



## Dear LSN Supporters

BBC news bulletins carried the story on 1st April: *Scientists have created a 'blueprint' of the genome of a songbird.* It could have been an April Fool, but no, it's true, an international research team has compared the genes of a chicken and a Zebra Finch and thereby identified the genetic code for birdsong. A charming story, and a serious one, for it carries the hope of new approaches to speech disorders such as those associated with autism and Parkinson's Disease.

The capacity of song to charm us lies at the heart of one of most disturbing, harrowing and seriously theological books I have ever read. *The Sparrow\**, by Mary Doria Russell was first published in the UK in 1997 and the following year it won the *Arthur C Clarke Award* for science fiction. This isn't a genre with which I'm familiar but last November the book was strongly recommended by someone whose judgement I trust implicitly. As I discovered, a recommendation is all very well, but a health warning might also have been kind. Talking to another friend about my experience of reading *The Sparrow*, she shuddered to be reminded how the book had affected her and told me she had once given a copy to someone else. His response has stayed with her ever since: *This book took me to a place I didn't want to go, he said, in such a way that I had no idea where I was going.*

*The Sparrow*, like the recent Hollywood extravaganza *Avatar*, is about a mission to another planet. Drawn by the compelling beauty of song-like sounds picked up from Alpha Centauri, a small team of oddly-assorted men and women set out into space in a hollowed-out asteroid, in search of the songsters of Rakhat. The voyage is secretly funded by the Jesuits and Emilio Sandoz SJ is the central character.

In January this year *The Times* science correspondent Anjana Ahuja wrote a piece entitled *What if the aliens decide they don't like us?* in which she suggested that scientists might be making a colossal mistake if they decided to contact extraterrestrial life, rather than just listen out for signals of its existence. She quotes an evolutionary biologist who believes that any life 'out there' is likely, having followed a similar evolutionary trajectory to our own, to be as *potentially nasty as humankind*. She doesn't mention *The Sparrow* by name, but the terrors she points to are uncannily similar to those explored in the novel.

For all the visual appeal and technical excellence of *Avatar*, many thoughtful viewers and reviewers were dissatisfied with its simplistic depiction of good and evil. By contrast, the depiction of good and evil in *The Sparrow* is agonisingly, shockingly, complex. George Monbiot, writing about *Avatar* in *The Guardian*, said that the film *offers a chilling metaphor for European butchery of the Americas*, and the memory of precisely that historic butchery is an inescapable aspect of *The Sparrow's* challenge and complexity.

But at the heart of the book is an extraordinarily insightful depiction of what happens when a good man's faith, commitment and love are tested, tortured, to destruction. What is faith in the face of such evil? What is hope? Traditional theology has always struggled to answer those questions convincingly, and struggles today more than ever. But spirituality, too, will have to dig very deep to find a meaningful response. Perhaps Cynthia Bourgeault gives us a starting point in her little book *Mystical Hope\*\** in which she explores the nature of a hope *not tied to outcome*, and a hope *with a life of its own, seemingly without reference to external circumstances and conditions*. She finds this hope in the Christian scriptures. Hers is not a traditional reading of those scriptures, but it has the ring of deep truth. So too do Richard Holloway's words after visiting the place where six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter, were murdered in El Salvador in 1989. He wrote:

*We went to the corridor off which lay the Jesuits' cells, streaked with caked blood. Then to the garden, to the wall against which they blew their brains out on the little lawn. How could I tell these people, especially the poor people I met, that they have re-evangelised me? For I can once again feel the power and beauty and danger of the Christian gospel.\*\*\**

Go well

Eley

\* *The Sparrow* published by Black Swan £8.99

\*\* See Bookshelf

\*\*\* Quoted in 'The Incarnation: More Than A Story' an article by Joan Puls

## In This Issue:

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**Please note that our office phone number has changed to 01908 300559**

