

Spirituality News

From the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Spiritual Formation Team



Summer 2026

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 3	Is Prayer a Waste of Time? <i>Denis Blackledge SJ</i>
Page 4	Rite of Election 2026 - <i>Vivienne S McCabe</i>
Page 5	A Holy Longing - <i>Esmé Shaw</i>
Page 6	St. Beuno's Evensong - <i>Walter J Essex</i>
Page 7	Prayerful Pause - <i>Richard Rohr</i>
Page 8	Could Your Parish Host a Life-Changing Week of Accompanied Prayer? <i>Sarah van Wely</i>
Page 10	Week of Accompanied Prayer: Perspective of a Priest in Charge - <i>Fr. Paul Leonard</i>
Page 11	The Surrender Novena - <i>Diana Russell</i>
Page 14	Book Review: Easter in Disguise - <i>Tina Quinn</i>
Page 15	Directors' News
Page 19	Events, Retreats and Resources



Then came Jesus, the One who models for all of us what it means to live outside the norms of a society that has forgotten its soul. He did justice for Samaritans, for Romans, for sinners in the very face of injustice. He spoke the language of equality in everything he did. He laid down his life in the cause of healing the outcast, commissioning the women, raising the weak to life again, and cleansing the temple. He left a path for us to follow, whatever its ends, however rejected by many, no matter how long it takes.

Joan Chittester: "The Time is Now"

Spirituality News Editorial Team

Editor: Walter Essex

Assistant Editor: Diana Russell

Communications & Projects Officer: AJ Andrews

Is Prayer a Waste of Time?



The simple answer is: *"Yes, it is!"* But - and there is an important but - it is a positive waste of time. When you begin to become friends with someone, or start to fall in love with another person, you have no problem spending lots of time in their presence. You choose to give yourself to the other through the gift of time spent together. And your relationship deepens as a result of just being together, enjoying the presence of the special other. And a deep bond of trust flowers and makes it easier to share at the level of the heart.

It is exactly the same process when it comes to talking about prayer. After all, prayer is simply you in a daily growing relationship with the One who has created you, and Who has given you everything that you are and have. But you have to choose to waste time positively, so that you may grow into an ever-deepening appreciation. After all, the ultimate Friend and Lover of your life is beyond the power of any words to describe. Ponder the Origin of, for example, beauty, wonder, goodness, compassion, and all other qualities that enhance your humanity and fulfil it.

It takes real time to become a true friend and lover, whether the other be human or divine. There is no other way, and there are no short cuts. Just as physical exercise helps you to become more healthy, so it is with this deep, deep spiritual exercise. Both take time, time chosen and given generously. Slowly, but surely, desire grows for more time spent together. In the end, it becomes a lifetime, provided the choice is renewed day by day. So, ready, steady, go for it. Opt to spend time each day with the One who loves you to bits! Fall in love and stay in love with our Loving Lord.

Denis Blackledge SJ

***"Opt to spend time
each day with the One
who loves you to bits."***

Rite of Election 2026

What a Joyful and Exhilarating Experience

The invitation to attend the Cathedral's annual liturgy of Rite of Election, celebrated at the beginning of Lent, provides a wonderful occasion for the Spiritual Formation Team to meet, to greet and update clergy and those attending the occasion from across the Diocese on the various activities of the Team - an opportunity to meet face to face. What a privilege.

This year the event appeared to take on a new dimension, identified by those preparing to welcome the large number of catechumens and candidates. Be Prepared! We have a record number of catechumens (125) and candidates (145): 270 pilgrims plus their Godparents, sponsors, relatives and friends together with parish clergy. A call was taken up by the Cathedral team as more chairs were sought and squeezed into the already packed Cathedral.

They arrived early, from across the Diocese. There was a sense of urgency, an eagerness to register, to find a good seat, to find others from their parish - to BE THERE. In their finery, their Sunday best, it was a League of Nations, representing the many parishes across the Diocese – a feast for the eyes. It was so wonderful to see so many people of all ages, all coming together; all called to be a disciple of Christ. There was an air of expectancy, of excitement; anticipation of what was to happen. It was contagious! They were coming to the Cathedral to meet their Bishop and clergy and to become part of the Catholic Communion.



Our stand was lively before and after the ceremony. So many questions - but common themes: What do you provide? How do we go on after the Easter vigil? How can I find support on my journey? How can you help?

It was a joyful occasion - a real tonic. As I cleared up after all had left, I was filled with such excitement, but also wondering / reflecting: How can we help those newly baptised or those on the next stage of their journey? How can we help ensure that they retain that enthusiasm, that wonder, that purpose and love of Christ as they embark on their own personal spiritual journey?

Vivienne S McCabe

"In their finery, their Sunday best, it was a League of Nations, representing the many parishes across the Diocese - a feast for the eyes."

