

THE WEAVINGS

Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle Department for Spirituality

March 2015

FORWARD TOGETHER IN HOPE

On 18 March, the *Forward Together in Hope* team will be releasing the first phase of resources for this process of review and renewal. These should be on the diocesan website by the beginning of the following week. There are lots of ideas for prayer and spirituality among them.

One idea that is capturing people's imaginations is 'Anchors'. This is the name being given to people who pray in their own homes—rather like the anchorites who lived next door to the church of Our Lady and St Cuthbert in Chester-le-Street. There is a leaflet explaining the ministry and a short commissioning liturgy that could be used to honour the importance of this spiritual work and those undertaking it.

Another idea that would be interesting for parishes to think about is that of 'Gem Churches'. This is a term coined by one of our diocesan priests for churches that are open during the day for people to pop in to, to pray or simply to be quiet. Many people will remember when churches were open as a matter of course and they could drop in and spend time with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. There are understandable concerns about security but there are ways around this—even if it is just to enable the church to be open for a short time. Again, a leaflet with some ideas to start with will be available. The Evangelisation Team are also working on resources that could be made available to help those who are not familiar with church buildings.



St Bede's, Jarrow—already a Gem Church

There will also be a leaflet about prayer at meetings. Many of us who go to a lot of church meetings know that they usually start and end with a prayer. The leaflet on prayer at meetings offers an outline for bringing the Word of God into meetings and allowing it and the Holy Spirit a voice during the course of them—and, particularly, when a bit more spiritual energy is needed to overcome issues and difficulties.

Now could also be a good time to think about things in the longer term. You might, for example, think about a parish pilgrimage or retreat day to bring people together. Another idea could be a Week of Accompanied Prayer which helps people to deepen their personal prayer lives but also share something of the experience with others.

Finally, there is a 'launch liturgy'. The first stage of *Forward Together in Hope* is about helping us to gear up for the later and more intense phases. There is no fixed route map! Like the early disciples, we are being called forward together in hope but have no clear idea of just where the Lord is leading us. This liturgy helps us to reflect on this—and also the fact that, wherever we are led, Jesus has promised to be with us always—even to the ends of the age. 



Saturday 20—Sunday 21 June
Venue: Emmaus/Youth Village

Bookings are now being taken for the Diocesan Festival later this year.

A couple of people have mentioned this in passing and surprised us by calling it a 'Youth Festival'! Well, we are certainly making use of the great facilities at Emmaus Youth Village but there are streams for adults, young people and children so there will be something for everyone! There are already Festivals for our schools and it was seeing how much the young people got from them that inspired us to look at offering something for the wider diocesan family.

The Diocesan Festival gives people of all ages and parts of the diocese a chance to come together to hear inspiring speakers and to share their own experiences and ideas with others—as well as simply to enjoy being with like-minded people in praising God and celebrating life as Catholics in our region.

More information from the diocesan website or from the Department!

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Do You Love Me— CTS Bestseller!

A week before the planned talk about the new Bishops' Conference document on spirituality was to be held at the Cloister Café in Newcastle, we had an email asking whether we had any of our initial order of the book as CTS had sold out! We heard later that they had sold over 2000 copies in its first month!

Happily, CTS reprinted the book and so copies were available for those who were able to make the session. This gave the opportunity to look at its contents and get ideas of how it could be used personally or in groups.



If you are interested in learning more or having a similar event locally, get in touch and we will organise something with you!

Catholic Network for Retreats and Spirituality Day Conference

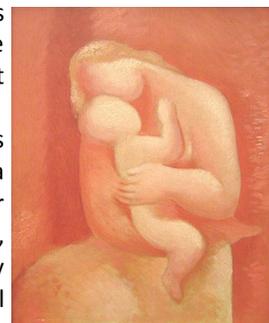
Around 60 people gathered at St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham for a day conference of the Catholic Network for Retreats and Spirituality (CNRS). This is a national body that was established to support people involved in giving retreats and spiritual accompaniment. Each year, CNRS organises a Conference which looks at significant topical issues relating to spirituality and retreats. This year, Rev Dr Andrew Walker led a day looking at the links between psychology and spirituality. Andrew brought a lot of personal experience to his input. He was recently appointed as Director of the St Marylebone Healing & Counselling Centre in London following his work in establishing the London Centre for Spirituality and his long experience as a spiritual director and author.

He explored how recent centuries had seen a separation between "head" and "heart" - the "head" being seen as accessing more objective knowledge and so, in a way, more trustworthy than the "heart" and its feelings. More recent studies in human consciousness are suggesting that this is a false distinction—

something that spirituality and spiritual direction has understood for many years.

The day was an excellent mix of theory and discussion and of deep, contemplative prayer. As Andrew emphasised, spiritual listening—or any deep conversation—comes from the place where two souls truly encounter each other. An understanding of theory and techniques are vital but those who want to accompany or support others need also to cultivate the deep inner silence from which true listening comes. He used a quote from Johannes Tauler, one of the Rhineland mystics which serves as a good reminder of what the spiritual life is about.

'Become a fertile ground for the divine birth. Cherish this deep silence within, nourish it frequently. May God help us to prepare a dwelling place for this noble birth, so that we may all attain spiritual motherhood.'



Centre for Prayer and Mission, Evangelisation Team

16 March—13 April
Display of the Icons
written by local people.
Durham Cathedral

Self-led Prayer service available
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Thursday 2 April (Maundy Thursday)
Straight after the Chrism Mass (12.15-ish)
Central Station

Flash Mob on the Passion
More information from Sr Michael
(0191) 581 3249 or email:
marymichael.lee7@googlemail.com

Saturday 21 March, 10.00am-5.30pm
A Study Day on

"Catholic Perspectives on Poverty"
Ushaw College, Durham DH7 9RH
Pre-booking is essential.
£50 with buffet lunch/ £40 without lunch.
Limited number of concessions available.
To book, or for further details, please
contact Eddie Jarvis:
e.t.jarvis@durham.ac.uk or
0191 334 1656

Holy Island

Saturday 14 March
A Day of Prayer
Led by members of

Catholic Charismatic Renewal.
For more information contact
Pat Kennedy
pat.kennedy@diocesehn.org.uk
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Saturday 28 March 11.30am-4.00pm
A Quiet Day of Prayer

Led by Deacon Jude Newton
and Eileen Richardson
An ideal way to prepare for Holy Week.
More information from
Department for Spirituality

St Antony's Priory, Durham

Saturday 7 March, 10am-1pm
'Reclaiming the Body for our Prayers'
With Paul Golightly
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14 March and 11 April
'Together in Meditation'
Two separate hours of Christian meditation.
More information from
Tel: 0191 384 3747
Email: info@stantonypriory.co.uk

Minsteracres

18 March, 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
Walking retreat
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25 March, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Quiet Day

Led by Rosarie Spence RSM
An opportunity to step aside, listen to
God in scripture and enjoy the peace and
tranquillity of the countryside.
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2 April (6.30pm) - 5 April (2pm)
Holy Week retreat

Join the community on their journey
towards Easter, including time for
reflection and the opportunity to take
part in the liturgies of Holy Week.
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10 April (7pm)-12 April (2pm)
Dancing our calling

Led by Janette Blakemore
Dancing and reflection on the inspiring
words of Irish poet, philosopher and
priest John O'Donohue.
Suitable for beginners.
More information from
01434 673 248
info@minsteracres.org
www.minsteracres.org