# Good Gardens

by Mary Keen

*Mary Keen is an award-winning garden designer and writer with many fine gardens and books to her name. She has a regular gardens column in The Telegraph and also reviews garden books for The Spectator. In November last year she gave a lecture at The Garden Museum (formerly the Museum of Garden History) in London. She's not quite sure how a printed copy of the lecture came into being, but when one such copy ended up in my hands I was so taken with what Mary had to say, I contacted her to ask if we might print extracts of her talk in Living Spirituality News. I enjoy gardens very much – who doesn't – but I am not a gardener in any sense of the word. Yet Mary's lecture addresses something much deeper than technical expertise and I am very grateful to her for kindly giving permission to re-print parts of it here. Her own garden, at the Old Rectory in Duntisbourne Rouse in Gloucestershire, is occasionally open to the public as part of the National Gardens Scheme (see [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk)) The next date you can visit her garden is 12th July.*

Good gardens for me are places where human time stands still and you start to feel that there is something going on under the surface. If that doesn't happen, if the garden doesn't communicate some deep emotional message, doesn't move you, then all the flowers and designer tricks are pointless. I want to find a way of getting you to see that what we see – the real tree or flower in real time or space – has a parallel and more important existence behind it. It isn't an intellectual exercise. It's about instinct. I think children are aware of this and that we lose it with age. As a child, I was sent away to a tiny school at a house where the resident children had outgrown their governess. It was an old-fashioned place under the Berkshire Downs. I think I was 8 and one summer morning, for a dare, I let myself out of the house to run round the garden before we were supposed to get up and dressed for the day. Scared of being caught, I ran full tilt and the dew felt cold on my feet. In the kitchen garden the paths were lined with pinks and the smell and the sense of being alone in this ordered place, where everything seemed to be waiting for the sun, made me stop. I picked a pink to prove the dare was done and then I hung about, thinking about how the garden had a life of its own. How it went on breathing the scent of the flowers, even when there was no one there to enjoy them. The lingering, the stopping, is important. Don't we want to be in the place where the daily worries and pre-occupations stop? To find a way of crashing the barrier to the otherworldly world? I am interested in what opens the inner eye that children have, that makes you aware of what matters. Gardens are good at that...

I have been wondering if there is some universal factor in any art form which never fails to stir the soul, to open the inner eye? Is it truthfulness? I did not say 'truth' because I wanted to avoid the cliché of 'beauty is truth'. But I mean truth. Coming at it from another direction, I sometimes call it unity of purpose, being true to the whole concept; the idea of what you're doing or making. Of getting the feel of what a place is about, not thinking 'what shall I do here?' The question to ask is what is here that is true, that is underneath the superficial things? What is here that matters? ...

I went this summer to Kim Wilkie's Orpheus at Boughton, in the rain and not in the best mood. I wasn't in the right frame of mind at Boughton, but there are effects that transcend moods and weather and traffic jams, and Kim's Orpheus was one of these. It's a place where you are hauled across the dividing line between the mundane and the spirit world and confronted by your image, and what lies below that, inside yourself. It is that power, that ability to possess your imagination, that seems to me to be the essence of any great work....

Looking hard and cultivating an instinct for atmosphere, for the feeling of a place, so that you can be true to the whole picture, are most vital. Slowing people down, so that they are aware of something deeper than human concerns, can help. Local distinctiveness is important. The choice of plants, the way of planting, the moving from dark to light, the spaces and the rests, all of these are only there to underline something that has a life of its own. The real otherworldly life that breathes and fades and lasts. People

say gardens are ephemeral, but I can still see the Berkshire garden I ran through as a child and a later garden when I had babies and had to get up to them in the night and saw the garden from the landing window and could not go back to bed. Outside in the early air by the River Lambourn, I pulled goose grass out of peonies and smelled before breakfast summer again. The otherworldly ones will always be there. In your mind's wide open eye.

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## Dwelling

Many of you will know Susan Howard, a friend and supporter of LSN, who has also been closely connected with CANA, the Wrekin Trust and Boatrockers. Sue has just joined the team at the idyllically situated Coach House retreat centre, near Inverness. In her Christmas letter she quoted two lines from a new poem by Andrew Rudd, called *Dwelling*. So captivating were those lines that I sought out the whole poem. Not yet in a published collection, Andrew kindly sent me a copy himself. During the snowbound days of January, when I couldn't get out of my village for over a week, the words of the poem resonated more and more each day. And in more recent days, when so many plans were disrupted and diverted by a cloud of volcanic ash, the words of *Dwelling* whisper wisdom once more. I am very grateful to Andrew for allowing us to include his poem in our newsletter. He is currently completing his doctoral thesis on poetry and spirituality and you can find out more about his work at <http://business.virgin.net/sound.houses>. We also wish Sue all good things in her new life in Scotland. For more information about The Coach House see [www.coachhousekilmuir.org](http://www.coachhousekilmuir.org) or call 01463 731 386.