A Holy Longing

At Mass one Saturday before Easter, I discovered that someone was going to be received into the Church. A young woman was asked to come forward to make her declaration of faith, but, before beginning her Act of Faith, that is the Creed, there was quite a long pause. We waited for her to come to a point when she could speak but, when she began to do so, she burst into tears and sobbed for quite a while. Even when she began, she wept and had to stop at times. I realised that she was overwhelmed by what she was saying in that momentous moment and I recognised that I was a witness to a powerful expression of a holy longing, a great desire for God.

While I was relishing such an experience, she stood in great embarrassment and did not realise that she had made a wonderful statement regarding how much she longed for God. I felt grateful for her honest display of what coming to God meant for her. I then began to reflect on *'What now for her?'* Will we the people of God support her? She may feel that there is so much to learn about being a Catholic Christian, but the most essential element is to be convinced above all that God loves her. That is

not easily achieved at a very deep level in her soul but over time it does happen, because God wants her.

In her relationship with the Lord, she will learn that she is not alone and will come to appreciate that Christ is as close to us as God the Father is to him and that we are His beloved too. There is no better *'best friend'* with whom we can share our lives. He is the best friend who loves us into life and this life actually changes the way we look at the world and at the people we meet.

However, it is important to recognise that God often works slowly and that we are in His hands. In the gospels the disciples frequently showed quite a tenuous grasp of the faith that they had been taught and so it is with us today. They questioned Christ and so do we, and like the disciples we, too, want to know and understand more. We only have to ask Our Lord in prayer and the Holy Spirit will grant us our deepest desires. *'God is pure joy and pure joy demands company!'* it is said.

Esmé Shaw



St. Bueno's Evensong

"Go, the Mass is ended."

The priest has said all
that needs to be said.
But, beyond the church window
the blackbird sings on,
the celebration not yet ended.

The song, triple-trilled, lifts into air.
From across the field
a response is intoned;
another, at the edge of the wood.
An un-notated trio, which blends,
within its randomness,
into an anthem of radiant joy.

Underneath, the chattering
of finches, of tits,
of shrill, simpering sparrows
as choral accompaniment
in this symphony of song,
which will stream on and on
until darkness and sleep
overtake them -
and me.

The Mass is now truly ended,
with the joyful, life-filled
avian Hymn of Creation
stilled into silence.

Walter J Essex



Prayerful Pause

Love is quite simply Who-We-Are-In-Christ. Love is our objective identity as sons and daughters of God. God took human flesh in Christ to teach us that identity.

Richard Rohr

Lover of All

Lord, lover of life, lover of these lives,

Lord, lover of our souls, lover of our bodies, lover of all that exists...

In fact, it is your love that keeps it all alive...

May we live in this love.

May we never doubt this love.

May we know that we are love,

That we were created for love,

That we are a reflection of you,

That you love yourself in us and therefore we are perfectly loveable.

May we never doubt this deep and abiding perfect goodness

That we are because you are.

Richard Rohr

"May we live in this love. May we never doubt this love. May we know that we are love."





Could Your Parish Host a Life-Changing Week of Accompanied Prayer?

What if your parish could offer people a retreat experience without anyone having to pack a suitcase, book annual leave, or disappear to a retreat centre for a week? That is exactly the beauty of a Week of Accompanied Prayer (WAP).

Again and again, parishes tell us the same thing afterwards: *"We had no idea how the week would impact our parishioners."* For many participants / pilgrims, it becomes a genuinely life changing week - a chance to discover that prayer is not simply saying words, but entering into and deepening a real, personal relationship with God.

One recent participant described it simply as: *"THE most wonderful life-changing experience for me."*

A Week of Accompanied Prayer is, at heart, an individually guided retreat in daily life. Running from Sunday afternoon to Friday evening, it offers people the opportunity to meet daily with a trained prayer

guide, while continuing their normal routines of work, family life and other hobbies and commitments.

It is wonderfully accessible. Some people would never consider *"going away"* on retreat for several days - whether because of time, finances, caring responsibilities, or simply nervousness about what retreats involve. But a WAP meets people where they are. It invites them to carve out daily time for personal prayer and reflection, supported by gentle accompaniment along the way.

And the fruit can be extraordinary. People often discover fresh ways of praying, a renewed sense of God's presence, and a deeper confidence in speaking honestly with the Lord. One pilgrim said: *"It was so helpful to discover different ways to pray."* Another wrote: *"My guide was wonderful - her empathy and listening were amazing."*

The week itself has a beautiful rhythm:

- Sunday opening welcome gathering
- Daily one-to-one meetings between pilgrim and prayer guide (Monday - Friday)
- Daily personal prayer throughout the week
- Friday evening closing gathering

Some meetings can also happen on Zoom if that better suits people's schedules or availability.

