



A Member of the Congregation
of St. Joseph Mission Network

WINTER-SPRING 2024 PROGRAM BOOK and NEWSLETTER

*Moraine Valley Community
College Nature Study Area,
photo by Mary Fishman*



“Your Presence is Your Present”

Dear Friends of The Well,

As I stand on the cusp of the Holiday Season, I am remembering the Christmas when my eldest child was 2 years old. We spent Christmas Eve at my parents' house with all 12 of my siblings, 7 of ultimately 11 in-laws, 9 grandchildren with more on the way. Even with a grab-bag gift exchange, the opening of gifts went on for hours. We left my mom's and dad's house at midnight with very crabby toddlers and exhausted “Santa's Helpers.” Shortly thereafter, the young parents with the over-tired toddlers and babies suggested the idea of Christmas without the exchange of presents. My creative and deeply spiritual sister, Cindy, resonated with a “Yes, because your presence is your present!”

The following Christmas, and every year after until her death, Cindy created a slideshow with family pictures set to music that conveyed a message, such as “Forever Young” by Rod Stewart, or “These Are Days” by 10,000 Maniacs. Other years she wrote parodies to Christmas Carols, and one year she made personalized homemade angel ornaments, each inscribed with a quote that matched the personality of the receiver. Every year she recruited a few siblings to join in the creative process. Her last Christmas, when she was too sick to take it on, she recruited my eldest to create, along with the other grandchildren, video skits that poked fun at their aunts and uncles. Cindy saw my daughter's gift for acting and filmmaking and called it forth for the sake of the community.

These “presentless” Christmases created a deep bonding: we laughed together, cried together, reminisced together, and we created memories as we deepened in our belonging to one another. Spirit awakened among us. When we are “present” to each other's “presence,” we are present to the ONE Presence within, among, and between us, and love and communion deepen. Cindy quietly evoked the gift of shared leadership. This seemingly unintended outcome allowed the tradition to continue well past Cindy's time on Earth even as her spirit continued to inspire the ideas.

I have experienced this spontaneous flow of community at The Well time and again over my tenure on staff. This

semester we are imagining and creating opportunities to consciously deepen this reality and to invite collaborative leadership. Peruse our programs. We have many and varied offerings. Pay special attention to the One Sacred Community and the Celtic Soul Gatherings. These are opportunities for us to come together and grow as an intentional spiritual community. In these dire times spiritual community is essential. We need safe spaces to laugh, cry, question, dig deep and find grounding in the Holy so that together we can be more “present to the presence” of God and one another. (See pp. 8-9 and 12-13 for more information.)

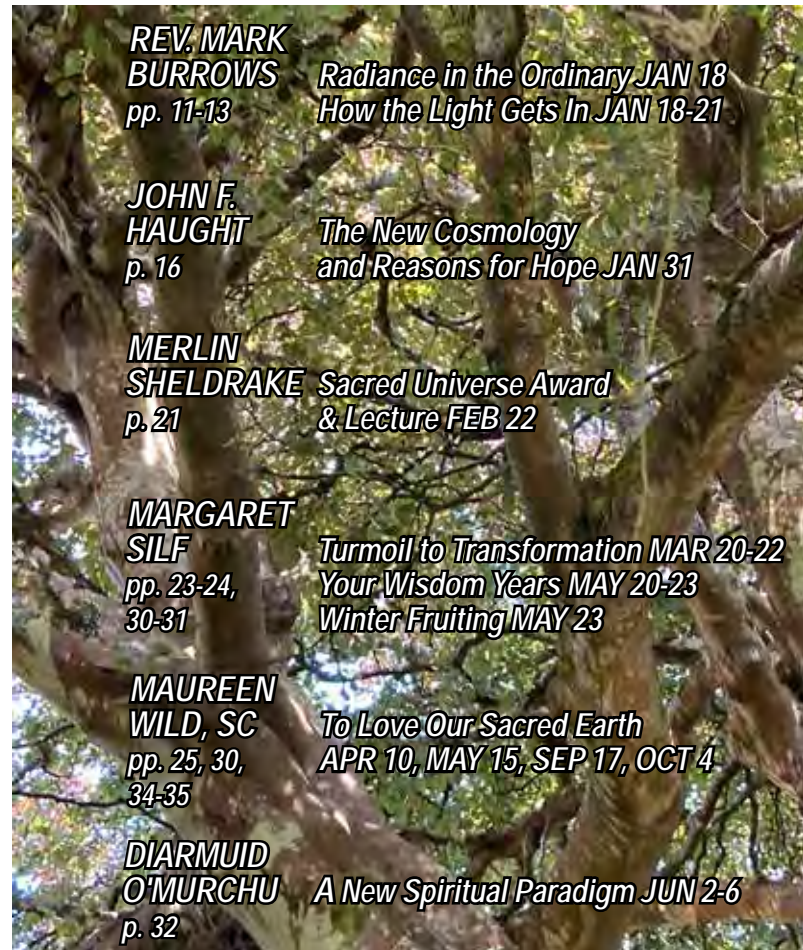
Lastly, speaking of the gift of presence, I am pleased to announce our newest staff member, Associate Director Evelyn Lobo, SSpS. Evelyn comes to us with the deep sense of God's presence among and within all. She thrives on collaborative leadership and she promises to be a significant asset to our ministry. (Learn more about Evelyn on p. 28.)

Bridget Sperduto



photo by Bridget Sperduto

*Your Light within the morning light
Your Soul within the human soul
Your Presence beckoning to us from
the heart of life. John Philip Newell*



REV. MARK BURROWS
pp. 11-13
Radiance in the Ordinary JAN 18
How the Light Gets In JAN 18-21

JOHN F. HAUGHT
p. 16
The New Cosmology and Reasons for Hope JAN 31

MERLIN SHELDRAKE
p. 21
Sacred Universe Award & Lecture FEB 22

MARGARET SILF
pp. 23-24, 30-31
Turmoil to Transformation MAR 20-22
Your Wisdom Years MAY 20-23
Winter Fruiting MAY 23

MAUREEN WILD, SC
pp. 25, 30, 34-35
To Love Our Sacred Earth APR 10, MAY 15, SEP 17, OCT 4

DIARMUID O'MURCHU
p. 32
A New Spiritual Paradigm JUN 2-6

The Universe Story is taught throughout the world, and though it might still be under the radar, it is becoming our common creation story. Science and spirituality are no longer seen as being at odds. New insights into consciousness, our burgeoning awareness of interdependency, and so many more discoveries are raising more questions than they are answering. We are awakening and coordinating together as a human species, committed together to evolving.

At The Well we love deep questions, new ideas, and scientific insights that shake up, or deepen, our beliefs (or both) and strengthen our relationships. To stay abreast and be a part of the evolution of human consciousness, The Well is bringing the world to you. We are offering exciting programs and retreats from thought leaders around the globe, including:

- Merlin Sheldrake, biologist, writer, and speaker from England, receiving the Sacred Universe Award and presenting a lecture.
- Margaret Silf, writer and retreat leader from Scotland, facilitating two retreats and an evening presentation.
- Maureen Wild, SC, eco-spirituality teacher from Canada, and 2023 Sacred Universe Award recipient, facilitating a retreat series.
- Margie Abbott, RSM, eco-spirituality retreat leader and Laudato Si' animator, and Sally Neaves, integral ecology animator and permaculture teacher/practitioner, from Australia, presenting a retreat series (p. 28).
- Diarmuid O'Murchu, author, retired missionary and social psychologist from Dublin, facilitating a retreat.

January

- 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Prayerful Pause Wed
- 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Yoga
- 4, 11, 18, 25 Prayerful Pause Thurs
- 6 Come and Paint
- 8, 15, 22, 29 Prayerful Pause Mon
- 9 Reiki Circle
- 9 Celtic Soul Gatherings
- 9 Drum Circle
- 18 Continue to Grow Your Knowing
- 18 Mark Burrows: Radiance in the Ordinary
- 18-21 Burrows: How Light Gets In Retreat
- 21 One Sacred Community
- 22 Dan Hooper: At the Edge of Time
- 26 The Wisdom Jesus: Book Group
- 26 Trivia Night Fun-Raiser
- 30 Circle of Light
- 31 John Haught: The New Cosmology and the Reasons for Hope



photo by Laurie Hertz

February

- 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Prayerful Pause Thurs
- 1 St. Brigid Day of Reflection
- 2, 9, 23 The Wisdom Jesus: Book Group
- 2-3 Women's Candlemas Retreat
- 3 Imagine This
- 3 Come and Paint
- 4 Wild Belongings: St. Brigid/Imbolc
- 5, 12, 19, 26 Prayerful Pause Mon
- 6 Drum Circle
- 7, 14, 21, 28 Prayerful Pause Wed
- 7, 14, 21, 28 Yoga
- 10 David Ellzey: Finding Your Power
- 11 One Sacred Community
- 13 Reiki Circle
- 13, 20, 27 Yoga to Nourish the Self
- 13 Celtic Soul Gatherings
- 14, 21, 28 Lenten Wholemaker Retreat
- 8, 29 Continue to Grow Your Knowing
- 16-18 Restorative Art Retreat
- 20 Emergent Strategy
- 22 Sacred Universe Award and Lecture
- 27 Circle of Light

