

From the National Chair

Mindful in May!

Across my facebook page, I am seeing regular posts to be *Mindful In May*.

It reminded me of the practice of taking a regular solitude day. Especially in my time in Novitiate in the late 1980's, each Friday until after lunch, would be a solitude day (after lunch we would spend the afternoon doing our "charges" – another word for cleaning!) Today my solitude is 24 hours once a month, with a colleague (spiritual director), where we peer direct one another – or rather try to open ourselves to listen more closely to what God is calling each of us. We both move away from our routines and daily tasks.

Whether it's mindfulness, contemplative prayer, centring prayer, it's all an attempt to listen more closely to God in our lives.

During one of my solitude days, as I was reflecting on the words from the most recent Professional Development with Dr. Joe McHugh, I remembered these words from Brian Gallagher's book :
"Taking God to Heart: A Living Spirituality."

Spiritual directors,
like all of us,
need to be aware
of the work
of God's Spirit
and any spirits
not of God
in their own lives,
if they are to ensure
that their own unfreedoms
do not affect
their listening to us. ¹



Photo: pixabay.com

With every blessing,
Rita Malavisi


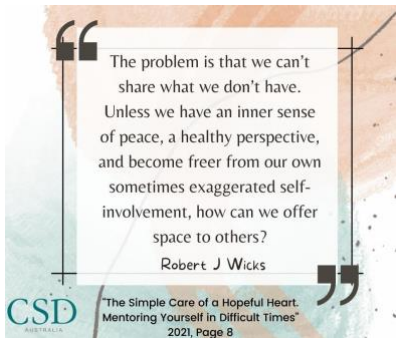

¹ Gallagher, Brian. *Taking God to Heart: A Living Spirituality*. St. Paul's Publications, 2008, pg. 56.

CSD Australia News

Social Media

In April, CSD Australia relaunched its presence on Social Media – Facebook and Instagram.

There is a post three times each week.

Members Mondays: Profiles of our Members	Wednesday Wonderings: Inspiring words from one of our spiritual writers	Freebie Fridays: Showcasing a range of free apps, emails, newsletters or retreats
		

If you would like to contribute to any of these, please feel free to contact Karen at communications@csdaustralia.com
Twitter is also being worked on at the moment.

Like our Facebook Page – <https://fb.me/CSDAustralia>
Follow our Instagram – <https://www.instagram.com/csdaustralia/>

Membership

Membership renewals are due at the end of June. Renewal notices will be sent at the end of May. Certificates will only be issued once payment and renewal forms have been returned and approved by the CSD Admin Group.

New Member Drive

This is a great time to have a “New Member” drive. Do you know someone who has recently graduated from one of the recognised spiritual direction programs? If so, recommend them to join CSD Australia. Keep an eye out for an email next week about the benefits for you, when someone you have recommended becomes a member.



CSD Australia Members

Voices of New Members

Stephen Hanly

By joining CSD Australia I hope to develop skills and to connect with people from many places sharing in the ministry of spiritual direction. It has been a couple of months now since I graduated from Siloam at Heart of Life, where I had the privilege and blessing of journeying with some awesome people. During this time, one most important thing became evident – that Jesus, my mate, has and is always there for me. I continue to discover the skills to help others discover the same adventure, as I wait in sacred silence, and listen to the heart of those with whom I journey.



Kim Mannix

Mine has been a winding ministry journey over many years in contexts of teaching, pastoral ministry in parishes, hospitals, aged care and currently in a parent liaison role in a NSW College. Having recently completed the life-changing Siloam program at Heart of Life, I've joined CSD to connect with a network of other spiritual directors, to draw on the wisdom of their experiences and to access the wonderful opportunities offered for on-going formation and personal development.



Kathleen Ward

I joined CSD as I'm looking to be connected to others in the Spiritual Direction community and also I am grateful for the opportunity for on-going Professional Development.

Profile of a Member

Anne McCutcheon

As a life-long Anglican, I had come to regard spiritual direction as the preserve of the clergy, and only really appropriate for lay people at times of crisis, discernment or heavy responsibility. So I'm a relative late-comer to this wonderful ministry.

My journey began when I discovered the treasure that is the House of Prayer in Townsville. My introduction to this beautiful community, in its idyllic setting, was through the Enneagram. Then, in 2018, I began a two-year program in the Ministry of Contemplative Spiritual Direction.

