



Australian Network for Spiritual Direction Inc.

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For people engaged in godly listening

Website: <http://www.ansd.org.au>

Newsletter January 2010

Greetings to you all.

As I sit here at my computer my mind wanders to think of a friend who is ballooning solo across the Austrian Alps. The thought of the peace she must be experiencing has drawn me to reconnect with my own such experiences and to do so without moving physically to visit those places again. I had to smile as I noticed the pamphlet for the ANSD conference for 2010 and the topic “Spiritual Directors – Touching the Art and Heart of Peacemaking”. I determined that this is a conference I can really prepare for beforehand as peacemaking needs to begin with being at peace within myself. Conference pamphlets are included with this newsletter or can be printed off from the website.

*Also in this newsletter is ANSD president **John Stuart’s** report. John centres his report around the SDI conference in Dublin in October. **Sue Dunbar** and **Cath Connelly** have also reported on their time at the SDI conference. Sue also treats us to a poem of “The Pansy”.*

*The Eremos Institute and **Kate Luxford-Morgan** direct us to a few events that will provide interest. Eremos invites us to events taking place during the Australian visit of **Susan S Phillips** and **Kate** makes us aware of a new resource available and encourages us to listen to “The David Binns Memorial Lectures in Spirituality”.*

*Newcastle and Queensland **regional representatives** have made their programmes for 2010 available and they are included in this newsletter.*

*Treasurer **Elizabeth Palmer** reminds us that subscriptions for 2010 are now due. Please complete the included form and send it to her or print it from the website.*

Jo Windeyer (editor)

AUSTRALIAN NETWORK FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE
2010**

ADELAIDE

9TH July - 12TH July

**Spiritual Directors – Touching the Art and
Heart of Peacemaking**

Presenter **Brendan McKeague**

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President's Letter

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

These words are from the great Irish poet W.B. Yeats, from his poem "The Lake Isle of Innisfree." Yeats had a rare genius for being able to capture the essence of what it means to be contemplative. "I hear it in the deep heart's core" draws our attention to that seat of wisdom where thinking cannot take us. He is aligned here with Paul in Ephesians 3:14-16 "This then is what I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every family, whether spiritual or natural, takes its name. Out of his infinite glory, may he give you the power through his Spirit for the HIDDEN SELF to grow strong...."

The art and practice of spiritual direction is to honour this journey to the hidden self, where we can hear in the "deep heart's core....the lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore." I was struck by this poem when I returned from the SDI Conference in Dublin in October. Cath Connelly and I visited Yeat's grave on our way to the conference. It was only when I returned home and re-read this poem that I realized just how much people like Yeats are able to help us see with "The eye of the heart" [Yeat's again]. Our Aussie poets and writers such as Mary Gilmore, Judith Wright, Oodgeroo Noonuccal, Tim Winton, Les Murray, Henry Lawson also help us to do the same.

The keynote speaker at the SDI Conference, Daniel O'Leary certainly led us to reflect and see with the "eye of the heart". The theme of the conference was "BEING PRESENT". One notable time for me was his invitation at the end of his second presentation to enter silence so as to be able to attend to being present to ourselves. He had spoken about being present to Presence after drawing on Augustine's words "make humanity your journey and you will arrive at God". So not just God's presence but our own as well. I became aware of the power of silence and just how much it is of Grace and also just how much it can disturb us. It was/is in the silence that we attend to the "deep heart's core." It is only in silence that we can do so. And here is the essence of spiritual direction viz. in the grace of mutual conversation to listen a person into speech. Speech that comes from the hidden self that has been visited courageously in love and where fear no longer holds sway. A speech that takes Jesus' words seriously "Perfect love drives out fear".

