

Reflection

We recently passed the midpoint of the year – the winter solstice. In the northern hemisphere, this is close to Christmas and so the coming of Christ and the coming of the light are often associated. As we in this part of the world celebrate the turning of our world to increasing light, let us be aware of the light and darkness in our lives.

Winter's Cloak by Joyce Rupp

This year I do not want
the dark to leave me.
I need its wrap
of silent stillness,
its cloak
of long lasting embrace.
Too much light
has pulled me away
from the chamber
of gestation.



Let the dawns
come late,
let the sunsets
arrive early,
let the evenings
extend themselves
while I lean into
the abyss of my being.

Let me lie in the cave
of my soul,
for too much light
blinds me,
steals the source
of revelation.

Let me seek solace
in the empty places
of winter's passage,
those vast dark nights
that never fail to shelter me.

Dear Colleagues,

Regional Conferences 2013

Regional conferences are getting underway now and it's great to see all the bookings coming through. For more details on the gatherings taking place in your or any other State, please contact the relevant Regional Co-ordinator.

ACT: Contact Liz Anne Smith,
lizannes24@gmail.com, for information.

NSW: Mon 16 - Tue 17 Sep 2013 at
St Joseph's Spirituality & Education Centre,
8 Humphreys Rd, Kincumber South (NSW
central coast). Theme 'Abundant Life'.

Leader: Janet O'Sullivan. Contact Nerida Drake, mdrake@tpg.com.au, for further information and bookings.

Old Nth: Regular meetings, including Peer Group Supervision, throughout 2013. See news from Margaret Trevethan (margt@aanet.com.au) below.

Old Sth: Sat 21 Sep 2013 at Presentation Centre, 26 Kooralgin St, Manly. Theme 'The Essence of Spiritual Direction: Listening to the Holy Spirit'. Leader: Margaret Trevethan. Contact Irene Alexander, irenics@ozemail.com.au, for further information and bookings.

SA: See report below from Mary Cresp, (mary.cresp@bigpond.com), on the SA Regional Conference held 11 June 2013.

Tas: Fri 25 - Sun 27 Oct 2013, theme 'The Enneagram & Its Implications for Spiritual Direction'. See news from Carey McIver (careymciver@gmail.com) below.

Vic (&NT): Sat 19 Oct 2013 at YTU Study Centre, Yarra Theological Union, 98 Albion Rd, Box Hill. Theme 'Evolutionary Spirituality: Soundings & Horizons'. Leader: Dr Di Shearer. Contact Michele McCourt, michelemccourt23@bigpond.com, for further information and bookings.

WA: Regular meetings throughout 2013. See news from Marie Therese Ryder (thereseryder@hotmail.com) below.

Report from Mary Cresp on SA Regional Conference

Despite cold and wet weather, 17 Spiritual Directors attended the Conference on 11 June 2013 hosted by CSD and led by Suzanne Dunbar, B.Sc. Dip.Ed. MA Spirituality.

Sue is well known in Australian Spiritual Direction circles. Currently Director of Barnabas Ministries Inc, an ecumenical agency offering spiritual care and nourishment for those on the journey of faith, Sue is also the director of two training programs in spiritual direction in Newcastle and Canberra. She trained in spiritual formation at the Institute for Spiritual Leadership, Chicago, becoming a staff member there while completing a master's degree in Spirituality at Loyola University. Her generosity, interest and expertise in spiritual formation has found expression in service as:

- .. National President for the Australian Network for Spiritual Direction,
- .. Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction council member,
- .. Eremos Retreat Team member ,
- .. Various roles with Spiritual Directors International.

The topic chosen for the CSD Conference was popular - 'Starting Out: Directing Those Unfamiliar with the Inner Journey'. As Sue pointed out, Spiritual Directors today frequently come into contact with people who are unfamiliar with the interior journey. The encounter covers a wide range - dedicated church-goers, devout people not adhering to any formalised religion, spiritual seekers, people from other faith traditions, all those 'in between'. 'These people often come without many of the personal skills and background that could be assumed in the past' said Sue.



Suzanne Dunbar

Participants opened up the question by exploring what has changed in the environment over the past 30 years, and how we might address it. Directors can no longer take for granted that they share the moral norms, faith expression and underlying theology of those who seek accompaniment. The experience of Directors verified Sue's point that 'the landscape of Spiritual Direction in 2013 is a larger and more diverse environment than existed previously.'

