

LORETO SPIRITUALITY CENTRE NEWSLETTER

January 2023



WELCOME to our Winter/Spring edition of the Loreto Spirituality Centre News.

The New Year is always a time to look back, and to look forward. For us at Loreto Centre, it has been a year of change and new beginnings. For the first time since Covid we were able to offer a full programme and welcome retreatants 'in person'. Participants enjoyed the Holy Week Retreat, and the Living Theology Summer School was so much enriched by the social interaction, not possible online the previous year.

There is huge change on a wider scale too. As the year unfolded, so did the disasters and hardships about which we hear every day. With so many reasons to fear the future, as we face the new year we are wondering how we can best respond. We were very happy to be able to offer our Conference Room to the local Ukrainian refugees as a venue for English lessons. At the same time, we were seeking ways of responding to the spiritual needs of those around us.

As I look back over the last year, I am reminded again and again of the quote from Adrienne Rich:

'My heart is moved by all I cannot save:
so much has been destroyed.
I have to cast my lot with those
who age after age, perversely,
with no extraordinary power,
reconstitute the world.'

At the Centre, we endeavour to offer a space to 'come away and rest awhile', to remember who we are and to whom we belong. We are called to be people of hope, and invited to respond to God's call to us in the midst of our daily lives. On our programme are written the words of Mary Ward:

'I listened to God's deep dream for me,
and felt ready to respond'

These words were written in her retreat notes in 1615. We hope too that all those who come here in the coming year, will find the space that they need to listen to God's dream for them, and that their retreat will bear fruit in their daily lives to make the world a better place for all.

As we look forward, we have tried to reflect the needs of our changing world in this year's programme at the Centre. As well as the usual Preached and Individually Guided Retreats, Holy Week Retreat and Living Theology, we are offering a number of themed retreats. A weekend for those who would like a taste of a silent retreat will be offered, with workshops on prayer. 'Finding Life in an era of Change' will offer an opportunity to address our need for wellbeing at this time, and 'Visio Divina' will encourage a new way of seeing, using our camera or smartphone. 'Space to Grieve' is the name given to a weekend retreat for those who have recently been bereaved. Other retreats include praying with Scripture, with Julian of Norwich, and a Cinema retreat for those who enjoy films.

This year we will also introduce Loreto Days, days of recollection which will take place one Saturday every month.

We hope that you will find something that will attract you, and we look forward to welcoming you here.

*For more information,
and other events,
please see our website
or contact the Centre
for a programme.*

The Staff - We would like to introduce you to some more members now familiar to regular visitors!



Michelle Hughes

Hello my name is Michelle. I have been working at the Loreto Centre for 8 years in April and I really enjoy my work. I have seen a lot of changes in the Centre over these years, especially the move from the old building. I have settled into the new building now and think the guests like staying with us and appreciate that all the rooms are now en-suite. I hope to carry on working at the Loreto Centre for a long time.

Sharon Pugh

Hello, my name is Sharon Pugh and I joined the Loreto team in February 2022. Prior to this my husband and I ran our own Guest House here in Llandudno for 15 years, so, when we decided to sell the business in 2021, it made sense to continue in an occupation that was familiar to me. I feel I have settled in well and enjoy meeting the many guests who come to stay here at the Loreto Centre. I find it a very calm and tranquil place to work. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family, walking our beautiful cocker spaniel, Hugo, baking and dabbling in different crafts!



Lisa Jones

My name is Lisa and I am part of the housekeeping team at the Loreto Spirituality Centre. I have been working here since April 2022. I enjoy my role, especially the variety of the tasks I do. I particularly like meeting the guests, who are always warm and sincere. I think the Loreto Centre is a nice place to work.

From a Group who used the Loreto Spirituality Centre

The group of Ukrainians who have been using our conference centre for English lessons and other activities, came for the last time this year for a Christmas celebration. One of the Volunteers writes:



‘A Christmas party held for Ukrainian refugees on December 11th marked the end of several months of support for our new members of the local community. Everyone has been very grateful for the inviting hub at the Loreto Centre which has provided a safe and welcome place for people to get help with their English, meet friends and feel supported and connected.

During the time since the refugees arrived in Llandudno, volunteers have been helping them with English skills using British Council resources and advice from English language teaching consultants. We have seen a marked improvement over this time, with the Ukrainians now in a place of confidence and competence in their conversation skills, as well as better able to negotiate everyday tasks like emails and general admin. We have also had a lot of fun, particularly with the children, where games which help to build vocabularies have also provided lots of laughter.



The refugees are now settled into their lives here, having made use of the helping hands along the way, and while they may no longer need weekly support as has been offered, they know they can always reach out for help. It's been hopefully very useful assistance for the Ukrainians as well as an enriching experience for the volunteers – and everyone is very appreciative to Loreto for hosting us.’

In the coming months . . .

