

The Spiritual Life Center
120 Mountain Avenue
Bloomfield, CT 06002-2903

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Join Us at Our First Annual Awards Dinner

PLAN ON ATTENDING OUR FIRST ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER on Saturday, September 28th from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry in Hartford.

Many people are hard at work to make this event a memorable one. We will be having a silent auction, so come prepared for fun and excitement. The highlight of the evening will be the presentation of our first Living Spirit Awards.

The Living Spirit Award is presented by the Board of Directors of the Spiritual Life Center, Inc. to persons and/or organizations who have, over the course of their life and ministry, witnessed to the integration of spirituality and life. Recipients of the award have given evidence of:

- ❖ witness of faith through service
- ❖ openness to people and organizations of diverse faith backgrounds
- ❖ commitment to sharing spirituality with the larger community
- ❖ witness to the possibility of transformation of individuals, relationships and structures.

Heartfelt congratulations and blessings upon our first recipients:

William Farley, President of CB Richard Ellis, CT

The Women's Leadership Institute of Hartford Seminary
accepted by Miriam Therese Winter

For further information or to help in this inaugural event please contact:

- ❖ Martha Kennedy, Events Chair
(860) 693-3413, perrybloo@juno.com
- ❖ Liz Keppel, Director of Development
(860) 658-5037, liz.keppel@attbi.com

Seating is limited, so please reserve your tickets early by calling The Spiritual Life Center at (860) 243-2374.

Mark your calendars!

The Spiritual Life Center Annual Awards Dinner
Saturday, September 28th, 6-10:00 p.m.
Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry, Hartford

See you there!!



The Source

The newsletter of The Spiritual Life Center ❖ Bloomfield, CT

... a community of faith gathered in love ... led by the spirit ...

120 Mountain Avenue ❖ Bloomfield, CT 06002 ❖ phone (860) 243-2374 ❖ fax (860) 242-7914 ❖ email: spiritlifectr@juno.com

The Center Announces a Double Anniversary

We're Twenty Years Old and We're One ...

CELEBRATING IS PART OF MOST CULTURES AND RELIGIONS. Celebrating cuts across economic and age divisions. Throw a good party and everyone will want to be there. Remembering is an integral part of celebrating. The act of remembering is called *zikkaron* in Hebrew, the very act of which involves making something present again. Through our remembering, past events are brought into the living present, often in ways that transform us.

In September, the Spiritual Life Center will begin a year of celebrating and remembering two important milestones. Twenty years ago, in 1982, the Center began as a ministry of the Hartford Archdiocese, part vision, part dream led by Sister Carmella Garafolo, RSM. Through these many years of offering spiritual direction and programs in spirituality in the greater Hartford area, its ministry has evolved and been refined. In 1988, the first class of interns began training to be spiritual directors. Fourteen years later, the Center is preparing to receive its eighth – and its largest – class. The hunger for Godlife, for mystery, for connection, for prayer continues to fill the many rooms of the white house on 120 Mountain Avenue.

One year ago, the Spiritual Life Center left the umbrella of the Archdiocese of Hartford and began a new incarnation as a non-profit, independent organization. As with all major change, this one brought sadness – St. Thomas Seminary had provided us with a comfortable home for many years – as well as a sense of adventure – what would our Center be like now?

One year later, we can look back and say that this year of transition has been a time of learning and growing, a time of laughing and crying, and a time of many hours of hard work and life lessons. The little white house at 120 Mountain Avenue has been a nest (literally in the middle of a plant on the porch this spring for a mother wren and her babes), a safe place, a haven for those who come seeking the mystery that many of us call “God.”

We are filled with joy and delight as we witness the growth of our community. Our many volunteers and supporters are the lifeblood of the Center. We invite you to join us, to stop by, to visit, to become involved in this community in some way.

Look for new things this fall. Our new logo and mission statement will be unveiled at our Annual Awards Dinner on September 28th. We hope you will be with us to celebrate these important pieces of our identity. With the help of our volunteer web designer, Maiya Rose Benda (thank you, Maiya!), our web site will be up and running before the snow flies. Keep your ears peeled for this highly anticipated event!

Join us in celebrating our two anniversaries. Pray thanksgiving with us for the vitality of this amazing ministry. Be with us for our fall events. Our fall program insert offers many different opportunities to explore your faith, to connect with people, or to sit simply in the quiet. God will be there waiting! ❖

Let Us Pray ...

As we go to press, we are aware that the anniversary of 9/11 will be here soon. Let us join together as a community gathered in love, led by the spirit, to pray:

Let us pray for all who lost their lives
in this terrible tragedy, may they rest in peace.

Let us pray for their loved ones,
may they be comforted.

Let us pray for our country,
may we be more intentional
about how we live and the choices that we make.

Let us pray for our world,
may a spirit of peace and wisdom
lead us into a more compassionate way of being.

Amen

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Center Staff

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Executive Director

Mary Blume
Mary Costello, RSM
Directors on Staff

Elizabeth Keppel
Development Director

Mary Bello, CSJ
Administrative Assistant

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David Blume
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Melina Rudman
Mission Effectiveness

Mission

The Spiritual Life Center, Inc. seeks to foster an awareness and development of spirituality and to contribute to the enrichment of the broader faith community by providing spiritual direction, an internship in spiritual direction, programs and retreats held onsite and at area retreat and conference centers. The Spiritual Life Center, Inc. serves individuals, groups, and agencies from many faith traditions and with a shared consciousness of the needs of the poor.

