



## ~ SPIRIT ~

Monthly notes and inspiration from Louisiana Spiritual Directors, Inc.

December 2018



**Advent Antiphons**  
From Mary's sweet silence,  
Come, Word mutely spoken!  
Pledge of our real life, Come, Bread yet unbroken!  
Seed of the Golden Wheat, In us be sown.  
Fullness of true Light, Through us be known.  
Secret held tenderly, Guarded with Love,  
Cradled in purity, Child of the Dove,  
COME!

Sr. M. Charita, I.H.M.



## President's Message

Dearest Members of LASD,

It was Advent many years ago—perhaps twenty-five—when I joyfully entered the spiritual direction office of Father Hampton Davis. I'll never forget our interaction that Monday morning. Although it was early on in my spiritual journey, I was being readily moved along in my pursuit of Jesus; and as if I had stumbled upon something new, I proclaimed to Father Hampton that I thought we are all called to "birth Jesus" at Christmas.

Agreeing, he then engaged with me in a dialogue, moving the conversation along with this question: "How did *Mary* birth Jesus at Christmas?"

Wanting to be the ever-so-bright student of all-things-spiritual, I responded rather naively, "Well, an angel came!"

As I remember, he was quick to respond with another question (as any good director would): "And *then* what happened?"

"She said 'Yes'", I replied with assuredness.

"And *THEN* what happened?"

Here's where it gets good.

I admitted that the Virgin birth has always confused me, that the idea of the Holy Spirit overshadowing a woman, impregnating her with a Child leaves me mystified. And with a tad of arrogance in my voice, I quipped, "Father, why don't you tell me what happened next?"

His response still resonates in my heart and I quote his insightful words often on retreat: "Robin, she allowed God to love her to the point to where He planted His seed in her. Can you do that? Can you allow God this Advent to love you to the point to where He plants His seed in you?"

*Can you, my dear peers, spiritual directors, and brothers and sisters in Christ—Can you allow God, this Advent, to love you to the point to where He plants His seed in you so that the fruit of that seed will grow in your own souls, your families, your co-workers, your directees, our hurting world?*

In the hustle and bustle of December, might we each find time for silence and extended prayer, for service and acts of good will, so that we, like Mary, might discover deep in our souls that seed of God's new life bursting forth in all of our endeavors—and birth Christ once again this Christmas.

Blessings on your Advent Journey and Merry Christmas!

**Robin Hebert**



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Sr. Alison McCrary, SFCC

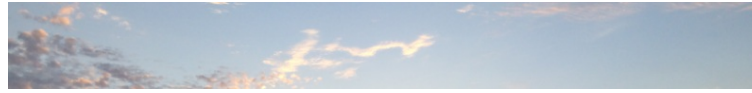


I first learned about Spiritual Direction when I was discerning my vocation as Catholic Sister in New Orleans. I began meeting with a director nearly ten years ago. As I continued on my faith journey and formation as a Catholic Sister and studied more about the contemplative life, prayer, spiritual companionship, and formally taking classes at Loyola University's Institute for Ministry, and then studying for my Masters Degree in Systematic Theology and Spirituality at Catholic Theological Union, others began to ask me to accompany them on their journeys.

I am a member of the Sisters for Christian Community, and my primary ministry is serving as a social justice movement lawyer. I also give several spirituality retreats, presentations, and workshops around the country. My ministry of spiritual companionship has primarily been on death row at Louisiana State Penitentiary as a Spiritual Advisor. I've been visiting the men and women on Louisiana's death row since 2005. Each person on death row is allowed to invite one person to serve as their Spiritual Advisor. A Spiritual Advisor functions similarly as a Spiritual Director but the role may also include

accompanying the victim's family or the children, grandchildren, or parents of the person on death row in a spiritual capacity in addition to ordering and sending spiritual literature or books to them, making funeral and burial arrangements when an execution date is scheduled, taking collect calls from the prison, writing letters to them, visiting the person monthly, and assisting with other needs the inmate may have when there is no one else for them to turn to.