Of course, prayer may be the most important ingredient - but good planning is a close second! Hosting a WAP works best when a small parish team is enthusiastically on board. We provide clear guidelines, a handbook, and support meetings with the parish team beforehand. We can also help with newsletter material, altar talks and information evenings.

There are practicalities to think through: suitable spaces for daily meetings, venues for the opening and closing gatherings, refreshments, and simple administration. Typically, between 15 and 30 people sign up, supported by a team of 4 - 8 trained spiritual directors or prayer guides. Often guides can travel daily, though occasionally accommodation may be needed.

The costs are refreshingly modest:

- travel expenses for guides
- light lunches and refreshments
- folders and journals for pilgrims
- parish printing costs

And the impact? Far beyond one week!

Parishes often notice renewed energy, deeper community and a fresh openness to the Holy Spirit. For some, the week becomes a catalyst for ongoing spiritual direction, ministry, or a richer prayer life. We can even offer a follow-up gathering a few months later to help pilgrims continue the journey.

In a busy, distracted world, people are longing for space to encounter God personally. A Week of Accompanied Prayer offers exactly that: local, affordable, deeply prayerful and quietly transformative. Our Diocesan Spiritual Formation Team is keen to help.

Perhaps your parish could be next?

Contact spirituality@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Sarah van Wely
Portsmouth Diocese Spiritual Formation Team



"Parishes often notice renewed energy, deeper community and a fresh openness to the Holy Spirit. For some, the week becomes a catalyst for ongoing spiritual direction, ministry, or a richer prayer life."

Week of Accompanied Prayer:

From the Perspective of a Priest in Charge

When I was recently offered the possibility of a week of prayer to be hosted in our parish, I jumped at the opportunity. I cast my mind back about 6 or 7 years when a similar week was offered and hosted in my previous parish, and I recalled just how fruitful and life-giving it was. I had no hesitation in saying "yes" to the opportunity.

From my perspective, hosting a Week of Accompanied Prayer offers many pastoral and spiritual benefits, both for individuals and for the wider parish community. In a busy and often distracted world, such a week creates a sacred opportunity for parishioners to slow down, listen to God and rediscover the importance of prayer in daily life.

One of the greatest benefits is that accompanied prayer makes prayer accessible for those who might otherwise not take such a step. Many people believe that prayer is only for the deeply religious. During an accompanied prayer week, parishioners are gently encouraged to pray in simple, personal ways using Scripture, silence, devotions, nature, art and craft, and conversation with a trained prayer guide. This reassurance - with the focus on *'pray as you can, not as you can't'* - can help people who feel uncertain or inadequate in prayer to realise that God speaks to everyone in ordinary life.

From my perspective, it was deeply encouraging to witness parishioners growing in confidence and openness in their relationship with God. Often people carry burdens, anxieties, grief or deeper questions that rarely surface in ordinary parish activities or day to day life. Through daily meetings with prayer guides, individuals can speak honestly about their faith journey in a safe and compassionate setting. This can lead to healing, renewed hope, and a stronger sense of God's presence.

Another important benefit is the encouragement of lay ministry within the church. Accompanied prayer depends greatly on trained lay prayer guides (all women, I have to add!) who generously share their gifts in service of others. This reflects the Church's understanding that all baptised people are called to participate actively in the mission of Christ. From my perspective, seeing lay members take responsibility for spiritual accompaniment is both affirming and enriching for parish life.

Such a week also strengthens the sense of community within the parish. Although prayer is personal, the shared commitment to prayer creates deeper bonds among parishioners. People become more aware that faith is not simply about attending Sunday Mass, but about supporting each other in discipleship on a daily basis. I was also keen to ask if any of the prayer pilgrims were willing to share their experience by way of a mini-testimony at the end of Sunday Mass and we were blessed to have three who offered to do so. These testimonies had a real impact upon the spiritual energy of the parish.

Fr. Paul Leonard



The Surrender Novena

I first encountered the *Surrender Novena* while on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje, seeking help for a family problem. I just happened to see it, lying on a table outside the centre for Mary's Meals there. The copies were free to be taken, so I rather casually took one, not immediately realising the treasure I had found. It came at the right time - when I had really come to the end of my own answers to this problem. Like in the Twelve Step Programme, I had to admit that I was powerless over the situation. My only way forward was to surrender to my Higher Power, God, who so generously responded to my search for an answer by placing this novena in my hands.

This was about twelve years ago, and I have shared the novena with so many friends, who have passed it on in their turn. We have found that learning to surrender, to let go of those things over which we have no control and to allow God to take charge, has given us that *'peace which the world cannot give'*. I warmly recommend this novena to you too.

