

# THE WEAVINGS

Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle Department for Spirituality

March 2014

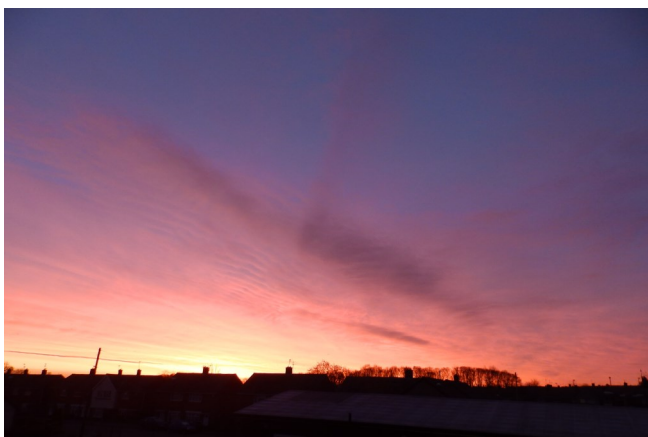
## Lent with Easter

One of the phrases in Pope Francis' Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* that has resonated with quite a few people is very timely as we prepare for the Season ahead: 'There are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter.' (paragraph 6)

Lent is a valuable part of the year. We can all benefit from a time to tighten up our spiritual lives—a spiritual spring-clean for those of us in the northern hemisphere. But there has been a tendency to see it as a gloomy time of penance and doing without. Fifty years ago, the Vatican document, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* reminded us that 'The season of Lent has a twofold character: primarily by recalling or preparing for baptism and by penance, it disposes the faithful, who more diligently hear the word of God and devote themselves to prayer, to celebrate the paschal mystery. This twofold character is to be brought into greater prominence both in the liturgy and by liturgical catechesis. (paragraph 109) Basically, we are reminded that Lent is an important time to recall (or, for some, prepare for) our baptism. This is when we are brought from the darkness of sin into the glorious light of eternal life. It is a great joy and privilege. In the early Church, Lent was the time for final preparations for baptism and is known today as the Period of Purification and Enlightenment for those preparing for baptism at Easter. It was a time that mixed penance with great anticipation: I am willing to fast—to pray—to be more generous because I am preparing for one of the most wonderful moments in my life.

Many of us do not quite have that sense of anticipation—we have lived through Lents and Easters and focused more on the "giving up" and "doing without" than on the joy of resurrection. We become—like Pope Francis suggests—Lent Christians rather than Lent-but-looking-forward-to Easter Christians.


As we embark on Lent, reflect on how you can bring the joy of the gospels to your daily life. Yes, we can fast—and pray—and be more generous in giving to the poor—but let us think about how they can be done in a way that manifests the joy that we are doing them because we look beyond the darkness to the brightness of Easter.



## Guest speaker from the USA Fr Jim Clarke




Two years ago, Kathryn was fortunate enough to go to Los Angeles for one of their annual Religious Education Congresses—with around 25,000 other Catholics! One of the talks she attended was "Spirituality for a Busy Person" by someone called Fr Jim Clarke who turned out to be Director of Spiritual Formation at St Johns' Seminary in the Archdiocese. She was so impressed that at the end she went and asked if he would consider coming over to Hexham and Newcastle! Fr Jim agreed and a visit is planned for May this year.

During his time in our diocese, he will lead a retreat day for our clergy and a day of reflection open to all **17 May on Holy Island**. He is leading a weekend retreat on '**Remembering the past, healing the present**' at **Minsteracres, 9-11 May**. He will also be keynote speaker at two days organised by Bishops' Conference Spirituality Committee—**7 May** in London and **15 May** in Salford. These days are linked to the publication of a new document from Bishops' Conference on spirituality so would be well worth attending. More information from the Department. 



Posters and booking forms will be in parishes very shortly for this year's Diocesan Festival which will help us to focus on **The Joy of the Gospel**. We will be welcoming **Bill Huebsch** from the United States who brings a wealth of pastoral experience of parish and diocesan life. The Festival will also be one of the first diocesan events for **Karen Kilby**. She is the new holder of the Bede Chair for Catholic Theology at Durham University and part of her role is to bring her knowledge and experience to our parishes and local groups. **TenTen Theatre** will offer thought-provoking drama and **More than Dance, Diocesan Church Music Association** and **YMT** will inspire the children and young people in their own activities.

Groups working around the diocese will be setting up a Marketplace and Saturday will see a return of the Ceilidh band which went down so well last time. There will be opportunities for prayer and worship and the event will culminate in a Festival Mass for the Feast of Corpus Christi. 