This past year, I was selected to be a part of the Spiritual Directors International (SDI) New Contemplatives Program and attended the International Seeking Connections Conference. The New Contemplatives Program seeks to encourage, understand, and engage with spiritual directors in the first half of their lives (aged 40 or under). During the 2018 conference, I participated in the SDI Learns Video Project Series. Most recently, I led a four-part SDI webinar series in October on the role of spiritual direction in social justice movements and how to accompany both those who are on the margins or directly-impacted by systems of injustice and those who are activists or organizers in movements for social change. In 2019, I will be presenting a workshop at the SDI Conference entitled "Gender, Sexuality, and Spirituality in Spiritual Direction" with other Spiritual Directors in the New Contemplatives Program. I hope to meet more of you from Louisiana there.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### 2019 LASD CONFERENCE Registration Information Coming Soon!

Our Annual Conference will be here before you know it! Our presenter will be [Fr. Joe Tetlow, SJ](#), one of the world's foremost wisdom figures in the area of spirituality. As a reminder, the conference will be held April 5-7, 2019 at the [Jesuit Spirituality Center](#) in Grand Coteau, Louisiana. If you have not yet done so, please mark your calendars!

### We're Looking for a Facebook Administrator!

We're searching for someone who would be willing to serve as administrator for our LASD Facebook page. This is one of the tools which we use to share useful information to LASD members and the general public about our ministry. If you're interested, please contact [Robin Hebert](#) or [Brad Leger](#).



## UPCOMING RETREATS AND WORKSHOPS

### An Introduction to the Directed Retreat

February 1 - 3, 2019

Jesuit Spirituality Center  
313 E. Martin Luther King Drive  
Grand Coteau, Louisiana 70541

Presenter: Nelda Turner and Center Staff

An Introduction to the Directed Retreat is designed for someone making a silent directed retreat for the first time. Group and individual sessions will focus on how to pray, to journal, and to communicate prayer experiences with one's director. This retreat also will prepare participants for a longer 3, 5, 8 or 30-day retreat.

Fee: \$180.00

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

## 24 Hours for the Lord

*An overnight retreat: time to pray & reflect*

March 29-30, 2019  
St. Mary of the Pines  
3167 Old Hwy. 51 S.  
Chatawa, MS  
only 90 minutes from BR

*Ignatian retreat  
Facilitated by  
staff of the  
St. Joseph Spirituality Center*

Register online:  
[www.stjocenter.org/events](http://www.stjocenter.org/events)  
or call 225.383.3349

Register by March 1, 2019  
for a discount

*God speaks in the silence of the heart.  
St. Teresa of Calcutta*



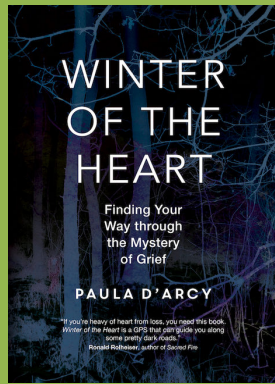
### READER'S CORNER

*Winter of the Heart: Finding Your Way Through the Mystery of Grief*

by Paula D'Arcy  
Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2018

Retreat leader, former psychotherapist, and bestselling author Paula D'Arcy is one of those experts. In *Winter of the Heart*, she shares her life's work, accompanying you through seasons of grief and the emotions that come with the loss of a loved one or after other major changes in life.

*Winter of the Heart* is a companion for anyone early in the grieving process—for the person experiencing shock, emotional pain, an inability to move, guilt, intense anger, and a range of other emotions that might be new to you. [Read more...](#)



### Something to Ponder . . .

*"For human beings, the most daunting challenge is to become fully human. For to become fully human is to become fully divine."*

Fr. Thomas Keating, O.C.S.O.  
1923-2018



To view a short interview of Fr. Keating discussing the fruits of meditation, click [here](#).



### TAKE NOTE

#### SDI Conference: Seeking Connection 2019 - Across Generations

You're invited to join the most welcoming community on earth for 3 days of contemplation, compassion and deep exploration of the art of spiritual companionship. It's called Seeking Connection 2019 -- Across Generations - March 14-17 Bellevue, Washington, USA. We offer 22 workshops, 7 full-day seminars, a 4-day interspiritual retreat, an indigenous-inspired spiritual journey in the stunning Pacific Northwest and 12 dynamic speakers from across the generational and spiritual spectrum. [Learn more and register here.](#)

[Watch this 7 minute video](#) which was made at the SDI Conference in St. Louis earlier this year. Spiritual directors speak about what the conference experience was like and why spiritual companionship matters. You may recognize a familiar face!



### 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. Dues may be paid by mailing a check or paying online via [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](http://www.louisianaspiritualdirectors.org)

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