March

- 1, 15 The Wisdom Jesus: Book Group
- 2 Undoing the Knots
- 2 Imagine This
- 2 Come and Paint
- 4, 11, 18, 25 Prayerful Pause Mon
- 5 Yoga to Nourish the Self
- 5 Drum Circle
- 6, 13, 20, 27 Prayerful Pause Wed
- 6, 13, 20 Lenten Wholemaker Retreat
- 6, 13, 20, 27 Yoga
- 7, 14, 21, 28 Prayerful Pause Thurs
- 10 One Sacred Community
- 12 Reiki Circle
- 12 Celtic Soul Gatherings
- 21 Continue to Grow Your Knowing
- 16 When Irish Eyes are Smiling: Celtic Feast and Annual Fundraiser
- 20-22 Margaret Silf: Through Turmoil to Transformation Retreat
- 24 Wild Belongings: Spring Equinox
- 26 Circle of Light
- 28, 29, 30 Easter Triduum

April

- 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Prayerful Pause Mon
- 2, 9, 16, 23 Ecology & Risen Christ Retreat
- 2 Drum Circle
- 3, 10, 17, 24 Prayerful Pause Wed
- 3, 10, 17, 24 Yoga
- 4, 11, 18, 25 Prayerful Pause Thurs
- 5, 12, 19, 26 Wisdom Jesus: Book Group
- 6 Imagine This
- 6 Come and Paint
- 9 Reiki Circle
- 9 Celtic Soul Gatherings
- 10 Maureen Wild: Teilhard...Thomas
- 11 Continue to Grow Your Knowing
- 13 Healthy Aging from a Neuropsychological Perspective
- 21 One Sacred Community
- 24 Everything is Sacred: Patterns of Connection
- 30 Circle of Light
- 30 Art as Meditation



photo by
Bridget Spurduto

May

- 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Prayerful Pause Wed
- 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Yoga
- 2 Continue to Grow Your Knowing
- 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Prayerful Pause Thurs
- 4 Imagine This
- 4 Come and Paint
- 5 Wild Belongings: Feast of Beltane
- 6, 13, 20 Prayerful Pause Mon
- 6, 9, 13, 16 Everything a Caress of God
- 7, 14 Art as Meditation
- 7 Drum Circle
- 11 Missives from Bingen
- 14 Reiki Circle
- 14 Celtic Soul Gatherings
- 15 Maureen Wild: Thomas...Janine
- 18 Bird Walk at Fullersburg Woods
- 19 One Sacred Community
- 20-23 Margaret Silf: Wisdom Years
- 23 Winter Fruiting
- 28 Circle of Light

FALL

SEP 17 Maureen Wild: Hildegard...Thomas

OCT 4 Maureen Wild: Francis...Thomas...Suzanne

June

- 1 Imagine This
- 1 Come and Paint
- 1 Free Flow: Watercolors
- 2-6 Diarmuid O'Murchu Retreat
- 3, 10, 17, 24 Prayerful Pause Mon
- 4 Drum Circle
- 5, 12, 19, 26 Prayerful Pause Wed
- 5, 12, 19, 26 Yoga
- 6, 13, 20, 27 Prayerful Pause Thurs
- 9 Garden Party
- 10-15 Wholemaker Guided Retreat
- 23 Wild Belongings: Summer Solstice

July

- 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Yoga
- 6 Imagine This
- 6 Come and Paint
- 13 Forest Therapy in the Courtyard
- 14-18 Boundless Compassion Retreat
- 19 Boundless Compassion Facilitators
- 26-Aug 3 Celtic Christianity Pilgrimage

In the program descriptions, you will note that many programs are labeled "Hybrid." This means that participants have the option to meet with others In-Person at The Well **or** to join on Zoom from home.



photo by Bridget Spurduto

Prayerful Pause

Mondays & Wednesdays • 9 - 9:15am (CT)

Thursdays • 4:30 - 5pm (CT)

Facilitators: Pat Bergen, CSJ, Carol Crepeau, CSJ, Bob Kent, Jackie Schmitz, CSJ, Kathy Sherman, CSJ, Bridget Spurduto

No matter where we are in this country or in the world, we are ONE Community and we need each other. On Mondays, we offer a prayer/song/reflection to focus your week. On Wednesdays we present a musical moment with singer/composer Kathy Sherman, CSJ, and others.

Thursdays provide an opportunity to reflect and to share the state of the heart. Drop in on any day. We trust that in quieting ourselves and listening deeply, both individually and collectively, we may better respond to what the Holy One is asking of us at this time.

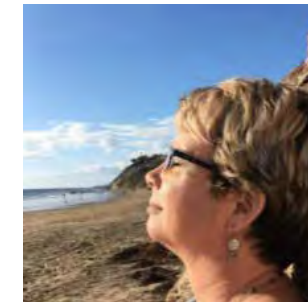
Zoom • Suggested Donation: Give at a level that feels right

Yoga

Wednesdays • 6:30 - 7:30pm (CT)

Facilitator: Karen Payne

Facilitator Karen Payne will teach you to observe and listen to your body, calm your mind, and connect with your "true self." Using your breath, you can learn to let go and live in the present. With continued practice you will find joy in simple awareness and discovery. This class is appropriate for all levels.



Karen Payne is a Hatha Yoga Instructor. Her teaching philosophy is to remind us to be in the moment with awareness to our mind, body, and spirit. Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$120/10 sessions or \$15/session

DOES PRAYER HAVE A COST?

A study we recently conducted revealed that for every hour of program length, we can cover our costs (staff, insurance, rent, marketing, etc.) if a minimum of ten people attend and pay \$25, and the facilitator donates their presentation (generally this is staff, a board member, or a CSJ Sister).

While we do not assign a charge to programs that involve prayer, they still have costs, per above. For example, for a fifteen minute Prayerful Pause session on Monday or Wednesday mornings, we cover our costs if ten people donate about \$6 per session.

We offer this information as an aid in discerning whether, and how much you will donate for your participation in Prayerful Pause, Reiki, Celtic Soul Gatherings, One Sacred Community, Circle of Light, and Wild Belongings. Know that we are grateful for your participation, and that your generosity allows us to continue in our mission of unity.

Come and Paint

First Saturdays: Jan 6, Feb 3, Mar 2, Apr 6, May 4, Jun 1, Jul 6 • 9:30am - 12pm (CT)

Facilitators: MaryHelen Crispo and Gillian Romano

These reunion sessions bring participants to a greater self-awareness through painting. Participation is open only to previous "Come and Paint" or "Paint Your Soul" retreat participants.

Zoom • Cost: \$10/session



Reiki Circle

Second Tuesdays: Jan 9, Feb 13, Mar 12, Apr 9, May 14 • 10 - 11am (CT)

Reiki Practitioners: Janet Bolger, CSJ, Chris March, CSJ, Jackie Schmitz, CSJ, Bridget Spurduto

Come to experience Reiki (an ancient healing technique), the "universal life

force." Certified Reiki practitioners will help participants activate the healing energy they were born with, feel more calm, optimistic, and empowered.

In-Person • Suggested Donation: Give at a level that feels right

Celtic Soul Gatherings

Second Tuesdays: Jan 9, Feb 13, Mar 12, Apr 9, May 14 • 6:30 - 8pm (CT)

Facilitators: Bob Kent, Ellen Wiggins

Celtic Christianity is a beautiful melding of the love-ethic of early Christianity and the nature-based religion of the Celtic Druids. The result is a strand of Christianity in which everything in Creation is sacred, the Divine Feminine and women leaders are honored, and we look inside for answers. In our Celtic Soul Gatherings, we will be meeting in small groups, once a month, to listen and share our deeper truths in response to sacred writings, poetry, music, and art that come out of Celtic Christianity and related traditions. Our first meeting will be online; we will decide

then how we will gather going forward. Come join us!

Bob Kent retired several years ago as an attorney and entered seminary with the goal of becoming a minister. A recent graduate of the Living School at the Center



photo by Bridget Spurduto

for Action and Contemplation in New Mexico, he loves the Christian mystics and tries to bring a little bit of Richard Rohr to everything he does.

Ellen Wiggins is a graduate of Seminary of the Wild and an

ordained eco-minister. Active in the Wild Church Network, she has

led contemplative meditation circles and co-facilitates earth-based gatherings through Wild Belongings, celebrating the Celtic Wheel of the Year.

Zoom (may change) • Suggested Donation: Give at a level that feels right

Drum Circle

Tuesdays: Jan 9, Feb 6, Mar 5, Apr 2, May 7, Jun 4 • 6:30 - 8pm (CT)

Facilitator: Karen Tlusty-Rissman

Nurture your spirit through rhythm and meditation. Based

SHE'S BAAAACK!!!

We are thrilled to say "welcome back" to Chris March, CSJ! She is once more offering private sessions in the modalities of Therapeutic Massage, Reiki, and Healing Touch.

Chris took a hiatus from her work at The Well to fill the role of Coordinator of Community Life for the CSJ Sisters of LaGrange Park. After organizing the move of two dozen Sisters to their apartments in the new Joseph House assisted living residence, and helping them get settled, the Covid epidemic broke. Over these three challenging years, Chris, along with the Joseph House staff, managed to create an atmosphere where safety, good health, and grateful spirits abounded.

