

CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS AUSTRALIA

Newsletter September 2023

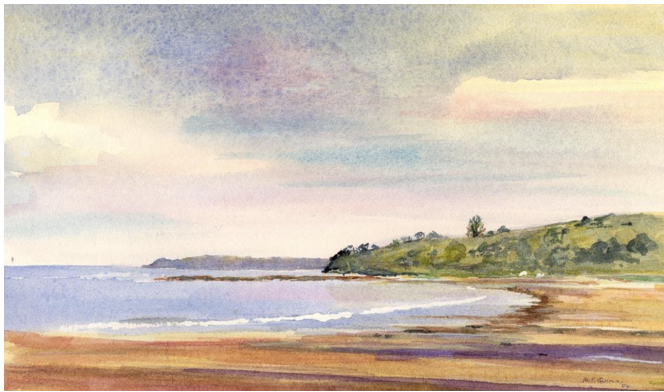
From the National Chair

The Season of Creation

Judy Cannato was an American Catholic author, retreat facilitator, and spiritual director who uses the term 'radical amazement' from Abraham Heschel's belief that "wonder is the proper response to the Divine. Radical Amazement is above all an invitation to live contemplatively, to get caught up in an awe-filled vision that evokes an immediate, active and compassionate response".^[1]

Cannato continues: "that the numerous discoveries made by science over the last century have provided us with new insights into the story of creation, and as this new story becomes a part of our awareness, it challenges us to expand the way we think about and respond to all the life around us."^[2] Some of us were able to engage in the Professional development session facilitated by Peter Hay just on Saturday. What an inspiration it was, and time of being contemplative.

In 2015, the Holy Father, Pope Francis published the encyclical letter *Laudato Si* (Care for our common home). Thomas Berry, a Passionist Priest, said over ten years ago "the universe is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects." What does that mean for me today?



Artist: Therese Quinn

O Light of God,
anointed by your morning light
I lift my spirit to receive the gift of this new day.
Open my eyes to the beauty that surrounds me,
that I may walk through this day
with the kind of awareness that calls for grateful living.
In all of creation let me see the brightness of your face.
Shine in my heart and on my life,
filling me with joy, creativity, hope and laughter.
Draw me into the radiant glory of your presence
and into the small lights of those
with whom I live and work.
Inspire me to take time for those who are discouraged
May I live the kind of presence that
enables others to feel at home.
Great Dawn of God, hear my prayer. Amen
~ Macrina Wiederkehr

With every blessing on your ministry
Rita Malavisi rsj
National Chair

^[1] Cannato, *Radical Amazement*, pg. 13

^[2] Cannato, *Radical Amazement*, pg. 10

CSD Australia News

CSD Insurance Policy Renewal

The current policy expires on 31st October 2023. Participation is open to all CSD Australia members who may not be covered by their workplace, their religious order, or in some other way.

For members already on the insurance who wish to renew will receive an email mid-October advising of the premium and the process of renewal for the coming year.

For anyone wishing to stop their insurance or who would like to join please email [Rita](#) or [Karen](#) who will be able to assist.

For more information about the policy please [refer to the CSD website](#).



New Members Gathering

On Wednesday 19th July a group of our newer CSD members gathered online. Not only was it an informative gathering, it was lively with sharing, conversation and insights. Rita guided an open reflection using the front image of the CSD website. Afterwards there was a conversation around where CSD could help along with identifying some of the challenges confronted so far as Spiritual Directors. We thought we would share these insights with awareness many have arisen in conversation, professional development sessions. We hold the invitation for the conversation to continue.



Where CSD can help

- ❖ Mentoring through experience and sharing wisdom
- ❖ Older wisdom could be channelled to where needed
- ❖ Continue to offer professional development sessions

A few challenges named included

- ❖ Awareness of self-identity as a Spiritual Director especially in the context of cultural diversity.
- ❖ Having the label 'Spiritual Director' especially the word director and what this represents.
- ❖ Creating a pamphlet to give to directees with helpful information, resources and key questions.
- ❖ Charging directees and understanding this from the perspective of 'what can I offer?' What is a suitable amount to charge? Is there a guide?

CSD Magazine Submissions

Our annual Magazine is starting to take shape and what an edition it will be! This year's theme is '**Faithful Times**'.

We extend an invitation to all members to submit a reflection, poem, art work, photographs, book or movie review to be included.