### Dwelling by Andrew Rudd

I am not there  
I am not then  
I am nowhere else  
but here.

I am not them  
I am not you  
I am myself.

I rest from doing,  
need not achieve.  
I do not ask  
I do not need.  
This is the place  
for me to be.

Here I am



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## Charter for Compassion

Karen Armstrong's Charter for Compassion is an award-winning *Idea Worth Spreading* according to TED, a not-for-profit foundation devoted to just such ideas. One of the most provocative, original thinkers on the role of religion in the modern world, many in LSN will have valued Karen Armstrong's writing and commentary over many years. In the post-9/11 world, she has become a powerful voice for interfaith understanding. She has said that *religion isn't about believing things. It's ethical alchemy. It's about behaving in a way that changes you, that gives you intimations of holiness and sacredness*. Her Charter for Compassion went 'live' in November 2009 with the aim of helping to restore compassion to the centrality of religious and moral life and people are encouraged to get involved in the initiative via [www.charterforcompassion.org](http://www.charterforcompassion.org).

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## Advance Notice – LSN and CRC joint conference 6th November

We are delighted to be collaborating with the Centre for Radical Christianity in Sheffield on a day conference on 6th November. This will be on the theme **Mysticism and Contemporary Spirituality** and LSN Director Eley McAinsh will be the speaker. A leaflet with booking information will be included with our Summer newsletter, but please put the date in your diaries. This event will take the place of a separate LSN Gathering this year and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at St Mark's in Sheffield in November. It will be a wonderful opportunity to forge new links and friendships. You can find further details at [www.stmarkssheffield.co.uk](http://www.stmarkssheffield.co.uk) and in due course on our own website.

## Calling Wales and Ireland

We are very conscious that events in Wales and Ireland are rarely featured in Pinboard and would like to encourage anyone with news of events that might be of interest to LSN supporters to let us know about them. If the timing is right, and space allows, we would be delighted to include them in the newsletter, otherwise the information will be circulated by email to supporters living in the region. Thank you!

## Check out our Website

We have recently added links to a number of organisations and networks with whom we have close ties and shared interests. The list makes very interesting reading and gives a wonderful sense of the richness and connectedness of the spirituality world. Please do have a look when you get a moment.

## Bookshelf

Readers may be interested to know that wherever possible all the titles mentioned in the Bookshelf section of *Living Spirituality News* are available for borrowing from the Willen Library (**see enclosed letter for an update on the library project**). For further information contact the LSN office, or the Librarian, Barbara Merrifield, on 01908 242693, or [library@thewellatwillen.org.uk](mailto:library@thewellatwillen.org.uk)

**Doris Klein: Journey of the Soul** (Sheed & Ward £19.99) An artist friend of mine gave me this book for Christmas and I used it, for the first time, as an aid to reflection on a recent quiet day. It's a collection of 25 evocative, almost abstract water colours, accompanied by brief meditations and very helpful suggestions for working with the images. As someone much more focussed on words rather than images, I found it an extremely surprising, illuminating process. As it says on the cover *The images resonate deeply with the human spirit and the text stands side-by-side with the art to uncover and embrace the spirit's mystery and power.*

**Kenneth Steven: The Ice and Other Stories** (Argyll £7.99) and **Island – Collected Poems** (Saint Andrew Press £14.99 hb) One of our favourite poets, the Perthshire-based Kenneth Steven has two new collections out. *The Ice and Other Stories* is a new collection of short stories from this writer we know best as a poet of the Celtic spirit and the wild places of Scotland. Spare and atmospheric, these stories weave their spell almost imperceptibly, but all the more hauntingly for that. In collecting 100 of his poems in *Island* Kenneth reaches what he has called a *kind of milestone*. The collection includes many of his best-loved poems from earlier volumes along with a welcome selection of new work.

