

# Spirituality Network Newsletter

Spring 2005

The Spirituality Network, Inc., facilitates spiritual growth and development through education, formation, training, and spiritual direction for individuals and groups, both within and outside of organized religious institutions.

## Art and Justice

### Woven together through Stories

The following is an excerpt from the keynote address given by Rev. Tim Ahrens at the Fifth Annual Arti Gras. The full transcript is available by contacting Rev. Ahrens at First Congregational Church, 228-1741 or via e-mail: [tim@first-church.org](mailto:tim@first-church.org)

One of the gifts I feel God has bestowed upon me is the fire and passion for justice. Each morning I rise praying for the salvation of the city—for its poor, for its rich, for the ever-growing gap between the two. I pray that God will give me strength to stand, to walk, to speak, to work for justice. In the depths of my soul, the quest for beauty and the desire to be in relationship to art is forming and coming into being.

Today, I challenge you to create, from this day forward, out of a vision for the millions—the millions who have suffered throughout history.

And the place to begin with the millions is with the one.

To assist you in responding to my challenge, I offer several stories of one in the millions, which I gleaned from my sabbatical journey last summer, covering 30,000 miles and several thousand years. Out of my travels, my studies, and my prayers I have come to believe that art and social justice are really intended by God to be woven together in stories—the stories of one in the millions and the millions in the one.

In Bohemia, there is a strange place called Terezin. It is located some 45 miles from Prague. This walled-in fortress with 12 ramparts in the shape of a star was built in the 18th Century by Emperor Joseph II of Austria to honor his mother Maria Teresa.

Today, Terezin is mostly a ghost town. During the Second World War, Terezin was something else altogether. It was a place of famine and fear. 15,000 children came through Terezin. Only 100 lived. Preserved from the barracks, suitcases, and hidden places in Terezin, over 4,500 works of children's art and poetry tell stories that seem like the stuff of cruel fairy tales—the somber reality of young children facing their dying days.

Children and ghettos. Butterflies absent and death present. These should not be. But their drawings and their poems should be. The children of Terezin and Auschwitz, of Columbus and Kabul, Baghdad and Birmingham call to us to be the ones who grant them justice.

Fred Shuttlesworth stands out as one in the millions who stands up for justice. He is a bona fide Christian and American hero. One week after the Supreme Court issued *Brown vs. Board of Education* in 1954, Rev. Shuttlesworth courageously entered an all-white school in Birmingham to register his children for classes. As he left the building, having been refused admission, his entire family was attacked and beaten, and members of the White Citizens Council, the unhooded version of the KKK, stabbed his wife. Through the years, his church was bombed three times, his home was bombed several times, he was jailed over 30 times, beaten, attacked by police dogs and blown against walls by fire hoses unleashed by police.

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# Art and Social Justice

Arti  
Gras  
2005

*"Justice is the soil in which all the other virtues can prosper." ~ Shalom Spiegel*

On January 29, we were pleased to offer the fifth annual *Arti Gras! A Celebration of Art and Spirit*.

The deep connection between creativity and spiritual growth has always been the heart of *Arti Gras* since its beginning in 2001. Each year, we have focused our creative exploration around a specific theme. This year's *Arti Gras* provided rich possibilities to create, express, and explore, focused around the theme of "Art and Social Justice." Participants created powerful expressions of their desire for justice, peace, and wholeness through poetry, lectio divina writing, earthen clay, mixed media, painting, polymer clay, collage, body prayer, music, and chant. The creative experience is one that puts us in touch with the energy of The Creator, The Divine Artist, who is continually creating and re-creating the world.

We were challenged from the first moment that day: create, express, and explore and do these through the lens of social justice. Rev. Tim Ahrens' keynote address encouraged us to remember the millions who have never had the opportunity to speak: the millions who suffered the slave trade, the millions in the ashes of the Holocaust, the millions slaughtered in Rwanda, Bosnia, Cambodia, Iraq, the millions in the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the millions of America's homeless poor, and millions more. He urged us to "let your creative designs grow out of not only your own personal pain, but also the pain of the millions who are still waiting for 'justice to roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream'" (Amos 5:24).

With the challenge to create on behalf of the silenced, we were able to move beyond ourselves and to see that true spiritual growth leads back out into the world.

Rev. Ahrens said in his keynote: "I have witnessed God's handiwork. It has created a deep peace coupled with a deep discomfort. It has created a zeal to walk humbly, love steadfastly, and to do justice—and by the way, justice, like art, can only *be done*—not talked about!"

May each of us grow in our capacity to create both beauty and justice in a world that cries out for both.

Gratitude  
"...ask  
and you  
shall  
receive..."

We asked and we received! Reams of paper, helping hands for special tasks, several pounds of coffee, and a lovely assortment of teas—these are a few of the generous gifts we received from our request in the last edition of the newsletter. We are deeply grateful for these donations of time and supplies.