I had not long retired after a 40 year career in Social Work and while spiritual direction took me on a new and exciting pathway, I recognized many of the signposts along the way. My treasured association with the House of Prayer continues and I now both receive and offer Direction within that community. My commitment to the Anglican church continues and, within that community, I am trying (gently!) to de-mystify a ministry that has so enriched my life.



Favourite Scripture: John 4, Jesus meets the woman at the well.

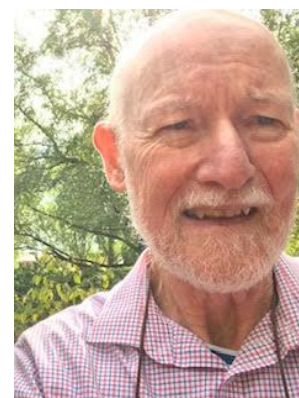
Favourite Book: "All the Light We Cannot See" by Anthony Doerr

Favourite Movie: "Death in Venice" (1971)

Memorable Moment: Sitting on an ice floe, watching penguins play in the sunshine, during a trip to Antarctica with my late husband.

Gerard Bennett

Studying at Heart of Life in 1996 Sue Richardson suggested I do Siloam. I said, "I don't think I can really listen to others share their stories without experience of suffering in my life!" Now I'd say; "Be careful what you wish for!" My life has been blessed by privilege – teaching, years of living in Africa, working with men with HIV/AIDS, hospital Chaplaincy, student counselling, living in L'Arche communities... Now spiritual direction – a privileged listening space. I feel that I am finally coming home to myself. My gifts are for community living, deep listening. Knowing I'm loved, loveable and loving, I am gentle and generous. I live a contemplative life-style and enjoy walking in nature, reflective writing and creating community.



Favourite Scripture: Eph 4:15 "Speak the truth in love"
Lk 24:32 "were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking with us on the road?"

Favourite Book: "Jesus: An Historical Approximation" by Jose A Pagola

Favourite Movie: One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

Memorable Moment: The whole of living in L'Arche

Bernadette Miles

I was introduced to spiritual direction in 2000 when I stumbled across the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. I remember leaving my first spiritual direction session thinking how wonderful it would be to be able to do the work of spiritual direction – but I wasn't a nun or a priest so who would come to me. Twenty-two years later, spiritual direction and spiritual formation are my full-time work. Currently I work with Marlene Marburg at Kardia Formation P/L where we offer companionship of empowerment for women and men through spiritual direction, Spiritual Exercises, supervision, and various programs for personal and leadership development.



My passion is the integration of spiritual direction with leadership and organisational development which was the topic of my PhD research and my recently published book *Strengthening Spirit-Releasing Potential: Spiritual Direction for Leadership and Organisational Development*. My current research project is with teachers to evaluate the influence spiritual direction can have on teacher wellbeing, resilience, and identity.



Favourite Scripture: John 10:10, I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full.

Favourite Book: “Urgings of the Heart: A Spirituality of Integration” by Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon.

Favourite Movie: “The Sound of Music” (I remember when I was 7 year old, seeing that for the first time and thinking to myself how amazing it is that God values mothers as much as God values nuns!)

Memorable Moment: Seeing my first glacier on a cruise around the Norwegian Fiords. Breathtaking and awesome.

Brianne Falconieri

I am a Spiritual Director and work as the Coordinator of the House of Prayer & Spirituality in Townsville. I found spiritual direction whilst I was undertaking a Period of Discernment for Ministry with the Uniting Church in 2017. I discovered a great affinity and passion for Spiritual Direction and the potential it has for personal spiritual transformation and growth. I am one of many pilgrims to graduate from the Tending the Holy Spiritual Directors training program here at the House of Prayer. In 2020 I interned for a year and then accepted the Coordinator Role in 2021. I have a passion for retreat giving, using art to explore spirituality and spiritual direction. I am a wife, mother to two teenage boys and currently studying a Masters of Spirituality through the University of Divinity.



Favourite Scripture: Psalm 46, God is our refuge and strength

Favourite Book: The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse by Charlie Mackesy

Favourite Movie: What Dreams May Come

Memorable Moment: Spotting a very rare cloud formation from the back yard with my sons.