Chris is delighted to return now to The Well. She treasures the opportunity to once more work with clients to facilitate balance and healing of their body, mind, and spirit. Chris originally trained, and practiced for years in geriatric medicine as a registered nurse. She then chose a different direction in her healing profession, graduating from massage school in 1997 and beginning her practice. Shortly afterwards, Chris went on to study energy techniques, finding that the healing arts of Reiki and Healing Touch meshed so well with her massage and nursing background. During every session, Chris uses an eclectic approach in a gentle, prayerful manner, reverencing the Spirit of each person.



For more information, or to make an appointment with Chris, please call her at 708-482-5084, or send an email to cmarch@csjoseph.org

A RETREAT FOR EVERY LIFESTYLE



Our retreats are evolving with the times. Covid opened the door to retreats on Zoom, and once people were able to gather again in person, we embraced the Hybrid retreat, investing in cutting edge technology to make these retreats appealing.

Besides adjusting how we meet, we are trying new retreat formats. We have something for everyone! The week-long, in-person retreats that used to be our summer mainstay are still an option. Many people who work full time or have children in the house don't have a week to spare for a retreat, so we are now offering a variety of retreat opportunities to fit different lifestyles and stages of life.

Our new concepts are: three or four-day mid-week retreats such as those offered by Margaret Silf; a retreat series that meets one-two hours for multiple sessions over a longer timeframe, such as Maureen Wild's To Love Our Sacred Earth retreats that meet monthly; the Lenten Wholemaker Retreat, and the Ecology and the Risen Christ Retreat that meet weekly; or Everything Is As It Were a Caress of God meeting twice-weekly. We propose that this

drawn-out retreat style will allow the new input, practice, and experience to steep over an extended period of time. It might fit better into a person's life who has children, or a demanding job, who can only spare a few hours every so often.

Weekend retreats or one-day retreats (How the Light Gets In; Women's Candlemas Retreat; Restorative Art Retreat; two retreats around St. Brigid; and Missives from Bingen) provide options for those whose weekday schedules don't afford much time off. Another retreat idea that seems to be catching on is the out-of-town retreat. We recently hosted an overnight retreat, On the Shores of Lake Michigan, just on the other side of our beautiful lake, and due to popular demand, we will offer it again next fall.

One thing you will notice about all of our retreats (and other programs) - whether on Zoom, Hybrid, In-Person only; a few hours in length, a weekend or a week long; continuous or spaced out over several weeks or months - we strive to create a welcoming space where community is built. Find a retreat that works for you!

on a blend of traditions, this Spirit Circle draws on our most ancient roots to creatively raise group energy. Each round will begin with a chant or Native American style flute song. Rhythm instruments will gradually come in until the drumming reaches its natural conclusion. There will be a few moments of silent meditation, taking in the energy that was raised and then sending it out as prayers and blessings.

Karen Tlusty-Rissman is a musician, astrologer, artist, and celebrant of Spirit. She currently leads a variety of

meditation classes in the western suburbs of Chicago and has facilitated sacred circles for 40 years. Karen plays the Native American flute, concert flute, bass guitar, Tibetan singing bowls, and gong.
In-Person, Indoors (outdoors if weather permits) • Cost: \$20

Continue to Grow Your Knowing: Building Your Living Sanctuary

Thursdays: Jan 18; Feb 8, 29; Mar 21; Apr 11; May 2 •

10:30am - 12:30pm (CT)

Facilitator: Tim Spurduto

In this series of classes we will focus on building your living sanctuary and making more space for your soul-self and purpose. This class is open to those who have taken Beginners Growing Your Knowing and Still Growing (Chakra Abilities).

Tim Spurduto is a Qigong Teacher and an Intuitive, and has a Master's Degree in Chinese Traditional Medicine and Nutrition.

Zoom • Cost: \$210 series

Radiance in the Ordinary: Discovering Abundance When We Need it Most

Thursday, Jan 18 • 6:30 - 8pm (CT)

Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Mark Burrows, PhD

"We eat bread, but we live from radiance." Hilde Domin



Beauty is an abundance in the midst of our lives; it gestures toward wholeness among the brokenness we experience. It is the gift present, if often hidden, in the most ordinary of moments. Drawing on poets and artists, we will explore how our experience of beauty holds the power to awaken us to the radiance we live from as found in our everyday lives. This evening talk points to how our awakening to beauty can lead us to see things "whole" in ways that inspire and encourage us to flourish in our lives.

Mark Burrows is well-known at The Well for programs he has offered over the last decade. Teacher and scholar, poet and translator of German poetry, his work explores the field of Christian spirituality and connects the ancient wisdom of the mystics with modern life. Ordained in the United Church of Christ (USA), he taught in several divinity schools in the US and Germany before turning his focus entirely to writing and retreat leadership in 2020. Recent books include *The Wandering Radiance: Selected Poems of Hilde Domin* (2023), and, with Jon M. Sweeney, *Meister Eckhart's Book of Darkness and Light: Meditations on the Path of the Wayless Way* (2023).

Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$25





The One Sacred Community initiative grows from our conviction that people are desperately seeking a meaningful 21st century spirituality as traditional systems are failing them. The Well will become more intentionally what many people tell us we already are: a spiritual home.

In response to The Well's Pledge Drive Initiative, Bridget Sperduto and Bob Kent, our Intern, recently gathered a focus group to discern how The Well may respond to the call to deepen as an intentional spiritual community. We asked the participants to share words that arise from their vision of community. Here's a sample of what we heard: welcoming, inclusive, experiential, ritual, commitment to justice, shared leadership, the Christ in All, All Is One, Sacred Universe Story, Celtic Christianity.

We also discussed the forms that spiritual community might take at The Well. The group agreed that we should continue with Prayerful Pause, which meets on Zoom Monday and Wednesday mornings, and on Thursday afternoons, and Wild Belongings, which gathers for ritual and reflection in

the woods eight times a year. We noted that when people gather over time for these programs, for other series such as our book studies, and even for our one-off programs, they create community. To deepen further, the group envisioned two additional opportunities for gathering: a small groups ministry that would meet monthly for deep listening and sharing on spiritual themes; and a monthly hybrid gathering of The Well community for ritual, prayer, spiritual exploration, and honoring the joys and sorrows of belonging to each other.

Growing from these discussions, starting in January, The Well will be offering two new opportunities to be in spiritual community. "Celtic Soul Gatherings" (p. 8) will meet in small groups monthly to reflect on words, art and music from Celtic Christianity and related traditions. "One Sacred Community" (p. 13) is the name we have chosen for our monthly hybrid gatherings of the entire Well community.

We hope you will join us! In addition, all of our spiritual community offerings are based on a belief in shared leadership. If you feel called to participate in creating any of our spiritual community gatherings, please email us at thewell@csjoseph.org.

How the Light Gets In: Wisdom for Flourishing in Our Broken World Retreat

Thursday, Jan 18, 6:30pm through Sunday, Jan 21, 3pm (CT)

Retreat Director: Rev. Dr. Mark Burrows, PhD

Our lives are made for thriving, but our circumstances often work against this. To flourish calls for radical wisdom, the sort that "re-minds" us of who we are. Can you imagine how light might shine "out of the darkness?" How do we come to glimpse the inner radiance we (and others) carry in our brokenness? What might this wisdom mean for how



"In the Summerhouse" by George Tooker, Smithsonian American Art Museum

we learn to flourish from day to day, given the anguish and suffering that define our times?

We'll explore two medieval visionaries — Meister Eckhart and Julian of Norwich — who help us understand how the "cracks" open us to an inner radiance. And we'll draw on a chorus of contemporary poets to elucidate that wisdom, including Rainer Maria Rilke, Rosemerry Trommer, Wendell Berry, and

Julia B. Levine. We'll also draw on the musical and visual arts to help us open ourselves to the power of that inner light which "the darkness [has] not overcome."

Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$500 Overnight • \$425 Commuter • \$400 Zoom

One Sacred Community

Sundays: Jan 21, Feb 11, Mar 10, Apr 21, May 19 • 11am - 12:15pm (CT)

Facilitators: Bridget Sperduto, Bob Kent, Susan Brownell

The joys and the sorrows of our time invite us to find strength in community. Many people have told us that The Well has become their spiritual home. We believe that the time has come for The Well to start gathering regularly as an intentional spiritual community. Come join

us for monthly ritual and reflection in the tradition of The Well: welcoming to all; rooted in the reality that All Is One; employing the lens of the Sacred Universe Story, scripture and other Earth-based traditions; engaging the heart and soul through ritual and deep sharing; committed to justice for all of Earth's beings; and facilitated through shared leadership and lay participation. Come join us!

Bridget Sperduto, M.Ed., Executive Director of The Well, weaves storytelling, scripture, theological, and scientific concepts into her programs, inviting participants into the profound presence and mystery of God around and within. She is an Associate of the Congregation of St. Joseph, a spiritual director, reiki master, educator and retreat facilitator.



"Spirit Dance" by Mary Southard, CSJ

Susan Brownell, MTS, has studied liturgy formally and informally, lived in her tipi for two summers, and taught on a Reservation for 14 years. She sprinkles kindness like confetti, feeds her unhoused neighbors, and longs for liturgy from the Universe Story.

See "Celtic Soul Gatherings," (p. 9) for Bob Kent bio. Hybrid • Facilitators are In-Person • Suggested donation: Give at a level that feels right

CELTIC SPIRITUALITY PILGRIMAGE TO INISHMORE



It appears that the traveling bug has hit The Well! Last summer our pilgrimage to Iona, Scotland was so awesome and inspiring that within weeks after the pilgrims' return, another trip was in the works. This

summer, we invite you to join us on a Celtic Christianity Pilgrimage to Inishmore, the largest of the Aran islands, off the west coast of Ireland.

