works in a similar way that a church building does. A church is made of bricks and mortar like so many other buildings but you know when you enter why you are going there. Walking in, sitting down, you become open to God who is in that place. The dedicated space in your home becomes your 'church'; through daily practice you have only to go there to begin the act of prayer.

Your 'holy' place could also be a garden shed, a bench in the park where you sit in your lunchbreak, or a place where you regularly walk. What helps is to make your going to whatever space you choose *intentional*, in just the same way that you choose to visit a friend of family member.

The second: Each day to purposefully seek God in a place that up to now we have found uncomfortable and that seems to work against any sense of God's presence.

I can think of a few: For example, I have never enjoyed walking along Borough High Street. There is no green of tree or plant to soften the concrete. The pavements are thronged with people walking against the flow of wherever it is you want to get to. The traffic is noisy. Why even try to seek God here? Because God is here and now. So as I walk along tomorrow I will breathe out my hurry and worry, and breathe in God with me. I will pause long enough to see the faces that pass me, the cars passing by, the sky framed by the buildings and ask the Lord to help me see well, with an open mind and heart. Perhaps I will hold the line of a psalm as I walk along, dodging those who cannot see because their eyes are trained on the screen of their mobiles. Where is such a place for you – somewhere that is a regular part of your life? Or perhaps it will be a time of day more than a physical place: perhaps the time when you first get in from work and all the emails are awaiting you, or the commute home on a busy train.

Seek God there, and you will find. It may not be anything dramatic or immediate. God inhabits the ordinary, and moves within the waiting heart.

Come, my heart says, 'seek his face!' Your face Lord do I seek...

I believe I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

[Psalm 27: 8,13]