*For donations of much needed paper and supplies:*

MJ Abell (coffee, tea, and greeting cards)  
Reva Allen\* (baked goods for *Arti Gras*)  
Donita Harris (paper)  
Sandra Kerka\*\*\* (baked goods for *Arti Gras*)  
Sabine Lamar (paper and coffee)  
Linda Lewandowski (paper and coffee);  
Rebeka Maples (paper)  
Bob McNall (paper)  
Claudia Retter (tea)  
Bob Sprafka (paper)  
Pam Townsend (paper)  
Nan Weir (paper and art supplies)

*For volunteers who gave their time and talents:*

*Quilters* who created the candle cloths for our Annual Appeal: Barbara Davis, Bobbie Reynolds, Rick Hatem, Kathie Houchens, Mo Meuse, Myra Stull

*Arti Gras Volunteers:* Kim Burns, Alex Cushing, Dee Fontana, Corinne Hughes\*\*, Jean Monk, Dan Schleppe, Myra Stull, Melissa Turner Rustin

\* Reva Allen is our newest volunteer staff person. She has taken on the task of keeping our books and helping with accounting/finance questions. Welcome, Reva!

\*\* Corinne Hughes deserves an extra-special round of applause for her faithfulness in serving the Network with time and energies. Corinne has worked *every Thursday for over 9 years* and in three locations, helping to keep our office operating smoothly. Thank you and God bless you, Corinne!

\*\*\* Sandra Kerka is our new volunteer newsletter editor. Many, many thanks to you, Sandra!

# Fundraising Events to Benefit the Spirituality Network



As a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, The Spirituality Network is continually faced with the challenge of fundraising. To help offset our expenses we occasionally offer events to feed your soul that will also raise funds to support our ministry in the community. These two events for the spring season offer opportunities to deepen your awareness and expand your understanding of spiritual topics. We hope you will be with us for these outstanding offerings.

## *Finding the Sacred Feminine: A Day of Discovery and Rejuvenation*

Friday, May 13, 2005, at the Franklin Park Conservatory.  
Registration and Coffee: 9:30am; Program: 10am-2pm

Suggested Donation: \$40 if PREPAID by May 5; \$55 after May 5. Admission to Franklin Park Conservatory, all materials and luncheon provided.

Additional Sponsorship welcome at these levels:  
Maiden: \$100; Mother \$250; Queen \$500; Crone \$1,000

Facilitators Mary Beth Meuse and Barbara Davis will lead us in celebration of the Sacred Feminine. In 2004, Mary Beth and Barbara traveled to Greece to explore ancient cultures founded on feminine wisdom as well as evidence of the sacred feminine throughout history. Through several creative exercises, participants will affirm their own feminine gifts, both as individuals and in community:

- Tap into universal images of Woman through ritual and storytelling
- Experience contemplative reflection in the lovely natural setting of Franklin Park Conservatory
- Find inspiration from the Chapungu Stone Carvings of Africa on display throughout the Conservatory

Please make checks payable to The Spirituality Network and send with your name, address, phone number, and e-mail to The Spirituality Network, 444 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43215 ATTN: May Event.

## *Civil Conversation in an Age of Un-civility*

June 7, 2005, 6:30pm, First Community Church, South Campus, 1320 Cambridge Blvd.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Richard Wing, Senior Pastor of First Community Church, followed by a Dessert Reception

Suggested Donation: \$35

As we experienced the divisiveness of last year's election season many of us began to wonder what happened to civilized debate? How can we, as persons of faith, remain grounded in our own beliefs while faced with the emotionally charged debates of our time? In his presentation, Dr. Wing will invite us to consider ways that we can bring compassion, empathy, and respect for differences into our discourse.

We hope that you will be with us for this important and inspiring evening in support of the Spirituality Network.

Details to arrive soon via regular mail and e-mail.

For more information on these events, please call 614/228-8867 or e-mail: [spiritnetwk@hotmail.com](mailto:spiritnetwk@hotmail.com)

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pp. 5-6 Designed to a T  
p. 7 Melvi Gelacio/Isis International-Manila  
pp. 10-11 Sandra Torrijos/Isis International-Manila



If It Is of God...

## Ongoing Groups

*Centering Prayer Groups*, Mondays, 7-7:45pm and Tuesdays, Noon-1pm (no longer meeting on Wednesdays). The Newman Center, 65 W. Lane Ave. Columbus; Fr. Vinny McKiernan, 614/294-4674.

*Mindfulness Meditation of Columbus*, Thursdays 7-9pm. First Community Church South Campus Annex Room 105. Weekly practice of mindfulness and insight meditation. Arjuna Desilva, 614/246-0687

*Contemplative Meditation Prayer Group*, Tuesdays, 7:30-8:30pm. Mary Jane Janki, 614/895-8457 or 447-3600.

### *Interfaith Dialogue Opportunities*

The Interfaith Association of Central Ohio (IACO) has representatives from eight faith groups: Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islam, Jain, Jewish, and Sikh.

The Education Committee offers Educational Forums that are open to the public and a Speakers' Bureau. They also tailor topics to a group's request. An Interfaith Festival is being planned for September 25, 2005.

The Spiritual Sharing Committee, in cooperation with the Interfaith Relations office of the National Council of Churches, is training people in interfaith dialogue. Following this training, groups will be formed in homes across central Ohio and we invite your participation.