## Contact Details

To sign up for *Weavings* or the daily e-mail, contact Kathryn Turner, Head of the Department for Spirituality via the Department for Education  
St Vincent's Offices, St Cuthbert's House, West Road,  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne. NE15 7PY

0191 243 3313

or

0191 534 4212

E-mail: [spirituality@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:spirituality@diocesehn.org.uk)

# Department for Spirituality News

On 15 February, the Spirituality Network met in Newcastle. This was a chance for people interested in prayer and spirituality to meet up and to collect Lent packs for their deanery or group. We looked at some of the things already happening and at upcoming events in the diocese and beyond. One area that was of particular concern was that many people seem to find prayer difficult and do not seem to know the many ways open to them. The group decided to reflect on this and come together next time and spend time thinking about how they might provide resources and ways to help. Another area of interest was the idea of preparing resources for times of significant loss—particularly bereavement but also other major life events. A small group has agreed to meet and to think about what might be useful in supporting people through difficult times. If you would like to be in contact with your deanery rep to try to develop things locally, please get in


touch.

The following weekend saw another Holy Island session—this time looking at Pope Francis' Exhortation on the Joy of the Gospel. We had a time to reflect on the gospel of the Sunday using the Pope's suggestions to help us to go more deeply into the Word of God. In the afternoon, we reflected on how we might share the love of God with others. How could we share those moments when Jesus touched our own hearts—and how might we be more aware of the sacred grandeur of our neighbour? The next day, 29 March, on the Island is a Lent Day that will be especially suitable for people preparing to be received into the Church but will be good for anyone wanting time out to focus on their spiritual life. Please note—the day is "across the tide"—11am-5pm but there will be plenty of time set aside to enjoy being on the Island when it is an island! Just a reminder that in May we will be

hosting part of a visit to the UK from Fr Jim Clarke is visiting the diocese from St John's Seminary in the Los Angeles Archdiocese where he is Director for Spiritual Formation. He is delighted to be leading a day for us on Holy Island on 17 May. As the day is likely to be popular, it would be helpful to start to have an idea of numbers. If you think you will be coming along, please could you let us know!

The Department is also very involved in plans for the Diocesan Festival in June—please see details on the front!

On 6 September, there will be a Festival of Spirituality in Durham. This will be an ecumenical venture with activities in the Cathedral as well as workshops in some of the Colleges. More details to follow—but make a note in the diary!

Finally, plans are underway to develop a Spirituality Resource Base in Newcastle (on the West Road, not far from the A1). More news on that in future issues. 

## Living Lent Locally...

Lent Days of Reflection

**Living Water-Light-**

**Thursday 27 March 10.30am-3pm**  
**St Michael's, Houghton-le-Spring, .**

**Saturday 29 March 11am-5pm**  
**Holy Island,**

**Saturday 5 April 10.30am-3.30pm**  
**Minsteracres**

(please note £10 donation requested to support work of the Centre)

**Saturday 12 April 10.30am-3pm**  
**St Thomas Aquinas, Darlington, .**

**Please bring packed lunches.**

*To book or more information, please contact Department, details overleaf.*

Centre for Prayer and Mission,  
Seaham

**Tuesday evenings of Reflection**

exploring the spirituality of the two halves of life (from Richard Rohr) and exploring the Blessings of Growing Older—at any age - with Joan Chittister.

**4 March Finding meaning in life**

**11 March The gift of time**

**18 March Surprised by Joy**

**25 March Transformation – our goal**

*More information from Sr Michael  
(0191) 5813249 or email:  
marymichael.lee7@googlemail.com*

St Antony's Priory, Durham

**Thursday 6 March (10am-4pm)**

**Quiet Day for the beginning of Lent -  
To be a Pilgrim**

During this day, we will explore the part pilgrimage and journey have played in the lives of spiritual seekers – and the part they might play in our own.

Led by Kathryn Turner

**Thursdays of Lent 2pm -4pm**

**The Heart's Time – by Janet Morley**

A book group for Lent .

**Saturday March 8th**

**Together in Meditation 10am - 12.30pm**

**Friday 11-Sunday 13April**

**Imagining the Passion- an Ignatian way  
into the last week of Jesus life.**

A balanced weekend input, time for space, prayer and personal reflection and optional one to one faith accompaniment with Sheila McNamara and Paul Golightly

*More information from St Antony's  
website: [www.stantonymspriory.co.uk](http://www.stantonymspriory.co.uk)  
or 0191 384 3747*



MINSTERACRES

**22 March**

**Walking retreat**

**Friday 28 – Sunday 30 March**

**Addiction unplugged: how to be free**

Led by *John and Anne-Louise Flaherty*

**Wednesday 9 April 10am – 4pm**

**Day of prayer**

Rosarie Spence RSM

Experience different ways of praying in beautiful setting.

Lunch, tea and coffee are provided.

**Friday 11 – Sunday 13 April**

**Introduction to**

**Individually Guided Retreat**

An opportunity to try a short with one-to-one meetings with members of the Minsteracres team.

**Thursday 17 – Sunday 20 April**

**Holy Week Retreat**

Minsteracres team

Join the community on their journey towards Easter, including time for reflection and the opportunity to take part in the liturgies of Holy Week.

*More information from Minsteracres  
website: [www.minsteracres.org](http://www.minsteracres.org)  
01434 673248*