**Cynthia Bourgeault: Mystical Hope – Trusting in the Mercy of God** (Cloister Books £9.95), **The Wisdom Way of Knowing** (Jossey-Bass £13.95), **Centring Prayer and Inner Awakening** (Cowley Publications £12.99). When I discover a author whose work I enjoy and value, I'm always pleased to know that they've written more than one book. Sometimes, of course, the other titles are disappointing, and merely recycle the same ideas in a commercial sleight-of-hand. But the best writers always have new and different things to say, even when writing on related themes. Cynthia Bourgeault's **The Wisdom Jesus**

(Shambala £12.95 – see Bookshelf Spring 2009) was one of the most striking books I read last year, and I keep coming back to it. The three titles mentioned here all precede that book, but are all well worth seeking out.

In *Mystical Hope* Bourgeault explores the nature of a hope tied neither to the future nor to a good outcome, but rather a hope intimately at hand, with a life of its own. In *The Wisdom Way of Knowing* she explores both the theory and the practice of Wisdom, which she describes as a *precise and comprehensive science of spiritual transformation that has existed since the headwaters of the great world religions and is in fact their common ground*. And in *Centring Prayer and Inner Awakening* she offers not only a guide to the practice of Centring Prayer, but an exploration of the transformative power of this practice.

**Paul F Knitter: Without Buddha I could not be a Christian** (Oneworld £12.99) I'm very grateful to another friend for bringing this book to my attention. Paul Knitter is Professor of Theology, World Religions and Culture at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Knitter looked to Buddhism to overcome a crisis in his Christian faith and discovered how Buddhist perspectives can inspire a renewed and enlivened understanding of Christianity, more rooted in experience than dogma, and more socially engaged.

**Judy Cannato: Field of Compassion – How the New Cosmology is Transforming Spiritual Life** (Sorin Books £10.99) A very welcome follow-up to Judy Cannato's *Radical Amazement – Contemplative Lessons from Black Holes, Supernovas and other Wonders of the Universe*. In this new book she develops her thinking on the new universe story, morphogenic fields and consciousness, and offers a transforming vision of the intricate connectedness of physical and spiritual worlds in what she calls *the field of compassion*.

**Annika Spalde: A Heart on Fire – Living as a mystic in today's world** (Wild Goose Publications £9.99) Annika Spalde is an ordained deacon in the Church of Sweden and lives in a community which works to promote non-violence in theory and practice. This is the story of her own journey, and the inspiration she has discovered in the mystical tradition. It's a simple, personal introduction to the practice of everyday mysticism.

**John O'Donohue: Echoes of Memory** (Transworld Ireland £12.99) This is a beautifully produced reprint of an earlier collection of John O'Donohue's poems in which he explored the enduring themes of love and loss, beginnings and endings. Lelia Doolan has written a helpful Foreword, setting in context the collection, which was first published in 1999.

**The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion** (Routledge £27.99) We have acquired a copy of this newly-updated reference book for the library. Designed as a comprehensive resource for Religious Studies Courses, it has many entries which will be of interest to anyone concerned with contemporary spirituality.

**Questions and Challenges:** *I think it's important that those of us who are concerned with and involved in the world of spirituality retain our critical edge: we do well to be aware of questions and challenges and prepared to reflect on them seriously. This isn't a question of apologetics, but of integrity and wisdom. With that in mind, I recommend three recent books which challenge some common thinking in the Spirituality world:*

**Jeremy Bernstein: Quantum Leaps** (Belknap Harvard £14.99) Bernstein explores how, and how pervasively, quantum mechanics has entered the general culture. His account ranges from the cross-pollination of quantum mechanics with Marxist ideology and Christian and Buddhist mysticism, to its influence on theatre, film and fiction. There's a fascinating chapter called *Bishops* and another called *Quantum Buddhists* and the book ends with a quote from Niels Bohr: *Those who are not shocked when they first come across quantum theory cannot possibly have understood it*. Bad science beware!

