



**Living Spirituality Connections**  
Resources for spiritual journeys

## Newsletter Autumn 2020

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### Introduction

In this newsletter we bring you articles that make responses inspired by our spiritual traditions to our present situation in the world - Covid-19 and its impacts by a pioneering minister, Paul Bradbury, and positive approaches to addressing climate change and biodiversity loss by Dr Mary Grey and by the Daily Bread team. Richard Rohr shares important insights into the Wisdom Pattern of life, which cycles through order, disorder and re-order.

We haven't divided the topics into sections this time, since articles often cross over the LSC key themes of The Creative Spirit, the Flourishing of the Earth and all Life; and Spiritual Journeying for individuals and groups.

### **Staying connected**

Among the things that people have said they find helpful in these times are a range of activities connecting us to nature; prayer and meditation, and other wisdom practices that keep us rooted; and ways of connecting with others via Zoom and other platforms.

Our regular **Living Conversation group** and **Journeying Together group** are flourishing on Zoom. If you would like to try setting up an online Living Conversation group, the guidelines are here: [http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/living\\_conversation\\_guidelines\\_for\\_website.pdf](http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/living_conversation_guidelines_for_website.pdf)

We can also give updated advice on using Zoom for a Living Conversation Group, if needed.

If you would like to join a drop-in activity, you are always welcome to participate in the monthly **eco-contemplative liturgies** that I host on Zoom on behalf of St James's Piccadilly. These are non-denominational in format. It has been good to have some LSC members join us in recent months. During the autumn and winter these are at 3pm on 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month. People stay a while after the liturgy for conversation if they wish to. Please email [petragriffiths@livingspirit.org.uk](mailto:petragriffiths@livingspirit.org.uk) if you would like details.

In these very changeable times, we are glad that we are able to continue with all our regular offerings on line. If there are further things that you would like us to do (bearing in mind that this is voluntary work), please let us know.

With our warm wishes to you for the seasons of Advent and Christmas,

*Petra*

Editor, Living Spirituality Connections Newsletter

**Living Spirituality Working and Discernment Group:** Linda Courage, Petra Griffiths, Heather-Jane Ozanne, assisted by Bridget Cambridge.

## Order, Disorder, Re-order

By Richard Rohr

There seems to be a universal pattern of spiritual transformation that takes us from Order, through Disorder, to Reorder. Order, by itself, normally wants to eliminate any disorder or diversity, creating a narrow and cognitive rigidity in both people and systems. Disorder, by itself, closes us off from any primal union, meaning, and eventually even sanity in both people and systems. Our focus here is Reorder, or transformation of people and systems, which happens when both are seen to work together.



Like most other kinds of growth, this spiral probably happens over and over throughout our lives, and reveals itself in the Bible:

Garden of Eden → Fall → Paradise.

Walter Brueggemann teaches three kinds of Psalms: Psalms of Orientation → Psalms of Disorientation → Psalms of New Orientation.

Christians call the pattern Life → Crucifixion → Resurrection.

Many now speak generally of Construction → Deconstruction → Reconstruction.

We are indeed “saved” by knowing and surrendering to this universal pattern of reality. Knowing the full pattern allows us to let go of the first order, accept the disorder, and, sometimes hardest of all—to trust the new reorder.

To grow toward love, union, salvation, or enlightenment, we must be moved from *Order* to *Disorder*, and then ultimately to *Reorder*. Law, tradition, and boundaries—what I call *Order*—seem to be necessary in any spiritual system both to reveal and to limit our basic egocentricity. Such containers make at least some community, family, and marriage possible. This process of moving from innocence to knowledge is never finished. Always

there is the realm of innocence, always there is the realm of knowledge (See the work of Rev. Howard Thurman).

