

# The Source

The newsletter of the Spiritual Life Center ❖ Bloomfield, CT  
... a community born of faith ... gathered in love ... led by the Spirit ...

Volume 16 ❖ Number One

Summer ❖ 2005

## A Word from the Board of Directors

**Who would have ever imagined?** Four years ago this summer the Spiritual Life Center moved into our new home on Mountain Avenue in Bloomfield with the nascent energy to dare a new future together. It was a bold and daring move! Now, in the retrospect of transition, we have seen the Center gain the necessary measures of stability, solvency and direction! Awesome!

**Who could have ever predicted?** These four short years found us building steadily and faithfully on the firm foundation that our first twenty years offered; and we have transplanted the precious-best of our past with careful discernment about where the Mystery we call God is yet calling us to be and to become for today and tomorrow. Wonderful!

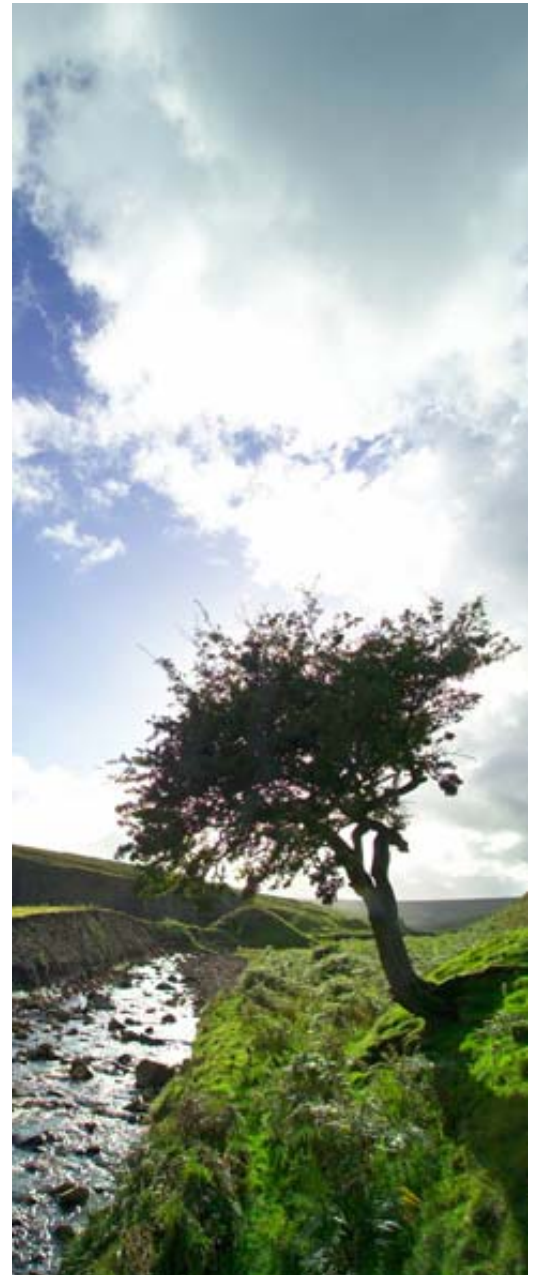
**Who might have known?** Our address changed and our spirit got so much larger! We have moved . . . stretched . . . grown . . . morphed . . . from ecumenical to interfaith; from one core program to an increasing number of growing options; from a transitional board to a permanent one; from an initial infrastructure to one that would ensure our future; from fledgling feet to strides of certainty and trust. Astonishing!

**And who could have possibly foreseen?** That as we settled in we would . . . navigate staff changes and expansion; affirm a new mission statement and direction; articulate our unique theology as a Center; craft a master public relations and communication plan; and engage a new way to staff our core program of the Spiritual Direction Internship? Fantastic!

**All I can say is thank you!** Thank you to the many people and contributions that have made all of this possible! I speak for the entire Board of Directors – past and present - in saying that we couldn't have done any of this without the broad support of our community! And I speak for the Board in saying that we are eager for the good that God has in mind for us tomorrow!