Diana Russell

A Prophet of our Time, Don (Fr) Dolindo Ruotolo

On November 19 1970, Don Dolindo Ruotolo died in his native Naples, at the age of 88. Padre Pio once said of this priest from Naples, Italy, *"The whole of paradise is in your soul."* His name, *"Dolindo"*, means *"Pain"* and his life was rich with this pain. As a child, a teenager, a seminarian and a priest, he experienced humiliation, which was the realization of the prophetic words of a bishop who said, *"You will be a martyr, but in your heart, not with your blood."*

In his profound humility, he was able to hear the words of God. Even with his hidden life, he was one of the greatest prophets of the last century. He wrote to Bishop Hnilica in 1965 that a new John

would rise out of Poland with heroic steps to break the chains beyond the boundaries imposed by the communist tyranny. On this postcard, he wrote words of consolation for Poland and all the countries suffering under the communist regime. This prophecy was realized in the papacy of John Paul II.

In his tremendous suffering, Dolindo became more and more a child who lived his self offering to the Divine Father. *"I am totally poor, a poor nothing. My strength is my prayer, my leader is the will of God, which I let take me by the hand. My security over the uneven path is the heavenly mother, Mary."* One of the treasures from the words which Jesus spoke to Dolindo was the teaching about total abandonment to God. In this novena, Jesus is talking to Don Dolindo and also to you.

Day 1: Why do you confuse yourselves by worrying? Leave the care of your affairs to me and everything will be peaceful. I say to you in truth that every act of true, blind, complete surrender to me produces the effect that you desire and resolves all difficult situations. ***O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)***

Day 2: Surrender to me does not mean to fret, to be upset, or to lose hope, nor does it mean offering to me a worried prayer asking me to follow you and change your worry into prayer. It is against this surrender, deeply against it, to worry, to be nervous and to desire to think about the consequences of anything. It is like the confusion that children feel when they ask their mother to see to their needs and then try to take care of those needs for themselves so that their childlike efforts get in their mother's way. Surrender means to placidly close the eyes of the soul, to turn away from thoughts of tribulation and to put yourself in my care, so that only I act. Saying, *"You take care of it"*. ***O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)***

Day 3: How many things I do when the soul, in so much spiritual and material need, turns to me, looks at me and says to me, *"You take care of it,"* then closes its eyes and rests. In pain you pray for me to act, but that I act in the way you want. You do not turn to me, instead you want me to adapt to your ideas. You are not sick people who ask the doctor to cure you, but rather sick people who tell the doctor how to. So do not act this way but pray as I taught you in the Our Father: *"Hallowed be thy Name"*, that is, be glorified in my need. *"Thy kingdom come"*, that is, let all that is in us and in the world be in accord with your kingdom. *"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"*, that is, in our need decide as you see fit for our temporal and eternal life. If you say to me truly, *"Thy will be done"*, which is the same as saying, *"You take care of it"*, I will intervene with all my omnipotence and I will resolve the most difficult situations. **O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)**

Day 4: You see evil growing instead of weakening? Do not worry. Close your eyes and say to me with faith, *"Thy will be done. You take care of it."* I say to you that I will take care of it and that I will intervene as does a doctor and I will accomplish miracles when they are needed. Do you see that the sick person is getting worse? Do not be upset, but close your eyes and say, *"You take care of it"*. I say to you that I will take care of it and that there is no medicine more powerful than my loving intervention. By my love, I promise this to you. **O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)**

Day 5: And when I must lead you on a path different from the one you see, I will prepare you; I will carry you in my arms; I will let you find yourself, like children who have fallen asleep in their mother's arms, on the other bank of the river. What troubles you and hurts you immensely are your reason, your thoughts and worry, and your desire at all costs to deal with what afflicts you. **O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)**

Pictured right: Don Dolindo Ruotolo



Day 6: You are sleepless; you want to judge everything, direct everything and see to everything and you surrender to human strength, or worse - to men themselves, trusting in their intervention - this is what hinders my words and my views. Oh, how much I wish from you this surrender, to help you and how I suffer when I see you so agitated! Satan tries to do exactly this: to agitate you and to remove you from my protection and to throw you into the jaws of human initiative. So, trust only in me, rest in me, surrender to me in everything. ***O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)***

Day 7: I perform miracles in proportion to your full surrender to me and to your not thinking of yourselves. I sow treasure troves of graces when you are in the deepest poverty. No person of reason, no thinker, has ever performed miracles, not even among the saints. He does divine works whosoever surrenders to God. So don't think about it anymore, because your mind is acute and for you it is very hard to see evil and to trust in me and to not think of yourself. Do this for all your needs, do this all of you and you will see great continual silent miracles. I will take care of things. I promise this to you. ***O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)***

Day 8: Close your eyes and let yourself be carried away on the flowing current of my grace; close your eyes and do not think of the present, turning your thoughts away from the future just as you would from temptation. Repose in me, believing in my goodness, and I promise you by my love that if you say, "*You take care of it*" I will take care of it all; I will console you, liberate you and guide you.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Day 9: Pray always in readiness to surrender, and you will receive from it great peace and great rewards, even when I confer on you the grace of immolation, of repentance and of love. Then what does suffering matter? It seems impossible to you? Close your eyes and say with all your soul, "*Jesus, you take care of it*". Do not be afraid, I will take care of things, and you will bless my name by humbling yourself. A thousand prayers cannot equal one single act of surrender; remember this well.

