

Dear Friends of The Well,

We are 19 months into the pandemic! I can clearly remember the day we went into lock down with the belief that it would be just two weeks stolen from our very busy lives. Amid the fear and concern, I actually felt an inexplicable joy. An awareness arose in me in that moment that the human species was being forced to pause and re-evaluate our behavior - the way we “do life” with one another and all creation. Over the course of this worldwide pause, I have made the following observations:

We are more resilient than we realize. Two weeks turned into more than a year and a half and we have survived it! It has been a roller coaster of emotions. We have witnessed and continue to witness divisions that threaten to tear us apart. We have been plunged into deep sorrow and are responding with a hunger for Unity. We persevere TOGETHER.

Community is getting us through. In times of crisis we often retreat, making our world smaller. During the worst of this pandemic we have broadened and deepened community, and continue to form bonds across time and space. We are finding joy and peace as we deepen in our communal prayer life. We are staying connected and find solace in knowing that we belong to one another and we are held in a Great Love.

We are learning that we can connect “heart to heart and center to center” (Teilhard de Chardin) without needing to be in the same physical space. We have the capacity to fall in love with people we have never met in person. Spending more time in the natural world, we experience peace and joy amid the chaos, as the forests, gardens and birds minister to us. We are coming to know that we are more than “stewards” of creation. We are co-inhabitants with a consciousness that can direct the future of the entire planet.

Lastly, we are living in a tumultuous time. As much as we may long for it, there is no going back to business as usual. It is time for us to embrace a new story; one of mutually enhancing relationships with the human and the more-than-human world. Paraphrasing Pedro Arrupe, SJ, it is time to fall in love and stay in love. It will change everything!

In lieu of a traditional program book we are sending this brief newsletter to update you on new developments at The Well and to highlight our Fall 2021 programs. We hope that you will be as excited about our offerings as we are!

Bridget Spurduto, Executive Director



Spirit Dance by Mary Southard, CSJ

COVID PROTOCOL

As we move to publication of this newsletter the following COVID-19 restrictions are in place:

- Due to rising COVID numbers and the highly transmissible Delta variant, the Ministry Center will be closed to in-person gatherings until further notice.
- Masks will be required for outdoor field trips and all participants must be vaccinated (unless exempted for medical reasons).

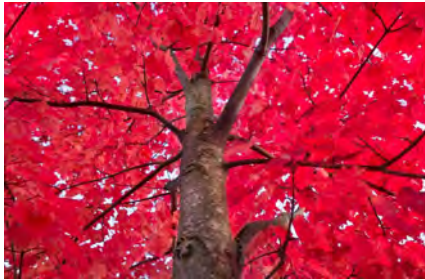
The Delta variant has shown us how quickly things can change. As the numbers increase we will remain virtual. If the numbers decline and remain low, we may be able to open on a limited basis (groups of 15 or less, vaccinated and masked).

ALL OF OUR WELL-KNOWN SPEAKERS/LARGE PROGRAMS WILL BE ON ZOOM this semester, regardless of whether or not we will be able to meet in person.

Stay tuned to our website and eblasts for updates.



FALL PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE



2-HEMISPHERE PRAYER SERIES

Thursdays, Sep 2—30, 4:30—5:00PM

Facilitators from The Well and Australia

Our Fall semester opens with a Season of Creation prayer series in concert with our treasured Australian friends. Free will offering.

YOGA

Wednesdays, Aug 25—Dec 29, 6:30—7:30PM

Facilitator: Karen Payne

Learn to observe and listen to your body, calm your mind and connect with your “true self.”

Appropriate for all levels. \$100 for 10 classes.

COME AND PAINT

First Saturdays, Sep 4—Dec 4, 9:30AM—12PM

Facilitators: Mary Helen Crispo, Gillian Romano, Mary Southard, CSJ

Reunion sessions open to participants in previous Come and Paint retreats. \$10 per session.

INDIANA DUNES FIELD TRIP

Monday, Sep 13, 10AM—12:30PM

Facilitators: Mary Fishman, Ranger Kip Walton

Meet at West Beach for a guided walk by an ancient marsh and into the dunes. \$15, byo lunch.

REIKI CIRCLE

Second Tuesdays, Sep 14—Dec 14, 10—11AM

Facilitators: Certified Reiki Practitioners

Experience long-distance Reiki, the “universal life force,” and activate the healing energy you were born with. Free will offering.