**Abundant Blessings!** ❖

Geordie Campbell  
*Board President*



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**Center Staff**

Cathy Murtha, DW  
*Executive Director*

Mary Costello, RSM  
*Associate Director*

Andree Grafstein  
Peter Heinrichs  
*Internship Team Members*

Cynthia Carr  
*Pathways Coordinator*

Rose Majestic  
*Development Director*

Hope Valiska  
*Administrative Assistant*

**Board of Directors**

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Martha Highsmith  
*Vice President*

Rosemary Reynolds  
*Secretary*

David Blume  
*Treasurer*

Robert Bernstein

Kathleen Graham

Ann Kane, CSJ

Fay Lenz

Susan Lewis

Stephen Ristau

Richard Watson

Joanne White

**Mission**

The Spiritual Life Center is a community born of faith, gathered in love and led by the Spirit to seek oneness with the Mystery that is God.

We are called to tend the Holy in the souls of individuals, groups, and the world by cooperating with God to invite and nurture, equip and sustain, heal and transform, through the ministry of spiritual direction.

**From the Director's Desk...**

*Who made the grasshopper?  
The grasshopper, I mean -  
the one who flung herself out of the grass,  
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,  
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down -  
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.*

**I**N HER POEM ENTITLED "THE SUMMER DAY", MARY OLIVER ponders the above. Can you imagine the scene? the green of the grass? the sugar being licked? those complicated eyes? Can you envision taking the time to notice that grasshoppers move their mouths back and forth? Do you remember noticing for the first time how a flower unfolds? Or discovered your own moon shadow? Or how vegetables grow so quickly out of control? Or how trees continue to bleed when they are cut down? Or how the horizon shifts with the changing light from dawn to dusk?

Summer is such a prodigal season! It offers an opportunity to look at life with more relaxed eyes. To ponder the mysteries with a softer heart. Here at the Spiritual Life Center we morph into a more gentle pace. There seems to be more time for people to connect, to catch up, to share an insight from a movie or book. We gather around the table to share lunch or iced tea. We admire the flowers from people's gardens and eat the produce grown from seed. We feast on the wonders of the season and of the community.

This week I welcomed back a person who has been out of state for eight years. As I showed her around the center, she would stop to notice a picture, a plant, a quilt, a piece of pottery. As I spoke of a particular significance for a person or group, I became aware once again of how prodigal have been our blessings. The surroundings and décor of the center speak so concretely of the generosity of the community. The powerful spirit and hospitality reflect so accurately the work that goes on here. We are a community that strives to welcome all who come with their reflection and questions. We attempt to hold the mysteries of the cycle of life - from birth to growth - to diminishment - to letting go - to rebirth.

In response to the reflective questions, Oliver claims "I do know how to pay attention. . . . how to be idle and blessed". What a wonderful gift of summer! Taking the time to realize how blessed one is! ❖

-Cathleen Murtha, DW  
Director

The Source is a newsletter for spiritual directors, directees, friends, volunteers, and supporters of the Spiritual Life Center. It is published twice a year: winter and summer. Hope Valiska, editor.

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email: info@spiritlifectr.org ❖ website: www.spiritlifectr.org

## Cathleen Murtha is named president of Spiritual Directors International

**O**UR VERY OWN CATHY HAS RECENTLY been elected president of the Coordinating Council of Spiritual Directors International. She has been an active member of SDI since 1982 and has served on the Coordinating Council for the past four years. Her appointment, effective on July 1, 2005, is for one year and is renewable for another term.

Spiritual Directors International is a global learning community of people from many faith and nations who share a common concern, passion and commitment to the art and contemplative practice of spiritual direction. The leadership community including the Coordinating Council, the Executive Director, Liz Budd Ellmann and the staff, works together to meet the needs of the growing community of spiritual directors and the directors of enrichment, formation and training programs throughout the United States and across the globe. One of the unique contributions of SDI is the publication of *Presence*, a quarterly journal which seeks to facilitate conversation among spiritual directors, articulate the essential elements of this contemplative practice, to encourage accountability and to develop clear ethical standards.

The spiritual directors here at our Spiritual Life Center have taken an active role within the larger community of Spiritual Directors International. Susan Jorgensen is the founding editor of *Presence* and Susan Izard has served on the editorial Board. Mary Blume has served on the Events Committee which plans the annual Symposium and Conference. Over the years, Mary Costello, Joanne Moran, Susan Jorgensen, Susan Izard, Mary Blume and Cathy have all served as workshop leaders or facilitators during the Events.

Cathy's appointment is an honor both for her and for the Center. It is a recognition by the larger community of Spiritual Directors of the quality of the ministry here in Bloomfield.