There is no novena more effective than this:
O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Mother, I am yours now and forever.
Through you and with you I always want
To belong completely to Jesus



Book Review:

“Easter in Disguise” By Liz Dodd

Liz Dodd is well known to many as a reporter and news editor for *The Tablet*. After a sabbatical when she cycled around the world, she is now a Sister of St. Joseph of Peace, a Catholic congregation of nuns whose charism is peace and justice. Her radical thinking and action have an appeal which is both challenging and commendable.

“Easter in Disguise” focuses on 6 spiritualities with a difference: *Solidarity, Poverty, Downward Mobility, Hospitality, Non-Violence and Resistance*.

Liz Dodd asks, *‘whether the churches have lost the radical urgency of what Jesus teaches us and if we have become the very institutions that Christ wanted to overturn?’*

During Lent Liz’s book invites us to explore these particular spiritualities. She aligns these with the gospel readings for the six Sundays in Easter. Each chapter is a blend of contemporary theology and lived experience: *“praxis theology”*. For many of us, Lent is a time that we do not particularly look forward to and count the days towards Easter and its message of joy and life. The author is able to show us that living Lent in a radical way draws us deeper into a solidarity with the resurrected Christ, enabling us to experience a depth of joy and fulness that becomes an Easter in itself.

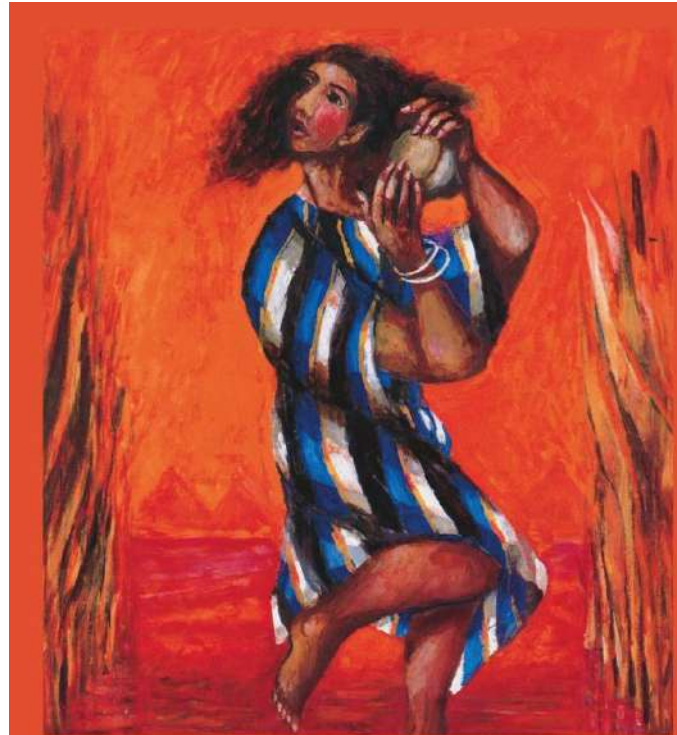
“Each section ends with questions and suggestions for further reading and a practical challenge.”

I was looking for a book to read in Lent: one that would challenge me beyond the usual requirements of fasting, penance and prayer but was acceptable in length with a fresh challenge for each week; one, most important, that would have an enduring effect and enable me to live my life in a different way.

Each section ends with questions and suggestions for further reading and a practical challenge and suggested spiritual practice to live out these theologies.

This is a book that I will find myself constantly revisiting, not just in Lent but when life feels uncomfortably comfortable. I am very grateful to the author for opening my eyes, and mind and heart.

Tina Quinn



Directors' News 1

THE JESUIT INSTITUTE

Imagine - 5 August 2026: Online, 8.00pm. 45 minutes. Hosted by Stephen Hoyland.

Imagine - 2 September 2026: Online, 8.00pm. 45 minutes. Hosted by Stephen Hoyland.

Finding God in Eden - 3 September 2026, 6.00pm - 8.30pm. Evening workshop/walk. Hutton-in-the-Forest, Nr. Skelton, Cumbria. Hosted by Sarah Young.