The conference was such a contrast to the fear exhibited by institutions such as Religion, Politics, finance etc. The amazing statement from Rome re disaffected Anglicans becoming Roman Catholics that does nothing to underpin ecumenical dialogue, It seems more about pandering to people who are frightened by women's ordination and fear of those who are gay. Even as we read this the banking moguls are calling for their bonuses to be reinstated. Here again we see fear of losing power and control and prestige as motivating forces. We also see China ranging against the Dalai Lama again, seemingly motivated more by fear than by the 'harm' a holy man can do.

This year we have been fortunate to have had a conference here in Sydney that invited us to attend with the 'eye of the heart' to the important issues that face us; care of the environment, the need for peacemaking, the honouring of relationships and the recognition of the Presence of God in all of these issues. Next year at our conference we will be further invited by Brendan McKeague to attend to the role of spiritual direction in "Touching the Art and Heart of Peacemaking."

At the time of writing this, in Melbourne, we are preparing for the "Parliament of The World's Religions". This promises to be an event of great significance for this country. It is held once every four years and Melbourne successfully bid to have it here. Here will be another opportunity to attend with the "eye of the heart" to ways of deep dialogue that can further the cause world peace.

At the close of the conference in Dublin, Una Agnew – a sister of St Louis – was summing up and gathering the threads of the three days and among other things she said "We have recalled here at the conference, the greatest gift we can give to each other....PRESENCE and its gift to us and to each other. Each of us is a frail conduit of God's Presence". Perhaps our prayer at this time can be the prayer of Paul in the Ephesians above. Judith Wright

in her poem "GRACE" speaks into this place of the "hidden self" when she reflects that beyond all our living and deep in all our living there is something more "Maybe there was once a word for it. Call it grace."

Presence and Grace and Gift are ours to share and the work of spiritual direction is to allow all of this to be revealed as Yeats says by hearing it "in the deep heart's core."

In conclusion ANSD had a presence in Dublin; Peter Bentley, Cath Connelly, Sue Dunbar, Colleen O'Sullivan and myself. Cath presented a workshop "Being Present to our Celtic Spiritual Heritage." It was received really well. So congratulations to Cath.

John Stuart
ANSD President.

Report on Spiritual Director's International, Dublin Conference.

The conference was a great experience, catching up with old friends, making new ones, sharing learning moments and wonderful liturgies. There were many things about the conference that were nourishing especially the plenary sessions with Daniel O'Leary. Two particularly enjoyable events, for me, were the workshops I attended. In the workshop on group spiritual direction with Rose Mary Dougherty, we learnt by doing, under the wise leadership of Rose Mary. The other was a workshop on poetry with Andrew Rudd. Andrew guided us through some simple steps in using poetry as a means of paying attention and coming to presence. We all wrote a seven line poem based on a selected object. I have included mine, "The Pansy" with this report.

The theme of the conference was Presence and in summing up the experience of the conference, Dr Una Agnew SSL suggested we bring with us six levels of presence. Namely:

1. Our unique genetic blueprint, our unique biology including our gendered presence and our psychological make-up.
2. Our expertise, competence and training – we are carriers of the wisdom of Divine Mystery, called to be humble before the gifts that we are.
3. Our personal cultural history – including the frailties and limitations of our culture and our own personal history with its sorrow and joy, light and darkness.
4. Our spirit – the inner stillness of each person's life is brought into presence. *"From the mystery of my inner spirit, I touch the mystery of others."*
5. Our soul – the silent depth, darkness and emptiness – the soul which is yearning for the fullness of presence. This we can radiate from within.
6. The Spirit is present in and through all that we are. *"The Spirit is present in the myriad of those here."*

This is a wonderful reminder of the richness of presence that we bring to every encounter. For us as spiritual directors, there is encouragement and challenge in these words. The encouragement is to remember all that we bring in our being present to another. The challenge is to be aware of the limitations of our unique presence which may get in the way as we companion others.