REWILDING THE HUMAN PSYCHE

Third Wednesdays, Sep 15—Dec 15, 12—2PM

Facilitators: Lynn and Bill Fleming, JoAnne and Bill McElroy

Study Bill Plotkin’s *Wild Mind, a Field Guide to the Human Psyche* through the lens of the Powers of the Universe. \$100 series.

MORE GROWING YOUR KNOWING

Thursdays bi-monthly, Sep 16—Nov 18, 10:30AM—12:30PM

Facilitator: Tim Sperduto

For those who have previously completed a Growing program, now is the time to take the next step on your path of waking up. \$150 series.

HILDEGARD RETREAT & TRAVELOGUE

Saturday, Sep 18, 1—3PM (Retreat)

Sunday, Sep 19, 1—2:30PM (Travelogue)

Facilitator: Maureen Wild, SC

Revel in the wisdom, artistry, and vision of Hildegard of Bingen during an afternoon retreat, then immerse yourself in the land of her birth thru a unique spiritual travelogue. \$25/\$10; or \$30/both.

THE EVOLUTIONARY EDGE

Four Tuesdays, Sep 21—Dec 14, 10—11:30AM

Facilitator: Bridget Sperduto

As systems collapse, now it is essential to stand on the evolutionary edge and co-create with God the future that our hearts know is possible. \$20 per session/ \$60 series.

2-HEMISPHERE EQUINOX

Thursday, Sep 23, 4:30—5:30 PM (CDT)

Friday, Sep 24, 7:30—8:30 AM (AEST)

Facilitators from The Well and Australia

Join us and our Australian friends as we celebrate the equinox and explore the wisdom of balance. Free will offering.

SACRED EARTH, SACRED SOUL

Mondays, Sep 27—Nov 22, 10—11:30 AM

Facilitator: Bridget Sperduto

Based on the newest book by John Phillip Newell, *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul*, we will take a deep dive into Celtic Spirituality. \$135 (9-week series).





One Sacred Community
by Mary Southard, CSJ

FINDING HOPE IN A TIME OF CRISIS:
ECOLOGY AS WHO WE ARE

Saturday, Oct 9, 9—11AM

Facilitator: Brenda Peddigrew, RSM

Learn “deeper seeing,” brief and immediate ways to enter into heart-relating with all the elements of our natural world. \$30.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENNEAGRAM

Saturday, Oct 16, 9:30AM—12PM

Facilitator: JoAnne McElroy

Gain a greater understanding of yourself using the Enneagram - a powerful spiritual and psychological tool for transformation. \$30.

VOLO BOG FIELD TRIP, INGLESIDE, IL

Wednesday, Oct 27, 10AM—12:30 PM

Facilitators: Mary Fishman, Stacy Iwanicki

Visit the southern-most open water quaking bog in North America, surrounded by the splendor of Fall’s golden Tamarack trees! \$15, byo lunch.

RIPENING: THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST OF POETS
IN THEIR LATER YEARS

Retreat, Fri and Sat, Oct 29, 7PM—Oct 30, 3PM

Facilitator: Mark S. Burrows

This retreat invites participants into the probing wisdom of selected contemporary poets, harvesting the gifts of their “late” writings that come from the depths of long experience. \$75.

THE OUR FATHER: ENTERING INTO THE
CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS

Mondays, Nov 1—15, 7—8PM

Facilitator: Jack Shea

The Lord’s Prayer/Our Father is easy to take for granted. But it may contain more than we suspect. It is a detailed set of evocative images that align us with the mind of Jesus. \$75 series.

FINDING THE MOTHER TREE

Tuesday, Nov 2 and Nov 16, 1:30—3PM

Facilitator: Shelby Boblick

The forest teaches us that all life is interconnected. This program introduces participants to the exciting concepts in Suzanne Simard’s new book *Finding the Mother Tree*. \$30 series.

CARRYING GRIEF AT THIS UNIQUE TIME

Thursday, Nov 11, 10—11:30 AM

**Facilitators: Ann Letourneau, CSJ, PsyD,
Colleen Narbone, MAPC, LPC**

Through reflection on this time when loss is so pervasive, you will “name” and “honor” your losses and explore some ways to carry them. \$20.

