



~ SPIRIT ~

Monthly notes and inspiration from Louisiana Spiritual Directors, Inc.
January 2015



Drenched in Holiness: Prayer for a New Year

*Dear God,
On this day may I ask You to grant this request?
May I know who I am and what I am,
Every moment of every day.
May I be a catalyst for light and love,
And bring inspiration to those whose eyes I meet.
May I have the strength to stand tall in the face of conflict,
And the courage to speak my voice, even when I'm scared.
May I have the humility to follow my heart,
And the passion to live my soul's desires.
May I seek to know the highest truth
And dismiss the gravitational pull of my lower self.
May I embrace and love the totality of myself?
My darkness as well as my light.
May I be brave enough to hear my heart?
To let it soften so that I may gracefully Choose faith over fear.
Today is my day to surrender anything that stands
Between the sacredness of my humanity and my divinity.
May I be drenched in my Holiness
And engulfed by Your love.
May all else melt away.
And so it is.*

-Debbie Ford

A Look Back at the 2014 LASD Annual Conference . . .



The conference was held the weekend of July 18-20, 2014 at the Jesuit Spirituality Center in Grand Coteau, Louisiana. The theme of the conference was "Discerning of the Spirit in the Craft of Spiritual Direction" presented by Fr. Mark Thibodeaux, S.J. Fr. Mark shared his practical experience and insights as a spiritual director and presently novice director for the Jesuit community in Grand Coteau. Among the many topics presented were:

- a review of St. Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits for the First and Second Weeks;
- the general characteristics of Desolation and Consolation and ways to identify each;
- the role of the spiritual director in dealing with each of these movements of the Spirit;
- the various forms of Consolation: Consolation without Previous Cause, Difficult Consolation, False Consolation and ways to identify and deal with each;
- the characteristics of Desolation and ways to recognize its signs in directees as well as ways of dealing with it.

Father Mark brought this material to life with vivid examples from his own practical experience which made these concepts so much clearer. The responses of the participants clearly affirmed the value of all that was presented. Many commented on the practicality and down-to-earth approach which made what can be a rather confusing topic so much more understandable.

Another common response dealt with the relevancy of the material to the work of spiritual direction as well as to one's own spiritual growth. In the words of one participant: ".....I picked up new things and many concepts deepened." Such was the general feeling at the end of the weekend which was obviously time well spent.

In addition to the learning and sharing of information, participants enjoyed wonderful opportunities for building community through socializing, connecting with other directors, and sharing times of communal prayer and celebration.

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NEWS FLASH:

Since our last communication, we have been contacted by Sr. Macrina Wiederkehr that she will unfortunately not be able to serve as our Annual Louisiana Spiritual Directors Conference speaker due to a recent accident that she has experienced. Let's all offer our prayers for her full recovery!

HOWEVER . . .

Our board members immediately jumped into action and have been able to book another presenter! We are excited to report that Gray Matthews, Ph.D., an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Memphis and a Thomas Merton expert, has graciously accepted our invitation. We will have more detailed information in next month's edition.

THEREFORE . . .

Our conference is *still* scheduled for May 22-23-24, 2015 at the Wesley Center

in Woodworth, Louisiana.

Registration is still open!



READER'S CORNER

Biblical Foundations of Spirituality is a timely and important book that invites readers to "touch a finger to the flame" of the sacred text of the Bible by offering guidance on *what* to read, *how* to read, and *why* to read the Bible as a source of spiritual nourishment. Using the latest scholarship, Barbara E. Bowe leads readers through the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, and illustrates the progression of faith in and insight about God - the turns and dead ends, the mistakes and successes, the struggles and challenges - that reflect in some way our own contemporary experience and search for God. Complete with a historical chronology, reflection questions, a glossary, and extensive notes and bibliography, this book is ideal for classroom and parish use as well as for individual readers such as spiritual directors.



SOMETHING TO PONDER . . .

*God speaks: it is a mystery,
i.e.,
it is the death of my senses and
my reason,
for it is the nature of mysteries
to immolate them.
A mystery is life to the heart
through faith, but for the rest
of our faculties, a
contradiction ...
the darker the mystery, the
more light it contains.*

- Jean Pierre de Caussade



TAKE NOTE

2015 Emerging Wisdom Educational Events

How will you be inspired and engaged in the inclusive, global learning community of SDI? Come to Kentucky, where Thomas Merton lived, and find meaning for yourself and in community. Celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Spiritual Directors International and the hundredth anniversary of Thomas Merton's birth during the Emerging Wisdom educational events in 2015. Merton's call to wisdom—in the significance of silence, social and environmental justice, and imagination in spirituality—continues challenging us today. Be a part of the learning. Be a part of the visioning. Be a part of the contemplative movement. Be a part of this radically inclusive, global learning community. You won't want to miss actively living out our mission together in

Date: April 14-22, 2015



Comments? Questions? Suggestions for future articles?
Want information on membership?



Louisiana Spiritual Directors, Inc. (LASD) is an association of trained Spiritual Directors formed to promote continuing education, fellowship and information for Spiritual Directors within Louisiana.



<http://www.louisianaspiritualdirectors.org/>

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