



SOUTHERN IGNATIAN NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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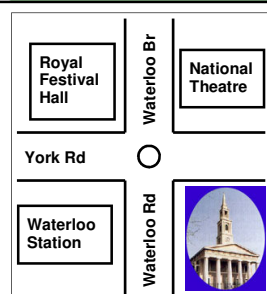
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Autumn Gathering - God and Sex: How Far Can You Go?

Our Autumn Gathering will be led by Sue Cash and Julian Maddock
Saturday 19 October at
St John's Church,
Waterloo Road
London SE1

11 am—4 pm (arrive at 10.30 am for informal networking).
 Please bring a packed lunch; coffee and tea will be provided. Donation * for the day is £10 for members and £15 for non—members.



Our Autumn Gathering will be an opportunity to reflect on the value of human sexuality and its place in the spiritual direction conversation. Using poetry, music, and visual images, we will look at our own experience, where the issues of sexuality emerge, and what resources are available. As spiritual directors, it is important that we convey a positive affirmation of someone's sexuality and spirituality, as they are fundamental to personhood.

Spirituality and sexuality are often portrayed as being at odds. Spirituality is of God and the soul; sexuality is of the body. Despite our belief in an incarnate God, it is sometimes as if the body were less important than the soul. Spirituality is far more than prayers and rituals. It involves the way I relate to God and live with my whole being, body and soul. Sexuality is far more than what I do in bed, and with whom. It includes the way I am in the world given my biology as a woman or a man. It involves the way I relate as a person with a body to other people with bodies. It is my desire for, and love of, others in their wholeness. Whether I have a special other, am single, or celibate, my sexuality

is present in all my relationships.

In the 'preludes' of the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius invites "to ask for what I want and desire." In the Contemplatio we are invited into the love of God. Spirituality and sexuality are about desire and love. They get to the heart of our identity and are crucial elements of human being. Yet, the Other/other is always beyond my control. Because of these things, God, and my desire for another can be both inviting and terrifying. I long for God, and yet where will I be led if I let God be God? I long for relationship with another, and yet that other is always different from what I want them to be.

These matters are the stuff of spiritual direction. And rightly so: for what of me is God not interested in? With my spiritual director I can confront my desire and my fear. I can address myself to letting the love of God — and my relief and thanks for that love — change me so that the way I relate to the Other/other increasingly lives God's desires.

We hope that our tongue-in-cheek title, part-borrowed from the title of a novel by David Lodge, will amuse and intrigue you into joining us for a day which will encourage and challenge us as spiritual

directors.

** The cost of the Gathering is to cover materials and expenses. It is recognised that financial situations differ and some people travel long distances. It is important that no one is prevented from coming because of financial hardship. A donation that is less (or in some cases more!) is acceptable. Please pay whatever you can afford.*

From the editor



Articles are welcome — either by email to :

Editor@signetwork.co.uk

Or write to:

The Editor, SiGN
c/o The Parish Office
St. John's Centre
222 Epsom Road
MERROW
Surrey. GU4 7AA



Chair's Report for the year to 31 Dec 2001

The Southern Ignatian Network (SIgN) is constituted by Deed of Trust and is a registered Charity No. 1055559. Its address is: The Secretary of SIgN, 136B Chestnut Avenue South, London E17 9EL. The Charity's objects are the advancement of the Christian Religion in particular by the promotion and encouragement of the Ignatian tradition.

Introduction

As we begin 2002, SIgN appears to be at a crossroads in its life, for a variety of reasons. As has become our usual practice, the past year has seen two successful Gatherings, ongoing support for members, the distribution of two Newsletters, and an updated list of our 250 members. Whilst our Annual General Meeting gives us an opportunity to reflect upon the life of the Network over the last year, it is particularly important this year that we look to the future.

Gatherings

In 2001 we had two Gatherings: one was on movement, massage and meditation lead by Sr Jean Kirkpatrick; the other on Justice and Peace issues lead by Mildred Nevile, which picked up themes from the events of 11 September. It was good this year to mix input which nourished ourselves with reflection that helped us to look beyond ourselves. The Gatherings were both in London. Our members come from all over the South of England but as yet, for want of suggestions and offers, it has not been possible to hold a Gathering outside London. The next Gathering will be at St John's Church, Waterloo.

Finance

You may remember that the Network has been financially subsidised by the Jesuit Order. This funding is now coming to its end. At recent meetings of the Core Group we looked at alternative ways of functioning as a Network. At our February meeting, we came to a consensus that SIgN, as we have come to know it, continues to need a facilitator, even if with reduced hours.

SIgN has a facilitator working 36 hours per month, i.e. ¼ of a full-time post. The role of the facilitator is pastoral and encouraging. It includes supporting

members in their apostolic ministry, enabling reflection to take place within SIgN, providing continuity, making arrangements for Gatherings, being a point of contact between and at the Gatherings, and facilitating the Core Group. In future the hours of the facilitator will be reduced, the actual number of hours being dependent on the amount of funding available.