**Barbara Ehrenreich: Smile or Die – How Positive Thinking Fooled America & the World** (Granta £10.99) This book received a huge amount of attention when it was published towards the end of last year, not just in the review pages but in opinion pieces and columns. It's witty, entertaining and polemical but makes a timely, serious and very spiritual case.

**Christian Salmon: Storytelling – Bewitching the Modern Mind** (Verso £14.99) This book addresses the theme of our last LSN Gathering – *Story and Meaning* – and, in a similar way to Ehrenreich's book (above), challenges the current received wisdom about story and narrative. Writing in *The Guardian*, Steve Poole said of *Storytelling*: *French writer Salmon treats us to the useful spectacle of a relentless polemic against a ubiquitous idea widely held to provoke only positive feelings. As used by branders or politicians [or religious institutions?] 'story-telling' is, on his argument, a sedative, suppressing the desire for truth in favour of satisfying narrative form.*

**If you don't have a specialist bookshop near to home**, the excellent Centre Bookshop at the London Centre for Spirituality, offers a wide selection of spirituality and theology titles, plus a range of music. With coffee available, the shop is in the Church of St Edmund the King, Lombard Street, London EC3V 9EA (020 7626 5031 or [bookshop@spiritualitycentre.org](mailto:bookshop@spiritualitycentre.org) ).



## Pinboard

### May

**14: London Centre for Spirituality: Spring Retreat Day.** Day when the Centre is kept silent and is available for you to book in for a half or whole day retreat. Contact [info@spiritualitycentre.org](mailto:info@spiritualitycentre.org) or 020 7621 1391 See [www.spiritualitycentre.org](http://www.spiritualitycentre.org)

**15: Glasgow Ignatian Centre: Celtic Spirituality.** A day to explore Celtic Spirituality with Fintan Creaven and Jane MacKichan. Contact [admin@iscglasgow.co.uk](mailto:admin@iscglasgow.co.uk) or 0141 354 0077 See [www.iscglasgow.co.uk](http://www.iscglasgow.co.uk)

**16: Oxford: Towards the One – A Dance Between Love and Wisdom.** A day of exploring how our perceptions of the Divine are transformed by the feminine, with Clare Goodrick-Clarke, Anne Baring, Caitlin Matthews and Linda Proud. Contact 01865 407680 or 407490 or [janedmay@btinternet.com](mailto:janedmay@btinternet.com)

**19-22: St Beuno's N Wales: Sexuality and Spirituality.** Exploring the interface between sexuality and spirituality with Andrew Walker. Contact [secretary@beunos.com](mailto:secretary@beunos.com) or 01745 583444 See [www.beunos.com](http://www.beunos.com)

**22: Turvey Abbey, Beds: Calligraphy for Icons.** Both beginning and experienced iconographers will enjoy this special workshop on lettering. Contact [day-events@turveyabbey.org.uk](mailto:day-events@turveyabbey.org.uk) or 01234 881432 See [www.turveyabbey.org.uk](http://www.turveyabbey.org.uk)

**22: Glasgow Ignatian Centre: Finding God in the City.** Reflecting and praying on our experience of God in the life of a city, with Fintan Creaven and Jane MacKichan. Contact [admin@iscglasgow.co.uk](mailto:admin@iscglasgow.co.uk) or 0141 354 0077 See [www.iscglasgow.co.uk](http://www.iscglasgow.co.uk)

**24-27: Sarum College, Salisbury: Contemporary Spirituality.** MA Module open to non MA students, including lectures by Eley McAinsh, Lisa Isherwood and Peter Tyler. Contact [ajensen@sarum.ac.uk](mailto:ajensen@sarum.ac.uk) or 01722 424827 See [www.sarum.ac.uk](http://www.sarum.ac.uk)


**26: Edinburgh: Meditation and Spirituality in a Secular Age.** An evening with Laurence Freeman, chaired by Neil Douglas-Klotz. Contact 0131 220 3234 or book via website: [www.tickets-scotland.com](http://www.tickets-scotland.com) See also [www.eicsp.org](http://www.eicsp.org)

### June

**4-6: Othona Community, Dorset: The Mystery of Contemplation.** Retreat with Simon Small, author of *From the Bottom of the Pond: the forgotten art of experiencing God in the depths of the present moment*. Contact [mail@othona-bb.org.uk](mailto:mail@othona-bb.org.uk) or 01308 897130 See [www.othona-bb.org.uk](http://www.othona-bb.org.uk)