CSD Australia Professional Development

Professional Development 28th May 9.30am - 11.00am

Come together (on zoom) to discuss the latest podcasts with Brene Brown and Richard Rohr, and its impact on us as spiritual directors. **Spirituality, Certitude, and Infinite Love.**

This is a two part series - with this podcast being released just last week.

<https://brenebrown.com/podcast/spirituality-certitude-and-infinite-love-part-1-of-2/>

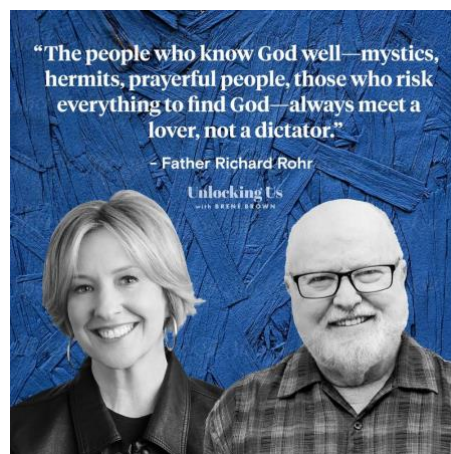
<https://brenebrown.com/podcast/spirituality-certitude-and-infinite-love-part-2-of-2/>

It will be important that you have listened to the podcasts before the discussion on 28th May.

Father Richard graciously expands on just a few of the quotes that have turned Brene Brown's world upside down, sharing his thoughts on what it means to be humbled by the mysteries of faith; how we often misinterpret God as a dictator, not a lover; and how we're ill-equipped to grasp the infinite nature of God and God's love.

The following are the three quotes Brene uses in the first podcast.

- People who've had any genuine spiritual experience always know that they don't know. They are utterly humbled before mystery. They are in awe before the abyss of it all, in wonder at eternity and depth, and a Love, which is incomprehensible to the mind.
- The people who know God well—mystics, hermits, prayerful people, those who risk everything to find God—always meet a lover, not a dictator.
- God is always bigger than the boxes we build for God, so we should not waste too much time protecting the boxes.



The process on the Saturday morning will be to begin with a time in prayer, then go to breakout rooms to discuss these or similar questions:

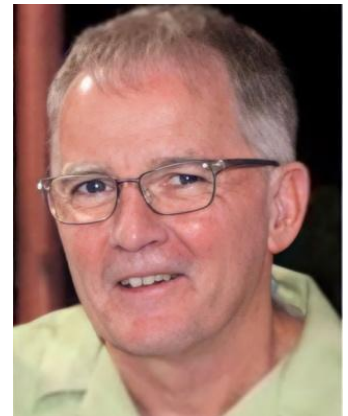
1. How has this program challenged or affirmed your thinking about your own faith?
2. What was your reaction to the podcast, what questions do you have around your Spiritual Direction practice?
3. If Richard Rohr would be asked to write another book, what do you think it should be about? What title would you give it?

March Professional Development Feedback

Here are some comments from participants from the last professional development.

Jungian Concept of the 'shadow' and its impact on Spiritual Direction with Fr Joe McHugh

- Thank you so much for organising this program which I have benefited so much for my personal growth and my ministry.
- I particularly liked the exploration of ways the shadow leaks through, how to become more acquainted with my own shadow and the two exercises at the end.
- Topic fitted in well with my interest in Enneagram. Particularly helpful were the signs of "shadow" in a supervisee, and also the pathways into our own "shadow".
- Input was clear, to the point, easy to listen to.
- Fr Joe's expertise in this subject.
- The whole session was valuable, the presenter clearly knew the material well and was able to communicate the topic well to people who may be unfamiliar with Jung's work.
- Made me aware of my own shadows and how they come into the fore during a spiritual direction sessions.