An Online Week of Guided Prayer For Those Affected by Clergy Abuse in the Church - 18 October 2026, 9.00am - 23 October 2026, 7.00pm. Online 1 week. Hosted by Sarah Young.

Growth in Prayer and Reflective Living (Epiphany Group) 3 November 2026 - 16 March 2027. Tuesday evenings online. 7.00pm - 9.00pm. Plus 3 in-person days in Edinburgh. The Epiphany Group.

INDIVIDUAL GUIDED RETREAT (IGR) ST. BUENO'S

In-person retreats at St. Beuno's are fully booked until the end of September.

Online Retreats: **24 - 28 August 2026,** Midweek, 3 days. **21 September 2026:** 8-day retreat.

Themed retreats at St. Beuno's

Gardening Retreat
10 - 26 August 2026: 5-day in-person retreat.

Finding God in Yoga: Life, Silence and Healing
17 - 21 August 2026: 3 days.

Finding God in Writing. 28 - 30 August 2026. 2 days.

Navigating Your Life With God: Personal Discernment
11 - 14 September 2026: 2 days.

Gardening Retreat
14 - 19 September 2026: 4 days - Fully booked.

'Be Still and Know That I am God' Exploring Mindfulness, Psychology and the Christian Life
18 - 21 September 2026: 3 days.

Finding God in Life's Liminal Spaces
25 - 27 September 2026: 2 days.

Your Life with God: Personal Discernment
11 - 14 September 2026: 2 days.

Gardening Retreat (Waiting List)
14 - 19 September 2026: 4 days.

LORETO SPIRITUALITY CENTRE, LLANDUDNO

Individually Guided Retreats
25 August - 1 September 2026: Any number of days from 3 to 6. Ewa Bern CJ.

21 - 30 September 2026: 8-day individually guided retreat. Chris Goodman CJ and Fr. Paul Daly.

12 - 16 October 2026: Quiet time self-catering with Spiritual Direction available Ewa Bern CJ.

3 - 10 November 2026: Any number of days from 3 to 6 Fr. John Rafferty & Josette Zammit-Mangion CJ

11 - 18 December 2026: Any number of days from 3 to 6 Ewa Bern CJ.

Directors' News 2

30 Day Spiritual Exercises

Full Spiritual Exercises (30-day retreat or alternatively this can be made in daily life). By private arrangement.

Ongoing Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction is available on a long-term basis.

Scripture Course

13 - 15 November 2026: Josette Zammit-Mangion CJ.

Themed Retreats

11 - 13 September 2026: *'And God Saw That It Was Good'*. A creative retreat - Barbara Martin & Ewa Bern CJ.

16 - 18 October 2026: Praying with Gospel Stories of Healing. Josette Zammit-Mangion CJ.

13 - 15 November 2026: Space to Grieve. Ewa Bern CJ & Jane Critten.

Advent Retreats

Advent Weekend Retreat, 27 - 29 November 2026. Gemma Simmonds CJ.

Advent Triduum

7 - 11 December 2026: Fr. Chris Thomas

Contact: www.loretocentre.org.uk

ALTON DAY OF RENEWAL (ADoRe)

25 July 2026: Zoom meeting. *'His Banner Over Us is Love'*. Responding to God's invitation to His heavenly banquet. Speaker: Russ Fairman.

22 August 2026: Zoom meeting. Love Mercy Responding to God's mercy to us by forgiving others. Speaker: Fr Gareth Leyshon.

19 September 2026: Zoom meeting. Healing: Love in Action Stepping out in faith and love to pray for people. Speaker: Ros Powell.

24 October 2026: The Heart of Loneliness is Love. Sainthood is for ordinary people! In-person, all-day meeting at English Martyrs Church, Reading.

28 November 2026: Zoom meeting. The Power of Love. How to have victory in spiritual warfare. Speaker: Joe Livingston.

Contact: www.altonrenewal.org

HOUSE OF PRAYER, East Molesey

25 July 2026, 10.00am - 4.00pm. *'Staying Sane in Insane Times'*. Led by Simon Parke.

Thursday 30 July 2026, 7.00pm - Sunday 2 August, 3.00pm. *'The Word was made flesh: Contemplation and the Alexander Technique.'* Led by Margaret Meehan.

Friday 7 August 2026, 7.00pm - Sunday 9 August, 3.00pm. *'Longing for God: Individually Guided Retreat'*. Led by the House of Prayer Team.

Friday 4 September 2026, 7.00pm - Sunday 6 September, 3.00pm. *'Longing for God: Individually Guided Retreat'*. Led by the House of Prayer Team.



Directors' News 3

Friday 18 September 2026, 7.00pm - Sunday 20 September, 3.00pm. Entering the Kingdom of God as a little child. Led by Anne Booth.

