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Editorial

Pope Francis was recently reported as having shared his fears that our Christmas festivities will be a 'charade', since the 'whole world is at war,' rejecting the 'path of peace' (Scottish Catholic Observer, Nov 27, 2015, p.1). This 'charade' is probably as old as civilisation. Around 750 B.C., for example, the prophet Amos describes God as saying, "I hate and despise your feasts ... Let me have no more of the din or your chanting ... but let justice flow like water, and integrity like an unfailing stream" (Am 5: 21 ff). In the 20th century a film about Adolf Hitler poignantly switches between his family Christmas celebration, singing carols of peace around the Christmas tree, and the concentration camps, where crimes were being carried out on his orders. It doesn't need too much imagination to guess how the same film makers might portray the charades of today, and I'm sure each of us is aware of our own charades. And so, as we approach the feast of love and peace, it behoves us to ask: What are our/my charades? What word is God speaking to us, to me? What does it feel like to hear those words?

This seems a bleak approach to Christmas, but the facts are real: though on the surface simplistic, the majority in the 'developed' countries will enjoy some festivity over Christmas, while those in 'developing' countries and countries at war are likely to have more of the same, perhaps a token of celebration, perhaps a 'truce' on Christmas day. And so it does not seem unreasonable to approach the feast of Universal Peace with an awareness of where it is lacking and with some thoughts about how to 'build' it at all levels.

Four things seem important: to have the peace of the Kingdom of God as a primary goal; to have a strategy for building it that mirrors it and can be applied at all levels; to be realistic about costs; and to have the commitment to persevere.

One of my favourite Scripture passages reads:

This, then, is what I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every family, whether spiritual or natural, takes its name. Out of his infinite glory may he give you the power, through his Spirit, for your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love, and built on love, you will with all the saints have strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth, until, knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you are filled with the utter fullness of God. Glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can hope for or imagine (Eph 3:14-21).

These words seem to me to contain a goal, a strategy, and a foundation for perseverance. I have been inspired to see them 'work' among African and Latin American women as they plan their annual budget from a common 'pot', and I am moved to see the process slowly seep back into the larger community that provides the 'pot'. What would our world be like if relationships at all levels were towards strengthening the inner/essential self of the other, whether that be an individual, a group or a nation? It is worth a dream!

There are many items in this newsletter that touch on the subject of peace. Kathy Galloway, Head of Christian Aid, Scotland, talks about the path of justice and the impact of injustice on those committed to it; women share their aspiration for equality within society and their religious traditions; men gather in ways that are meaningful for them; a study day on discernment reminds us that discernment is at the service of co-creation; and the three wise men share what it meant for them to be opened to receive the Prince of Peace.

May these days of Christmas fill us with the joy and peace of the Kingdom of God, and may these gifts spill over into those areas of the kingdom where God has placed us as individuals. -- Eileen Cassidy snd





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CENTRING and CENTREPIECES

June seems a distant memory, but not when I recall the day we had at the ISC on *Centring and Centrepieces: Creating an Ambience for Prayer*. More than twenty people gathered for this contemplative day which was led by Tom McGuinness, whom it was good to see again, Jane MacKichan from the ISC Team, Katy Low and Melitta Bosworth, two of the ISC associates. We were interested in creating both prayerful centrepieces and the more general prayerful ambience, not just for ourselves, but for those with whom we pray and for whom we put on events in our local situations.

Tom's introductory words took us immediately into that 'space' that we wanted to create. He suggested that centring is like being dropped into a still place: it is a gift that we receive, a tuning into a layer that is always there, a layer where we allow God to be God. He shared with us centring postures, sounds and words, many of which he had learned during his student days in Japan.

One of the many benefits of being centred is that it helps us move towards being and living in perfect balance. Tom encouraged us with a short Cirque du Soleil film of young performers doing amazing balancing movements. This was well beyond our physical ability, but it was a perfect illustration of the beauty of balance.

