

Formed by the Spirit

The Newsletter of the Southwark
Diocesan Spiritual Formation Group

Opportunities, events, resources and articles
on prayer and spirituality

Issue 25: June 2015



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O world invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee.

Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air –
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of thee there?

From 'In No Strange Land' by Francis Thompson

Southwark Spiritual Formation

Some courses and events
Autumn 2015 to summer 2016

Prayer for healing

This course will explore pastoral, theological and practical issues related to prayer for healing. For example: What does it mean to be 'whole'? How do we respond to potentially vulnerable people with respect and sensitivity? What expectations do we have of God when we pray? This course may be helpful for prayer ministry teams or churches planning initiatives related to healing.

Mondays, October 12th and 19th, 10.30am to 1pm in Trinity House.

Led by Hilary Fife and Chris Chapman

Prayer of the Heart:

An introduction to Christian Meditation

Tuesdays November 10th and 17th, 10.30am to 1pm in Trinity House

Christian Meditation is a way of contemplative prayer, prayer of the heart without words or images. It is a very early form of Christian prayer used by the desert fathers and mothers and recovered by Fr. John Main, a Benedictine monk, in the last century. We shall be hearing about its origins, its way of creating community and, most importantly, practising it ourselves.

Led by Eileen McDade. Eileen McDade has been meditating for about 12 years and looks after a group at Westminster Cathedral as well as being the coordinator for NW London. She is co-founder of Silence in the City and gives regular introductory courses and quiet days.

A Glimpse beyond the Veil: Praying with Icons

An opportunity to understand icons and their origins more fully in order to be able to use them as an aid to prayer. This is NOT in icon painting course. We will take a closer, more reflective look at some well-known icons and discover the truths they reveal.

Tuesdays February 2nd and 9th, 10.30am to 1pm in Trinity House

Led by Sister Magdalen Lawler

How to lead a quiet day

A day set aside to be open to God can take many forms. These two sessions will move in a step by step way through the process of planning and leading a quiet day. We will explore how to help people into stillness and a variety of prayer related resources.

March 1st and 8th, 10.30am to 1pm in Trinity House

Led by Chris Chapman and members of the Quiet Day Leaders Network.

Diocesan Prayer and Spirituality Day,

Saturday April 16th.

Southwark Cathedral, 10am to 4pm

With Margaret Silf as speaker, a wide range of workshops and a variety of prayer spaces

With the Spirit as our guide: Exploring the ministry of spiritual direction

A spiritual director helps another to listen to the Spirit and deepen prayer amidst the complexity of daily life. This session is aimed at those who wish to widen their understanding of this ministry, and explore opportunities for development within it

Saturday 14th May, 10am to 1pm in St. Matthew's House, Croydon

Led by Chris Chapman

Deeper into God:

Prayer within the Carmelite tradition

These two sessions will explore how we co-operate with the work of the Spirit drawing us deeper into relationship with God and outwards with God into the world. We will consider how prayer, in its different forms, allows God to form and lead us, drawing on the writings of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross.

Wednesdays April 20th and 27th

6.30pm to 8.30pm in Trinity House

Led by Chris Chapman

For more information and to book please contact Chris Chapman

chris.chapman@southwark.anglican.org
020 7939 9474

Living and Walking the Franciscan Way

An opportunity to hear about, and
explore Franciscan Spirituality



Saturday 4th July 2015

10am – 12.30pm

St Mary's Church, Sanderstead

Purley Oaks Road, CR2 ONY

Led by Sister Sue CSF

This morning is offered by 'Ways in to
Prayer.' This ecumenical group of prayer
leaders has grown out of an initiative by
Southwark Spiritual Formation Group.

Refreshments from 9.30am

For more information and to book your
place please contact Chris Chapman

chris.chapman@southwark.anglican.org

020 7939 9474 or Jane Hoskins

j.hoskins233@btinternet.com

Seeking Stillness 2015

Enter the Garden



Saturday 11th July 10am-12.45

St Swithuns' Church, Grovelands Road,

Purley CR8 4LB

Leader: Jane Hoskins

Seeking rest and refreshment as we walk
in the stillness of garden imagery and word.

