



YEAR OF FAITH 2012
2013

THE WEAVINGS

Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle Department for Spirituality

January 2013

A Spiritual Legacy (3)

On 27 December, the Church celebrated the feast of St John the Evangelist. The First Reading for the Day includes these words: "We announce to you the eternal life which dwelt with the Father and was made visible to us. What we have seen and heard we announce to you, so that you may have fellowship with us and our common fellowship be with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ" (*1 John 1:2-3*). These are very much words of the Christmas Season—and are also the words which open another of the documents from Vatican II—*Dei Verbum, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Revelation of God*.



God has constantly revealed himself to his people but at this time of year we celebrate his ultimate self-revelation in Jesus Christ—as St John's Prologue (John 1: 1-18) reminds us—the Word was made flesh and lived among us and his life is a light to enlighten all peoples.

Dei Verbum teaches that **there exists a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end.** (*para 9*)

Both tradition and Scripture are, it says, **like a mirror in which the pilgrim Church on earth looks at God ... until she is brought finally to see Him as He is, face to face** (*see 1 John 3:2*) (*para 7*)

The document reminded the Church that **she has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since, especially in the sacred liturgy, she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life from the table both of God's word and of Christ's body.** (*21*).

Although it has to be admitted that Catholics as a whole were usually less familiar with the Scriptures than many of those in the reformed traditions—often because they were

proclaimed and prayed in Latin. To remedy this, the Church Fathers encouraged translations, especially from the original texts, so that the Word of God should be easily accessible to the faithful at all times.

But alongside study of the Bible—learning more about its background and so on— they were also concerned that people should remember

that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together; for "we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying." (*25*)

- + Try praying with the Sunday Readings—particularly the Gospel. Read it slowly and let the words sink deep into your soul—allowing God to speak to your heart.
- + Choose a psalm—or part of a psalm—or some of the words of Jesus and learn it/them by heart. Use them as a prayer from time to time during the day (or night).
- + Think about joining—or starting—a Scripture prayer group.
- + Invest in *Bible Alive/Magnificat* or other aid to reflecting on the scripture of the day. 

Lent 2013!

Ash Wednesday is on **13 February**—so quite an early Lent and Easter this year. The theme chosen for Lent is 'The Universal Call to Holiness' which comes from the Vatican II document, *Lumen Gentium*—which looks at the mystery of the Church. Lent is a time when we try to focus on our spiritual lives so is a good time to reflect on this call to holiness—to becoming the people God created us to be.

As with Advent, materials for deaneries, parishes and schools to use for evenings, mornings or days of reflection are going to be sent out to deans on CDs. These can be adapted to suit each deanery or parish's needs.

The CDs can also be ordered from Diane Murray at spirituality@diocesahn.org.uk or by telephoning the office below. Most of the resources will also be available on the diocesan website later this month.

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@diocesahn.org.uk

Coming up soon at local Retreat Centres

Minsteracres

Friday 18 – Sunday 20 January
Faith on the Margins, John Bell

A weekend with John Bell (writer, broadcaster) looking at how Jesus related to those who were marginalised in his own day—and how these encounters link to our contemporary situation.

Saturday 16 February, 10am - 4pm
Walking retreat, Minsteracres team

Seven to ten miles through the beautiful countryside around Minsteracres

Wednesday 27 February, 10am - 4pm
Quiet day, Rosarie Spence RSM

Thursday 28 – Sunday 31 March
Holy Week retreat Minsteracres team

Join the community on their journey towards Easter.

info@minsteracres.org
01434 673 248

Centre for Prayer & Mission, Seaham

Tuesday evenings—from 15 January
Fr Robert Barron's series, **Catholicism**
marymichael.lee7@googlemail.com
0191 581 3249

St Antony's Priory, Durham

Saturday 12 January, 10-12.30
'Together in Meditation'

Two separate hour long sessions of shared silence and contemplation

Saturday 19 January
'Burning Bright',
Janet McHugh

A Quiet Day using the Spiritual journey and poems of Artist and Writer William Blake

25-27 January
'Introduction to prayer guiding' Part 1
Ecumenical team

Training and resourcing weekend at Minsteracres

25-27 January
'Person Centred art therapy training'
Christine Flanders

First of six residential weekends throughout 2013

26 January
'From Charity to Justice'
Quiet day for Christian Aid,
Kathy Galloway

Head of Christian Aid Scotland formerly leader of the Iona Community
bookings@stantonypriory.co.uk
0191 384 3747



Rehallowing the Land

Between January and July, the Departments for Spirituality and Evangelisation Team will be offering evenings of reflection around the diocese looking at the heritage of our Northern Saints. During the evenings there will be a chance to see and pray with Icons painted by people from around the diocese.

This month's visits are:

16 January, St Cuthbert's, Throckley

23 January, St Mary's Church Hall, Whickham

30 January—Sunderland (venue to be confirmed)

Mini-Pilgrimage

Following the very successful pilgrimage to Hartlepool in November, the Evangelisation Team will be leading a mini-pilgrimage to **Morpeth and Newminster on Saturday 26 January.**

The pilgrimage will start with Mass at 10am at St Robert's, Morpeth with the option of a walk to the ruins at Newminster. It is hoped that a virtual pilgrimage will be available for those unable to tackle the fields version! At the end of the pilgrimage, there will be an option to stay for lunch and a choice of prayer workshops.

Prayer Station of the Month

This month we begin a series which will offer a different Prayer Station for each month. These are simple prompts for prayer that can be put in a corner of a church—or in school—or in your own home. The full-size version will be available on the diocesan website but you could also simply copy and paste the picture (if you get **Weavings** electronically) or cut it out and pop it in a pocket or purse or on a bedside table or stick it to your bathroom mirror!

For January, we are picking up on a theme from the Year of Faith. Pope Benedict's letter about it is called *Porta Fidei* (*porta fid-ay-ee*) which means the Door or Gate of Faith.

Pope Benedict says, "To enter through that door is to set out on a journey that lasts a lifetime."

The Gate of the Year

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hand
into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light
and safer than a known way."

So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God,
trod gladly into the night.

And He led me towards the hills
and the breaking of day in the lone East.

(Minnie Louise Haskins 1908)



What are your hopes for 2013?

What are the unknowns you fear?

Pray for the grace to place your hand
in the Hand of God throughout the year ahead.

It is a journey that takes us into places that are filled with joy—and other places that will make us afraid. We do not know where the journey will take us but we do know that, once we go through that Door of Faith, God will never abandon us on the way.

So, this month, we use a poem which was made famous when King George VI used it for his Christmas broadcast when Britain was at war.

As we embark on a new year, we acknowledge that we do not know what lies ahead—and pray that we will not only know with our heads that God really is in it with us but that we shall sense it deeply in our hearts.