For the **full article** go to: [http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Richard Rohr Order, Disorder, Re-order.pdf](http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Richard_Rohr_Order_Disorder_Re-order.pdf)

Fr. **Richard Rohr** is a globally recognized ecumenical teacher bearing witness to the universal awakening within Christian mysticism and the Perennial Tradition. He is a Franciscan priest and founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation (CAC) in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The above article is a summary of the themes of Richard's Rohr's latest book **The Wisdom Pattern: Order, Disorder, Reorder**, as summarised in a blog and in daily emails from Richard Rohr in 2020. Copyright © 2018 by CAC. Used by permission of CAC. All rights reserved worldwide. Thank you to the Center for Action and Contemplation for permission to make this material available here. You can get daily emails from Richard Rohr at the Center for Action and Contemplation. Free of charge, donations welcomed: <https://cac.org/email-sign-up/>

## Joy in Enough

By Mary Grey

I want to begin by re-telling Luke's parable about the rich farmer (Luke 12.15-21). You know it well: it is in the context of Jesus warning his followers against all kinds of greed and Luke's teaching on wealth. He told them of a rich man whose crops yielded a gigantic harvest and he had nowhere to store them. So he decides to pull them down and build better and ever – bigger ones. Then he tells his soul – eat, drink and be merry – enjoy yourself! And I never fail to be chilled by the next words: "You fool," God says, "This very night I will demand your soul – this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?" This is a man who typifies a "more" culture, a culture which has lost its communal soul. Which cannot understand the imperative of "enough is enough". Let alone the capacity for "joy in enough". Eco-theologian, the late Thomas Berry called this a "deep cultural pathology...When the power of ecstasy is subverted into destructive channels...we are in a disastrous situation"

**How can society find its way back from a culture of more to a culture of enough?**

I tried to google this sense of a loss of a corporate soul typified by the Lukan rich man, and all I could find were individualistic programmes offering healing from addictions. Yes,

important, but it's communal/collective addiction we are speaking of. How to transform the desire of society for more things – the equivalent of the rich man's barns – to what truly brings joy, shared well-being and flourishing.

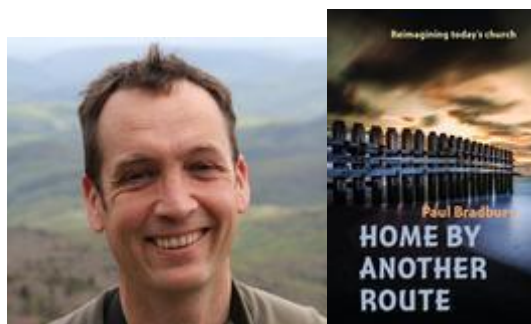
Go to [http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Joy-In\\_Enough\\_Mary\\_Grey.pdf](http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Joy-In_Enough_Mary_Grey.pdf) for **the full article**, including practices to awaken the heart and to dismantle structures that harden the heart.

**Dr Mary Grey** is author of *Redeeming the Dream: Feminism, Redemption and Christian Tradition*. Amongst her other books is *Thirsting for Water: Celebrating 30 years of Wells for India*, the project she founded with **Nicholas Grey**.

This article was originally a talk given at the launch of the Green Christian Joy-in-Enough campaign. <https://joyinenough.org/>. It is reproduced here with kind permission of **Green Christian** <https://greenchristian.org.uk> and of Professor Grey.

## How the current pandemic might impact our understanding of Church

By Paul Bradbury



**Paul Bradbury**, pioneer minister and author of *Home by Another Route: Reimagining today's Church*, (BR, 2019). finds echoes of our current circumstances in the Old Testament story of Exile.

*'Being a member of the Church of England is going to look very different in the days ahead. Our life is going to be less characterised by attendance at church on Sunday, and more characterised by the prayer and service we offer each day.'* (from the Archbishops' letter to Anglican clergy 17.3.20)

A radical shift in how we are and how we do church has been forced upon us in ways that are completely out of our control. We are still adjusting. The world we inhabit, many of the rhythms and rituals that are the landscape of our lives have changed overnight. We do not

know how long the present experience will last. Do we carry on as before, except online? Or does this new situation invite a very different kind of posture and identity as a church?

The situation has deep resonance for me with the story of exile. The destruction of Jerusalem and the enforced relocation of a substantial number of its citizens to Babylon was an immense crisis. A crisis not just in terms of how to survive, but in terms of what it meant to live and worship as the people of God. All the symbols and rituals bound up with life as God's people were gone. However, whilst exile was a theological and existential crisis it was also a period in which Israel experienced significant renewal as they faced the need to reframe and reimagine their lives as God's people.

There are 3 main themes to this renewal, each of which may well have significant resonance for the church today as we response to our own crisis.