Coffee, tea and creative space available.

A donation towards expenses is invited

The London Spirituality Centre



For details of a wide range of events and
development opportunities contact:

The Church of St Edmund the King

Lombard Street, London EC3V 9EA

Tel: 020 7621 1391

info@spiritualitycentre.org

<http://www.spiritualitycentre.org>



www.silenceinthecity.org.uk

Contemplatives and Mystics as Prophets and Visionaries

Westminster City Hall

Tuesday 30 June from 7pm to 9pm

Led by Cynthia Bourgeault

Suggested donation £10 refreshments from
6.30pm.

Harnessing the Power of Love:

Westminster City Hall

Wednesday 1st July 10.30 am to 4.30pm

Led by Cynthia Bourgeault

Suggested donation £20 Refreshments will
be available from 10am. Bring a packed
lunch.

To get tickets for these events you can pay
online or send a cheque with the event
you want to attend on the reverse of the
cheque and include a SAE.

Silence in the City, 77 Tower Bridge Road,
London SE1 4TW

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

Events at The Meditatio Centre

St Marks Myddelton Sq
London EC1R 1XX



INNERKEIT: Meister Eckhart on Mindfulness, Meditation and Contemplation

Saturday 27 June 10.30 am
Led by Richard Woods OP

My Only Me is God

Saturday 11 July 10.30 am
Led by Martin Laird OSA

Movement and Meditation Workshops

Saturday 20 June 1.00pm
Saturday 4 July 1.00pm

For details of all events and to book contact: **020 7278 2070** meditatio@wccm.org

Art and Spirituality Network

Rooted where we are: Moorland and City

Saturday 22nd August 2015,
11.30am-3.30pm At Friends' House, 173-177
Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

Led by Linda Murgatroyd and Melvin Freake
This workshop is an opportunity to reflect on how life evolves and is sustained in the contrasting environments of the Yorkshire Moors and Inner City London, and in our own lives. We will respond to the Quaker Arts Network exhibition "[Climb up to the Moor](#)" and also to the Euston road neighbourhood, using our eyes, ears and art materials, guided by experienced Art and Spirituality Network facilitators. No artistic experience is needed. Art materials supplied.

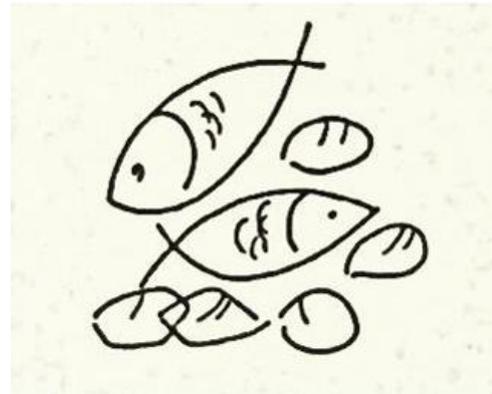
For details and booking forms for this and other events go to:

<http://artandspirituality.net/forthcoming-events>

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 offer an extensive programme of quiet days, training events and individually guided retreats from their home in Lewisham / Blackheath. Brief outlines of some events are given below but for full details and costs see their website.

The house is also available for use by individuals seeking quiet time and for parish groups for prayer related events

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

You are precious and honoured to my eyes

Friday 30th October to Sunday 1st November
A Silent Retreat Week-end to discover a taste of the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius

Seven days of prayer

Tools for prayer

Monday

Seek

When you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will heal you.

When you search for me you will find me, if you seek me with all your heart
[Jeremiah 29: 11-13]

We pray when we reach out to God from our heart. Our prayer might have words or run too deep for words. All our restlessness and longing is gathered together as we pray. And all the time God seeks us with compassionate and resourceful love.