At the end of February we approached the Jesuits to see if further funding could be made available. We will shortly make an application and we await their response. In the event of the Jesuits not feeling able to respond to our request for further funding for the Network, we would have to continue in a different way and without a facilitator.

Core Group

The Charity is administered by a Core Group comprising:

Chair - Julian Maddock
Vice chair - Jane Arden
Secretary - Nicky Woods
Treasurer - John Ruming
Membership Secretary - Margaret Palladino
Other members - Liz Grant, Monica Popper, Andrew Walker and Julia Waterfield. Michael Barrow (Society of Jesus) was co-opted.

At this AGM we see the resignations of five members from the Core Group. After many years of staunch and meticulous work as treasurer of SIgN, John Ruming is now standing down from the Core Group in accordance with the constitutions of the charity. He is a founder member of SIgN and we have valued his commitment and knowledge of our roots. We are fortunate that Laurence Benkhabeb has been co-opted onto the Core Group and has taken instruction from John on the workings of SIgN finances. We hope that she will be confirmed as the new treasurer at this AGM.

We also say goodbye to Jane Arden and Liz Grant who have served on the Core Group since its inception and have also completed their maximum term. Jane has been vice-chair this year and Liz was secretary for several years. Both have worked hard in the nitty-gritty of committee process and administration of the Network. I have been particularly grateful of Jane's support this year

as we have been working on the future of SIgN.

Finally, Sr Monica Popper and Julia Waterfield are leaving the Core Group. We are grateful to all of them for the prayer, attention and work they have put into ensuring that the Network and the Gatherings continue. We wish them many blessings.

Change of fees

The Core Group regretfully decided that it would be necessary to recommend that the annual subscription be increased from £5 to £7 with effect from January 2003. [In the event, there was a spontaneous and unanimous decision to increase the annual subscription to £10.] The Group would like to encourage members who can do so, to pay their subscription for 3 years at a time. The advantage to members would be having to remember to pay once every 3 years instead of annually. The advantages to SIgN would be 1) to reduce administration, 2) to reduce the likelihood of members forgetting to renew their membership, thereby providing greater continuity, and 3) for taxpayers using Gift Aid, to enable earlier refund of tax, which in turn can be used to earn more interest.

Final words

In its own special way, SIgN is an important network of people. Many of you accompany others in spiritual direction and weeks of prayer. Many more are involved in all sorts of apostolic ministry. This is often lonely and tough work. SIgN provides a place where those of us who are inspired by the insights of Ignatius and the Ignatian tradition can find belonging, friendship and collegiality, support, and some on-going input for the journey.

I pray that we may continue in God's grace with whatever the future hold for us and for the Network.

Julian Maddock
9 March 2002

"we came to a consensus that SIgN, as we have come to know it, continues to need a facilitator, even if with reduced hours."



2003 Southern Ignatian Network Gatherings

Spring 15 March 2003

Autumn 11 October 2003

The topics for the gatherings have yet to be decided.

The venue will be St John's Church, Waterloo. (see page 1 for directions).



"Inigo" Meetings

These afternoon workshops began as the initiative of a group of us who completed the Ignatian Spirituality Course in 1999: we felt we needed some regular 'refreshers' with experienced facilitators, as well as a chance to meet together and share. We now meet three times a year, and we are delighted to invite you to join us.

Our meetings are open to anyone with some knowledge of Ignatian spirituality and the *Spiritual Exercises* and a ministry of accompanying others on their faith journey. They are held at St Edward's House, 22 Great College Street, Westminster, on the corner of Great College Street and Tufton Street (the front door is actually No. 1 Tufton Street, opposite the back entrance of Dean's Yard). The nearest Underground station is St James's Park. Do come and join us for an informal gathering from 1 pm – bring a packed lunch, tea and coffee provided. The workshop itself is from 2 pm to 4 pm.

NEXT MEETING:

**Monday 21 October
2002**

**Fr BILLY HEWETT sj
"Ignatian Implications
of Imitation"**

The cost of the workshop is £8. It helps us if you pay when booking – please send a cheque made payable to **St Marylebone Healing & Counselling Centre** to: Antonia Lynn, 7 Kingsmead Close, West Ewell, Epsom KT19 9RD

Please write for more details, or e-mail Antonia at antonia-lynn@hotmail.com

Do ask if you would like to be on our regular mailing list.

The above portrait of St. Ignatius was done posthumously by Jacopino del Conte in 1556. The painting is now in Rome at the international headquarters office (*the Curia Generalizia*) of the Society of Jesus. (Graphic and text courtesy of the Society of Jesus)

**SOUTHERN IGNATIANT NETWORK ANNUAL ACCOUNT
(1 JANUARY - 31 DECEMBER 2001)** (This account has yet to receive the Examiner's approval) Although the Network remains on a sound financial base a unanimous vote was taken by those members attending the last AGM to increase subscriptions to £10 a year. This will be one of the steps in the re-application for funding from the Society of Jesus and maintain a small surplus at the bank to enable us to meet the future needs of the network.