Submit your contribution [here](#) or [email](#) by the end of September.



CSD Australia Members

Voices of New Members

Imelda O’Loughlin

A few weeks ago, I participated in a CSD professional development opportunity: “Barriers to Contemplative Listening: Enneagram Perspective.” This was my first experience of CSD and I decided that I would very much like to be a member - hence my application.



Andrea Grant

Becoming a Spiritual Director has been an ongoing journey of growth. I love to talk about this ministry with other Spiritual Directors to continue to open my mind and heart to the ways I can offer this ministry.



Annette Arnold

I joined CSD with the intention of joining a spiritual direction community in Australia.



Kevin Gadd

After completing the Emmanuel Spiritual Direction Formation Programme in Newcastle (2019-2022) I am looking forward to growing in this ministry of being attentive to the presence of God in our life.



Mark Walsh

I joined CSD Australia after attending a wonderful session with Pádraig Ó Tuama. I look forward to being part of a community of people engaged in the ministry of accompaniment.



Profile of a Member

Margaret Wiseman

Married to Brian for 58 years. We have two children, five grandchildren and one great granddaughter. I am very much a part of their lives. I graduated as a Spiritual Director in 2000 at Sydney Centre for Religious Development. Sister Pauline Ferguson rsj, was the Director of the Centre. Our formation was based on Fostering the Contemplative Listening and guided by Bill Connolly sj, who I met in Boston. I also did a course at SCR D and received a certificate in Supervision of Spiritual Directors. After Graduation I spent a few years on the team at SCR D for the formation of Spiritual Directors. I am also part of JISA team. I continue to offer Spiritual Direction and supervision to Directees and Directors. I am Chaplain in a Women's prison and a better chaplain for my formation in Contemplative listening.



Favourite Scripture: Matthew 28: 16-20

Favourite Book: The Universal Christ by Richard Rohr

Favourite Movie: The Sound of Music

Memorable Moment: Holding my great granddaughter the day she was born.
Four generations of first born girls.

Elizabeth Sopher

With a background in missions, nursing, and counselling, it was only quite recently in the 2000's that I learned about the formal practice of Spiritual Direction and subsequently completed the Art of Spiritual Direction course at Brisbane, Stillpoint Centre in 2017-2018. For me, with my tendency to want to problem solve and fix, Spiritual Direction has not only been personally transformative in 'finding rest for my soul', but also informs my way of being with others whether in companioning in spiritual direction, pastoral care, or everyday relationships. Married to Philip for 30 years, we have two children and two grandchildren who are 3 years and 16 months of age.



Favourite Scripture: Matthew 11: 28 - 30

Favourite Book: Let your life speak by Parker J. Palmer

Favourite Movie: The Sound of Music

Memorable Moment: A recent return trip to Tasmania with its history, intriguing wildlife and glorious scenery after 40 years.

Honorary Members

Tess Veenker

The Ritual of 'Letting Go'

It was with great sadness that after 3 decades of being involved in the precious and sacred ministry of Spiritual Accompaniment I found myself drawn into a ritual of 'letting go'. I visited Millgrove and slowly walked the labyrinth there. I gently carried the names of each of my pilgrims with me remembering the sacredness of our journey and then handed them back to God. It was an aching experience of grief and letting go.

The ache itself speaks of the significance and necessity of this ministry. How blessed and fortunate I have been to have experienced this treasured time with my pilgrims!

As I now walk into a new path of leadership, I urge each one of you to gaze deeply into the beauty of this ministry. Hold it with reverence and humble respect knowing that it is a graced call. My pilgrims have left their fingerprints in my heart. As I now carry them with me on this new road.

I am deeply honoured and appreciative of CSD for inviting me to remain as an Honorary member for it enables me to have an invisible thread of connection with CSD – thank you! Blessings to all as you continue in this sacred ministry.



Chris Ryan

My vocation as a spiritual director arose initially after unexpected grace directed me out of a wilderness (of depression). In the years that followed, I have learnt that the Spirit's ability to intervene powerfully, even building working relationships with a number of heavily accented foreign seminarians, was far greater than any occasional lack of 'spiritual director confidence' on my part. I was doubly blessed by my training as a director, as it also led to a very rewarding parallel career as a pastoral practitioner.