26 September 2026, 10.00am - 4.00pm. Praying with all of ourselves. Led by Karen Wellman.

Friday 2 October 2026, 7.00pm - Sunday 4 October, 3.00pm. Open Door Retreat: Training Retreat Weekend. Led by Tina Quinn and Sarah van Wely.

Friday 9 October 2026, 10.00am - 1.00pm. Quiet Morning: Praying the Psalms. Led by Kerry Penson.

Friday 9 October 2026, 7.00pm - Sunday 11 October, 3.00pm. Longing for God: Individually Guided Retreat. Led by the House of Prayer Team.

Sunday 18 October, 6.00pm - Sunday 25 October 2026, 10.00am. Resting in Presence: An Intensive Journey into Centering Prayer. Led by Jill Benet.

Tuesday 27 October 2026, 7.00pm - 8.15pm and 6 following Tuesdays. *'Lord, Teach Us To Pray'*. Seven-week course on prayer. Led by Audrey Hamilton.

Wednesday 28 October 2026, 10.00am - 4.00pm and 5 following Wednesdays. Icon-making workshop. Led by Cari Bridgen.

Saturday 31 October 2026, 10.00am - 4.00pm: Living from the Heart: Praying with Edith Stein. Led by Kerry Penson.

Friday 6 November 2026, 7.00pm - Sunday 8 November 2026, 3.00pm: Longing for God: Individually Guided Retreat. Led by the House of Prayer Team.

Friday 20 November 2026, 10.00am - Sunday 22 November, 3.00pm: Silence and Stillness - Music and Dance. Led by Brijji Waterfield.

Saturday 28 November 2026, 10.00am - 4.00pm. The Coming of our God. Led by Brian Purfield.

Website: www.christian-retreat.org

ST. ANDREW'S RETREAT CENTRE

Sisters of St Andrew's, 99 Belmont Hill, London, SE13 5DY

At St. Andrew's, our small retreat centre in South London, we wish to offer some space and quiet for days, workshops, retreats, to nurture our faith and our relationship with God.

Retreats

Come for some hours or days of quiet retreat on your own, with or without personal accompaniment. Our programme for the coming months also has some suggestions:

Sunday 26 July - Tuesday 4 August 2026: An Urban Oasis Silent Retreat. This is a residential individually guided retreat. Minimum 3 days.

Saturday 26 September 2026: *'Creator of all that is, Seen and unseen.'* With Sister Regula.

Friday 23 October - Sunday 25 October 2026: Weekend silent retreat individually guided with the sisters.

Saturday 31 October 2026: Ignatian workshop: *'The Making of Bread'*, with Mary Chamberlin and sister Marie-Christine.

Saturday 28 November 2026: A Quiet Pause in Advent. A Sacred Journey of Waiting. Preparing for Christmas with Sister Marie-Christine.

Please contact us well in advance if you are thinking of joining us for one of these events. Subscribe to or unsubscribe from our newsletter, send an email to welcome@sisters-of-st-andrew.com.

Directors' News 4

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES NETWORK

The Triune God: Their Movement in the Spiritual Exercises

Monday 10 August - Friday 14 August 2026, Hinsley Hall, Leeds.

Contact: conference26@spiritualexercisesnetwork.uk

Praying the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises over nine months

September 2026 - May 2027. Fortnightly in person at St. Katharine's, Parmoor, RG9 6NN. Mondays 1.30pm- 3.30pm.

Group and one-to-one Spiritual Direction

Contact oxfordsen@btinternet.com to express an interest.

KAIROS SPIRITUALITY CENTRE, ROEHAMPTON

Silent Preached Retreats

18 - 25 August 2026: Fr. Thomas Kulandaismy, MSFS, *'Stories from the Shadows: Lesser-Known Old Testament Biblical Figures that Inspired Us'*.

10 - 14 September 2026: Bishop John Crowley. *"For I am certain of this . . . that nothing can come between us and the love of God."* (Romans 8:38-39)

6 - 13 October 2026: Canon John Udris *'Open to me the gates of holiness.'* (Psalm 118:19)

Advent Triduum

28 November - 2 December 2026: Fr. Matt Blake, OCD. *'Entering more deeply into the spirit and meaning of Advent'*.

5 - 9 December 2026: Bishop John Crowley - *'Come, Lord Jesus'*.

Individually Guided Retreats - Led by The Kairos Team. *"If only you knew what God is offering."* (John 4:10)

31 July - 7 August 2026: 6-Day IGR

23 October - 1 November 2026: 8-day IGR: Hear the invitation of Jesus as he says to you . . . *"Come aside by yourself to a deserted place and rest awhile...If only you knew what God is offering."*

Day of Prayer for Young Adults (16 - 19 years) 3 October 2026:

This is led by the Kairos Team and is an opportunity to meet with other young people and enjoy a day of prayer, reflection, input, sharing and activities. A chance to explore your own faith and relationship with God.