After a short break Katy and Melitta shared with us how they went about creating centrepieces. They emphasised the importance of the whole process, from choosing a theme, matching it with a specific group of people and identifying suitable resources of inspiration; they were emphatic that this process is prayer in its own right and should be treated as such; they regarded the emerging centrepiece as a statement of welcome to and care for those for whom it was created; and they encouraged us to dig deeply into the wells of our own lives and experience for the necessary inspiration. Then,



with the aid of a beautiful centrepiece, Jane led us in an imaginative contemplation of the story of Jesus cooking fish on the shore for the disciples.

After lunch each of us prayed with either a verse from Scripture, or an image, poem or prayer, chosen at random, and then set about creating our centrepieces. We selected materials from an array that had been provided and, within forty minutes, every corner of the ISC was filled with 'sacred spaces' made from all sorts - fabrics, ribbons, shells, stones, glass beads and pottery. In silence we contemplated each others', allowing the visual to speak and be heard in a profound silence.

This was a day of inspiration, creativity and fun. We let go of our inhibitions and were surprised by the results. But the thing that made it possible was the atmosphere, an atmosphere of warmth, stillness, encouragement and appreciation that gave each hesitant participant the freedom-to-be! It was a useful and prayerful day that was greatly appreciated by all. Thank you to each of the Team for enriching us.

-- Laurene MacKenzie



ACT JUSTLY, LOVE TENDERLY, WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD

Opening Day of ISC Programme Year



Kathy Galloway

On 12th September we were ably led through our Opening Day of the Programme Year by Kathy Galloway, Head of Christian Aid, Scotland. The theme of “Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly with your God” (Micah 6: 6-8) seemed particularly poignant in the midst of the refugee crisis in Europe.

In the first session we looked at “A Spirituality for Justice”, using Christian Aid’s beliefs that to do justice means:

- * Power to change institutions;
- * the right to essential services;
- * fair shares in a constrained world;
- * equality for all; and
- * tackling violence and building peace.

In the second session we looked at the Spirituality of Compassion, using the powerful poem by Ingrid de Kok: “The Archbishop chairs the first session”. It reads:

***The Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
April 1996. East London, South Africa***

On the first day, after a few hours of testimony the Archbishop wept.

He put his grey head on the long table of papers and protocols and he wept.

The national and international cameramen filmed his weeping, his misted glasses, his sobbing shoulders, the call for a recess.

It doesn’t matter what you thought of the Archbishop before or after, of the settlement, the commission,

or what the anthropologists flying in from less studied crimes and sorrows said about the discourse, or how many doctorates, books, and installations followed, or even if you think this poem simplifies, lionizes romanticizes, mystifies.

There was a long table, starched purple vestment and after a few hours of testimony, the Archbishop, chair of the commission, laid down his head, and wept.

That’s how it began.

In the final part of our day with Kathy, she offered us reflection on “A Spirituality for the Earth”. We used the following lines from Adrienne Rich for prayer:

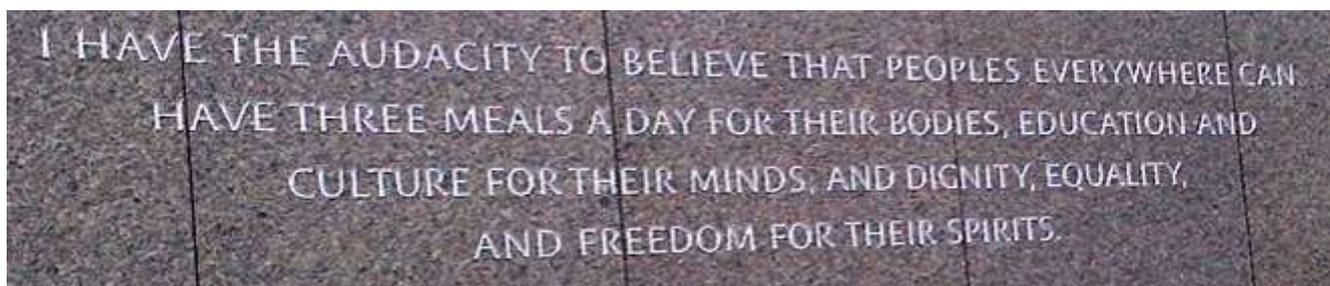
“My heart is moved by all I cannot save:
so much has been destroyed
I have to cast my lot with those
who, age after age, perversely,
with no extraordinary power,
reconstitute the world.”