Another Spiritual Sharing Group meets on the first Wednesday of each month from noon-1pm at the Columbus Metropolitan Library, first floor conference room, 96 S. Grant St. The public is invited to share concerns, exchange views, and build relationships.

For information, leave a message at 614/849-0290, or call the president, Les Stansbery, at 231-6954. To receive e-mail updates on all interfaith activities, contact butalia.l@osu.edu.

In April 1986, The Spirituality Network was envisioned as an interfaith outreach to address the "Thirst for the God of Life." The Network's Winter 2004 newsletter had a one-page summary of the Network's history. Each Network member carries part of the history. In conversation with Noreen Malone, OP, and Maxine Shonk, OP, about the history, we came up with some questions that you can answer to fill in the Network history. Please look the questions over and answer any or all of them. With grant funding, I am working to combine research and input from Network members for a comprehensive history of the Network's first 20 years to take the form of a book. Please send your answers to the questions, or your "memories" from your involvement, by e-mail to rickhatem@hotmail.com or by post to Rick Hatem, 24910 State Route 93, Creola, OH 45622.

At the end of the Network's first 10 years, the summary following the questions provided a snapshot of the Network. Please help to paint the picture today with colors from each of the years. Thank you!

Why was the Network needed in 1986?

Why did you get involved? What was your thirst?

Have you been a participant in the Wellstreams Program?

What brought you to the Network? Where was the Network when you crossed its path?

Did involvement with the Network have an impact on your life? How? Why or why not? How has the Lenten Journal helped you in your journey?

How did you experience the Network's mission or ministry?

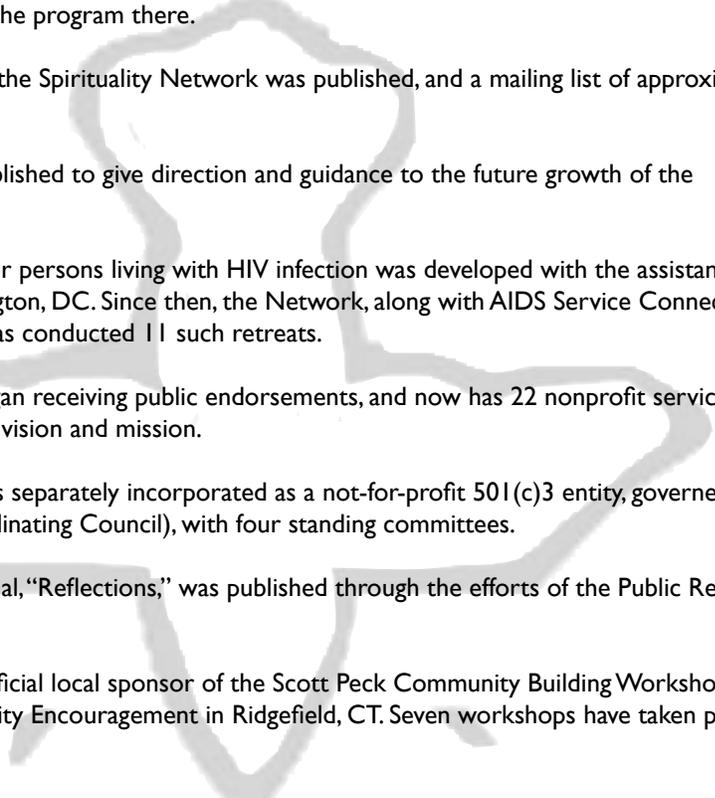
What is your favorite memory from your involvement with the Network? The 10-year anniversary celebration, "A Touch of Life, A Splash of Hope"; a "Community Building Workshop" or a "Busy Person's Retreat"; as a presenter or a participant at Arti Gras?

What was the Network's most significant contribution in your opinion?

What are the needs today that the Spirituality Network is best suited to respond to?