For further information on Spiritual Directors International, please visit their website at [www.sdiworld.org](http://www.sdiworld.org). ❖

## Naming and Claiming Our Theological Foundation

**T**HREE YEARS AGO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS and the Mission Effectiveness Committee reformulated and reclaimed our Mission Statement. It has been our guiding light in all of our endeavors. As we have grown and developed beyond any one faith tradition or formulation, we have been asked from time to time to articulate what is it that we believe? What are our foundations? Do we have a theological statement?

The Board of Directors has been grappling with this for a while. Following an in-service workshop in the fall of 2004 on Spiritual Legacy, Susan Izard, one of our Board members, applied some of the learnings of that day to the Board's desire to formulate a response to some of the above questions. We entered into that process in January where we affirmed six characteristics of what we know it means to be the Spiritual Life Center today. They are: inclusivity, community, listening for the Holy, incarnation, hospitality, and service. At our Annual Board of Directors Retreat in February, we devoted some good energy and insight in sharing our individual perspectives. What follows is our working statement. It flows from the work of the Board and was put in its present form by Susan.

*We believe that God is dynamically present in all of life, and that all creation embodies the image of the Divine.*

*We believe that God calls us together to be an inclusive community reflecting God's limitless love, grace and mystery, and to offer hospitality to all people on a spiritual journey in an environment of openness and trust.*

*We believe that we are invited to cooperate with God in the transformation of ourselves and the world, we listen with an attentive spirit to the sacred stories of others, and witness to and affirm the presence of God.*



# Annual Appeal

SOON THE RESPITE OF SUMMER DAYS WILL TURN to the busyness of the fall. The Spiritual Life Center's 2005 Annual Appeal will begin at the end of September. This year the Center enters into its fourth year as a self-sustain non profit organization. According to national development experts, the first five years of newly formed non-profit are the most critical in terms of cementing its existence and helping to assure its future. With your help we have been able to "stay the course" during the past four years and are hoping you will support us once again.

We have set a goal of \$50,000 in order to balance the budget, fund new initiatives like Spirituality and Work, meet the continued demands of time and services connected with the internship, create more outreach to the greater community, carry on

our other programs and of course meet the need of increased requests for spiritual direction.

We know the fall brings a deluge of requests for help from many organizations. We hope you will renew your commitment to the work of The Spiritual Life Center. Our unique mission of serving the spiritual needs of people is needed now more than ever during this time of incredible turmoil in the world.

Look for your annual appeal packet toward the end of September. We thank you in advance for your support and ask God's blessing on you and yours. ❖

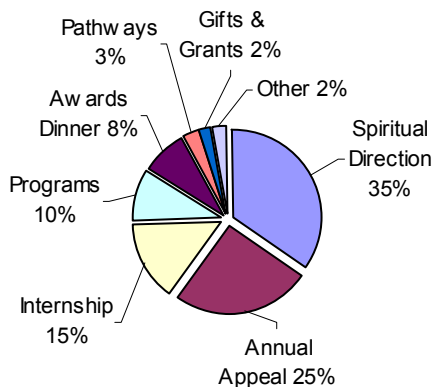
-Rose Majestic  
Development Director

## 2004-2005 Statement of Income & Expenses

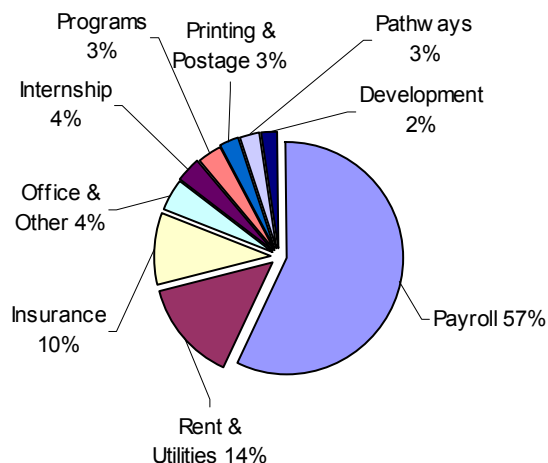
(in thousands)

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenses</b>	
Spiritual Direction	63.5	Payroll	102.1
Annual Appeal	45.7	Rent & Utilities	26.0
Internship	27.4	Insurance	18.1
Programs	17.6	Office & Other	7.7
Awards Dinner	14.9	Internship	6.6
Pathways	5.7	Programs	6.2
Gifts & Grants	4.4	Printing & Postage	5.1
<u>Other</u>	<u>4.4</u>	Pathways	4.9
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$183.5</b>	<u>Development</u>	<u>4.9</u>
		<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$180.5</b>

**Income Items as a % of the Whole**



**Expense Items as a % of the Whole**



## 2005 Living Spirit Awards

**T**HE ANNUAL LIVING SPIRIT AWARDS DINNER WAS held on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> and once again was a great success. We gathered at St. Thomas Seminary to honor and celebrate Mr. Courtney Bourns, whose life truly embodies activism in the most positive sense. His work has included the founding of The Gathering Place, as well as involvement with the Greater Hartford Citizens Network and the Hartford Seminary, to name a few.