**5: Dublin: Tracking the Wilderness: Contemplation of a New Monastic Way.** Day conference with Beverly Lanzetta, author of *Emerging Heart: Global Spirituality and the Sacred*. Contact Bernadette Flanagan on 00 353 1 8520751 or [sophiasociety@gmail.com](mailto:sophiasociety@gmail.com)

**8: St Bede's, York: The Dawn of Britain – Our Celtic Saints.** Day with Ray Simpson, of the International Community of Aidan and Hilda. Contact [admin@stbedes.org.uk](mailto:admin@stbedes.org.uk) or 01904 464900 See [www.stbedes.org.uk](http://www.stbedes.org.uk)



**15: Ty Croeso Centre, South Wales: Prayer Day.** A day of rest, renewal and guidance in various prayer techniques, with Alice Brennan. Contact 01633 867317 or [tycroeso@talktalk.net](mailto:tycroeso@talktalk.net)  
See [www.tycroesocentre.co.uk](http://www.tycroesocentre.co.uk)

**19: Oxford: Finding the Spirit in a Secular Age.** Day event with the Alister Hardy Society and the Wrekin Trust. Speakers include Martin Palmer, David Lorimer and Lord Harries of Pentregarth. Contact [johnfranklin35@hotmail.com](mailto:johnfranklin35@hotmail.com) or 0208 858 4750

**22: St Bede's, York: Dreams and New Life.** Day with Madeleine O'Callaghan, exploring ways in which our dreams draw us into partnership with the creative spirit of God at work in the Universe. Contact [admin@stbedes.org.uk](mailto:admin@stbedes.org.uk) or 01904 464900 See [www.stbedes.org.uk](http://www.stbedes.org.uk)

**25-27: Holland House, Worcs: The Secret Life of Bees.** Weekend event for women, taking *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kydd as a starting point for personal and spiritual exploration. Led by Rosie Miles. Contact [glimb@freenetname.co.uk](mailto:glimb@freenetname.co.uk) or 01962 867374 See [www.hollandhouse.org](http://www.hollandhouse.org)

**26- 9 July: Scottish Churches House, Dunblane: Visions for the Future – International Theological Summer School.** Contact [templeton.e@btinternet.com](mailto:templeton.e@btinternet.com) or 01796 482232, [mail@alisterhulbert.com](mailto:mail@alisterhulbert.com) or 0131 332 0008, or [reservations@scottishchurcheshouse.org](mailto:reservations@scottishchurcheshouse.org) or 01786 823 588 See [www.scottishchurcheshouse.org](http://www.scottishchurcheshouse.org)

**29: St Bede's, York: Mysticism and Contemporary Spirituality.** Day with Eley McAinsh. Contact [admin@stbedes.org.uk](mailto:admin@stbedes.org.uk) or 01904 464900 See [www.stbedes.org.uk](http://www.stbedes.org.uk)

**29- 3 July: St Mary's Twickenham: The Testing of Hearts – A Spirituality for Reconciliation.** Inaugural conference of InSpiRe: The Centre for Initiatives in Spirituality and Reconciliation. Contact [inspire@smuc.ac.uk](mailto:inspire@smuc.ac.uk) or 020 8240 4185 See [www.smuc.ac.uk](http://www.smuc.ac.uk)

## July

**5-9: Luther King House, Manchester: Summer School on Post-modern Christian Spirituality.** MA programme module but open to all. Contact 0161 249 2504 or [learning@lkh.co.uk](mailto:learning@lkh.co.uk)  
See [www.lutherkinghouse.org.uk](http://www.lutherkinghouse.org.uk)

**9-11: Hilfield Friary, Dorchester: Lifting the Spirit.** Experience the joy of circle dancing with Miggy Scott. Contact [hilfieldproject@franciscans.org.uk](mailto:hilfieldproject@franciscans.org.uk) or 01300 342313 See [www.hilfieldproject.co.uk](http://www.hilfieldproject.co.uk)