# A Dedicated Decade

of spiritual growth serving central Ohio

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- April 1986 The Spirituality Network was envisioned as an interfaith outreach to address the “Thirst for the God of Life.”
- July 1986 This vision was proposed to and adopted by the leadership of the Dominican Congregation of St. Mary of the Springs as a pilot project.
- January 1987 A committee was formed to study the need for and feasibility of spirituality ministry in central Ohio. The Spirituality Network began with one small office, the donated services of one director, and an answering machine.
- Spring 1988 The first Women’s Awareness Program was conducted in Scioto County for welfare woman in Portsmouth, Ohio. On February 14, 1990, this program was moved to the St. John/Holy Rosary Family Resource Center in Columbus. On February 1, 1995, the women at St. John/Holy Rosary accompanied us to Faith Mission to begin the program there.
- January 1989 The first program catalog of the Spirituality Network was published, and a mailing list of approximately 1,200 was generated.
- January 1990 An Advisory Board was established to give direction and guidance to the future growth of the Spirituality Network.
- June 1990 The first Interfaith Retreat for persons living with HIV infection was developed with the assistance of Damien Ministries in Washington, DC. Since then, the Network, along with AIDS Service Connection and Mount Carmel Health, has conducted 11 such retreats.
- Fall 1990 The Spirituality Network began receiving public endorsements, and now has 22 nonprofit service organizations supporting the vision and mission.
- April 1992 The Spirituality Network was separately incorporated as a not-for-profit 501(c)3 entity, governed by a full Board of Trustees (Coordinating Council), with four standing committees.
- February 1993 The first annual Lenten Journal, “Reflections,” was published through the efforts of the Public Relations Committee.
- April 1993 The Network became the official local sponsor of the Scott Peck Community Building Workshop for the Foundation for Community Encouragement in Ridgefield, CT. Seven workshops have taken place since.
- Fall 1994 The Network was a *Columbus Dispatch* Community Service Award Finalist and was formally recognized by Amethyst, Inc. for its service to the recovery community.
- May 1995 Noreen Malone, OP, Coordinator of the Network, received the Living Faith Award from the Metropolitan Area Church Council for service in the Ecumenical Arena.
- January 1996 WELLSTREAMS, a 2½-year training program in spiritual direction began after a 3-year planning process by the Education/Formation Committee.
- February 1996 The Network’s first satellite office was established at First Community Church.
- April 1996 Thousands of people are served through the Network’s programming, outreach, and spiritual direction. Over 60 resource members filled requests for spiritual opportunities all over central Ohio. More than 100 unpaid administrative staff, organizational contacts, committee members, etc., help to maintain the vision of the Network. Our mailing list now exceeds 5,000.
- April 1996 To sustain the growth and development of the Spirituality Network, our first major fundraiser, “A Touch of Life, A Splash of Hope,” is created by the Development Committee.



# Spring... Renewed Hope

by Carol Ann Spencer, O.P

Lent will soon give way to Easter. What can each of us say about our Lenten Journey? Ash Wednesday, in the words of Joel, the Prophet, invited us to “return to the Lord with all your heart...rend your hearts and not your clothing.”

Every major religion sets aside some time for renewal, for slowing down and taking stock of where we have been and where we are going. There is much Wisdom in this. We all know that life moves too fast and that Time just seems to disappear. Lent is the time to sort out our priorities and to look at the choices that we make. *Who or what is the center of my life? Where do I spend most of my gift of time?* These are hard questions and they invite us to reflection, change, and renewal.

Easter is both a paradox and a challenge for us. The Easter Season is actually 50 days, longer than our Lenten Journey. The paradox for many is that we may do better in keeping Lent than in celebrating Easter. The gifts of Easter are *peace, joy, and hope*. How do our words and actions witness to the power of the Resurrection?

Our hearts and spirit ache for spring as the winter refuses to let go. We are warmed by the small signs of new life that are beginning to bud forth. The challenge of Easter is that we are called to be signs of new life for a weary world. *Who or what gives me hope, peace, and joy?* If we have hope, peace and joy will follow. Hope is choosing life, love, care, and truth even in the midst of suffering and darkness. Hope has something to do with wanting to live, with giving birth. Hope leads to Resurrection.

It is my hope for you this Easter season that you will experience a budding of new life, a quickening of your spirit that will encourage you to celebrate this rising from the dead. If it is not there yet, may you find someone to walk with you who is living the Easter journey, until you find that HOPE WITHIN YOU.

## HOPE

Either  
we have hope with us  
or we don't.

It is a dimension of the soul, and  
it is not particularly dependent  
on some observation of the world.

It is an orientation of the spirit,  
an orientation of the heart.

It transcends  
the world that is immediately experienced  
and is anchored somewhere beyond the horizons.

Hope  
in this deep and powerful sense  
is not the same as joy  
that things are going well  
or willingness to invest in enterprises  
that are obviously headed for early success,  
but rather  
an ability to work for something  
because it is good,  
not just because it stands a chance to succeed.

Hope  
is definitely not  
the same thing as optimism.

It is not the conviction  
that something will turn out well,  
but the certainty  
that something makes sense  
regardless of how it turns out.

It is hope,  
above all,  
which gives us the strength to live  
and continually try new things.

~Vaclav Havel, Past President, Czech Republic

We congratulate the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Springs as they begin a year of celebration for their sesquicentennial celebration. On February 5, 1830, four Dominican pioneer women from Kentucky traveled to Somerset, Ohio, to open an academy for girls and minister to the small Catholic community that had settled there. They remained in Somerset until 1868. After a fire in 1866 destroyed the school and convent, Mr. Theodore Leonard gave the Sisters property in Shepard, Ohio, to build again. Since 1868, the Springs Dominicans have resided on the corner of Sunbury Road and Airport Drive.

Their history and ministry intersected with the Spirituality Network in 1986 when some Dominican Sisters saw a need to provide some spirituality opportunities for those living in Central Ohio. This was the beginning of the Spirituality Network.

Each place that the Springs Dominicans have ministered over these 175 years was invited to *Rejoice with Us. Celebrate with Us. Pray with Us.* One day during the year was designated for each place of ministry and our turn at the Network came early with the announcement: "We ask you to pray for us and we shall remember you in our prayer on February 17, 2005." We certainly are not restricted to that day and so we invite you to hold this congregation of Sisters in your thoughts and prayers throughout the remainder of this year. They will conclude the year on February 5, 2006, with regional celebrations in Columbus, Pittsburgh, New York, New Haven, and Chimbote, Peru.