Income:		£
	Donations	68.00
	Subscriptions	1176.00
	Conference Admissions	706.50
	Bank Interest	216.53
	Facilitator's Fees	75.00
	Total Income	2242.03
Expenditure:		
	Newsletters & Listing (printing/posting)	409.97
	Conference (hall, fees, refreshments)	753.00
	Core group travel & accommodation (for meetings)	547.03
	Administration/mailing (not newsletter)	47.00
	Facilitator: Salary, Tax & NI	7046.51
	Expenses	78.75
	Insurance	78.75
	Total Expenditure	9372.87
Liabilities:		
	Conference Expenses (Refreshments)	52.00
	Administration/Mailing	50.00
	Tax & NI Payment	507.38
	Newsletter Printing	73.50
	Total Liabilities	682.88
Current Assets:		
	Cash at Bank	6064.62
	Total Assets	6064.62

SIGN is a registered charity – reg. No. 1055559



A Core Group has existed since the beginning of SIGN in one form or another.

S I g N

Nicky Woods
Secretary, SigN
136B
Chestnut Avenue South
LONDON
E17 9EL

Email:
Nicky@signetwork.co.uk

Core Group News

At the AGM, Laurence Benkhabeb, Lynne Galloway, Pamela Lee, David Rogers, Diana Stainer and Diana Witts were nominated and duly elected. At the subsequent meeting of the Core Group the following officers were elected: Laurence Benkhabeb - treasurer; Andrew Walker - Vice chair.

A Core Group has existed since the beginning of SIGN in one form or another. At present the Core Group has 11 members. It meets twice a year, in February and September. In between times, members serve on small sub-groups to prepare Gatherings, produce the newsletter, consider matters relating to the membership, and to monitor financial matters. In all there are about 4 meetings in the year in addition to atten-

dance at Gatherings. It has never been easy to find people to serve on the Core Group because of the commitment and busy lifestyle of members but you can see the Group is vital for the future of SIGN. You will have learned more about what it means to be a member of the Core Group from the description at the end of the membership list in your last mailing. We hope that you may have considered serving SIGN on the Core Group this year, or that you will in the future.

Support from the membership of SIGN is vital to its future, with or without a facilitator. We would ask you to consider if you are able to help the Network in any way. You may have skills to offer, for example, helping with the newsletter, mailings or Gatherings. If you are a taxpayer, you can Gift Aid your subscription, or you may feel able to make a donation in addition to your subscription.

Membership

Thanks to all who have renewed their subscription. Renewal forms enclosed for those who have not paid for 2002. Subscriptions for 2003 are due on January 1 2003

Changes and Goodbye

By the time you read this, SIGN will be without a Facilitator and this will make a difference to the way members create meaning and significance within the Network. If you were able to attend the AGM, you will remember a long discussion about this situation. SIGN is unable to continue funding this rôle. The Jesuits, who generously donated £25,000, are currently reviewing their contribution to a variety of Ignatian-based groups and no decision has been reached regarding the possibility of any further financial involvement. As from 31 August, should there be no further funding, I will no longer be facilitator, and it is time to say farewell. If more funding is granted, I will stay until the AGM. Then, I feel, having served three years, it will be time to look to the new.

My three years in this post have been enriching, challenging and at times perplexing. More than anything, I

have enjoyed meeting many of you at the Gathering days and sharing and supporting so much enthusiasm for apostolic ministry. As I will be co-leading the Autumn Gathering with Julian, it will be possible for me to say some of my goodbyes personally. Working with the Core Group members has also been an important part of my work and I wish the new members much energy and hope for the future. Theirs will become a more demanding and time-consuming rôle.

More importantly, so will yours! Whether or not a new facilitator is appointed, the possibility of regional representatives that was voiced at the Spring Gathering becomes a significant development in this new stage of SIGN's work.

Change is a process that always involves loss and a lived experience of being in flux. As a Network, it will be necessary to move from and let go of an old model in order to live and celebrate something new. The "new" will take its time to arrive.

I have recently been reading the "New Scientist Guide to Chaos," (ed. Nina Hall; pub. Penguin) which states that, "Biological

systems are governed by non-linear mechanisms. This means we must expect to see chaos as often as we see cycles of steadiness." We all walk the chaotic path in our personal, social, national and international interactions and I am reassured that such a process has an echo of the transformative journey of conversion into spiritual freedom. Somehow this uncertain, changing, somewhat chaotic experience in which I find myself, and in which perhaps SIGN finds itself, has an authentic ring of humanity. To the extent that this is an Ignatian principle of change, we may feel somewhat grounded as the Network seeks to reshape itself in the future.

Sue Cash,

2 Dawes House, High Street,
 Burwash, East Sussex
 TN19 7HD
 Tel. 01435 833 193

'Mystics in the Market Place.'

A further course of studies for those who wish to deepen their previous study. It will run from January 2003/ December 2003 and will be held at St. Edmund's Spirituality Centre near Lombard st. (Bank Station) every alternate Thursday's. It will comprise Biblical Theology, Transpersonal Psychology and Experiential work, which means sharing of experience in the group. Further Information from Kathleen Lyons 142a Rodney Rd. Walworth SE17 1RA. Tele. 0207-708-3541