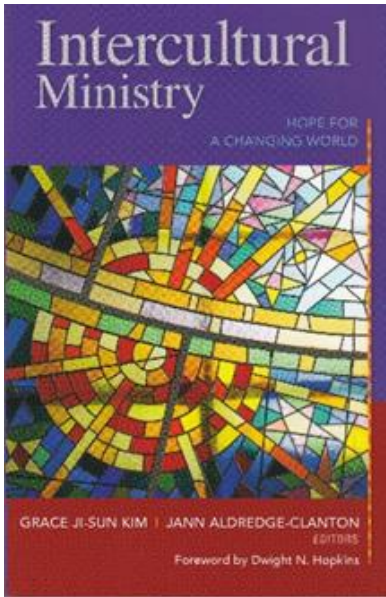


Book Reviews

“Intercultural Ministry: Hope for a Changing World”

By Grace Ji Sun Kim and Jann Aldredge - Clanton (Eds)

Reviewed by Gail Reneker : Sefton, NSW

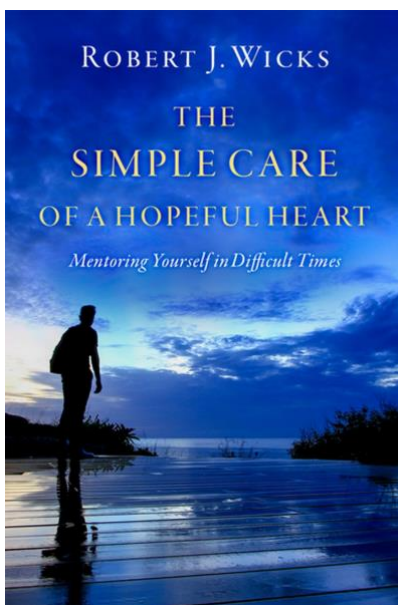


This book presents us with a collection of essays written by pastoral leaders telling of their personal experience of ministering within communities of diverse cultures in American churches – experiences with relevance in Australia. The writers offer Scriptural and theological reflections on their experience and the call being made to the church, as one contributor puts it, to become ‘the beloved community’. It is suggested by one that what the church needs is not a multicultural ministry but rather an intercultural community. The significant challenges that this poses, e.g. the variety of perceptions of what this means, threats to power and privilege, racial and ethnic tensions, toleration of difference, are experienced and described in different ways. One gift required, and one pertinent to us as spiritual directors, is cultural competency. Mindful of the Pentecost experience it is described as ‘understanding deeply the experience of another while still being rooted in your own cultural reality’. In general, the book provides an invitation to readers to move out of their comfort zones!

“The Simple Care of a Hopeful Heart: Mentoring Yourself in Difficult Times”

By Robert J Wicks

Reviewed by Gail Paxman : Melbourne, VIC



This book has come to me during a time of personal transition and has spoken into the ups and downs I am experiencing in life. Following the recent CSD presentation by Robert J Wicks, this book offered me compassion, hope, structure, and insight to move forward.

It is a book speaking to Spiritual Directors, and others in the helping and healing professions, as we deal with issues life presents to us, including the impact of the pandemic on ourselves. Offering fifty brief but engaging lessons, this book invites you to contemplate what is impacting you and to listen to yourself. Each lesson is concise and offers approaches to mentor yourself, with courage and commitment, through whatever is going on for you, so you can emerge in humility, wisdom and compassion with a deeper embrace of true love.

This is not a “read it once” book, I will revisit it as I experience future life challenges because it offers me a way to mentor myself through, and reinvigorate myself during life’s inevitable storms.

AECSD News

CSD Australia representative on AECSD Clare Shearman

My thought about spending three days away from the office to attend my first AECSD meeting caused me some concern. Firstly, how could I not be in the office for three days? (I was in week eight in a new role as Director at Heart of Life.) Secondly, I was in the midst of a big work issue which was taking every last drop of energy I had. I received nothing but warmth and understanding when I expressed my concerns to the council, who assured me it was okay to come as I was able. This gave me the freedom to do just that. I was able to attend to the work matter and get to the meeting.



What I found through my attendance and through the gentle and astute facilitation of our time together by Jill McCorquodale was akin to a warm bath. I felt a sense of belonging, of welcome, and of acceptance. I felt as though I had found my people! The process of decision making at AECSD is thoughtful, contemplative and collaborative. It is a great process to be a part of and to learn from. Without doing heaps of reading, or looking at past minutes of meetings, I was inducted into the organisation and left with a great sense of who AECSD is and what it is about. I can report back to CSD Australia members that the many facets of spiritual direction formation in Australia are deeply cared about, very much considered and held by the leadership of AECSD.