The world is hungry for Celtic spirituality, and it is packed into this 8-mile-long by 1 ½ mile-wide island facing the Atlantic Ocean. Unreached by the Roman empire, the ancient Celtic way and the early Christian teachings had time to be woven together here into a harmonious whole. You can feel the heartbeat of God once you step on the land.

Our mornings will be spent among monastic ruins and places of burial, hearing what happened here from our facilitator Dr. Kirk Webb, Director and Founder of the Celtic Center. Afternoons will be free - to return to the ruins, spend time on the beaches and cliffs, take in the incredible sights and sounds of nature, and rest. Meals in the morning and evening will be together. You will find this pilgrimage offers a lovely balance of time in community and time alone. For details, see p. 34, and our website. Register by Jan 12.

At the Edge of Time

Monday, Jan 22 • 6:30 - 8pm (CT)

Facilitator: Dan Hooper

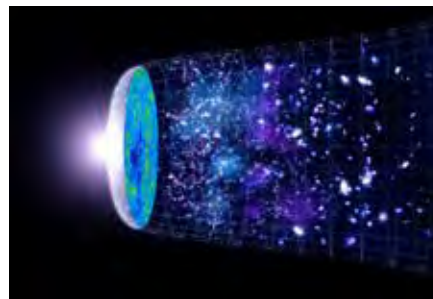
In *At the Edge of Time*, Fermilab Senior Scientist Dan Hooper explores cosmology's most elusive time period: the seconds, and fractions of a second, immediately following the Big Bang.

Hooper outlines what we know and, perhaps more importantly, what we don't yet know about this time, elucidating the extraordinary and perplexing questions that physicists are investigating in an effort to unveil the origin and nature of our universe.

Reflecting on science's successes and failures studying this edge of time, Hooper proposes that we could well be on the brink of a paradigm-shifting revolution in physics, the likes of which hasn't been seen since 1905.

Dan Hooper is a senior scientist and the head of the Theoretical Astrophysics Group at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory and a professor of astronomy and astrophysics at the University of Chicago. He is the author of *Dark Cosmos* and *Nature's Blueprint*.

Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$25



NASA

The Wisdom Jesus: Book Group

Fridays: Jan 26; Feb 2, 9, 23; Mar 1, 15; Apr 5, 12, 19, 26

• 9:30 - 11am (CT)

Facilitator: Bridget Spurduto

If you put aside what you think you know about Jesus and approach the Gospels as though for the first time, something remarkable happens:

Jesus emerges as a teacher of the transformation of consciousness.

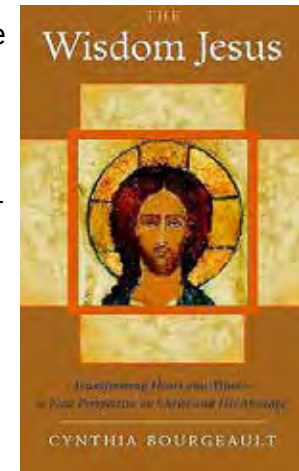
Author Cynthia Bourgeault is a masterful guide to Jesus' vision and to the traditional contemplative practices you can use to experience the heart of his teachings for yourself.

See "One Sacred Community," (p. 13) for Bridget Spurduto bio. Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom and sometimes In-Person • Cost: \$150 series

Trivia Night: Back In-Person!

Friday, Jan 26 • Arrival 6pm (CT) • Game Time 7 - 9pm (CT)

Join us for our sixth annual Trivia Night, a fun-filled event like no other. Are you a big fan of Jeopardy? Do you like testing your knowledge, or are you just looking for a fun night out in January? Gather a group of up to 8 friends or family members to make a team, or register solo and let



us place you on a team. Bring food, snacks and drinks for you and your team to enjoy throughout the evening. Be prepared for a night of laughter and enjoyment in the company of old and new friends.

In-Person • Cost: \$25

Circle of Light

Last Tuesdays: Jan 30, Feb 27, Mar 26, Apr 30, May 28 • 9:30 - 10:30am (CT)

Facilitators: Bob Kent, Bridget Spurduto

Do you know that all created matter is made of energy? Absolutely everything in this universe consists of energy. You and I and every species are energy or Spirit slowed down enough to see. Furthermore, every thought, every emotion, every action is also energy vibrating at a particular frequency.

Those who hold a higher vibration through prayer, meditation, thoughts of gratitude, and actions of love counteract the negative, destructive, and violent energy on the planet. If you are wondering what difference you can make during these tumultuous times, consider joining us in community to collectively and consciously raise our vibration for the sake of our planet.

See "Celtic Soul Gatherings," (p. 9) for Bob Kent bio, and "One Sacred Community," (p. 13) for Bridget Spurduto. Zoom • Suggested Donation: Give at a level that feels right



"I am a hole
in the flute that
the Christ breath
moves through.
Listen to this
music."

Hafiz

Celtic cross, Iona
photo by Ellen Wiggins

The New Cosmology and the Reasons for Hope

Wednesday, Jan 31 • 6:30 - 8pm (CT)

Facilitator: John F. Haught

In his theological journey toward a Christian theology of hope, John Haught has found support in a number of theologians and philosophers, but has travelled mainly in the company of Teilhard de Chardin and Alfred North Whitehead. In this presentation he will outline how their shared, but at times differing, cosmic sensitivity has guided him as he has dealt in the classroom and in his writings with the main questions in science and religion. He will propose in passing also that Teilhard's cosmic vision and Whitehead's aesthetic metaphysics together provide a fertile framework for a contemporary ecological theology supportive of Pope Francis's vision of life on earth.

John F. Haught, PhD is Emeritus Professor at Georgetown University. He specializes in Roman Catholic systematic theology, with a particular interest in issues pertaining to cosmology, evolutionary biology, and Christianity. He has authored numerous books and articles, including most recently *God after Einstein* and *The Cosmic Vision of Teilhard de Chardin*.

Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$35



NASA, Preston Dyches

St. Brigid Day of Reflection

Thursday, Feb 1 • 9am - 2pm (CT)

Facilitators: Bridget Sperduto, Ellen Wiggins

2024 marks the 1500-year anniversary of the death of St. Brigid of Kildare. Please join us for a day of retreat to reflect on her life and legacy. We will engage in ritual based on the meditative walk in Brigid's Garden at Kildare. We will explore our personal and collective thresholds and you will leave feeling more aligned with and empowered by the spirit of Brigid to be a force of love and action. Final ritual will be held outdoors weather permitting.

See "One Sacred Community," (p. 13) for Bridget Sperduto bio, and "Celtic Soul Gatherings," (p. 9) for Ellen Wiggins.

In-Person • Cost: \$75
(includes lunch)

Women's Candlemas Retreat

Friday, Feb 2, 7pm through Saturday, Feb 3, 4pm (CT)

Retreat Directors: Pat Bergen, CSJ and Kathy Sherman, CSJ

Gather with others to reflect on the inbreaking of increased Light as Winter inches closer to Spring. Indige-



photo by Bridget Sperduto

nous people were keenly aware of the increase of energy, the emergence of dreams, creativity and healing that accompany this seasonal moment. Join us as we, too, celebrate in solidarity this cosmic feast.

Pat Bergen is a Sister of the Congregation of St. Joseph whose mission is "Unity" flowing from John 17: 21, "That All May be One." She is an educator, spiritual director, retreat and workshop facilitator, and restorative justice circle keeper who served 18 years in leadership of her congregation. Her doctoral dissertation is entitled "Communion with Creation: Implications for Prayer, Justice and Leadership."

Kathy Sherman, CSJ is a writer, singer, and activist who believes that all life is permeated with the sacred. Passionate about writing music that fosters hope and healing for our world, Kathy is deeply committed to working for non-violence, racial justice, and advocating for the protection and healing of our planet.

Hybrid • Facilitators are In-Person • Cost: \$150 Overnight
• \$115 Commuter • \$115 Zoom



"Dance Your Dreams Awake"
by Mary Southard, CSJ

Imagine This... One Hour Imagination Sessions

First Saturdays: Feb 3 through Dec 7 • 8 - 9am (CT)

Facilitator: Pat Bergen, CSJ

The ability to imagine is one of the main characteristics of being human. If we can imagine something, it can come to be. These monthly sessions will engage participants in exercising their imaginations and senses. Each month, we are going to strengthen the field for love in the world by imagining the world through integral ecology and interculturality as revealed in the themes of Laudato Si'.



Facilitator presentation, dream inquiry, art, and spiritual quotations will help in this discovery. Gradually participants will experience what the Pope means by "integral ecology."

You will need the Ministry of the Arts 2024 Calendar from the Congregation of St. Joseph. To obtain a calendar (either in print or PDF form), please make your request here: csjoseph.org/mota/. Join the movement; change the world!

Zoom • Cost: \$70 series

Wild Belongings: St. Brigid/Imbolc

Sunday, Feb 4 • 2 - 4pm (CT)

Facilitators: Ellen Wiggins, Bob Kent, Pat Eichenold

Our Sacred Earth is seeded with Divine revelation. Wild Belongings invites us into a deeper experience of this revelation through relationship with the land, the creatures near us. We come together to honor St. Brigid, Christian Saint and Celtic Goddess, "a symbol of continuity between one age of Wisdom to the next," and Imbolc, a Celtic Festival celebrating the "lambing season." What is being birthed in us as Spring arrives? Join in this time of awe and wonder.