At the end of each session we were asked to pray and reflect with what it means to share the justice-seeking, compassionate, humble journey of Jesus –

- * From private faith to public witness
- * From personal comfort to shared vulnerability
- * From self-sufficiency to interdependence

The day offered much food for thought and was a fitting start to the year ahead.

- - *Catriona Fletcher*





WOMEN in RELIGION

Led by Isabel Smyth, snd

An Afternoon in the Interfaith Series

On a Sunday afternoon in November, around fifteen people made it through very heavy rain to the ISC for the first of three inter-faith events, a talk entitled "Inter-faith: Women and Religion", and led by Isabel Smyth SND.

We began by looking at a brief history of women who had influenced in major ways the societies in which they lived, or who had been responsible for discoveries of an academic/scientific nature. Their names were barely known and are just now being rediscovered by modern researchers. If wider society has been patriarchal, said Isabel, and history has generally been written about men and by men, we should not be surprised to see the same trend reflected in religions around the world.

It was interesting to learn that in the Hindu tradition the position of women in religion was originally similar to that of men. Women participated in religious ritual and worship and some were educated and became Brahmavadinis. Hinduism has powerful female goddesses such as Kali and women mystics like Antal and Mirabai.

However, as religious practices developed and became more specialised and the priestly clan became more dominant, the disparity between men's and women's roles in religion and in educational attainment grew.

This led us to a lively discussion on the similarities between the history of religion in India and in our own religious history in the west. We discussed the urgent need for change to enable both men and women to take part in and contribute equally to religion.

After a 'social break', we considered how Islam

has developed over the centuries according to different interpretations of the Qur'an and different cultures. The Qur'an itself upholds the equality of men and women and believes in the complementary roles of men and women. Like apparently all religions, however, it has been influenced by the patriarchal nature of the cultures in which it exists. Today, modern Muslim feminists are beginning to re-interpret the Qur'an to show the underlying equality between men and women.

This was a lively session in which each person present was fully engaged as we exchanged stories of experiences we had had in our various situations. We could have continued for much longer, but all too soon it was time to go home. All agreed that it was most enlightening to look at religious history from a female perspective and that it had been a stimulating afternoon. Thank you to Sister Isabel for sharing her vast knowledge with us.



Three Wise Women, Representing Wise Women of All Faith Traditions and None



Ninety-two books have been added to the library since July. Thank you to the donors. All are welcome to come, browse, borrow..... !

A Little Light Discernment

Led by Paul Nicholson, SJ
Ongoing Formation Series



Paul Nicholson is now both a familiar and welcome face at the ISC, and much appreciated by those of us already trained and practising spiritual accompaniment and retreat giving, but eager to deepen our understanding and hone our skills in these areas. On November 7th about fifteen of us gathered for the third in the *A Little Light* series: having taken us down the paths of *A Little Light Theology* (2013) and *A Little Light Scripture* (2014), we were eager to find the 'Light' side of discernment.

Paul began the day by placing discernment within the context of decision-making and, as usual, kept this real as opposed to theoretical by rooting it in our own experience. We reflected on decisions we had made, identified hindrances to free decision-making and thus arrived at the pre-requisites for good discernment. We gave considerable time to discernment of spirits, within

the contexts of different 'cosmologies', the various 'movements' of spirits and the Ignatian 'rules'. In the afternoon we considered exactly what is meant by discerning God's will and/or making an election, and how we might use the 'Times of Election' in the *Spiritual Exercises* towards this. Paul gave us the useful reminder that discernment is always at the service of co-creation, a powerful awareness when caught up in the process. Finally, and importantly for us, we noted the limits of discernment and the role of ourselves as accompaniers when helping individuals and/or groups discern.