Pictured Left to Right: Cathy Murtha, Courtney Bourns, Geordie Campbell

**W**e also recognized Covenant to Care for Children for their tireless work on behalf of Connecticut's abused, neglected and impoverished children. For the past 18 years they have brought together social workers and congregations of all faiths to help over 30,000 children. Cynthia Bartholomew, the Director, accepted the award on behalf of the organization.



Pictured Above: Cynthia Bartholomew, Rose Majestic, & Covenant to Care

**T**his year's event raised over \$11,000 for the Center (almost the same amount as last year). Even though our attendance was a little lower, we had increases in our financial sponsors and donations from those that couldn't attend the dinner. The silent auction was a rousing success that raised over \$4,000—double the amount of last year's auction. We were also able to keep expenses down this year because of generous discounts and pro bono work.

Of course none of this could have happened without the incomparable work of our 'dream team' committee. Their creativity, loyalty, and yeomen's efforts can never be measured. My heartfelt and undying thanks go to Eduardo Barrios, Mary Costello, Ellen Graham, Ann Griffith, Barbara Japenga, Fay Lenz, Joanne Moran, Cathy Murtha, and Debbie Windish.

Special thanks also go to Janet May at St. Thomas Seminary, Goulet Printer, Reggie DeLarm who created this year's awards, Alan Grant for his photography, Susan Johnson who provided music during the reception, Michael Kelly Blanchard for his "Song Altars" during the dinner, Theresa Spear for the beautiful tea roses, Jayne Keenan for her incredible cake creation, David Leon of Bloomfield Discount Liquors, and Joanne White & Barbara Japenga for the beautiful prayers to celebrate our gathering.

If you didn't have a chance to attend this year's joyful, elegant and touching event, make plans to come next year. We'll be there! ❖

-Rose Majestic  
Development Director

## Changing Times and Changing Faces

ONE OF THE REALITIES OF GROWTH AND change is that the community is dynamic and open. Since our last Newsletter we have bid farewell to Mary Bello, CSJ. Mary has been the face and voice that has greeted many of you over these past five years. At the end of December Mary left us to return to her first love, teaching. We are so grateful to her for her gracious hospitality, her efforts at updating our data base and keeping us computer literate, her gifts of story telling and her beautiful spirit. We miss her and wish her well.

We have also experienced a change in working relationship with Mary Blume who has served on the staff with a special responsibility for the Internship, the Volunteers, the In-service for Spiritual Directors as well as offering spiritual direction and supervision. After twelve years, Mary has discerned the choice to let go of some of her responsibilities and to return to her volunteer capacity. We are blessed that Mary remains such a vibrant part of our community.

### Director of Development

Rose Majestic has been with us since December, 2004. She is also the Executive Director of the West Haven Emergency Assistance Taskforce (WHEAT) and was previously the Associate Director for the Connecticut Food Bank. Rose is a graduate of the Spiritual Direction Internship here at the Spiritual Life Center, has an M.A. in Religion from Yale Divinity School, a Masters in Education from Indiana University of PA, and a BS

in Business from Indiana University of PA. She also serves on the Board of Directors of Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers.

### Administrative Assistant

Hope Valiska, the newest member of our staff, joined our community in February of this year. She graduated in 2002 from the University of Maine at Farmington, with a degree in Mathematics and a background in Creative Writing. She brings to us wonderful skills, experience, and energy.

### Spiritual Direction Internship

Andree Grafstein and Peter Heinrichs have joined the Internship Team for the new group that began this past September. Andree, who resides with her husband in Farmington, has been involved with the center almost from its inception. She has been a participant in the supervision group that has been meeting the longest. She has many years of experience as a spiritual director, retreat leader and facilitator of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises.

Peter Heinrichs, the Pastor of South Congregational Church is Springfield, MA, lives with his wife and daughters in Greenville. Peter was a participant in the 1996- 98 Internship and has served as a spiritual director, mentor, facilitator with a special interest in the pastoral setting and with groups and systems. ❖

## Looking Ahead...

Pathways of Spirituality and the Spiritual Direction Internship will be accept applications in January & February for new classes beginning September 2006.