A prayer to hold and keep as you go through the day:

**O God you are my God. I seek you.
My soul thirsts for you** [Psalm 63:1]

Tuesday

Notice

*Blessed are your eyes because they see,
and your ears, for they hear*
[Matthew 13.16]

A disciple is one who is willing to listen and learn. Today, if we give our attention, moment by moment, we will be open to receive the word of God spoken in 'ordinary' things. In the middle and at the end of the day pause to recall those things you have 'seen' and 'heard'.

A prayer to hold and keep as you go through the day:

**Lord, open my ears this day to hear you.
Open my eyes to see you. Open my
mind to understand you. Open my heart
that I may desire to follow you in all
things.**

Wednesday

Bless

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits [Psalm 103: 1-2]

Gratitude warms the heart. Saying 'thank you' keeps us in remembrance of relationship. We are not alone, we are cared for, and each day has its gifts.

A prayer to hold and keep as you go through the day:

**Generous God, help me to see how
goodness and mercy follow me this day.
Gladden my heart through your presence
with me.**

Thursday

Pour

I pour out my soul
[Psalm 42.4]

Prayer is a pouring out of our soul. We let go to God what is deepest in us, without fear or inhibition: our concern for one we love, our puzzlement or pain at the course of events, our wonder at what is beautiful. 'Pouring' is a movement of the living water of our own spirit and of God's Spirit.

A prayer to hold and keep as you go through the day:

**Holy Spirit,
let my prayer this day
be as a river,
flowing strong and free.**

Friday

Forgive

Bear with one another, and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive. [Colossians 3.13]

To forgive is not to cling to our complaint against another. We remember the wrong done, we feel the hurt, we become aware of our anger rising – and all of these are natural, But in forgiving we allow that hurt that has flowed into our life to also flow away. We do not cling.

A prayer to hold and keep as you go through the day:

Free me this day, Lord, from the need to hold on to my complaint.
Help me find release
in the release of those
who have harmed me.



Saturday

Serve

*I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.
I was a stranger and you welcomed me [Matthew 25,35]*

Today, express your prayer bodily in some service of another. Let it be something you freely choose to do, rather than an 'ought' you unwillingly come to. Be awake today to the moment when the Lord meets you in a stranger...or in someone very close to you whom you tend to take for granted.

A prayer to hold and keep as you go through the day:

**Lord Jesus
let me be available to you today.
Let me have time for you
when you come to me in need.**

Sunday

Abide

Abide in me as I abide in you [John 15.4]

To abide is to be with another. Jesus abides in us; we are invited to abide in Jesus. Here is home for our homelessness, rest for our restlessness. This place of abiding is always available to us, even as we move about our day.

A prayer to hold and keep as you go through the day:

**Lord, let me abide in your house today.
Let me be at home in you as you are at home in me.**

I have called you by your name

[Isaiah 43.1]

For most people in my life I am Chris. But my full name is Christopher. How did I become 'Chris'? Shortening a name can be a way of expressing familiarity amongst friends and family. Many of us will have gained or suffered by this depending on how we feel about the full version of our name. David becomes Dave and Margaret becomes Maggie. Paradoxically those with short names may end up with longer ones: Ann becomes Annie and Sam becomes Sammy.

I'm not sure how I became 'Chris', but I suspect I also had a hand in things. It wasn't that I disliked 'Christopher'; it was more that I decided I didn't want to inconvenience the world by having too many syllables. 'Chris' was a way of quietly fitting in without causing too many ripples. 'Christopher' was more of an announcement – a proclamation – this is who I am...take notice! I wasn't sure whether the full version of 'me' was OK and whilst this went far deeper than how others addressed me 'Chris' was a way of hiding in the background – slipping away from full view.

John Powell once wrote a book entitled 'Why am I afraid to tell you who I am? And the answer: 'I am afraid to tell you who I am because you might not like who I am'. Perhaps even more than this, 'I don't know who I am, and I am afraid to find out because it might not be alright'.