Sue Dunbar

Review of SDI Conference, Dublin 2009

Cead mile failte romhat – a hundred thousand welcomes to you! This was our sung welcome to the conference by the lilting voice of Carmel Boyle from the An Croi community, County Meath. From this opening ritual to the final blessing, the sense of Presence was nurtured and grown. Two themes remain with me: Firstly, presence is at all times immanent – it is always at hand and our task as directors can sometimes mean “getting out of our own way” so that we may become aware of that which is always there; and secondly, that the more we become ‘present’, the more our directees are safe to explore their own sense of Presence. Our key-note speaker, the gentle, humble, witty, intelligent Daniel O’Leary, explained that “God wants us to experience the amazing amazingness of being human”. As such, spiritual direction is less about changing our directees and more about releasing their own inner wisdom. It is about surrendering to the flow – making the space needed for transforming moments. Daniel’s closing words, “I do want to wish you a wonderful humanity and a wonderful divinity”, captured the essence of this conference. All 200 attendees, indeed seeking the best for our directees and for each other, also sought to dwell in that place where divinity is so present that our humanity “shines like the sun”.

Cath Connelly

Dr Susan S Phillips in Australia

The Eremos Institute is proud to support and promote a visit to Australia by Dr Susan S. Phillips. Please save the dates when planning your gatherings in 2010 and please forward this notice to all colleagues and members of your network. Full details and registration forms can be found on the Eremos website – www.eremos.org.au



Susan S. Phillips is the Executive Director of New College Berkeley, an affiliate of the Graduate Theological Union. She is a spiritual director and sociologist, an Adjunct Professor of Spiritual Direction at San Francisco Theological Seminary, and is active in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Her writings include the award-winning *The Crisis of Care: Affirming and Restoring Caring Practices in the Helping Professions* (with Patricia Benner) and *Candlelight: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction*. Susan is also a contributing writer in *Supervision of Spiritual Directors – Engaging in Holy Mystery*, which along with *Candlelight*, is published by Morehouse Publishing under the Spiritual Directors International (SDI) Imprint Series.

There will be at least four events during Susan’s visit to Australia – two in Sydney, one in Brisbane and hopefully also in Alice Springs.

Saturday 13th March at 10am to 4pm at Pennant Hills (Sydney): “Sacred Space and Sacred Time” - a day of reflection to be led by Susan with Noel Davis and Trish Watts.

Tuesday 16th March at 1:00 - 5:00pm in Sydney – A half day seminar in association with the NSW College of CPE. Further details TBA.

Alice Springs dates and times TBA

Tuesday 23rd March at 9:00am - 12:30pm in Brisbane, - A half day seminar in association with the Qld Institute of CPE, Inc on “Garden or Circus: Metaphors we live (and die) by” At Riverglenn Conference Centre, 70 Kate Street, Indooroopilly

Eremos will be offering special discount annual membership rates for anyone who attends Susan Phillips’ Australian events.

Apologies to Lucy Tierney and Patrick Oliver whose articles in the June 2009 ANSD Newsletter were connected with the wrong name. “Spirituality and the Enneagram” was written by Lucy Tierney and “Listening to Dreams” was written by Patrick Oliver.

The Pansy

*I greet you with an ink spot on my face.
A smile, cheerful and yellow, surrounds the tear in my heart.
My petals tell a story, torn and folded, an insect's lunch,
And you say I am beautiful!
What echo have I stirred in you, that you should call me beautiful?
Cherish this stirring.
It is my gift to you.*

Sue Dunbar

The David Memorial Lectures In Spirituality A new resource for the spiritual life

One of Australia's finest religious artists and a priest of the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane, David Binns died in Brisbane on 3 November 2008 after a long period of ill health.

David's boundless complex imagination encouraged us to 'see' outside the square. He had a gift for finding the holy in the ordinary, the ordinary in the holy. Passionate about sharing his love of God and his beloved saints Francis and Clare, he helped us see the God to be found in our neighbour. He was deeply committed to ecumenism and the interfaith dialogue.