Individually Guided Retreats

17 - 21 April 4 Day

17 - 26 April 8 Day

5 - 7 May

*Weekend silent individually guided retreat
with workshops on prayer.*

17 - 24 July 6 Day

25 July - 3 August 8 Day



Preached Retreat

3 - 10 July

Life as a Pilgrimage

or

Journey?

with Perry Gildea CM

Lent and Holy Week

20 - 24 March **Lenten Triduum:**

Praying Matthew's Gospel in Lent, with Nicholas King SJ

5 - 9 April **Holy Week Retreat** with Michael Barnes SJ and Loreto Centre Team

"I started coming to the Loreto Centre for Easter as a 'young adult' looking for a home when Loyola Hall closed down . . . skip forward 9 years and we are still coming . . . The Easter retreat offers a place of welcome, rest and a celebration of Holy Week in the context of a retreat; an opportunity to focus and feel the connections between the different days and readings, so that when Easter does arrive I can feel that I have been through the journey of Holy Week and am ready to celebrate . . .

For me and my family the thing that pulls us back every year is the genuine warmth of welcome, not just from the Loreto Sisters themselves, but from the whole team there . . . As a parent, trying to connect my children to the Church and it's celebrations isn't always easy . . . For me and my family, the Easter Retreat provides an opportunity to recharge our spiritual batteries and allows my children to have an additional experience of what it means to be a part of the Church - as well as sneak in a trip to the beach and the infamous Great Orme Toboggans. We look forward to coming once more in 2023 and spending Holy Week together."



Living Theology Summer School

30 June – 2 July with Michael Smith SJ, Fiona Ellis, Michael Barnes SJ and Josette Zammit-Mangion IBVM

" . . . this was a wonderful ecumenical opportunity to deepen our understanding of the Christian faith and Christian living, with plenty of opportunity for comments and questions from participants.

As always, I came away from Llandudno enriched and stimulated, and the dates for Living Theology 2023 (30 June – 2 July) are already firmly in the diary. Warmest thanks to all the speakers and to Sr Ewa and all the other Loreto staff for enabling this annual summer school to happen in such a beautiful location."

We need your help . . .

These are difficult times for many and all of us have been badly affected by Covid and the financial crisis. We would like to welcome everyone to Loreto Centre including those who cannot afford the full cost of an event. We have a small bursary fund and would like to add to this so that those who need can avail of it. Any donation towards this fund, however small, will be gratefully received. You can do this by cheque or bank transfer and if you are a tax payer you can gift aid your donation. If you would like to make a donation towards the upkeep of the Centre that would also be very welcome.

Cheques should be made payable to **Loreto Centre** and the details for a bank transfer are as follows:

Cooperative Bank, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP
Account Name: Loreto Sisters-Loreto Centre
Account No. 65498136
Sort Code: 08 90 00

International Bank a/c number
GB34 CPBK 0890 0065 4981 36
Bank Identification Code
CPBK GB22

THE NAME 'LORETO'

The shrine of Loreto, on the N.E. coast of Italy near Ancona, has been a place of pilgrimage since the Middle Ages.

The legend is that, at the end of the thirteenth century the Holy House of Nazareth was transported by angels to Loreto, where it is revered by pilgrims to this day.

When Teresa Ball started her community and school in Rathfarnham Dublin in 1822, she looked for a name for her foundation and chose Loreto.

Why did she choose Loreto?

She wanted her community and school to be places of love, gentleness, faith, kindness and tolerance, like the home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph in Nazareth.

Why then did she not choose the name Nazareth or Holy Family or something similar? Why Loreto?

The shrine of Loreto is not much in the news these days but it was in Teresa Ball's young days. In 1801, the statue of Our Lady of Loreto, stolen by Napoleonic troops in 1797, was returned to the shrine of Loreto for good. So perhaps it is not so surprising that Teresa Ball chose the name Loreto as an equivalent for Nazareth.

Nearly all the houses and schools founded from Rathfarnham have been called Loreto.



Mary Ward often visited the shrine of Loreto in her journeys across Europe. She called her the Blue Lady in her letters, to disguise her whereabouts!



A new IBVM Leadership Team

Every few years, a religious congregation calls a 'General Congregation', a meeting where delegates from every Province meet to discuss important matters and some also elect a new Leader. Such a meeting took place in October, in Manresa, the place where St Ignatius wrote the Spiritual Exercises. We would like to share with you the good news that our new Leader is Carmel Swords, known to some of you. Carmel is from the Irish Province, and has been to Loreto Centre on several occasions, most memorably with the Friends of Mary Ward, for whom she led a weekend retreat in April of last year, and was very well received.



Carmel will be supported by four 'consultors', an advisory body who will work alongside her. One of those elected to this role is Kate, whom many of you will have met. Kate was in the Llandudno community and had been involved in the work of the Centre in recent years.

Carmel, Kate and three other consultors, Natalie from Australia, Geraldine from India and Mary from Kenya, have moved to Rome to begin their new mission.

We wish them well, and assure them of our prayer.