The motto that the Dominican Sisters have chosen for this special year:

*Springs of Hope...The Dominican Mission Continues.*

## Dominican Sisters Celebrate 175 Years of Ministry in Ohio

### **Wanted for the Network Office:**

Coffee (regular and/or decaf)

Lexmark 70 black Inkjet Cartridge  
(for a Compaq IJ300 printer)

Lexmark 50 black Inkjet Cartridge  
(for a Compaq IJ600 printer)

37¢ first-class stamps

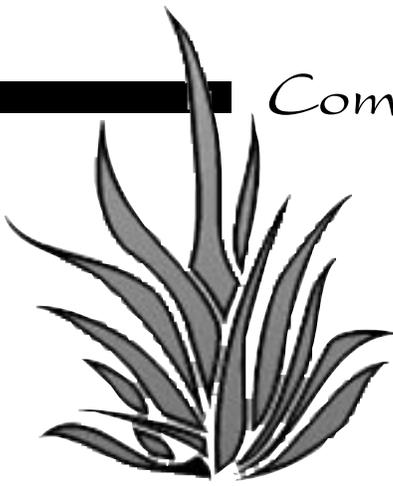
23¢ postcard stamps

*Every little bit helps tremendously!*



It is not too early to begin thinking about joining the next class of Wellstreams that will begin in August 2006. The application process will open in September 2005. This program is open to women and men of all faith traditions who have a desire to enhance their own spiritual journey and wish to discern their call to share with others. For more information or to receive an application packet, please contact Carol Ann Spencer, O.P. at 228-8867 or [carol.spencer1@juno.com](mailto:carol.spencer1@juno.com).

# Community Events



## **The Spiritual Center of Maria**

**Stein**, 2365 St. Johns Rd., Maria Stein, Ohio. 877/925-7625; e-mail: spiritualcenterms@bright.net. (Prices are suggested donations. Do not let money keep you away. We can help with a scholarship for those who need it.)

*Life's Healing Journey*, April 22-24, 2005. Fr. Peter Campbell, MSC, a nationally known figure of gentle and compassionate healing, will be presenting this wonderful retreat. The weekend will lead others, in a gentle way, to the journey of inner peace. \$130 single donation, \$220 couple donation, \$75 commuter donation.

*Taste the Silence: An Introduction to Centering Prayer*, May 6-8, 2005. This weekend retreat is for those who hunger for a deeper relationship with God and a contemplative dimension in their lives. Learn the method of Centering Prayer as adapted by Trappist Fr. Thomas Keating from our rich Christian contemplative heritage. The presenters are Barbara Grants and Anita Donan, members of the leadership team of Contemplative Outreach Ohio and commissioned to present this workshop by Contemplative Outreach Ltd. \$110 single donation, \$176 couple donation, \$70 commuter donation.

**The Martin de Porres Center**, St. Mary of the Springs, 2330 Airport Dr, Columbus, Ohio 43219. For more information call 614/416-1910; <http://www.columbusdominicans.org/mdp>

*I Have Survived the Winter: Moving through Grief*, April 9, 2005, 10am-3pm. In this workshop, we will explore the process we go through when grieving the death of a loved one—moving through the harsh, dreary “Winter” of our grief into the brightness and healing that Spring and Summer can bring. The day will include input and time for reflection and sharing and will conclude with a memorial prayer service honoring those who have died and who have special meaning in our lives. The workshop, facilitated by Mauryeen O'Brien, OP, will be particularly helpful to those who are grieving a death and those who minister to the bereaved. Open to the public. Suggested donation \$5, which includes a light lunch.

*Women of Appalachia: Making a Difference*, April 16, 2005, 10am-3pm. Join us for a very insightful and inspiring program about the challenges our neighbors of Appalachia face every day. Women from the “Coal River Mountain” group will discuss the issue of mountain top removal and what they have done to promote justice. Robbie Pentecost, OSF, Executive Director of the Catholic Committee of Appalachia, will discuss other difficulties facing the people living in the area, including poverty, racism, and sustainability. Open to the public. Suggested donation \$5, which includes a light lunch. Offered in partnership with Shepherd's Corner and the Office of Preaching, Justice, and Care of Creation of the Dominican Sisters, St. Mary of the Springs.

*Celebrating Community through Dance*, May 1, 2005, 7-8:30pm. This program is a repeat from last September, with the addition of a few new dances. Come and experience the sense of community that is created by sharing in several simple circle dances. Arleen Kisiel, OP, Director of the Martin de Porres Center, will facilitate this session. No dance experience is necessary, and you need not have been present at September's session. Free and open to the public.

*Turning Leaves and Tea Leaves—A Book Club*, 2d Wednesday of the month, 2-3:15pm.