1. A renewed vision of God's presence
2. A renewed vision of holiness
3. A renewed vision of mission

To read the **full article** go to: [http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/PaulBradbury\\_on\\_pandemic.pdf](http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/PaulBradbury_on_pandemic.pdf)

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## **New Gallery on our website**

**curated by Linda Courage**

The eight artists who are involved with the Gallery are already known to us. Making their work connects them in some way to life, with or without belonging to any particular religion. This connection with self, nature, others, and for some, life's source, is a way of understanding spirituality.



Photograph by @José Closs

The creative process, in all its forms, has been called ‘the immune system of the mind’ – the words of a prison chaplain at an art and mental health gathering for service users and providers of care in Leeds in the 1990s. If you are interested in the creative process, the thoughts of 54 artists are contained in ‘***Diving into the Mystery: Studies in the Creative Process***’ which is available at [www.anamcararetreat.com](http://www.anamcararetreat.com)

Comments from viewers of the Gallery:

*“What a treasure trove. We so badly need balance, stillness and beauty to gain perspective in these crazy and unstable times.”*

*“Such creative work. Thank you for sending me this. Yay for art in these traumatic times.”*

Our thanks go to Linda for her vision in creating this Gallery, to all the contributing artists, and to Bridget for much help with displaying the artworks.

Please take a look at the Gallery and email Linda Courage at [linda.courage60@gmail.com](mailto:linda.courage60@gmail.com) if you would like to comment or to participate in future. To see the Gallery go to: <https://www.livingspirit.org.uk/the-gallery-2/>

**Linda Courage** is the Living Spirituality Connections contact for the Arts & Spirituality special interest area. If you would like to join that special interest area and the private Facebook group belonging to it, please email Linda at the above email address.



# ARTS AT THE INTERSECTION

Where art forms and cultures meet

*"Art is standing with one hand extended into the universe and one hand extended into the world, and letting ourselves be a conduit for passing energy". Albert Einstein*

**Arts at the Intersection** is a collaboration between several organisations; including Spirit of Peace, Art for Health and UnityMusic. The motivation for Arts at the Intersection is to harness the power of the Arts as a means for creating community cohesion and cultural exchange. The Arts can also be an aid to individual and inter-cultural healing and development and play an important role in enriching individuals and communities. They are a catalyst for change and encourage people to reflect in new ways. The arts provide both subtle and direct challenges, particularly with regard to appreciating other cultures, challenging stereotypes and opening hearts and minds to the celebration of commonality and difference.

## **The aims of Arts at the Intersection include:**

1. Facilitating access to arts and cultural activities for individuals and communities with a special focus on marginalised and minority groups.
2. Bridging cultures and enhancing community cohesion in multicultural and interfaith contexts. This includes facilitating positive cultural exchange in local and international contexts.
3. Harnessing the healing power of the arts and creativity to enable personal and community growth.
4. Providing workshops to enable community groups to engage with the Arts to enhance their work.
5. Exploring themes and actions which contribute to Human and Earth Flourishing through the Arts.



## Events

'Joining the Spirit of Peace event gives me hope for a good future where people feel a deep commitment to people beyond family, tribe, immediate community, nation etc. the event was profound.' Participant.

**SEVENOAKS UNITARIANS AND ARTS AT THE INTERSECTION**

WARMLY INVITE YOU TO AN ONLINE COMMUNITY ARTS 'TEA TIME' EVENT

**OPEN HOUSE**

**4 PM SUNDAY 14TH JUNE 2020**

THE EVENT WILL BRING TOGETHER MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND OTHERS TO ENJOY A SHORT PROGRAMME OF EASTERN AND WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC, POETRY, PARTICIPATORY ART AND REFLECTION.