See "Celtic Soul Gatherings," (p. 9) for bios.

In-Person, Outdoors • Weather contingencies: we will meet outside for the whole program in dry, above freezing weather. If it is below freezing, snowing, or raining, we will meet inside, going outside only for the wander.

• Suggested Donation: Give at a level that feels right

Finding Your Power in a World of Conflict

Saturday, Feb 10 • 9am - 3pm (CT)

Facilitator: David Ellzey

To move from feeling powerless to hopeful and grounded in strength, we must face the cosmic truth of oneness as our basic nature - easily forgotten in this world of such conflict and separation.

Join us to let go and uncover true power, not of force, but

of the unshakeable realization that what spins the planets, also beats our own, and all, hearts. With skills of releasing, sacred breath, self-inquiry, and dialogue, you can awaken from the sleep of smallness and separation, to sensing the unified force of all the universe as your very own being.



photo by Bridget Spurduto

For decades, David Ellzey has been coaching worldwide on letting go and consciousness, merging ancient and modern ways of investigation and self-realization. He is a licensed teacher of The

Sedona Method, a co-recipient of

the Raoul Wallenberg Humanitarian Award, and author of *The Ocean of Now*.

Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$75 (includes lunch)

Yoga to Nourish the Self

Tuesdays, Feb 13, 20, 27; Mar 5 • 1 - 2pm (CT)

Facilitator: Nina Ginocchio

Slow, mindful yoga is a wonderful tool to help us cultivate calm in our lives and nourish the self. In this course, we will begin with our breath and then layer in movement and quiet focus to release tension and bring a greater sense of

ease to the body. We will listen to the messages that the body is sending us and adjust accordingly.

This class moves at a pace that balances effort with ease and is perfect for those new to yoga as well as experienced practitioners. You'll leave feeling calm, refreshed, and full of the nourishing energy that you need! This program will begin with chair yoga and may progress to a mat yoga class depending on the goals and facility of the participants.

Nina Ginocchio is a registered, certified yoga teacher with over 11 years of experience. She teaches yoga for the nervous system – yoga that allows us to connect with the body, the mind, and the spirit.

Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$60 series

Lenten Wholemaker Guided Retreat

Wednesdays, Feb 14, 21, 28; Mar 6, 13, 20 • morning 9:30 - 10:45am or evening 6:30 - 7:45pm (CT)

Co-sponsored with the St. Joseph Retreat Center

Facilitators: Pat Bergen, CSJ, Kathleen Durkin, CSJ, Christine Parks, CSJ, Kathy Sherman, CSJ

The Cry of Earth and the Cry of the Poor summon all people of faith to ecological conversion this Lent. According to experts in science and leaders of



photo by Bridget Spurduto

faith, there is no time to waste. Respond to the cries by participating in our Wholemaker Guided Retreat.

Participants will meet once a week, Ash Wednesday Feb 14 through Wednesday Mar 20, for presentation and suggestions for prayer between sessions. An optional opportunity for spiritual direction will be available between sessions for a free will offering. Register for morning or evening sessions.

Hybrid • Facilitators are In-Person and on Zoom • Cost: \$80

Restorative Art Retreat

Friday, Feb 16, through Sunday, Feb 18

• Fri & Sat 9am - 4pm (CT) • Sun 9am - 12pm (CT)

Facilitator: Gillian Romano

Through everything, Love is the constant force. Our job is to let go into it. During these three days, we will let go into love as we tap into the creative forces that are innate and alive UNIQUELY in each one of us.

As we witness our unique and intuitive marks unfold on our paper, we will experience just how magical, supportive, and restorative listening to our own deeper knowing



"Shady, New York" by Sophie Freedman, Smithsonian American Museum of Art

can be. We will play with tempera paint to practice our expressions. Participants at all levels are welcome - especially those who have never picked up a paint brush! Let's explore, rest, laugh, and be in AWE together!

Gillian Romano comes to us with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts. With an equal love for nature and art, she spent three years as a backpacking guide in southern Utah. Her knowledge of the Universe Story helped her to see with a particular type of amazement the way nature moved around her. Gillian has co-led many art retreats alongside Mary Southard, CSJ, and is excited to teach just how robust and influential the intuitive painting process can be in discovering new avenues for compassion and connection with ourselves and the world around us.

In-Person • Cost: \$300 (includes supplies and lunch)

Emergent Strategy: Living into Our Reality of Interdependence

Tuesday, Feb 20 • 2:30 -4pm (CT)

Facilitator: Bob Kent

Come explore the wisdom and teachings of celebrated spiritual writer and racial and environmental justice activist adrienne maree brown. We will take a deep dive into her acclaimed book, *Emergent Strategy*, which draws on the science fiction writings of Octavia Butler, deep study of the natural world, and



embodied spirituality to create an integrated approach to thriving – personally and collectively - and working for justice. Brown, who is Black and Queer, is a fresh, important voice among those working to help us live into the reality of our interdependence and what that means for how we can and should be in the world.

See "Celtic Soul Gatherings," (p. 9) for Bob Kent bio.

Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$25

2024 Sacred Universe Award Presentation & Lecture: Entangled Lives: Fungal Networks, Ecology, and Us

Thursday, Feb 22 • 1 - 2:30pm (CT)

Co-sponsored with the Siena Center of Dominican University

Award Recipient & Lecturer: Merlin Sheldrake

The Well is thrilled to announce that Merlin Sheldrake will be the recipient of the 2024 Sacred Universe Award. This award, first presented to Thomas Berry in 1993, honors leaders in the field whose work and life foster mutually enhancing human–earth relationships. Join us for this special occasion to honor Merlin who will accept the award followed by his lecture.

Thinking about fungi makes the world look different. Most fungi live out of sight, yet make up a massively diverse kingdom of organisms that support and sustain nearly all living systems. Fungi throw our concepts of individuality and even intelligence into question. They can change our minds, heal our bodies, and help remediate environmental

disaster. In this talk, Merlin will discuss the ways these extraordinary organisms – and our relationships with them – change our understanding of the planet on which we live, and the ways that we think, feel, and behave.

Merlin Sheldrake is a biologist, speaker, and author of *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds, and Shape Our Futures*. *Entangled Life*, a New York Times and Sunday Times best-seller, has been translated into twenty-six languages, and was named a TIME Must-Read Book.



Merlin's research ranges from fungal biology to the history of Amazonian ethnobotany, to the relationship between sound and form in resonant systems. He received a Ph.D. in tropical ecology from Cambridge University, is a research associate of the Vrije University Amsterdam, works with the Society for the Protection of Underground Networks (SPUN), and sits on the advisory board of the Fungi Foundation. A keen brewer and fermenter, Merlin is fascinated by the relationships that arise between humans and more-than-human organisms. Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$10

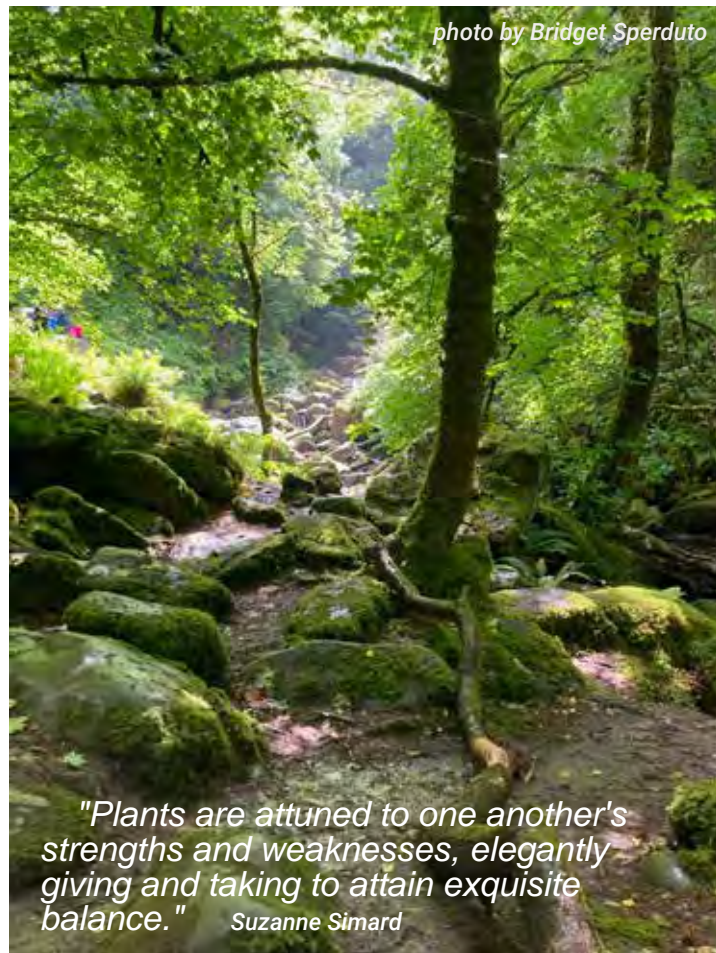


photo by Bridget Sperduto

"Plants are attuned to one another's strengths and weaknesses, elegantly giving and taking to attain exquisite balance." Suzanne Simard

Undoing the Knots & Weaving the Cross: A Lenten Day of Reflection Celebrating St. Brigid of Kildare

Saturday, Mar 2 • 8am - 4pm (CT)

Facilitators: Eileen Durkin, Ellen Wiggins, Kate DeVries

Co-sponsored with Old St. Pat's

Céad míle fáilte! We offer a hundred thousand welcomes as we celebrate and pray with St. Brigid, the fifth-century Celtic Christian Abbess. A contemplative at heart, St. Brigid will inspire you as we learn of her many expressions of hospitality and generosity, her mission as a peacemaker, her love of nature and God's creatures, and her soulful knowing of the sacredness in all. Our day will be full with contemplative prayer, wanders in nature, and shared reflections on this "thoroughly modern 1500-year-old saint" and the hope she offers us all. Space is limited - register soon.