I am privileged to have been selected to represent CSD Australia in this way and look forward to serving our membership through my representation. Please feel free to contact me with any feedback or matters that you would like me to take forward on your behalf as I take up this role.

Email director@heartoflife.melbourne

Leaders of Spiritual Direction Networks :

The Leaders of Spiritual Direction Networks met on Wednesday 27th April. It is a pleasure to welcome and congratulate the new Chair of AECSD, Irene Alexander. Here's something about Irene to help to know her better.

Irene Alexander has a background in psychology, missions and counselling. She is a spiritual direction formator in Australia (Stillpoint Art of Spiritual Direction) and the Philippines (Asian Theological Seminary). Born in New Zealand she now lives in Brisbane. Her passion is that people would know themselves deeply, become all they can richly, and know God intimately. Irene has two adult sons and five grandchildren. She has written several books including *Practicing the Presence of Jesus*; *Awakening Desire*; and *To Whom Shall We Go?*



Discernment Circles

The spiritual direction network across Australia has responded positively to the call to register for a discernment circle to listen to the wisdom of the group in considering a National Register and what that means. The Spiritual Directions National Register working party will meet in late May, once all the groups have had a chance to meet, to gather the wisdom and desires from the discernment circles. Around one hundred gathered in eighteen discernment circles. Here are some comments from our members of their experience participating in the discernment circles.

Maureen O'Halloran

The Discernment Circle was a rich, fruitful contemplative conversation, with ample time given for deep listening to one another. There was sincere harmony in the group's responses to the discernment questions – a sure sign that the Holy Spirit was working amongst us.

Mark Freeman

Our time together mirrored many aspects of spiritual direction in that there were elements of the present and the future. Participants were diverse, yet the respectful deep listening yielded imaginative perspectives for a future that felt both wise and exciting.

Mary Murphy

In participating in the Discernment Circle led so skilfully by Irene Alexander I have noticed and enjoyed the emergence of two graces:

1. Context – that of engaging prayerfully and deeply with spiritual directors I have never met before, a real blessing and example of 'network weaving.'
2. This way of proceeding and progressing the perhaps beckoning call of a National Register feels absolutely Spirit-led.

I believe we are definitely on the path with open minds and hearts to where this process may lead.

Other News

From Heart of Life :



Interludes of Your Making (in-person reflection event)

(Margaret Trainor, BA Textile Art, M Therapeutic Arts, Grad Dip Spiritual Direction)

Saturday 21 May 2022, 10am-3pm

\$60 (BYO lunch; morning and afternoon tea provided)

You are invited to step aside for a personal interlude – a day to be supported as you quietly listen to your heart and allow the Spirit within to lead you gently forward.

For bookings : <http://www.heartoflife.melbourne/bookings/seminars-and-courses-2022/>

From Kardia :



90-Day Full Spiritual Exercises Retreat

Directors: Rachel McLoughlin and Colleen Johnson

16 May – 28 August 2022 (with a break in the retreat 25 June – 10 July 2022)

Grace Upon Grace: Savouring the Spiritual Exercises through the Arts by Marlene Marburg, is an inclusive and contemporary retreat normally prayed in daily life over thirty weeks. During this ninety day retreat, we will pray each of the thirty weeks over three days (instead of seven days) with two one-hour prayer sessions per day.

For bookings : <https://www.kardia.com.au/programs/retreats/90-day-retreat/>

From Wellsprings :

Introduction to the Enneagram 1 & 2 with Marg Loftus

Enneagram 1: 11th May from 10.00am till 3.00pm

Enneagram 2: 8th June from 10.00am till 3.00pm



We're on a unique journey toward self-awareness but we often forget to look at the world from different perspectives. The Enneagram explains the 'why' of how we think, feel and behave and begins to change the way we see ourselves and others. As a sacred map to the soul, it shows us how we can develop our gifts and come to terms with our greatest interpersonal emotional and spiritual challenges, pointing us to our True Self. These workshops introduce the nine personality types of the Enneagram.

For Bookings for Enneagram 1 :

https://www.wellspringcentre.org.au/index.cfm?module=event&pagemode=indiv&page_id=1536839

For Bookings for Enneagram 2:

https://www.wellspringcentre.org.au/index.cfm?module=event&pagemode=indiv&page_id=1536842