Please contact Cindy Carr for Pathways at [revccarr89@aol.com](mailto:revccarr89@aol.com), or Cathy Murtha for the Internship at [cmurtha@spiritlifectr.org](mailto:cmurtha@spiritlifectr.org).



Graduating Class of the Pathways of Spirituality Program, May, 2005.

## Fall Book Sale September 15<sup>th</sup> - October 15<sup>th</sup>

Once again our porch will be the site of our Used Book Sale. For a nominal fee you can purchase some gently used old and new favorites. Both hard cover and paper backs are available from such authors as Antoinette Bosco, Leo Buscaglia, Thomas Greene, Ted Loder, Joyce Rupp, Louis Savery and Patricia Berne, John Shea, Bernie Siegel and Jon Kabat-Zinn. Come and brose on the porch and have a cup of tea and see what catches your fancy.

At this time we are not looking for more donations to the book sale. We are hoping to share some of our surplus wealth and donations of resources. ❖

## Mouse Pads for Sale

The Public Relations Committee of the Board of Directors has designed a special Spiritual Life Center Mouse Pad. The creative endeavor contains both the Center's logo and banner statement: Walking Together with the Spirit. A special feature is the 4 x 6 inch opening for a favorite photograph. Stop by the Center to see some samples and purchase one for yourself and/or a friend. What an original way to keep the center in mind and to have a cherished picture with you as you work. The donation for each mouse pad is \$5. ❖

## Newsletter & Mailing Updates

One of the challenges of a growing organization is the management of our data base. It has been some time since we have asked you to update your information for us. On the bottom of this page there is a copy of a form that we would ask you to complete and send to us either through the mail or by email. We are especially interested in receiving email addresses. If we can work through e-mail it greatly reduces our costs. We do promise you that we will not divulge any of your information with an outside party. You are too precious to us. ❖

### Information Update

Please help us to update our database by filling out this form  
with your most current contact information, and returning it to the  
Spiritual Life Center, 120 Mountain Ave, Bloomfield, CT 06002-5003.  
Thank you.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(street)

\_\_\_\_\_ (town) \_\_\_\_\_ (state) \_\_\_\_\_ (zip)

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you prefer to receive SLC information and newsletters electronically?      YES      NO



Spiritual Life Center, Inc.  
120 Mountain Avenue  
Bloomfield, CT 06002-5003

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Paid  
Permit No 3227  
Hartford, CT

## Consider Giving to the Spiritual Life Center Today!

**P**LEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT THE SPIRITUAL LIFE CENTER depends on the generous support of its community. Support comes in many forms: gifts of time and talent, prayer, financial, attending events and programs, referring people to the Center, and spreading the word about our ministry here. Word of mouth works every time. In whatever form, we consider your presence to be a gift and it is an invaluable part of this vibrant and vital community. You can designate your financial support for any number of ministries at the Center:

- \* **Scholarship Fund for the Internship.** Some people who seek training for spiritual direction need tuition support.
- \* **Scholarship Fund for Spiritual Direction.** Many people are unable to give the suggested donation of \$30-\$50 per session. Your gift could help support this vital ministry.
- \* **Planned Giving Program.** You may make a bequest by will, contribute to our endowment fund, or designate the Center as one of the beneficiaries of a life insurance policy.
- \* **Ongoing Program Support.** We offer our programs at a very reasonable rate to allow people within a variety of income ranges to attend. Again, your gift can help support these programs.

- Yes, I want to support the Spiritual Life Center. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Please send me more information on your Planned Giving Program.
- I would like someone to contact me about your Planned Giving Program.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to the Spiritual Life Center and mail to 120 Mountain Avenue, Bloomfield, CT 06002-5003. Thank you.



# Spiritual Life Center

## 2005 Programs

120 Mountain Avenue ❖ Bloomfield, CT ❖ (860) 243-2374 ❖ [www.spiritlifectr.org](http://www.spiritlifectr.org)

### Where were You when I needed You? Accompanying survivors of Sexual Abuse

#### *In-service Program*

Presenter: YVETTE YOUNG

Thursday, 10/20 from 9:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

CONVENT OF THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH,  
WEST HARTFORD

*Suggested Donation: \$55 Cost includes lunch*

Spiritual directors, pastors, pastoral counselors, chaplains, teachers – caregivers working with sexual abuse survivors, enter the place of anger, loss, and intense suffering that is part of their experience. Each story is sacred and unique.