*Justice Movie Series* offers a monthly selection of films that invite us to consider and explore various issues of justice in our world. Please call or visit the website for a schedule of movie listings. April 10, 2-4pm: “Bowling for Columbine,” the Oscar-winning documentary film directed by Michael Moore. May 15, 2-4pm: “Deadline” details the drama of Illinois' clemency hearings leading up to Governor Ryan's decision regarding 167 death row inmates.

## **Jung Association of Central**

**Ohio**, 59 W. Third Ave., Columbus. For more information: 614/291-8050; e-mail: [JungACO@core.com](mailto:JungACO@core.com); [www.jungcentralohio.org](http://www.jungcentralohio.org). Contact: Gina Peacock.

*Underground Springs: Finding Our Gifts at the Bottom of the Well*, Lecture, April 1, 2005, 7-9pm; Workshop, April 2, 10am-3pm. Presented by Nancy Dougherty, Jungian Analyst, MSW, LCSW. First Community Church, North Campus, 3777 Dublin Rd., Columbus.

*2nd Saturday Coffee and Conversation*, Monthly, 10am-12pm, JungHaus, 59 W Third Ave. Different topic each month. Donations gratefully accepted.

*All Wisdom's Children: Meditations with the Great Mystics of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* with Neil Douglas-Klotz, PhD,

May 5, 2005, 7:30-9:30pm: Public presentation and book signing at First Community Church, 3777 Dublin Rd, Columbus, OH 43221. \$15

May 6-8, 2005, Friday-Saturday 9:30am-5pm, Sunday 9:30am-12:30pm: Weekend retreat at the Martin de Porres Center, near Ohio Dominican University, 2330 Airport Drive, Columbus. Full retreat/workshop \$185 (workshop participation, select meals and refreshment breaks, and entry to the Thursday evening event). \$167 for INDUP members, retired persons, or limited income. Some work exchanges available for a further reduction. Deadline for guaranteed registrations: April 25, 2005.

Contact Rev. Elizabeth Munira Reed, The Shalem Center, 885 High St., Ste. 106, Worthington, OH 43085; e-mail: [munira@abwoon.com](mailto:munira@abwoon.com); 614/885-2411 ext. 2131

Neil Douglas-Klotz, Ph.D, is the author of *Prayers of the Cosmos*, *The Hidden Gospel*, *Desert Wisdom*, *The Sufi Book of Life*: 99 *Pathways of the Heart for the Modern Dervish* and *The Genesis Meditations*. He directs the Edinburgh Institute for Advanced Learning in Edinburgh, Scotland and is the co-chair of the Mysticism Group of the American Academy of Religion

*Jesus and the Future of American Christianity*, four lectures by eminent Jesus scholar and author John Dominic Crossan, May 13-14, 2005, First Community Church, South Campus, 1320 Cambridge Blvd. Friday, 7:30pm; Saturday, 9am-3pm. In addition to the lectures, Dr. Crossan will preach on Sunday, May 15, at the 9:15am service at the North Campus (3777 Dublin Rd.) and the 11am service at South Campus.

For further information, contact Reverend David Hett, Minister of Religious Life & Learning, or Hilda Neff at First Community Church: 614/488-0681 ext. 113, e-mail: [hettdds@fcchurch.com](mailto:hettdds@fcchurch.com) or [hilda@fcchurch.com](mailto:hilda@fcchurch.com).

Dr. Crossan will return for a second series this fall: "The Historical Paul and the Future of American Christianity," November 11-12. Both series are sponsored by the Spiritual Searcher Committee of First Community Church.

I asked Dr. Shuttlesworth if his mind ever slipped back 40 or 50 years to the experiences of abuse and injustice he and so many had encountered. He looked me straight in the eyes with his clear and penetrating focus and said, "God created the world and all that is herein. So we don't have to spend a lot of time talking about all that God has done and is doing. We have to do what he created us to do. He created us to work for justice, to fight for human and civil rights, and work for righteousness in this world."

Under the Edmund Petus Bridge, just outside Selma, Alabama, there is a garden that is itself one in the millions, too. There the Holy Martyrs of righteousness and justice are memorialized. The garden is overgrown by weeds and underbrush. Above this garden, on March 8, 1965, thousands of people were driven and beaten by baton-wielding state troopers as they marched across the Edmund Petus Bridge. In what is now known as "Bloody Sunday," hundreds of men, women, and children sustained severe injuries from these beatings.

Below the bridge, in the park, on almost every tree, there are simple wooden markers carved with the names of those murdered and martyred in the civil rights movement. A hemp rope, similar to ones used to drag slaves and to lynch innocent African-American men and women across centuries of wrong, connects the trees. At the edge of the park is a large pile of rocks, surrounded by homemade art, handmade memorials, and wall murals on the buildings beyond. One rock had these words from Joshua 4 carved into it: "When your children shall ask you in time to come, what means these 12 stones, then you shall tell them how you made it over." For Joshua, the rocks comprised a shrine in honor of the 12 tribes who entered the Promised Land after 40 years of wandering. For the African-Americans who chiseled these words, it was a proclamation that over 340 years of suffering crossed over the Alabama River in this place in late March 1965.

Simple and simply powerful, these works of art call out to us for justice.