David received his Masters Degree in Sacred Theology (STM) in Spiritual Direction from the General Theological Seminary, New York in 1988 and became the inaugural director of the Brookfield Centre for Christian Spirituality from 1992 – 2004. A gifted spiritual director, he was well-known to members of ANSD, and formed deep and generous friendships with many of us.

To honour David's life and work, the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane through its Ministry Education Commission (MEC), has established the **David Binns Memorial Lectures in Spirituality**. These lectures will examine the relationship between spirituality, theology and the imagination, both in the particular sense of the creative arts and in the broader sense of innovation and re-imagining, informing our understanding of living life in the Spirit in this 21st century. They will be held annually in October around the time of David's birthday (23 Oct).

David's long-time friend The Rev Philip Carter from The Julian Centre, Adelaide delivered the inaugural lecture at the Brookfield Centre for Christian Spirituality on 19 October 2009 before a gathering of over 170 people. It was an occasion David would have loved. Passionate about his theme "*A Wise Heart: the art of being fully alive, fully human*", Philip drew on a number of rich sources to illustrate his arguments, reflecting that "all of us as artists, priests and human beings are structured Christologically or paschally, that like God we flourish when we give ourselves away, and that love is proved in the letting go." He gave us much to ponder.

And you too can ponder these things. Philip's lecture is available to download from the MEC website at www.ministryeducation.org.au. It comes with a series of questions and statements to encourage reflection on the ideas presented. These questions are not exhaustive but to be seen as 'starters' for ongoing reflection and conversation. They are suitable for use by both individuals and small groups.

Enjoy engaging with this work and sharing it with others.

- Kate Luxford-Morgan

ANSD Programme for Queensland in 2010.

Wednesday Feb 10th (Evening) Anne Fry will present on Connecting to the Transforming Grace of Liminal Space.

Saturday – April 24th – Day. Lucy Tierney will present Focusing as a gift of the universe to each of us.

Wednesday, May 19th Evening Rob Jones, from Men Transforming Men, will present Spirituality for Men.

Saturday - June 12th –afternoon. Jane Simon will present on Finding God in Liminal space – spirituality in substance abuse/addiction – a Mother’s journey

Saturday August 21– Relection Day. Topic: Touching the Art and Heart of Peacemaking.

Saturday October 9th afternoon Spirituality and Mental Health

Saturday Nov 20th afternoon A reflection on the journey of this year and planning for 2011.

ANSD Programme for Newcastle in 2010.

Saturday 20th Feb: Kate Scholl on Journalling

Saturday 8th May: Anne Waketama on Agent of Change (For this you are asked to have seen the film “The Children of Men”

Saturday 7th August: Susan Ashley-Brown, on Music, Therapy and Spirituality

Saturday 30th October: Lee Moore, Jenny Parsons and Nanoya Barrett on Art Therapy and Spirituality.

Membership Form

ANSD Membership is per calendar year

Title: _____ Name: _____

Street: _____

Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

tel (home): _____ tel (work): _____

email: _____

Annual Membership

Single: \$40.00 (\$30.00 concession)

Double: \$55.00 (\$45.00 concession)

Please accept my membership for the next year in the ANSD.
Enclosed is my annual membership donation.

Amount: _____

Being for the year: _____

Please tick this box to consent to your name on
ANSD membership list for ANSD related activities:

Signed: _____

I would prefer to receive my newsletter by email:

I would prefer to receive my newsletter by post:

Please mail this form and your membership payment to:

ANSD Membership

Liz Palmer

39 Rutledge Street

QUEANBEYAN NSW 2620

For direct deposit, the account is at the Commonwealth Bank – BSB: 062 902

Account name: Australian Network for Spiritual Direction Inc, Account no: 00903865

Please quote your membership number which is on the address label for “snail mail” deliveries and should be part of your “name” for email deliveries.

It helps if you email me (palmerea@fastmail.fm) to let me know that you have made a deposit. Thanks.