From the Director's Desk...

*Thank God our time is now when wrong
Comes up to face us everywhere,
Never to leave us till we take
The longest stride of soul men ever took.
Affairs are now soul size, the enterprise
Is exploration into God.*

—“A Sleep of Prisoners” by Christopher Fry

Dear Friends,

When I discovered this section of poetry again recently, I realized how appropriate it was to our world today. Certainly wrongs abound in our media stories of corruption, greed, sexual misconduct, abuse of power, fear of terrorism and continued rape of the earth. Our experience and reflection reveal how these stories are not just out there. They are our stories mirrored in our churches, work places and environment. Affairs are now soul size. We are being led into a deeper exploration that is God.

It is at this moment that we at the Spiritual Life Center celebrate our 20th Anniversary. Over these past two decades we have been called and challenged to deeper prayer and more heartfelt contemplation to deal with the complexity of issues that confront us all. In both individual and group spiritual direction, we are encountering the Mystery of God in ever more diverse and intimate ways. In training programs and in supervision, spiritual directors continue to focus on how they are being called to cooperate with God in the transformation of the world. With a growing sense of a community of dedicated board and committee members, volunteers and benefactors, we commit ourselves to the enterprise before us.

We look forward to the months ahead as we celebrate our 20th Anniversary. We will inaugurate our first Annual Awards Dinner on September 28th with the presentation of the Living Spirit Award. This award is presented to persons and organizations who have, over the course of their life and ministry, witnessed to the integration of spirituality and life. The first recipients of this award are Mr. William Farley, President of CB Richard Ellis CT and the Women's Leadership Institute of Hartford Seminary under the direction of Sister Miriam Therese Winter.

Later in the fall, we will host a two-part event with Jack Shea. The Wednesday evening event on October 23rd touches upon the demands of integrating spirituality and the workplace. The all-day workshop the following day will empower spiritual directors, religious educators, and pastoral care workers to listen more attentively and creatively to the stories of others. More information about these events is in the insert in this newsletter entitled “Programs.”

More than ever we are convinced of the importance of our Center and the unique contribution we can make to the “long stride of soul” that is being demanded of us. We thank you for your support in the past and know that the steps we have begun to take will thrust us into our next decade. We rely on your continued prayer, financial support, suggestions, and challenges. ❖

The Source is a newsletter for spiritual directors, directees, friends, volunteers, and supporters of **The Spiritual Life Center**. It is published each fall, winter, and spring. Susan S. Jorgensen, editor.

Celebrating Our Newest Class of Graduates



back row: Ingrid Corallo, Theresa Spear, Ann Griffith, Bob Sizemore, Marye Gail Harrison, John Nieb, Jayne Keenan, Margot Saadeh, Dennis Gallant, Karen Harris. **front row:** Mary Blume, Mary Costello, Nancy Babcock, Mary Lou Pieczarka holding photo of Melody Kee Smith (deceased class member), Mark Cerrato, Barbara Japenga, Cindy Carr, Cathy Murtha

IT WAS WITH ABOUNDING JOY THAT WE WITNESSED FIFTEEN people graduate from our *seventh* internship program on a bright and beautiful day in May. God's splendour was evident everywhere as families and friends gathered at Sacred Heart Parish Center in Bloomfield, CT to celebrate this unique group of individuals.

In a recent interview, Nancy Babcock described her class as a bridge between the old and the new. As fledgling directors, they began their internship in September, 2000, at St. Thomas Seminary when the Spiritual Life Center was a part of the Archdiocese of Hartford. Like Ruth spoke to her mother-in-law, "Wherever you go I will go," so this group of people spoke to the Spiritual Life Center. They followed the Center to its new space at 120 Mountain Avenue in Bloomfield, and began helping the Center live into its new incarnation as a non-prof-

it, independent corporation. They cherished the memory of the old as they courageously embraced the new. Many of them were instrumental in helping with the renovation of the new space and in lending muscle and organizational skill when Moving Day arrived in June, 2001.

This class encountered God in laughter and through tears. Theirs was not an easy two years as they supported class member Melody Kee Smith in her struggle with a cancer that claimed her life in September of 2001. They were challenged, as we all were, to make sense of life after the tragedy of 9/11.

May each of you be blessed as you bring your ministry of spiritual direction out into the world in your own unique ways! The Center looks forward to bearing witness to the fruits of your many gifts. ❖

Focus on People:

Welcome Our New Development Director

WELCOME, LIZ! ELIZABETH KEPPEL JOINED THE Spiritual Life Center staff at the beginning of summer. On her resume, Liz states that her objective is "to be an effective and productive contributor to a faith-based organization." She brings experience and expertise from the many hours she has worked tirelessly helping her church, her children's school, and her town in the area of development and fund raising.

Liz is part of an Irish Catholic family from the Pittsburgh area. She and her husband, Robert, have lived in Connecticut for the past fourteen years; their two children, Justin, who is nine, and Joya, who is six, put the Spiritual Life Center's porch to good use during the long days of summer.

Liz brings an energy and vision that are obvious as soon as you meet her. She has been busy creating a home for herself in part of the front office, which she will share with Mary Bello. First priorities were a computer and a network. When you encounter this energetic, enthusiastic blond-haired woman at the Center, be sure to introduce yourself. She will greet you with a warmth and vitality that are sure to elicit a smile. ❖