Justice is the most difficult work of Christians today. We claim to be people who hold the collective values of all in our hearts, minds, and actions. Yet we live in a society that turns away more and more from the poor in our midst.

You and I have to undo this mess of our narcissistic, consumerist culture. I for one will continue to stand and walk as long as I am able. I will cry out and witness. I will bother God and I will bother people. Sometimes, I may stumble into the fray, and I pray that I will stay in the fray until justice prevails. As I rise each day to pray for the salvation of the city, I will witness because I believe this life is for each child of God. It should be beautiful and it should be just.

# Spiritual Direction

## Discovering God's Presence

Spiritual direction is a prayerful, reflective experience in which you come to recognize the presence and movement of God's spirit in all aspects of your life.

At the heart of spiritual direction is the understanding that God longs to be in relationship with you as much as you long for God. In the midst of our busy lives, we long for a felt sense of God's love; because of the busy-ness we struggle to find it. Entering the process of spiritual direction invites you to greater awareness of the infinite ways that God is calling to you, inviting you into a deeper, more meaningful relationship. You will discover God's grace in both blessing and brokenness.

The name "spiritual direction" can be misleading; it is not about being "directed" or instructed, but rather accompanied on your journey into relationship with God.

The companion will not set your course, but will point out sights along the path that you might have overlooked. Perhaps the companion simply stands with you when you need to gather strength to continue, grieving the losses and celebrating the joys with you along the way. A spiritual director can be a trusted guide, no matter where your journey leads.

There are many reasons for seeking spiritual direction. Some enter direction in order to discern a difficult choice; others seek a deepened prayer life; and still others look for avenues to more self-understanding or better health in personal relationships. Spiritual growth moves us to greater love that is reflected in our relationship with God, self, others, and all creation. This growth enriches our worship experiences, supports our faith, and adds meaning to ordinary moments.

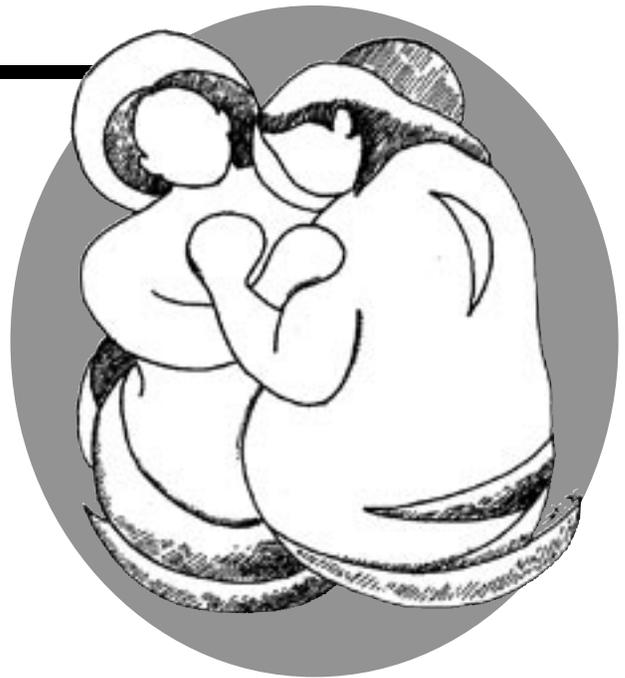
The process of spiritual direction occurs in confidential, one-on-one sessions\*. The director will provide a safe and inviting environment where he or she will listen deeply to your story. As you give voice to your longings, your questions, and your experiences, you may discover healing emotional expression.

Your director will hold your story in sacred confidence, and you will feel the blessing of being *heard*.

Spiritual directors who are on the referral listing of the Spirituality Network must meet these four criteria:

- They have completed extensive training and formation.
- They are in spiritual direction themselves.
- They are in confidential peer supervision.
- They are committed to continued spiritual formation and education.

In addition, directors follow the code of ethics as set forth by Spiritual Directors International.

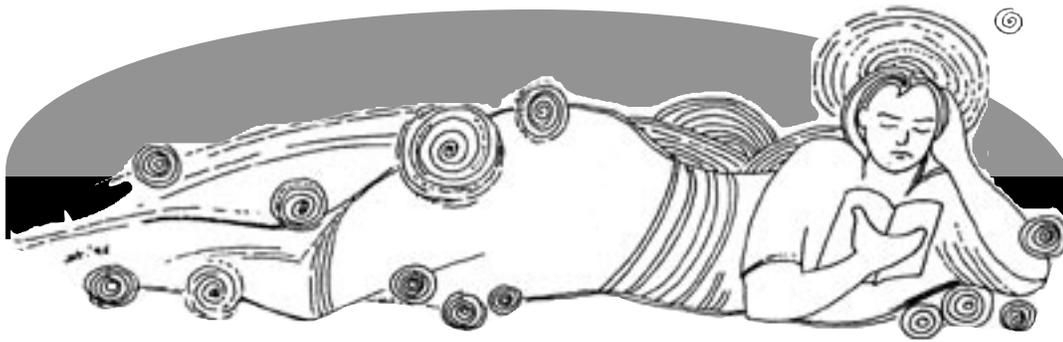


If you would like to explore the possibility of beginning spiritual direction, please contact The Spirituality Network to schedule an intake interview (we will gratefully accept a small donation for this service). The intake process will cover the basic understanding of the direction process and help you to discern if direction is indeed what you are looking for. In addition, the intake interviewer will invite you to reflect on what is meaningful in your spiritual life currently, your faith development and tradition, if any, as well as ask for specific requirements you may have (i.e., geographic, religious, or gender issues). From this interview, you will be given two or three possible matches with their contact information for you to follow up with. It is important that you are comfortable and feel safe with your spiritual director, so it is wise to contact the referred directors before deciding.