Just as the milieu in which theories for the conduct of Spiritual Direction were devised in the 1970s has changed, so too might attitudes towards some of the rules then established have to become more flexible. For example, there may well be occasion when the 'script' calls for more than merely reflecting back what the Directee says. Sometimes a 'teaching moment' calls for faith sharing, especially when the seeker is looking for a way out of ignorance. How this is done demands sensitivity and care on the part of the Director. The stance of Presence allows the encounter, then, to be one of contemplation.

All participants were high in their praise of a very satisfying and nourishing conference.

News from Margaret Trevethan, Qld Nth

The Townsville Peer Group continues to meet monthly for supervision at The House of Prayer & Spirituality and this year has welcomed new members, Rosemary Dunn and Helen Houghton.

Our western members in Mt Isa recently again supported the annual retreat in daily life offered in the Good Shepherd Catholic Parish. Titled "Inner Peace in Divine Love", this year's retreat was led by Jesuit Tertian, Fr Todd Kenny from Boston and was based on the First Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. Br Jim Cameron, Lorna Fisher, Kath Byrnes, Melodie Cross and Terry Lees led the weekly group Spiritual Conversation process and provided one-to-one Spiritual Companionship to retreatants. A second retreat is planned for October.

News from Marie Therese Ryder, WA

Since there are only four CSD members registered in WA, we have not created a specific CSD group as we already have had for many years a Spiritual Directors' group in Perth. Two of the CSD members live at a distance and so cannot attend our meetings. One of them would be interested in some sharing about doing spiritual direction by Skype if any CSD members have any experience in that regard. We can also discuss the topic at our meetings. Some of the topics we will be discussing over the rest of the year are:

- .. Spiritual direction of directees affected by trauma with particular reference to trauma encountered in Institutional Settings. The discussion will be led by Dr Philippa White who has qualifications in Social Work and has specialised in trauma counselling.
- .. Accompanying directees through loss and grief.

In August, we have an annual Retreat Day and in December, we have our AGM followed by dinner.

News from Carey Mclver, TAS

Our final gathering for the year is 25-27 October 2013 with a focus on Supervision to be facilitated by Kathleen Spokes sgs. At our May meeting, we sought input on the

future learning foci for our group and Supervision is one of the main priorities.

Public Liability Insurance for Spiritual Directors

A member of the Reference Group is working with a couple of insurance companies to investigate public liability insurance for our members. We are also awaiting a discussion with AECSD who are working on the same matter. We will report to members again as soon as possible.

Search for Deputy Chair

We have had some conversation around the need for a National Deputy Chair of CSD. It was decided to invite dialogue amongst the members as to who this may be. The CSD Reference Group believes it does not have to be a Victorian. There needs to be in place some mechanism as to what should happen if the National Chair is unable to fulfill his/her duties. The person appointed could join the bi-monthly meetings via phone conference if necessary.

I therefore invite group or individual responses that could inform our Reference Group Meeting on 11 July. If you wish to contribute to the conversation, please let our secretary (secretary@csdaustralia.com) or me (chair@csdaustralia.com) know your thoughts, preferably in writing, before 11 July.

New Look EVENTS page

Next time you visit our CSD website, www.csdaust.com, you will notice that we have a new tab - EVENTS – that enables viewers to easily identify forthcoming events.

New Members

We welcome new members Bernadette Wallis and Ottavia Pittella. We wish them well in their ministry and hope they have a long association with CSD.

Unidentified Membership Payments

Dear members, when making online payments direct into CSD's bank account, please ensure you enter your FULL NAME in the Reference (to appear on the Receiver's

bank statement) so that we can identify you!

If you make a payment by cheque, please make sure we can clearly read your Member name - perhaps attach a note or write your member name on the back of the cheque. Many of the cheques we receive are in the name of a religious order and it is not always clear who the relevant Member is. Many thanks!

Further to this, we have received:
(1) an online deposit of \$50 made on 28 May 2013 with the reference 'ABN 57228273773 ADF'; and

(2) another online deposit of \$50 made on 11 June 2013 with the reference 'Internet Tfr'.

We are unable to identify either of the above transactions and so cannot issue a receipt. We would be grateful if the remitters could please contact us at secretary@cstdaustralia.com. Thank you!

Tim Moloney cfc, *National Chair, CSD*

DATES TO NOTE in 2013:

11 Jul Reference Group meeting
12 Sep Reference Group meeting
16-17 Sep NSW Regional Gathering, Kincumber Sth
21 Sep Qld Sth & East Regional Conference, Manly
25-27 Oct TAS Regional Gathering
19 Oct VIC Regional Conference, Box Hill
28 Nov Reference Group meeting