AFTERWARDS WE HOPE YOU WILL STAY ON FOR A CHAT!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND A ZOOM LINK TO JOIN THE EVENT PLEASE EMAIL [INFO@SPIRITOFPEACE.CO.UK](mailto:info@spiritofpeace.co.uk) OR PHONE 07711 960644

**SEVENOAKS UNITARIANS AND ARTS AT THE INTERSECTION**

WARMLY INVITE YOU TO AN ONLINE "OPEN HOUSE" EVENT

**NEW ROOTS**

**4PM SUNDAY 26TH JULY 2020**

THE EVENT WILL BRING TOGETHER MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL AND WIDER COMMUNITY TO ENJOY A SHORT PROGRAMME OF MULTI-CULTURAL MUSIC, POETRY, PARTICIPATORY ARTS AND REFLECTION

AFTERWARDS WE HOPE YOU WILL STAY ON FOR A CHAT!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND A ZOOM LINK TO JOIN PLEASE EMAIL [info@spiritofpeace.co.uk](mailto:info@spiritofpeace.co.uk) OR PHONE 07711960644

SEVENOAKS UNITARIANS spirit of peace points to peace for peace UnityMusic موسيقى جسر الثقافات Music Bridging Cultures

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Following the two successful online events whose posters are above, a third event is now in preparation, on the theme 'Treasures of Light and Darkness.'

## Enquiries and Collaborations

If anyone would like to work with us on an Open House online event for their community, with any of these themes, or if you have any questions, please get in touch with Heather-Jane Ozanne of Spirit of Peace by email at [info@spiritofpeace.co.uk](mailto:info@spiritofpeace.co.uk).  
<http://www.spiritofpeace.co.uk/>

At both events sessions of participatory art took place. You can see an example of this, along with further participant feedback, in the **longer version of this article** here:  
[http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/AATI\\_overview\\_summary.pdf](http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/AATI_overview_summary.pdf)

## Daily Bread. Grain of Hope: Slice of Heaven Harvest Reflections by the Daily Bread team

At the Harvest Festival service on 4 October at St James's Piccadilly the Daily Bread community wheat-growing project drew to a close. From March to Easter, to Lammas, to Harvest, wheat has been grown in the church courtyard, and in gardens across London. It has been harvested, milled, and some of it made into bread: a story that has run alongside the pandemic months of 2020 — a parable for our time, encouraging the church to acknowledge the whole strange harvest of this year, with all its loss, anger, and injustice, as well as the creativity and kindness that have been so evident. Reconnecting with the natural world and finding the renewable energy to keep changing our behaviour require, as we learn from Pope Francis, a deeper commitment to contemplation — to seeing God's world as God creates and recreates it.

*"God is the web, the energy, the space, the light—not captured in them, as if any of those concepts were more real than what unites them— but revealed in that singular, vast net of relationship that animates everything that is."* Barbara Brown-Taylor



In this year's Harvest Eucharist we looked for ways to celebrate in the context of the deep planetary crises we face. The liturgy included beautiful singing by Ali Beck, a film and the dressing of the altar by Sara Mark. The sermon slot combined reflections from the growers and creators of the poetry and scientific input, with **Lucy Winkett's** sermon inviting us to join the Sabbath life of God; to love, to rest and to pray as part of that creation:

"I truly believe that the only way we have a chance to change our behaviour is by falling in love again with the natural world of which we are part....And the way to that is...contemplation, purposeful spending time gazing at all that God has given us to love. It is a spiritual practice that ... invites us to live life on tiptoe, attentively, urgently, yes, but that urgency rooted in a deep and revolutionary patience."

We closed the service with a pledge that we all made:

*“Today, the cosmic Christ at the heart of all creation urgently calls us to renew our relationship with all that lives.*

*Let us pledge ourselves to renew and remember our interdependence with all that lives.*

*We promise to help each other change the way we live..... “*

Our thanks go to **Deborah Colvin** for her scientific input, to **Sara Mark** for her films and photographs, and to **Diane Pacitti** for the poetry that marked each stage of the Daily Bread Project.

The Daily Bread video is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAxJO8ULmxw>

You can watch the streamed Harvest service here (start at just over 16 minutes in): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqOgsuMfpms> Feedback sent in after the service included: “It was a stunning service. It had an intense but hopeful and calming message of positivity.”

The wheat has also been grown across London by community members, and the growth process has been documented through poems, photographs and scientific commentary on St James’s website: <https://www.sjp.org.uk/daily-bread.html>

## **Putting your voice behind the strong civic society movement building towards the UN Climate summit by Petra Griffiths**

Churches and voluntary organisations are already gearing up in order to have as strong an influence as possible on our politicians who will be voting at this international summit, to be held in Glasgow in November 2021. Excellent coordinated approaches are available online from The Climate Coalition <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/> which involves all campaigning organisations, and The Climate Sunday website <https://www.climatesunday.org> (organised by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland). Both have good focused action suggestions. These include holding church services on a national Climate Sunday on 5 September 2021, and signing the **Time is Now online declaration**: <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/thetimeisnow> The process is smoother if you use Chrome as a browser. You will be kept up to date with the developing national movement if you register your interest, and we are encouraged to start this activity early on.