**ADVENT: FOR GOD’S SAKE, WHAT IS
HAPPENING?**

Monday, Nov 29, 7—8:30 PM

Facilitator: Pat Bergen, CSJ

Thomas Merton says “Advent is the beginning of the end of everything that is not Christ.” If you are having trouble perceiving this, join us! \$15.

ADVENT AT HOME DIRECTED RETREAT

Mon, Nov 29, 7PM—Tues, Dec 14, 7PM

Spiritual Directors: Pat Bergen, CSJ, Diane Pfahler, SND, and Bridget Sperduto

This 16 day retreat will draw us into the Season of Advent, awakening us to the reality of what is happening in our midst. \$125.

OPENING TO REVOLUTIONARY LOVE

Friday, Dec 10, 9:30AM—12PM

Facilitators: Colleen Gorman, Bridget Sperduto

How is the Author of Love inviting us to enter into the revolutionary love we celebrate at Christmas? We will weave themes from Valerie Kaur’s *See No Stranger* with those of scripture. \$30.



**Circle of Life:
Winter**
by Mary Southard, CSJ



STAFF CHANGES

Good-bye and hello

This past June we said good-bye to our beloved Sr. Diane Pfahler as she embarked on her journey into retirement. We are so grateful for the time she has given to The Well and for the gifts she has shared with us. As COVID restrictions loosened, we were able to gather a small group to bless her on her way. Pictured above at Diane's farewell are almost all of

the current and former staff members of The Well. That's a lot of history!

Kari Hamende, our new Program and Facilities Coordinator, joined The Well on June 14th. We know you will enjoy getting to know Kari, a person of deep spirituality and rich experience. We are excited about the many gifts she brings to our team.



“It is in the gap between two views where dynamic energy and openness are present to discern the newness being born.”



A national conference to bridge divides

When the pandemic began, our country was already divided across political, religious, economic, and racial lines. Surprisingly, the coronavirus, which had the potential to unite us in care for one another, became yet another source of division!

In response to the polarities which are ripping families, friends, and country apart, The Congregation of St. Joseph and its Spirituality Centers (including The Well) are delighted to sponsor “Bridging the Divides, Tending the Gap,” in partnership with the Fetzer Institute. This virtual conference will gather persons of various faiths, spiritualities, ages, and cultures who are longing to participate in the movement toward unity and the healing of divisions. Find out more: bidpal.net/bridgingdivides

LOOKING AHEAD

One final note as we try to discern the future in this age of the pandemic...

Virtual gatherings have their perks: we have been able to connect across geographical boundaries; old friends of The Well who have moved away are able to reconnect with us; people can participate from the convenience of their own homes. There are also obvious downsides to meeting virtually: no hugs, no sense of “getting away for a retreat,” no socializing over coffee or a meal, and little of the spontaneity that we get from gathering in person.

In an attempt to capture the positive sides of both virtual and in-person gatherings, a sub-committee of The Well's Board of Directors is researching **hybrid models**. When we are able to move forward with gathering at the Ministry Center, we hope to offer an online option to meet the needs of those who are unable (or prefer not) to meet in person.

Commitment to a future full of hope We are thrilled to announce that we are part of the *Laudato Si* Movement of the Global Catholic Church! As part of the Congregation of St. Joseph, we made a commitment to participate in a seven year process to protect the biodiversity of the planet and alter the trajectory of climate change. We envision a future full of hope for those who come after us.

This sounds unimaginable, but as we gather with others around the world we believe we can and will do this. The *Laudato Si* Action Platform has seven goals, all of which are interconnected: Response to the Cry of Earth, Response to the Cry of the Poor, Ecological Economics, Adoption of Simple Lifestyles, Ecological Education, Ecological Spirituality, Community Engagement and Participatory Action and Advocacy. With the full endorsement and involvement of the Church, this movement will engage: families, health care institutions, schools and universities, dioceses and parishes, out-reach agencies, religious congregations, and funding organizations!

A committee has gathered to implement the goals of *Laudato Si* across the Congregation and among its many collaborators. As we intensify our long-standing commitment to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor, we invite you to become involved in the movement, and pray together with us for a future of hope for the children of all species!

More information will be coming out soon on how you can join us.

The Well Spirituality Center
1515 W. Ogden Ave.
LaGrange Park, IL 60526
email us: thewell@csjoseph.org
call us: 708-482-5048