Most people see a spiritual director once every 3-6 weeks for about an hour each time. The frequency and length of sessions is determined between the directee and director. A stipend is typically given to the director, based on one's ability to pay. The range is usually \$25-\$75 or more. However, if you are unable to pay the lower amount, please don't hesitate to make arrangements with your spiritual director for a lower fee. No one will be turned away for inability to pay.

We would love to have the opportunity to come to your group or organization to make a presentation on the ministry of spiritual direction. If you would like to learn more, please call The Spirituality Network, 614/228-8867 or visit our website: [www.spiritualitynetwork.org](http://www.spiritualitynetwork.org). You may also visit the website of Spiritual Directors International at [www.sdiworld.org](http://www.sdiworld.org).

*\*Group spiritual direction is also an option that is similar in format and experience, except it happens in a small group rather than individually.*



## Books for your spiritual life

***The Spiral Staircase: My Climb Out of Darkness* by Karen Armstrong. Anchor Publishing, 2005.**

This deeply engaging memoir offers a glimpse into the heart of one relentlessly searching for God, even when she thought she had abandoned the search. Ms. Armstrong is well known for her earlier works *History of God*, *In the Beginning: A New Interpretation of Genesis*, and “*Islam: A Short History*” among other titles. The story begins with her decision to leave the Roman Catholic convent she had entered 7 years earlier. She had hoped to find God, to experience God, to grow closer to God, but the convent did not offer these for her. She discovers, many years and many difficulties later, the transcendence that she had not found in the religious order. *The Spiral Staircase* captures a distinctly unique story of our universal longing for God.

***Seeing with Our Souls: Monastic Wisdom for Every Day* by Joan Chittister, O.S.B. Sheed and Ward Publishers, 2002.**

What spiritual qualities do we need in order to become a positive presence in the world? What does it mean to live from a contemplative stance? From centuries of monastic wisdom, Sr. Joan identifies 12 key “qualities of soul,” pairing each one with a passage from Scripture and her own brief reflection. These passages invite the reader to become more aware of the political, economic, and cultural elements that are an integral, and often unrecognized, part of spiritual formation. Through the practice of *lectio divina* (sacred reading that connects Scripture with the process of personal transformation), these reflections encourage us to assess our hope and choices for the future. *Seeing with Our Souls* is well suited to reading in “small sips” in order to savor the wisdom found there.

***A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey toward an Undivided Life* by Parker J. Palmer. Jossey-Bass, 2004.**

According to Parker Palmer, the scandals of Enron, WorldCom, and the Catholic Church among others are not as much a failure of ethics as of human wholeness—of living a divided life without the integrity of being what one is. Palmer brings together issues of concern to many—building community, teaching and learning for transformation, social change, and the spiritual dimension of learning—in his discussion of how individuals can reunite “soul and role” and live more authentic lives. He describes the use of circles of trust, which are learning communities that support the journey toward wholeness through such practices as listening, truth telling, and a commitment to acting in every situation in ways that honor the soul. Palmer is the author of *The Courage to Teach* and *Let Your Life Speak*.

To receive updates on Network and  
Community events via e-mail, write to us  
at [spiritnetwk@hotmail.com](mailto:spiritnetwk@hotmail.com) (subject line:  
"updates list").

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The Spirituality Network, Inc., facilitates spiritual growth and development through education, formation, training, and spiritual direction for individuals and groups, both within and outside of organized religious institutions. The Spirituality Network is a 501(c)3 nonprofit ecumenical organization founded by Christians of the contemplative tradition.

Beginning in 1986, the Spirituality Network was envisioned as an interfaith outreach to address the "thirst for the God of Life." Though the Network was founded and has been sustained primarily by individuals from the wide spectrum of Christian faith, our aspiration is to be a community of acceptance and inclusion.

It is therefore, our vision that:

The Spirituality Network will be an inclusive resource for individuals and groups in Central Ohio who share a desire for spiritual growth and to aid others on their spiritual paths. Through a rich and diverse network of resources, we will provide a lasting sense of hope, peace, and purpose for our community.

Our programs include:

- Wellstreams Ecumenical Program of Spiritual Formation and Training
- Spiritual Direction Referrals
- Retreat Planning and Facilitation
- Continuing Education for Spiritual Directors and those in companioning ministry
- Women to Women Listening Ministry

See page 3  
for details of two  
Network  
Fundraising  
Events