At the end of a profound day, we were all grateful for Paul's light touch which led us to depth, and for the theoretical and practical illumination that he shed on the ever important subject of discernment. We look forward to more days in this series.

- - Eileen Cassidy snd



CASPAR'S STORY

TRAVELLERS and seekers,
across the centuries
I greet you
who once were young
and keen, and green in hope
as I was, once.

TODAY, those dreams collide
in you, in me:
collide and separate
as we recall a star
a movement
that took us by the hand
held us by the heart
and led us
back
to where it all began.

THEN, I was green indeed,
green in hope, and rash.
And, as always, quick to grab the
moment.
Alert and keen,
I, Caspar, saw the star - the first to see
it rise -
far beyond the boundaries of our faith.

I, THE YOUNGEST, saw it,
named it;
knew at once it's beauty and its breadth
urging on my heart,
obedient to the birthing Word
calling me to follow:
I, whose star had always been
my dearly treasured freedom.

MY freedom?
What price my freedom now?
How much gold to tip the scales
before the graced surrender?

YOUNG, rash, keen
setting the pace - my pace, my freedom,
my reckless green adventure.

APPRENTICED to the journey,
charmed, alarmed, disarmed,
I journeyed forth to learn from others
wiser and more learned -
or so I thought.

BUT, THE STAR became my compass;
the search, my destination;
the swaddled child my teacher -
and my King.

- - Barbara Buda

OUTREACH

Reaching Beyond the ISC



Outreach continues to be a focus for the ISC. We realise increasingly that this takes place in two ways, through the direct work we do outside the Centre and through the work done by others who look to the Centre for training, support and resources.

On "The Hill", as it is commonly known, our involvement with the Garnethill Group continues to bring together in a partnership of collaboration the ISC, St. Aloysius College and St. Aloysius Parish. For the Year of Mercy, we have worked out quite an extensive programme that is open to all. You will find details on the ISC's new website which will be launched in January, and you can request flyers by phoning or e-mailing the ISC. Do come to as many events as interest you, and bring a friend!

Besides these big events, so to speak, we are keen to work with parishes for the Year of Mercy. We have already led two sessions at St. Aloysius Parish and spoken with our local deanery on what we might offer

over this special year. We see the Year of Mercy as a natural opportunity to offer groups occasions for prayer and reflection, and we have discovered much Ignatian thinking in this initiative of Pope Francis and in the content of the Bull.

Our work with parishes continues. This past term we did three days at monthly intervals with two parishes in Kilmarnock which share a parish priest - Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Matthew's, and we are in dialogue with other parishes who have approached us.

Our hope in the New Year is to develop our work with clergy and teachers and, over the next three years, to support parishes in the Archdiocese of Glasgow as they move towards 'clusters'. Over the Spring we plan to work on a new initiative - a programme for developing family spirituality - which we will launch in the new programme year.

- - *Catrina Fletcher*



Melchior's Story

It fell to me, Melchior - and who better?
to grease the palms
that held the keys to Herod's court.

OUR entrance
and our audience
bore fruit - I saw to that.
With every bow,
ingratiating and admired,
I had my hero's hour
before the scribes and priests
the counsellors and the King.

WE LISTENED WELL, took note
and headed off to Bethlehem, a village on an
antique map,
the star before us once again:
and through the night we sped
marking distance by the sense of mystery
gnawing at our bones.

SUDDENLY, it halted - this star, our guide -
above a house so non-descript we would
have passed it
on any other day but this one.

Now, and looking back,
I see myself - me, Melchior the vain, the self-
obsessed -
falling to my knees
before a child,
a babe in arms,
with arms outstretched,
and waiting
but, for whom?