Favourite Scripture:

Ps. 61:2 "When my heart sinks,
lead me to the Rock that is higher than I"

Favourite Book:

Into the Light, by Dr John Lerma.
The author is an atheist hospice physician forced to challenge his ideas when confronted with a series of astounding near-death experiences.

Favourite Movie:

Aladdin, Shrek and Inside Out
All make me laugh and cry with recognition.

Memorable Moment:

Recently my son asked me to compose and read a poem for his Berlin wedding. The reading proved to be very tearful and unforgettable.

Carol Tomlinson

My story began in 1973 when a parishioner asked if I would be his director. My experience then was absolutely zilch! Fortunately, this prompted me to find a Director!

Later, I was asked to help lead a number of women through an 'At Home' Ignatian retreat. I had no experience here, either. I was a school teacher! However, I did the retreat myself with guidance, staying just a couple of weeks ahead of those I accompanied! The Spirit worked overtime!

In 1991, the opportunity came to be formed in this ministry by Bill Connolly and Madeleine Birmingham. Thus began the richest time in my life! I have been so blessed by those who have enriched my life journey so much. I remain ever grateful!

Grace Bartolo

I came to the ministry of spiritual direction rather late in my life as a Sister of Mercy, having previously ministered initially as a Teacher, and then in Congregational administration. Finally I had the opportunity to train in, what was and had always been my deep calling – that of Spiritual Direction.

I myself had been very fortunate to be able to make Directed Retreats and benefit from regular spiritual direction over many years. My own experience of Spiritual Direction also taught me much about how to be present to others in this very privileged role. I have now been involved in this ministry for some twenty years or so.



I prefer to think of it as spiritual companioning – walking with someone on their Spiritual journey. I consider it a tremendous privilege to be invited into the deepest and most sacred parts of people's stories. Constantly I am reminded of the deep ways our God leads us and ministers to us. The trust and openness of those with whom I journey calls me to an ever deeper trust and surrender to an all loving God, who I have come to believe and know only ever wants what is for our good. I would have to say that I have received far more than I have given in this sacred ministry.

CSD Australia Professional Development

You are welcome to join all or any of the monthly sessions planned for 2023.

There is no cost or need for members to book.

A zoom link will be sent to all members in the preceding week.

If you would like a friend to join, who is a non member - please see the trybooking link below.

Encounter: The Essence of Interculturality with Cathy Solano

Saturday October 21st 9.30am - 11.00am (AEDT)

Interculturality a theology calling us to embrace the rich diversities that God creates in our world. It is a vision of the kin-dom that Jesus preached, a belief that it is God's dream for creation, and is also the deep yearning of all the peoples of earth.

If we are open to the personal demands required for the process of interculturality we will be moved to address the fears fuelling the many problems of our world such as racism and exploitation.

Interculturality is God's gift to humanity, inspiring us to move beyond merely tolerating the reality of multiculturalism, because being multicultural is not enough! Non members are welcome to join and book through [trybooking](#).

Cost is \$20 for non members.



August Professional Development

Here are some reflective questions which Bernadette presented during the session.

Spiritual Direction for Professional Practice with Bernadette Miles

- How have you witnessed God's companionship of empowerment in your Spiritual Direction practice?
- What might differentiate Spiritual Direction from Supervision when offered in the professional setting?



September Professional Development

On Saturday 2nd September fifty of us gathered exploring Spiritual Direction from the perspective of Cosmogensis guided by Peter Hay. Watch this space for more reflection on this enriching session.

Book Review

“Enneagram Companions: Growing in Relationship and Spiritual Direction”

by Suzanne Zuercher

Reviewed by Patricia Naughton : Croydon Park, New South Wales

This book highlights the strengths and struggles, the giftedness and the compulsions of the various types of individuals studying the Enneagram. The personality types are in groups of three (Triads 2/3/4/s ; 5/6/7/s ; 8/9/1/s).

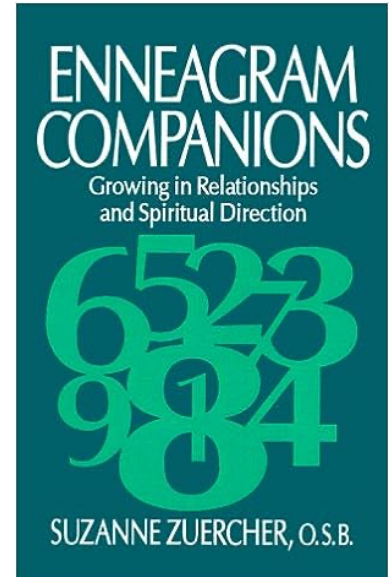
Each Triad presents the three individual Directees and their Director eg. 2Directee, 3 Directee, 4 Directee and 2/3/4/ Director.

