

START A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY AT WORTH ABBEY

Beryl Sidebotham

Set out on a spiritual journey of discovery with Worth’s new Personal and Spiritual Growth group. It was launched at the Abbey last September, and each week the group has met with a facilitator and enjoyed a different spiritual experience.

The very first session was based on the phrase: “Be still and know that I am God.”

Just eight words maybe, but they were broken down and built upon in the course of a very enriching prayer meeting. Then there was the question: “What is the most important thing for me when praying?”

The next was a piece of “Lectio Divina” (meaning divine reading, which is a key part of the Benedictine way) based on Psalm 46. We were asked: “Does my prayer affect others?”

So many questions.

The group has used the “creative listening” method of sharing. This means speaking from the silence, allowing each person to speak, without challenge or question. No one speaks twice until all have spoken once. (But there is no compulsion to speak if you do not want to.)

No one reading this will experience the course exactly as we have. You will have your own personal experience and perhaps discover more about God and yourself.

Each term has two modules or topics. So far we have covered: praying, discernment, listening and spiritual conversation and at the moment are delving into “Human Being/Spiritual Being”. We have the intriguing “Images of God and Self” to come.

We have also experienced silence, “Quaker Style”, and we were asked: “What stops us from listening?”

“Is there fear or prejudice preventing us hearing God, ourselves/others?”

Discernment/Spiritual Discernment is the new buzz phrase and it means seeking God’s will for us. So we asked: “Is discernment a gift from God or a personal achievement?”

We have experienced what it is like staying in conversation with God and an expedition into the unknown. Oh...and of course the “Holy Trinity”.

Here is the space where we find a quality and depth in our silence

YOU WILL HAVE YOUR OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AND PERHAPS DISCOVER MORE ABOUT GOD AND YOURSELF.

This is a course where you do not have to buy textbooks, write endless essays (although a summary of each module always goes down well with the facilitator), or arrive with a bagful

of things. All that is required is you. Each person in the group has been willing to see things through different windows and share their discoveries with a safe sense of exploration.

For further information on the Personal and Spirituality Growth Course at Worth Abbey, contact The Open Cloister.

E-mail: TOC@worthabbey.net

***Post: The Bookings Secretary,
The Open Cloister, Worth Abbey,
Paddockhurst Road, Turners Hill,
CRAWLEY, West Sussex RH10 4SB***

Tel: 01342 710318