KNEELING on my expectations,
a threadbare cloak, discarded and
forgotten
in one brief moment's blessed exchange
creating space within me,
(I name it now - this space - the chastity of
hope,
the capacity to adore)
I placed before him Frankincense
to seal my offering
to my King.

- - *Barbara Buda*

Leading Groups in Prayer



The ISC offered a new short course this year, just 6 evenings, on leading groups in prayer. The idea was to give people the confidence to introduce groups of people to different ways of praying. The six evenings started and ended with the ISC team introducing and rounding off the course, while the other four weeks had the participants alone or in pairs giving the group a prayer workshop.

Generally the course was well received; one participant said:

"I got much more than I was looking for: the practical element has been an excellent learning experience. The different themes each week have covered lots of areas and I have lots of ideas now for going forward. What has also been a blessing is the fellowship."

Another said:

"Preparing a workshop from start to finish was an excellent exercise, which has given me great confidence in going forward."

One advantage of the participants giving the workshops themselves was that there was more variety. Not only were there eight different workshops, which allowed us to do more than the usual examen, lectio divina and imaginative contemplation, but there were different ways of presenting each one which we were able to look at in a positively critical way. As one participant said: *"Seeing how the rest of the group ran their sessions and interpreted the brief showed me ways*

of doing things I would never have thought of."

The evenings were a short two hours and it was certainly tight to fit into the time two workshops plus some reflection on them, to look at the following week's work and to have a break. In addition having just six sessions limited particularly the amount of input given by the ISC team. *"More time would have been good, but I believe a lot has been achieved in 6 weeks (has it really only been 6 weeks?). It was most enjoyable and I'm sorry to see it end,"* said one participant. The team felt that, if we offer this course again next year, it should be half an hour longer each evening and have double the number of sessions for the ISC team's input prior to the participants giving their workshops. This would allow the team to present the idea of leading groups in prayer and would allow the group to get to know one another before pairing up for work.

Most of the participants had in mind a practical use for the things learnt on the course. Some were to give presentations in their own churches or prayer groups, while others intended to begin new groups. *"I hope to establish a prayer group within my church using all of the workshop sessions used and will certainly practise the elements in my own personal spiritual journey."*

Surely many people will be brought to creative new ways of praying through the people who took part in this course.

- - David Birchall



MEN'S MEETING



It was early November and a few of the guys decided to get together for a bit of a beer and a blether actually it was a bit more than that.

We decided at the start of our session this year that we would like to try a couple of events for men, to give them a space where they could get together and have some prayer and reflection, some time for discussion and fellowship with other Christian men. It says in the book of Proverbs "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17). We thought we'd see how that might work out.

Our first night - the first of three that are planned for this programme year - looked at 'A

Christian man and work'. We reflected on keeping a healthy work / life balance and discussed some of the opportunities and obstacles we experience in our personal lives. We also talked about being men of faith, and the difference that faith makes to us in our everyday life, especially to those closest to us in our families and among work colleagues.

We also had a beer.

Our next two men's events are on February 22nd and April 25th 2016. We hope that those who came to the first will make it to these two, and that you will bring a friend or two along with you!

-- John Hampsey

Balthazar's Story

IN EVERY BIRTH, there is a kind of dying;
 behind every death, a promise,
 a hand held out to something new.
 Yes, fine words - philosophy - but that is what I deal in,
 or dealt in,
 I, Balthazar, great Teacher and Philosopher.

ASK ADVICE of every wise person' - ancient scriptures
 recommend.
 My wisdom filled libraries
 with dead words:
 inks trailed across pages
 stretching to infinity and beyond.

MY APPETITE for debate,
 wrestling with life's questions,
 was insatiable.
 STILL RESTLESS in my quest for novelty
 a star - and the dying embers of adventure -
 prised me from the comfort of my reputation
 and the happy prospect of wisdom well rewarded.

