



~ SPIRIT ~

Monthly notes and inspiration from Louisiana Spiritual Directors, Inc.

June 2018

Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? One who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name . . .

Isaiah 40:26



More scenes from the 2018 LASD Conference . . .



More comments from 2018 LASD Conference participants:

"Using the language that I recall (from last year's conference), Brother Bisson said that it is our spiritual practices that are the bridge from our 'false self' to our 'true self.' Using Bill's language, our spiritual practices are the movement from low heart to high heart. I like the continuity and that Bill led us into a variety of experiential prayer paths... These very well-led prayer experiences added the retreat layer that has been something we had been wanting to offer the Association."

"The anointing ritual we did Sunday morning was really powerful. The weekend was truly a retreat experience for me."

"I was especially touched by the power of the Elm Dance and the anointing. Both enabled me to feel deeply connected to others around the world and to the other directors at the conference."



L'Arche founder, Jean Vanier, reflects on the concept of "shepherds". Notice the similarities to the qualities of a spiritual director...

"Good Shepherds"

Shepherds are the ones who lead those who have been entrusted to them to inner freedom—the freedom to make good choices, to take initiative, and to grow to greater maturity and love.

In biblical language, to know someone by name implies a growing understanding of a person, of his or her unique gifts and weaknesses, needs and mission in life.

That means taking time with that person, listening, and above all creating a mutual relationship of communion, revealing to that person that he or she is loved, has value and is precious.

One can only guide someone if there is no desire to possess, control, or manipulate the other, if mutual trust, respect, and love have been born between the two...





A message from our LASD Board President . . .

Dearest Members of LASD,

I found myself reflecting recently on our statewide ministry and discovered a deep gratitude for the faithful, supportive community that I find in our membership. As spiritual directors, we come from all walks of life, but we share this in common: a thirst for the Divine and a calling to walk with others who bear that same longing. Our thirst is quenched first of all in the silence of our own hearts as we meet our faithful God in prayer and in faith practices that are unique to each of us. It is also satisfied when we gather at conferences to acquire new concepts from experts in the field of spirituality and build community by sharing with one another the workings of our inner lives. Moreover, there is the deep fulfillment we experience each time we sit in our individual spiritual direction offices where we witness the Divine unfold in the soul of another. It's our thirst that binds us to one another.

One of the unique ideas that emerged from the conference evaluations was that of putting a face on our membership by spotlighting a member each month. I was delighted with the idea, mostly because I want to get to know some of you better and understand a little about your particular expression of our ministry. This month begins our inauguration of this effort. I asked Mike Van Vranken to tell us a bit about his ministry. I think that you will enjoy meeting Mike, too.

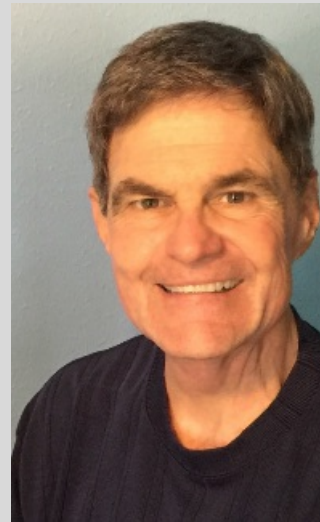
I welcome suggestions of members to highlight in the coming months. As the summer months unfold, may God bless you with ample and nourishing leisure time. Let us pray for one another!

Fondly,
Robin Hebert



Mike Van Vranken

Mike is a lifelong Catholic and currently lives in Shreveport where he offers spiritual direction in his office at St. Joseph Catholic Parish. He was kind enough to share his story with us.



I was drawn to this ministry as people continued to ask me for help with their prayer life or their relationship with God. I began my formal training with the Archdiocesan Spirituality Center's Internship for Spiritual Direction in March of 2015 with completion in 2017.

I am convinced that our unique ministry of spiritual direction is perfectly positioned for this particular moment in history. With fewer people in almost every religious tradition practicing their faith within an organized institution, who is better poised to respectfully reach them than trained spiritual directors? Many indeed are searching for God, but without the church, we may be their only avenue.

At the same time, those who remain in institutional church communities feel marginalized themselves. They experience reduced Sunday congregations, fewer clergy and a society that seems to be against them. Again, who better to gracefully and respectfully help them navigate their walk with God in their daily lives than you and me?

I'm building a spiritual direction practice open to all believers with the purpose of helping them consciously commune with and experience God in ways they've never even imagined.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING RETREATS AND WORKSHOPS

Beginning/Intermediate Icon Writing Workshop

St. Charles Center
2151 Sam Houston Jones Parkway
Lake Charles, Louisiana 70611

Monday, July 23 - Sunday, July 29, 2018

Coordinator: Sylvia Marcantel

Fee for Beginners: \$1,165.00
Students providing own board and supplies: \$1,005.00

Instruction is in the Byzantine-Russian Tradition of the Prosopon School of Iconograph (www.prosoponschool.org) Class size is limited and reservations are on a first come, first served basis. For registration information, contact Sylvia at 337-304-2911 or smarcantel@suddenlink.net



READER'S CORNER

Busy Lives and Restless Souls: How Prayer Can Help You Find the Missing Peace in Your Life
by Becky Eldredge
Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2017

If you've already figured out your life and feel totally complete, then this book may not be for you. But if you are like the rest of us, every day presents a mountain of to-do items, jobs to go to, errands to run, projects to complete, meals to cook, children to raise... You forge ahead and get it done, but you know that things aren't as they should be... Louisiana Spiritual director and writer Becky Eldredge has felt that same longing, and she knows what people are missing—a relationship with God through prayer. [Read more...](#)



"Our deepest calling is to grow into our own authentic self-hood, whether or not it conforms to some image of who we ought to be. As we do so, we will not only find the joy that every human being seeks—we will also find our path of authentic service in the world."

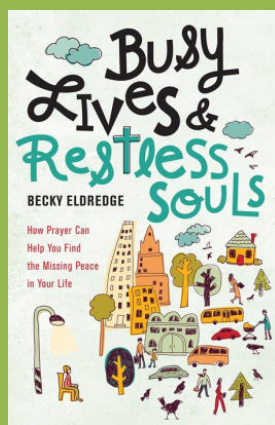
Parker J. Palmer



TAKE NOTE

**SDI Webinar
Unique & Connected:
New Approaches to
Ignatian Spirituality
(Recordings, 4 Hours)**

Ignatian Spirituality is built on the idea of "Finding God in all things." This 4-part webinar series will examine how that deep wisdom and practice is emerging in new ways, including yoga, art, embodiment and women's empowerment. Guided by international teacher, Nita Ng, the course will provide experiential spiritual formation, engaging heart, body, mind and spirit. [Read more...](#)



Keeping your membership current . . .

Let's not forget that our membership status is concurrent with the fiscal year which runs from July 1 - June 30. To access a membership form or to pay online, please click on [this link](#). If you have any questions, please contact [Elsa Mendoza](#).



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.



www.louisianaspiritualdirectors.org

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