When God calls me by my name does he say 'Chris' or Christopher'? In one way this is a nonsense question. Your name, or my name to God is far more than a collection of letters arranged in a certain order. It is all that we have been, all that we will be, all that God is creating in you and me even now. In this sense I do not even know the fullness of my name; only God knows this and only in God can I come to know it.

But my sense is that to God I am more 'Christopher' than 'Chris': in other words, he addresses the whole of me: that which I know now and that which I am yet to discover, that which I am comfortable about and that which I fear and find disturbing, my weaknesses, needs and longings as much as my strengths, gifts and achievements.

It is important not to run from your name. It is your name after all. There can be no alternative. And it is a good name. In the Creation story in Genesis, God forms living thing, then names each one as a unique being and, gazing at what is made, sees that it is good. Forming, looking and naming are one, undivided movement of creation. Even now God is forming you, speaking your name, gazing with love at what love is making.

Prayer is how we journey with God into the fullness of our name. Jesus spoke up against people who prayed on street corners for all to see them and applaud their holiness. Instead, he said, 'go to your private room, shut the door and pray to your Father who is that secret place' [Matthew 6.6] It is not the outward face of how other perceive you or how you project yourself to the world that creates encounter with God but the courageous facing of your own reality, even if you don't entirely know what that reality is. Let God teach you your name and lead you in turn to speak it, for after all, this is why you have been created:

Call me Chris, or call me Christopher. I can be comfortable with either. It is only a difference of letters and syllables. But Lord, call me by my true name that I might understand the person you have created me to be,. More than this, help me to speak my name, come what may.

The presence to care

Presence was at the heart of Jesus' ministry. He took time to sit at table with people, hear their stories and understand their pains and longings. On the way to Jairus' house he turned aside to find the woman who has reached out through the crowd to touch him. For that moment no-one else intruded; nothing else mattered.

Such care is difficult for us. We are so caught up in the next thing to be done to stay still for very long. Distraction is often cast as the enemy of prayer; but it stands in the way of care too. Both prayer and care depend on our capacity and willingness to be present to the moment.

Even as I finished that last sentence the phone rang, and I found my impatience rising: 'doesn't this person know that I'm busy writing something about being present to people?'!!!

To be present one has to let go of personal agendas, anxieties about what will be happening next or preoccupations about what might take place later. It is a work of real humility; the ultimate in renunciation.

Prayer is a way of being present to Presence. The name of God as given to Moses is 'I AM'. We meet God in the here and now moment. In this place, and within this present, God **is**. We live within time, conscious of the past and wondering about the future; but God is in this 'now' and 'here' that is also eternity. And in this eternity we are fully alive to the reality of each moment and to the person who stands in need of our care – even when they ring us at the 'wrong moment'.

To practice prayer of presence is also to increase our capacity to care. Both take generosity and hospitality of the heart.

Here are some ways I have found helpful in becoming more attentive to the moment.

Walk: For most of us walking is part of our daily life: to and from the station, the journey to the shops, or the walk with the dog. Ask God for the gift of awareness of his presence as you walk. Stay in your senses, more than in your thoughts. Take in what you see, hear and feel: the way sunlight and shadow play on the buildings you pass by, the smell of rain after dry weather, the sound of birdsong or human voices. Ask God for the gift of prayerful presence to the beauty and wonder of what 'is'. Give God thanks for your own life and for all that lives and breathes around you.

Open your hands: The physical movement of opening our hands helps to express our letting go of what preoccupies us and our readiness to receive what God desires to share. If you find yourself growing taut with anxiety or busyness, open your hands. Palms held downwards allow what you are grasping too tightly to fall away. Palms held upwards are ready to receive God's good gift of this moment and his presence within it.

Unwrap the 'present': Allow your attention to focus on what God has given you to notice. It might be a verse of scripture you read in the morning that touched something inside you. It could be something that caught your eye as you went about your day. Unwrapping the deeper meaning of what you have perceived will be a work of co-operation with God. Your part will be to recall that moment and hold it in your mind. God's part will be to unfold the layers of the experience and take you to the gift that lies within