I BROUGHT THE CHARTS, the tools,
 the hoarded wherewithal to live with any why
 and, full of curiosity, out we went to track a path
 behind a star
 that simply burst upon our world.

THOUGH LONG the journey
 (tedious too!)
 glad was I to have the trust of others
 eager to be told of Wisdom,
 universal truths that held us bound securely
 on this earth.

UNTIL, that is, the clamour of our questions stilled,
 our reservations hushed,
 the star above us rested while we stood before a
 threshold low
 and entered, stooping.

I LEFT THE SCENE bereft of words.
 And all the cleverness I'd crafted, honed and polished
 now shrouded, and entombed.

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Looking Ahead at the ISC



As the calendar year draws to a close we at the ISC begin to ponder what we are going to offer in the next academic year's programme. As you will have read in this newsletter, there has been quite a lot happening in the Centre recently. Our courses have been better subscribed than last year and our new course in 'Leading Groups in Prayer' seemed popular among those who wish to lead others in prayer.

It's always somewhat difficult to judge new events in the second half of our programme that are not scheduled to take place until next year; yet we have to decide this year whether to include them in future planning. Our pilgrimage to 'Ignatian Spain' has proved popular and is already nearly fully booked, so that is probably worth offering again. We are about half-full with the full 30-day retreat in Loyola, Spain, so maybe that is worth considering for next year. (If you are still pondering whether or not to apply, please remember the early-bird discount runs out at the end of 2015.)

The Holy Year of Mercy, which started on the 8th of December, is proving of interest to Catholic parishes. Our outreach group has been going out and presenting various prayer and reflective sessions on topics such as: the Ignatian Spirituality of Pope Francis, Mercy in the Scriptures and facilitating what can be done locally to

celebrate the year of Mercy. If you know of a parish and other group who is interested in our presentations for the 'Year of Mercy', do suggest they get in touch with us.

Our co-operation with the parish of St Aloysius will be enhanced this year by our putting on the Living Theology Course in the ISC this coming May. This course for thinking Christians will add a new dimension to our work at the ISC. Previously, Living Theology had been held in the parish hall, but we felt that the Spirituality Centre would be a pleasanter venue for the numbers involved.

We have begun this year trying to reach out to a wider clientele than usually come along to the ISC. The first evening for men has been held with a good group that shows promise. We now hope to consider how to touch more younger people. We also are keen to move out of the Centre and meet people where they are in churches and other meeting places.

We invite readers of this newsletter who have good ideas for bringing Ignatian Spirituality to a wider audience to get in touch with any member of the team and chat over things with us.

- - David Birchall

CAUGHT UP in quiet mystery and emptied out the word that welcomed me was pure:

Love.

Easy and simple.

No calculation there,
no better, richer wisdom than a child - a God - with
open arms.

GOING HOME a different way - wherever home exists -
we left our treasures,

and took the gift instead.

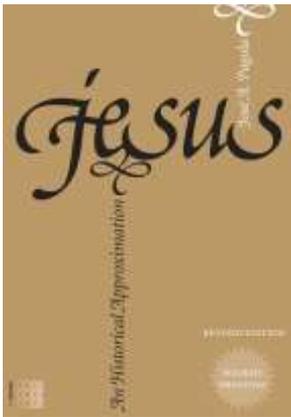
THE MYRRH, I left behind
to bury all the grief of wasted time
when eyes and heart and mind were closed
to
Love.

- - Barbara Buda



ISC CLUBS

The Book Club



There has been much talk among book worms about José Antonio Pagola's book on Jesus: *Jesus, An Historical Approximation* (Convivium Press, 2009). At its September Taster Day the ISC dedicated one workshop to the Book Club, and used an extract from the author's introduction to the book as a text on which we might reflect together. At the end of the session five of the group decided to join the Book Club so that they could dig more deeply into the book itself. It has been a fascinating journey to date.