In the lead up to the 2015 Paris Climate Summit there were strong delegations from churches and voluntary groups, and a Pilgrimage to Paris was organised which helped to attract attention to the campaign.

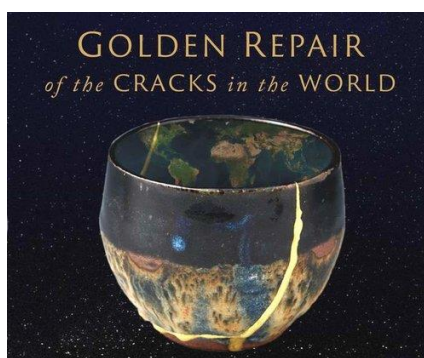


*At the large **Lighting the Way** vigil on the Millennium Bridge in London in the lead-up to the Paris UN Climate Summit in 2015.*

## Helpful resources for Covid times

### New LSC website page

<http://www.livingspirit.org.uk/resources-and-links/helpful-resources-for-covid-times/>



*From Michael Meade's Mosaic Voices website: <https://www.mosaicvoices.org/golden-repair-of-the-cracks-in-the-world>*

A story based on Golden Repair, involving the imperfect repair of pieces of broken pottery, is just one of the themes in our new page showing the things that people are finding helpful

in this difficult period. Thank you to those who have sent in suggestions for things that are inspiring or supporting you this year. This new website page shows a range of music, art, books, online meditation opportunities and ongoing courses. Do take a look.

## **BOOKS**

### **Heart's Ease. Spirituality in the Music of John Tavener**

Eds. **June Boyce-Tillman and Anne-Marie Forbes**

Our age owes Sir John Tavener deep gratitude. His works cross both cultural and disciplinary boundaries. He illustrated how to deal with intense suffering and felt deeply for the suffering of the world. He stands as an icon representing a view of artistic expression as a way of generating hope and transcendence. In Tavener's thinking, spirituality was closely tied to wellbeing and healing and this book considers the spiritual encounters that brought him 'heart's ease' and the communication of that experience to performers and listeners through his composition.

The contributors to this book include scholars, musicians, theologians, medical practitioners, informed listeners and practitioners in religious traditions. It includes case study material, empirical studies, philosophical, theological and theoretical contributions along with accounts from lived experience of the spirituality generated by Tavener's music.

This is set in the context of a world that sees spirituality as sometimes coupled and sometimes uncoupled from religion. The pattern of the book is an alternation between interludes and chapters illuminating different facets of the crystal of Tavener's creative work and the spirituality and 'heart's ease' that it can offer.

**Heart's Ease** is a book from the Music and Spirituality Series published by Peter Lang.

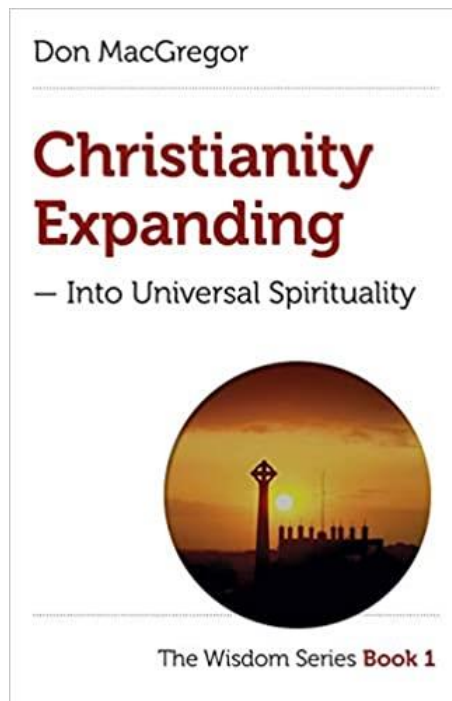
### **Christianity Expanding Into Universal Spirituality**