The relationships between the director and directee vary according to the different triads they come from, however, in each triad meaningful examples are presented for clarification.

Throughout, each triad emphasis is placed on focusing on the present. As directors grow in self knowledge they are better equipped to assist others who are in the same triad. Directors need to learn that what enables them may not necessarily be of assistance to directees from other stances.

Suzanne’s last statement can be a guide for each of us as directors and directees as she says, “Having written all this, I still offer you these pages, confident there is truth here. The observations flow from years of self-remembering, self-observing, and, I hope, self-understanding.”

She beckons us not simply to read or think about the insights of the Enneagram but “ rather that the Spirit leads us on to broader and deeper awareness’s”.



AECSD News



Australian Ecumenical Council for
Spiritual Direction

About the Council For Spiritual Directors
For Formation Programs
Events and Current Projects Contact Us

Find a Spiritual Director

Date Claimer

The 2024 AECSD Gathering will be held 5-7th July in beautiful Hahndorf, Adelaide. Our theme will be an exploration of the Paschal Mystery: wounds and the healing journey. Please mark the date in your calendar, and watch this space and the [AECSD website](#) for more information!



Call for Nominations

Due to the retirement of a number of current Council members at the end of 2023, the Council warmly invites the community of spiritual directors, spiritual direction associations, networks and formation programs, and individual spiritual directors, to discern and nominate people recognised as leaders in the ministry of spiritual direction to join the AECSD in 2024.

The Commitment is a four-year term, and involvement includes attendance at Council meetings (approx. 4-5 per year, in person and via Zoom) with travel reimbursement available, involvement in the recognition process for formation programs, planning and participation in national gatherings and events, and other roles associated with the work of Council as discerned.

Further criteria for nomination and associated information are all available on the AECSD website. Nominations are due by 1st October.

For more details, please take a look at the [website](#) or [email](#).



Other News

From Heart of Life : Emmaus Supervision Program

Application for 2024/25 intake closes 15th October 2023

The Emmaus Supervision Program has been developed in response to demand for professional supervisors for those in individual ministry. The lecturers and supervisors at Heart of Life foster a discerning approach whereby supervisors-in-formation learn to attend to their supervisees and walk with them as they seek to recognise what may be hidden to them, opening their eyes to their potential for growth in their particular ministry.

The program is open to women and men of varying faith and cultural traditions, who are drawn to support the ministry journey of others, and seek to discern whether they may be called to the ministry of supervision. The program will suit those who are looking to move into this area of work who have at least five years' experience in their particular ministry.

[For more information](#)



Heart of Life

Centre for Spiritual & Pastoral Formation



CHRISTIAN
BROTHERS
OCEANIA PROVINCE



EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
AUSTRALIA



MacKillop
Family
Services

From Christian Brothers, MacKillop Family Services and Edmund Rice Education Australia :

Diversity and Inclusion with James Alison

September 18th, 6.15 pm - 9.00 pm or September 20th, 12.15 pm - 4.30 pm

You are invited to join in this conversation to explore how we might co-create a better world for all through valuing and seeking diversity and inclusion.

James Alison is a Catholic theologian, priest and author. He is well known for his firm but patient insistence on truthfulness in matters of diverse sexualities as an ordinary part of basic Christianity, and for his pastoral outreach through finding ways of engaging people in dialogue.

[For more information](#)

From Kardia : Grace Upon Grace: Eight Day At Home Retreat

October 10th - 18th

Kardia is offering you an invitation to join them in forming a community of prayer during an eight-day retreat while you are at home.

The retreat will be drawn from the book *Grace Upon Grace* by Marlene Marburg. You can make this a silent retreat or a retreat in daily life. You can choose to pray with one or more readings from the daily suggested readings.

Each day the group will meet on zoom for group sharing (no more than five people) with a spiritual director. Upon registration, you will be given simple instructions on how to access and use Zoom.

[For more information](#)