José Pagola has dedicated his life to Biblical Studies and Christology, and has done research on the historical Jesus for more than 30 years. In this book he shares his scholarship with the reader in language that everyone can understand. He addresses basic questions about who Jesus was as a first century Galilean Jew;

how he would have understood his life; the uniqueness of his message; the centrality of the Kingdom of God to him as a person and in his teaching; and the circumstances surrounding his death etc.

Reading this book with others has triggered an awareness and a level of questioning and sharing that is life-giving. It is bringing the Gospels to life in a way that bypasses most Christians, simply because no one tells us. It is putting flesh on the bones of Jesus, so to speak, and is strengthening our faith and commitment. It is enabling the Gospels to speak to us in a new way and is giving us a thirst for more.

If you have a chance to get hold of and read this book, you can be sure that you will have no regrets and that you will be enriched. It is a good spend, at just over £20, including P&P. Happy reading!

The Film Club



As suggested above, reading José Pagola's book on Jesus has been a nourishing experience for mind and faith. The selection of the BBC's film *The Nativity* for the ISC's December film was a perfect complement to this book. What Pagola did in words, the BBC production team did in film, focussing, through flash-back, on what must have been the most significant period in Mary's life - from just before the Annunciation to the birth of her son.

The film 'enfleshes' these events. Through it we experience what it meant for a young betrothed Jewish woman to become pregnant not by her husband-to-be: it is to open herself to potential stoning, as for some Muslim women today. We experience the suffering of Mary as she lives her role in the story of

salvation, a suffering that is mixed with the peace of her own inner truth and a joy in the child she is carrying, and a role that is no play-act, but is very real. We experience the journey of Joseph into his role. We experience the social, religious and political contexts of the incarnation, which incidentally depict exaggerations of perennial temptation, and at the same time are drawn into the hopes of ordinary people. We experience the incarnation as God's act of totally selfless love that exposes him to all human vulnerabilities, rather than immunises him against them. What greater love . .

This film engages us at an affective level and, if contemplated, seeps into many levels of our identity. I hope the BBC shows it again this Christmas.

Through a Glass Darkly An Advent Day of Reflection led by Magdalen Lawer, snc



It feels that no Advent or Lent is complete at the ISC without Magdalen Lawler, who so ably facilitates reflection through art and literature and this year led us to experience Advent through stained glass.

From the outset we sensed a connection between stained glass and our own lives. Magdalen pointed out that, in order to see the message in the glass, there must be darkness on the viewer's side and light on the other side: the light penetrates the glass and exposes its message. So in our faith journey: God's light within each of us can penetrate the surrounding 'darknesses' and help us meet them with faith. To deepen this connection, Magdalen shared with us a George Herbert poem, *The Windows*, about the preacher's role.

Lord, how can man preach thy eternal word?
He is a brittle crazy glass;
Yet in thy temple thou dost him afford
This glorious and transcendent place,
To be a window, through thy grace.

But when thou dost anneal in glass thy story,
Making life to shine within
Thy holy preachers, then the light and glory
More reverend grows, and more doth win;
Which else shows waterish, bleak, and thin.

Doctrine and life, colours and light, in one
When they combine and mingle, bring
A strong regard and awe. But speech alone
Doth vanish like a flaring thing,
And in the ear, not conscience, ring.

With introductory slides of the work of many stained glass artists, including Claire Mulholland's, now in the Rock Chapel at St. Beuno's, we came to appreciate that images can speak louder than words and can proclaim a deeper theology than words. While words can so easily tie us to the period with which they are associated, visual images have the power to evoke our own experience of the situations they depict.

With a focus on Mary, Magdalen led us on a stained glass pilgrimage. We saw the stained glass of many artists . . . in many buildings, both old and new. We paralleled the artists' portrayals of the young Holy Family with situations in our world today - situations of pain, like that of Mary when she met Simeon, of poverty, deprivation, rejection, slavery, exile etc. And we experienced the presence of God within the glory, as depicted in the many stained glass angels, and in the mess. We experienced what Jean Paul Sartre wrote:

This God is my son
This divine flesh is my flesh
He is made of me; he has my eyes
and the shape of his mouth
is the shape of mine.
He looks like me
A little God one can hold
in one's arms and can cover with kisses
A warm God that smiles and breathes,
A God one can touch and who lives.