**By Don MacGregor**

From the introduction to the book: "...takes us on a whistle-stop tour of the areas that need updating if Christianity is to flourish in the 21st Century. New science, ecological concern and the need for new theology are all converging into a maelstrom of change. With broad brushstrokes on a big canvas, a path of personal transformation is charted, drawing on the mysterious Perennial Wisdom teachings that have survived down the ages. Pulling

no punches, Don MacGregor delves into typically taboo subjects such as reincarnation, drawing a distinction between Jesus and the Christ. This dynamic first volume of The Wisdom Series is an initial outline of areas that demand ongoing exploration.”

Dr Rupert Sheldrake, biologist and author of *A New Science of Life comments*: “I found this book stimulating and inspiring. It is also admirably brief and clear.” All religions evolve, and Christianity is evolving rapidly today. Don MacGregor's book is a thoughtful guide to this process, and shows how the essential core teachings of Christianity can be disentangled from unhelpful interpretations that stand in the way of a living Christian faith in the twenty-first century.



To buy the book go to: <https://wordery.com/search?term=don+macgregor>

## **Teilhard de Chardin On Love. Evolving Human Relationships**

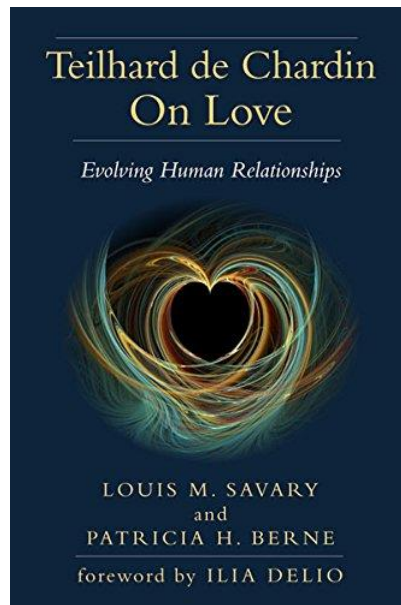
**By Louis M Savary and Patricia H Berne**

**Reviewed by Linda Courage**

“The day will come when,  
after harnessing space, winds, the tide and gravitation,  
we shall harness for God the energies of love.  
And, on that day,

for the second time in the history of the world,  
\*man will have discovered fire.”

*Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ*



The authors of this welcome book set out to explain the vision of Teilhard de Chardin in an accessible way for their readers. Each chapter contains what they term Spiritual Practice, and Spiritual Exercises, to integrate what is being shared with individual readers and groups with their own experience.

Teilhard de Chardin was a scientist as well as a Catholic priest. He was fascinated by the process of evolution and how love itself is a tangible, powerful, and crucial force in the universe. He believed it should be named alongside other forces in nature, for example, gravity.

The authors apply the spirit of Teilhard to many discoveries made after his lifetime, helping to open contemporary worlds to his far reaching vision. Seeing love as essentially energy, we are guided through the Theory and the Practice. Topics covered include: Teilhard's Perspective On Love; Relationships Are Real Beings; 'Union Differentiates'; More Fully Human; Parent-Child Relationships; Love in Friendships and Teams; A Theology of Love.

This book lends itself to personal and spiritual development of individuals and groups. The exercises and practices should provide (a stimulus for?) for encounter and exchange.

\* A useful companion text for further reading could be Anne Hillman's **Awakening the Energies of Love. Discovering Fire for the Second Time**. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2016. Anne replaces the word 'man' with 'humanity' when she uses the same quote at the beginning of her book.



## The Beauty of Stillness

By Elizabeth Mills

Elizabeth introduces her booklet by saying: “Being active and constantly busy is greatly valued. Little time is given to giving ourselves space: to take time to pause, to reflect and to be still.” Yet there is an inward stillness spoken of through the ages by people of all faiths, which is always available to us all.



James Roose-Evans, author of *Inner Journey: Outer Journey* has commented “There is something so calm and so still in these pages, like walking into a cathedral very early in the morning. Take one page at a time and let it float. Let it be one’s mantra for the day or even several days.”

**To order** the 48 page booklet (£4 P&P inc) please email [e.m.mills@btinternet.com](mailto:e.m.mills@btinternet.com)