Eileen Durkin has been researching St. Brigid of Kildare since 1993, when she wrote a dramatic homily entitled "St. Brigid Wakes Up" for the St. Patrick's Day Mass at Old St. Patrick's Church in Chicago. Since then, she has been advocating for St. Brigid's relevance as a much-needed sign of hope and healing in our hearts, our churches, and our world. As the saying goes, "All are welcome under St. Brigid's cloak."

Kate DeVries, D.Min. is an online chapel host for Old St. Patrick/St. Margaret Mary, a liturgical musician at St. Paul VI Parish in the western suburbs, and a special education teacher in Berwyn. Formerly, she held the positions of co-director of Young Adult Ministry for the Archdiocese of Chicago, and pas-

toral associate at St. Francis Xavier Parish in La Grange, IL.

See "Celtic Soul Gatherings," (p. 9) for Ellen Wiggins bio. In-Person, at Morton Arboretum, Arbor Room, Lisle, IL • Cost: \$75 includes breakfast and lunch

When Irish Eyes are Smiling: A Celtic Feast Annual Benefit for The Well Spirituality Center

Saturday, Mar 16 • 4pm (CT)

Join us for an enchanting Celtic celebration to support The Well Spirituality Center. A spirited liturgy in the Alexine Chapel will be followed by cocktails, appetizers, and a delicious dinner in Welcome Hall. We will also honor former board member and multi-event chairperson Beth Sennett for her extraordinary service to The Well.



You will have plenty of time to browse and bid on great silent auction items and experiences. Try your Irish luck at the gift card and wine pulls. Make this a St. Patrick's evening to remember with family and friends, all while helping The Well! Stay tuned - more information and invitation to follow.

In-Person • Cost: \$100

Through Turmoil to Transformation Retreat: Becoming the Change We Long For

Wednesday, Mar 20 through Friday, Mar 22

• **Mornings: 9 - 10:30am**

• **Afternoons: 1 - 3:30pm (CT)**

Facilitator: Margaret Silf

We are living through times of extreme turmoil as crises multiply and the "old normal" breaks down all around us. Could these things be the labour pains of a new story striving to come to birth for the human family and for our planetary home? Can an apparently catastrophic breakdown become a breakthrough to an astonishing new beginning?



photo by Bridget Sperduto

The metamorphosis of the caterpillar into a butterfly, through the meltdown of the chrysalis will guide our reflections on the present global crisis, and give us grounds for authentic hope that we are being invited to evolve to a

higher plane of what it means to be human. Two sessions daily will offer a presentation and a brief reflection break followed by an opportunity to share our thoughts and responses.

Margaret Silf is passionate about making Christian spirituality accessible to people with no theological background. She is the author of a number of books for 21st century pilgrims who may or may not identify with institutional religion. Margaret lives in Scotland. Formerly employed as a technical author in the IT industry, she left paid employment in 2000 to devote her time to writing and accompanying others on their spiritual journey through retreats, workshops, and days of reflection. Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$300 Overnight • \$225 Commuter (includes lunch, snacks and contemplative space) • \$195 Zoom

Margaret is also facilitating a retreat in May (p. 30). Register for both retreats and receive a discount. See website for details.

Wild Belongings: Spring Equinox

Sunday, Mar 24 • 2 - 4pm (CT)
Facilitators: Ellen Wiggins, Bob Kent, Pat Eichenold

What better time to bid farewell to Winter's darkness than to mark the rising Spring, a time when the Earth's sun sits



"Daffodils on Blue"
by Mary Southard, CSJ

directly over the equator before heading north. We will celebrate outdoors with prayer, song and a wander on the land.

See "Wild Belongings," (p. 18) for weather contingencies. In-Person, Outdoors • Suggested Donation: Give at a level that feels right

Easter Triduum Services

Holy Thursday, Mar 28 • 6:30pm

Good Friday, Mar 29 • 3:30pm

Holy Saturday, Mar 30 • 7:30pm (CT)

Everyone is welcome to join the Sisters of St. Joseph and The Well community for the celebration of the Easter Triduum, a liturgical expression of the paschal mystery within our evolving universe calling us all to communion in Christ.

Ecology and the Risen Christ Retreat: A Series on the Goals of Laudato Si'

Tuesdays: Apr 2, 9, 16, 23 • 9:30 - 11am (CT)

Facilitator: Pat Bergen, CSJ

Called to Ecological Spirituality (Apr 2)

Stories reveal our worldview. Worldviews reveal the Who, the Where, and the How of our God and who we say Christ is. Our experience of God leads to a lifestyle that reveals our spirituality. Make sure your spirituality is eco-spirituality!

One Cry: Cry of Earth and Cry of the Poor (Apr 9)

Listen. Whose cry are you hearing? Whose cry are you feeling? Join together and discover the depth of the cry and the profound implications offered as we dare to listen and to let our hearts be broken. From the depths will come forth a wisdom beyond reason which holds the potential to make all things whole.



"Easter" by Mary Southard, CSJ

What Does Ecological Economics Look Like? (Apr 16)

Ecos means "house"! Ecology means the study of the house. Economics is how we manage the house. Look around. Notice what is happening to our Common Home! Join us as we learn about new ways of relating with our house and living in Christ.

Coming Back into Balance with the Whole Cosmos (Apr 23)

Look around, our human life has gotten out of whack. The state of the world is calling us personally and as a human community to an ecological conversion with no time to waste! As the Body of Christ, this conversion summons us to live in, with, and for Christ.

See "Women's Candlemas Retreat," (p. 17) for bio. Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$80 series

To Love Our Sacred Earth Retreat: Teilhard's "Mass on the World" Meets Thomas Berry's Cosmic Liturgy and Celebration

Wednesday, Apr 10 • 10am - 12pm (CT)

other sessions May 15 (p. 30), Sep 17 (p. 34), Oct 4 (p. 35)

Facilitator: Maureen Wild, SC

This four-part retreat series explores teachings within the writings of cultural historian and geologist Thomas Berry as they interweave with the wisdom of nature-centered mystics and of nature-inspired scientists. Choose any or all sessions.

The "Mass on the World" is one of Teilhard's most mystical and poetic writings. For Teilhard, we live in the bosom of a great cosmic Eucharist. Thomas's vision is the entire universe as the primordial sacred community. He observed that we've developed celebrations for seasonal events (e.g., solstices and harvest) and liturgies, ceremonies, and traditions marking religious stories of faith (e.g., Christmas, Ramadan, Passover, Easter). But we've not yet begun to acknowledge and celebrate the moments of grace in our grand cosmic liturgy.



Maureen Wild, SC is the 2023 recipient of The Well's Sacred Universe Award. She served as Director of two spirituality-based ecological learning centers, and she has helped foster the international network, Sisters of Earth, since 1994. Blessed with many great teachers, one most enduring influence was Thomas Berry, who challenged all to live a resolute life of Great Work that protects, rather than ruins, Earth.

Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$150/series • \$40/session • additional \$40/session includes lunch and contemplative space for the day

Healthy Aging from a Neuropsychological Perspective

Saturday, Apr 13 • 10 - 11:30am (CT)

Facilitator: Dr. Shannon Connell

Join us for an illuminating interactive program on the mind/brain system and how our natural aging process affects our functioning. Topics addressed will include the process of normal aging from a neuropsychological perspective, normal and abnormal cognition, healthy habits for a healthy brain, and tools for maintaining a vibrant mind/body/spirit connection. The



positive impact of spiritual and physical practices will be explored.

Dr. Connell has served as the Coordinator of Neuropsychology at Mercy Health's Memory Clinic, Muskegon, MI for five years. She has maintained a private practice since 2008. Research areas include: cognitive health, resilience, and mindfulness-based meditation.

Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$25

Everything is Sacred: Patterns of Connection within Living Systems

Wednesday, Apr 24 • 6:30 - 8pm (CT)

Facilitator: Mary Case, MD

"Love is cosmic energy, an affinity of being-with-being, a universal property of all life that embraces all forms of organized matter." Teilhard

Yes, and what does that mean in daily life? If "affinity of being-with-being" is present all around us, where is it? This is an opportunity to deepen and enrich our spiritual life by taking a more granular look at the science of nature-based spirituality. This offering will explore patterns of connection within and between living systems; for example, the exquisite branching pattern we see in trees is also present in your brain, and invisible



photo by Edie Emmenegger

soil fungi partner with trees to manage forests. You will be dazzled by the "cosmic energy of love" which finds connection irresistible.