Can God be any closer than this?

Thank you, Magdalen, for another inspiring day.



Epiphany Group's Six Day Series:

- 9 Jan 2016 **The Generosity of Elders**, A day aimed at 'second-half' or retired people and those who accompany them in life. With Nancy Adams.
- 6 Feb 2016 **Living Compassion**, with Véréne Nicolas.
- 30 April 2016 **Mindfulness and Mysticism**, with Carmel Byrne rscj.
- 4 Jun 2016 **Thomas Merton: Many Paths to Wholeness**, with John Dunne
- Full information and booking: sixdaysedinburgh@yahoo.co.uk 07952 198379

Forthcoming Series, Events and Retreats at the ISC**Further details on website****Tel: 0141-354-0077****E-mail: admin@iscglasgow.co.uk****COURSES****Portraits of Jesus, New**

Led by Dr. Noel Donnelly
Wednesdays, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
January 13, 20, 27; February 3

**ONGOING FORMATION STUDY DAY
(for those trained in Spiritual Accompaniment)**

1. Date Sat. Feb 20 (10:30 am - 4:30 pm)
Title **The Spiritual Exercises: The Meditations of Week 2**
Presenter: David Birchall, SJ

DAY AND EVENING EVENTS

1. Date: Sun Feb 21 (2:00 - 5:00 pm)
Title: **World Faith Traditions and Major Social Issues (2): Religion in Public Life**
Presenter: Isabel Smyth snd
2. Date: Mon Feb 22 (7:00 - 9:00 pm)
Title: **Men's Meet 2: Integrity in Life at Home**
3. Date: Sat Mar 5 (Full Day),
Title: **A Day of Prayer in Lent**
Presenter: Magdalen Lawler, snd
4. Date: Sun Mar 13 (2:00-5:00),
Title: **A Film for Lent: The Passion**

RETREATS**Lent Retreat in Daily Life**

Mondays, Feb 1 - Mar 14, 2016, starting at 7:00 pm

Non-Residential Retreat Weekend at the ISC
Feb 27 - 28, 2016(10:30-4:30 each day)

Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius: 30 Day Retreat,
Loyola, Spain, 26 June - 30 July, 2016

Ignatian Spain - A Pilgrimage, 27 July - 3 August,
2016

Individually Guided Residential Retreats, 2016

1. **29 Jun - 8 July (8 day)**, Drumalis, Larne, N.Ireland
2. **29 Jun - 3 July (3 day)**, Drumalis, Larne
3. **3 - 8 July (4 day midweek)**, Drumalis, Larne
4. **9-16 July (6 day)**, Iona (Full)

REGULAR DROP-IN EVENTS

First Friday Retreat Mornings at the ISC (10:00 - 1:00), Sept - Jun (In Jan it is on 8th)

Eat, Pray, Breathe, Tuesday lunchtime quiet prayer. Starts Sept 1st (1:00-1:30)

Taizé Evenings: Quiet hour interspersed with Taizé chants. 3rd Monday of month, Sept - Jun. Starts Sept 21st (7:30)

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION:

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If you prefer to receive the newsletter by regular mail, please send **your full name and postal address** to: The Administrative Secretary, Ignatian Spirituality Centre, 35 Scott Street, Glasgow, G3 6PE. A donation towards printing and postage would be appreciated. It now costs £3 to print and mail the newsletter.

IGNATIAN GROUPS and ROLES in SCOTLAND

Ignatian Spirituality Promoter
Epiphany Group
Ignatian Spirituality Centre
The Lantern Group
The Lauriston Jesuit Centre

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