Weekend Events - minimum of 8

18 - 20 September 2026: Fr. Hugh Lagan, SMA, workshop - *'The Awakened Leader'*. For anyone in church leadership roles - ideally suited to diocesan and congregational leaders.

16 - 18 October 2026: Fr. Gary McCloskey retreat. *"I will make the young their leaders."* (Isaiah 3:4) Saints Carlo Acutis, Maria Goretti, and Giorgio Frassati are our Spiritual Guides.

Website: www.thekairoscentre.co.uk/contact-us

Chemin Neuf Community: This is a Catholic community with an ecumenical vocation. Sclerder Abbey, Sclerder Lane, Looe, Cornwall, PL13 2JD.

Cana Summer Week: 26 July - 1 August 2026: Drawn from Ignatian Spirituality, this is an opportunity for a couple to rekindle their love, feel refreshed and deepen and strengthen their relationship. Within a safe environment, children are looked after with structured activities.

Events, Retreats and Resources

BENEDICTINE

Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton, Reading
English Benedictine Congregation under the Patronage of Saint Edmund, King & Martyr.
www.douaiabbey.org.uk

Quarr Abbey, Ryde, Isle of Wight
A Catholic Benedictine Monastery that offers hospitality and a range of activities and events.
www.quarrabbey.org

Worth Abbey, Crawley, East Sussex
An English Benedictine Monastery. The 'Open Cloister' is the Abbey's programme of weekend and mid-week retreats, open to both men and women. The Retreat Centre brochure is available online.
www.worth.net

The Lay Community of St. Benedict (LCSB) Lay Benedictines
The Lay Community of St. Benedict (LCSB) is dedicated to the Gospel and the spirituality of St. Benedict. Members are married, single, men or women, young and old. Includes lay people and those called to religious ministry. For daily prayer times click on
www.lcsb.uk

CARMELITE

Carmelite - Order of Discalced Carmelites UK, Carmelite Spirituality Centre, Carmelite Priory - Boars Hill, Oxford
Provides an extensive range of resources such as online talks and retreats, lectures, courses, such as the *Living Prayer course - a course in contemplative prayer and living*.
www.carmelite.uk.net

JESUIT

London Centre for Ignatian Spirituality Mount Street Jesuit Centre
www.londonjesuitcentre.org

St. Beuno's Jesuit Spirituality Centre, North Wales
St. Beuno's provides a wide range of Individually Guided Retreats including online, themed retreats and training courses, such as *Retreat Giving and Spiritual Guidance*. It provides courses in Spiritual Direction, Spiritual Accompaniment, and Prayer Guiding.
www.beunos.com
01745 583444

London Centre for Spiritual Direction
LCSD is an international centre, based in London. It works to connect people with a spiritual director, train spiritual directors and provide ongoing development.
www.lcsd.org.uk

Sarum College, Salisbury

Sarum College is an ecumenical Christian institution. It offers a range of day courses, short courses, modules and postgraduate study, such as MA Christian Spirituality. Examples of courses and modules include Foundations and Forms of Christian Spirituality, Spirituality, Health and Wellbeing, Spiritual Development in Context. A two-year programme in Spiritual Direction offers a balanced learning environment, blending personal and spiritual formation with skills development.

www.sarum.ac.uk

Wisdom Centre Retreat and Conference Centre, Romsey

The Wisdom Centre offers a wide range of day retreats, activities and events.

www.wisdomhouseromsey.org.uk

Catholic Spirituality Network

Promotes the awareness of retreats and helps people develop their own spiritual life within the Catholic community. It is one of the denominational member groups of the Retreat Association.

www.csn.retreats.org.uk

PRAYER RESOURCES

Centre for Action and Contemplation

Daily meditations and online courses.

www.cac.org

Magnificat

The Magnificat is a spiritual guide to help you develop your prayer life, grow in your spiritual life, find a way to a more profound love for Christ, and participate in the holy Mass with greater fervour.

us.magnificat.net/home/discover



Dear *Spirituality News*



LET US KNOW YOUR THOUGHTS

Please feel free to comment on the contents of *Spirituality News*,
suggest topics which you would like to read, or share news.
spiritualitynewsletter@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

NEVER MISS A COPY - SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Click on the link to subscribe to *Spirituality News*.
<https://forms.office.com/r/qYBvqBTz8d>

ANY QUESTIONS?

If you want to unsubscribe from our mailing list, or if you have a query about the
newsletter please email:
spirituality@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

For information about Spiritual Direction, please email:
spiritualdirectorsnetwork@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth
Spiritual Formation Team