Yvette Young, our presenter for the day, has worked extensively with sexual abuse survivors and the people who live and work with them, and brings patience, compassion, and understanding to her ministry.

Her presentation in the morning will look at how the experience of abuse affects the survivors' outlook on self, life, and God, and how the healing companion may be affected by it and help or hinder the process.

Our afternoon panel of directors and other caregivers will share their own growth and learnings and will welcome questions.

*Yvette Young has been the Training Coordinator for the YWCA of the Hartford Region Sexual Assault Crisis Service for four years, and has worked as a therapist for Catholic Family Services for two years.*

*She has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Trinity College, as well as a Masters of Education in Counseling Psychology from Cambridge College.*

### Watercolors for the Artistically Undiscovered

Presenter: LINDA GEBHART

Saturday, 11/5 from 9:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.

SPIRITUAL LIFE CENTER

*Suggested Donation: \$35*

This workshop offers participants the opportunity to empower themselves by releasing the artist inside. Learn some simple and fun painting techniques in a relaxed setting and a holistic creative process.

No art experience necessary, materials included. Please bring a brown bag lunch, drinks will be provided.

### The Spirituality of Recovery Series "It's All About Relationships"

Presenter: RICK PACUKONAS

Saturday, 11/12 from 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

SACRED HEART CHURCH,  
550 HARTFORD TNPK., VERNON

Saturday, 12/3 from 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.

SPIRITUAL LIFE CENTER

*Suggested Donation: \$20*

Adversaries, strangers, acquaintances, friends, family, lovers, soul mates, and God – we meet them all in our journey of recovery, and some days it's heaven and some days it's hell. How we act and react to those around us will often determine our joy of life. Relationships can be a delicate dance, where two people attempt to enjoy the experience through subtly wrestling for control while trying to avoid the toes of another. Yet, the more experience you have with The Steps, the easier one's life dance will be.

There are insights of spiritual wisdom that can be applied to any relationship to enhance the value or minimize the stress. If there is room for improvement in your relationships and you would like to learn from the experience of other recovering pilgrims, please join us. You are not alone.

## 2005 Series

### Knitting Into the Mystery

Presenter: SUSAN JORGENSEN WITH  
STAFF

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month  
from 7:00 – 8:30 P.M.

9/13, 10/11, 11/8, 12/13

SPIRITUAL LIFE CENTER

*Suggested Donation: Free will offering*

Consider joining our Knitting Circle. All meetings are open to newcomers. We knit shawls for others to celebrate life, to comfort, to heal, to bless. Come and be a part of this important shawl-knitting ministry as we pray, talk, and share the joy of knitting. No knitting experience required – we can teach you the basic stitches.

If you need materials, please call to let us know. We will provide them for you at cost.

### Focusing Bio-Spirituality: Level 1

Presenter: MARY COSTELLO, RSM

Thursday evenings  
from 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.

10/6, 10/13, 10/20, 10/27, 11/3

SPIRITUAL LIFE CENTER

*Suggested Donation: \$125 for the series*

Focusing provides a practical and simple framework within which your bodily sense for grace and God can become part of everyday awareness. It helps us to create an inner climate of a caring presence allowing us to let go of controlling and judging.

Focusing teaches us to come home to ourselves and develop a deeper sense of God's presence in our lives.

### Taize Evening Prayer

Presenters: REV. SUSAN S. IZARD  
AND CATHLEEN MURTHA, DW

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month  
from 6:30 - 7:30 P.M.

9/20, 10/18, 11/15, 12/20

CHAPEL AT FIRST CHURCH,  
12 S. MAIN ST., W. HARTFORD

*Suggested Donation: Free will offering*

The Christian community at Taize has developed a form of prayer that includes chant, readings, and silence. In our hurried pace of life, many have found this type of prayer in community very centering and hopeful for our world.

The Spiritual Life Center and First Church of Christ Congregational in West Hartford co-sponsor this monthly time of prayer.

## Register for a Spiritual Life Center program today:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Program(s):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I am enclosing a deposit of \$ \_\_\_\_\_, made payable to the Spiritual Life Center.  
(Send a deposit at your discretion)

I will remit the full amount at the time of the program.

Please mail this form to the Spiritual Life Center, 120 Mountain Avenue, Bloomfield, CT 06002.