**9-11: Douai Abbey, Berks: Pre-Benedictine Monasticism – the Spirituality Behind the Man.** 4th Annual Conference with Monos (Centre for the study of monastic culture and spirituality) and University of Wales. Contact 01509 506656 See [www.monos.org.uk](http://www.monos.org.uk)


**13-16: Hoddesdon, Herts: Shifting Paradigms – Theology and Economics in the 21st Century.** Annual Conference of the Modern Churchpeople's Union, with Edmund Newell. Contact [conference@modchurchunion.org](mailto:conference@modchurchunion.org) or 0161 633 3132

**14: St James's Piccadilly, London: Growth, Prosperity and the Human Spirit.** Evening talk by Jonathan Porritt. Contact 020 8552 2096 See [www.greenspirit.org.uk](http://www.greenspirit.org.uk)

**23-25: Hilfield Friary, Dorchester: Caring for Creation in a World of Crisis.** Weekend exploring the links between peace and the environment from a Christian perspective. Contact [hilfieldproject@franciscans.org.uk](mailto:hilfieldproject@franciscans.org.uk) or 01300 342313 See [www.hilfieldproject.co.uk](http://www.hilfieldproject.co.uk)

## August

**16-23: Othona Community, Dorset: Life is a Carnival.** New event in Othona programme – the chance to take part in Bridport Carnival with its grand parade, fete and funfair. Plans evolving so check website for further details. Contact [mail@othona-bb.org.uk](mailto:mail@othona-bb.org.uk) or 01308 897130  
See [www.othona-bb.org.uk](http://www.othona-bb.org.uk)





**24: Oxford: Contemplation as an Alternative Consciousness.** Day conference with Richard Rohr at The Stillpoint. Contact [ian@thestillpoint.org.uk](mailto:ian@thestillpoint.org.uk) or PO Box 788, Oxford OX1 9HF  
See [www.thestillpoint.org.uk](http://www.thestillpoint.org.uk)

In addition to the events listed above, you might also like to look at the programme of **The Abbey, Sutton Courtenay** (contact [admin@theabbey.co.uk](mailto:admin@theabbey.co.uk) or 01235 847401 See [www.theabbey.uk.com](http://www.theabbey.uk.com) ). Through Spring and Summer they are running a series of events called *The Way of the Mystic*.

Also, **Jenny McIntosh of Spirited Exchanges** has recently announced a re-launch of their website, so do have a look at [www.spiritedexchanges.org.uk](http://www.spiritedexchanges.org.uk)

And finally, you might also be interested in **Open Christianity**, the newsletter of the Ireland-based Open Christianity Network. Edited by Hilary Wakeman, author of *Saving Christianity*, it has excellent reviews and useful information, even if distance would prevent most LSN supporters attending the events it highlights. See [www.ocnireland.com](http://www.ocnireland.com)

## The Living Spirituality Network

The Living Spirituality Network exists for people who are exploring the meaning of spirituality, both within and beyond the traditional churches. The Network provides supporters with information, encouragement and contacts as they seek to understand and deepen their spiritual lives. We work with a wide range of individuals, groups and communities, many of whom find themselves on the edges of mainstream church structures. For further information on the Network, and the groups and communities with which we are in contact, please contact the office for a copy of our leaflet.

### Support:

The Living Spirituality Network relies on grants and donations from small communities, projects, networks, individuals and churches. Major support is gratefully received from the Society of the Sacred Mission.

**Living Spirituality News** is issued three times a year, and is available by post, by email or via the website. If you know of anyone who would welcome a copy, please contact the Administrator. **It is issued free of charge but donations of £10.00-£15.00 pa would help considerably in off-setting our costs and would be gratefully received.** Please make cheques payable to: **'CTBI – Living Spirituality Network'**, and send them to the Administrator at the address given. If you are a taxpayer and are willing to **Gift Aid** your donation, please ask for a form to sign.

**A large type version is available on request.**

### Contact us at:

The Living Spirituality Network, The Well at Willen, Newport Road, Willen, Milton Keynes MK15 9AA  
Please note our NEW phone number: **++44(0)1908 300559** email: [spirituality@ctbi.org.uk](mailto:spirituality@ctbi.org.uk)  
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