Dr. Case is a retired National Board-certified anatomic and clinical pathologist with subspecialty training in neuropathology. She and her husband Kevin practiced medicine in Omaha, Nebraska and Bellevue, Washington. Her professional career radiates with passion for the human brain—not only for studying how it functions physiologically and cognitively, but also for training others in how to use this information in a practical way.

Hybrid • Facilitator is In-Person • Cost: \$25

Art as Meditation and for a Spark of Joy!

Tuesdays, Apr 30; May 7, 14 • 1 - 3pm (CT)

Facilitator: Carol Cummins

The beauty and detail that can be found in nature arouses a sense of wonder, alluring us into communion with creation. Contemplative painting can be a prayer of gratitude for the beauty of Earth's creativity and variety. It can deepen our relating with "other than human beings," releasing a power of the Universe that evolves into care and nurturing for the entire web of life.

This meditative painting workshop



is for anyone who enjoys watercolors, the experienced and beginner alike. Our theme will be modern botanicals, as taught by Sarah Simon (known as @themintgardener on Instagram). We will be using her watercolor workbook, which costs about \$20 and includes premium watercolor paper. The fun part is that the drawing is done for you, and you can go directly to painting. Join us for one session or all three, to practice and enjoy the fun of painting in community.

Carol Cummins is a calligrapher and a student of watercolor painting, a lover of words and images. Spending time in nature is her favorite way to connect with the Divine. She believes noticing beauty is a spiritual practice that inspires hope and brings a sense of awe. Carol has presented Mandala and Neurographic Art Workshops previously at The Well, and is excited to introduce the teaching of Sarah Simon to our community of artists. In-Person • Cost: \$75/series • \$30/session

Wild Belongings: Feast of Beltane

Sunday, May 5 • 2 - 4pm (CT)

Facilitators: Ellen Wiggins, Bob Kent, Pat Eichenold

Wild Belongings invites us into a deeper experience of Divine revelation through relationship with the land, the creatures near us. Beltane, a Celtic festival falling on the eve of May, was marked by a great bonfire celebrating the brightness of the Celtic god, Bel. As we welcome the increasing sunlight, we will join in communion with the land and each

A NOTE FROM EVELYN LOBO, OUR NEW ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR



I am a Sister of an international congregation, Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters. I entered in 2013. Prior to entering religious missionary life, I worked for 12 years at Eli Lilly & Company, Indianapolis as a Principal Research Scientist. I completed doctoral studies in Pharmaceutical Sciences from University of Buffalo, SUNY (2002). I earned my Master's (1996) and Bachelor's (1993) degrees in Pharmaceutical Sciences in Mumbai, India. I completed a two year diploma program in Theology from St. Andrew's College, also in Mumbai, and received my Spiritual Direction Certificate from the Claret Center in Chicago.

I grew up in a devout, close-knit Catholic family of four siblings. My paternal grandfather lived with us.

I enjoy being at the edge of discovery and revelation regarding sacred scriptures, creation, laws of nature, quantum physics and spirituality. I cherish the ministry of being a spiritual companion. I facilitated Bible study and spirituality talks in English and Spanish at Blessed Trinity and Little Flower Parishes in Waukegan.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of The Well community. I look forward to knowing and growing with you and sharing my gifts.

other through readings, song, and ceremony. All are welcome. See "Wild Belongings" (p. 18) for weather contingencies.
In-Person, Outdoors • Suggested Donation: Give at a level that feels right

Everything Is As It Were a Caress of God

Mondays and Thursdays, May 6 & 9, 13 & 16 • 7 - 8:30pm (CT)

Facilitators: Margie Abbott, RSM, Sally Neaves

Over two weeks and four sessions Sally Neaves and Margie Abbott, RSM will offer us an opportunity to reflect on the peril that Earth is undergoing and acknowledge Pope Francis saying in Laudate Deum "I have realised that our responses have not been adequate, while the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point."

They will reflect and share practices using Joanna Macy's spiral. The spiral begins with "gratitude" which helps us to become present and grounded so that we can more fully acknowledge the "pain" of the world. When we honour pain, we learn the true meaning of compassion. This will help us to "see with new eyes" as we get to know more genuinely our relatedness to all that is. We taste our own power to change and feel the texture of our living connections with our human ancestors and with those to come, as well



Joanna Macy's spiral
"Caress from God"
by Dori Midnight

as with our other-than-human kin. We go forth from the retreat open to "action" that is possible for each of us. Expect in this online retreat time to deeply listen, to share in small groups, to meditate together, and to learn ways to bring the retreat alive with practices in small groups wherever you are situated.

Margie Abbott is a Sister of Mercy based in Geelong, Australia with qualifications in education, spirituality, theology, facilitation, and psychodrama. She leads eco-spirituality retreats, is a Laudato Si' animator, and facilitates groups nationally and internationally. Margie highly values inner independence, the contemplative stance, and active hope for a healing world.

Sally Neaves is the Integral Ecology Animator of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea. She is also a permaculture teacher and practitioner, creating and designing ways in our lives where waste becomes resources, productivity and yields increase, and where nature (including people) are preserved! Sally lives in New South Wales, west of Sydney, Australia.
Zoom • Cost: \$95

Missives from Bingen - Seeking and Questioning with Hildegard

Saturday, May 11 • 9am - 12pm (CT)

Facilitator: Jennifer Delvaux

Hildegard of Bingen produced ethereal visions, heaven-



ly compositions, and the medicinal knowledge to treat root and bone. Her achievements still possess the power to capture our imaginations and fill us with awe, and yet they would not have been possible if Hildegard

had not persevered through the same kinds of daily questions and challenges that continue to frustrate us today. Her relationship with the Divine and with friends and loved ones nurtured all that was extraordinary in her life.

Through a remarkable collection of letters we see Hildegard not just as a mystic but as a companion - a companion we, too can turn to amid the trials of our own spiritual journeys. In this retreat we will engage her letters and similar writings to see her wisdom, as well as her frustrations, as a light in our own encounter with the Divine.

Jennifer Delvaux serves as Director of Mission Integration for the Congregation of St. Joseph and CSJ Initiatives. Previously, she spent over twenty years in pastoral ministry at parish and diocesan levels with a passion for accompaniment, justice issues, building connections between people, and making a daily effort to grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Hybrid • Facilitator is in-Person • Cost: \$40

To Love Our Sacred Earth Retreat: Thomas on Guidance and the Self-Healing of Earth Meets Janine Benyus on Biomimicry

Wednesday, May 15 • 10am - 12pm (CT)

other sessions Apr 10 (p. 25), Sep 17 (p. 34), Oct 4 (p. 35)

Facilitator: Maureen Wild, SC

Our second session features Thomas Berry on guidance and the self-healing of Earth meeting Janine Benyus, natural science writer and innovation consultant, on biomimicry. Thomas points to humanity as being "lost" and needing guidance from the Earth community. This is mirrored within the contemporary wisdom of biomimicry as articulated by Benyus, which looks to the authentic spontaneities within the wild for solutions - solutions that emulate nature's ways.

See "To Love Our Sacred Earth Retreat" (p. 26) for bio.

Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$150/series • \$40/session

Bird Walk at Fullersburg Woods, Oakbrook

Saturday, May 18 • 8 - 10am (CT)

Birding Guide: Mike Warner

Facilitator: Mary Fishman

The Chicago area teems with visiting birds during the spring and fall migratory seasons. Join us bright and early to spy on some colorful



out-of-town warblers (on their way to Canada) finding their breakfast in the forest along Salt Creek. This outing is designed for people new to birding. We'll have an easy walk on a flat, ground-limestone trail. Mike Warner, the President of the Du Page Birding Club, will be our expert guide.

In-Person, Outdoors • Limited to 15 participants • Cost: \$25

Discovering Your Wisdom Years Retreat

Monday, May 20 through Thursday, May 23

• Mornings: 9 - 10:30am (CT) • Afternoons: 1 - 3:30pm (CT)

Facilitator: Margaret Silf

Our later years challenge us to learn the art of slowing down, letting go, and facing our own mortality, but they also surprise us with joy as our perspective changes. We glimpse more clearly the possibilities that the longer view reveals. We discover unexpected gifts that winter brings.

Just as we feel we are winding down, we find ourselves called to wake up and embrace the most fulfilling challenge of all - to mature inwardly into our wisdom years. Join us to explore and celebrate the promise at the heart of your own wisdom years. We will gather twice daily. Each session will offer a presentation and a brief reflection break followed by an opportunity to share our thoughts and responses.

See "Turmoil to Transformation" (p. 24) for bio.

Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$400 Overnight • \$300 Commuter (includes lunch, snacks and contemplative space) • \$250 Zoom

Margaret is also facilitating a retreat in March (p. 23). Register for both retreats and receive a discount. See website for details.

Winter Fruiting

Thursday, May 23 • 7 - 8:30pm (CT)

Co-sponsored with the Siena Center of Dominican University

Facilitator: Margaret Silf

An evening for those who have reached the later years of life and are eager to explore, and share, the spiritual fruits of life's winter season.



"Snowy Berries" by Frankie Dutil, CSJ

Just as the winter tree must relinquish its leaves, so we too face the challenge of letting go. And just as the tree's seeds fall into the ground, to bear new fruit in the future, so our lives too bear fruit, born of experience and matured into wisdom. We will reflect on the nature of that fruit, and the gift that is ours to give to the future.

Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$10

The Free Flow of Letting Go: Painting with Watercolors

Saturday, Jun 1 • 9am - 3pm (CT)

Space is limited to 10-12 people

Facilitator: Frankie Dutil, CSJ

Our spiritual traditions bring us to the truth that the deeper beauty and substance of life often emerge when we stop grasping and struggling for control in our lives.

Watercolor painting is a truly experiential metaphor for the spiritual journey. This medium defies precise control yet yields wonderful results when we are able to let go. Prior experience with watercolors is not necessary to enjoy this day. Beginners will learn basic techniques.

"Frankie" has enjoyed art since childhood. After working with different media she has come to love watercolors the best. Frankie says, "I like to think of watercolor as a lesson for living. Sometimes the water and the paint kind of take off on their own and we feel like we are not in control. However, if we just let it happen and 'go with the flow,' something better than what we had planned comes to life." In-Person • Cost: \$75 (includes lunch and supplies)



"Sun and Trees - Red Tree" by Frankie Dutil, CSJ

Diarmuid O'Murchu Retreat: A New Spiritual Paradigm for the 21st Century

Sunday, Jun 2, 7pm through Friday, Jun 7, 4pm (CT)

Facilitator: Diarmuid O'Murchu

Based on his recent book *Ecological Spirituality*, Diarmuid O'Murchu will explore a major shift in our understanding of spirituality, an expanded vision for how we understand God, creation, and ourselves in this time of climate emergency.



photo by Bridget Spurduto

Diarmuid is a retired missionary and social psychologist who has devoted much of his life to Adult Faith Development through workshops and conferences on an international scale. He now lives in Dublin, Ireland.

Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$650 Overnight • \$525 Commuter (includes lunch, snacks and contemplative space) • \$450 Zoom

Wholemaker Guided Retreat

Monday, Jun 10, 2pm through Saturday, Jun 15, 12pm (CT)

Facilitators: Pat Bergen, CSJ, and additional Spiritual Directors

The Cry of Earth and the Cry of the Poor summon all people of faith to ecological conversion. According to scientists and people of faith there is no time to waste.

Respond to the cries by participating in the Wholemaker Guided Retreat, with the option for spiritual direction included as a free will offering.

Hybrid • Facilitators In-Person • Cost: \$600 Overnight • \$400 Commuter (includes lunch, snacks and contemplative space) • \$375 Zoom

Wild Belongings: Summer Solstice

Sunday, Jun 23 • 2 - 4pm (CT)

Facilitators: Ellen Wiggins, Bob Kent, Pat Eichenold

Wild Belongings invites us into a deeper experience of Divine revelation through relationship with the land, the creatures near us. All are welcome as we gather to honor the longest day of sunlight in the Northern Hemisphere.

Save the date!

Garden Party Family Fun-Raiser for The Well

SUNDAY, JUN 9, time T.B.D.

The CSJ Sisters are thrilled with their beautiful, newly-landscaped courtyard. The Joseph House community had a big hand in its design, and it shows in every carefully-considered detail. We thought we would help them show it off during a season when everything is in bloom. The ideas are still flowing for this family-friendly fun-raiser, but so far we are thinking of an ice cream social with root beer floats, face painting, nature games for the kids. See you in the garden.



photo by Mary Fishman

We will be guided by poetry and chant, exchanging wisdom with the land, its inhabitants, and one another. Let's give thanks for the warmth and abundance of Light.



photo by Mary Fishman

See "Wild Belongings" (p. 18) for weather contingencies. In-Person, Outdoors • Suggested Donation: Give at a level that feels right

Forest Therapy in the Courtyard

Saturday, Jul 13 • 10am - 12pm (CT)

Facilitator: Maura Neuffer

Spend a morning among the trees (and flowers) of the beautiful courtyard at The Well. Reconnect with nature during this slow invitational walk led by a Certified Forest Therapy Guide. Forest therapy recognizes that sensory experiences in nature are essential to the well-being of the human body, mind, and spirit. The walk is not about the destination, but about the awakening of your senses to the natural environment around you. We will conclude the experience with a tea gathering.

Maura Neuffer is an experienced Certified Naturalist, Environmental Educator, and a Certified Forest Therapy

Guide through the ANFT (Association of Nature and Forest Therapy). Maura is passionate about connecting people of all ages with the wonders of the natural world and all creation.

In-Person, Outdoors • Limited to 16 participants • Cost: \$25

Boundless Compassion Retreat

Sunday, Jul 14, 7pm (CT) through Thursday, Jul 18, 4pm (CT)

Facilitator: Mary Dean Pfahler, SND

"Compassion is a necessity, not a luxury. Without it, humanity cannot survive." Dalai Lama

Well-known author Joyce Rupp fashioned the Boundless Compassion retreat as a call to walk compassionately with self, others, and all of creation. In this retreat based on her book *Boundless Compassion: Creating a Way of Life*, participants will discover the seeds of compassion planted across the spectrum of faith traditions and found in insights from theology, spirituality, science, sociology, and psychology. Come, explore what it means to embrace oneself and all beings within the circle of compassion.



Sister of Notre Dame, Mary Dean Pfahler, delights in helping seekers savor the experience of Gracious Mystery in their lives. A former educator in Ohio and Papua New Guinea, pastoral minister, retreat center director, and college campus mentor, she now finds joy in

accompanying individuals and groups in spiritual direction, the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, and Boundless Compassion retreats.

In-Person • Cost: \$550 Overnight • \$450 Commuter (includes lunch, snacks and contemplative space)

Participants in this retreat are eligible to apply to attend the Boundless Compassion Facilitator Training that follows on Friday, July 19.

Boundless Compassion Facilitators Training Workshop

Friday, Jul 19 • 9am - 4pm (CT)

Facilitator: Mary Dean Pfahler, SND

This one-day workshop offers the opportunity to become a certified facilitator of the Boundless Compassion program.

The training prepares participants to use their individual talents and experiences to incorporate the Boundless Compassion program into their sphere of influence and to share the content in a variety of ways. Participants are required to attend a four-day Boundless Compassion retreat in person and complete an application for review before being accepted into the training workshop.

In-Person • Cost: \$150 Overnight • \$100 Commuter

Celtic Christianity Pilgrimage

Friday, Jul 26 through Saturday, Aug 3

Facilitators: Dr. Kirk Webb, Bob Kent

Are you ready to enter into a pilgrimage experience with friends and community from The Well? Would you like to encounter the land, spirituality, and wisdom of the Celts,



on the beautiful Island of Inishmore, off the west coast of Ireland? Come join us on our Summer 2024 Celtic Christianity pilgrimage to Ireland!

Our pilgrimage will be led by Dr. Kirk Webb of the Celtic Center. Double rooms and single rooms are available. See our website for more information on the pilgrimage and pricing. Space is limited and is filling up. • *Registration deadline: Jan 12*

• Non-refundable deposit of \$600 reserves your spot

To Love Our Sacred Earth Retreat: Hildegard's Viriditas Meets Thomas's Spirituality of Earth

Tuesday, Sep 17 • 10am - 12pm (CT)

other sessions Apr 10 (p. 25), May 15 (p. 30), Oct 4 (p. 35)

Facilitator: Maureen Wild, SC

The third session of this series will focus on Hildegard's concept of Viriditas, the greening power of God, merging with reflections on Thomas's essay *The Spirituality of Earth* - Earth's processes expressing an abiding numinous presence, an intrinsic spiritual quality from the beginning. See "To Love Our Sacred Earth" (p. 26) for bio.

Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$150/series • \$40/session



To Love Our Sacred Earth Retreat: Francis of Assisi and Thomas on Intimacy with Nature Meet Suzanne Simard on New Ways to See and Know a Forest

Friday, Oct 4 • 10am - 12pm (CT)

other sessions Apr 10 (p. 25), May 15 (p. 30), Sep 17 (p. 34)

Facilitator: Maureen Wild, SC

Our fourth and last session in this series features the intimacy with nature of Francis of Assisi and Thomas Berry, meeting Suzanne Simard (author of *Finding the Mother Tree*) on new ways to see and know a forest. Each encounter reveals growing bonds of intimacy and communion, intuitive and experiential knowing – even a sense of shamanic evocation – that strives to protect the intrinsic wisdom of nature.

Hybrid • Facilitator is on Zoom • Cost: \$150/series

• \$40/session



Maureen Wild, SC

Don't miss out on your virtual program

After you register for a program on Zoom, you will receive a series of reminder emails from The Well with the Zoom link and meeting information. If you have not received an email from us with the Zoom info by the day before the program begins, please contact us so that we can assist you: thewell@csjoseph.org



OUR MISSION

The Well Spirituality Center is a community that fosters an awakening to our Unity with the Divine, One Another, and all Creation.

Recognizing that all is one, we provide opportunities to grow a deeper understanding of ourselves, a spiritual community of belonging and action, and an appreciation for our place and our part as agents of healing in the unfolding Universe Story.

MEET THE WELL STAFF

Bridget Sperduto, Executive Director

Evelyn Lobo, SSpS, Associate Director

Mary Fishman, Marketing Coordinator

Roberta Walsh, Registration and Database Associate

Bob Kent, Intern

To find out more/register: csjthewell.org
(708) 482-5048

Mary Southard, CSJ and Frankie Dutil, CSJ artwork used with permission from MOTA. Images available at ministryofthearts.org



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